

FROM HEIGHT TO CRISIS: THE LAST HALF CENTURY OF NIZÂM-I KADÎM
AND OTTOMAN SOCIETY AS SEEN BY THE GAZETTE DE FRANCE, 1740-1787

A Ph.D. Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

From Height to Crisis: The Last Half Century of Nizâm-ı Kadîm and Ottoman Society as Seen by the Gazette de France, 1740-1787

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This dissertation focuses on the period of 1740-1787 which was one of the last high points in the history of the Ottoman Empire. It uses the French monarchy's official periodical, the *Gazette de France*, as its main source to find new and valuable information on the Ottoman Empire during this era. This period saw Ottoman society and elites prosper as they were able to accumulate wealth over multiple generations. Ottoman women played a prominent role in this dissertation and their role within the Empire's political culture is examined in detail. The city of Istanbul and Ottoman society take center stage along with Ottoman diplomacy as major topics covered in this work. Overall, this dissertation demonstrates the length to which this period in Ottoman history has been under researched and to what extent it is one of the more interesting periods in the history of the Ottoman Empire.

Keywords: Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa, Ishak Ağa, Louis XV, Comte des Alleurs, Comtesse des Alleurs, Esma Sultan, Saliha Sultan, Melek Mehmed Paşa, Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, Adélaïde de France, Safiye Sultan, Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa, Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa, Moralı Beşir Ağa, Cafer Bey, Mahmud I, Osman III, Mustafa III, Abülhamid I, Ottoman diplomacy, Ottoman political culture, Ottoman marriages, Ottoman women, Janissaries and fires, Ottoman society, Istanbul, 18th century press, Jean-Claude Flachat.

ÖZET

Zirveden Krize: Gazette de France'da (1740-1787) Nizam-ı Kadim'in Son Yarım Yüzyılı ve Osmanlı Toplumu

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Doktora, Tarih Bölümü

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Bu tez, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu tarihinin son zirve noktası olan 1740-1787 dönemine odaklanmaktadır. Tez, Fransız monarşisinin resmi süreli yayını Gazette de France'ı ilgili dönemde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu hakkında yeni ve değerli bilgiler bulmak için ana kaynak olarak kullanmaktadır. Bu dönemde, Osmanlı toplumunun ve seçkinlerinin, birden fazla nesil boyunca servet biriktirebildikleri için zenginleştiği görülmektedir. Bu tezde Osmanlı kadınları önemli bir rol oynamış ve İmparatorluğun siyasi kültürü içindeki rolleri ayrıntılı olarak incelenmiştir. İstanbul şehri ve Osmanlı toplumu Osmanlı diplomasisi ile birlikte bu çalışmada ele alınan başlıca konular olarak merkezde yer almaktadır. Genel olarak, bu tez, Osmanlı tarihi içinde bu dönemin ne denli az araştırıldığını ve Osmanlı İmparatorluğu tarihinde bu dönemin ne denli ilginç bir dönem olduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa, Ishak Ağa, Louis XV, Comte des Alleurs, Comtesse des Alleurs, Esmâ Sultan, Saliha Sultan, Melek Mehmed Paşa, Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, Adélaïde de France, Safiye Sultan, Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa, Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa, Moralı Beşir Ağa, Cafer Bey, Mahmud I, Osman III, Mustafa III, Abdülhamid I, Osmanlı diplomasisi, Osmanlı siyasi kültürü, Osmanlı evlilikleri, Osmanlı Kadınları, Yeniçeriler ve yangınlar, Osmanlı Toplumu, İstanbul, 18. yüzyıl basını, Jean-Claude Flachat.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

1.1 The Year 1787 a Turning Point in Ottoman and French History

The year 1787 was the start of the end *Nizâm-ı Kadîm* or the Ancien Regime of the Ottoman Empire with the start of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1787-1792 and the accession of Selim III in 1789. Coincidentally in February 1787 Louis XVI and Calonne his *contrôleur-général*, Finance Minister, presented their financial and institutional reforms to the *Assemblée des Notables*. The Notables would reject these financial reforms and so prevent the French monarchy from effectively tackling its bankruptcy, which would start the series of political events that would lead to the French Revolution in 1789.¹ The fact that both the Ottoman Empire and France were on the brink of major changes that would both fundamentally alter the direction of their respective histories at

¹ William Doyle, *The Oxford History of the French Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 71-72.

around the same time was pure coincidence and also reflected a larger trend as will be discussed further below. This dissertation is an examination of the half century before the beginning of this new era that would completely change the nature of both states. Thus the period of 1740-1787 is the last half century of the traditional state of the Ottoman Empire and of the French monarchy before they changed into new states and began to face new problems, the period of 1740-1787 was the calm before the storm. And whereas a sense of normalcy would return to most of Europe after 1815, the Ottoman Empire would continue to struggle with these new realities and problems that it faced until the emergence of Tanzimat in 1839.

1.2 The Objective of this Dissertation

This dissertation aims to examine Ottoman history between 1740-1787, from the aftermath of the Treaty of Belgrade after 1739 to the start of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1787. The Treaty of Belgrade ushered in a new era in Ottoman history when the Ottoman Empire did well and was in an overall good state, which lasted until the start of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774, which changed everything. Between 1740-1768 life in the Ottoman Empire and the state of the Empire itself was at one of the high points of its history, with the 22 years prior (1718-1740) also a good period in its history. It was an era in which the Ottoman Empire was respected and still feared throughout Europe, in which the Empire itself willingly increased its interactions with Europe, and it was a period that was overall relatively safe and lacking in major violence. The war of 1768-1774 changed everything and brought an end to this calm period of the Empire's history

and arguably brought an end to the relative peace and security that had previously existed within the Ottoman Empire borders, as a new kind of violence emerged during the Russo-Ottoman war of 1768-1774, that brought the empire into a major crisis. This crisis led to the emergence of new kinds of men both at the centers of power and in the provinces, like Cezayirli Gazi Hasan Paşa, who emerged as the most dominant of these new kinds of men for the period of 1774-1787.

This author does not care for the “decline” theory of the Ottoman Empire for a multitude of reasons, but simply put, it is a wrong analysis of the Ottoman Empire and its history, as Ottoman history, like Chinese or French history, is not linear but in fact has multiple high and low points. The “decline” theory also distracts Ottoman historians from examining the details of a particular period in time for what they were, instead focusing on trying to pursue ways that certain narratives like the “decline” theory can be proven or disproven. The goal of this dissertation is to bring life into the Ottoman Empire and Ottoman society between 1740-1787, the period is in itself interesting and in great need of examination for what it was and not what it could have been. History is a great field of study as those who study it have the opportunity through research of having an idea or a picture of what life was like in a different era and a different part of the world. The Ottoman Empire in the 18th century, like most of the world of that era, was fundamentally different from the “modern” world, the conception of things were completely different, and history should be about discovering what life was like for those who lived in different eras.

Thus the simplest goal of this dissertation is to do exactly that and show various aspects of 18th century Ottoman society along with analyzing different political and

cultural elements of that era. This author was able to do so thanks to the *Gazette de France*, which served as his main source for the period, and as the readers will find out, provided extensive coverage of the Ottoman Empire's political elites, but also gave glimpses of Ottoman culture(s) and its political culture, among other things, during the period in question. The main argument(s) of this dissertation will be discussed later after the *Gazette de France*, its history, and some of the other sources used for this dissertation have been examined. The review of the French press of the 18th century is also done in order to provide guidelines and ideas for other Ottoman historians or potential historians to use in the future.

1.3 The Origins of this Dissertation

The author of this dissertation had first heard of early modern gazettes during the first few years of his dissertation as he was researching the topic of silver flows and the Ottoman Empire, after he had read several chapters from Michel Morineau's *Incroyables Gazettes et fabuleux métaux*. Morineau's book is one of the most important books on silver flows in the Early Modern Era, his work changed the narrative on silver flows by mostly showing the errors of previously accepted pioneering works like those of Earl Hamilton and Pierre Chaunu. What makes Morineau's work relevant to this dissertation was that he had used Dutch gazettes as his primary sources on determining the silver flows between the Americas and Europe. This author had initially not thought much about gazettes as a possible source for Ottoman history, but it stayed in his mind. A few years later, when he had decided to change topics from the Ottoman Empire and silver

flows to Franco-Ottoman relations in the 18th century, the author had read an article by E. S. de Beer entitled “The English Newspapers from 1685 to 1702” in a compilation book titled *William III and Louis XIV: Essays 1680-1720 by and for Mark A. Thomson*. Combined with his recollection of Morineau’s work, this article would lead this author to start looking for 18th French gazettes, eventually discovering the *Gazette de France* a few months later, and everything from that point onward changed.

1.4 The Reliability of the *Gazette de France* as Compared to 18th Century Books

The press in the Early Modern Era was a different animal than what it would become in the 19th century, this dissertation’s main source was the French monarchy’s official paper, the *Gazette de France*. The gazettes of the early modern era are still a mostly underutilized sources and unsurprisingly have barely been touched by Ottoman historians. The 18th century French gazettes were heavily focused on foreign affairs as were most of the other gazettes throughout Europe during this period. Outside of the *Gazette de France*, which from its inception in 1631 until the end of 1761 was a weekly paper; all of the major French Gazettes by the 1740s were bi-weekly, with the *Gazette*² only becoming so in 1762.

The *Gazette de France* was picked by this author as the main source for his dissertation on the Ottoman Empire during the period of 1740-1787 because it was Versailles’ paper, meaning that it reflected the French monarchy’s official stance on

² *Gazette* will from this point onwards always refer to the *Gazette de France*.

things and on how, what, and who the French public should be made aware of. All of the material about the Ottoman Empire that was covered by the *Gazette* during this period was what the kings, their foreign ministers, and the ministry of foreign affairs wanted the French public to know or view about the Ottoman Empire. This becomes obvious when looking at other French gazettes of the era that provided more sensitive material or published less provable gossip about and coming from the Ottoman Empire. The complexity of the relationship between the *Gazette de France*, the French Monarchy, and the Ottoman Empire will be discussed in detail later in this introduction. It also goes without saying that the *Gazette* provides an enormous amount of information on the Ottoman Empire that the *Vakanüvis* and many other official Ottoman sources do not provide, the reasons for that will also be discussed later. The *Gazette* was however complimentary to Ottoman sources, as it frequently provided additional details covered by Ottoman sources. It also could provide additional details about the lives of powerful Ottoman figures, their relatives, and their protégés or patrons. And since the Ottoman Empire was simultaneously both a part of Europe but also excluded from Europe due to major religious and cultural difference, among many other differences, the *Gazette* provided a lot of random information on the Ottoman Empire that it frequently did not provide for other parts of Europe and that Ottoman sources often could overlook as they would have been too mundane for them. The weekly and later biweekly nature of the *Gazette* also made it a reliable source on Ottoman history that in the mid to long term could and did provide certain evidence of trends that were unique to the Ottoman Empire but also could show trends that had the Ottomans follow certain European wide trends as well. For example the Ottoman Empire seems to have followed the French and European

trend as it concerns climate and harvest during the 18th century, while it did not follow the increasing European trend of taking greater precautions as it concerns fires. It also seems to have followed the European trend of wealth accumulation among the elites during this period, but this topic still needs further research.

Many Ottoman historians like Virginia Aksan have frequently based their studies of the Ottoman Empire during the 18th century on books or works written by contemporary Ottomans and Europeans.³ These sources are useful and important for Ottoman and European history, but they are random sources, meaning that they were not and are not a consistent source. The 18th century gazettes were on the contrary consistent, they were depending on the specific gazette published on a weekly, biweekly, and even daily basis. In addition to the consistency of gazettes as potential sources for Ottoman or European history, they had a steadier readership than books did. They were cheaper and were a more practical source of information for people than books were, they could be accessed easily in cafes or libraries, and they frequently could be read in groups. Thus they are a more reliable source on what Europeans could know about the Ottoman Empire and they also demonstrated what members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should have known about the Ottomans. Baron de Tott's book gives Ottoman historians a lot of information and interpretations on the Ottoman Empire during the second half of the 18th century, but the amount of people who would have read his book was nothing compared to those who read the *Gazette*. The *Gazette* itself was also arguably a more reliable source than Tott's book as its bias, namely that it was Versailles' official paper, was more well known while the Baron de Tott's bias and ties to such figures as the comte

³ Ahmed Resmi Efendi's works and Baron de Tott's memoirs.

de Saint-Priest, who was accused by Vergennes of being a Russian agent,⁴ were not necessarily well known by the readers of his book. Thus as historians, we are faced with books whose authors' ties and biases are not always known, while those of the *Gazette* were known as it was whatever the French ministry of foreign affairs allowed it to cover. Thus the *Gazette* was overall a reliable source for Ottoman history, its consistency in its coverage of the Ottoman Empire as well as Versailles' censorship of sensitive news made the published material more likely to have been considered to have been true, whether it was really the truth is another matter, but the question can be asked for just about any sources.

1.5 The Potential Uses of the *Gazette de France* for Ottoman History

The *Gazette de France* is arguably a more useful source for Ottoman history than it was for French history,⁵ as it was not permitted to cover political news in France unless Versailles wanted it to. As a result French political news was only covered in terms of publishing frequently verbatim official declarations, the king's decrees or promulgations, or edicts. It also covered the appointment or dismissal of French ministers throughout the period, however it occasionally did not mention the dismissal of some of these ministers,⁶ and it usually described the dismissal of ministers as them offering up their resignation to the king. The most notable exception to the tendency of publishing news of ministers that had "offered their resignations" was the case of the duc de Choiseul and his cousin the

⁴ Comte de Saint-Priest, *Mémoires: Tome I* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1929), 183.

⁵ It had begun in the 2nd half of the 17th century.

⁶ For example this author could not find the news about the dismissal of the marquis de Monteynard as Secretary of War in January 1774.

duc de Praslin, who were both dismissed on Christmas Eve in 1770, in which the *Gazette* detailed how they were “asked” to resign from their posts and sent into exile on their lands outside of Paris.⁷ This explicitly reflected Louis XV’s disfavor towards his now former chief minister, who was now in complete disgrace, and it was a rejection of both his opposition to his own attempts at reforming the Parliaments, which would lead to the Maupeou Coup in 1771, and to Choiseul’s aggressive foreign policy. Choiseul besides supporting the Parliaments⁸ against the king’s reforms,⁹ had been leading a highly aggressive foreign policy that had saw France support and guide the Ottomans to war against Russia in 1768, and had also led to the Falkland Islands Crisis of 1770-1771.¹⁰ Choiseul had also opposed the new Official Mistress Madame du Barry (1768-1774), a bastard commoner of great beauty,¹¹ whose nomination as the king’s official mistress was viewed as disgraceful by many members of the nobility like Choiseul.¹²

Thus the *Gazette de France* and the 18th century European press, provide a lot of information on the Ottoman Empire for Ottoman historians; some of the information is already well-known like the Janissary riot of 1740,¹³ some of it provides greater details or context to certain events like the Janissary fires of 1750-1752,¹⁴ and some of it provide much more information on certain individuals like Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa

⁷ *Gazette de France*, 28 décembre 1770, 421-422.

⁸ In 18th century France the Parlements were the high courts of the kingdom, a place for justice and confirming the King’s laws and decisions.

⁹ Julian Swann, *Politics and the Parlement of Paris under Louis XV* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 322-323.

¹⁰ Geoffrey W. Rice, “British Foreign Policy and the Falkland Islands Crisis of 1770–1.” *The International History Review* 32, No. 2 (June 2010): 291-292.

¹¹ Michel Antoine, *Louis XV* (Paris: Fayard, 1989), 887-888.

¹² Swann, *Politics and the Parlement of Paris under Louis XV*, 320-321.

¹³ *Gazette de France*, 20 aout 1740, 404-405.

¹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 28 mars 1750, 145-146.

than Ottoman sources did.¹⁵ Some material help provide patterns for certain events or institutions like the *Kaptan-ı Derya*,¹⁶ some provide gossip from Istanbul about certain events,¹⁷ some provide completely new information on previously forgotten events like the various Janissary attempts against Seyyid Abdullah Paşa,¹⁸ or about some mysterious death of the Danish consul at Salonika.¹⁹ The *Gazette* also published a series of articles on Janissary stories,²⁰ on festivals held at the Austro-Ottoman border at Belgrade,²¹ on Ottoman, Austrian, and Russian mobilization in 1783,²² on the marriages of the children of *Sadrzams*,²³ the emergence of *Ayans* like Cezzâr Ahmed Paşa,²⁴ and on major figures behind the scenes like Ishak Ağa.²⁵

The *Gazette* treated the Ottoman Empire as simultaneously a European state, but also as a state fundamentally different from France. As a result of this and probably Versailles' knowledge that the Ottomans would not read the *Gazette*,²⁶ it had more leeway in what it could write about the Ottomans than it would with other states. In fact, the state one learns the least about while reading the *Gazette* is France itself. The combination of being able to write about more sensitive material on the Ottomans along with being viewed as being different from the French meant that the *Gazette* did cover a lot of cultural stories from the Ottoman Empire. For example, in one issue the *Gazette* covered the Kurds in an almost National Geographic style, stating who they were, where they

¹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 11 janvier 1762, 13.

¹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 12 juillet 1749, 349-350.

¹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 20 juin 1750, 289-290.

¹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 24 août 1748, 405-406.

¹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 30 novembre 1764, 383.

²⁰ *Gazette de France*, 9 novembre 1767, 383.

²¹ *Gazette de France*, 24 mars 1786, 101.

²² *Gazette de France*, 18 juillet 1783, 257.

²³ *Gazette de France*, 16 mai 1786, 161.

²⁴ *Gazette de France*, 28 avril 1777, 149.

²⁵ *Gazette de France*, 14 octobre 1752, 501.

²⁶ Although it is possible that the Porte would have started to translate European gazettes by the 1770s.

lived, and that they had a conflict with an Ottoman Paşa.²⁷ A similar dispatch also involved the French ambassadors' wife, the comtesse des Alleurs' visit to the then *Sadrizam* (1752-1754) Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa's harem to visit his wife there.²⁸ Such stories rarely occurred when the *Gazette* covered Spain, Tuscany, or Sweden; but the otherness of the Ottomans created interest among the French public to know more about them. For example, the Janissaries consistently get mentioned by the *Gazette*, and between 1763-1768 there were numerous Janissary stories published by it. Thus the *Gazette*, which largely focused on foreign affairs, ceremonies, and official acts of various states; has also emerged as an important source for the cultural history of the Ottoman Empire. In addition, since most contemporary Ottoman sources were official, like official French sources, they preferred to focus on elites and ceremonial events; but with the *Gazette* many Ottoman non elites cultural elements were covered by it because they were not fully Europeans to the French public. The *Gazette* also covered the impact that European wars and Ottoman wars or occupations like Cezayirli Gazi Hasan Paşa's of Egypt in 1786-1787 had on Istanbul, on the Ottoman economy, and on Ottoman society. Whether it be the Ottoman Empire selling livestock to Austria during the Seven Years' War,²⁹ the scarcity of goods at the end of 1758,³⁰ or the scarcity of Mocha coffee in Istanbul in 1787 leading to the Dutch to take advantage of this opportunity.³¹ This the *Gazette* provided a variety of news and information on the Ottoman Empire that often times could be viewed as too sensitive, unimportant, or too mundane for the Ottomans themselves to record them.

²⁷ *Gazette de France*, 29 septembre 1753, 457.

²⁸ *Gazette de France*, 31 mars 1753, 145-146.

²⁹ *Gazette de France*, 12 mars 1757, 123-124.

³⁰ *Gazette de France*, 27 mai 1758, 249-251.

³¹ *Gazette de France*, 22 juin 1787, 243.

1.6 A Brief History of the *Gazette de France* and Its Owners

In 1631 Théophraste Renaudot obtained a *privilège*³² on May 30th, on the same day he printed and published the first issue of the *Gazette de France*, which would continue uninterrupted until the French Revolution.³³ Renaudot owned and edited the *Gazette* until his death in October 1653, he was succeeded by his son Théophraste II Renaudot who ran it until his death in 1672.³⁴ Initially Renaudot's *Gazette* had contained a lot of news about France, but with the start of the Fronde in 1648, it began to provide less news about France itself, and under his successors it began to be silent on news coming from France.³⁵ Between 1672-1679 the *Gazette* continued to publish its weekly issues, but the ownership was in a bit of a mess due to inheritance issues, but finally in 1679 and with the intervention of Colbert,³⁶ the *Gazette* once again came under the family as the Abbé Eusèbe II Renaudot took it over in 1679. He owned and managed the *Gazette* between 1679 until his death in 1720 and in 1717 he managed to get the *privilège* of the *Gazette* passed on to his nephew the 1st marquis de Verneuil (1720-1747).³⁷ The marquis de Verneuil was Secretary of the Chamber and Cabinet of the King, and was the *Introducteur des ambassadeurs*.³⁸ He was the man that introduced both Yirmsekiz Mehmed Çelebi in 1720 and his son Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa in 1742 to Louis

³² *Privilège* literally means privilege, but in the 18th century French context, it meant the monopoly of a person to own the rights over an intellectual or commercial property. *Privilège* was usually bought by the person who received it, for example Flachat's book received a *privilège* or the right to be published and printed in France.

³³ Gilles Feyel, *L'Annonce et la nouvelle: La presse d'information en France sous l'ancien régime, 1630-1788* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2000), 46-47.

³⁴ Feyel, *L'Annonce et la nouvelle*, 437.

³⁵ Feyel, *L'Annonce et la nouvelle*, 435-436.

³⁶ Feyel, *L'Annonce et la nouvelle*, 437-438.

³⁷ Feyel, *L'Annonce et la nouvelle*, 439.

³⁸ The man who introduced ambassadors to the king of France.

XV.³⁹ Thus the owner of the *Gazette*, had personally met both 18th century Ottoman ambassadors to France prior to the reign of Selim III, and the *Gazette* highly positive coverage and continued coverage of Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa until his death in 1761 reflected the owner's own personal sensibilities towards the man.

In 1747 his son the 2nd marquis de Verneuil takes over the *Gazette de France*, however Louis XV's official mistress, the rising star in France, Madame de Pompadour wanted to give the *privilèges* to her protégé the Abbé Bernis, later Cardinal, and so Verneuil asked 200 000 French pounds for it from Bernis, which proved too much for him to pay.⁴⁰ But he did not want to get on Pompadour's bad side and so eventually sold the *Gazette* to the marquis d'Argenson's protégé Pierre-Nicolas Aunillon in February 1749,⁴¹ however his purchase of the *Gazette* completely ruined him and so he lost his hold on it by May of 1751.⁴² The *privilège* of the *Gazette* was then purchased by Rabiot de Meslé and Le Bas de Courmont,⁴³ who both played a key role in spreading the *Intelligenzblätter* model of printed advertisements in France,⁴⁴ and they established at the same time the *Annonces, Affiches, et Avis divers* (1751-1782),⁴⁵ and became responsible for establishing printed advertisement in most cities of France by 1757.⁴⁶ The *Gazette* itself began to have advertisement at the end of the last pages of each issue from April 5th 1762,⁴⁷ when it had become a more modernized and a biweekly paper.

³⁹ *Gazette de France*, 15 janvier 1742, 26.

⁴⁰ A. Boislisle, *Lettres de M. de Marville, lieutenant-général de Police, au Ministre Maurepas (1742-1747): Tome I* (Paris: H. Champion, 1905), 205.

⁴¹ Feyel, *L'Annonce et la nouvelle*, 439-440.

⁴² Feyel, *L'Annonce et la nouvelle*, 440-441.

⁴³ Feyel, *L'Annonce et la nouvelle*, 663-664.

⁴⁴ Printed weekly to multiple times a week advertisement.

⁴⁵ <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k74610b/f2.image>

⁴⁶ Feyel, *L'Annonce et la nouvelle*, 665.

⁴⁷ *Gazette de France*, 5 avril 1762, 125.

In 1761 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the Duc de Choiseul purchased the *privilège* of the *Gazette de France* from Meslé, who had become its sole owner, and in the following year it began to implement many of the reforms that he had recommended to make for the *Gazette*. The most notable of the reforms to the *Gazette* was that it went from being 12 pages to 4 long, however the writing was much smaller and denser, and it became a biweekly paper. In addition it started to put advertisement at the end of each issue of the *Gazette* and starting on April 1st 1765, the *Gazette* began to publish a table of French stocks at the end of each issue.⁴⁸ Therefore from approximately 1765 until 1787, the *Gazette's* standard issue would be 4 pages long, with the last page usually having news from Versailles, followed from Paris, then the table with French stocks, and then at the very end advertisement. Another of Meslé's reforms was to try to get the intendants,⁴⁹ French ambassadors, and French consuls to send interesting news to the *Gazette*.⁵⁰ Overall throughout the period of 1740-1787 the various owners of the *Gazette* were very close to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which eventually purchased it in 1761. The closeness of the *Gazette* to that ministry should never be forgotten when reading, as most of its sources came from it, and most of the censors of the *Gazette* had ties to that ministry.

1.7 The Editors and Correspondents of the *Gazette de France*

⁴⁸ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} avril 1765, 104.

⁴⁹ The main administrators of the provinces in France, but they were not the governors.

⁵⁰ Feyel, *L'Annonce et la nouvelle*, 746-747.

The Renaudot family by the 1st marquis de Verneuil had moved up into a much higher and more prestigious noble status, which resulted in him and his son no longer being active in the affairs of the *Gazette*, and thus leaving its writing to a chief editor. Previously there had been editors of the *Gazette*, but from 1718 onward it was the editor-in-chief who was in charge of the *Gazette* and its day to day affairs.⁵¹ Between 1718-1732 there was Jean Hellot as chief editor, then it became Sainte-Albine between 1733-1749, briefly between 1750-1751 there was under the ownership of Aunillon another chief editor,⁵² but Sainte-Albine was appointed chief editor in 1751 by Meslé and stayed in that post until his retirement at the end of September 1762, which the *Gazette* announced in its rubric from Versailles.⁵³ Sainte-Albine would have been responsible for the *Gazette*'s coverage of the War of the Polish Succession (1733-1735) and the Russo-Austrian-Ottoman War of 1735-1739 both before the period of this dissertation. Major events covered under the period of this dissertation that Sainte-Albine was in charge of editing and also partially censoring were the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748), the Persian-Ottoman War of (1743-1746), the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), along with smaller events like the Paşa of Rhodes Incident (1748-1751) or the Maltese-Ottoman Incident of 1760-1762. Sainte-Albine was the chief editor of nearly all of the years in which the *Gazette* was only a weekly paper between the years 1740-1761, that was covered in this dissertation. Like the Marquis de Verneuil, Sainte-Albine was close to Versailles and his editorship of the *Gazette* was meant to be complementary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and it was as a result an extension of that ministry.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Feyel, *L'Annonce et la nouvelle*, 452.

⁵² Feyel, *L'Annonce et la nouvelle*, 650.

⁵³ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} octobre 1762, 370.

⁵⁴ Feyel, *L'Annonce et la nouvelle*, 442.

The *Gazette*, like nearly all 18th century gazettes before the French Revolution, did not publish the names of the editors, authors, correspondents, or contributors to the paper. Everything was anonymous unless the *Gazette* made an announcement about changes to the editors or to new mailing addresses, and information on the correspondents were almost never given by the *Gazette*. However there are occasional indications of whom some of the correspondents would have been. In the *Mercure de France*'s coverage of Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's embassy to France of 1741-1742, it mentioned that the *Mercure* had a correspondent named Desroches, who was the First Secretary of the French embassy in Istanbul under the French ambassadors Jean-Baptiste d'Andrezel (1724-1726) and the marquis de Villeneuve (1728-1741), from about 1724 until his death in 1734.⁵⁵ Additionally the *Gazette* wrote a rubric from Istanbul that was published on March 31st 1753, in which the comtesse des Alleurs, the wife of the French ambassador, visited the wife of the current *Sadrazam* Çorlulu Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa (1752-1755).⁵⁶ Obviously this later story came directly from the French embassy and was either written by the comte des Alleurs himself to the French minister of Foreign Affairs, the marquis de Saint-Contest (1751-1854), or by his First Secretary.

Thus a large portion of the news published by the *Gazette* was from the French embassy in Istanbul, besides by 1762 when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had bought the *privilège* to the *Gazette*, most of the news published by it came directly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs itself.⁵⁷ Besides the French embassy in Istanbul, most of the news about Syria during the war would have come from the various French consulates

⁵⁵ *Mercure de France*, Juin 1742: second volume, 966.

⁵⁶ *Gazette de France*, 31 mars 1753, 145-146.

⁵⁷ Censer, *The French Press in the Age of Enlightenment*, 25.

and vice-consulates in the region, so in 1772 the *Gazette* reported from Alexandria (Iskenderiye) on the expulsion of Abu al-Dhahab by Bulutkapan Ali Bey al-Kabir from Cairo. The French consul or his staff in Alexandria (Iskenderiye) would have written this story and sent it to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which would have prepared sections for the *Gazette* to publish.

Besides its own sources, the *Gazette* like all 18th century periodicals, would have borrowed rubrics or stories from other periodicals of that era. For Ottoman related news, the rubric would have been published in another European city like Hamburg, Frankfurt, Vienna, Warsaw, or Saint Petersburg to name the most common ones. This usually meant that either the French embassy there sent the Ottoman related news to France or the *Gazette* simply reproduced a rubric from a local gazette. Usually Ottoman news from Hamburg and Frankfurt came from other local papers, while those of Vienna, Warsaw, and Saint Petersburg could be both, but usually were more likely to be from the French embassy there than from local periodicals.

1.8 The Format and Rubrics of *Gazette de France*, and its Missing Pages between 1740-1787

The *Gazette* was a weekly paper that was 12 pages long between 1740-1761, this was a highly outdated format as all of its competitors like the *Courrier d'Avignon*, the *Gazette d'Amsterdam*, the *Gazette d'Utrecht*, or the *Gazette de Leyde* were all biweekly by this point in time. The *Gazette* only became biweekly in 1762 when the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs bought its privilege, which it published on Mondays and Fridays until the year 1779 when it was published on Tuesdays and Fridays, which it announced on the 25th of December 1778.⁵⁸ The *Gazette*'s new biweekly format led to its consistent coverage of yearly births, deaths, and marriages in France, Great Britain, Denmark, German kingdoms, Austria, Sweden and as time went on in most of Italy, Spain, and even Russia, which were usually published every year between the months of December to March. In addition to statistics on population, statistics on shipping, most notably on ships travelling through the Strait of Sund, one of the main entrances to the Baltic Sea between Denmark and Sweden, were recorded with regularity during this period along with other statistics. The *Gazette* also regularly covered English stocks during most of this period, unfortunately Dutch stocks were not covered regularly by the *Gazette*. As a reader of the *Gazette* one could see what the impact of wars, financial crises, or other events had on the English stocks during this period. The best example was the Jacobite uprising led by the Stuart candidate to the English throne, Prince Charles Edward Stuarts who arrived in Scotland in 1745 and started the rebellion on August 19th, which the *Gazette* reported on the 18th of September.⁵⁹ The *Gazette* published English stocks from August 13th 1745, they were worth in sterling pounds the following: 108 and $\frac{3}{4}$ for the South Sea Company, 145 and $\frac{1}{8}$ for the Bank of England, 180 for the East India Company, and 110 and $\frac{1}{2}$ for the Annuities.⁶⁰ The impact of the Jacobite rebellion led by Prince Charles Stuart had a major impact on the stocks as by November 5th 1745 they had fallen to: 99 and $\frac{5}{8}$ for the South Sea Company, 138 and $\frac{1}{2}$ for the Bank of England, 172

⁵⁸ *Gazette de France*, 25 décembre 1778, 477.

⁵⁹ *Gazette de France*, 18 septembre 1745, 479-481.

⁶⁰ *Gazette de France*, 28 août 1745, 447.

and ¼ for the English East India Company, and 104 and ¼ for the Annuities.⁶¹ Interestingly, Prince Charles Edward's failed invasion of Scotland proved extremely popular in France, which made his expulsion from Paris, due to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, both difficult and strongly opposed by large segments of the Parisian populace.⁶²

The *Gazette* proved to be an even more useful source for Ottoman history, in fact as this dissertation will demonstrate, they are a crucial source for Ottoman history during the period between approximately 1650-1839. The change from weekly to biweekly proved to have been of an enormous value to this author and to Ottoman history, as its coverage of the Ottoman Empire became much more consistent, regular, and reliable. It started to provide longer "human interest" stories, that frequently involved the Janissaries, doctors, and events that occurred in Istanbul or other parts of the empire. Ceremonial elements would continue to be important in the *Gazette's* coverage of the Ottoman Empire during the years 1762-1787, but they never took up the amount of space that they previously had taken between 1740-1761. Instead the most consistent stories or rubrics on the Ottomans in the *Gazette's* was its coverage of the *tevcihat*, the appointments and dismissal of Ottoman officials throughout the period in question.

Throughout the entirety of the period 1740-1787, the *Gazette's* coverage of the Ottoman Empire was at its lowest during the peaks of European or French wars like the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748), the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), and after 1778 when France joined the American War of Independence (1775-1783). Thus peace times were when Ottoman news were at their peak and when long rubrics giving detailed

⁶¹ *Gazette de France*, 20 novembre 1745, 595-600.

⁶² Farge, *Dire et mal dire*, 233-234.

information on Ottoman society were published, thus periods like 1748-1756, 1763-1768, 1776-1778, 1783-1787 saw increased coverage of the Ottoman Empire. Naturally, the peak of Ottoman news in the period of 1740-1787 was during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 and the aftermath of the Ottoman war in Syria between 1774-1776. The Ottoman news during this period increased to unheard levels, the period of 1768-1774 by itself may have provided more Ottoman news than the 1740s and 1750s combined. The details on Ottoman military preparations, campaigns, logistics, military results, along with the state of the Ottoman capital and Izmir were published in great detail that is quite shocking as some the information provided would have been considered today as being close to “top secret information.” Although by the time they were published, this information would have been viewed as no longer being “top secret” as the military situations would have changed, but for example the amount of soldiers within both the Ottoman and Russian armies and navies were stated multiple times per year during the war. The only reasons why there were increasingly less details about the battles and Ottoman military movements was due to Versailles’ censorship as a result of Ottoman defeats or poor military conditions. Versailles clearly wanted the Ottomans to look good, when they could not do so as was the case for the Battle of Çeşme and Kartal in July and August 1770 respectively, then the *Gazette* provided the barest of details possible, often its first rubric on such battles would have it appear as an inconclusive battle. This was in sharp contrast to its coverage of 1769, which saw it give great details to the Ottoman fortress of Hotin repulsion of an initial Russian attack, with the *Gazette* even publishing a French translation of the Ottoman statement⁶³ on what was a very minor victory.⁶⁴

⁶³ See Figure 2.

⁶⁴ *Gazette de France*, 17 juillet 1769, 229.

Overall the regularity and the amount of information covered by the *Gazette* on the Ottoman Empire was astounding, especially after 1761. The period in Ottoman history from approximately 1640 to 1839 has the potential to become significantly better understood if Ottoman historians start to read the gazettes on a regular basis along with reading Ottoman sources.

18th century French gazettes did not follow 20th and 21st century models and formats, for one there were no authors to any of the writings, unless an excerpt from a letter was published, and frequently these did not have authors. The headline was the city and the date from which an article was written, and these articles will be called rubrics from this point onward. The rubrics were frequently written weeks and/or month(s) from the issue that they were published in, for example the 53rd and last issue of 1740 published a rubric from Hamburg dating from December 15th 1740, stating that Prussian troops had by the orders of Frederick II gone into Silesia.⁶⁵ The *Gazette* was able to report on events happening in Silesia after two weeks of it happening, and this was urgent news as it was the start of the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1787). Thus reading the *Gazette* helps historians become familiar with the difference between our flow of time and the flow of time of the 18th century. The speed of news and gossip in the 18th century was much slower than it is today, but as time went on through the years between 1740-1787, news began to spread and be published more quickly. This was a result of the combination of the increased frequency of a *Gazette*'s publication, another factor was the rise of something resembling the "public sphere," or the increased interest of the French and European population in news from across the continent. Literacy also increased

⁶⁵ *Gazette de France*, 31 décembre 1740, 635-636.

throughout the 18th century, further increasing demand for news, incentivizing the rise of new publication, which quickly expanded in the second half of the 18th century, at least as it concerns the French gazettes, journals, and other papers. Finally the improvements of roads throughout Europe, along with increased maritime trading and transportation led to news spreading quicker by 1787 than it had in 1740.

There are a few pages missing from the *Gazette* between 1740-1787 that the author was unable to find on <https://gallica.bnf.fr/> and other sites that have the *Gazette de France*. The last two pages, pages 630-631, of the year 1742 were missing. In the year 1769 the second page from the 68th issue or page 276 was missing. The entire first issue for the year of 1780 was missing, which was a total of 6 pages, and pages 370-371 of the 75th issue of the year 1787 were also missing. In total some 11 pages were missing from the over 25 000 pages that made up the *Gazette de France's* entirety between the years 1740-1787.

1.9 The *Gazette de Leyde* and the *Courrier d'Avignon*

There were multiple French language gazettes throughout the 18th century, too many to discuss in detail here, so the *Gazette de Leyde* and the *Courrier d'Avignon* will be the two gazettes discussed in this section.⁶⁶ By 1740 both the *Courrier d'Avignon* and the *Gazette de Leyde* were biweekly, in contrast to the *Gazette de France* which only became a biweekly paper in 1762. The *Gazette de Leyde* was picked because it emerged

⁶⁶ See Figure 1 for a map of all the French language gazettes printed outside of France.

as the reference among the French language Gazettes during the 1770s and the 1780s,⁶⁷ its independence as compared to its rivals enabled it to publish more critical material on the French monarchy and other states during this era. The *Gazette de Leyde* was published in Leyden in the Netherlands, as only the *Gazette de France* had the authority or *privilège* to be published and printed in France, this was typical of the French press in the 18th century. It was founded in 1677 by a Huguenot named Jean Alexandre de la Font,⁶⁸ and it was banned from publication in the Netherlands by the Batavian Republic at the behest of the French Revolutionary government in 1798, the first ban on it since the 17th century.⁶⁹ Its independent position as compared to its Dutch French language gazette competitors and the *Gazette* enabled the *Gazette de Leyde* to cover political issues in France,⁷⁰ which as stated previously the *Gazette* could not do. Like all French language papers of the 18th century, its main market was France, however unlike many of its rivals it did have a sizable reading public outside of France, and it may even have been read in Istanbul during the 1780s.⁷¹ In fact by the 1790s, the *Gazette de Leyde*, the *Gazette de Cologne* and the *Courrier du Bas-Rhins* came to Istanbul on a somewhat regular basis.⁷² There is a strong possibility that the Porte had the *Gazette de Leyde* translated in the 1780s, however the author cannot definitively state that that was the case. Its coverage of the Ottoman Empire seems to have been mostly the same as the *Gazette d'Amsterdam*

⁶⁷ Jeremy D. Popkin, *News and Politics in the Age of Revolution: Jean Luzac's Gazette de Leyde* (London: Cornell University Press, 1989), 8-9.

⁶⁸ French Protestant that would have been opposed to the regime of Louis XIV.

⁶⁹ Popkin, *News and Politics in the Age of Revolution*, 244.

⁷⁰ Jeremy D. Popkin, "The Gazette de Leyde and French Politics under Louis XVI," in *Press and Politics in Pre-Revolutionary France*, eds. Jack R. Censer and Jeremy D. Popkin (London: University of California Press, 1987), 77-78.

⁷¹ Popkin, *News and Politics in the Age of Revolution*, 7-8.

⁷² Pascal Firges, *French Revolutionaries in the Ottoman Empire: Diplomacy, Political Culture, and the Limiting of the Universal Revolution, 1792-1798* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 140-141.

and other French language Dutch papers of the era as their sources were the same.⁷³ And based on Pierre Rétat's work, the *Gazette de Leyde* like its Dutch competitors increasingly normalized the Ottoman Empire and Ottoman terms, whereas in the 1720s the Sultans were a kind of obscure figure, by the 1770s the Sultans had become "accessible" or more human.⁷⁴

The *Courrier d'Avignon* is examined in greater detail as it was along with the *Gazette de France*, the main gazette of Southern France, which was the region of France with the most ties to the Ottoman Empire. It was published and printed in Avignon a Papal enclave in Southern France surrounded by the kingdom of France, similarly to the Netherlands and Switzerland, it was a center of gazette and book production outside of the jurisdiction of the kingdom of France. In 1733 it was created by the printer Charles Giroud and the author and writer François Morénas, with the former involved in getting the okay from Versailles and a very favorable agreement with France's postal system which made the *Courrier d'Avignon* the second cheapest gazette in France after the *Gazette de France*.⁷⁵ Morénas played an important role in making the *Courrier d'Avignon* fairly popular at inception, and was editor in chief between 1733-1742, and 1750-1768.⁷⁶ The *Courrier d'Avignon* had a large readership in Versailles, Paris, Rome, but its main readership was located in the following cities: Lyon,⁷⁷ Marseilles, Grenoble,

⁷³ Pierre Rétat, *La Gazette d'Amsterdam: Mirroir de l'Europe au XVIIIe siècle* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2001), 247.

⁷⁴ Rétat, *La Gazette d'Amsterdam*, 253-255.

⁷⁵ R. Moulinas, *Imprimerie, la librairie et la presse à Avignon au XVIIIe siècle* (Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, 1974), 302-303.

⁷⁶ Moulinas, *Imprimerie, la librairie et la presse à Avignon au XVIIIe siècle*, 316.

⁷⁷ The second biggest city in 18th century and the primary center of the contraband in books, gazettes, and other printed materials due to its proximity to Geneva.

Aix, Toulouse, Montpellier, and in the provinces of Provence and Languedoc as whole.⁷⁸ Contrary to the *Gazette*, the *Courrier d'Avignon* contained a large amount of gossip in its rubrics, this makes it both a potentially very useful source for Ottoman history of the 18th century and a source that historians should be careful with. Its use of gossip is very useful as a lot of the gossip on the Ottoman Empire came from Istanbul and the various communities that inhabited the Ottoman capital, however it is very difficult to judge the reliability of some of the news that was published in the *Courrier d'Avignon*. The *Gazette* and the *Gazette de Leyde* were both overall much more reliable than the *Courrier d'Avignon* as sources on the Ottoman Empire, but a lot of the “juiciest” material on the Ottomans would have come from the *Courrier*. Much like the *Gazette de Leyde* and most 18th century French languages gazettes, the *Courrier d'Avignon* was seized and disbanded during the French Revolution in 1793, even though it had surprisingly been a pro French Revolution paper.⁷⁹

This section briefly examined the *Gazette de Leyde* and the *Courrier d'Avignon* because they are the two 18th century French language gazettes that can be the most useful for Ottoman historians after the *Gazette de France* itself. These papers like almost all 18th century gazettes, including the *Gazette de France*, frequently borrowed or copied the same rubrics from each other. For example the *Gazette de Leyde*'s coverage of Saliha Sultan, one of the powerful sisters of Mustafa III and Abdülhamid I, and her marriage to

⁷⁸ Moulinas, *Imprimerie, la librairie et la presse à Avignon au XVIIIe siècle*, 361.

⁷⁹ *Courrier d'Avignon*, 12 octobre 1779, 344-345.

the *Sadrazam Koca Ragıp Mehmed Paşa* in April 1758 was nearly identical to the *Gazette's* coverage of the same issue.⁸⁰

Any Ottoman historian wishing to examine the political culture of the Ottoman Empire should look at either of these two papers as a potential source for Ottoman history. But a potentially even richer source for Ottoman history during this period may be German and Italian gazettes, they have the greatest potential of any gazettes of the 18th century as sources of social and economic history of the Ottoman Empire due to their proximity and Germany was stated to have had the richest and possibly the most advanced press or news culture of the 18th century.⁸¹

1.10 The *Gazette de France* and the French Public

The *Gazette de France*, like all 18th century European gazettes is a unique source that makes it potentially much more valuable than both books and archival documents when it comes to the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Europe. The biggest reason why it was the case was because the *Gazette* and other 18th century periodical show us what the French public was exposed to and could know about the Ottoman Empire. Who read the Baron de Tott's book, nobody really knows. Who read the *Gazette*? Thousands of Frenchmen every week, now did most of them read the rubrics on the Ottoman Empire, that can't be known, but they could if they wanted to. So the

⁸⁰ *Gazette de Leyde*. 23 mai 1758, 5. This gazette did not use numbers so the number 5 represents the 5th page of that issue, which was in the *Supplément* or additional news section. For the *Gazette's* coverage of the marriage see Chapter V..

⁸¹ Popkin, *News and Politics in the Age of Revolution*, 50-51.

Gazette is a very active source, it simultaneously gives the historian important information about the Ottoman Empire, while telling us that the French public was equally exposed to this information as we are. It tells us what the learned French public could know and it tells us what the Secretaries of Foreign Affairs and the *Premiers Commis*⁸² of the ministry of Foreign Affairs should have known about the Ottoman Empire at the time. So when the *Gazette de France* published a rubric in 1753 on Ishak Ağa feasting with Mahmud I during Kurban Bayramı, we know that somewhere between hundreds to thousands of Frenchmen would also have read this, and somewhere between a couple thousands to over tens of thousands of Frenchmen would have been exposed to this story as well. It told them and us that the French ministry of foreign affairs via its ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, considered Ishak Ağa to be an important figure, despite the fact that he was simply a *gümrük emini*, a post that would not have been considered particularly prestigious in French society. But the *Gazette* was telling the French public and us that in fact it was a position of power and wealth, and that some of the men who held that post mattered greatly and were of public interest to France and to Frenchmen.

The *Gazette de France* is not a one dimensional source like books and archival sources frequently were, it almost always tells us three things at the same time. The first thing that it tells us was information on the Ottoman Empire that is useful to know as Ottoman historians, and two that the French public at that time was just as exposed to this as we were, whether or not they read it or read it in detail is another story, and the same

⁸² Chief bureaucrats within the ministries of the Ancien Régime, in the 18th century there were usually between 2 to 3 at a time. These were the experts of the ministry, the men who wrote the instructions to ambassadors and provided context to their ministers about the various states and issues involved.

thing can always be said about books. The third thing that reading the *Gazette* tells us was what Versailles knew about the Ottoman Empire and what it wanted the French public to know about them and how they should be perceived.

1.11 The Reliability and the Importance of the *Gazette de France* as a Source for Ottoman History

The *Gazette de France* is a reliable source for Ottoman history for a multitude of reasons, but before talking about why it is specifically a reliable source, 18th century gazettes will be briefly discussed. European historians since the 19th century have used 18th century French language gazettes, and naturally non French language gazettes, for European and North American history. This author previously mentioned Michel Morineau who was able to trace silver and gold flows between the Americas and Europe in the early modern era by the use of French language Dutch gazettes. His work has become one of the foundational books on monetary history of the early modern era, if his use of the gazettes for trans-Atlantic history is valid, then using them for Ottoman history should be just as valid. In fact the *Gazette de France* covered the Ottoman Empire on a much more regularly basis than it did North America or anywhere else outside of Europe. Besides Morineau, other prominent European historians of the 18th century have used gazettes to provide greater details or context to the history of the era, so if the 18th century press is good enough for European and world history, then it should be good enough for Ottoman history.

The *Gazette* was Versailles' paper, which meant that its main source of news came from the French ministry of foreign affairs,⁸³ and so the majority of the rubrics published by it during this period came from Versailles itself. The ministry of foreign affairs was also responsible for the censorship of the *Gazette*, for Ottoman history this has become very useful as it meant that the *Gazette* could not really publish unfounded news about the Ottoman Empire as it could cause a diplomatic embarrassment for France if the Porte found out about its coverage. Thus the *Gazette* was famously dry when it covered the news, as being Versailles' official paper, it could cause diplomatic problems or make the king appear badly. This is one of the main reasons why French historians have criticized the *Gazette*, as it has often been found lacking as a source for French history. But this was not the case for the Ottoman Empire, since Versailles clearly had high regards for the Ottomans, which the *Gazette* reflected, it did cover it regularly and provided on a regular basis political news. From the 1760s onward it began to publish on a regular basis news stories about Ottoman social life and by the 1780s it was also doing so for Ottoman commercial life. The uniqueness or otherness of the Ottoman Empire also became an advantage in the *Gazette's* coverage of it and thus for its usability as a source for Ottoman history, because there was throughout the entire period a certain level of interest by the French public in knowing about the Ottomans and Ottoman society. This led to more detailed rubrics on Ottoman society and on social events that occurred in the Ottoman Empire then there would have been on similar stories from Germany. Thus one of the traditional handicaps of European sources, its warped view of the Ottoman Empire, becomes an advantage as it concerns the *Gazette*, as it provided information on the Ottomans that usually would not be viewed as news worthy for other European state.

⁸³ Jack R. Censer, *The French Press in the Age of Enlightenment* (London: Routledge, 1994), 25.

An additional reason why the *Gazette* was uniquely reliable is that it avoided using gossip in its rubrics on the Ottoman Empire. If it used gossip, then it made it clear for example the Janissaries started a fire in 1750 because of the dismissal of the Yeniçeri Ağası by the *Sadrizam* Divitdar Mehmed Emin Paşa. The *Gazette* usually implied that such actions were done by the Janissaries, it rarely definitively stated that they were the cause of the fires, only hinted at it being the reality. The other way that the *Gazette* would show its bias in a rubric would be if we used the example above, when it gave all of the details about the dismissal of the Yeniçeri Ağası by the *Sadrizam* Divitdar Mehmed Emin Paşa, stating in the same rubric that he was dismissed on let's say the 15th of July and on that night major fires broke out. Immediately as a reader the *Gazette* was pushing you into believing that the Janissaries were responsible for the fires without outright stating that they were. It could not outright state that the Janissaries had caused the fires as trouble could emerge if their faction had won and one of their members became *Sadrizam*, the ambassadors to Austria or Russia could then show Versailles' biased coverage against that faction. This is why it was unusually careful when it covered events both in the Ottoman Empire and in Europe, other French language periodicals were not official state papers and had no qualm in providing gossip and being openly hostile against a certain faction in Ottoman political life.

Thus all of the evidence points towards the reliability of the *Gazette* as a source for Ottoman history and contrary to its many French language rivals, the majority of its sources did come from the ministry of foreign affairs, and it had to be carefully in what it said when it came to the Ottomans or any other European state. This makes the *Gazette* an extremely reliable source as the majority of what it published would have been

considered as accepted news or accepted facts by the French public. Whether accepted news or facts by the French public about the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century was the reality in the Ottoman Empire is another question that all European sources of this era also have to be asked. All evidence points to it being a more reliable source than its rivals and many of the books or memoirs written on the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century.

The *Gazette* also provides a lot of information on the Ottoman Empire that official Ottoman sources frequently would avoid mentioning because they might be considered sensitive, like the circumstances surrounding the death of Seyyid Hasan Paşa in Diyarbakir in 1748. Ottoman sources might forget to mention certain pieces of information because they were viewed as too mundane, would an official for the Porte bother writing about Ottoman men at a festival in Semlin courting the local Christian women? Frequently what the *Gazette* covered is what official Ottoman sources covered, it however frequently gave additional details that the *Vakanüvis* might not have found to be particularly pertinent or not acceptable to write about because of the factional politics of the time. Thus the *Gazette*'s value is in the consistency of its coverage of the Ottoman Empire, which enables the reader to get a feel for the Ottoman Empire of that era, and if they read long enough they can find Ottoman patterns to certain reigns or eras, like Mustafa III's use of marriage during his reign. Since the *Gazette* also covered all of the major European capitals, it also exposed the similarities between Istanbul and these other cities, but also on how unique it was, namely in the scope of its fires and in danger of the Janissaries. It also helps historians find trends in Ottoman and European history, and frequently the Ottoman followed European wide trends during this era, like having bad harvests throughout the near entirety of the 1780s like the rest of Europe. One final note

on this issue is that the *Gazette* is also an important source on potential topics on Ottoman history, as this dissertation will demonstrate, it covered a plethora of different topics, which makes it a very useful source for thinking or coming up with new topics on Ottoman history.

1.12 Jean-Claude Flachat and his Memoirs *Observations sur le Commerce et sur les Arts*

Jean-Claude Flachat lived in Istanbul from around the end of 1741 until the end of 1755 or the start of 1756,⁸⁴ as the last political news that he provided in his book was about the execution of Silahdar Bıyıklı Ali Paşa and the appointment of Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa, which both occurred at the end of October 1755.⁸⁵ His patron between 1746 and 1752 was the *Kızlar Ağası* Moralı Beşir Ağa, who appointed him *Bezirganbaşı* at some point during this period, thus Flachat was an insider who had insider knowledge about Ottoman political, palatial, and commercial culture. He also lived a long time in the Ottoman Empire, and when he came back to France in 1756, he became a manufacturer and eventually his memoirs were published in France. His book desperately needs a Turkish translation as it provides a wealth of unique information on the Ottoman Empire and Istanbul during the mid 18th century, and as it will be demonstrated in one of the chapters, he gives ample information on the downfall and death of his patron Moralı Beşir Ağa in 1752. He was a biased source, some of his stories

⁸⁴ Jean-Claude Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce et sur les arts d'une partie de l'Europe, de l'Asie, de l'Afrique, et même des Indes Orientales: Tome I* (Lyon: Jacquenod Père & Rusand, 1766), 274.

⁸⁵ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 362-363.

about going to Istanbul from Austria were probably exaggerated, but when he gives detailed information about both the public and private celebrations under Mahmud I, it becomes clear that he talks from experience or from sources that were there. The biggest problem with Flachat as a source is he does not provide any dates, and so when he discusses certain events like fires, it is not clear which *Sadrazam* or year he is talking about. Besides this, one must be careful at how he interprets events as he was clearly partial and hostile towards certain figures. But the information that he provides about daily life in Istanbul both for men and women is of tremendous value as it will be seen in the chapter about Ottoman women.

Besides the *Gazette de France*, Jean-Claude Flachat's memoirs entitled *Observations sur le Commerce et sur les Arts*, was the most widely used primary source in this dissertation. It is a source that Ottoman historians have yet to fully utilize despite it being one of the most important and useful sources on Istanbul, its social, political, and commercial life during the 18th century. It was published in 2 volumes in 1766 with a *privilège* given to Flachat by Bertin,⁸⁶ the former contrôleur-général or minister of Finances from 1759-1763, who remained at the Conseil until his resignation in 1780. Bertin was a provincial like Flachat, and between 1763-1774 he was often informally called the 5th Secretary as he had with the blessing of Louis XV founded what we would call today,⁸⁷ at least in Canada, the Ministry of Agriculture and Industry. In addition, Bertin was the only minister that lost his post from 1760 to 1774 that was able to stay at the *Conseil* and not be exiled, he was an ally of Madame de Pompadour and possibly an

⁸⁶ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce et sur les Arts: D'une partie de l'Europe, de l'Asie, de l'Afrique, et même des Indes Orientales, Tomes I-II*. Lyon: Jacquenod père & Rusand Libraires, 1766.

⁸⁷ Since Louis XIV France had had 4 secretaries of State: Foreign Affairs, War, Navy, and the King's Household.

actual friend of Louis XV, together they would eventually founded sinology in France in.⁸⁸

Flachat was a merchant and entrepreneur, and his book contains a lot of information on agriculture and industry throughout Europe and including the Ottoman Empire. It received a *privilège* which meant that it had simultaneously the right to be published in France and it had royal approval, this meant that Louis XV via Bertin approved of this book and the way in which the Ottoman Empire was depicted. This is an important point as a *privilège* meant a royal endorsement and approval of the way things were being depicted in a printed and published source. Thus the ways in which Flachat described Istanbul and the Ottoman Empire were a reflection of the way Versailles saw these things and approved of it, for example the Baron de Tott's book did not receive a *privilège*, which meant that Versailles did not endorse the book and its description of the Ottoman Empire. So Flachat's book was widely used throughout this dissertation and is one of the primary sources on the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century that is in the greatest need for a Turkish translation.

1.13 Ottoman Historiography and the 18th Century Press

Although there have been a fair amount of Ottoman historians that have used 18th century European gazettes as a source for Ottoman history, few have systematically read the entirety of a year's publication of one of the gazettes. Ottoman historians have tended

⁸⁸ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 862-863.

sympathetic views towards Greek peasants in the 1770s, by the 1820s they some of them did. Thus there is an ironic twist that the French press in the 18th century may have been more neutral than the French press in the 19th century as it concerned their coverage of the Ottoman Empire.

1.14 The 18th Century in Ottoman Historiography

One of the plague's of Ottoman studies is the size of the Ottoman Empire's longevity, from the end of the 13th until 1922, which has made studying the history of this empire very difficult for historians. Naturally, like for most states, the most recent history has been most popular, namely from Tanzimat to the end of the Empire 1839-1922, with the Classical period and the early Post-Classical (combined together from approximately 1453 to 1640) being the second most popular period. The early period although highly popular still need further research, but the discrepancy between its popularity and scholarly works has to do with the overall lack of sources from this period as compared to all of the other eras. This has left the period from approximately 1640 until 1839 as the least studied and least understood in Ottoman history. Unsurprisingly this period has also been dominated by the study of the idea of "decline" and has often times been defined by vague generalities. This dissertation aims to examine the least studied and understood period of this era, namely the period between the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739 and the start of the Ottoman-Russo War of 1787-1792. It aims to combine major narrative or arguments with a plethora of details and questions, along with looking at many topics or

subjects that have remained largely understudied in all periods of Ottoman history. The *Gazette de France*, the main source of this dissertation has previously been used by very few Ottoman scholars, however its potential along with that of other 18th century gazettes as a source for Ottoman history has remained unused. The *Gazette* and other papers of the 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries have the potential to truly change the history of the Ottoman Empire from 1640-1839, they provide a plethora of information on the Ottoman Empire previously unimaginable to Ottoman historians. And they show us what European readers would have been exposed to as it concerned the Ottoman Empire.

One of the biggest problems with the Ottoman Empire's limited reading culture during the era of 1640-1839 was the limitations on what kind of writing material that could be written and preserved. Simply put, its inability to have a printing culture on a scale comparable to that of other parts of Europe prevented it from producing more unofficial sources or official sources aimed at examining non-official elements of Ottoman society. Although the *Gazette de France* contains less traces of oral culture, like political or cultural gossip, during the period of 1740-1787 than its competitors did, it still had some. The gazettes that did not have a *privilège* from the French monarchy like the *Gazette* did, contained a plethora of gossip from the cities it reported from. The *Courrier d'Avignon* could publish rumors and gossip because it was not the official paper of the French monarchy, and this is the biggest problem with Ottoman sources during this period, the majority were officially sanctioned sources. The more official a source was, the more careful it was in its telling of political events that occurred, the *Gazette* was no exception to this, most of the major political intrigues, infightings, and controversies that happened in 18th century France were not covered by the *Gazette*. Usually only official

edicts, laws, decisions, or the end results like the dismissal of a minister were published by the *Gazette*, but the reasons why these things happened or why they were published in the *Gazette* were never elaborated upon.

This brings us back to 18th century Ottoman sources, they were very similar to the *Gazette* as they often avoided discussing controversial issues because there would be major consequences for the author if they wrote something that could cause their dismissal or exile, or that of their patron. The limited reading culture of the Ottoman Empire prevented it from being the medium of controversial discussions, this was also partially true with France as well, as a result a lot of the controversial views and opinions of individual Ottomans would have been shared with another person verbally rather than in writing. Naturally, the French also did this in this time period, but some also shared their controversial or critical views in writing, a few Ottomans also did this near the end of the century like Ahmed Resmi Efendi, but men like him were the exception not the rule. For example, when an Ottoman ambassador wrote his *Sefaretname*, he usually wrote tersely and focused on ceremonial elements of the trip, the controversial elements like how a certain city or state might do certain things better than the Ottomans did, would have been shared verbally with their patrons. It is easier to prove that someone wrote something wrong, then proving that they said something wrong. This author had planned and still plans on systematically reading all of the *Vakanüvis* of this era, but he simply did not have the time to start reading them, as a result they are used sparingly. The author is fully aware of the problems of not having them widely used in this dissertation, he was not provided the time needed to complete this dissertation and is greatly disappointed by this.

1.15 Ottoman Historiography for the Period of 1740-1787

The period of 1740-1787 is one of the “dark ages” in Ottoman historiography, it is one of the least studied, usually overlooked for so called Lale Devri (1718-1730) or for the reign of Selim III (1789-1807), and has historically been used by historians of the Ottoman Empire to justify the “decline” theory. It is also a period in Ottoman history whose context is a bit more difficult to understand as it was an era in which Ancien Régime France played a central role in European culture and diplomacy. However the reigns of Louis XV and Louis XVI have only become mainstream periods of study by historians since the 1980s, a decade that would have seen the rise of English and the decline of French as a learned language in Turkey. Additionally, the Annales School’s primary focus on socio-economic history along with a large section of Ottoman historians has led to a lack of basic understanding to the major events that occurred in the Ottoman Empire during the period of 1740-1787. The combination of these factors, along with the difficulty in mastering Ottoman Turkish and fully understanding the Ottomans or certain segments of Ottoman society at any given period in Ottoman history prior to the reign of Abdülhamid II (1876-1909), has left the period of 1740-1787 obscure and misunderstood in Ottoman history. This can also be extended for the entire period between the death of Murad IV in 1640 to the start of the Tanzimat in 1839, with a few the exception of a few brief periods like the reign of Mustafa II (1695-1703), the so called Lale Devri (1718-1730), and the reign of Selim III (1789-1807), along with the events that led to the

accession of Mahmud II in 1808, are about the only periods that have received a certain amount of focused scholarly research. The remainder has received an okay amount of research, but this research has been too unfocused or spanned too long of a period to really give proper context to the era, the most guilty of these are series like the *Cambridge History of Turkey*.⁹² The third volume of that series is around 500 pages long, spans from 1603 to 1839, and has 20 chapters or articles; which means that the same popular periods are overrepresented like the first half of the 17th century. Additionally, a lot of the chapters in a book such as this, have an unintentional implicit sense of a timeless Ottoman Empire, meaning that the Ottoman Empire throughout the period of 1603-1839 did not necessarily change much, or that what is applicable for the Ottomans in the 1640s, was valid for them in the 1740s. Like its contemporaries in Europe and Asia, the Ottoman Empire greatly changed in the 17th and 18th centuries, their institutions may have kept the same names, but their roles, uses, importance all changed greatly. The Janissaries as an institution may have had the same name and the same official roles throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, but the reality was quite different and it changed throughout the period.

This author believes that series like the *Cambridge History of Turkey*, should follow the model of the same series but for China, the *Cambridge History of China* series, which has as of right now 17 volumes, had volumes published at different periods based on the available scholarly material. For example one of the first volumes of the series to be published was published in 1978 on 19th century China, while the volume on China's "Dark Ages" was published 40 years later in 2019. Although this may be an

⁹² This book is used as an example as it is a good example of what not to do, and there is no one author. It is better to criticize a group than an individual historian, as that historian is a person, whose best efforts should not be used against them.

extreme example, it is still better to write an in depth book on a specific period, than to write a general book on a relatively long period that only has concrete research for certain decades of the era in question.

1.16 Main Arguments

This dissertation's primary objective is bring life into and provide a lot of information, context, and trends to the period of 1740-1787, which has been too little studied by Ottoman historians. It also has the purpose of introducing 18th century gazettes to Ottoman historians so that they eventually start using this crucial source along with Ottoman sources, as it truly helps to fill in the gaps that Ottoman sources do not provide or cannot provide due to the political culture of the empire at the time.

This dissertation argues that the Ottoman Empire followed many of the European wide trends of the 18th century, whether it be related to climate and harvests, the makeup of the political elites, the emergence of tourism, the use of diplomacy as a non violent way to end potential problems, the political role that Ottoman women could and did have during this period. It also argues that as much as the Ottoman Empire did follow European wide trends during this period, there were certain issues or trends that made it unique. The danger of Ottoman cities as a result of the plague, major fires, earthquakes, and potential militia revolts and rebellions contrasted strongly with other European capitals like Paris where these things either never occurred or only happened on a small scale.

This dissertation demonstrates and argues that the Ottoman Empire from 1740 to 1787 underwent major changes as a result of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774, which began to change the makeup of the Empire and led it to crisis. The kinds of violence, like the war which emerged in Syria between 1771-1776, had previously not been seen throughout large sections of the Ottoman Empire since the conquest of Constantinople by Fatih Sultan in 1453. In other words, from the mid 16th until 1768, the Ottoman Empire like every other state experienced various forms of violence, but nothing compared to what it experience after the start of the war of 1768. This war led to the rise of powerful local figures, *Ayans*, who could ally among themselves and with a foreign power, in this case Russia, and successfully battle Ottoman forces. In fact it was only with the end of the war and Gazi Hasan Paşa's accession after 1774 that the Porte was able to restore power throughout most of the provinces that had seen an explosion of violence and war during the Russo-Ottoman War. However the start of another war in 1787 led to the unraveling of the Porte's successful reintegration of its various provinces.

Finally this dissertation puts a focus on a series of topics that Ottoman historians prior to recent years had little to say for this period. The Ottomans did effectively use diplomacy during the mid 18th century, they both used diplomacy like Europeans used it but they also used their own unique methods of diplomacy and diplomatic pressure. The Ottoman Empire in Istanbul did have a political culture that was both complex and compelling, in which the literate and illiterate participated in as did the Muslims and non Muslims. This period did see the rise of wealth accumulation among the Ottoman elites in Istanbul and it also saw an overall decline in the uses of *müsadere*, which never went away but was only truly used on figures that had been completely disgraced or executed.

The Muhsinzades, Ivazzades, Dürrizades, Melek Mehmed Paşa's and Silahdar Mehmed Paşa's families, among many more families all showed wealth accumulation over multiple generations. The war of 1768-1774 may have led to a temporary decline in these figures, but their familial wealth continued for many of them well into the 19th century.

Ottoman elite women played important and sometimes crucial roles within Istanbul's and some of the Ottoman provinces' political culture. The sisters of the Sultans of this period wielded a tremendous amount of influence, and had on average a second husband by the time that their brother's become the Sultan, which on average was at age 44 during this period. The Ottoman princesses simply had more life and networking experiences than their brothers had, they used both the female and male members of their respective networks to improve or maintain the status of their husbands and help advise their brothers. These networks naturally could be used to take down or try to take down the head of a rival faction as was the case with Moralı Beşir Ağa in 1752, and the relationship between Esma Sultan, Abdülhamid I's full sister, and Gazi Hasan Paşa is still not clear, other than the fact that her protégé İzzet Mehmed Paşa was his enemy and ultimately failed to keep himself in power for long.

This dissertation says a lot about the state of 18th century Istanbul and the dangers that its fires, the earthquakes, the plague, and the Janissary riots and rebellions that all could cause the destruction or devastation of large segments of Istanbul. The dangers that lurked for the inhabitants of the Ottoman capital was best illustrated during the *Kaymakamlık* of Melek Mehmed Paşa, the husband of Zeynep Sultan, which lasted from 1769 until the very start of 1774, and yet despite all of the violence that the city faced during this period, it actually fared much better than it could have as the Ottoman

authorities were able to supply the city throughout the entire war without coming close to facing famine. This was the product of the Ottoman capable administration but also of the favorable harvest and climate of the early 1770s, which like the rest of Europe would start to worsen from the mid 1770s onward.

Finally this dissertation provides glimpses into the lives of Ottomans and Europeans interacting with each other and their respective cultures, the 18th century saw the rise of tourism in Western Europe, the Ottoman Empire increasingly became a destination for tourists, most notably for some scholarly tourists. There were also some cases of Ottoman tourists traveling for leisure in Europe, just as there were cases of Ottoman and European migration. This dissertation is long and contains an enormous amount of information, which is due to this author's ambitious nature. The combination of all of these different topics and strands add up to an Empire which was at one of its many high points in its history, everything was going well for the Ottomans leading up to 1768, much like the rest of Europe, things were booming in the mid 18th century, but as time went on and the war of 1768-1774 started, things changed. The figures and institutions of power changed, and Egypt emerged as its own base of power that could once again challenge Istanbul and put up quite a fight. Luckily the Porte was always able to divide its *Ayans* and powerful local notables against each other as it did against Bulutkapan Ali Bey al-Kabir who fell out of power due to his former top lieutenant Abu al-Dhahab's betrayal in 1773. The period of 1740-1787 was one of the great eras in Ottoman history and it is deserving of much greater research by Ottoman historians.

1.17 Chapter Outlines

This introduction was the first chapter, Chapter II of this dissertation is on the Ottoman Empire's effective use of Diplomacy in the European fashion during the Reign of Mahmud I after the Treaty of Belgrade until his death in 1754. It argues that this period was a surprisingly innovative period in Ottoman diplomatic history with the Empire's cunning attempt at ending the Austrian War of Succession at the start of 1745 by offering its mediation. It had done so primarily because the Ottoman Empire was losing a lot of its customs revenues and the war had caused major inflation in the Ottoman capital. These two factors were hurting the Ottoman Empire's war efforts against Nader Shah during the Persian-Ottoman War of 1743-1746, which prevented the Ottomans from effectively fighting Nader Shah leading to a stalemate by the end of that war.

Prior to the Ottoman Empire's offer of mediation, Mahmud I had sent Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa as Ottoman ambassador to France between 1741-1742, which proved to have been quite possibly the most successful Ottoman diplomatic embassy to a European court during this period and possibly even from 1703 to 1789. He left an left in France and among the French elites an extremely positive view of the Ottomans, so much so that French elites even inquired about him during the later 1740s. Louis XV king between 1715-1774 would remain a firm believer in the Ottoman Empire's capability as a power capable to neutralize Russian power in Eastern Europe. This chapter also dealt with the Ottoman Empire during the era of the mid 18th century European wars, namely the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748) and the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). It also analyzed the important role that Ishak Ağa the *gümrük emini*, played in the Ottoman Empire during the reign of Mahmud I, as he played a key role in

both the *Ahidname* given to France in 1740 and in the Ottoman Empire's offer of mediation to the belligerent powers in 1745 during the Austrian War of Succession.

Chapter III is the reverse of Chapter II, as this chapter examines the Ottoman Empire's effective use of diplomacy from the Sublime Porte, in other words it analyzes and demonstrates how the Ottoman Empire was able to effectively get what it wanted when it faced embarrassing diplomatic issues during the period of 1740 to 1768. It focuses on the triangular relationship between the Ottoman Empire, Malta, and France, in which the Ottomans were able to make certain Maltese problems go away with minimum damages to its prestige by getting France to do its bidding for it. The Ottomans were ultimately able to get France to force Malta to release a regicide in Mustafa Paşa, the Paşa of Rhodes, something that was culturally taboo to do, because of Ottoman threats on their commercial relations. This chapter also examines a few cases, the most notable of which was the career of the traditional Ottoman corsair Cafer Bey, the man who was briefly Kapudan Paşa after the Battle of Çeşme and before Cezayirli Gazi Hasan Paşa took over that position. This chapter's main argument is that the Ottomans were effective at using the threat of violence to get European powers to do their bidding on the diplomatic stage.

Chapter IV is about the height of Mustafa III's reign between 1763-1769 and it examines key figures of his administration during this era. Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's *Sadrâzamlik* was the most notable element of this chapter, as he held an enormous amount of power and influence over his brother-in-law. His daughter's marriage to a prominent figure during this era is also discussed as it concerns wealth accumulation

among Ottoman elites during this period. It also examines the events that led to the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 from an Ottoman perspective.

Chapter V is on the major role that elite women played in the Ottoman Empire's political culture. Ottoman women were not simply passive figures who played no role in the political realm, which like in the rest of Europe was the realm of men. Much like Madame de Pompadour or the French Princess Madame Adélaïde who were able to influence powerful men, Ottoman Princesses such as Safiye Sultan and Esma Sultan were able to influence their brothers like Sultan Mahmud I and Sultan Mustafa III. Safiye Sultan played a key role in the downfall of the powerful *Kızlar Ağası* Moralı Beşir Ağa (1746-1752) in 1752, while Esma Sultan played an important role behind the scenes to the rise to power of her husband Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa during both of his terms in 1765-1768 and between 1771-1774 during the reign of her older brother Mustafa III. She also played an even bigger role during the reign of her full brother Abdülhamid I as she became one of the major power brokers of his reign, or at the very least during the early years of his reign. Other elite women played important roles in the Ottoman Empire, the Lady from Bergama became the center of a regional conflict in the region of Izmir, while the Lady from Konya played a key role in the downfall of an Ottoman official in Anatolia. This chapter also examines the role that the wife of an ambassador, the comtesse des Alleurs, wife of the French ambassador between 1747-1754, as she became one of his most effective weapons in establishing ties and alliances with powerful Ottoman women, who in turn could influence their husbands in the favor of France.

Chapter VI is about Istanbul during this time period and how it was the most dangerous city in Europe because of the combination of the various natural and human

disasters that literally plagued it. It discusses how these factors destabilized the Ottoman capital and how they were not as common or as dangerous in other major European cities during this period. Major European cities of this era never faced the challenges that Istanbul had, especially not at the frequency and at the extent that Istanbul had to face them. It then examines the *Kaymakamlık* of Melek Mehmed Paşa who was *Kaymakam* for most of the war between 1769 until the very start of 1774. The position of *Kaymakam* was extremely difficult during this period, but due to a series of circumstances like good climate and harvest, which will be discussed in the next chapter, enabled him to manage the situation fairly well. However Istanbul was faced with a lot of violence during the war, something it frequently also faced before and after wars too. This chapter is thus a more in depth look at the Ottoman capital and what made it unique in Europe, it also examines the rise of new kinds of violence that emerged in different parts of the Ottoman Empire during the war of 1768-1774. Ultimately this chapter's main argument is that Istanbul was the most dangerous city in Europe for reasons out of the control of the Ottomans themselves, which played a role in the lack of stable political culture of the city and among its elites.

Chapter VII is on the cultural and commercial relations between the Ottoman Empire and Europe during the period in question. It takes a look at Ottoman migrants to Europe and European migrants to the Ottoman Empire, like doctors or renegades. It deals with the topic of tourism between the Ottoman Empire and Europe, which was on the rise from both sides, with Carsten Niebuhr and Pierre-Joseph de Beauchamp two prime examples of scholarly tourists who traveled through the Ottoman Empire. The economic growth of the Danube as a major trading center and conduit for Austrian-Ottoman

commercial relations, especially after 1774, which also led to increased social interactions between Ottomans and Habsburg subjects, a lot of which took place in Belgrade and Semlin. There were also “true crimes” like stories that emerged in both the Ottoman Empire and Europe that involved Europeans and Ottomans, the most interesting case was the death of the Danish consul of Salonika in the 1766. Finally the last chapter of this dissertation examines the impact of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 on the emergence of Hellenism in France, but it also looks at a potential Ottoman version of Hellenism that at the very least seemed to have been present among Istanbul Muslim and non-Muslim elites during the near entirety of the period of 1740-1787. Unsurprisingly the Ottomans living in the capital interacted with its Byzantine heritage in ways that seemed to have been very complimentary towards the city’s non-Islamic roots. The main argument of the last chapter is that the Ottoman Empire and Europe saw continued major cultural growth between the two, which was overall more positive than negative, and that the Ottomans were not simply “passive” but active in creating cultural exchanges with Europeans. The last chapter is the conclusion to this dissertation.

CHAPTER II

The Ottoman Empire and mid 18th Century Wars, 1740-1763

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is an examination of the Ottoman Empire within the context of the Persian-Ottoman War of 1743-1746 and the European Wars of the mid 18th century. The first few chapters are on the impact and legacy of the Treaty of Belgrade of 1739, which the Ottoman Empire used as a foundation to diplomatically expand its political and commercial ties with the rest of Europe. The *Ahidname* given to France and Naples, both in 1740 and earlier in 1737 to Sicily, were the product of a combined Ottoman-European initiatives and led to important Ottoman diplomatic missions to both France and Naples. The Ottomans sent Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa to France, whose embassy to France proved even more successful than that of his father's, as Louis XV and a large number of Frenchmen would continue to have a high opinion of the Ottoman Empire

until the end of his reign in 1774.⁹³ The Ottomans also sent Küçük Hüseyin Efendi the nephew of the recently deposed *Sadrizam* Hacı Ivaz Mehmed Paşa (1739-1740),⁹⁴ to Naples where he was received by future king of Spain, Carlos III (1759-1788), who was then king of Naples and Sicily (1735-1759).

The Ottoman Empire was greatly affected by European wars during the 18th century, Istanbul and the Ottoman center of the Balkans and Western Anatolia were impacted by the wars due to the decline of trade in Mediterranean region, which underwent major periods of strain as a result of the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748) and the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). The impact of these wars frequently led to increased inflation in the Ottoman capital and to a decline in customs dues and other revenues sources tied to the Ottoman Empire's trade with Europe. The impact of this was most evident in 1745 when the Ottoman Empire offered to mediate peace between the various belligerents of the Austrian War of Succession. The offer of mediation had been the initiative of one of the great *Reisülküttab* of the 18th century, Tavukçubaşı Mustafa Efendi (death in 1749), and of the powerful *Gümrük Emini* of the mid 18th century, Ishak Ağa (death in 1763). It was simultaneously an attempt by the Porte to increase its

⁹³ Louis XV was born in 1710 and became king at the age of 5 in 1715 and ruled France until his death in May 1774, a few months after the death of Mustafa III, who was of the same generation as he was born in 1717. Generationally Louis XV and Mustafa III were the same, but the first became king at the age of 5, while the second became king around the age of 40. Louis XV also only effectively started to rule for himself after the death of Cardinal Fleury in 1743, so he was 33 years old when he actually took over ruling. Due to the *kafes* system, Mustafa III's son Selim III (1789-1807, death in 1808), who was born in 1761, was of the same generation as Louis XV's grandsons Louis XVI (1774-1792, death in 1793) born in 1754, Louis XVIII (1815-1824) who was born in 1755, and Charles X (1824-1830, death 1836) who was born in 1757. So Mustafa III became Sultan in 1757 when Louis XV had been king for already 42 years while Selim III became Sultan in 1789 when Louis XVI had already been king for 15 years. Coincidentally Selim III was deposed in 1807 some 18 years after his accession while Louis XVI had been deposed in 1792 some 18 years after his accession, and both were executed about 1 year after they were deposed.

⁹⁴ Hacı Ivaz Mehmed Paşa's family was one of the more influential families of the Ottoman Empire in the mid 18th century, his son Ivazzade Halil Paşa would be the unfortunate *Sadrizam* who lost at the Battle of Karta in August 1770, and his other son Ivazzade Ibrahim Beyefendi was *Şeyhülislam* on two separate occasions between 1774-1775 and briefly in 1785.

influence in Europe by trying to end it and it was also an attempt to try to increase the Porte's revenues so that it could better fund the ongoing war against Iran. Thus an Ottoman initiative of mediation as a neutral party to a European war was tied to its need for better finances, which were strained as a result of its war against Persia.

After examining the Persian-Ottoman War of 1743-1746 along with the Austrian War of Succession and its impact on the Ottoman Empire, this chapter will examine the Porte's role in preventing a Russo-Swedish war from erupting between 1749-1750 and the subsequent events that occurred during the reign of Osman III. It will then examine the Ottoman Empire and how it impacted and was impacted by the Seven Years War. This period saw considerably less diplomatic activities from the Porte than it had had under the reign of Mahmud I, and the chapter will end with the year 1763 when of Koca Ragıp Paşa died and the Seven Years' War came to an end.

However this chapter will begin with the topic of climate and harvest during the 18th century and how the Ottoman Empire ultimately seemed to have followed the French and European pattern for this era. The pattern was roughly speaking a period of great harvest and climate during the 1740s and 1750s, a period of continued good harvests and fair weather in the 1760s but with some increasing problems that were often localized to specific regions. The 1770s saw the harvest and the weather becoming increasingly bad and uneven, and the 1780s were simply disastrous for nearly all of the regions of Europe both in terms of weather and harvests.

This chapter primarily argues that the Ottoman Empire was diplomatically very innovative under Mahmud I between 1740-1754, and that it diplomatically it became more conservative or less interested afterwards between 1754-1763. The period of 1740-

1754 saw major Ottoman diplomatic innovations and successes, which have up to this point in time not been noticed or put into a proper context by historians. This chapter also examines some of the internal machinations within the Ottoman Empire during this period and argues that the uniqueness of Istanbul made it vulnerable to inflation during European wars. Finally, it argues that the Ottoman Empire's harvest mostly followed the pattern of that of Europe, as naturally did the climate during this period.

2.2 Climate and Harvests in the 18th Century

French historians studying the revolution and the Ancien Régime in the 18th century has found certain patterns about climate and harvest for 18th century France. This pattern was roughly speaking that the 1700s were disastrous harvest and climatic years, the 1710s and 1720s were difficult times, the 1730s were still difficult. But the 1740s and 1750s were two decades of warm weather along with great agricultural harvests, the 1760s mostly continued that trend but it also started to see bad harvests and bad weather for localized regions.⁹⁵ The 1770s saw major changes to the trend as bad weather and bad harvest increased, but certain regions still had great harvests while other regions had terrible ones. The 1780s saw disastrous weather and harvest not only in France,⁹⁶ but in Italy,⁹⁷ Spain,⁹⁸ Germany,⁹⁹ Austria and Transylvania,¹⁰⁰ Sweden,¹⁰¹ Poland,¹⁰² Russia,¹⁰³

⁹⁵ Think of it like all of Anatolia has a great harvest, but the North-Eastern Black Sea sees its crops ruined by hail.

⁹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 13 juillet 1781, 256.

⁹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 30 aout 1782, 328.

⁹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 14 mai 1779, 177.

⁹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 17 février 1786, 58.

the Balkans,¹⁰⁴ North Africa,¹⁰⁵ Egypt,¹⁰⁶ the Eastern Mediterranean,¹⁰⁷ and even Bagdad.¹⁰⁸ The *Gazette de France* makes increasing mentions of famine and bad harvests starting in the 1760s, these become more frequent and worse in the 1770s, and in the 1780s they are the standard and nearly universal for all the regions of Europe including the Ottomans. The *Gazette* does not show all of the regions being equally impacted by bad harvests and bad weather, some regions may have not followed the trend. But the most common theme of the 1780s as it concerns climate and harvests was a near universal disaster with cold weather, sometimes historically cold, along with a series of natural disasters like locusts destroying what was otherwise okay to good harvests throughout the decade.

The Ottoman Empire, whether it be the Balkans, North Africa, Egypt, the Eastern Mediterranean coast, and even South-Eastern Anatolia and Iraq seem to have followed these trends, most notably in the 1780s as the *Gazette* makes references to famine and bad harvests for all of these regions mentioned above. This is not a definite proof that most of the Ottoman Empire followed the trend of 18th century Europe as it concerns climate and harvests, but it a strong indication that the Ottoman Empire did follow the trend the European wide trend. The significance of this is namely that the increasing problems that the Ottoman Empire faced were not solely due to the problems caused by the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 and its aftermath, but rather that the negative and

¹⁰⁰ *Gazette de France*, 17 mars 1786, 91-92.

¹⁰¹ *Gazette de France*, 16 janvier 1787, 17.

¹⁰² *Gazette de France*, 3 janvier 1786, 1.

¹⁰³ *Gazette de France*, 26 octobre 1787, 423.

¹⁰⁴ *Gazette de France*, 15 aout 1780, 305-306.

¹⁰⁵ *Gazette de France*, 9 avril 1779, 133.

¹⁰⁶ *Gazette de France*, 10 avril 1778, 121.

¹⁰⁷ *Gazette de France*, 10 aoust 1778, 289.

¹⁰⁸ *Gazette de France*, 25 mai 1787, 194.

destabilizing impact that that war had on the Ottoman Empire was further worsened by worsening weather and harvest conditions. The Ottomans were already going to have a hard time after 1774 in maintaining and reestablishing order throughout the empire, but the weather and harvests all made this more difficult. Istanbul, which will be discussed in some of the later chapters of this dissertation, was already a difficult city to administer and to keep order in, would face increasing difficulties after 1774 both due to the legacy of the Russo-Ottoman war but also due to the impact of climate.

By the end of November 1787, Istanbul was faced with the threat of famine,¹⁰⁹ despite the fact that the war of 1787-1792 had only been declared by the Ottomans on August 19th, that neither Russia nor Austria were prepared for a war. In fact Russia only replied to the Ottoman declaration of War a month later at the end of September,¹¹⁰ thus Istanbul and the Ottoman center had economically not been greatly impacted by the war yet. Commercial relations between the Ottomans, Russia, and Austria were only cut off at the end of 1787,¹¹¹ and all three powers were slow to mobilize, which meant that by November Istanbul had still not had a large military presence mobilized in the region yet.¹¹² Russia itself had had a poor harvest and had to import grains from Poland in 1787,¹¹³ another region that had also had a poor harvest in 1787.¹¹⁴ Austria various territories nearby the Ottoman Empire also had terrible harvests and Transylvania even faced the threat of famine in 1787.¹¹⁵ There was no major Russian naval presence in the

¹⁰⁹ *Gazette de France*, 11 janvier 1788, 13.

¹¹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 30 octobre 1787, 427-428.

¹¹¹ *Gazette de France*, 27 novembre 1787, 463.

¹¹² *Gazette de France*, 21 décembre 1787, 495.

¹¹³ *Gazette de France*, 13 novembre 1787, 448.

¹¹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 26 octobre 1787, 423.

¹¹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 12 octobre 1787, 402.

Mediterranean,¹¹⁶ but there was a small one in the Black Sea, which did prevent some grain ships from going to Istanbul.¹¹⁷ The famine and high inflation faced by Istanbul by the end of November 1787 is contrasted with Istanbul's situation in the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774. In mid November 1770, months after the Battle of Çeşme (July 5-7th), Istanbul was in no danger of famine despite Russian dominance of the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea,¹¹⁸ it was however in deep need for coffee which had been cut off by the Russians.¹¹⁹ Istanbul's coffee problem was also worsened by Bulutkapan Ali Bey al-Kabir's prohibition on coffee exports to Istanbul, leading to high prices there and even to the state regulating coffee.¹²⁰ It was in February 1771 that the *Kaymakam* Melek Mehmed Paşa (1769-1774), husband of the Ottoman princess Zeynep Sultan, started facing major problems with violence, the Janissaries, and most notably the *kalyoncu* in the city.¹²¹ The first signs of high bread prices and fears of famine only emerged in Istanbul at the start of April 1771,¹²² but by February 1772 the danger of famine had passed and the Sublime Porte allowed ships to export grain outside of the city again,¹²³ in fact by the end of the February 1772 Istanbul's grain stock had a year's worth of grain stored in the capital.¹²⁴ Thus it took about 2 years and 7 months after the start of the 1768-1774 war for Istanbul to start facing the threat of famine, while in 1787 it only took about 4 months for the city to face the threat of famine. Besides the already mentioned factors of climate and harvests, the Russian presence in the Black Sea Region and Gazi Hasan Paşa's

¹¹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 7 décembre 1787, 479.

¹¹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 11 janvier 1788, 13.

¹¹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 14 janvier 1771, 13.

¹¹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 28 janvier 1771, 31.

¹²⁰ *Gazette de France*, 8 avril 1771, 111-112.

¹²¹ *Gazette de France*, 25 mars 1771, 93.

¹²² *Gazette de France*, 24 mai 1771, 163.

¹²³ *Gazette de France*, 30 mars 1772, 117-118.

¹²⁴ *Gazette de France*, 10 avril 1772, 131.

occupation of Egypt (1786-1787) would also have had an impact on the threat of a potential famine in Istanbul.

Thus the period of 1740-1787 saw two decades of near perfect weather and harvests for the Ottoman Empire and Europe, with each succeeding decade worsening until the 1780s became a disaster for the Ottomans and the rest of Europe, including its enemies Austria and Russia. In fact, there is a lot to be said about the state of Europe after the Treaty of Paris in 1783, Europe became highly unstable with states being simultaneously aggressive towards one another while facing increasing internal crises. As previously mentioned, climate and harvests were one of the major causes for this instability, but there were other factors. These factors were, however not as big and more unique to each region or state. France faced bankruptcy by 1787 as a result of its structural problems within the French monarchy's finances, that its participation in the War of American Independence (1775-1783) in 1778 had led to the collapse of its finances.¹²⁵ Joseph II's aggressive reforms along with attempts at expanding his domains led Austria from crisis to crisis, which all exploded up by 1789, forcing his brother Leopold II to sue the Ottomans for peace in 1790.¹²⁶

This chapter and the following two chapters deal with the period in which the Ottoman Empire like the rest of Europe, seemed to have a period of warm weather and abundant harvests. It was a period that was thus good to be alive in and the favorable climate and agricultural factors may help to explain the second half of Mahmud I's reign, from the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739 to his death in 1754, which was one of the great eras

¹²⁵ Jean Egret, *La Pré-Révolution française, 1787-1788* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962), 5.

¹²⁶ Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763-1848* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 75-76.

in Ottoman history, and certainly one of the more important periods in Istanbul's history. It was time in which the capital was frequently festive and in which Mahmud I regularly held big events during Kurban Bayramı, which Flachet compared to celebrations at Versailles under Louis XIV.¹²⁷ Thus the many unique elements from the second half of his reign may be tied to the combination of winning the both the war and the peace for the war of 1735-1739,¹²⁸ and having favorable climate circumstances that enabled experimentation to happen in.

2.3 The Legacy of the Treaty of Belgrade

The Treaty of Belgrade was one of the great Ottoman diplomatic triumphs of the decade and it led to a series of diplomatic victories for the Empire, which exploited its increase in prestige to expand its commercial and diplomatic ties with Europe. It gave France a new *Ahidname* in 1740 as a thank you for its ambassador the marquis de Villeneuve's mediation of the Treaty of Belgrade.¹²⁹ The Ottoman Empire had during established commercial relations with Sweden with the *Ahidname* of 1737 and with the help of France it established its first alliance with a European Power, when it signed a defensive alliance with Sweden in 1739,¹³⁰ which was ratified in Istanbul at the start of

¹²⁷ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 13-16.

¹²⁸ L'Abbé Laugier, *Histoire des négociations pour la paix conclue à Belgrade: Tome II* (Paris: 1768), 69-70.

¹²⁹ Albert Vandal, *Une Ambassade française en Orient sous Louis XV: La mission du marquis de Villeneuve, 1728-1741* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1887), 409.

¹³⁰ L'Abbé Laugier, *Histoire des négociations pour la paix conclue à Belgrade: Tome II*, 117-118.

August 1740.¹³¹ In April of 1740, the Ottoman Empire granted an *Ahidname* to the Kingdoms of Naples and Sicily under Carlo VII/V with the help of France,¹³² and its ambassador the Finochietti.¹³³ In 1759 he became king Carlos III of Spain and ruled there until his death in 1788, he was the cousin of Louis XV and was coincidentally the king of Spain that established official diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire in 1787 when they sent Vâsîf Efendi there between 1787-1788.¹³⁴

The 1740 *Ahidname* also provided the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily with a certain level of cooperation from the Porte as it concerned the liberation of slaves from those two kingdoms and increased pressure on the North African Regencies to not attack their ships.¹³⁵ It led to the Regency of Tripoli to send an ambassador to Naples to conclude a treaty with Carlo VII/V in June 1740,¹³⁶ demonstrating that the Porte still held a certain level of influence among the North African Regencies. In turn, Carlo VII/V sent the Finochietti to Tripoli to get a commercial treaty from them.¹³⁷ In July of 1740, the Porte sent to Naples the *Kapıcıbaşı* with the ratification of the *Ahidname* given to the kingdom of Naples and Sicily.¹³⁸

At the start of December 1740, the comte de Castellane was named to replace the marquis de Villeneuve as French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire,¹³⁹ he would get his

¹³¹ *Gazette de France*, 8 octobre 1740, 487-489.

¹³² He later became Carlos III king of Spain 1759-1788, he was the third son of Louis XV's paternal uncle Philip V, the Bourbon king of Spain (1700-1724 and 1724-1746).

¹³³ *Gazette de France*, 25 juin 1740, 307-308.

¹³⁴ Ethan L. Menchinger, *The First of the Modern Ottomans: The Intellectual History of Ahmed Vasif* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 113-114.

¹³⁵ *Gazette de France*, 16 juillet 1740, 347-348.

¹³⁶ *Gazette de France*, 23 juillet 1740, 360-361.

¹³⁷ *Gazette de France*, 13 août 1740, 396.

¹³⁸ *Gazette de France*, 20 août 1740, 410-411.

¹³⁹ *Gazette de France*, 10 décembre 1740, 606.

first audience with the *Sadrazam* Şehla Hacı Ahmed Paşa on the 12th of April 1741.¹⁴⁰ The Ottoman Empire sent Hüseyin Efendi, the nephew of the former *Sadrazam* Hacı İvaz Mehmed Paşa (1739-1740) as its ambassador to Naples and Sicily,¹⁴¹ by August 1741 he had arrived in Messina, Sicily where he was doing his quarantine.¹⁴² In September 1741 Hüseyin Efendi got his audience with Carlo VII/V and the Neapolitan court in which the *Gazette* wrote in detail about the ceremony,¹⁴³ he visited various nobles, castles, and the Arsenal and throughout the rest of his stay in Naples.¹⁴⁴

The Treaty of Belgrade (1739) was as much of a triumph for the Ottoman Empire as it was for France's newly rising diplomacy of "Arbitrator" of Europe which had seen previous successes during the Polish War of Succession (1733-1735).¹⁴⁵ Both Mahmud I and Louis XV were proud of their respective state's outcome in the Treaty of Belgrade, Louis XV celebrated by minting coins showing France's role as mediator in the Treaty¹⁴⁶ and ultimately as the "Arbitrator" of Europe.¹⁴⁷ There were numerous celebrations that were made in Istanbul in honor of the French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire and the mediator of the Treaty of Belgrade, the Marquis de Villeneuve (1728-1741),¹⁴⁸ and for the Treaty of Belgrade.¹⁴⁹ Mahmud I celebrated began a new phase of his reign, in which his ambitious construction projects for Istanbul along with

¹⁴⁰ *Gazette de France*, 24 juin 1741, 290-291.

¹⁴¹ *Gazette de France*, 26 aout 1741, 403.

¹⁴² *Gazette de France*, 19 aout 1741, 389-390.

¹⁴³ *Gazette de France*, 21 octobre 1741, 500-501.

¹⁴⁴ *Gazette de France*, 28 octobre 1741, 513.

¹⁴⁵ John L. Sutton, *The King's Honor and the King's Cardinal: The War of the Polish Succession* (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1980), 194-195.

¹⁴⁶ See Figure 3.

¹⁴⁷ *Mercure de France*, Juin 1742: second volume, 974-975.

¹⁴⁸ Excluding Villeneuve, there were two French ambassadors between 1740-1787 that became Ministers in Versailles, Vergennes who became Secretary of Foreign Affairs between 1774-1787, and Saint-Priest who was briefly Secretary of the *Maison du Roi* or the King's Household.

¹⁴⁹ *Gazette de France*, 30 janvier 1740, 49-52.

his lavish celebrations would come to define his reign as one of the great eras in Ottoman history.¹⁵⁰ Louis XV's pride in France's role in the Treaty of Belgrade would in 1745, during the height of the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748), lead to the appointment of Villeneuve as Secretary of Foreign Affairs on November 3rd 1744.¹⁵¹ However Villeneuve had to politely reject this post due to his health problems,¹⁵² which proved to be wise of him as he would die months later on June 28th 1745.¹⁵³ Further proving the importance that the Treaty of Belgrade had in Louis XV's diplomatic outlook, was the publishing with *privilège* in 1766 of the Abbé Laugier history of the Treaty of Belgrade. This book was a history in the Vakanüvis style, in which great details were given to the events that led to the Treaty and what came afterwards, with the intended goal to demonstrate the glory of Louis XV and of his diplomatic policies before the Seven Years' War.

The Treaty of Belgrade was a diplomatic triumph for both France and the Ottoman Empire. France used its role in the treaty to emphasize a rising policy among certain elites within the French ministry of foreign affairs, namely France as the “arbiter” of Europe. The Ottomans got Belgrade back, they received new levels of diplomatic prestige, and they used the Treaty of Belgrade to extend ties with France and friendly powers like Sweden and the kingdom of Naples and Sicily. One the major successes of this era was Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's Embassy to France 1741-1742, which is the topic of the upcoming section.

¹⁵⁰ Ünver Rüstem, *Ottoman Baroque: The Architectural Refashioning of Eighteenth-Century Istanbul* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 64-65.

¹⁵¹ *Gazette de France*, 14 novembre 1744, 549-552.

¹⁵² *Gazette de France*, 21 novembre 1744, 561.

¹⁵³ *Gazette de France*, 10 juillet 1745, 367-368.

2.4 An Ottoman Diplomatic Triumph: Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's Embassy to France, 1741-1742

As a result of its mediation of the Treaty of Belgrade, France got a new *Ahidname* in 1740, which greatly expanded its commercial and religious privileges throughout the Ottoman Empire on a permanent basis, making it the most favored nation with the Ottoman Empire.¹⁵⁴ The new *Ahidname* led to the Ottoman Empire sending an extraordinary ambassador to France at the end of 1741, namely Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa the son of the former Ottoman ambassador to France of two decades earlier, Yirmisekiz Mehmed Çelebi (1720-1721).¹⁵⁵ Said Paşa's embassy to France in 1741-1742 was arguably the most successful Ottoman embassy to Europe in the 18th century and proved to be a diplomatic triumph as it solidified the French monarchy's ties and loyalty to the Ottoman Empire as a key partner Eastern Europe. Despite its much greater impact on France than that of his father's embassy in 1720-1721, it has oddly been forgotten by historians, usually written off as a footnote in Ottoman diplomatic history.¹⁵⁶ The biggest reason why his embassy was overshadowed by his father's own embassy, was that his father's embassy produced one of the most famous and celebrated Sefaretnamesi in Ottoman history.¹⁵⁷ While Said Paşa's own Sefaretnamesi of his embassy to France in 1741-1742 still remains lost and the reign of Mahmud I has until fairly recently not been

¹⁵⁴ Vandal, *Une Ambassade française en Orient sous Louis XV*, 423.

¹⁵⁵ Although not a Paşa at this point in time, Said Paşa eventually became *Sadrâzam* (1755-1756) during the brief reign of Osman III, thus he will be referred to as a Paşa rather than as an Effendi.

¹⁵⁶ Göçek, *East Encounters West*, 80,

¹⁵⁷ Göçek, *East Encounters West*, 9-10.

adequately researched, and certainly not as much as that of his uncle Ahmed III.¹⁵⁸ Moreover, whereas the embassy of 1720-1721 could be neatly tied to the *Lale Devri* narrative, Said Paşa's embassy to France in 1741-1742 could not be neatly tied to any historical narrative of the era as Mahmud I's reign has prior to this century not receive serious historical analysis, and Said Paşa's embassy has usually been labeled as being an example of the "ad hoc" period in Ottoman diplomacy.¹⁵⁹

The *Gazette* reported that Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa was appointed Beylerbeyi of Rumeli before he left Istanbul as Ottoman ambassador to France on a French ship on the 2nd of August 1741,¹⁶⁰ and arrived at Toulon on the 15th of September 1741.¹⁶¹ The *Mercure de France* reported that he was around 45 years old when he was in France, which would mean that he was born around 1696.¹⁶² Interestingly, this meant that Said Paşa was around the same age as his Sultans Mahmud I (August 2nd 1697) and Osman III (January 2nd 1699), the latter was the Sultan that made him *Sadrazam* between October 25 1755-April 1st 1756. This meant that he was slightly older than Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa who was born somewhere between July 10th 1698 to June 19th 1699,¹⁶³ and it made him about a decade older than Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa who was born in the mid 1700s. Obviously the age of Said Paşa and these other *Sadrazam* are approximate dates, but it is useful to know approximate generation that a major figure belonged to.

¹⁵⁸ Faik Reşit Unat, *Osmanlı Sefirleri ve Sefaretnameleri* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1992), 72.

¹⁵⁹ Arı, "Early Ottoman Diplomacy: Ad Hoc Period," in *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional*, ed. A. Nuri Yurusev (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 62-63.

¹⁶⁰ *Gazette de France*, 15 janvier 1742, 25.

¹⁶¹ *Gazette de France*, 30 septembre 1741, 468.

¹⁶² *Mercure de France*, Juin 1742, Second volume, 849-850.

¹⁶³ Norman Itzkowitz, "Mehmed Raghıb Pasha: The Making of a Grand Vezir." (PhD diss., University of Princeton, 1959), 8.

From the 17th of September until the 14th of October, he stayed in quarantine at Touton's lazaret, afterward he stayed in a house named "*Le Jardin du Roi*,"¹⁶⁴ which had been prepared for him.¹⁶⁵ He left Toulon on the 7th of November with the sieur de Jonville, Ordinary Gentlemen, who was tasked with accompanying him to Paris with a suite of 50 mounted guards.¹⁶⁶ He arrived in Lyon, France's second biggest city during the 18th century, on the 22nd of November, he then arrived at Dijon on the 1st of December.¹⁶⁷ The *Mercure* reported his arrival in Paris to have been on the 16th of December 1741, and referred to him as "Zaid Effendy,"¹⁶⁸ which was unsurprising as spelling in 18th century France was increasingly becoming standardized, but was still not standardized. The 2nd issue of the *Gazette* for the year 1742, mentioned that Said Paşa's public entrance in Paris was on the 7th of January and his public audience with Louis XV was on the 11th.¹⁶⁹ His public entrance in Paris was on a cold week, in which the Lieutenant-General of the Paris Police, Marville, worried if the roads would be cleared enough for Said Paşa to make his entrance.¹⁷⁰ Marville solved this problem by putting chopped manure along with salt on the street of Saint-Antoine, where the Ottoman ambassador made his entrance.¹⁷¹ Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa thus made his entrance on January 7th in Paris alongside the Sieur de Verneuil and the Maréchal de Noailles.¹⁷² Noailles was alongside Cardinal Fleury and later on Madame de Pompadour

¹⁶⁴ The King's Garden.

¹⁶⁵ *Gentilhomme Ordinaire*.

¹⁶⁶ *Gazette de France*, 15 janvier 1742, 25-26.

¹⁶⁷ *Gazette de France*, 15 janvier 1742, 26.

¹⁶⁸ *Gazette de France*, 23 décembre 1741, 614.

¹⁶⁹ *Gazette de France*, 15 janvier 1742, 23-24.

¹⁷⁰ Boislisle, *Lettres de M. de Marville au Ministre Maurepas: Tome I*, 1-2.

¹⁷¹ Boislisle, *Lettres de M. de Marville au Ministre Maurepas: Tome I*, 1-2.

¹⁷² *Gazette de France*, 15 janvier 1742, 26-27.

the most influential French courtier or political figure of the 1740s,¹⁷³ and a member of one of the most elite French noble families, the Noailles.¹⁷⁴ Louis XV relied on his counsel after the death of Cardinal Fleury in January 1743,¹⁷⁵ naming him a Minister of State in his *Conseil* on March 10th 1743,¹⁷⁶ he began to lose his influence over the king with the rise of Madame de Pompadour after 1745.¹⁷⁷ The other major French figure that accompanied Said Paşa on his public entrance in Paris and on his audience with Louis XV at Versailles was the sieur de Verneuil, *l'Introduiteur des Ambassadeurs*, who was a descendant of Théophraste Renaudot the founder of the *Gazette de France* in 1631,¹⁷⁸ and the current owner of the *Gazette*.¹⁷⁹ Thus Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa not only met with important political figures, he also met with people who had important cultural roles as well, and whose paper the *Gazette* covered his journey through France in detail, and would subsequently cover his career in the Ottoman Empire until Said Paşa's death as governor of Maraş in 1761.¹⁸⁰

The main issue of the *Gazette* that covered Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's embassy was an additional issue, which were called *Supplément*, these were additions to the standard *Gazette de France* issues, for the period of 1740-1761 when the *Gazette* was weekly, these *Supplément* were usually published separately from the standard issues, and were often just as long or longer than a standard issue of 12 pages. For the years

¹⁷³ Camille Rousset ed., *Correspondance de Louis XV et du Maréchal de Noailles: Tome I*, 234-235.

¹⁷⁴ Rousset ed., *Correspondance de Louis XV et du Maréchal de Noailles: Tome I*, V-VI.

¹⁷⁵ Rousset ed., *Correspondance de Louis XV et du Maréchal de Noailles: Tome II* (Paris: Librairie Administrative de Paul Dupont, 1865), 126-127.

¹⁷⁶ *Gazette de France*, 16 mars 1743, 133-134.

¹⁷⁷ Colin Jones, *Madame de Pompadour: Images of a Mistress* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 38-40.

¹⁷⁸ Eugène Hatin, *Histoire politique et littéraire de la presse en France: Tome I* (Paris: Poulet-Malassis et de Broise Libraires-Éditeurs, 1859), 81-82.

¹⁷⁹ Feyel, *L'Annonce et la nouvelle*, 439.

¹⁸⁰ *Gazette de France*, 11 janvier 1762, 13.

1762-1787, when the *Gazette* was biweekly, the *Supplément* were added at the end of the issue, and were usually 2 pages long. Thus the third issue of the *Gazette* for the year 1742 was a special issue on Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's journey through France, his public entrance in Paris, and his audience with Louis XV, the French royal Family, Cardinal Fleury the Chief Minister (1726-1743) a year away from death, and the French court.¹⁸¹ It was 9 pages long and published on January 15th 1742, and in total the *Gazette* had 52 issues in the year 1742, which meant that 1/52 of its coverage for that year was dedicated solely to Said Paşa's embassy. In addition to the *Gazette's* coverage of Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's embassy, the *Mercure de France* also covered it extensively. The *Mercure de France* in the 1740s was a monthly paper or an 18th century version of a magazine that mostly focused on literature, but also had a news components to it, among other things. It also had 2 additional issues usually appearing in June and December during the 1740s, and its coverage of Said Paşa's embassy was the near entirety of its second June issue of 1742. It was in total 218 pages long, almost all of the *Gazette's* coverage of his embassy that was mentioned above was printed verbatim in the *Mercure*, but it contains a history of Ottoman embassies to France along with French-Muslim relations since the times of Harun al-Rashid (Caliph 786-809) among other things that will be discussed shortly.¹⁸² Thus, whereas the *Gazette* had 1/52nd of its coverage for the year 1742 be on Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's embassy, for the *Mercure* its coverage of the embassy was 1/14th of its coverage for the year 1742. Said Paşa's embassy was one of the defining events that happened in France for the year

¹⁸¹ *Gazette de France*, 15 janvier 1742, 25-34.

¹⁸² *Mercure de France*, Juin 1742, second volume, 845-846.

1742,¹⁸³ and it was viewed as such by contemporaries. This demonstrates that the French public was fascinated by the Ottomans and the Ottoman Empire and its regular coverage of the Ottomans further proved this to be the case, and issues related to the Ottomans could be the center of attention of the French public. Franco-Ottoman relations also improved as a result of this embassy, but the closeness between the two powers would only truly reach their peak after the arrival of the comte des Alleurs in Istanbul as French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in 1747.¹⁸⁴ Said Paşa's embassy also demonstrates that France was culturally ready to have a permanent Ottoman embassy in its borders, whereas it is unclear if Austria was fully ready to have a permanent Ottoman embassy within its borders, and Russia certainly was not ready.

Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's embassy included his son Mesut Bey, who was around 15-16 years of age,¹⁸⁵ and his son-in-law Said Ahmed Ağa, the Marshal of the embassy.¹⁸⁶ On the 11th after Said Paşa had his public audience with the king, he received one with the Dauphin, then Verneuil brought him to the room in Versailles where all of the Ottoman gifts were displayed and where Louis XV came to visit him.¹⁸⁷ Before leaving Versailles he held a meeting with Cardinal Fleury, Chief Minister of France between 1726-1743, in which he received a letter from the *Sadrizam* Şehla Hacı Ahmed Paşa (1740-1742).¹⁸⁸ With the exception of the enigmatic duc d'Orléans,¹⁸⁹ who he met later, all of the *Prince du Sang* or royal French princes were at the reception of Said

¹⁸³ See Figure 4.

¹⁸⁴ Albert Vandal, *Louis XV et Élisabeth de Russie: Études sur les relations de la France et de la Russie au Dix-huitième siècle* (Paris: E. Plon et Cie, 1882), 213-214.

¹⁸⁵ *Mercure de France*, Juin 1742, second volume, 880.

¹⁸⁶ *Mercure de France*, Juin 1742, second volume, 1011.

¹⁸⁷ *Gazette de France*, 15 janvier 1742, 33.

¹⁸⁸ *Gazette de France*, 15 janvier 1742, 33.

¹⁸⁹ The third duc d'Orléans and the son of the Régent who received his father during his embassy in 1720-1721.

Paşa's embassy at Versailles.¹⁹⁰ Throughout his stay in France, Said Paşa and his retinue frequently went to the *Comédie Italienne*, which was noted for how illuminated the room was, he met with students studying Turkish under the Jesuits, and he met on multiple occasions Louis XV, the Dauphin, the Queen, and the French princesses.¹⁹¹ He, his son, and his son-in-law visited manufacturing workshops, Louis XV's library, and the Library of the l'Abbaye de Sainte-Genevieve, which surprised them for the amount of books and letters written in Turkish including one written by one of the Sadrazams under Kanuni Süleyman.¹⁹² On the 3rd of April 1742, he received at his residence all of the European ambassadors for supper.¹⁹³ On May 1st he followed the king and the French court to Fontainebleau, one of the main palaces of the French kings, and where Louis XV did a lot of hunting. On the 2nd of May he joined Louis XV on the hunt and was surprised but pleased to see a lot of women in carriages at their side.¹⁹⁴ Finally on June 12th 1742 he had his farewell audience with Louis XV and he brought back with him many gifts from France, but most famously mirrors,¹⁹⁵ that the French ambassador the comte de Castellane (1741-1747) was able to see them installed in Topkapı with the permission of the Kızlar Ağası Hacı Beşir Ağa sometime between 1742-1743.¹⁹⁶ The embassy of Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa was a great success whose legacy will be discussed in the following section.

¹⁹⁰ *Mercure de France*, Juin 1742, second volume, 979.

¹⁹¹ *Mercure de France*, Juin 1742, second volume, 982-984.

¹⁹² *Mercure de France*, Juin 1742, second volume, 984-988.

¹⁹³ *Mercure de France*, Juin 1742, second volume, 988-989.

¹⁹⁴ *Mercure de France*, Juin 1742, second volume, 989.

¹⁹⁵ *Mercure de France*, Juin 1742, second volume, 1032.

¹⁹⁶ François Rousseau, "L'Ambassade du comte de Castellane à Constantinople, 1741-1747," *Revue des Questions Historiques* 36, No. 26 (1901): 426-427.

2.5 The Legacy of Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's Embassy to France

Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's embassy was a major event in France that illustrated the French public's fascination with the Ottomans and his successful ability to adapt to the French environment made him popular among the French. They were impressed with Said Paşa, they felt that he was a man of ability and talent, and that seemed to effortlessly speak French and adapt to French society.¹⁹⁷ By the end of his embassy in France, the French public and elites had high hopes for him with a lot of them, including Versailles, thinking that he was destined for great things and potentially even become a key figure within the Porte and in Franco-Ottoman relations.¹⁹⁸ In fact throughout the 1740s, various Frenchmen inquired about Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's position within the Ottoman Empire, writing to the French ambassador at the time, the comte des Alleurs, about what role he had.¹⁹⁹ Along with the Ottoman-Swedish defensive alliance of 1739, his embassy would have convinced Louis XV on the possibility and feasibility of having a formal alliance with the Ottoman Empire. Throughout the entirety of his reign, Louis XV and a large segment of Versailles and French elites, would favor having close relations with the Ottoman Empire at the expense of Russia and to a lesser extent Austria.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ *Mercure de France*, Juin 1742, second volume, 989-990.

¹⁹⁸ Mme du Deffand, *Correspondance inédite de Mme du Deffand: Tome I* (Paris: Léopold Collin Libraire, 1809), 338-339.

¹⁹⁹ Mme du Deffand, *Correspondance inédite de Mme du Deffand: Tome I*, 338-339.

²⁰⁰ Vandal, *Louis XV et Élisabeth de Russie*, 246-247.

Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's embassy along with the Treaty of Belgrade further confirmed Louis XV's views that the Ottoman Empire was in fact still a powerful state and that it could further help his interests and that of his heir, the Dauphin,²⁰¹ in Eastern Europe. Louis XV's foreign policy was highly interested in the fate of Poland, which was a result of his wife Queen Marie Leszczyńska, daughter of the former king of Poland and ally of Charles XII and the Ottoman Empire, Stanislas Leszczyński.²⁰² Stanislas Leszczyński fell out of power in Poland when Charles XII lost the Battle of Poltava and he joined him in exile at Bender during the period of 1709-1714. Thus for Louis XV and French foreign policy of the 18th century, Said Paşa's embassy proved pivotal in France's preference of an Ottoman alliance over a Russian alliance, and it further cemented French perceptions of the Ottoman Empire as a possible protector of Polish independence. His son the Dauphin de France never ruled, but all indications point towards his strong belief in France's traditional diplomatic system prior to the Diplomatic Revolution of 1756, both due to his strong opposition to Madame de Pompadour but also due to convictions.²⁰³ As when his oldest son Louis XVI became king of France in 1774, Vergennes, the former ambassador to the Ottoman Empire (1755/1756-1768) was appointed as Secretary of Foreign Affairs, and the person who almost took that post in 1774 was the Baron de Breteuil, another experienced French diplomat that was hostile towards Russia.²⁰⁴ Thus in 1742 France was excited to have sided with the right power

²⁰¹ Munro Price, *Preserving the Monarchy: The comte de Vergennes, 1774-1787* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 14.

²⁰² Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Prut Seferi ve Barışı, 1123 (1711): Cilt 1-2* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1951): 114.

²⁰³ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 495-496.

²⁰⁴ Price, *Preserving the Monarchy*, 32.

and wished to continue having good relations with the Ottomans and would on multiple occasions seriously consider and attempt an alliance with the Ottoman Empire.²⁰⁵

Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's embassy along with the Ottoman War of 1735-1739 had impressed Versailles and the French public so much that they were shocked by Ottoman defeats during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774. The *Gazette* reflected French optimism towards the Ottoman Empire up until the summer of 1769, when that optimism turned to disbelief and ultimately to embarrassment. The comte de Broglie, the head of the *Secret du Roi*, Louis XV's secret foreign policy, remarked in 1773 that Ottoman defeats had completely ruined France's traditional strategy for Eastern Europe.²⁰⁶ Such thoughts reflected the profound disappointment in France at the Ottoman Empire's inability to effectively fight Russia during the years 1769-1770. It also reflected the lasting impact of the Treaty of Belgrade and Said Paşa's embassy to France, he had greatly impressed the French and confirmed to them all of the good things that they previously had thought about the Ottomans while dispelling of any possible issues that they might have had.²⁰⁷

Whereas the official papers of the French monarchy the *Gazette de France* and the *Mercure de France* both reported positively on Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's embassy to France, it did have some issues. However, none of these issues were to the severity of those that Canibi Ali Paşa's embassy to Vienna between 1740-1741 had faced,

²⁰⁵ Pierre Duparc ed., *Recueil des Instructions aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France, Volume XXIX: Turquie* (Paris: Central national de la recherche scientifique, 1969), 367-368.

²⁰⁶ M. E. Boutaric, *Correspondance secrète et inédites de Louis XV sur la politique étrangère avec le comte de Broglie, Tercier, etc: Tome II* (Paris: Henri Plon, 1866), 83.

²⁰⁷ *Mercure de France*, Juin 1742, second volume, 989-990.

as one of the latter's embassy's Janissaries had committed suicide in Vienna.²⁰⁸ The problems that Said Paşa's embassy faced were more trivial and typical problems for an Ottoman embassy such as having issues with getting halal meat, which the former French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire and the chief negotiator of the Treaty of Belgrade, the marquis de Villeneuve, was able to solve with Said Paşa.²⁰⁹ Other issues included members of his suite stealing or being accused of doing such an act,²¹⁰ a male prostitute was arrested at his embassy,²¹¹ three Ottomans were caught with prostitutes who were punished with 200 hits with a stick or a bat.²¹² When Said Paşa was at Fontainebleau, one of Louis XV's principal palaces, his embassy escort had mostly stayed in Paris, where they caused major problems at the Palace and gardens of Luxembourg, leading to their ambassador banning them from going back there.²¹³ There were about 8 to 10 individuals that tried to join the Ottoman embassy before it left France, this was strictly forbidden and with the cooperation of Said Paşa these individuals were apprehended.²¹⁴ The Lieutenant-General of Police Marville came close to having to deal with a major cultural problem that he simply did not fully know how to deal with, namely that one of the members of the Ottoman embassy came close to dying, had he died Marville would have had him buried at night in an empty field without telling the Ottoman ambassador about it, luckily none of the members of Said Paşa's embassy died in France.²¹⁵ These issues that emerged from Said Paşa's embassy were overall fairly trivial and typical of Ottoman ambassadorial problems of the mid 18th century, the most important problem that could

²⁰⁸ *Gazette de France*, 3 juin 1741, 257-258.

²⁰⁹ Boislisle, *Lettres de M. de Marville au Ministre Maurepas: Tome I*, 9.

²¹⁰ Boislisle, *Lettres de M. de Marville au Ministre Maurepas: Tome I*, 39.

²¹¹ Boislisle, *Lettres de M. de Marville au Ministre Maurepas: Tome I*, 39.

²¹² Boislisle, *Lettres de M. de Marville au Ministre Maurepas: Tome I*, 45-46.

²¹³ Boislisle, *Lettres de M. de Marville au Ministre Maurepas: Tome I*, 50.

²¹⁴ Boislisle, *Lettres de M. de Marville au Ministre Maurepas: Tome I*, 55-56.

²¹⁵ Boislisle, *Lettres de M. de Marville au Ministre Maurepas: Tome I*, 53.

have arisen would have been if murder had been committed, but it was not. Thus the embassy of Said Paşa went smoothly and greatly increased Ottoman prestige in France, helping make the Ottoman Empire a crucial friend and unofficial ally of France's for the near entirety of the period of 1740-1787.

Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's embassy to France in 1741-1742 did not just have a lasting legacy in France, it also impacted the Ottomans. Under Mahmud I and Osman III the Ottomans continued to give France privileges that it frequently did not give other powers, this included allowing the comte de Castellane (1741-1747) to see the mirrors that Louis XV had sent to Mahmud I in Topkapı.²¹⁶ As will be discussed later, the French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, the comte des Alleurs (1747-1754), had a great influence over the Porte and managed to establish close ties to many of the key figures of Mahmud I's later reign. As for Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa he became *nişancı* in 1743 and seems to have been at odds with Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa,²¹⁷ who had replaced one of his patrons, Şehla Hacı Ahmed Paşa, as *Sadrizam*. He eventually became *Sadrizam* himself between October 1755 and April 1756, but his tenure in that post was in many ways anticlimactic and he never truly recovered the influence that he had during the reign of Mahmud I.

2.6 Diplomatic Protégés: The relationship between Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa and France

²¹⁶ Rousseau, "L'Ambassade du comte de Castellane à Constantinople," 426-427.

²¹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 23 février 1743, 85-86.

The *Gazette*'s coverage of Said Paşa after his embassy to France was quite extensive, any time that he received a promotion or was nominated to a post was mentioned in the *Gazette*. He even received a brief obituary in the *Gazette* and other French papers when he died, something that was extremely rare for Ottoman political figures at the time as the only political figures that received obituaries were reigning Ottoman *Sadrzams*,²¹⁸ the Sultans,²¹⁹ and occasionally other members of the royal family.²²⁰ Thus he was treated like an ally of France and like a French protégé, this was further reflected when he was demoted or was disgraced, which were almost never covered by the *Gazette*, something that was typical of how it treated its allies or friends.²²¹

Said Paşa was not unique in being a diplomatic protégé of another power, France's chief minister in the 1760s was the Duc de Choiseul, whose father was Emperor Francis I's (1745-1765) ambassador to France as Grand Duke of Tuscany, in fact Choiseul himself had served in the Austrian army during the Austrian/Russian-Ottoman War of 1736-1739, and he even visited the marquis de Villeneuve when he had finished negotiations at Belgrade in 1739.²²² Choiseul was famously one of Madame de Pompadour's protégés, who rose to power as a capable diplomat and a man with extended ties with Austria. He was not the only major diplomat to have been the protégé of another power, the French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire between 1768-1784 was the comte de Saint-Priest, he was courted and groomed by Joseph II, who pushed his

²¹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 17 avril 1781, 133.

²¹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 11 mars 1774, 83.

²²⁰ *Gazette de France*. 25 novembre 1752, 573.

²²¹ See the *Gazette*'s coverage of Spain, Naples, and Sweden under Gustavus III.

²²² Rohan Butler, *Choiseul, Volume 1: Father and Son, 1719-1754* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 225-226.

sister to have him replace Vergennes as Secretary of Foreign Affairs throughout the 1780s.²²³ Needless to say that Saint-Priest proved to be one of the least supportive French diplomats of the Ottoman Empire throughout his entire political career,²²⁴ he was even receptive to Joseph II's delusional idea of partitioning the Ottoman Empire.²²⁵ There are also strong signs that he was not only a protégé of Joseph II, but also a Russian one, as Vergennes accused him of being bribed by Russia, which Saint-Priest furiously denied in his memoirs.²²⁶

Another example of another major French diplomat being a protégé of another state was the marquis d'Ossun the French extraordinary ambassador to the kingdom of Naples and Sicily under Carlo VII/V between 1752-1759.²²⁷ When he became king of Spain as Carlos III in 1759, he asked France to have the marquis d'Ossun become France's ambassador to Spain, where he was a key figure in the 3rd Bourbon Family Pact of 1761.²²⁸ When Louis XVI and Vergennes decided to replace him with Louis XVI's *menin*,²²⁹ the comte de Montmorency, they made the marquis d'Ossun a Minister and a member of the *Conseil du Roi* to make sure that Carlos III was okay with the change of

²²³ Chevalier Alfred d'Arneth et M. Jules Flammermont, *Correspondance secrète du comte de Mercy-Argenteau avec l'Empereur Joseph II et le Prince de Kaunitz: Tome I* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1889), 365-368.

²²⁴ Comte de Saint-Priest, *Mémoires: Tome I*, 158-159.

²²⁵ François Charles-Roux, *Le Projet français de conquête de l'Égypte sous le règne de Louis XVI* (Le Caire: Imprimerie de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1929), 21.

²²⁶ Comte de Saint-Priest, *Mémoires: Tome I*, 183.

²²⁷ King Charles VII of Naples and Charles V of Sicily between 1735-1759, then king Charles III (Carlos III) of Spain 1759-1788.

²²⁸ A. Morel-Fatio et H. Léonardon eds., *Recueil des Instructions données aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France, Vol. XII, Tome III : (1722-1793)* (Paris: Ancienne Librairie Germer Baillière, 1899), 337.

²²⁹ Menins were boys or teenagers that the Dauphins and Princes grew up with, they were the first members of his household. Often times Menins became confidants and close to the Princes as was the case with Montmorin and Louis XVI or as was the case with Louis XVI's father and the comte de Mury, Louis XVI's first War Minister between 1774-1775.

ambassadors.²³⁰ The Ottomans may also have had diplomatic protégés of their own, as the Baron de Penckler, one of the most successful European ambassadors to the Ottoman Empire during the 18th century, was the ambassador there for Austria between 1740-1755. It was the Sublime Porte under Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa that requested his return as Austrian ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in 1761,²³¹ in fact the *Gazette* reported that he was a “friend” of the *Sadrizam* Ragıp Paşa.²³² Thus most powers, including the Ottoman Empire, had diplomatic protégés from other powers that they could rely on in further helping relations and the mutual interests of both states. Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa was France’s protégé and he played an important role in facilitating relations between the two powers between the 1730s until his death in November 1761.²³³

2.7 The Persian-Ottoman War of 1743-1746

The Persian-Ottoman War of 1743-1746 was covered by the *Gazette*, however the ongoing Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748) along with the mediocre performances of the Ottoman Empire during that war led to an uneven coverage of the war. The Persian-Ottoman War of 1743-1746 involved Nader Shah who was, as stated in the introduction of this dissertation, one of the few figures to have almost always been negatively depicted by the *Gazette*, which meant that during this war his victories were usually ignored or muddled by the *Gazette*. The war also had the additional problem that

²³⁰ John Hardman and Munro Price eds., *Louis XVI and the comte de Vergennes: Correspondance, 1774-1787* (Oxford : Voltaire Foundation, 1998), 28.

²³¹ *Gazette de France*, 10 mai 1762, 159-160.

²³² *Gazette de France*, 25 octobre 1762, 407.

²³³ *Gazette de France*, 8 janvier 1762, 9.

the *Gazette's* coverage of events before it became a biweekly paper in 1762, was very vague about the dates to certain events, which meant that very few dates were given to the battles or news of Nader Shah's actions, this resulted in it being very vague as to when things actually happened.

At the end of 1742, Russia and Nader Shah had agreed to renew the Treaty of Resht (January 1732),²³⁴ this enabled Nader Shah to invade the Ottoman Empire without worrying about a Russian attack. By February 1743 Elizabeth I (1741-1762) had decided to send an ambassador to Persia, while Nader Shah moved his army away from the Russian border.²³⁵ During the first quarter of the year 1743, the Porte rejected the latest proposals that Nader Shah had sent and had "begun" war preparations.²³⁶ Around the month of April 1743, the *Sadrizam* Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa, in his second term (April 1742-September 1743), was named the *serasker* while another army would be put under his predecessor Şehla Hacı Ahmed Paşa (1740-1742).²³⁷ The uses of former *Sadrzams* as *seraskers* was something that the Ottomans had done in the Persian War of 1730-1735 and would do again in the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774. The Persian invasion of Anatolia had begun by April of 1743 as they had moved towards the city of Kars, this had led to a Divan in which the Porte had decided to impose a new tax on the Orthodox Greek clergy and that the Porte would seize the goods of deceased bishops. There were increasingly rumors of rebellion in the Ottoman capital, which led Ali Paşa to strangle a great number of the agitators in the city.²³⁸ Ottoman soldiers were reported to be

²³⁴ *Gazette de France*, 2 mars 1743, 101-102.

²³⁵ *Gazette de France*, 23 mars 1743, 137-138.

²³⁶ *Gazette de France*, 15 juin 1743, 281-282.

²³⁷ *Gazette de France*, 22 juin 1743, 298-299.

²³⁸ *Gazette de France*, 6 juillet 1743, 317-319.

marching towards Erzurum by the start of summer 1743,²³⁹ and that Ottoman troops were mobilizing around Diyarbakir.²⁴⁰ By mid summer of 1743, the *Sadrazam* Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa had still not left Istanbul and Nader Shah had started the siege of Mosul.²⁴¹ Near the end of the summer of 1743, the Porte sent more troops to Eastern Anatolia and proclaimed a pretender as the new Safavid Shah and it had been decided that Ali Paşa would not lead the troops, but instead stay in Istanbul.²⁴² On September 23rd the Porte dismissed Hekimoğlu and replaced him with the Yeniçeri Ağası, Seyyid Hasan Paşa (September 1743-August 1746), who the historian Robert Olson described as easier to control than Hekimoğlu for Hacı Beşir Ağa the Kızlar Ağası until 1746.²⁴³ This author does not completely agree with this assessment as Seyyid Hasan Paşa had had a lot of military and security experience, and proved to be a durable political figure, as he had been Yeniçeri Ağası between July 1738 and September 1743 before becoming *Sadrazam*. The *Gazette* reported that the Persian Ottoman pretender would lead an army of 150 000 men into Persia while the former *Sadrazam* Şehla Hacı Ahmed Paşa would lead a defensive army in Anatolia.²⁴⁴ On December 14th 1743, the *Gazette* published a rubric from Istanbul, which it had not done since spring of 1743, it was dated to October 20th 1743. It stated that Nader Shah was still besieging Mosul and that one of his sons was marching towards Erzurum.²⁴⁵

²³⁹ *Gazette de France*, 27 juillet 1743, 353-355.

²⁴⁰ *Gazette de France*, 3 aout 1743, 370-371.

²⁴¹ *Gazette de France*, 19 octobre 1743, 497-498.

²⁴² *Gazette de France*, 2 novembre 1743, 521-523.

²⁴³ Robert W. Olson, *The Siege of Mosul and Ottoman-Persian Relations, 1718-1743* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), 158.

²⁴⁴ *Gazette de France*, 9 novembre 1743, 537-538.

²⁴⁵ *Gazette de France*, 14 décembre 1743, 593-594.

On November 30th 1743, an officer sent by the governor of Mosul announced to the Porte Hüseyin Paşa al-Jalili's successful defense of the city and Nader Shah's withdrawal from Mosul. The final assault by Nader Shah on that city had occurred on October 4th 1743, but they lost a lot of men and so abandoned their camps surrounding Mosul,²⁴⁶ the news of the Ottoman successful defense of Mosul had a calming affect the Ottoman capital.²⁴⁷ At the start of 1744, the Safavid pretender²⁴⁸ under Ottoman control wanted to go back to his palace and abandon the front, as he was afraid of Nader Shah.²⁴⁹ By April 1744 the Porte had rejected Nader Shah's demand of having a Persian representative in Mecca, which meant that the Ottomans refused to make peace with Iran and that the war would go on.²⁵⁰ In the fall of 1744, the Ottoman army had led a second victory against Nader Shah's forces, but no additional information was provided on the events that transpired or where exactly this victory had occurred.²⁵¹ The year 1744 saw the Austrian War of Succession intensify while the Persian-Ottoman War came to a halt, which led to the *Gazette* ignoring the Ottoman Empire's war against Persia during most of the year. The *Gazette* published nearly nothing on the war between the 30th of May 1744 and December 19th 1744, which was over half a year's worth of no news coverage on the Persian-Ottoman war. The year 1744 was also one in which Nader Shah faced a lot of internal resistance and rebellions, his own brother-in-law was assassinated by one of his enemies, and so the year 1744 saw Nader Shah less active against the Ottomans.²⁵²

²⁴⁶ *Gazette de France*, 25 janvier 1744, 37-39.

²⁴⁷ *Gazette de France*, 29 février 1744, 97-98.

²⁴⁸ *Schach Rade*.

²⁴⁹ *Gazette de France*, 21 mars 1744, 133-134.

²⁵⁰ *Gazette de France*, 30 may 1744, 254-256.

²⁵¹ *Gazette de France*, 19 décembre 1744, 620-622.

²⁵² L. Lockhart. *Nadir Shah: A Critical Study Based Mainly Upon Contemporary Sources* (London: Luzac & Co., 1938), 241-242.

On January 12th 1745 the Porte had decided to send an army of 180 000 men against Nader Shah, while the latter prepared for a new campaign and threatened to massacre cities who refused to surrender to him.²⁵³ By the start of spring of 1745, the former *Sadrazam* between December 1737 and March 1739, Yeğen Mehmed Paşa, had been named *serasker* of Anatolia and would have some 60 000 men under his command, while Şehla Hacı Ahmed Paşa would take over Diyarbakir with 30 000 men.²⁵⁴ By the start of the summer of 1745, Nader Shah had withdrawn from the Ottoman borders, which gave the Ottomans time to reinforce Trabzon with soldiers and munitions.²⁵⁵ On November 6th 1745, the *Gazette* published a rubric from Saint Petersburg dated to October 2nd, in which it stated that the Ottomans had not been defeated, which was a reference to the Battle of Kars on August 19th 1745, but instead had defeated Nader Shah's son and that the Ottoman army had started to invade Iran.²⁵⁶ On December 18th 1745, the *Gazette* published a short rubric from Vienna dating to November 27th, which admitted that there were news reports of an Ottoman defeat against Nader Shah, but that it had not been confirmed by news sources in Istanbul, and that such stories frequently proved to be false.²⁵⁷ This was a reference to the Battle of Kars, in which the Ottoman army was completely routed and the former *Sadrazam* Yeğen Mehmed Paşa was killed in action by Nader Shah. It was along with the siege of Mosul of 1743 the biggest battle of the war, the *Gazette* would not provide any further information on this battle. As previously discussed in the introduction, the *Gazette* covered the Ottoman defeat at the Battle of Kars in so little detail because it was biased in favor of the Ottomans and held

²⁵³ *Gazette de France*, 6 mars 1745, 109-110.

²⁵⁴ *Gazette de France*, 19 juin 1745, 324-325.

²⁵⁵ *Gazette de France*, 21 aout 1745, 429-430.

²⁵⁶ *Gazette de France*, 6 novembre 1745, 565-566.

²⁵⁷ *Gazette de France*, 18 décembre 1745, 640-641.

Nader Shah in utter contempt. Had the Persian-Ottoman War of 1743-1746 occurred during times of peace in Europe, then the *Gazette* would have provided further details about what had occurred at the Battle of Kars, but it still would have omitted key details about the battle as it made the Ottomans look bad. The fact that the *Gazette* censored news stories in favor of the Ottomans is proof of the fact that Versailles looked at them as unofficial allies, as it did the same for Bourbon Spain throughout the entire period of 1740-1787.

The year 1746 was dominated by Persian-Ottoman negotiations for peace and had little military actions, the Ottomans began the year by receiving Nader Shah's extraordinary ambassador Ali Bey who received a public entrance in the city on January 12th, and had his meeting with Seyyid Hasan Paşa on the 17th of January, and with the Sultan on the 25th. The new proposals provided by both parties had led to a rapprochement between the two powers, as Nader Shah renounced all of his former ambitions and only wanted to be recognized as Shah of Iran.²⁵⁸ Although the negotiations did not go over completely smoothly,²⁵⁹ still by April 1746 things were looking very positive for an end to the war,²⁶⁰ and by the end of April 1746 the Persian envoy Ali Bey had had his farewell meeting and returned to Nader Shah with an Ottoman ambassador with the goal of finalizing the terms of peace.²⁶¹ On August 24th 1746 the preliminaries of the peace treaty between the two powers was signed,²⁶² in the fall of 1746 the Porte recognized Nader Shah as Shah of Iran and that it would not support his enemies, in return he promised not to ally or plan to attack the Ottoman Empire. The borders between

²⁵⁸ *Gazette de France*, 19 mars 1746, 135-136.

²⁵⁹ *Gazette de France*, 30 avril 1746, 206-207.

²⁶⁰ *Gazette de France*, 7 may 1746, 218-219.

²⁶¹ *Gazette de France*, 28 may 1746, 256-257.

²⁶² *Gazette de France*, 5 novembre 1746, 529-531.

the two states stayed the same and Persians were given permission to go on the Hajj to Mecca.²⁶³ The Treaty of Kerden was announced in Istanbul on November 3rd 1746 and its ratification was made on the 21st of March 1747.

The Persian-Ottoman War of 1743-1746 was the end of an era, as Iran would no longer pose a threat to the Ottoman Empire, and Ottoman-Persian relations would remain cordial for most of the second half of the 18th century. Nader Shah finally achieved a certain level of legitimacy from the Ottomans by being recognized as Shah, which was an achievement of his and something that Kerim Khan never succeeded in doing. For the remainder of the 18th century Iran would fall deep into civil or tribal wars that would devastate the region and make it harmless for the Ottomans. In fact one of the major changes that occurred between 1740-1787 was the downfall of Iran as a major threat to the Porte and in its stead emerged Egypt as a new potential threat to the Ottoman center with the rise of Bulutkapan Ali Bey al-Kabirin 1768. From that point onward powerful Ayans or Mamluks in Egypt or Syria would be considered a bigger threat and priority than Iran was, this was best illustrated in the years 1775-1776 when the Porte led by Gazi Hasan Paşa focused on defeating and killing Ali Bey al-Kabir's ally Zahir al-Umar al-Zaydani than on defending Baghdad and Basra from Kerim Khan's forces.²⁶⁴ Finally, the Persian-Ottoman War of 1743-1746 would have cost a lot of money, severely straining Ottoman finances and may have been one of the main reasons for the most innovative Ottoman diplomatic initiative of this era, the offer of mediation in 1745 to the European powers fighting in the Austrian War of Succession.

²⁶³ *Gazette de France*, 17 décembre 1746, 601-602.

²⁶⁴ *Gazette de France*, 10 novembre 1775, 401.

2.8 The Ottoman Empire's Offer of Mediation in 1745 and the Austrian War of Succession

The 1740s and 1750s were diplomatically innovative years for the Porte as it sent an unusual large amount of diplomatic envoys throughout Europe and made new proposals to European powers. In 1744 before it made its offer to mediate a peace settlement for the war, the Porte influenced by the comte de Bonneval's advise told the European naval powers that Ottoman waters were neutral.²⁶⁵ As a result, by the start of 1745, the Porte had already begun to seriously consider ways to lessen the damages that the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748) had done to its commerce, its economy, and to its finances. So in February 1745 at the height of the Austrian War of Succession, the *Sadrizam* Seyyid Hasan Paşa (1743-1746) invited all of the European ambassadors in Istanbul to a meeting with the Porte and declared to them that the Porte offered its mediation for the Austrian War of Succession. The *Gazette* in its rubric on the Ottoman offer of mediation explained the reasoning of the Porte was that it had good relations with many of the Powers in the Austrian War of Succession, including Austria, and that it hoped to balance the different sides' agenda in the process.²⁶⁶ It also mentioned that it had made the offer due to commercial reasons as the war had damaged Ottoman trade, which was confirmed by a letter that Castellane sent to the French ambassador to Venice the comte de Montaigu (1743-1749).²⁶⁷ In his letter to his colleague, Castellane stated that the reason why Seyyid Hasan Paşa had offered Ottoman mediation to the European

²⁶⁵ Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, *Histoire de l'Empire ottoman depuis son jusqu'à nos jours: Tome XV* (Paris: Bellizard, 1839), 79-80.

²⁶⁶ *Gazette de France*, 3 avril 1745, 180.

²⁶⁷ Joseph Souchon, *Correspondance diplomatique du comte de Montaigu, Ambassadeur à Venise, 1743-1749* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1915), 261.

ambassadors to put an end to the war was due to primarily to the decline in Ottoman custom revenues and to the high prices of European goods, most notably to French cloths, in Istanbul and Izmir.²⁶⁸ English corsairs had seized a lot of French ships and French cloth on ships which had caused a major price hike for textiles in the Ottoman capital, and so the *Grand Douanier* or Gümrük Emni, almost certainly Ishak Ağa, whose profits had come from customs dues and so had seen a major drops in his revenues which led him to pressure the Porte.²⁶⁹ Additionally, Morea and Istanbul were facing inflation in grain prices as there was a major shortage of it in both regions, leading to Ishak Ağa to send ships to the Black Sea in order to get more grain.²⁷⁰ This may have been indirectly tied to both the Austrian War of Succession and to the Persian-Ottoman War of 1743-1746, but more details are needed to confirm or refute this. Hammer provided another major factor to the Ottoman offer of mediating the end of the Austrian War of Succession, namely the role that the *Reisülküttab* Tavukçubaşı Mustafa Efendi played in it. He stated that Mustafa Efendi had conceived of the project of offering Ottoman mediation to put an end to the war at the supposed opposition of Bonneval, and that all of the Belligerents in the war were embarrassed by the offer, with Maria Theresa successfully deflecting the issue by stating that she would take the offer if her allies did.²⁷¹

Both Ishak Ağa and Tavukçubaşı Mustafa Efendi were likely to have been the principal figures behind the Ottoman offer of mediation, as both men were enormously wealthy, for instance Mustafa Efendi was noted as an unusually rich man when he died

²⁶⁸ Souchon, *Correspondance diplomatique du comte de Montaigu*, 261.

²⁶⁹ Rousseau, "L'Ambassade du comte de Castellane," 434.

²⁷⁰ Souchon, *Correspondance diplomatique du comte de Montaigu*, 264-265.

²⁷¹ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire ottoman: Tome XV*, 88-89.

on September 3rd 1749,²⁷² and Ishak Ağa was one of the main powers behind the scenes of the second half of Mahmud I's reign. Mustafa Efendi was also not simply a wealthy man, he had been an extraordinary ambassador to Vienna in 1730 to announce Mahmud I's accession to the throne, he played a key role in the Congress of Nemirov in 1737, he had signed the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739, and he signed and gave the *Ahidname* to France in 1740.²⁷³ The comte de Bonneval or Humbaracı Ahmed Paşa also played a role in the Ottoman offer of mediation, he may have been the one that suggested it to both Ishak Ağa and Tavukçubaşı Mustafa Efendi.²⁷⁴ Thus the Ottoman mediation of 1745 was not made out of ignorance or a foolish venture, there were experienced, capable, and influential men involved in its realization. The offer had also been made by the Ottomans when they were at war against Nader Shah, the loss of revenues from trade would have hurt the Porte's ability to finance its war against Persia. But how exactly the Persian-Ottoman War of 1743-1746 impacted the Porte's finances is unclear, both due to a lack of sources that was at the disposal of this author, and to the fact that it was not a major war for the Ottomans,²⁷⁵ which meant that it was probably an "affordable" war.²⁷⁶ But what an "affordable" war meant was that Istanbul, as compared to the previous and following wars, did not send an enormous amount of money and troops to the Eastern frontier, nor was the economic center of the Ottoman Empire directly impacted by that war. Ironically the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748) almost certainly did directly impact the Ottoman center's economy as a result of the increased prices in European goods in its

²⁷² *Gazette de France*, 18 octobre 1749, 517-518.

²⁷³ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire ottoman: Tome XV*, 181-183.

²⁷⁴ Albert Vandal, *Le Pacha Bonneval* (Paris: Cercle Saint-Simon, 1885), 77-78.

²⁷⁵ It was nowhere near the scale of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774, which was a major war in scope and scale, and cost the Porte a tremendous amount of money.

²⁷⁶ Term taken from Riley's book on French finances in the Seven Years' War, see bibliography. It meant a war that was manageable by the state and did not lead to an explosion of debt or a destabilization in the state's finances.

major ports, this may be why the Porte was more aggressive in trying to end that war instead of the one that they were fighting against Nader Shah.

By the end of 1745, the Porte had moved closer to Austria thanks to Maria Theresa's subtle rejection of Ottoman mediation and of the baron de Penckler, the Austrian ambassador to the Porte, who was moving the Ottomans to recognize the newly elected Francis I (1745-1765), husband of Maria Theresa, as Holy Roman Emperor.²⁷⁷ In April of 1746 Austria was further courting Ottoman recognition of Francis I as Holy Roman Emperor by sending a lot of expansive gifts to the Porte,²⁷⁸ and it was later in that year that Russia also began its rapprochement with Austria as it offered a renewal of the Defensive Alliance of 1726,²⁷⁹ which eventually led it to join the war in 1748.²⁸⁰ At the end of the summer of 1746,²⁸¹ the capable *Sadrâzam* Seyyid Hasan Paşa was dismissed and later appointed as governor of Negreponce (Eğriboz),²⁸² and replaced by the inconsequential Tiryaki Hacı Mehmed Paşa (August 1746-August 1747).

The French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire during most of the Austrian War of Succession was comte de Castellane, who was appointed at the end of 1740,²⁸³ and was replaced by the comte des Alleurs who received his audiences with Seyyid Abdullah Paşa and Sultan Mahmud on the 23rd and 24th of October 1747,²⁸⁴ while Castellane only had his farewell audience and left Istanbul on the 5th of May 1748.²⁸⁵ Thus for the period of 1741 to 1747, Castellane was the French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, he would

²⁷⁷ *Gazette de France*, 15 janvier 1746, 25-27.

²⁷⁸ *Gazette de France*, 23 avril 1746, 194-196.

²⁷⁹ *Gazette de France*, 9 juillet 1746, 325-326.

²⁸⁰ Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession*, 148-149.

²⁸¹ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} octobre 1746, 469-470.

²⁸² *Gazette de France*, 22 octobre 1746, 505-506.

²⁸³ *Gazette de France*, 10 décembre 1740, 606.

²⁸⁴ *Gazette de France*, 16 décembre 1747, 598-599.

²⁸⁵ *Gazette de France*, 6 juillet 1748, 321-322.

prove to be the least capable of the French ambassadors to the Porte during the period of 1740-1787. He was a protégé of Cardinal Fleury, the Chief Minister of France (1726-1743), as he had married his niece, and was viewed as not being particularly capable.²⁸⁶ His embassy followed the marquis de Villeneuve's extremely successful one between 1728-1741, and although he was ultimately not up to the task, he was also given a difficult task as by 1743 his embassy in Istanbul had become isolated from most of the other French embassies in Europe.²⁸⁷ The *Gazette* confirmed the increased isolation of the French embassy in Istanbul as its reporting on the Ottoman Empire reached one of its low points between 1743-1747 for the period of 1740-1787, and very few of the *Gazette's* rubrics directly came from Istanbul.²⁸⁸ The reasons for the French embassy's isolation to the rest of France and its embassies throughout Europe during the Austrian War of Succession were because it did not have an embassy in Vienna during the war, most of Germany and Northern Italy were at war, and so only Poland, Venice, and Naples were territories by which Castellane could correspond with. However, with a large amount of English corsairs in the Mediterranean, it made it difficult for the French to correspond between Istanbul, Venice, and Naples.²⁸⁹ Austria's control over most of the territories surrounding the Venetian Republic, meant that the land route was not used for important correspondences or orders.²⁹⁰ While Saxony, whose Elector was Augustus III king of Poland (1733-1763), sided with Austria during the Second Silesian War (1743-1745), making it harder for Istanbul to communicate with Warsaw, Russia's entrance in

²⁸⁶ D'Argenson, *Journal et Mémoires: Tome III* (Paris: Librairie de la Société de l'histoire, 1859-1867), 115-117.

²⁸⁷ Duparc ed., *Recueil des Instructions aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France, Volume XXIX: Turquie*, 355.

²⁸⁸ The other low points of the *Gazette's* coverage of the Ottoman Empire were between 1757-1761 during the Seven Years' War, and the years 1779-1782 during the American War of Independence.

²⁸⁹ Joseph Souchon, *Correspondance du Comte de Montaigu*, 149-150.

²⁹⁰ Joseph Souchon, *Correspondance du Comte de Montaigu*, 59-60.

the war in 1747 would also impact Castellane's correspondence with French diplomatic agents in Warsaw. Thus Castellane who was the least capable of the French ambassadors during the period of 1740-1787, was also put in a position in which he had to make his own decisions without having any real instructions as to France's goals, while also having a much smaller budget than his predecessor Villeneuve and his successor in des Alleurs, as financial aid was mostly cut off from France. Franco-Ottoman trade was also at a standstill during the war, which meant he could not directly or indirectly profit from this, and since the Ottomans were not in the war, the embassy in Istanbul did not have the important status that it usually had. With the death of Fleury in January 1743, Castellane also lost his patron and French foreign policy went into transition, and only became clearer or more focused after 1747 with the advent of the marquis de Puisieulx.

The *Gazette* thus provided information about the Ottoman Empire during the Austrian War of Succession, but as stated previously the embassy of Castellane, especially after 1743 to 1747 was one of the low points of the *Gazette's* reporting on the Ottoman Empire. The biggest victims of the *Gazette's* lack consistent coverage of the Ottoman Empire during this period were the *Sadrâzamlık* of Seyyid Hasan Ağa (1743-1746), and the Ottoman-Persian War of 1743-1746.

The Ottoman offer of mediation during the Austrian War of Succession in 1745 surprised nearly everyone.²⁹¹ The *Gazette* has a rubric about it, but the most enlightening source on the mediation, at least from the French point of view, came from Montaigu's correspondence. The French thought that the reason why the Ottomans offered the Mediation was due to the loss of custom revenues, and the expansiveness of European

²⁹¹ Joseph Souchon, *Correspondance du Comte de Montaigu*, 261.

goods, most notably of French textiles.²⁹² This is interesting as the most probable *Gümrük Emini* of Istanbul during this period was probably Ishak Ağa, a figure that played a major role behind the scenes and had extensive ties with Mahmud I, the Palace, and the French. Besides Ishak Ağa, the *Reisülküttab* Tavukçubaşı Mustafa Efendi played a key role in the Ottoman offer of mediation and was one of the most accomplished and successful *Reisülküttab* of the 18th century.²⁹³ Although Ishak Ağa will be examined in detail later in this chapter, this author did not have enough time to closely examine the life and career of Tavukçubaşı Mustafa Efendi, who is in desperate need of further study and has up to this point in time been left to wallow in obscurity, and he has frequently not even been mentioned in major books on Ottoman diplomatic history.²⁹⁴

2.9 The Ottoman Empire After the Austrian War of Succession to the Death of Mahmud I, 1748-1754

By May 5th 1748 the preliminaries of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle had been signed and a general armistice had been established, which was sent by letter on the 10th of May and was subsequently published by the *Gazette* on the 18th of May, which put an end to the Austrian War of Succession.²⁹⁵ From 1748 until the start of 1754, when Anglo-French rivalry re-ignited leading to the Seven Years' War in 1756, two of biggest diplomatic events and affairs in Europe that occurred during this brief interim of peace

²⁹² Joseph Souchon, *Correspondance du Comte de Montaigu*, 261.

²⁹³ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman: Tome XV*, 181-183.

²⁹⁴ For example Turan makes no mention of him in his *İmparatorluk ve Diplomasi*.

²⁹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 18 may 1748, 244-245.

were related to the Ottoman Empire. The Malta Affair of 1748-1751 was directly tied to the Ottomans, and the Russian attempt at invading Sweden in 1749-1750. The first was naturally directly related to the Ottoman Empire, while the second was initially indirectly tied to them until it no longer was when the *Sadrzams* Seyyid Abdullah Paşa (1747-1750)²⁹⁶ and Divitdar Mehmed Emin Paşa (1750-1752) were forced by France and Sweden to reassert their obligations to Sweden if Russia invaded.²⁹⁷ The Malta Affair of 1748-1751 will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Russia had agreed very late into joining Austria's side in the Austrian War of Succession and by the time that the preliminaries of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle had been signed in early May of 1748, Russian troops had not only been mobilized, but were close to the Austrian border.²⁹⁸ This meant that the Ottomans at the behest of their ally Sweden and their mutual unofficial ally in France, had to threaten Russia to war in order to prevent it from invading Sweden. Russia's ally, Austria was exhausted from the past war as was France, and so none of the major powers wanted a Northern war. The Porte under Seyyid Abdullah Paşa was also struggling with its own internal problems besides the Maltese affair and the potential for a Swedish-Russian war. During the late 1740s, Seyyid Abdullah Paşa was preoccupied in quelling potential Janissary rebellions against him and the Porte.²⁹⁹ Neither he nor his immediate successor Divitdar Mehmed Emin Paşa, were in a position to go to war against Russia, as his successor Divitdar Mehmed Emin Paşa equally struggled with Janissaries, whose opposition to some of his reforms

²⁹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 4 octobre 1749, 493-494.

²⁹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 4 juillet 1750, 314-315.

²⁹⁸ M. S. Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession, 1740-1748* (London: Longman, 1995), 148-149.

²⁹⁹ Joseph Souchon, *Correspondance du Comte de Montaignu*, 262.

led to many of the fires in Istanbul between 1750-1752.³⁰⁰ Thus both *Sadrzams* were bluffing when they told Russia that the Swedish alliance was still valid and that they would go to war to help its ally Sweden if Russia invaded it, while knowing that they were personally not in a position to lead the Janissaries to war. Their bluff along with other European diplomatic pressures succeeded and dissuading Elizabeth I from waging war on Sweden and by the end of 1750 the threat of war had virtually vanished, which led to Sweden sending a gift to the Ottomans thanking them for helping prevent the war.³⁰¹

2.10 The Power Behind the Sublime Porte in the mid 18th Century: Ishak Ağa the *Gümrük Emini*

One of the biggest finds that this author made from reading the *Gazette* was the discovery of Ishak Ağa, a figure who Hammer had described as being very rich and influential.³⁰² Ishak Ağa was Istanbul's *Gümrük Emini*, and referred to by the *Gazette* as known as "*le Grand Douanier*" or as "*le Surintendant des Douanes*"³⁰³ for most of the period between 1737 to 1763. He seems to have emerged as a major player in Istanbul's financial circles in the mid 1730s, getting the post of *Gümrük Emini* in 1737,³⁰⁴ he held this post for almost all of the period between 1737-1763 with a few exceptions such as his arrest during the third *Sadrzamlık* Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa from March 30th³⁰⁵ until May

³⁰⁰ *Gazette de France*, 28 mars 1750, 145-146.

³⁰¹ *Gazette de France*, 21 novembre 1750, 554.

³⁰² Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman: Tome XV*, 276-277.

³⁰³ *The Great Custom Agent and the Chief Officer of Customs*.

³⁰⁴ Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, 3. Cilt, ed. Nuri Akbayar (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996), 802-803.

³⁰⁵ *Gazette de France*, 17 mai 1755, 229-230.

1755.³⁰⁶ He was however quickly released after the fall of Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa in May 1755,³⁰⁷ who seemed to have been his enemy as he probably removed him as *Gümrük Emini* during his brief tenure in 1742-1743,³⁰⁸ only for Ishak Ağa to be back in his post before the year 1745.³⁰⁹ The *Sicill-i Osmani*, which provided a lot of wrong information about Ishak Ağa, stated that he was once again dismissed as *Gümrük Emini* in 1757-1758 but reappointed as *Gümrük Emini* for the last time a year later in 1758-1759.³¹⁰ The *Gazette* did not provide any information about his potential dismissal and reappointment between 1757-1759, the *Sicill-i Osmani* may be correct or it may not be, further research is still needed in order to have a clearer view of his situation after the end of 1755.

This author first began to notice the existence of Ishak Ağa while reading the *Gazette*, which made nearly yearly references to his banquets with Sultan Mahmud I in the 1750s. The first mention of him in the *Gazette*³¹¹ was from a rubric written on August 3rd 1749 in which Mahmud I visited him at his *yalı* in presumably Beykoz on July 24th, in which Ishak Ağa feasted the Sultan and give him a diamond pendulum worth 60 *kise*.³¹² The following year, he built a luxurious *yalı* on the Bosphorus and hosted Mahmud I on the 24th of September, a week after the Sultan had visited the newly constructed aqueduct at Bahçeköy.³¹³ Although Ishak Ağa gave a considerable amount of gift to the Sultan, the *Gazette* did not give any details as to what they were on this occasion. On July 15th 1751

³⁰⁶ *Gazette de France*, 28 juin 1755, 301.

³⁰⁷ *Gazette de France*, 13 mai 1763, 177.

³⁰⁸ Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, 3. Cilt, 802-803.

³⁰⁹ All of the French sources refer to the *Gümrük Emini* around 1745 as being a powerful figure, which heavily imply that it was Ishak Ağa, beside we know that the *Sicill-i Osmani* is riddled with mistakes.

³¹⁰ Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, 3. Cilt, 802-803.

³¹¹ The reader should recall that this author has not read any of the issues before the year 1740 and so there is a possibility of İshak Ağa being mentioned before 1740.

³¹² *Gazette de France*, 4 octobre 1749, 493-494.

³¹³ *Gazette de France*, 28 novembre 1750, 565.

Mahmud I had lunch at his *yalı* in the country, presumably Beykoz,³¹⁴ and that his favor and influence over the Sultan was on the rise.³¹⁵ In the following year during the celebrations of Kurban Bayramı, Mahmud I had dinner on August 28th at the then *Sadrizam*'s home (Çorlulu Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa 1752-1755), in which as was tradition, European ambassadors brought desserts. In the same week, he then visited and had lunch with Ishak Ağa at his *yalı*, in which the lunch appeared to have been quite elaborate. After his visit to Ishak Ağa, the Sultan then went to visit the aqueduct in Bahçeköy again.³¹⁶

Oddly, in 1753 the *Gazette* makes no mention of Ishak Ağa despite it being possibly the least eventful year in news for the *Gazette* during the entire period of 1740-1787, in fact the only place that was eventful when it came to news was France itself, as the “Denial of Sacraments” crisis reached its height between 1752-1754.³¹⁷ As mentioned in the introduction, the *Gazette* almost never discussed French politics, as a result a lot of the issues for the uneventful year of 1753 saw the pages of writing be shortened or the size of the letter were made bigger to make sure that the 12 page standard for each issue was met. In 1754 during the Kurban Bayramı celebrations, which were massive and served as a celebration for the end of the plague in Istanbul and in Izmir for that year, on the 30th of July, Mahmud visited the *Sadrizam* Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa (1752-1755) at his residence in Dolmabahçe, in which the European ambassadors once again brought deserts to the dinner as was custom.³¹⁸ Within the same week he visited Ishak Ağa at his

³¹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 18 septembre 1751, 446.

³¹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 25 décembre 1751, 617-618.

³¹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 14 octobre 1752, 501.

³¹⁷ John Rogister, *Louis XV and the Parlement of Paris, 1737-1755* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 101.

³¹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 21 septembre 1754, 445.

yalı in Beykoz, and then visited the new aqueducts, which were not stated where they were, but presumably it was the ones in Bahçeköy. About a month later on August 29th, Mahmud I visited again and had lunch with Ishak Ağa at his residence, in which European ambassadors sent some 100 000 silver coins worth of desserts for this occasion,³¹⁹ after this event the Sultan went to the Kiosk of Foccat³²⁰ on the other side of the Bosphorus.³²¹

After the death of Mahmud I, Ishak Ağa faced numerous problems, only for him to find himself once again as the *Gümrük Emini*. Under the third term of Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa as *Sadrizam* (February-May 1755), Ishak Ağa was deposed and arrested on March 30th and imprisoned at Yedikule,³²² which had recently seen its walls repaired from the earthquake of 1754.³²³ In May 1755, he was re-instated as *Gümrük Emini* days before the fall of Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa, and the *Gazette* praised the Porte's "just decision" and equally extolled Ishak Ağa's integrity.³²⁴ By the year 1755, according to Flachet Ishak Ağa had 2 children,³²⁵ at least one of which was a girl, if not both of his children, as his successor as *Gümrük Emini* was his son-in-law Seyyid Ahmed Efendi, the *Dârüssaâde yazıcısı*, who held on to the right to hold on to the position for the remaining 3 months until the bail on that post was over.³²⁶

From his return as *Gümrük Emini* in May 1755 until his death around the 18th of March 1763, the *Gazette* makes no mention of Ishak Ağa. This was due to several factors,

³¹⁹ 100 000 écus.

³²⁰ Not sure where this is in Istanbul.

³²¹ *Gazette de France*, 19 octobre 1754, 493.

³²² *Gazette de France*, 17 mai 1755, 229-230.

³²³ *Gazette de France*, 24 mai 1755, 241.

³²⁴ *Gazette de France*, 28 juin 1755, 301.

³²⁵ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 94-95.

³²⁶ *Gazette de France*, 13 mai 1763, 177.

the most important was the start of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). The *Gazette's* coverage of the Ottoman Empire was at its lowest from 1757 until the start of 1761 when it began to pick up again. Another major factor was the accession to throne of both Osman III and Mustafa III as Ishak Ağa seems to have failed to keep as close of ties to them as he did with Mahmud I, but again, this could be the product of the *Gazette's* focus on the Seven Years' War. The other major factor was the change in French ambassador, as the French ambassador the comte des Alleurs died on November 23rd 1754,³²⁷ and was subsequently replaced by the comte de Vergennes, who was initially appointed as plenipotentiary minister, and then promoted to ambassador in 1756.³²⁸ Vergennes was probably not as close to Ishak Ağa as his predecessor had been, as he probably did not have the finances to gain his trust as his predecessor would have had. Des Alleurs was known to have spent large sums of money as the French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, while Vergennes would grow to have a reputation as being very careful with money by the time of his dismissal, which may have been a byproduct of the Seven Years' War, which almost certainly would have limited his financial position, as Versailles would have sent him less money during the war when its finances were in a desperate situation.³²⁹ The reign of Louis XV after 1763 became focused on restoring the finances of the monarchy,³³⁰ along with dealing with the Parliamentary oppositions to his reforms.³³¹ Thus Vergennes would not have had the same finances as des Alleurs, and thus would not have been able to maintain French influence to the level that his

³²⁷ *Gazette de France*, 18 janvier 1755, 25.

³²⁸ Louis Bonneville de Marsangy, *Le Chevalier de Vergennes: Son Ambassade à Constantinople, Tome II* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1898), 126-127.

³²⁹ Antoine, Michel. *Louis XV*, 812.

³³⁰ James C. Riley *The Seven Years War and the Old Regime in France: The Economic and Financial Toll* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 202-203.

³³¹ Swann, Julian. *Politics and the Parlement of Paris under Louis XV, 1754-1774*, 218.

predecessor would have had. The death of Ishak Ağa was announced by the *Gazette* in its 38th issue on May 13th of 1763,³³² by May 1763 his relatives and followers had been released from custody and most of his goods were given to his children.³³³ Finally on January 24th 1764, Ishak Ağa's son-in-law Seyyid Ahmed Ağa was removed as Istanbul's *Gümrük Emini* and was replaced by Mehmed Ağa who in acquiring this position also kept his *Gümrük Mukâtaası* of Izmir and Salonika.³³⁴ Thus it seems like a potentially equally wealthy man, if not wealthier than Ishak Ağa replaced his son-in-law in the post of *Gümrük Emini*. However Mehmed Ağa died in December 1767, on this occasion the *Gazette* referred to him as Emin Mehmed Ağa, and as both *Gümrük Emini* and *Kapıcıbaşı*.³³⁵ After the death of Mehmed Ağa, the *Gazette* stopped covering the appointment and removals of *Gümrük Emini* on a regular basis. Occasionally some of the men appointed to the position were mentioned, like at the start of 1768 when the appointment of the Başbâki Kulu, Hüseyin Ağa, was reported by the *Gazette* to be the successor of the deceased Mehmed Ağa at the start of Muharrem 1181.³³⁶ However, the same Hüseyin Ağa was reported to have died at the start of April by the *Gazette*, he was also referred to as a member of the Eminzade family, which had provided great services to Sultan Mahmud I, and his goods and wealth were given to his heirs by Mustafa III.³³⁷ In March 1774, the *Gümrük Emini*, who was nameless, was deposed from his position by the administration after the accession of Abdülhamid I.³³⁸ Thus there was overall a decline in the *Gazette's* coverage of the *Gümrük Emini* as a position, which may signify

³³² *Gazette de France*, 13 mai 1763, 177.

³³³ *Gazette de France*, 24 juin 1763, 227.

³³⁴ *Gazette de France*, 12 mars 1764, 81.

³³⁵ *Gazette de France*, 29 janvier 1768, 33.

³³⁶ *Gazette de France*, 7 mars 1768, 77.

³³⁷ *Gazette de France*, 23 mai 1768, 173.

³³⁸ *Gazette de France*. 8 avril 1774, 121-122.

that the position declined as a post of influence after the death of Ishak Ağa, or that they were no longer close to the French embassy.

But what happened to Hüseyin Ağa and his successors were infrequently covered by the *Gazette* up until 1787. Whether this had to do with the decline in importance of that post or in the decline of French influence over the *Gümrük Emni* of Istanbul is unclear, it could also be simply that Ishak Ağa was an exception and a special case. He may have been the most influential, powerful, and richest *Gümrük Emni* in 18th century Istanbul, or for the period of 1740-1787. What is clear, was that he was one of the most powerful and influential figures during the reign of Mahmud I, that he had extensive ties with Moralı Beşir Ağa and with the French ambassador the comte des Alleurs (1747-1754), and that he had a lot of clout with Mahmud I. He was one of the sarraf or financiers behind the Imperial palace, he probably facilitated the finances of the members of the palace, and probably those of some of the *Sadrâzam* like Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa.

With the exception of the year 1753, the *Gazette* reported on a yearly basis of Mahmud I's visits to Ishak Ağa's yalı, usually his residence in Beykoz, during major events or celebrations like Kurban Bayramı, throughout the years 1749-1754. This was significant for a multitude of reasons, the first being that Ishak Ağa was one of the wealthiest men in Istanbul during the later reign of Mahmud I, a man that could afford to host the Sultan on a yearly basis, who was also clearly involved in some of the major architectural projects of Mahmud I's, in fact he had built five *meydan* fountains in Istanbul between 1741-1752,³³⁹ most notably in Beykoz. The *Gazette's* continued emphasis on the Sultan's visit to his residence and then to the aqueducts at Bahçeköy

³³⁹ Shirene Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (London: University of Washington Press, 2008.), 21.

could be coincidental, but it could also hint at Ishak Ağa involvement in their construction. Further research is still needed to know for certain if it was either a coincidence or if he truly played a role in the construction of the aqueducts and potentially other major construction works.

The *Gazette*'s coverage of Ishak Ağa's lavish dinners for the sultan shows us that he was an incredibly wealthy man and potentially one of the wealthiest in mid 18th century Istanbul. Any man that can feast the sultan around the time of Kurban Bayramı on a yearly basis is either a powerful man or an extraordinary rich man, Ishak Ağa seems to have been both, as it seems unlikely that the Sultan feasted simply with him out of friendship alone. In November 1740 Versailles gave instructions to the newly appointed comte de Castellane, French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire between 1741-1747, in which he is told that his predecessor the marquis de Villeneuve had been unable to include fixed rates on French textiles at customs because of the influence and opposition of the *Gümrük Emini*, Ishak Ağa, who controlled the customs in Istanbul and Izmir. Castellane was then told that Villeneuve had been able to come to an understanding with Ishak Ağa after paying a large sum, 24 000 *guruş*, but that his duty was to get these rates accepted and incorporated by the Porte by officially approving the negotiated rates between the marquis de Villeneuve and Ishak Ağa.³⁴⁰ This shocking piece of information tells us that Ishak Ağa was responsible for the Porte's commercial policies towards France during the reign of Mahmud I, this certainly explains the *Gazette*'s coverage of him, as he was a crucial figure to Franco-Ottoman commercial relations. This further solidifies the role that he played in the Ottoman offer of mediation

³⁴⁰ Duparc, *Recueil des Instructions aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France*, 348-349.

to the belligerent powers during the Austrian War of Succession in 1745, as he was losing customs revenues due to the decline of Franco-Ottoman trade during the war. The Porte would almost certainly have relied on him to provide funds for the Persian-Ottoman War of 1743-1746 and this may have been along with Tavukçubaşı Mustafa Efendi's solution to the double problem of declining revenues from trade and a Persian war that required additional funds.

Ishak Ağa was almost certainly a *Sarraf*, and there is also the interesting possibility that he could have been the equivalent of a “*Banquier de Cour*”, which meant that he could have been one of Topkapı's main financial agents during the reign of Mahmud I. Flachat discusses Ishak Ağa in the context of the early reign of Osman III and of the fall of his patron, the Kızlar Ağası Moralı Beşir Ağa in 1752.³⁴¹ Flachat stated that when Osman III confiscated or *müsadere* the goods of the deposed *Sadrizam* Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa (1752-1755) in 1755, the Porte had found 2 chambers full goods belonging to Flachat's former patron Moralı Beşir Ağa and his treasurer or *haznedar* Süleyman Ağa.³⁴² This led to the newly appointed *Sadrizam* Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa and the Porte to suspect Ishak Ağa's involvement with some of Bahir Mustafa Paşa's dubious enterprises besides his own. This led to his arrest and interrogation, in which he was asked to find the receipts or accounting books on all of his transactions for Istanbul's customs.³⁴³ There quickly emerged an important amount of protest against his arrest, especially by the French and other Europeans in Istanbul, and Ishak Ağa was released after paying a large

³⁴¹ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 93-94.

³⁴² Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 93-94.

³⁴³ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 94.

sum of money and “proving” his innocence,³⁴⁴ around the time that Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa fell out of power in May 1755.³⁴⁵

The *Gazette*’s coverage of Ishak Ağa demonstrated major mistakes found in the *Sicill-i Osmani*, which stated in its biography of Ishak Ağa that he was dismissed as *Gümrük Emni* or *Gümrükçü* in 1742 and that he was only reinstated as *Gümrük Emni* in 1753.³⁴⁶ The *Gazette*’s consistent coverage of him during the period of 1749-1754, along with other French sources of the period, completely contradicts the *Sicill-i Osmani*’s biography of him, in this instance the *Gazette* would be more reliable as it was a contemporary source and the French clearly viewed him as an ally and knew much about him. To the French at the end of Mahmud I’s reign, Ishak Ağa was not simply just another Ottoman official from a previous era, but a major player and ally that could help serve France’s interest in the Ottoman Empire and in Europe. However, the topic of Ishak Ağa requires further studies, especially in the Ottoman archives of Istanbul, this author is confident that there will be much more information on him and that there is the potential to have a much more comprehensive understanding of the this period in Ottoman history, as Ishak Ağa was certainly one of the most important figures of Mahmud I’s reign.

2.11 The Ottoman Empire during the Seven Years’ War 1756-1763

³⁴⁴ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 95.

³⁴⁵ *Gazette de France*, 5 juillet 1755, 313.

³⁴⁶ Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, 3. Cilt, 802-803.

The Ottoman Empire was a neutral power during the Seven Years' War, it was diplomatically less active than it had previously been during the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748), but it was nonetheless still diplomatically active. It began the war under Osman III whose death at the end of October 1757, along with the fall of the *Kızlar Ağası*, and the rise of Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa were the defining moments of the early parts of the Seven Years' War for the Ottoman Empire. The marriage between Saliha Sultan and the *Sadrazam* Ragıp Paşa on April 6th 1758 was the beginning of a new period for the Ottoman Empire, as the *sadrazamlık* of Ragıp Paşa moved the Ottoman Empire away from the unstable but brief reign of Osman III and of the insecurity of the early months of Mustafa III's reign. With Ragıp Paşa the Ottoman Empire saw increased internal stability and a more focused and aggressive diplomacy with certain European powers.

The plague and famine devastated Hotin at the start of the summer of 1756,³⁴⁷ while Istanbul in July of 1756 was equally devastated by the plague and it saw some 12 000 houses destroyed by fires,³⁴⁸ which would only worsen by the end of August.³⁴⁹ In mid July 1756, the *Sadrazam* Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa declared to European ambassadors that it will be neutral in the current war.³⁵⁰ At the end of August 1756 Prussia invaded Saxony,³⁵¹ which it would be completely plundered throughout the war by Prussia,³⁵² and its ruler the Elector of Saxony and king Augustus III of Poland (1733-1763) fled to Poznan in Poland. In reaction to these turn of events involving the king of

³⁴⁷ *Gazette de France*, 31 juillet 1756, 362.

³⁴⁸ *Gazette de France*, 28 aout 1756, 409.

³⁴⁹ *Gazette de France*, 2 octobre 1756, 478-479.

³⁵⁰ *Gazette de France*, 4 septembre 1756, 421.

³⁵¹ *Gazette de France*, 18 septembre 1756, 450-453.

³⁵² Franz A. J. Szabo, *The Seven Years War in Europe 1756-1763* (London: Pearson Longman, 2008), 39.

Poland, who was also the Elector of Saxony, Bahir Mustafa Paşa asked the Austrian ambassador Schwachenheim the circumstances of the Prussian invasion of Saxony.³⁵³ In mid October he reassured the Austrian ambassador that the Ottoman Empire would continue the peace between the two states established at the Treaty of Belgrade, and that Austria could remove its troops from Hungary to fight Prussia without fear of an Ottoman invasion.³⁵⁴ In November 1756, the Porte and Gahler, the Danish representative in Istanbul, had had two meetings about a potential commercial treaty or *Ahidname*,³⁵⁵ which was signed by both parties on the 29th of October.³⁵⁶ Bahir Mustafa Paşa's meeting with Schwachenheim over the Prussian invasion of Saxony confirms two things, the first that the Prussian invasion of Saxony was the defining event that caused the Seven Years' War to become a much bigger and bloodier war than the War of Austrian Succession. The second thing that it confirmed was that the Ottomans were unsurprisingly fully aware of the significance of the Prussian invasion of Saxony and they wanted confirmation from the Austrian representative of the information that they had acquired by October 1756.

The year 1757 began with a shocking event, the assassination attempt on Louis XV by Damiens on January 5th, which was surprisingly covered by the *Gazette*.³⁵⁷ Louis XV survived the attempt, but it had major ramifications for the remainder of his reign,³⁵⁸ French ministerial leadership during the war,³⁵⁹ and it led to harsh punishments for any

³⁵³ *Gazette de France*, 20 novembre 1756, 557-558.

³⁵⁴ *Gazette de France*, 20 novembre 1756, 557-558.

³⁵⁵ *Gazette de France*, 4 décembre 1756, 582-583.

³⁵⁶ *Gazette de France*, 25 décembre 1756, 623-624..

³⁵⁷ *Gazette de France*, 15 janvier 1757, 30-33.

³⁵⁸ Jones, *Madame de Pompadour*, 128-129.

³⁵⁹ Dale K. Van Kley, *The Damiens Affair and the Unravelling of the Ancien Régime, 1750-1770* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 152-153.

acts or gossips that even implied the notion of regicide.³⁶⁰ It led to the downfall of his two most powerful and experienced ministers in Machault,³⁶¹ an ally of Madame de Pompadour, but whose disassociation of her after the attempt led to her turning on him, dooming him.³⁶² His rival the comte d'Argenson, the Secretary of War (1743-1757) and also acquired the "Paris Ministry" after the fall of Maurepas in 1749. He was the ministerial leader of the D v t faction,³⁶³ thus allied to Mesdames,³⁶⁴ Maurepas who had fallen out of power in 1749, the Queen, and was the most powerful rival of Machault and Madame de Pompadour during this era.³⁶⁵ As a result of the Damiens Affair, France would lack for most of 1757 and 1758 strong leadership and was arguably somewhat leaderless at the top, it would only be with the arrival of Choiseul at the end of 1758 as Secretary of Foreign Affairs that France would start to once again have good leadership at the top. Just like the Ottoman Empire during this period, factional politics and infighting, along with the relatively arbitrary decision of the ruler could have devastating consequences for the state and lead to disaster.

In 1757 the Ottoman Empire had a new *Sadrizam* in Koca Mehmed Rag p Pa a (January 1757-April 1763), who replaced Bahir Mustafa Pa a. During this period the Ottoman Empire officially became a munitions and provisions supplier to Austria, as it

³⁶⁰ Lisa Jane Graham, *If the King Only Knew: Seditious Speece in the Reign of Louis XV* (London: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 205-206.

³⁶¹ Machault was one of Louis XV's most competent ministers during his entire reign. He was *contr leur-g n ral* or Minister of Finances (1745-1754), *Garde des Sceaux* or Minister of Justice 1750-1757, and Secretary of Naval Affairs (1754-1757). He was an ally of Madame de Pompadour up until the Damiens Affair.

³⁶² Yves Combeau, *Le comte d'Argenson: Ministre de Louis XV* (Paris:  coles des Chartres, 1999), 190.

³⁶³ Combeau. *Le comte d'Argenson*, 166.

³⁶⁴ Mesdames was title for Louis XV's daughters, including Ad la de, but individually the singular Madame would be used to refer to them, for example Madame Ad la de.

³⁶⁵ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 722-723.

sold some 6000 horses to Austria, which arrived at Belgrade in January 1757.³⁶⁶ In February 1757, the Sublime Porte authorized Austria to purchase 6000 livestock from Moldavia and Walachia,³⁶⁷ the authorization of selling both horses and livestock to Austria would have been given by Bahir Mustafa Paşa as Koca Ragıp Paşa only arrived in Istanbul at the end of February 1757.³⁶⁸ Good relations between the Ottomans and Austria would continue under Ragıp Paşa in 1757 as he congratulated Schwachenheim on Austria's victory at the Battle of Kolin on June 18th 1757,³⁶⁹ which was usually a sign of friendship in European diplomacy of the time. At the end of September 1757, as a guarantor of the Treaty of Westphalia, Sweden declared war on Prussia starting the Pomeranian War (1757-1762),³⁷⁰ in which Sweden hurt its finances and caused major internal division to join a war that it had no impact on whatsoever.³⁷¹ On October 29th 1757 Osman III died,³⁷² his cousin Mustafa III officially ascended the throne on November 3rd 1757,³⁷³ and by April 1758 Koca Ragıp Paşa would truly start to become the new Sultan's *Sadrizam* as he brought down his main rival for power the *Kızlar Ağası*.³⁷⁴

After the marriage of Saliha Sultan to Koca Ragıp Paşa in April of 1758, and published in the *Gazette* at the end of May 1758, the *Gazette's* coverage of the Ottoman Empire's diplomacy and internal Ottoman politics declined to one of its low points. The Seven Years' War was at its height and so instead of political news coming from the

³⁶⁶ *Gazette de France*, 12 février 1757, 74-75.

³⁶⁷ *Gazette de France*, 12 mars 1757, 123-124.

³⁶⁸ *Gazette de France*, 23 avril 1757, 193-194.

³⁶⁹ *Gazette de France*, 10 septembre 1757, 436.

³⁷⁰ *Gazette de France*, 15 octobre 1757, 498-500.

³⁷¹ Gunnar Aselius, "Sweden and the Pomeranian War," in *The Seven Years' War: Global Views*, eds. Mark H. Danley and Patrick J. Speelman (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 162-163.

³⁷² *Gazette de France*, 3 décembre 1757, 609.

³⁷³ *Gazette de France*, 24 décembre 1757, 653.

³⁷⁴ *Gazette de France*, 28 janvier 1758, 45.

Ottoman Empire, the *Gazette* published more commercial and economic news related to the Ottomans between June 1758 until the end of 1760. There were however some diplomatic news covered by it, the most notable of which was the Danish representative Gahler, who had negotiated the *Ahidname* give to Denmark by the Porte at the end of 1756, received his audience with Mustafa III on February 27th 1758. Interestingly he received a caftan but not a pelisse, which was a major diplomatic snob, but the *Gazette* noted that the Porte had decided to change the gifts that it would give to European ambassadors, due to their costs.³⁷⁵ It was also in 1758 that Ahmed Resmî Efendi went to Vienna as extraordinary ambassador of the Ottoman Empire to inform them of the ascension of Mustafa III, he arrived in Vienna on the 10th of March,³⁷⁶ and he received his official audiences with Maria Theresa (1740-1780) and her husband Francis I (1745-1765) respectively on the 17th and 19th of April.³⁷⁷ While Ahmed Resmî Efendi was in Vienna, Osman Efendi went to Saint Petersburg to inform Elizabeth I (1741-1762) of Mustafa III's ascension, where he arrived on the 19th of April, had his public entrance on the 23rd and then his audience with the Czarina on the 24th of April.³⁷⁸ Mustafa Ağa the Ottoman extraordinary ambassador to Poland went there to inform them of Mustafa III's ascension and had his audience on March 29th 1758.³⁷⁹ There were some attempts to turn the Porte against Austria and Russia during the early part of the war around 1757-1758, but they were unsuccessful.³⁸⁰ It would be in 1762 that the Ottomans came close in

³⁷⁵ *Gazette de France*, 29 avril 1758, 201-202.

³⁷⁶ *Gazette de France*, 25 mars 1758, 144.

³⁷⁷ *Gazette de France*, 6 mai 1758, 215.

³⁷⁸ *Gazette de France*, 3 juin 1758, 261.

³⁷⁹ *Gazette de France*, 22 avril 1758, 189.

³⁸⁰ *Gazette de France*, 18 février 1758, 81.

joining the war on Prussia's and Russia's during the brief reign of Peter III (January 5th - July 9th 1762), but his wife's coup against him brought an end to that possibility.³⁸¹

The *Gazette* provided some interesting details about two cases of Ottoman provincial rebellions both of which happened in Anatolia, the first rebellion was led by Hacı Mustafa Ağa Karaosmanoğlu at the end of 1755 who was dismissed as *mütesellim* of Saruhan for his exploitation of the population, which had led to a large amount of protests to the Sublime Porte.³⁸² The *Gazette* claimed that he had a force of 6000 men and was thus a major regional power,³⁸³ but his sons were not in the region when he rebelled, giving the Porte and opportunity to get rid of Hacı Mustafa Ağa, by sending a *ferman* to the Janissary commander of Manisa, Kösezade Hidayetullah Ağa, to have Karaosmanoğlu executed.³⁸⁴ The *Gazette* stated that a Kapıcılar Kâhyası, Kösezade Hidayetullah Ağa, had come to Hacı Mustafa Ağa to inform him that the Porte had forgiven him and planned to give him a major post. After some negotiations, Hacı Mustafa Ağa followed him to have dinner away from his base of power to the Janissary's own camp, while they were about to eat at Kösezade Hidayetullah Ağa's table, his troops killed Hacı Mustafa Ağa.³⁸⁵ The head of Karaosmanoğlu was then sent to Istanbul in November 1755,³⁸⁶ and all of his goods were seized, which were considerable due to the brigandage that he had committed, but also because of his important role in the Anatolian

³⁸¹ H. M. Scott, *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers, 1756-1775* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 45.

³⁸² Yuzo Nagata, *Tarihte Âyânlar: Karaosmanoğulları Üzerinde Bir İnceleme* (Ankara Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997), 27.

³⁸³ *Gazette de France*, 21 février 1756, 85.

³⁸⁴ Nagata, *Tarihte Âyânlar*, 27.

³⁸⁵ *Gazette de France*, 21 février 1756, 85.

³⁸⁶ Nagata, *Tarihte Âyânlar*, 27.

cotton trade.³⁸⁷ The second rebellion occurred in 1760, when the Paşa of Konya³⁸⁸ rebelled against the Porte after he was ordered to come to the capital to answer for his behavior. He was stated as having 20 000 men at his disposal, he was also able to get neighboring regions to help him, probably by force, and forced the Porte to hold extraordinary *Divans* to discuss how they were going to end this potentially dangerous rebellion.³⁸⁹ The next issue to cover the rebellion of the Paşa of Konya continued with the Paşa of Konya leading 15 000 men towards Istanbul, the Sublime Porte promised him mercy if he returned to his post, but as the *Gazette* noted, Paşa of Konya did not fall into this “trap.”³⁹⁰ The third and last time that the *Gazette* covered the rebellion of the Paşa of Konya, he was still fighting the Porte, he had defeated some of the troops sent against him, and by the start of October 1760 he had even taken Erzurum, which would enable him to resist future attacks against him for a while.³⁹¹ Unfortunately the *Gazette* did not publish any further news about the Paşa of Konya’s rebellion, and so in total only three issues covered it, all three issues published the news about his rebellion in rubrics from Vienna, which was ordinary, especially in times of war when communication between France and the Ottoman Empire were limited and frequently cut off. The *Gazette* clearly perceived the rebellion of the Paşa of Konya as being much more dangerous than that of Karaosmanoğlu, its silence after the end of 1760 on the whole affair implies either that it became an even bigger problem for the Porte or that the *Gazette* did not have enough space to cover it, or a combination of the two. Whereas the case of Karaosmanoğlu showed the Porte’s power in Western Anatolia, that of the Paşa of Konya showed the

³⁸⁷ *Gazette de France*, 28 février 1756, 97.

³⁸⁸ *Bacha d’Iconium*.

³⁸⁹ *Gazette de France*, 6 septembre 1760, 422.

³⁹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 27 septembre 1760, 457.

³⁹¹ *Gazette de France*, 25 octobre 1760, 508.

limitations of the Porte's power, and the potential power and threat that an *Ayan* or regional figure could be to the Porte.

The Seven Years' War, like the Austrian War of Succession and later on the American War of Independence, had a major impact on the Ottoman Empire's economy. It proved profitable to those who would have been *mültezim*, *malikâneci*, and *çiftlik* owners, who as illustrated above managed to officially³⁹² and almost certainly unofficially sold more than what was stated in the *Gazette*.³⁹³ At the end of 1757, commercially the war had greatly impacted the Ottoman Empire's trade with Europe, for example on January 1758 a French convoy of 17 ships had arrived at Toulon from the Ottoman lands.³⁹⁴ In times of peace such military convoys were not necessary, but in times of war French merchants ships needed additional protection and this meant that they came less frequently to Ottoman ports, and when they did, they came in big numbers. Interestingly at the end of 1761, a British war ship stopped a French commercial ship around Sicily, but let it go as it had a passport from the Sublime Porte,³⁹⁵ which demonstrated that European powers at war did respect the Ottoman Empire's extended authority in the Mediterranean. It also showed that the British administration had become much less aggressive than it had previously been, probably due to the overwhelmingly protest from neutral powers like the Dutch over its piracy in

³⁹² If the *Gazette* published information on commercial relations or transactions between the Ottoman Empire and Austria, it almost certainly would have been officially sanctioned, as these were not necessarily news stories in high demand. The *Gazette* and Versailles did not have interest in causing a diplomatic issue out of news stories that were to contemporaries of secondary importance in terms of their news worthiness, as a historian however, this author is very thankful its publication.

³⁹³ The transactions between Austria and the Ottoman Empire were either the first of such kinds of transactions, or they were not. Both options would have led to increased commercial ties between the local officials and merchants involved in these transactions, facilitating the possibility of unofficial transactions between the same groups in the future.

³⁹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 21 janvier 1758, 35-43.

³⁹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 5 février 1762, 50.

the first half of the Seven Years' War. Overall the British were much less aggressive in Mediterranean waters than they were in the Atlantic and around the Baltic, as Dutch merchants became major victims of English piracy during most of the war,³⁹⁶ as the English used piracy to pressure the Dutch to stop trading with France during the war,³⁹⁷ but it severely hurt Anglo-Dutch relations and played an important role in the rise of a pro-French faction in the Netherlands.³⁹⁸ This would lead to the diplomatic isolation of Great Britain from 1763 until around 1787, as the Dutch, especially in Holland would increasingly side with France, which led to the rise of an alliance between France and the Dutch Patriots in Holland in the 1780s. The diplomatic isolation of Great Britain during this period would lead it to help Russia against the Ottoman Empire in 1769, and it would play an important role in its defeat in the American War of Independence (1775-1783). The rapprochement and subsequent alliance between the Dutch Patriots in Holland and Versailles would play a key role in further ruining Joseph II's ambitions in 1784-1785, and it would play a major role in 1787 when Prussia and Britain invaded the Netherlands, while bankrupt France was unable to do anything for its allies,³⁹⁹ substantially hurting the authority of the French monarchy a year and a half before the start of the French Revolution.⁴⁰⁰

European wars in the 18th century caused inflation in the Ottoman Empire, which was most notably felt in Istanbul, but other major cities such as Izmir were also severely affected by inflation or price increases caused by wars that the Ottoman Empire was

³⁹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 2 décembre 1758, 604-605.

³⁹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 3 février 1759, 55-58.

³⁹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 24 mars 1759, 138-141.

³⁹⁹ Whiteman, *Reform, Revolution and French Global Policy*, 59.

⁴⁰⁰ Orville T. Murphy, *The Diplomatic Retreat of France and Public Opinion on the Eve of the French Revolution, 1783-1789* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1998), 95.

neutral in. In April 1758 Istanbul faced the threat of a shortage in grain and severely high bread prices, extra guards were put at the port of the city where ships full of barley had arrived, to make sure that the barley reached the bakers, who had orders to immediately turn it into bread and each bakery had Janissary guards to protect it from pillaging.⁴⁰¹ Further causing inflation in Istanbul was the return of the plague in April 1758, which led to a lot of its inhabitants to go into the country, it forced merchants to stay home, and Greeks were forbidden from doing any festivities for Easter due to high inflation, the scarcity of bread, and the plague.⁴⁰² At the end of December 1758, Mustafa III was inspecting incognito or *tebdîl* the city to make sure everything was in order. He had recently hung a banker, who he had found rigging the weight of bread, or giving smaller portions, thus committing fraud. He also forbade the inhabitants of Istanbul from smoking on the streets to prevent fires from happening, he even arrested a Janissary smoking on the streets and put him in jail, but despite all of these precautions, a fire broke out and destroyed 1000 houses on the 22nd of December.⁴⁰³ Mustafa III's administration was very vigilant in making sure that grain prices were low and punished severely those that increased the cost of bread.⁴⁰⁴ By June 1758, both the plague and inflation had decreased significantly in Istanbul, especially with the end of Ramadan, which around May 1758.⁴⁰⁵ The use of guards to protect grain or bakers was also done by the French authorities in Paris and in fact the Paris police was always heavily involved in the transportation, distribution, and regulation of grain throughout the 18th century.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰¹ *Gazette de France*, 27 mai 1758, 249-251.

⁴⁰² *Gazette de France*, 24 juin 1758, 297.

⁴⁰³ *Gazette de France*, 10 février 1759, 61-62.

⁴⁰⁴ *Gazette de France*, 10 février 1759, 61-62.

⁴⁰⁵ *Gazette de France*, 29 juillet 1758, 357.

⁴⁰⁶ Steven L. Kaplan, *Bread, Politics, and Political Economy in the Reign of Louis XV* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), 329-331.

The French kings liked to see themselves as the father of the people, thus they had an obligation to make bread available to the people at affordable prices.⁴⁰⁷

Izmir also faced the same problems in May, June, and in mid July several Turks accused the Christians of Izmir, mostly Europeans, of being the cause of inflation and incited the Janissaries against them, who planned to burn and pillage their neighborhood, but one of the Janissaries informed the Venetian consul, and so they were able to defend themselves and prevented the disaster from happening.⁴⁰⁸ However the plague had a greater impact on Izmir and the Aegean than it had on Istanbul, as Manisa and Menemen,⁴⁰⁹ along with the neighboring region killed a large number of the inhabitants which prevented the harvest from being collected. The authorities were thus forced to declare that anyone who helped with the harvesting of wheat would share the profits with the owners.⁴¹⁰ The Gazette published on July 18th 1761 a short rubric from Livorno that was about Macedonia, which had over the past two years been devastated by the plague and earthquakes and was facing the threat of famine in July 1761.⁴¹¹ Despite the overall good harvests throughout most of Europe during the entirety of the Seven Years' War, the powers involved faced major problems with inflation and provisioning the troops throughout Europe, as it was the case with Britain in 1762. It had great difficulty in provisioning its Hanoverian armies in Germany during the end of the winter of 1761-1762, and there was major inflation in Western Germany and in Britain as a result of the strains of war.⁴¹² In fact the years after the Seven Years War, saw major scarcity of grain

⁴⁰⁷ Kaplan, *Bread, Politics, and Political Economy*, 5-6

⁴⁰⁸ *Gazette de France*, 19 août 1758, 393.

⁴⁰⁹ *Magnésie et Menamin*.

⁴¹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 16 septembre 1758, 441.

⁴¹¹ *Gazette de France*, 18 juillet 1761, 356-357.

⁴¹² *Gazette de France*, 2 avril 1762, 115.

throughout Italy, like in Naples,⁴¹³ Civitavechia,⁴¹⁴ Rome,⁴¹⁵ and Tuscany.⁴¹⁶ This led to the kingdom of Naples was being forced to import wheat from the Ottoman Empire,⁴¹⁷ an unusual event in Italy, especially as the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily was a major exporter of grains throughout the years 1740-1787. The grain shortage in Italy led to Genoa becoming a major center of grain exports to the rest of the Italian peninsula, which was very unusual as that was not its traditional role, which displayed the scope of the crisis that Italy south of Genoa and Venice faced in terms of grain shortages.⁴¹⁸ Tunisia also faced a grain shortage because of the dry weather had caused a bad harvest in the region, it even hurt the olive harvest for that year as well and saw major inflation in the cost of bread.⁴¹⁹ In 1764 Tunisia also saw the threat of locust emerge, which further increased the prices of bread and grains there.⁴²⁰ However the grain shortage had ended by the end of April 1764,⁴²¹ this displayed what had been discussed at the beginning of this dissertation, namely that the decade of the 1760s was great for harvest but occasionally had poor harvest in certain regions for the odd year.

On September 19th 1761 the *Gazette* briefly mentioned the official audience that the Prussian ambassador Rexin had with Koca Ragıp Paşa along with the recent signing of the Commercial Treaty or *Ahidname* between the Ottoman Empire and Prussia.⁴²² The brevity of the rubric on an important milestone in Ottoman-German relations was due simply to the fact that France was at war against Prussia and had tried to prevent it from

⁴¹³ *Gazette de France*, 27 février 1764, 66.

⁴¹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 12 mars 1764, 83.

⁴¹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 19 mars 1764, 91.

⁴¹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 19 mars 1764, 91.

⁴¹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 2 avril 1764, 106.

⁴¹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 7 mai 1764, 147.

⁴¹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} juin 1764, 174.

⁴²⁰ *Gazette de France*, 13 juillet 1764, 223.

⁴²¹ *Gazette de France*, 14 mai 1764, 155-156.

⁴²² *Gazette de France*, 19 septembre 1761, 459.

happening. The *Gazette* reflected Versailles' attitudes towards the Prussian *Ahidname* of 1761, and as a result stated the fact that it occurred without giving any details, this was one of the *Gazette*'s most widely used forms of censorship. In March 1763, Penckler and Rexin informed together the Porte of their two Power's signing of the peace Treaty of Hubertusburg on February 15th 1763.⁴²³ In July 1763, the Porte sent an extraordinary ambassador to Prussia, Ahmed Resmi Efendi, with the intended goal of making an alliance between the two powers,⁴²⁴ and since the Ottomans and Prussia did not share borders, the Porte had asked for Poland's cooperation and protection of its ambassadors when he would arrive on its borders.⁴²⁵ On August 4th 1763, Rexin held an audience with Hamza Hamid Paşa, in which his Janissary escort was removed.⁴²⁶ Ahmed Resmi Efendi arrived at Kamieniec in Poland on September 11th, where he was received with great pomp.⁴²⁷

On March 23rd 1763, Koca Ragıp Paşa had become very sick and as a result Hamza Hamid Paşa took his place in interim and presided over the Divan and other functions of the *Sadrizam*'s until Koca Ragıp Paşa got better,⁴²⁸ which never happened as he died on April 8th 1763.⁴²⁹ Interestingly, Mustafa III visited his *Sadrizam* during his last days,⁴³⁰ and kept his loyal ally Hamza Hamid Paşa as *Sadrizam*, whose elevation to that post was "universally" applauded in Istanbul.⁴³¹ The *Gazette* provided an obituary for Koca Ragıp Paşa's death, which was not unusual for sitting *Sadrizam*, however his

⁴²³ *Gazette de France*, 25 avril 1763, 155.

⁴²⁴ Virginia H. Aksan, *An Ottoman Statesman in War and Peace: Ahmed Resmi Efendi, 1700-1783* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 68.

⁴²⁵ *Gazette de France*, 26 aoust 1763, 300.

⁴²⁶ *Gazette de France*, 23 septembre 1763, 331.

⁴²⁷ *Gazette de France*, 21 octobre 1763, 564.

⁴²⁸ *Gazette de France*, 13 mai 1763, 117.

⁴²⁹ *Gazette de France*, 23 mai 1763, 189.

⁴³⁰ *Gazette de France*, 18 mars 1763, 95.

⁴³¹ *Gazette de France*, 23 mai 1763, 189.

obituary was more of an eulogy, which is odd considering France's difficult relations with the Ottoman Empire during his tenure as *Sadrizam*.⁴³² Koca Ragıp Paşa's assets were seized by the Porte and the *sarraf* and people involved in his administration were arrested, including the father-in-law of Mouradgea d'Ohsson,⁴³³ the Voyvoda of Galata, and two Genevan merchants.⁴³⁴ However one of the people that had ties to Koca Ragıp Paşa's house and administration, a certain Ali Ağa, was strangled on May 18th 1763, and his body was exposed in the first court of Topkapı with a warning stating that "the Persian Ali has been put to death for extorting the people and for his treachery."⁴³⁵ The Armenian *sarrafs*, including the father-in-law of Mouradgea d'Ohsson, were liberated from prison by the Porte, and so the affairs related to Koca Ragıp Paşa's wealth and succession were at an end.⁴³⁶ Unfortunately no details were provided on the impact or role that his widow Saliha Sultan had in the arrests, and whether or not it was an attempt by her or her brother the Sultan to protect her wealth from her late husband's family or retainers.

The brief tenure of Hamza Hamid Paşa (April 8th-October 31st 1763) as *Sadrizam* was surprisingly consequential, as he enacted an Imperial Decree or Hatt-ı Şerif⁴³⁷ that ordered that all fraudulent or debased coins be sent to the Mint to be remade, and ordered merchants not to use debased coins.⁴³⁸ He also had to deal with the return from exile of the former Greek Orthodox Patriarch Cyril V of Constantinople (1748-1751, 1752-1757),

⁴³² *Gazette de France*, 23 mai 1763, 189.

⁴³³ Carter Vaughn Findley, *Enlightening Europe on Islam and the Ottomans: Mouradgea d'Ohsson and his Masterpiece* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 18-19.

⁴³⁴ *Gazette de France*, 10 juin 1763, 211.

⁴³⁵ *Gazette de France*, 11 juillet 1763, 247.

⁴³⁶ *Gazette de France*, 19 août 1763, 291.

⁴³⁷ *Kats-Cherif*.

⁴³⁸ *Gazette de France*, 28 novembre 1763, 407.

who tried to start a riot against the current Patriarch Samuel I Chatzeres (1763-1768) in order to reinstall himself Patriarch. However the Greek Orthodox Church moved immediately against him, removed all of his religious responsibilities and authorities, and asked the Porte to deal with him. As a result he was exiled to Mount Sinai,⁴³⁹ on the Red Sea, where he would be guarded.⁴⁴⁰ Besides these issues, Hamza Hamid Paşa was responsible for sending Ahmed Resmi Efendi to Prussia, and he was dismissed by Mustafa III on October 31st. He was however treated with honor by the Sultan, who seemed to have appreciated his services, but may have viewed him as not being the right man to be *Sadrizam* as some people felt that he was not necessarily a strong one.⁴⁴¹ Mustafa III made him Governor of Crete, he did not confiscate his goods, and even gave him 40 000 guruş, which strongly suggested that he had appreciated his services.⁴⁴² Hamza Hamid Paşa was replaced by Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa (1752-1755, April 30th-December 3rd 1756, and 1763-1765), who was the only three time *Sadrizam* of the 18th century with Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa. With the dismissal of Hamza Hamid Paşa, the early reign of Mustafa III had come to an end, the remainder of his reign would be dominated by powerful brothers-in-laws and sons-in-laws, his sisters, the Polish question, and ultimately the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774. The *Gazette* did not provide enough information on the era of Mehmed Ragıp Paşa due to the Seven Years' War, his reign as *Sadrizam* established an era of political and social stability at the center of the Ottoman Empire.

⁴³⁹ By coincidence Carsten Niebuhr and his 4 Danish colleagues were actually in Mount Sinai, but would have left by the time Cyril V would have arrived there.

⁴⁴⁰ *Gazette de France*, 28 novembre 1763, 407.

⁴⁴¹ Marsangy, *Le Chevalier de Vergennes: Tome II*, 232-233.

⁴⁴² *Gazette de France*, 9 décembre 1763, 421.

2.12 Conclusion

This chapter examined the Ottoman Empire's diplomatic relations with European powers throughout the later reign of Mahmud I and the reigns of Osman III and the early reign of Mustafa III. The reign of Mahmud I after the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739 was quite innovative in terms of Ottoman uses and experimentations with diplomacy. It sent the embassy of Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa to France between 1741-1742, which proved to be an Ottoman diplomatic triumph and left a lasting impression on Louis XV throughout the remainder of his reign. The Ottoman Empire attempted to improve its financial situation in order to better finance its war against Nader Shah between 1743-1746 by offering its mediation to the belligerent powers of the Austrian War of Succession in February 1745. Although rejected by the European powers, it was an innovative way to try to improve its position against its enemy in Nader Shah, and it demonstrated the negative impact that the Austrian War of Succession had had on the Ottoman center, namely that it had caused a decline in trade and had led to inflation in European goods in the Ottoman capital and throughout most of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire's capable use of a diplomatic bluff throughout 1749-1750 to help stop Russia's invasion of Sweden, by invoking its diplomatic and military obligations to Sweden if Russia invaded, helped prevent a war from erupting. It may not have been the primary reason for the prevention of a Swedish-Russian war between 1749-1750, but it certainly did play a role in the calculations of Russia and the other European powers involved.

It further examined the role of Ishak Ağa one of the key figures of the reign of Mahmud I, he was instrumental in some of the elements of the *Ahidname* given to France in 1740, he also played a key role in the Ottoman offer in mediation in 1745. This chapter then discussed the Seven Years' War and it ended with the death of Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa, whose accession and marriage with Saliha Sultan in 1758 led to the rise of new kinds of statesmen during the reign of Mustafa III, namely the brothers-in-law, which be analyzed in depth in a later chapter. This chapter examined the Ottoman Empire's use of diplomacy within the European ways of doing diplomacy, the next chapter will deal with the Ottoman Empire's use of diplomacy with Europe on its own terms.

CHAPTER III

The Ottoman Empire, France, and Malta between 1740-1774

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the Ottoman Empire's use of diplomacy with Europe from Istanbul and analyzes the triangular relationship between the Ottoman Empire, Malta, and France. The Ottoman Empire's antagonistic relationship with Malta and its Christian corsairs is famous, their 18th century dynamics is however not well known. This chapter will discuss a series of major events and affairs that occurred between the Ottoman Empire and Malta that involved France along with the Ottoman Empire's relationship with corsairing in the Mediterranean during this period. Several cases Ottoman-Maltese affairs like the Paşa of Rhodes incident of 1748-1751 or the Incident of 1760-1762 had major repercussions for France and the Italian peninsula. These two cases illustrated the Ottoman Empire's effective use of diplomacy from Istanbul in getting what it wanted

from a power by just using the threat of violence on another power. The Ottomans did so by getting France to do what it wanted from Malta by threatening France with major diplomatic and commercial consequences if it did not get Malta to do what the Porte wanted in both cases.

The Tunis-Algiers War of 1755-1756 and the role that both the Porte and Malta played in it will also be examined as well as the career of Cafer Bey, a prototypical Ottoman corsair. This chapter will then end with the impact that the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 had on Ottoman-Maltese relations and on the Mediterranean as a whole, interestingly Malta stayed neutral during the war. This chapter will then end with a conclusion discussion the end of the traditional corsair era as a result of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774, which fundamentally changed the dynamic in both the Eastern and Western Mediterranean, which ultimately led to powers like Malta losing relevance in the region.

3.2 Malta and the Paşa of Rhodes Incident, 1748-1751

The Malta incident of 1748-1751 was one of the major diplomatic issues that the Ottomans faced during the interwar period between the end of the Austrian War of Succession in 1748 and the start of the Seven Years' War in 1756. Besides the *Sadrazam* Seyyid Abdullah Paşa (1747-1750), the main diplomatic actor in this event was the newly arrived French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, the comte des Alleurs (1747-1754), who received his audience with Seyyid Abdullah Paşa and Sultan Mahmud on the 23rd

and 24th of October 1747.⁴⁴³ Franco-Ottoman relations would reach their height in the 18th century under des Alleurs, who proved to be a capable ambassador and diplomat in Istanbul, and seems to have used his Polish connections to further increase French influence over the Porte.⁴⁴⁴ Des Alleurs knew how to impress the Ottomans and how to make France seem like the most powerful and wealthiest state in Europe, he did so by spending a large amount of money on gifts and on appearances.⁴⁴⁵ These certainly worked as he acquired close ties to along with insider knowledge and access to Moralı Beşir Ağa,⁴⁴⁶ İshak Ağa,⁴⁴⁷ and with Seyyid Abdullah Paşa's successors Divitdar Mehmed Emin Paşa,⁴⁴⁸ and Çorlulu Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa in his first Sadrazamlık (1752-1754).⁴⁴⁹ He further strengthened French ties with the Swedish, Neapolitan, and Prussian ambassadors, he also continued to maintain good relations with Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa among other figures.⁴⁵⁰ His wife being a woman of high noble birth from Poland, played an important role in his diplomacy by inviting the wives of powerful Ottoman figures to the *Palais de France* as was the case for Moralı Beşir Ağa's harem which visited her,⁴⁵¹ or when she visited the harem of the wife of Bahir Mustafa Paşa in 1752, which the *Gazette* wrote a detailed rubric about it.⁴⁵² The role of his wife on his diplomatic maneuvers will be discussed in a later chapter.

⁴⁴³ *Gazette de France*, 16 décembre 1747, 598-599.

⁴⁴⁴ Boutaric, *Correspondance secrète et inédites de Louis XV: Tome I*, 198-199.

⁴⁴⁵ *Gazette de France*, 22 aout 1750, 398-399.

⁴⁴⁶ Alfred de Curzon, "L'Ambassade du comte des Alleurs à Constantinople (1747-1754)," *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique* 28, No. 1 (1914-1915):443-450.

⁴⁴⁷ *Gazette de France*, 21 septembre 1754, 445.

⁴⁴⁸ *Gazette de France*, 28 février 1750, 97-98.

⁴⁴⁹ *Gazette de France*, 31 mars 1753, 145-146.

⁴⁵⁰ Mme du Deffand, *Correspondance inédite de Mme du Deffand: Tome I*, 338-339.

⁴⁵¹ Curzon, "L'Ambassade du comte des Alleurs," 443-450.

⁴⁵² *Gazette de France*, 31 mars 1753, 145-146.

It should not come as a surprise that des Alleurs came close into signing a Franco-Ottoman alliance on two separate occasions, but which never fully materialized as result of either French or Ottoman lost of interests,⁴⁵³ or in his sudden death and the Diplomatic Revolution changing the dynamics between the two states.⁴⁵⁴ Whereas in the late 1730s France under Cardinal de Fleury (1653-1743) had outright rejected an alliance with the Ottoman Empire during the Polish War of Succession (1733-1735),⁴⁵⁵ France after 1743 was now under the direct rule of Louis XV who was clearly open to such a possibility.⁴⁵⁶ Louis XV was receptive to an alliance because he grew up in an era when the Ottoman Empire was one of the Great Powers in Europe, but no longer the threat to Christendom that it had previously been.

Prior to having started reading the *Gazette*, this author had read about the Paşa of Rhodes Incident in 1748-1751 in a French article written in 1932,⁴⁵⁷ which was along with Alfred de Curzon's article on the comte des Alleurs (1747-1754) the only "modern" secondary sources written on this topic.⁴⁵⁸ The *Vakanüvis* briefly mention the incident, but they were official works that could not openly discuss at length details of this affair, which had been an embarrassment for the Porte and it caused a minor diplomatic crisis in Franco-Ottoman relations.⁴⁵⁹ It illustrated that the Porte fully understood that Malta's patron was ultimately France, and that if they exerted pressure on France, then they could get what they wanted from Malta. They would in turn repeat this tactic against France

⁴⁵³ Curzon, "L'Ambassade du comte des Alleurs," 425-426.

⁴⁵⁴ Marsangy, *Le Chevalier de Vergennes: Tome I*, 347-349.

⁴⁵⁵ Vandal, *Une Ambassade française en Orient sous Louis XV*, 236-237.

⁴⁵⁶ Didier Ozanam et Michel Antoine eds., *Correspondance Secrète du comte de Broglie avec Louis XV (1756-1774): Tome II* (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1956), 272-273.

⁴⁵⁷ L. Celier, "La conjuration du Pacha de Rhodes (1748-1751)," *Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de France*, Vol. 69, No. 1 (1932), 102-114.

⁴⁵⁸ Alfred de Curzon, "L'Ambassade du comte des Alleurs à Constantinople (1747-1754)." *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique*, 28 année, No. 1, 392-459.

⁴⁵⁹ Celier, "La Conjuraction du Pacha de Rhodes," 113.

during the 1760-1762 Ottoman-Maltese Incident, when Christian corsairs took the Kapudan Paşa's ship and brought it to Malta.

The Paşa of Rhodes Incident began in 1748, a bit less than a year after the comte des Alleurs appointment as replacement to the comte de Castellane as French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire. Des Alleurs had more extensive powers than had had his predecessor the comte de Castellane, whose patron had been the now deceased Cardinal Fleury.⁴⁶⁰ Des Alleurs had ties to Madame de Pompadour's extended circle, and it appears as well the marquis de Puisieulx, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs between 1747-1751, and one of Madame de Pompadour's chief advisors on foreign affairs throughout the 1750s.⁴⁶¹ His wife as a result of her family, the Lubomirskis, was a known figure of interest to the Ottomans, thus des Alleurs had a unique advantage in that he could not only help further Franco-Ottoman relations, he could also help further extend Franco-Ottoman-Polish relations and ties.

The Paşa of Rhodes Incident began on February 2nd 1748, the Maltese forces had found a ship that was poorly managed on the coast of the island of Gozzo in Malta, they quickly seized it and found former Christian slaves of mostly Hungarian, Balkan, and even Maltese origins in control of the ship.⁴⁶² However, what was most interesting was that one of the few Muslim captives on that ship was Mustafa Paşa, the Paşa of Rhodes, whose ship had been taken by these Christian slaves.⁴⁶³ Earlier in January 1748, the Christian slaves on that ship had taken over the ship, when the signal "Vive Saint-

⁴⁶⁰ D'Argenson, *Journal et Mémoires: Tome III*, 115-117.

⁴⁶¹ D'Argenson, *Journal et Mémoires: Tome IX*, 187.

⁴⁶² Celier, "La Conjuration du Pacha de Rhodes," 103-104.

⁴⁶³ Celier, "La Conjuration du Pacha de Rhodes," 103-104.

Jean”⁴⁶⁴ was yelled out, they seized weapons, took over the ship and killed or threw overboard nearly all of the Turks or Muslims on board, with the exception of 22 of them, who were enslaved.⁴⁶⁵ They then brought the ship to Malta on the 2nd of February, and by March of 1748 the Porte began to show its displeasure at the course of events to European ambassadors.⁴⁶⁶

As the comte de Castellane had his farewell audience with the *Sadrazam* Seyyid Abdullah Paşa at the start of May of 1748, letters from Mustafa Paşa, the captive in Malta and who was described as the son of a former Kapudan Paşa,⁴⁶⁷ who was a certain Süleyman Paşa.⁴⁶⁸ It became clear that he was the son of Süleyman Paşa, the Kapudan between 1737-1740, which the *Sicill-i Osmani* confirmed.⁴⁶⁹ What makes this even more interesting, is that according to Hammer, and unbeknownst to him, in his biography of Melek Mehmed Paşa that he put at the appendix at the end of the 16th volume of his History of the Ottoman Empire, Hammer also claimed that Melek Mehmed Paşa was the son of the Kapudan Paşa between 1737-1740 Süleyman Paşa.⁴⁷⁰ Thus in an odd twist, the Paşa of Rhodes who was captured by Christian slaves, and subsequently became a prisoner of Malta, was the son of the Kapudan Paşa Süleyman Paşa, the brother of Melek Mehmed Paşa who was Kapudan Paşa on three different occasions (1752-1754, 1767-1768, and in 1774) along with being the *Kaymakam* (1769-1773/1774) for the near entirety of the Russo-Ottoman War. In addition to all of this, Melek Mehmed Paşa was married to Zeynep Sultan (1715-1774) from 1764 until her death in 1774, which meant

⁴⁶⁴ Long live Saint-John!

⁴⁶⁵ *Gazette de France*, 30 mars 1748, 156.

⁴⁶⁶ *Gazette de France*, 4 may 1748, 213-214.

⁴⁶⁷ *Gazette de France*, 6 juillet 1748, 321-322.

⁴⁶⁸ Celier, “La Conjuration du Pacha de Rhodes,” 104.

⁴⁶⁹ Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, 5. Cilt, 1543.

⁴⁷⁰ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman: Tome XVI*, 491.

that the man responsible for one of the more embarrassing diplomatic events of the Ottoman Empire between 1740-1787 was the brother-in-law of one of the Ottoman Princesses, who was the sister of Sultans Mustafa III and Abdülhamid I.⁴⁷¹

By the start of May 1748, Mustafa Paşa, the Paşa of Rhodes, was in the captivity of the Grand Master of Malta, and he wrote letters to Istanbul to inform the Porte that he was being well treated by the Maltese.⁴⁷² In the same rubric of the same issue in which this information was published, the *Gazette* stated that Sultan Mahmud I was counting on French mediation to bring back the Paşa of Rhodes to Istanbul.⁴⁷³ By December 1748, the *Gazette* was disqualifying rumors of Ottoman military mobilization for war and of a potential Ottoman attacks on Malta, it stated that these rumors were simply unfounded and that the Ottoman navy was in no condition for such an expedition.⁴⁷⁴ Later in its May 17th 1749 issue, the *Gazette* reporting from Malta further dispelled any notion of a potential Ottoman attack on the Island, stating that the Maltese themselves were not worried about a potential invasion,⁴⁷⁵ which contrasted sharply with Malta and most of Italy's mobilization against such a threat in the years 1760-1762. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Porte under *Sadrizam* Seyyid Abdullah Paşa (1747-1750) was neither particularly focused on Malta, nor on a potential Russo-Swedish War from breaking out between 1749-1750, whose negotiations with Sweden about the Swedish-Ottoman alliance of 1739 were still ongoing at the end of July 1749.⁴⁷⁶ Seyyid Abdullah Paşa and the Porte were focused instead on a potential Janissary rebellion, which they

⁴⁷¹ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} avril 1765, 101.

⁴⁷² *Gazette de France*, 6 juillet 1748, 321-322.

⁴⁷³ *Gazette de France*, 6 juillet 1748, 321-322.

⁴⁷⁴ *Gazette de France*, 21 décembre 1748, 609-610.

⁴⁷⁵ *Gazette de France*, 17 mai 1749, 256.

⁴⁷⁶ *Gazette de France*, 9 août 1749, 401-402.

were busy suppressing any possibility of it occurring, and which led to the execution of some 40 men at the start of May 1749.⁴⁷⁷ Later in June of 1749, Istanbul faced significant inflation in the prices of basic goods, which further led to seditious plots and conspiracies against Seyyid Abdullah Paşa, which were becoming increasingly openly vocal about his administration's management of the prices of goods in the Ottoman capital.⁴⁷⁸ However so far the Paşa of Rhodes incident was a minor affair, but the events that would transpire on June 6th 1749 would turn the incident into a major event for the Ottomans, Malta, and France.

On the 6th of June 1749 the Grand Master of Malta uncovered a plot to assassinate him and by which the slaves would then massacre all of the Knights of Malta and take over the island, and then give the island to the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁷⁹ They had hidden arms all over the island including even in the Grand Master's palace for months and had relied on an African man or slave as their go between. They had tried to get a Greek merchant to help them take over the island, but he informed the Knights of Malta about the conspiracy and they quickly moved to suppress it.⁴⁸⁰ However a later issue of the *Gazette* stated that it was a Jew that had recently converted to Christianity that had told the Grand Master about the conspiracy.⁴⁸¹ This was not the first attempt by Maltese slaves from rebelling against the Knights of Malta, as one attempt at a rebellion on a Maltese ship by its slaves had failed in the summer of 1747.⁴⁸² The interrogation of the various participants in the failed conspiracy to take over the island of Malta led to all the fingers

⁴⁷⁷ *Gazette de France*, 12 juillet 1749, 349-350.

⁴⁷⁸ *Gazette de France*, 2 aout 1749, 392-393.

⁴⁷⁹ *Gazette de France*, 2 aout 1749, 391-392.

⁴⁸⁰ *Gazette de France*, 2 aout 1749, 391-392.

⁴⁸¹ *Gazette de France*, 9 aout 1749, 403-405.

⁴⁸² *Gazette de France*, 26 aout 1749, 410-411.

pointing to the Paşa of Rhodes as being its chief architect.⁴⁸³ Mustafa Paşa had been a prisoner on Malta for over a year by the start of the summer of 1749 and he had been released from jail, but remained a prisoner on the island, naturally his major role in the conspiracy led to his transfer to the Fort of Saint-Elmo. The initial plan of the rebels was to poison the Grand Master and the water in the aqueducts of Malta,⁴⁸⁴ but the difficulty of such a plan led to the new plan which was the uncovered conspiracy, namely of massacring the Knights of Malta. The plan was to kill the Grand Master, then to start a fire in various neighborhoods and on ships to distract the Knights of Malta, the slaves would then have taken up their weapons against the Knights and massacred them. They then would have massacred the population that had previously treated them poorly, looted the island, and then would have given it to Malta's enemies. The day of the rebellion would either have been when most of the Maltese galleys had returned from their expeditions, or on June 29th, the day of celebration for Saint-Peter.⁴⁸⁵ Along with Mustafa Paşa, the main actors of this conspiracy were Kara Ahmed an African tied to the Grand Master, many of his servants, most of the Turks or Muslims on the Island, along with a few Greeks and Christians from the Ottoman Empire had also been involved in the conspiracy.⁴⁸⁶ In total over 1 500 slaves were said to have been involved in the conspiracy and it was found that Mustafa Paşa had been the head of it.⁴⁸⁷ After the conspiracy was uncovered, the Grand Master wrote a letter to all of the various captains of ships informing them that many of their slaves had been involved in the conspiracy.⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁸³ *Gazette de France*, 9 aout 1749, 403-405.

⁴⁸⁴ *Gazette de France*, 22 novembre 1749, 584-585.

⁴⁸⁵ *Gazette de France*, 9 aout 1749, 403-405.

⁴⁸⁶ *Gazette de France*, 9 aout 1749, 403-405.

⁴⁸⁷ *Gazette de France*, 23 aout 1749, 425-426.

⁴⁸⁸ *Gazette de France*, 9 aout 1749, 403-405.

The Knights of Malta's punishment towards the conspirators were brutal forms of executions, there were two major nameless conspirators after the Paşa of Rhodes, the first of them was executed by wheel, and begged to be converted to Christianity, which he was and was baptized before he died. The second conspirator was executed by dismemberment, unlike his co-conspirator, he refused to convert to Christianity.⁴⁸⁹ The judges appointed to deal with this conspiracy found 80 accomplices and determined that Mustafa Paşa was in fact the ringleader of the whole plot, he had made numerous promises to slaves and had given gifts to foreign soldiers in Malta, and he had promised to the previously mentioned African man that he would get a promotion to an important post by the Ottoman Empire if their plan succeeded.⁴⁹⁰ A lot of the inhabitants and Knights of Malta wanted Mustafa Paşa to be executed, but the Grand Master, unsurprisingly refused to give permission to do so, which was one of the main reasons that he was kept in prison on Saint-Elmo. The Grand Master initially thought that the Ottoman Empire had been involved in the conspiracy, but quickly found out that it was not involved.⁴⁹¹ Mustafa Paşa prominent role caused a unique problem for the Maltese and the French, as he could not be executed unless the Porte gave them its permission to do so, as if Malta executed him then it would cause a major diplomatic crisis. Mustafa Paşa was an *ümera* or a member of the *askeri* class, he was the Ottoman equivalent of a nobleman, and thus his fate was in the hands of the Porte, he had initially asked to talk to the French chargé d'affaires to Malta, the Bailli du Bocage (1742-1752), but he refused to see the Paşa of Rhodes.⁴⁹² Four other leaders of the conspiracy were tortured by having

⁴⁸⁹ *Gazette de France*, 30 aout 1749, 436-438.

⁴⁹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 30 aout 1749, 436-438.

⁴⁹¹ *Gazette de France*, 30 aout 1749, 436-438.

⁴⁹² *Gazette de France*, 20 septembre 1749, 471-472.

boiling resin put on their bodies, once the torture was too much they were strangle and their bodies were burned. Two Jews and four Greeks were condemned to death for having recruited slaves into the conspiracy, they were put in sacs and thrown into the Mediterranean Sea.⁴⁹³ The execution of someone by drowning them by putting them into a sac and then throwing them into the sea seems to have been a Mediterranean wide form of execution, as the Ottomans in Istanbul also used it.⁴⁹⁴

Further restrictions were put on slaves and their ability to travel, and the judges along with the Grand Master definitely found proof of no Ottoman involvement in the conspiracy and stated as much to the public, thus Mustafa Paşa was found to have acted alone.⁴⁹⁵ By mid September 1749, the Knights of Malta continued to execute most of the people involved in the conspiracy by putting them in sacs and throwing them into the Mediterranean to drown, they also offered 1000 pieces of silver⁴⁹⁶ to any slaves that reported on a future conspiracy or plot against them.⁴⁹⁷ At the end of October 1749, the *Gazette* reported that the Porte was embarrassed by the events that transpired in Malta and of Mustafa Paşa's role in them, especially since he was tied to important people like his father the late Süleyman Paşa and his brother Melek Mehmed Paşa, and possibly other figures that are not currently known. The *Gazette* then mentioned that the *Sadrizam* Seyyid Abdullah Paşa was putting a lot of pressure on the French ambassador the comte

⁴⁹³ *Gazette de France*, 20 septembre 1749, 471-472.

⁴⁹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 3 juillet 1769, 213.

⁴⁹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 20 septembre 1749, 471-472.

⁴⁹⁶ 1000 écus.

⁴⁹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 18 octobre 1749, 524.

des Alleurs, to repatriate Mustafa Paşa and presumably end this embarrassing event for the Porte.⁴⁹⁸

After this issue of the *Gazette de France* from October 25th 1749, the *Gazette* stopped covering the events that ensued concerning the Paşa of Rhodes. This is unsurprising as it was an embarrassment for all of the players involved, it was embarrassing for the Ottoman Empire for one of its Paşa's to have been captured by corsairs and brought to Malta. It was embarrassing for Malta as it could not execute the ringleader of a major conspiracy to kill the Grand Master of the Order of Malta, in other words Mustafa Paşa attempted to commit regicide,⁴⁹⁹ which was forbidden as a concept by all. France was embarrassed by this situation as Seyyid Abdullah Paşa (1747-1750) and his successor Divitdar Mehmed Emin Paşa (1750-1752) both put major pressure on France to repatriate Mustafa Paşa. The problem for France was if it did not do so it risked jeopardizing its privileged relationship with the Ottoman Empire and damaging its influence in Eastern Europe. But this situation also forced France to request Malta to release a man who attempted to commit regicide, which was deeply taboo and unacceptable in any other circumstances, it also could be a major embarrassment for France if knowledge of France's help in releasing Mustafa Paşa became public. Ultimately what happened was that in September of 1750, Louis XV personally talked to the Bailli de Froullay, the Maltese ambassador at Versailles, and asked him to have this "monster" escape or evade Malta.⁵⁰⁰ If the Grand Master did so, then Louis XV promised him a personal favor in return, and paid 8000 sequins for his liberation.⁵⁰¹ Finally on

⁴⁹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 25 octobre 1749, 529-530.

⁴⁹⁹ D'Argenson, *Journal et Mémoires: Tome VI*, 12.

⁵⁰⁰ Celier, "La Conjuración du Pacha de Rhodes," 113.

⁵⁰¹ Curzon, "L'Ambassade du comte des Alleurs," 429-430.

March 12th 1751, the marquis de Puisieulx, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of France (1747-1751), had arranged for his valet to get Mustafa Paşa out of Malta, which he did.⁵⁰² Later that year Mustafa Paşa arrived in Istanbul and spent the rest of his life living in relative obscurity as neither the French nor the Porte wanted any ties to him.⁵⁰³ The *Gazette* eventually published a rubric on his death, and which stated that the Paşa of Rhodes had died in relative obscurity at the end of February 1763,⁵⁰⁴ thus he did not live long enough to see the rise of brother, Melek Mehmed Paşa, marry Zeynep Sultan and become one of the most powerful figures in Istanbul between the mid 1760s to the mid 1770s.

The curious case of the Paşa of Rhodes' capture by Christian slaves who brought him to Malta in 1748, only for him to lead a major conspiracy in an attempt to kill the Grand Master of Malta and take over the island was a curious page in 18th century Ottoman diplomatic history and in Franco-Ottoman relations. It demonstrated the importance and influence that the Ottoman Empire held over France by the mid 18th century, as its ability to get a failed regicide to be simultaneously released by another power, albeit one that was nearly a vassal state of France, and to have him be returned safely to Istanbul shows that the Ottoman Empire had clout over France. As it will be demonstrated in the 1760-1762 Maltese Incident, in the mid 18th century the Ottomans were quite capable at using diplomacy in Istanbul as a means to avoid using violence against another European power, they mainly used the threat to their commercial relations along with the threat of hurting the prestige of that European Power's

⁵⁰² Celier, "La Conjuration du Pacha de Rhodes," 114.

⁵⁰³ Celier, "La Conjuration du Pacha de Rhodes," 114.

⁵⁰⁴ *Gazette de France*, 11 avril 1763, 137.

diplomatic representative, in this case France, to get what they wanted peacefully. This may not necessarily have been standard European diplomatic practice but it worked quite well for the Ottoman Empire during this period.

Arguably as equally important as the Ottoman Empire's ability to effectively use diplomatic pressure from Istanbul, was the Porte's discomfort with Mustafa Paşa's actions.⁵⁰⁵ It tells us that the Sublime Porte, like its European contemporaries were unsurprisingly hostile towards the concept of regicide, even when attempted by one of their own high profile figures against a person or state that was viewed as being hostile and a nuisance, as was the case with Malta. Although Mustafa Paşa may have subsequently gotten a decent career as a member of the *ümera*, from all the sources that this author had access to, they are either silent on his life after 1751 or state they he lived in obscurity for the rest of his life.⁵⁰⁶ Considering that this author had discovered, by the use of contemporary European sources and some material from Hammer, that he was the brother of Melek Mehmed Paşa, who became one of the key figures of Mustafa III's reign, it seems quite clear that Mustafa Paşa's behavior had breached a moral line for the Sublime Porte as well. But the Porte also refused to allow him to be executed or stay a prisoner of Malta's for an overly long period of time, this also tells us something about the Sublime Porte's mindset during the mid 18th century. Namely, that a disgraced Paşa was still nonetheless a Paşa, and thus his rank provided him certain privileges even if he was a disgraced figure. This has some interesting parallels with the nobility in Western Europe during the same period, as even if they crossed certain moral lines, they still had certain privileges that required a certain overlooking of their disgrace. This author is not

⁵⁰⁵ *Gazette de France*, 25 octobre 1749, 529-530.

⁵⁰⁶ *Gazette de France*, 11 avril 1763, 137.

saying that the Ottoman political elites necessarily had the same “rights” or status as European nobles in Western Europe, but merely that there were certain interesting patterns that they had in common by the mid 18th century. This author also wishes to emphasize again, that the Ottomans successfully repatriated a Paşa who had attempted to commit regicide, which was a social and political taboo both for Western Europe but for the Sublime Porte as well. Their diplomatic clout with France was able to get him repatriated at no real cost for the Porte, while France was able to relatively smoothly get him out of Malta due to its own clout and influence over Malta. The Ottomans were able to get Louis XV to ask the Grand Master of Malta to release a man who attempted to kill him, a concept deeply taboo to both men involved, all in order to keep good diplomatic and commercial ties with the Ottoman Empire.

3.3 Malta and the Tunis-Algiers War of 1755-1756

The year 1755 was somewhat of a destabilizing period for Algiers as in December of 1754, its Bey Mohammed Ibn Bekir (1748-1754), had been violently assassinated when he was distributing the payment to the militias and soldiers. The man who assassinated the Bey, was immediately killed along with his faction, and the head of the Cavalry, Babi Ali (1754-1766),⁵⁰⁷ was proclaimed the new Bey by the soldiers and the population.⁵⁰⁸ In 1755 under the command of *Kapudan Paşa*’s nephew, Karabağlı Süleyman Paşa, two ships from the Ottoman fleet arrived in Algiers in order to supply it

⁵⁰⁷ Ali Effendi Aga, Général de la Cavalerie Maure.

⁵⁰⁸ *Gazette de France*, 22 février 1755, 93.

with munitions and military equipment and with the orders of forcing Algiers to make peace with both the Dutch and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.⁵⁰⁹ The reason why it wanted peace between Algiers, the Dutch, and Tuscany was for commercial reasons, as the Ottomans, both Turks and Armenians used Dutch ships and ships from Livorno to transport their goods through the Ottoman Empire and to Europe during this period.⁵¹⁰ The Porte further ordered its Kapudan *Paşa* Karabağlı Süleyman Paşa to protect Greece and Dutch ships in the Eastern Mediterranean from Algerian corsairs.⁵¹¹

Malta played a surprising role in the years 1755-1756 as it became an ally and rescuer of the Bey of Tunis against the Bey of Algiers. In December 1755 Tunis declared war on Algiers,⁵¹² at the start of January 1756 Tripoli had joined the side of Tunis against Algiers,⁵¹³ and by February 1756 both corsair states were mobilizing for war.⁵¹⁴ In April of 1756, the Bey of Tunis Sidi Mohamed⁵¹⁵ forced the Bey of Constantine to retreat to the mountains away from Tunis,⁵¹⁶ but by July of that year the Bey of Tunis stayed in the capital while his rival was besieging a fortress⁵¹⁷ near the capital of Tunis.⁵¹⁸ By July 18th 1756 Algiers had taken the besieged fortress along with another one, executing their garrisons, and went to the front of the city of Tunis. A lot of this city's population began to send their goods out of town, and Malta had begun preparing in case Tunis fell.⁵¹⁹ On August 24th the Bailli de Fleury, the Maltese military commander, had arrived at the

⁵⁰⁹ *Gazette de France*, 23 aout 1755, 402.

⁵¹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 31 mai 1755, 253.

⁵¹¹ *Gazette de France*, 14 juin 1755, 282-283.

⁵¹² *Gazette de France*, 10 janvier 1756, 20.

⁵¹³ *Gazette de France*, 24 janvier 1756, 41.

⁵¹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 20 mars 1756, 140.

⁵¹⁵ Sidy Mahomet.

⁵¹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 22 mai 1756, 245.

⁵¹⁷ *La forteresse de Steff*.

⁵¹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 7 aout 1756, 376.

⁵¹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 28 aout 1756, 409-410.

Tunisian port of La Goulette and had repulsed the Algerian corsairs coming for Tunis, they received for the serives the release of all Maltese slaves and of a lot of Christian slaves from the Bey of Tunis.⁵²⁰ On September 1st the Bailli de Fleury was informed that Algiers was on the brink of taking Tunis and Malta prepared to rescue key figures of the Bey's family and administration. On the 2nd of September at 7.30 in the morning, four ministers of the Bey of Tunis that had been saved by Malta, told them of the complete defeat of the Bey of Tunis and of the escape of most of his family.⁵²¹ He immediately ordered all Maltese ships to go to La Goulette, where 10 Algerian ships were located, and most were beaten back by Malta.⁵²² A rubric from Livorno that was dated to September 13th stated that the city of Tunis was besieged and that its Bey had fled to Malta with 32 slaves and his treasury, this proved to be false.⁵²³ A rubric from the 44th issue of 1756, the same that had brought news about the escape of the Bey's family, had urgent news from a ship that had arrived from North Africa to Marseilles. It stated that the city of Tunis fell because of the betrayal of one of the Officers of the garrison who opened the doors of the city to the besieging army. The forces of Algiers took the Bey and his son,⁵²⁴ who they killed⁵²⁵ in front of his father, who was subsequently tortured in the hope of revealing where his treasure was hidden.⁵²⁶ The looting and pillaging of Tunis lasted 20 days, all of the homes and houses, including those of European consuls with the exception of the English Consul's were all pillaged by the Algerians.⁵²⁷ On November 30th 1756, a major figure from Tunis that had fled there had converted to Catholicism and would be

⁵²⁰ *Gazette de France*, 25 septembre 1756, 461.

⁵²¹ *Gazette de France*, 30 octobre 1756, 521-522.

⁵²² *Gazette de France*, 30 octobre 1756, 521-522.

⁵²³ *Gazette de France*, 2 octobre 1756, 478.

⁵²⁴ Ali Pasha.

⁵²⁵ ... il a été massacré en présence du père...

⁵²⁶ *Gazette de France*, 30 octobre 1756, 526-532.

⁵²⁷ *Gazette de France*, 4 décembre 1756, 587-588.

baptized by the Grand Master of Malta and Maria Amalia (1724-1760)⁵²⁸ the Queen of Naples and Sicily.⁵²⁹ After the pillaging of Tunis, Algiers established a vassal Bey there, and had begun making negotiations for peace with Tripoli by the end of November 1756.⁵³⁰ By the end of winter 1757, the French and the English were battling near Malta, and Algiers became hostile towards the Dutch.⁵³¹ As the Seven Years' War expanded in scope and intensity, the Porte was forced to intervene in favor of the Dutch and of the European consuls who were being harassed by the Algerians in Tunis, and ordered them to stop the violence against them.⁵³² Simultaneously Algiers was resolving its lingering issues with Tripoli,⁵³³ and by September 1757 serious negotiations between Algiers and the Dutch were underway.⁵³⁴

Interestingly outside of its intervention prior to the Tunis-Algiers War of 1755-1756, the *Gazette* made no mention of the Sublime Porte's involvement or opposition to the war between its two vassals. This may have been due to the plague which devastated the Ottoman Empire during this period.⁵³⁵ There was also a major fire in Istanbul in 1756 which was reported to have destroyed 12 000 houses and some 1000 inhabitants were killed in the fires.⁵³⁶ Thus the Porte might have been preoccupied with the Seven Years' War along with Istanbul centric problems, and so may not have been fully focused on the

⁵²⁸ Maria Amalia of Saxony was the daughter of the Elector of Saxony and king of Poland Augustus III (1733-1763). Her sister Marie-Josèphe became the Dauphine of France, when she married the Dauphin (Louis XV son) in 1767. This made Maria Amalia the aunt of Louis XVI, Louis XVIII, Charles X, Clotilde de France the Queen of Sardinia (1796-1802), and of Elisabeth de France. It should be reminded that Maria Amalia's husband was Carlos VII/V of Naples and Sicily (1735-1759) and then Carlos III king of Spain (1759-1788), he was also a Bourbon and was cousin of Louis XV.

⁵²⁹ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} janvier 1757, 7.

⁵³⁰ *Gazette de France*, 22 janvier 1757, 43.

⁵³¹ *Gazette de France*, 26 mars 1757, 151.

⁵³² *Gazette de France*, 9 juillet 1757, 325.

⁵³³ *Gazette de France*, 9 juillet 1757, 325.

⁵³⁴ *Gazette de France*, 24 septembre 1757, 467.

⁵³⁵ *Gazette de France*, 23 aout 1755, 402.

⁵³⁶ *Gazette de France*, 28 aout 1756, 409.

war between two of its vassals. It was only when the Algerian forces conquered Tunis and looted the various European consulates along with Algiers aggressive behavior towards the Dutch, that Osman III and the Porte reacted and ordered Algiers to stop these acts of aggression. However, whether or not Ottoman merchants were harmed in the siege and pillaging of Tunis is unknown, nor if there were internal Ottoman pressures that might have led Osman III and the Porte under Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa (April-December 1756) to have acted against Algiers. But the *Gazette* both because it was still a weekly paper, and not biweekly like the vast majority of gazettes of the 1750s, and due to a potential European “bias” might have led it to not focus on the Muslim or on the Ottoman angle in the whole Tunis-Algiers War of 1755-1756. There is also the fact that the Seven Years’ War had begun, a war that would almost immediately see its scope and intensity eclipse the War of Austrian Succession, which the *Gazette* reflected in its coverage of the war. Thus as Ottoman historians, we are somewhat lucky that the *Gazette* continued to cover this story in quite vivid details until the end of 1756, and gave some remnants of it in 1757. But this may have to do with the reality of the news “cycle” of the 18th century, as the months between the end of October to the start of April were the least news worthy because of winter. It’s one of the main reasons why the *Gazette* would publish statistical information throughout the months of January and February, partly because it was the start of the year, and partly because these months needed news stories to fill space as the *Gazette*’s standard issues between 1740-1761 had to be 12 pages long and those between 1762-1787 had to be 4 pages long.⁵³⁷ But overall the Tunis-Algiers War of 1755-1756 demonstrated how actively involved Malta could be in the political affairs of the North

⁵³⁷ Naturally the *Gazette*’s standard issues were 12 pages long before 1740, just like they continued to be 4 pages long after 1787. But these are not in the period of this study, nor has the author had the time to systematically read the issues before and after the period of 1740-1787.

African regencies while the Porte seemed to have remained mostly aloof to these conflicts until European pressure and currently unknown Ottoman pressures forced it to react at the end of 1756.

3.4 When Italy feared the Ottoman Empire: The Maltese-Ottoman Incident of 1760-1762

The 1760-1762 Ottoman-Maltese incident was discovered by this author when reading the *Gazette* during the year of 1760. The year began initially with a failed Muslim slave attempt to rebel and take over one of the galleys of Malta, only to be caught and swiftly punished.⁵³⁸ The story of a failed Muslim slave rebellion against Malta was very reminiscent of the Incident of 1748-1751, but unfortunately no details were given as to how the Muslim slaves were punished. The Ottoman-Maltese incident of 1760-1762 began in September 1760 at the island of İstanköy (Kos),⁵³⁹ the Kapudan Paşa Abdülkerim Paşa (May 17th -June 14th 1760⁵⁴⁰ to November 1760)⁵⁴¹ had gotten off his ship and left about 300 Turks or Muslims aboard to watch over the main ship.⁵⁴² Whereas Abdülkerim Paşa and his retinue went to the mosque for the Friday prayer,⁵⁴³ the Christian slaves attacked the ship and its crew and killed about 260 of them and threw

⁵³⁸ *Gazette de France*, 3 mai 1760, 211-212.

⁵³⁹ The *Gazette* called the island Stanchio.

⁵⁴⁰ Mehmed Hâkim Efendi, *Hâkim Efendi Tarihi: Cilt II*, ed. Tahir Güngör ve ed. Ziya Yılmaz (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2019), 948.

⁵⁴¹ *Gazette de France*, 13 décembre, 600. However the *Gazette* is very unclear if Abdülkerim Paşa is the one being deposed.

⁵⁴² *Gazette de France*, 22 novembre 1760, 564-565.

⁵⁴³ Mehmed Hâkim Efendi, *Hâkim Efendi Tarihi: Cilt II*, 974.

them over board, taking over the Kapudan Paşa's ship along with two caravels.⁵⁴⁴ They arrived 18 days later to Malta on October 6th, with 3 demands, namely that the five Turks that they had captured on their way to Malta be released, that they build a chapel, and that they be rewarded for bringing the Kapudan Paşa's ship. Malta initially agreed to these terms in return for acquiring the Kapudan Paşa's ship, which was built around 1757-1758, it had 74 bronze canons, and it had 40 Turkish slaves and 73 of the rebels.⁵⁴⁵ The captured ship had a very rich cargo, including a significant amount of silver, gold, and other precious goods.⁵⁴⁶ The *Gazette* does not mention this, but the archival sources that Marsangy used for his work on Vergennes stated that it was the Corsair Calamata from the Venetian island of Cerigo (Çuha Adası) that had earlier been captured by the Ottomans but had successfully led the rebellion overtaking the ship and bringing it to Malta.⁵⁴⁷

The Porte reacted severely by first executing Abdülkerim Paşa at some point between September 1760 to the early months of 1761 for losing his ship to the slaves who brought it to Malta.⁵⁴⁸ In late January or early February the Porte decided to start mobilizing its fleet to recapture the captured ship with the planned help from its vassals of Tunisia and Alger.⁵⁴⁹ By February 11th 1761, the French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, the comte de Vergennes (1755/1756-1768), was involved in the matter and attempted to dissuade the Porte from attacking Malta, while the Porte continued its

⁵⁴⁴ *Gazette de France*, 22 novembre 1760, 564-565.

⁵⁴⁵ *Gazette de France*, 22 novembre 1760, 564-565.

⁵⁴⁶ *Gazette de France*, 27 décembre 1760, 622-623.

⁵⁴⁷ Marsangy, *Le Chevalier de Vergennes: Tome II*, 116-117.

⁵⁴⁸ Şemdânîzâde, *Şemdânîzâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Târîhi: Mürîr-Tevârih*, Cilt II. A, ed. Münir Aktepe (İstanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Matbaası, 1976), 46.

⁵⁴⁹ *Gazette de France*, 7 mars 1761, 118-119.

mobilization.⁵⁵⁰ On March 1st Malta had liberated from slavery all of the Christian slaves from the Kapudan Paşa's ship, which was named "The Ottoman Crown,"⁵⁵¹ and hearing of Istanbul's mobilization it began its own and called out all of the Knights of the Order of Malta to come back to the island to prepare its defense.⁵⁵² Mustafa III at the end of February and in the month of March went on a near daily basis to visit the shipyard in Istanbul,⁵⁵³ he dismissed Mustafa Paşa as Kapudan Paşa, who seemed to have occupied this post on an interim basis, for Hacı Hasan Paşa at the end of February.⁵⁵⁴ On March 25th the *Gazette* reported from Ragusa (Dubrovnik), that between 8-10 Ottoman ships of the first order were ordered to be constructed for the upcoming campaign, but that the lack of sailors along with the lack of quality seamen along with its "dependence" on enslaved Christians prevented this from being realized. It further went on to state that Tunis had been ordered to be prepared to help the Ottoman fleet against Malta by the moon of Mars. Malta continued its own mobilization, its fortresses were being repaired, its financial officers had been ordered to take a loan from the Bank of Venice, and it had registered 15 000 men to defend the islands.⁵⁵⁵ At the start of May, the Papal States under Pope Clement XIII (1758-1769) had sent numerous grain ships to Malta to supply it against the Ottomans and had ordered to prepare the Papal States' navy for war against the Ottomans at Civitavecchia, Rome's main port city on the Tyrrhenian Sea.⁵⁵⁶ Naples under king Ferdinando IV (1759-1806), the third son of the king of Spain Carlos III

⁵⁵⁰ *Gazette de France*, 4 avril 1761, 161.

⁵⁵¹ *La couronne ottomane*.

⁵⁵² *Gazette de France*, 4 avril 1761, 162.

⁵⁵³ *Gazette de France*, 25 avril 1761, 197.

⁵⁵⁴ Mehmed Hâkim Efendi, *Hâkim Efendi Tarihi: Cilt II*, 994.

⁵⁵⁵ *Gazette de France*, 9 mai 1761, 224-225.

⁵⁵⁶ *Gazette de France*, 23 mai 1761, 254-256.

(1759-1788), who previously had been king of Naples between 1735-1759,⁵⁵⁷ was afraid of an Ottoman invasion of Malta,⁵⁵⁸ the kingdom of Naples and Sicily was the protector of Malta, which was located between the two kingdoms. By May 13th, the *Gazette* reported from Naples that the Ottoman fleet had been armed and amassed 20 ships-of-the-line, 30 galleys, and 200 transport ships.⁵⁵⁹ The *Gazette*'s June 6th issue related that Malta's envoy was at Civitavecchia organizing the Knights' of Malta that were in Italy to return to Malta, while Naples was sending 30 000 sacks of grains and 3000 men to Malta, which had 3000 knights and 15 000 soldiers, and in addition to all of this 2 Spanish War ships were cruising the region between Malta and Sicily.⁵⁶⁰ The same issue reported from Venice that the Porte was divided over what to do in the upcoming summer campaign, that it lacked artillery and supplies to make a major naval campaign and that the size of the ships amassed were too small for a potential invasion of Malta and more in line with an expedition in the Black Sea.⁵⁶¹ The issue of June 20th, announced from the Warsaw rubric that the Ottoman fleet with a relatively modest amount of ships was going on an expedition like it usually did to the Greek Islands in the Aegean and to the Eastern Mediterranean. It explained that this change of heart was due to the Ottoman Empire's past failures in conquering Malta, which had led to its lack of motivation in mobilizing a

⁵⁵⁷ Carlos III was the third son of Felipe V (1700-1746) the first Bourbon king of Spain and Louis XV's uncle, thus making Carlos III Louis XV's cousin. Carlos III was king Naples and Sicily (1735-1759) and was simultaneously the man that established official diplomatic relations between the Ottoman Empire and Naples in 1740, receiving an Ottoman ambassador in 1742; and also the king that established official diplomatic relations between the Ottoman Empire and Spain, receiving Ahmed Vasif Efendi in 1786-1787. Carlos III was an important figure in the history of Italy, Iberia, and the Americas, but he also played an important role in Ottoman commercial and diplomatic expansion in the Western Mediterranean, and is a figure that merits greater study by Ottoman historians.

⁵⁵⁸ *Gazette de France*, 23 mai 1761, 254-256.

⁵⁵⁹ *Gazette de France*, 30 mai 1761, 266.

⁵⁶⁰ *Gazette de France*, 6 juin 1761, 279-280.

⁵⁶¹ *Gazette de France*, 6 juin 1761, 280.

new expedition against it.⁵⁶² The Ottoman fleet that went out that year was ultimately composed of 12 ships,⁵⁶³ with later issues of the *Gazette* stating that it had 8 ships-of-the-line and 10 galleys that were tasked with their usual yearly job of collecting the tribute from the Greek Islands.⁵⁶⁴ Some of the ships from Hacı Hasan Paşa's fleet eventually went to Alexandria (İskenderiye) in Egypt in July of that year for unstated reasons.⁵⁶⁵

However, we know that the Porte's successful pressure on the French ambassador the comte de Vergennes (1755/1756-1768), had gotten France to take care of the matter and return the ship back to the Ottomans, making an Ottoman invasion of Malta expensive and unnecessary.⁵⁶⁶ Thus by June of 1761, Malta was no longer worried about a potential Ottoman invasion,⁵⁶⁷ and by the end of September most of the Knights of Malta had left to go back to mainland Italy.⁵⁶⁸ By November 21 1761, the Hacı Hasan Paşa had returned to Istanbul with parts of his fleet, namely 3 ships-of-the-line and 3 galleys, while 7 ships had been sent to Alexandria (İskenderiye) in Egypt.⁵⁶⁹ The Ottoman fleet that had scared most of the Italian peninsula into mobilizing for a potential Ottoman invasion had been composed of less than 20 ships of important size, whose goal was the usual collection of the tribute from the Greek islands in the Aegean Sea. The contrast between Italian and European fears of the Ottomans was in sharp contrast to the Porte's cool reaction to the incident as it ultimately knew that France would solve the issue for it, this contrast was reflected in the sources. Whereas the *Gazette* showed the

⁵⁶² *Gazette de France*, 20 juin 1761, 297-298.

⁵⁶³ *Gazette de France*, 4 juillet 1761, 321-323.

⁵⁶⁴ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} août 1761, 380-381.

⁵⁶⁵ *Gazette de France*, 22 août 1761, 411-412.

⁵⁶⁶ Marsangy, *Le Chevalier de Vergennes: Tome II*, 130-131.

⁵⁶⁷ *Gazette de France*, 11 juillet 1761, 340-341.

⁵⁶⁸ *Gazette de France*, 14 novembre 1761, 560-561.

⁵⁶⁹ *Gazette de France*, 11 janvier 1762, 13.

anxiety that Italy felt from this incident, both Hâkim Efendi and Şemdinizâde briefly discussed the incident, ultimately focusing more on the diplomatic solution to this issue than the potential of having a military solution to it. It tells us that the Ottomans were still feared in Europe and that even mundane yearly activities like the Kapudan Paşa going on his yearly tribute collection in the Aegean Sea could be interpreted by other Powers as a potential act of military aggression against another power.

The incident was ultimately resolved diplomatically by the Ottomans with their successful pressuring of the French ambassador to Istanbul, the comte de Vergennes (1755/1756-1768), in which either the French were going to force Malta to return the ship back to them or they would expel the French ambassador and French consuls from the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁷⁰ Vergennes in turn contacted the Secretary of Foreign Affairs the duc de Choiseul (1758-1761/1766-1770) who was at this point on the ascent and had become or was about to become the Chief Minister in France, which he would hold onto until his fall on December 24th 1770.⁵⁷¹ Koca Ragıp Paşa also threatened to invade Malta if France did not have the ship returned.⁵⁷² Interestingly, Vergennes told Choiseul that the Ottoman fleet was in no condition to invade Malta and naturally such an event would have major

⁵⁷⁰ Marsangy, *Le Chevalier de Vergennes: Tome II*, 123-125.

⁵⁷¹ The duc de Choiseul (1719-1785) came from one of the elite noble families of Lorraine, his father the marquis de Stainville served as the diplomatic envoy to Versailles for the husband of Maria Theresa, Francis I Grand-Duke of Tuscany (1737-1765) and Holy Roman Emperor (1745-1765) in the 1730s and 1740s. Choiseul served under Austria during the Austro-Ottoman War of 1737-1739, he then fought on the French side during the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748). He later gained the favor of Madame de Pompadour and was appointed French ambassador to Rome (1753-1757) and then Vienna (1757-1758), where he played a crucial role in strengthening the Franco-Austrian alliance. In 1758 he becomes Secretary of Foreign Affairs, after the death of the duc de Belle-Isle in 1761, Choiseul also became Secretary of War and the chief minister of France until his downfall at the end of December 1770. In 1761 Choiseul had his cousin the duc de Praslin replace him as Secretary of Foreign Affairs while he became Secretary of the Navy (1761-1766), from 1766 until his downfall he switched ministries with his cousin Praslin and became once again Secretary of Foreign Affairs (1766-1770). Choiseul was the most powerful political figure from the end of January 1761 until the end of 1770 and was a major proponent of the Austrian alliance. He was preparing France for a future war against Great Britain when he was dismissed by Louis XV on Christmas Eve in 1770.

⁵⁷² Marsangy, *Le Chevalier de Vergennes: Tome II*, 118-123.

repercussions on Bourbon Naples under Ferdinando IV,⁵⁷³ the third son of Carlos III king of Spain, an important ally of France who was about to join the Seven Years' War on France's side in 1762.⁵⁷⁴ But ultimately Ottoman pressures succeeded in getting France to force Malta to return the ship, which Choiseul negotiated with the Grand Bailly de Fleury,⁵⁷⁵ a nephew/relative of the deceased Cardinal de Fleury.⁵⁷⁶ On the 14th of January 1762, the French frigate "The Bird"⁵⁷⁷ entered Istanbul along with the Kapudan Paşa's ship "The Ottoman Crown" and two Neapolitan Frigates, which had numerous gifts for the Porte as well as the announcement of Ferdinando IV's accession to the throne of Naples and Sicily.⁵⁷⁸ The official entrance of the French frigate "The Bird" along with the Ottoman ship "The Ottoman Crown" occurred on January 19th 1762, firing 21 canons shots as was tradition, on the 25th of January Vergennes, the Sieur de Moriés and other officers of "The Bird" officially gave over the ship to the *Sadrazam* Koca Ragıp Paşa (1757-1763), they then had coffee and şerbet with perfums being used as was tradition. Koca Ragıp Paşa then gave Vergennes a sable robe,⁵⁷⁹ to the Sieur de Moriés a stoat robe,⁵⁸⁰ and to the other officers military robes. Vergennes was also given a beautiful horse harnessed *à la Turc* by the Mîrâhur.⁵⁸¹ The Dragoman of the Porte also went on the French frigate "The Bird" to give on behalf of the *Sadrazam* to the Sieur de Moriés and the crew some 1000 silver coins,⁵⁸² 15 beefs, and 100 sheep.⁵⁸³ The Frigate left Istanbul

⁵⁷³ Marsangy, *Le Chevalier de Vergennes: Tome II*, 123.

⁵⁷⁴ *Gazette de France*, 7 février 1761, 65-66.

⁵⁷⁵ Marsangy, *Le Chevalier de Vergennes: Tome II*, 130-131.

⁵⁷⁶ *Gazette de France*, 30 octobre 1756, 521-522.

⁵⁷⁷ *L'Oiseau*.

⁵⁷⁸ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} mars 1762, 79.

⁵⁷⁹ *Martre Zibeline*.

⁵⁸⁰ *Hermine*.

⁵⁸¹ *Gazette de France*, 19 mars 1762, 99-100.

⁵⁸² *Écus*.

⁵⁸³ *Gazette de France*, 2 avril 1762, 115.

on the 7th of March for Izmir, it would then go to Malta for its quarantine, putting an end to the whole Malta Incident of 1760-1762.⁵⁸⁴ By 1763, the Kapudan Paşa was using the ship taken to Malta as his main ship again for his expedition to the Aegean Sea.⁵⁸⁵

The Ottoman Empire under Koca Ragıp Paşa successfully dealt with an embarrassing event by its use of diplomacy instead of using military intervention to solve their problems. The Ottomans successfully used France's vulnerable position, which was at war against Great Britain and Prussia in the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), to threaten its commercial interests in the region if it did not return the Kapudan Paşa's ship back to them. This clearly illustrates that the Ottoman Empire was and could be effective in its use of diplomacy and could be just as opportunistic or even Machiavellian as any other European power in getting what it wanted from another power. However, it appears that they did miss an opportunity to extend their diplomatic circles and their ties to France, by not sending an ambassador to France in order to honor it for doing such a task for them. Choiseul the Secretary of Foreign Affairs and the Chief minister of France in the 1760s was surprised and disappointed that the Ottomans never decided to send an extraordinary ambassador to France as a thank you for the ship.⁵⁸⁶ Koca Ragıp Paşa coldly rejected French demands for such an ambassador, ultimately arguing that if the Ottomans sent an ambassador then it would look like they had paid for the ship to be brought back instead of getting it the way they had gotten it.⁵⁸⁷ Clearly Koca Ragıp Paşa did not want to get involved in the Seven Years' War and appearing to be too favorable to the French, but this proved to be in retrospect shortsighted, as the Ottoman Empire would clearly have

⁵⁸⁴ *Gazette de France*, 26 avril 1762, 143.

⁵⁸⁵ *Gazette de France*, 24 juin 1763, 227.

⁵⁸⁶ Marsangy, *Le Chevalier de Vergennes: Tome II*, 150-151.

⁵⁸⁷ Marsangy, *Le Chevalier de Vergennes: Tome II*, 150-151.

benefited from sending an ambassador to France to see its current situation. France at the start of the 1760s was still the wealthiest kingdom in Europe, it had the best roads in all of Europe, and was a leader in urbanization, architecture, engineering, and cartography. Any ambassador sent to France in that era would have been exposed to the French roads, that had improved a lot since Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa's embassy in 1741-1742. The Cassini Map was being mapped out with large parts of it already done by the start of the decade,⁵⁸⁸ such a map could have been shown to the Ottoman ambassador, showing the potential of maps as a source for revenue collection and population control. The potential Ottoman ambassador would also have seen the expansion of the French press and of the gazettes, which might have helped restore an Ottoman printing press. There were many more reasons as to why sending an extraordinary ambassador to France in the early 1760s would have benefitted both states, but it never occurred. Overall the Maltese incident of 1760-1762 illustrated the Ottoman Empire's ability to use diplomacy to get what it wanted without losing much in return.

The capture of the Kapudan Paşa's main ship by Christian slaves and the subsequent execution of the Kapudan Paşa as a result of his failings are interesting but nothing new. What makes this incident very interesting and revealing of the era and the Ottoman Empire's relationship with Europe are the following four things. The *Gazette* quickly began reporting of Ottoman mobilization for an invasion of Malta, which reflected partially debates that the *Divan* was holding, but more importantly than that it reflected the rumors being spread from Istanbul to Italy, and ultimately to Paris and the *Gazette*, showing the power and influence that rumors could have. The second important

⁵⁸⁸ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 415-416.

element this incident showed was that Europe was still very much afraid of the Ottoman Empire and Ottoman power was real for them,⁵⁸⁹ most of Italy mobilized and prepared for both a potential Ottoman naval attack and an Ottoman invasion,⁵⁹⁰ all based as previously stated largely on rumors.⁵⁹¹

The third point that this incident demonstrates was that the Porte quickly moved away from potentially invading Malta and Italy to get the ship back, by getting France via its ambassador Vergennes (1755/1756-1768) to retrieve the ship for them. This resulted in the combined circumstances that the Ottomans knew of France's influence and power over Malta while also being close enough to France to simultaneously rely on them as a friend and to threaten them if they did not do anything about it. The fourth point, was that the Ottomans effectively used their power and diplomacy to fix the blunders of one of their own *Vezirs*, by avoiding a war and by getting France to do this for them. In exchange France got closer to the Ottomans and got some presents and honors from the Porte, all of which would have cost nothing compared to a war against Malta.

3.5 Cafer Bey an Ottoman Corsair Turned Kapudan Paşa

Cafer Bey was one of the most famous Ottoman corsairs of the 1750s and 1760s, and was referred to by Hâkim Efendi as Kızılhisârlızâde Cafer Bey.⁵⁹² He was rewarded by Osman III in 1755 for defeating three Maltese ships with his own ship by sinking one,

⁵⁸⁹ *Gazette de France*, 18 février 1741, 80-81.

⁵⁹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 25 mars 1741, 139-140.

⁵⁹¹ *Gazette de France*, 6 may 1741, 213-214.

⁵⁹² Mehmed Hâkim Efendi, *Hâkim Efendi Tarihi: Cilt I*, 231-233.

capturing another, and the last one fled,⁵⁹³ and for bringing 12 Christian prisoners and freeing two Muslims prisoners.⁵⁹⁴ The first mention of Cafer Bey in the *Gazette* was when he recaptured an Ottoman ship taken by Maltese corsairs at the start of June 1764.⁵⁹⁵ In its issue of September 23rd 1765, the *Gazette* published an excerpt from a letter from Malta dating to August 12th, in which the Maltese led by the pirate that had taken the Kapudan Paşa's ship in 1760, were attacked by 28 Albanian corsairs from Ulcinj (Ülgün),⁵⁹⁶ but were defeated by the Maltese in a bloody confrontation in which all of the Albanians were killed and the Maltese had lost 16 men in the battle.⁵⁹⁷ The battle that these Maltese fought probably played a role in their capture by Cafer Bey who captured them a few months later with his ship of 24 canons off the coast of Anatolia, after they had taken a small English ship.⁵⁹⁸ Cafer Bey brought the Pirate, that had captured Kapudan Paşa's ship in 1760, to Istanbul where he was hanged on his ship in front of Incili Köşk. The Christian pirate was from Crete and was a ruthless msn who usually executed the crews that he had captured, of which he was about to do to the English sailors captured, when Cafer Bey attacked him and brought him to his end.⁵⁹⁹ It is difficult to say if Cafer Bey's career high point was 1765 or in 1770 when he was briefly Kapudan Paşa after the Battle of Çeşme.

The *Gazette* mentioned Cafer Bey on its June 8th 1770 issue, from a rubric dating to April 18th and from Istanbul, by which point the Morean Rebellion had started and the Russian navy was in the Eastern Mediterranean. The *Gazette* mentioned how Cafer Bey

⁵⁹³ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire ottoman: Tome XV*, 278.

⁵⁹⁴ Mehmed Hâkim Efendi, *Hâkim Efendi Tarihi: Cilt I*, 232.

⁵⁹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 13 juillet 1764, 223-224.

⁵⁹⁶ *Dulcignotes*.

⁵⁹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 23 septembre 1765, 303.

⁵⁹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 13 décembre 1765, 393.

⁵⁹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 27 décembre 1765, 409.

was in charge of three ships-of-the-line at Rhodes and was awaiting the arrival of the rest of the fleet which was composed at that point in time of 6 galleys, and 15 ships-of-the-line, 5 of which were in the Dardanelles. In this same issue, the dismissal of Eğribozlu Ibrahim Paşa for Mandalzade Hüsemmeddin Paşa who would lead the Ottoman fleet to disaster at Çeşme, was mentioned along with the *Gazette's* first mention of Gazi Hasan Paşa.⁶⁰⁰ The Ottoman fleet under Hüsemmeddin Paşa was spotted off the coast of Greece with 16 ships-of-the-line, 2 galleys, and 4 other ships on June 6th, the Russian fleet of 17 ships-of-the-line and 8 other ships was nearby and attempted to attack the Ottoman fleet but was unable to do so due to a storm. The Russian fleet was forced to go back to Morea while the Ottoman fleet went to Negreponite (Eğriboz), the Ottoman fleet went back to sea on the 13th of June, and the *Gazette's* correspondent did not expect any major battles to occur between the two fleets, and expected diseases to be the biggest killer for these two fleets for the rest of the year. The rubric was written from Livorno, one of Russia's naval bases of operations in the Mediterranean,⁶⁰¹ and it also mentioned in the same rubric that the Russian fleet tried to get the inhabitants of Athens and Negreponite (Eğriboz) to rebel but failed.⁶⁰² On September 3rd 1770, the *Gazette* published a rubric from Trieste dating to August 4th, which contained a series of information taken from letters from Zante, Corfou, and a ship that had arrived from Izmir. The Ottoman fleet was around the Dardanelles awaiting reinforcements from Istanbul, while the Russian fleet was closely following it. The letters claimed that there were canon shots fired, but that it

⁶⁰⁰ *Gazette de France*, 8 juin 1770, 187.

⁶⁰¹ *Gazette de France*, 7 décembre 1772, 449-450.

⁶⁰² *Gazette de France*, 27 août 1770, 280-281.

was unlikely to lead to a battle as the Ottomans did not want to fight in the open seas, while the Russians did not want to fight near the Dardanelles.⁶⁰³

Cafer Bey played a prominent role in the Battle of Çeşme between July 5th and 7th, the *Gazette*'s coverage of the Battle was published on September 10th 1770, two months after the battle had occurred, the rubric was an excerpt from a letter from Malta dating to July 29th, and it was over half a page in length and inserted at the last page of that issue, meaning that it was urgent news that had recently arrived in Paris.⁶⁰⁴ The news had been taken from two English captains under the service of the Russian fleet who had left the island of Scio (Sakız) around the 15th of July and reported that the Ottoman fleet had stopped at Çeşme, which is when admiral Spiridov decided to attack with three lines, the first under him, the middle under the Count Orlov, and the third under the English admiral Elphinston. Spiritov attacked Hüsemmedin Paşa's ship, capturing his emblem, and putting fire to the ship, which caused his ship and that of Hüsemmedin Paşa's to explode half an hour later.⁶⁰⁵ Despite the Ottoman fleet having 15 ships-of-the-line vs the 9 for Russia, the surprise attack and explosion caused a massive confusion throughout the Ottoman fleet, causing its sailors to go on land to fortify their positions there. At night, Admiral Spiridov deliberately burned one of the Russian ships and had it hit an Ottoman ship, which in turn started fires on the neighboring Ottoman ships. Cafer Bey and a lot of men escaped by land from the disaster, there were no news on the fate of Hüsemmedin Paşa and no mention yet of Gazi Hasan Paşa.⁶⁰⁶ Outside of news about the destruction of the Ottoman fleet and the Russian capture of Aegean islands, no detailed rubric emerged

⁶⁰³ *Gazette de France*, 3 septembre 1770, 288.

⁶⁰⁴ See Figure 8.

⁶⁰⁵ *Gazette de France*, 10 septembre 1770, 298.

⁶⁰⁶ *Gazette de France*, 10 septembre 1770, 298.

on the Ottoman Fleet and the fate of Cafer Bey and no mention of Gazi Hasan Paşa until the *Gazette*'s issue of September 24th, when it published a rubric from Istanbul and dated to August 3rd. The Porte received the news of the Ottoman defeat at the Battle of Çeşme on July 12th, it learned on the 13th that its fleet had been nearly completely destroyed by the fire because of the Kapudan Paşa's bad decision in the positioning that he took for his fleet, which both Cafer Bey and Gazi Hasan Paşa had strongly opposed,⁶⁰⁷ the latter along with Hüsemmeddin Paşa were gravely injured in the battle. The *Gazette* reported that Gazi Hasan Paşa threw himself into the sea when his ship started to burn, and his crew were able to grab him and bring him back on land.⁶⁰⁸ Hüsemmeddin Paşa was deposed and Cafer Bey was promoted to Kapudan Paşa at some point in mid July, and the former *Sadrazam* Moldovancı Ali Paşa was ordered to take charge of the fortresses on the Dardanelles and given command of their defenses.⁶⁰⁹ In a different issue from October 19th, the *Gazette* recorded that the Kapudan Paşa Cafer Bey and Gazi Hasan Paşa were ordered by the Porte on August 6th to leave Izmir and go to the Dardanelles.⁶¹⁰ On October 29th the *Gazette* reported from a rubric from Paris, which meant urgent news, that Cafer Bey was in the Dardanelles alongside of Moldovancı Ali Paşa the commander there, who had 10 000 men at his disposal, and that the Ottoman fleet consisted of 7 caravels and some 30 galiotes, a tiny fleet.⁶¹¹ In October 1770, Gazi Hasan Paşa took the island of Limnos (Limni),⁶¹² while Cafer Bey stayed at the Dardanelles, which proved to be the turning point in the Mediterranean front for the war.⁶¹³ Gazi Hasan Paşa repulsed a

⁶⁰⁷ *Hussein Bey*. The *Gazette* often confused the names Hasan and Hussein/Hüseyin.

⁶⁰⁸ *Gazette de France*, 24 septembre 1770, 311.

⁶⁰⁹ *Gazette de France*, 24 septembre 1770, 311.

⁶¹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 19 octobre 1770, 339.

⁶¹¹ *Gazette de France*, 29 octobre 1770, 354.

⁶¹² *Hasan Bey*.

⁶¹³ *Gazette de France*, 23 novembre 1770, 379.

Russian attack on the island at the end of October, forcing Orlov to go to Chios (Sakız).⁶¹⁴

On November 5th 1770, the Porte deposed Cafer Bey as Kapudan Paşa and replaced him with Gazi Hasan Paşa,⁶¹⁵ who with the exception of Melek Mehmed Paşa's interim term as Kapudan Paşa between February 24th-July 1774, would hold this position from November 5th 1770 until December 19th 1789. However Gazi Hasan Paşa initially refused to be Kapudan Paşa until April because he wanted and finally received full powers to act on his own in that position.⁶¹⁶ After his dismissal, Cafer Bey was exiled to Cyprus,⁶¹⁷ at the start of the year 1771 he was sent to Izmir to inspect its defenses,⁶¹⁸ and eventually died of the plague in Bodrum in May 1772,⁶¹⁹ his brief tenure as Kapudan Paşa (mid July-November 5th 1770) was a bit of an anti climax for the career that he had had. He had been one of the foremost Ottoman corsairs of the 1750s and 1760s, and proved to have been a fairly capable admiral or at the very least an experience seamen as luck was not the only reasons as to how he was able to survive the Battle of Çeşme. However, the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 had brought to an end the era of traditional corsairing in the Mediterranean, and new kinds of men like Gazi Hasan Paşa emerged to replace traditional corsairs like Cafer Bey. In other words, Cafer Bey was the typical Ottoman and Mediterranean corsairs of the 18th century until the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 changed everything by forcing the Ottoman Empire to militarize its own navy to fight other major powers' own navies like those of Russia, or France, or

⁶¹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 17 décembre 1770, 407.

⁶¹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 4 février 1771, 37-38.

⁶¹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 17 mai 1771, 153.

⁶¹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 4 février 1771, 37-38.

⁶¹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 11 février 1771, 48.

⁶¹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 31 juillet 1772, 279.

Britain. Neither Gazi Hasan Paşa nor the Porte could be satisfied in fighting Maltese corsairs in the Mediterranean, as they now had to prepare for potential naval wars that could be of the same scope as land battles, and also needed big ships to bring soldiers from the center to Ottoman provinces that had been in rebellion like Syria in 1774-1776, Egypt in 1786-1787, or Morea and Albania throughout the late 1770s and the 1780s.

3.6 Malta and the Ottoman Empire during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774

When the Russo-Ottoman War began in 1768, it seemed as if the Mediterranean region would remain largely uninvolved in the war. However, it all changed when Catherine II achieved two things in 1768, namely she demanded from Great Britain that it fully follow on the articles from their commercial Treaty of 1766, which meant that the English had to help Russia man its fleet, welcome the Russian fleet in its ports, and supply it with goods there, which Great Britain ultimately did.⁶²⁰ The second major element that enabled Russia to have such a fleet was the improvements in Danish relations that eventually led to Paul, Catherine II's son and heir, to renounce his claims to the Danish throne in 1773,⁶²¹ and whose process had begun with the renewal of the Russian-Danish Defensive Treaty in 1765.⁶²² This further helped Russia when its navy crossed the Sund and large parts of it were able to station in Copenhagen throughout

⁶²⁰ *Gazette de France*, 16 janvier 1769, 19.

⁶²¹ *Gazette de France*, 22 octobre 1773, 381.

⁶²² *Gazette de France*, 6 mai 1765, 141.

1769-1770.⁶²³ Russia's ability to send her fleet to the Mediterranean thanks to Danish, but most notably English help, proved crucial as it would not have been able to have done so otherwise. Russia also received its first major international loan to fight this war, which it used to pay for its fleet in the Mediterranean, but this is outside of the scope of this dissertation.

When Russia's fleet arrived in the Mediterranean, the Republic of Venice,⁶²⁴ the kingdom of Spain (Bourbon),⁶²⁵ the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily (Bourbon) all limited the amount of Russian ships to its ports to 3-4 ships in total.⁶²⁶ Surprisingly, considering its history with the Ottoman Empire, Malta applied the same policy to the great displeasure of Catherine II,⁶²⁷ who demanded that Russia be allowed more than 3-4 ships to be stationed in Malta.⁶²⁸ By limiting the amount of Russian ships to their ports to 3-4, Venice, Spain, Naples and Sicily, and Malta were all declaring their neutrality. One could argue that all of these were neutral but with a somewhat pro-Ottoman bent to them, certainly by the end of the war, Venice had become neutral but pro-Ottoman due to Russia's abuses of its neutrality,⁶²⁹ its occupation of its islands,⁶³⁰ and its fleet and corsairs many attacks on Venetian ships.⁶³¹ In fact the war made the Ottoman Empire and Venice much closer to each other than they previously had been, as the Venetian Republic was angry at Russia's abuses throughout the war and of it causing chaos in Morea, which greatly impacted Venice's neighboring territories, and the Porte was happy

⁶²³ *Gazette de France*, 17 novembre 1769, 372.

⁶²⁴ *Gazette de France*, 5 février 1770, 42.

⁶²⁵ *Gazette de France*, 12 mars 1770, 82.

⁶²⁶ *Gazette de France*, 11 décembre 1769, 401.

⁶²⁷ *Gazette de France*, 12 mars 1770, 82.

⁶²⁸ *Gazette de France*, 11 juin 1770, 192-193.

⁶²⁹ *Gazette de France*, 7 mai 1773, 160.

⁶³⁰ *Gazette de France*, 17 décembre 1773, 459.

⁶³¹ *Gazette de France*, 17 mai 1771, 155.

with Venice's behavior throughout the war.⁶³² Outside of Venice, only France was more actively pro-Ottoman throughout the entire war, the other powers that were neutral but more pro-Russia in the Mediterranean were the Grand Duchy of Livorno under the Grand Duke Leopold I (1765-1790) and the Papal States under Clement XIV (1769-1774).⁶³³ Whereas the Papal State was overall both neutral and pro-Russia, it was not actively so unlike the Grand Duchy of Tuscany whose port of Livorno and the city of Pisa became Russia's center of operations in the Western Mediterranean,⁶³⁴ while the island of Paros (Berre Adası) became its military headquarters in the Eastern Mediterranean.⁶³⁵

Malta followed Bourbon Mediterranean policies throughout the war, to the anger of Russia, as it served its best interest in keeping its main patrons happy. Besides Malta had nothing to gain from accommodating the Russian fleet outside of short term profiteering, and even there, it probably did not really have the resources to fully accommodate the Russians. Nonetheless, this marked a major shift in Malta's policies in relations with the Ottoman Empire, as it was now no longer actively antagonistic towards the Ottomans. Throughout the 1770s and the 1780s it would continue to do corsairing against North African ships like Naples and Sicily did,⁶³⁶ however the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 had significantly changed the importance, the relevance, and even the long term sustainability of traditional piracy. Russian entrance into the Mediterranean and its successful control of the Aegean meant that the naval threat to the Ottoman Empire was no longer based on piracy, but on larger scale naval warfare. One in which ships-of-the-line were required to be built in order to destroy other ships and to block access to

⁶³² *Gazette de France*, 27 aoust 1770, 280.

⁶³³ *Gazette de France*, 27 novembre 1769, 383.

⁶³⁴ *Gazette de France*, 13 décembre 1771, 411.

⁶³⁵ *Gazette de France*, 30 septembre 1771, 315.

⁶³⁶ *Gazette de France*, 14 novembre 1780, 422-423.

key sea routes. Malta did not have the resources to build large navies based on ships-of-the-line, it simply did not have the resources for such ventures. Besides, under Gazi Hasan Paşa, the Ottoman navy increasingly became a ship-of-the-line based fleet, thus Malta increasingly was not only unable to compete with the Russians, the French, and the Spanish navies, the Ottoman navy also became too powerful for it. Besides this, Napoleon's occupation of Malta in 1798 before going to Egypt was in many ways the epilogue for Malta, as its glory days had ended by 1768. The Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 thus saw a major shift in Ottoman-Maltese relations with Russia and eventually later on other Major Powers ultimately replacing Malta as the biggest Mediterranean threat or antagonist to the Ottoman Empire in the Mediterranean Sea.

3.7 Conclusion and Ottoman-Maltese Relations after 1774

After 1774 Malta no longer was a major threat or burden to the Ottoman Empire for two main reasons, the first was the naval power of Russia, Spain, France, and Great Britain were too big for Malta to compete with and the Ottoman navy under Gazi Hasan Paşa also became too powerful for the Maltese to handle on their own. The Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 completely changed the dynamic in the Mediterranean, this included the threat and danger that Malta could provide for the North African Principalities and the Ottoman Empire, along with the danger of piracy or corsairs. Russia unleashed a wave of Russo-Greek-Albanian corsairs in the Eastern Mediterranean

that raided Anatolia,⁶³⁷ Cyprus,⁶³⁸ Syria,⁶³⁹ and the coast of Egypt.⁶⁴⁰ Malta would continue to raid North Africa and Muslim ships for the remainder of this era,⁶⁴¹ but its threat as a leader in piracy in the Mediterranean was over. Whereas Venice was capable of modernizing its navy and successfully fight a war against Tunis between 1784-1792,⁶⁴² so much so that Tunis was unable to do anything against the Venetian admiral Angelo Emo throughout the height of the conflict between 1784-1786 due to Venice's far superior naval and financial power;⁶⁴³ Malta was on the other hand in no such position. It simply did not have the resources to be on the same level as Venice, let alone Russia or other major powers. Besides all of this, Gazi Hasan Paşa successfully modernized and expanded the Ottoman navy as *Kapudan Paşa* (1774-1787), turning the Ottoman navy into a powerful navy comparable to many of the Major Powers outside of Great Britain and France.⁶⁴⁴ Thus the period of 1774-1787 saw the swift decline of Malta as a threat and nuisance to the Ottoman Empire as the dynamics in Mediterranean fundamentally changed.

Overall this chapter analyzed the Ottoman Empire's relationship with Malta, France, and piracy. The Ottomans were successfully able to manage two embarrassing events during this period, namely the Paşa of Rhodes Incident of 1748-1751 and the capture of the Kapudan Paşa's ship Incident of 1760-1762. Both incidents required the Ottoman Empire to use diplomatic pressures on its friend France to force it to make

⁶³⁷ *Gazette de France*, 13 février 1775, 57-58.

⁶³⁸ *Gazette de France*, 17 février 1775, 63.

⁶³⁹ *Gazette de France*, 18 novembre 1774, 399.

⁶⁴⁰ *Gazette de France*, 6 janvier 1775, 7.

⁶⁴¹ *Gazette de France*, 24 mars 1777, 106.

⁶⁴² *Gazette de France*, 28 décembre 1784, 426.

⁶⁴³ *Gazette de France*, 28 janvier 1785, 34.

⁶⁴⁴ *Gazette de France*, 30 juin 1777, 247.

Malta return either the Paşa of Rhodes or the ship. Both incidents were embarrassing to the Ottomans, which is why Ottoman sources are not as detailed about them as they could have been, especially the incident involved Mustafa Paşa, who was the brother of Melek Mehmed Paşa, who was over a decade away from marrying Zeynep Sultan when this incident occurred. The Tunis-Algiers War of 1755-1756 demonstrated the odd role that Malta could play in North African political affairs, and the career of Cafer Bey highlighted the end of an era, as he was a traditional Ottoman and Mediterranean corsair who was ultimately replaced by the Gazi Hasan Paşa. This chapter was in many ways about triangular relationship between the Ottoman Empire, France, and Malta and on Ottoman corsairing before 1768.

CHAPTER IV

The Height of the Reign of Mustafa III, 1763-1769

4.1 Introduction

This chapter was initially going to deal extensively with the Polish question and the events that led to the Ottoman declaration of war against Russia in 1768, but the author lacked time and this was the last chapter to be “finished” and edited. As a result, only the internal events within the Ottoman Empire will be discussed in detail in this chapter, which would still have been the most notable and original contributions of this chapter had it been properly finished. This chapter focuses on the height of the reign of Mustafa III which was from nomination and arrival of Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa as *Sadrizam* at the end of September 1763 to Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa when he

left Istanbul with the Ottoman army for the war front at the end of March 1769.⁶⁴⁵ So this chapter is the examination of the last years of the Ottoman Empire before it would the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774, which would cause the Empire to face numerous crises after the end of the war in 1774. As a result of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774, the Ottoman Empire's internal and external dynamics, structures, and eventually mindsets of the Ottomans completely changed, forcing the Empire to adjust to the many crises that it would face.

This chapter focuses on figures that have previously been mentioned in this dissertation, namely Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa, Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, and Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa, all of whom were *Sadr azams* during this period. Other major figures of this period are also discussed, most notably Sultan Mustafa III himself is analyzed and this chapter's main theme was that this was the calm before the storm and that this period saw clear signs of wealth accumulation by these elite statesmen. It was also the height of the brothers-in-law's era of the 18th century, as Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, Silahdar Mehmed Paşa, Küçük Mustafa Paşa, Melek Mehmed Paşa, and Nişli Mehmed Paşa all played prominent roles during this period in the Porte's administration of the Empire.

4.2 The Fall and Execution of Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa March-April 1765

⁶⁴⁵ *Gazette de France*, 15 mai 1769, 157.

The *Gazette* reported on January 11th 1765 in a rubric from Istanbul dated to the 1st of December 1764 that reported that there was a rebellion in Nicosia (Lefkoşa) in Cyprus on the 5th of November 1764, that led to the death of its governor Çil Osman. The inhabitants of Nicosia (Lefkoşa) had petitioned the Porte against their governor Çil Osman and as a result it sent an inspector who arrived in the town on the 4th of November 1764. On the morning of the 5th of November, the inspector came to the Kadı court and ordered that Çil Osman appear before it, the governor refused to do so and asked the inspector to come see him with his orders.⁶⁴⁶ The inspector along with the Kadı, the *ülema*, priests, and a lot of the inhabitants went to Çil Osman's home, where a *Divan* was assembled. However during the *Divan* part of the palace fell where the priests and the general population were standing, killing some "300" people and causing a riot. The inhabitants fearing that this had been the plan of Çil Osman rioted and attacked the governor killing him and anyone preventing them from getting a hold on him, pillaging the palace and killed Çil Osman. After learning of the rebellion the Porte sent the *Kapıcıbaşı* Mustafa Ağa, the former *Topçu Başı*, along with an *ülema* to oversee and enact justice on the riot that led to the death of Çil Osman, whose successor was the newly appointed Kafes Hacı Ali Efendi.⁶⁴⁷ It seemed that some of the people involved in the death of Çil Osman were eventually punished and decapitated by the first half of 1766, and their heads were sent to Istanbul.⁶⁴⁸ On September 5th 1766 the heads of 40 of these rebels were exposed at Topkapı, including the leader of the rebellion Halil Ağa, the

⁶⁴⁶ *Gazette de France*, 11 janvier 1765, 9.

⁶⁴⁷ *Gazette de France*, 11 janvier 1765, 9.

⁶⁴⁸ *Gazette de France*, 8 septembre 1766, 293.

governor of Karaman Kör Ahmed⁶⁴⁹ became a Paşa with three tails for having quelled the rebellion with his troops and reestablishing order on Cyprus.⁶⁵⁰

The *Gazette*'s coverage of the fall and execution of Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa was heavily censored as only slightly more than the minimum was provided as to the circumstances of his fall. In its May 13th issue the *Gazette* published a rubric from Istanbul dating to April 1st 1765, it began with Bahir Mustafa Paşa along with Sultan Mustafa III and the *Şeyhülislam* Dürriade Mustafa Efendi (1762-1767) going to the Mosque of Sultan Ahmed for the morning prayer on the 22nd of March 1765. Three days later on the 25th of March the *tevcihat* or yearly appointments were made including the nomination of his brothers-in-laws: Esma Sultan's husband Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa was appointed governor of Bender, Zeynep Sultan's husband Melek Mehmed Paşa was appointed Beylerbeyi of Anatolia, Ayşe Sultan's husband Silahdar Mehmed Paşa was appointed governor of Salonika, and Saliha Sultan's husband Nişli Mehmed Paşa was appointed governor of Bosnia. While the former governor there Moldovancı Ali Paşa got Saliha Sultan's husband's former post of Vidin, and Ahmed Resmi Efendi, who the *Gazette* referred to as the Ottoman ambassador to Prussia, was appointed Çavuşbaşı.⁶⁵¹ The day after the *tevcihat* or yearly appointments were announced, Bahir Mustafa Paşa was asked to come to the Palace, where he was dismissed as *Sadrizam* and arrested. Melek Mehmed Paşa, who the *Gazette* referred to as *Capoudan*, was appointed as *Kaymakam* and the *Kethüda*, a former *Tezkereci*, along one of his Kethüda Katibi were arrested on the 27th of March along with many of Bahir Mustafa Paşa's officers and

⁶⁴⁹ Chour Ahmet.

⁶⁵⁰ *Gazette de France*, 24 octobre 1766, 345.

⁶⁵¹ *Gazette de France*, 13 mai 1765, 149.

imprisoned in Yedikule.⁶⁵² On March 30th Bahir Mustafa Paşa was put on a galley and exiled to Mytilene (Midilli), his people were released from Yedikule and put under house arrest, and Mustafa III had yet to name a new Sadrazam, but the *Gazette* expected it to be Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, which proved to be correct.⁶⁵³

In its May 17th issue, the *Gazette* published a continuation of the previous rubric, as it was written from Istanbul and dated to April 1st, which it frequently did with rubrics from the Ottoman Empire as their correspondents tended to write longer letters due to the distance between France and the Ottoman Empire. In 1765 the *Gazette* also had to worry about having enough material for each issue, which had to be 4 pages long, and so splitting up a long letter from Istanbul into two rubrics which were published in two separate issues was standard practice. The night of the 30th and 31st saw a major fire emerge destroying some 500 houses and it lasted 12 hours,⁶⁵⁴ it was probably related to the downfall of Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa, but the *Gazette* did not provide any concrete proof of this, and another smaller fire happened at Cihangir close to Tophane, where 150 houses were destroyed in seven hours.⁶⁵⁵ Bahir Mustafa Paşa's men that had been liberated from Yedikule were then exiled to either Lemnos (Limni) or Famagusta (Gazimağusa) in mid April 1765.⁶⁵⁶ On April 28th Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa arrived in Istanbul, he initially met with the Kethüda and the *Reisülküttab* Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa, he then had dinner with the *Kaymakam* Melek Mehmed Paşa and with the *Şeyhülislam* Dürrizade Mustafa Efendi, he then went with them to Bahariye, where one

⁶⁵² *Gazette de France*, 13 mai 1765, 149.

⁶⁵³ *Gazette de France*, 13 mai 1765, 149.

⁶⁵⁴ *Gazette de France*, 17 mai 1765, 153

⁶⁵⁵ *Gazette de France*, 10 juin 1765, 181.

⁶⁵⁶ *Gazette de France*, 27 mai 1765, 165.

of Mustafa III's *yahıs* was located.⁶⁵⁷ On June 21st 1765, the *Gazette* published a rubric from Istanbul and dated to May 15 that included the appointment of Melek Mehmed Paşa as governor of Aydın and Vergennes' first official meeting with Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa on the 8th of May, after these news reports was the news of the execution of Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa,⁶⁵⁸ which was followed with the transfer of Silahdar Mehmed Paşa, Ayşe Sultan's husband, from being governor of Salonika to Silistra and Ochakov (Özi).⁶⁵⁹ The news about the execution of Bahir Mustafa Paşa was published in the fourth paragraph of the rubric. It stated that Bahir Mustafa Paşa, who had been exiled to Mytilene (Midilli), had been executed and that his head had been brought to Topkapı on the 10th of May to be exposed in front of the first door of the interior of the palace, where it stayed for three days with a piece a writing stating that his execution was due to his greed, his exploitation and his extortions had betrayed the law and the state, and had caused the death of a lot of people in Cyprus.⁶⁶⁰

Thus Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa's actions as *Sadrizam* had been the cause of the many complaints of the inhabitants of Nicosia (Lefkoşa) against their governor Çil Osman, or the inspector that the Porte sent to Cyprus to inspect the situation had under the orders of Bahir Mustafa Paşa caused the rebellion that led to the death of Çil Osman the governor of Nicosia (Lefkoşa). It seems most likely that Çil Osman was in fact his agent in Cyprus, whose goals was to exploit the area and population as much as possible to amass a fortune for his patron the *Sadrizam*, Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa. The other evidence at the disposal of this author, that has been discussed in the sections on his

⁶⁵⁷ *Gazette de France*, 10 juin 1765, 181.

⁶⁵⁸ See Figure 6.

⁶⁵⁹ *Gazette de France*, 21 juin 1765, 193.

⁶⁶⁰ *Gazette de France*, 21 juin 1765, 193.

previous two terms as *Sadrazam*, all confirm that he was the kind of figure to exploit the local populations for his own gains. There is also a possible political angle to both his downfall and his execution, namely that he had tried to keep Mustafa III's brothers-in-laws outside of Istanbul,⁶⁶¹ which may have led them and more importantly their wives in working to bring his fall. His people were arrested again and brought to the *Bostancıbaşı*, where they would be questioned and probably tortured, as the *Bostancı*s were the men who interrogated and tortured people for the Porte,⁶⁶² to find out where their patron's and their own wealth was located.⁶⁶³ Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa was a very interesting figure that this author still needs more information on in order to more properly evaluate him and he seems almost like a figure ahead of his time, as men like him emerged to powerful positions throughout the Ottoman Empire after 1770.

The *Gazette* published an interesting rubric during the reign of Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa as *Sadrazam*, it came from Istanbul and was dated to July 16th 1764. It was a description of the circumcision of Bahir Mustafa Paşa's sons on July 6th 1764, which was described as being one of the most solemn ceremonies for Muslims. The circumcision of the current *Sadrazam*'s sons had been preceded by several days of festivities and celebrations like lighting the city, throughout the city and at the palace. Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa on the day of his sons' circumcision hosted the *Şeyhülislam* Dürriade Mustafa Efendi (1762-1767) and all of the major *Paşas* that were in the capital.⁶⁶⁴ No further details were given on the ceremonies nor on the celebrations, but it was the only story that the *Gazette* published between 1740-1787 on the circumcision of

⁶⁶¹ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman: Tome XVI*, 110-111.

⁶⁶² Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 97-98.

⁶⁶³ *Gazette de France*, 16 septembre 1765, 293.

⁶⁶⁴ *Gazette de France*, 24 août 1764, 271.

a son of a major official. The fate of Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa's sons and of his house is unclear and requires more research, the *Gazette* reported that his beautiful palace near Atmeydanı was destroyed in a fire on March 12th 1766,⁶⁶⁵ but it did not state if his family still owned that palace. The fate of Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa was however a dishonorable death, he was decapitated, which was a punishment that was destined for men that had committed grave crimes against the state. Had he merely fallen out of power due to factional intrigues, then he probably would have been strangled, his decapitation was meant to disgrace and dishonor him. The Porte also used him as an example and a warning to the it's administrators and *Paşas* that even the *Sadrazams* could face dishonorable deaths for abusing their powers, so could they.

4.3 The Ottoman Empire during the Height of the Era of the Brothers-in-Law: The First *Sadrazamlık* of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, 1765-1768

The summer of 1765 was dominated by Mustafa III's visits to his own *yalı* at Karaga as well as his visits to Melek Mehmed Paşa's and Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa's *yalıs*.⁶⁶⁶ On August 23rd 1765, the Voyvoda of Wallachia Stefan Racovita was deposed for exploiting the population there, and on the 28th of August his son Yorgaki was brought to the *Bostancıbaşı* where he was strangled, and his body was attached to a large gallows in front of his *yalı* in Arnavutköy. Yorgaki was stated to have been responsible for the mistreatment of the inhabitants of Wallachia and to have been the

⁶⁶⁵ *Gazette de France*, 28 avril 1766, 137.

⁶⁶⁶ *Gazette de France*, 30 aoust 1765, 273.

richest Greek of the empire, and naturally his goods were confiscated.⁶⁶⁷ In 1766, the two mansions or *yalis* of Yorgaki in Tarabya were sold to two Greeks, who turned the properties into manufacturing warehouses. However the *Bostancıbaşı* on the orders of the Porte had the two warehouses destroyed on the 4th of July of 1767, the Greeks were compensated for the losses.⁶⁶⁸

Mustafa III continued the Ottoman the traditional Ottoman Sultan's celebration of Kurban Bayramı, however the celebration of this holiday, was considerably more modest than that of his predecessor Mahmud I, who famously had grandiose celebrations and festivities during Kurban Bayramı in the latter half of his reign.⁶⁶⁹ Mustafa III however seems to have given greater emphasis to the celebration of *Mevlit Kandili* or *Mawlid*, the celebration of Prophet Muhammad's birthday. The *Gazette* first mentioned the celebration of *Mevlit Kandili* in 1762, which was celebrated on October 2nd of that year, when the Sultan along with Koca Ragıp Paşa and the *Şeyhülislam*, presumably Dürriade Mustafa Efendi (1762-1767), went to Sultan Ahmed's Mosque for the prayer.⁶⁷⁰ It was next mentioned in 1763, when the Sultan left his *yalı* to go to Sultan Ahmed's Mosque alongside Hamza Hamid Paşa and Dürriade Mustafa Efendi for the prayer on the 21st of September.⁶⁷¹ In 1765 he likewise did the same and went on the 29th of August to Sultan Ahmed's Mosque with a large retinue to pray there,⁶⁷² and he went to Yeni Cami for the same celebration on the 19th of August 1766.⁶⁷³ In an issue published on April 18th 1766, the *Gazette* published a long rubric dated to March 1st 1766 on the Sultan's celebration of

⁶⁶⁷ *Gazette de France*, 11 octobre 1765, 321.

⁶⁶⁸ *Gazette de France*, 31 août 1767, 305-306.

⁶⁶⁹ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 9-10.

⁶⁷⁰ *Gazette de France*, 26 novembre 1762, 457.

⁶⁷¹ *Gazette de France*, 11 novembre 1763, 387.

⁶⁷² *Gazette de France*, 11 octobre, 321.

⁶⁷³ *Gazette de France*, 10 octobre 1766, 329.

the 15th day of Ramadan, the 24th of February 1766. The robe of Prophet Muhammad was consecrated in water, Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa and Dürriade Mustafa Efendi then came to the *Saray* for the noon prayer and to partake in the ceremony, where they distributed pieces of cloth to the Janissaries. However a fire broke out in Unkapanı, where the grain warehouses were located. The entire court went there and it took some four hours to put out the fire, which destroyed 40 buildings.⁶⁷⁴

On October 23rd 1766 Prince Selim was put into the hands of his teachers that would be in charge of his education, the ceremony of this event was described in detail by the *Gazette*.⁶⁷⁵ On January 10th Prince Mehmed was born, which was announced by canon fires from Topkapı, the Sultan sent the *Kızlar Ağası* to inform Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa of the birth of the a new prince. The next day the *Şeyhülislam* Dürriade Mustafa Efendi along with the Officers and Ottoman officials assembled themselves at Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's residence, from there they went to the naval kiosk, where they had the honor to congratulate the Sultan. Due to the fact that Ramadan was approaching, it started on January 31st,⁶⁷⁶ and the damages that had been done by the earthquake, there were no major public celebrations for the birth of a royal prince, outside of firing canons three times a day.⁶⁷⁷ On January 19th, Melek Mehmed Paşa was appointed Kapudan Paşa for a second time, while Nişli Mehmed Paşa, Saliha Sultan's last husband, replaced him as Rumeli Beylerbeyi.⁶⁷⁸ On the 14th of February 1767, the

⁶⁷⁴ *Gazette de France*, 18 avril 1766, 125.

⁶⁷⁵ *Gazette de France*, 12 décembre 1766, 401.

⁶⁷⁶ *Gazette de France*, 20 mars 1767, 91.

⁶⁷⁷ *Gazette de France*, 27 février 1767, 67.

⁶⁷⁸ *Gazette de France*, 20 mars 1767, 91.

ceremony of the consecration of the robe of Prophet Muhammad into water was held and the Porte then distributed baklava to the Janissaries.⁶⁷⁹

Arguably the most important domestic issue that Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa faced during his first tenure as *Sadrizam* was the earthquake of 1766 in Istanbul, its aftermath, and the reconstruction of the Ottoman capital. On July 4th 1766, the *Gazette* published its rubric on Istanbul's earthquake of May 22nd 1766 from a rubric dating to June 3rd, and which was a page and half long, making it one of the longest rubrics on the Ottoman Empire that was unrelated to wars and conflicts during the period of 1762-1787.⁶⁸⁰ On the 20th of May 1766, Sultan Mustafa III, Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, Dürriyade Mustafa Efendi went to Hagia Sophia for the morning prayer during Kurban Bayramı. On May 22nd the earthquake of 1766 occurred in Istanbul around 5 and ½ in the morning, it lasted for about two minutes causing large dust clouds that enveloped the entire city. The *külliyes* and *imarets* built by Ali Paşa⁶⁸¹ and Çorlulu Ali Paşa, possibly Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's maternal grandfather,⁶⁸² were completely destroyed. Sultan Mehmed II's mosque's dome was destroyed as well as that of another mosque close to the Edirne door, and the Çarşı's and Bedestan's roofs were so damaged that the authorities were forced to destroy them, and several major *Hans* like the *Vezirhan* almost completely fell over, leading to the death of a large amount of people under their rubble. One of the towers from Yedikule was destroyed, and many of the *hamams* were also destroyed, especially in the Southern part of the city. The Eski Saray's walls were greatly damaged, but those of Topkapı's not as much, the apartments of the Harem were damaged, and the Darphane

⁶⁷⁹ *Gazette de France*, 27 mars 1767, 99.

⁶⁸⁰ When the *Gazette* was biweekly.

⁶⁸¹ Not clear which Ali Paşa this was.

⁶⁸² Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman: Tome XIV*, 379.

was also considerably damaged during the earthquake. Outside of Hagia Sofia, the Büyük Valide Han, and the Yeni Han, all stone buildings were in ruins.⁶⁸³ The *Gazette* argued that Istanbul was fortunate that it did not suffer the fate that Lisbon faced in the 1755 earthquake there, and it argued that the reasons why the damages and the death count was not as high in Istanbul as it had been in Lisbon in 1755, was a result of the wooden houses that dominated the city and that were not very high. If most of the city had had stones houses then, the *Gazette* argued, Istanbul would have faced a similar fate as Lisbon had in 1755. Most of the wooden houses in Istanbul remained intact and better resisted the earthquake than the stone buildings of the city, which may be one of the main reasons why Istanbul continued to build wooden houses throughout this period. The Ottoman capital luckily did not face any fires in the aftermath of the earthquake of May 22nd 1766, and the government immediately started to repair or destroy the building that were the most at risk of collapsing, and it prevented the general population from approaching these buildings. The government also searched for the living and the dead under the rubble, providing rescue to the survivors and getting the bodies of the dead for a proper burial.

The death toll provided by the *Gazette* was the estimated at the lowest possible amount, which it calculated to have been about 800 to 900 dead, which it argued was a result of the time that the earthquake had occurred in. The morning prayer had finished and so the men had left the mosques, the *ülema* had still not entered the *medreses*, men had left the *hamams* while women had still not entered them, and the *bedestans* and *çarşıs* were still not opened when the earthquake hit. This meant that most of the

⁶⁸³ *Gazette de France*, 4 juillet 1766, 213-214.

population was not around stone buildings, but still in their wooden homes. The neighborhood to the North of Istanbul were not as badly hit, with the exception of Galata and the Tershane, most of the stone walls there crumbled, and numerous chimneys in Pera had collapsed. A lot of villages near Istanbul suffered from the earthquake, but the *Gazette's* correspondent still had not gotten news from them to give further details about their situation. The piers on the Bosphorus were also impacted by the earthquake, with many of them losing their ladders. There were still seismic waves that occurred throughout the end of May, which led the Porte on the 28th of May to order that all buildings risking collapse to be destroyed immediately, which had been the primary occupation of the stonemasons and construction workers of the city. The Sultan was staying in a tent in his gardens at his palace, while most of the major Ottoman officials had left the city for the country, while the general population fled to cemeteries and fields for safety.⁶⁸⁴

On the following issue published on July 7th, which was a continuation of the same rubric about the earthquake of May 22nd and its aftermath, it stated that the architects of the Porte had been busy inspecting the damaged buildings to see whether or not they could be repaired or needed to be destroyed.⁶⁸⁵ Later issues of the *Gazette* covered a minor earthquakes that happened on Friday June 3rd when Mustafa was praying at Hagia Sofia, and it mentioned that a lot of his officers abandoned him during the earthquake and left Hagia Sofia while he was still praying there. A lot of stone buildings including Topkapı were heavily damaged during the second earthquake, probably due to the damages that they had previously sustained from the first earthquake on the 22nd of

⁶⁸⁴ *Gazette de France*, 4 juillet 1766, 213-214.

⁶⁸⁵ *Gazette de France*, 7 juillet 1766, 217.

May.⁶⁸⁶ By the end of June 1766, the seismic waves had decline significantly, but there were still some minor earthquakes on July 14th and 15th,⁶⁸⁷ and throughout the entirety of June construction workers were coming to the Ottoman capital to help rebuild the city, but there was still not enough of them by the start of July.⁶⁸⁸ On August 5th there was a small earthquake in Istanbul, but those in Gallipoli, Rodosto (Tekirdağ), Edirne, Bursa, Aydın, and Bythinia were much more destructive.⁶⁸⁹ In an issue published on October 10th 1766, the *Gazette* further indicated that the Marmara Sea region, notably the Dardanelles, Gallipoli again, Tenedos (Bozcaada), and Enez were all severely hit by the earthquakes during the summer of 1766.⁶⁹⁰ On November 23rd 1766, an earthquake occurred again in Istanbul, this time it had damaged and destroyed some of the “Greek” columns of the cisterns of either Yeretaban or Şerefiye.⁶⁹¹

Although the earthquakes of 1766 devastated the Ottoman capital and the Marmara Sea region, nearby Izmir remained largely unscathed by the earthquakes, it was however economically impacted as Ottoman trade in the region greatly declined causing ships that had come to Izmir to go back home either empty handed or with much less goods than they had come to purchase.⁶⁹² In addition the caravans were closed due to the earthquakes and the continued conflict between *Ayans* of the region, namely between Ataullah Ağa Karaosmanoğlu, the *voyvoda* of Bergama Araboğlu,⁶⁹³ and a certain Sore Mustafa Paşa, who may have been the Porte’s agent. Sore Mustafa Paşa had attacked

⁶⁸⁶ *Gazette de France*, 25 juillet 1766, 237.

⁶⁸⁷ *Gazette de France*, 22 aoust 1766, 273.

⁶⁸⁸ *Gazette de France*, 8 aoust 1766, 253.

⁶⁸⁹ *Gazette de France*, 19 septembre 1766, 305.

⁶⁹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 10 octobre 1766, 329.

⁶⁹¹ *Gazette de France*, 16 janvier 1767, 17.

⁶⁹² *Gazette de France*, 17 novembre 1766, 375.

⁶⁹³ Nagata, *Tarihte Âyânlar*, 31.

Araboğlu with 2000 men and turned him against Ataullah Ağa Karaosmanoğlu, who after defending himself against Sore Mustafa Paşa and Araboğlu, had fled the region with 600 men, his wives and children, his treasury and jewelry, while abandoning the rest to his rivals. The *Gazette's* clearly disapproved of the expulsion of Ataullah Ağa Karaosmanoğlu from the region, as he was described as being loved by the people and merchants for his kindness and moderation. This is further contrasted with its comments on Araboğlu, who it described as an individual hated in the region for his exploitation of the people and those under his authority. Araboğlu is also stated to have caused problems for the Porte and to have betrayed his allies in the past, as he just did against Ataullah Ağa Karaosmanoğlu.⁶⁹⁴ An earlier issue that was published a week before the one just discussed about Araboğlu and Ataullah Ağa Karaosmanoğlu, mentioned that the Porte had sent the Haseki Ağa with a large retinue to Aydın at the end of September 1766. The *Gazette* stated that it was still not clear what his mission was, but that he was ordered to seize the goods and the wealth of Ataullah Ağa Karaosmanoğlu, who was described as all powerful in the region of Aydın, who had been disgraced and dismissed by the Porte and was in flight at the end of September 1766.⁶⁹⁵

The *Gazette* reported at the end of December 1766, from Amsterdam, where it had received letters from merchants in Izmir, that the silk trade was still doing poorly in the Aegean region due to Sore Mustafa Paşa's expedition against Ataullah Ağa Karaosmanoğlu. The Porte had also asked the European consuls in Izmir not to provide help or asylum to Ataullah Ağa Karaosmanoğlu, but rather to help give him up to the

⁶⁹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 17 novembre 1766, 375.

⁶⁹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 10 novembre 1766, 365.

authorities if they could.⁶⁹⁶ Oddly near the end of the Ataullah Ağa Karaosmanoğlu affair, which ended with him being killed on the road,⁶⁹⁷ a fact that was not covered by the *Gazette*, was that the Paşa of Aydın, Sarı Abdurrahman Paşa, died in January 1767.⁶⁹⁸ As Paşa of Aydın, Sarı Abdurrahman Paşa should have played a prominent role in the whole affair but neither the *Gazette* nor the historian Yuzo Nagata provide much detail about his involvement, his death a few months after that of Ataullah Ağa Karaosmanoğlu is highly suspicious.

On April 23rd 1767 the influential *Şeyhülislam* Dürriyade Mustafa Efendi had been dismissed from his post and replaced by Veliyyüddin Efendi (April 1767-1768) and on the 30th of April Melek Mehmed Paşa prepared his fleet to leave the capital and go to Beşiktaş on the 4th of May, his fleet consisted of 4 galleys, and 9 ships, whose goal was to chase Maltese corsairs, who had attacked Ottoman ships near Rhodes,⁶⁹⁹ and Albanian⁷⁰⁰ pirates in the Mediterranean.⁷⁰¹ The planned expedition of Melek Mehmed Paşa for the summer of 1767 was typical for the era, but it would end in the year of 1770, when the traditional threat of corsairing in the Mediterranean would be replaced with the bigger threat of the Russian navy, which would turn the Ottoman fleet into one based on fighting corsairs to one based on fighting powerful navies. In fact Ottoman and Maltese ships fought on July 1st,⁷⁰² in which the Maltese won the skirmish near Cyprus, and the Turkish ship exploded while another one was captured along with a crew of 20 along with its

⁶⁹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 22 décembre 1766, 416.

⁶⁹⁷ Nagata, *Tarihte Âyânlar*, 32.

⁶⁹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 27 mars 1767, 99.

⁶⁹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 29 juin 1767, 228.

⁷⁰⁰ *Arnaouts*.

⁷⁰¹ *Gazette de France*, 12 juin 1767, 207.

⁷⁰² *Gazette de France*, 13 juillet 1767, 250.

captain.⁷⁰³ Melek Mehmed Paşa's fleet was eventually called back to Istanbul at the start of October 1767 and may have been a precaution in case of the start of a war against Russia,⁷⁰⁴ he came back to Istanbul on November 15th of that year.⁷⁰⁵ On July 30th Sultan Mustafa III, Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, Veliyyüddin Efendi secretly, by wearing disguises, went to Kuruçeşme, where they had long conferences, and they asked for the First Dragoman of Russia to come to Topkapı after their return to the city center.⁷⁰⁶ On August 10th another secret meeting between these three figures occurred in a nearby village.⁷⁰⁷ At the end of the summer of 1767, the Porte began to make reforms as it concerned the leading *ülema*, by removing their impunity for embezzling public funds. The chief cleric⁷⁰⁸ of the former *Şeyhülislam* Dürriyade Mustafa Efendi, Abdurrahim Efendi, was exiled from Istanbul for embezzling the former *Şeyhülislam*. Müderrisat Efendi,⁷⁰⁹ was detained in his home in Ankara, while his son, a Seyyid,⁷¹⁰ and son-in-law were put in prison, and a *Kapıcıbaşı* was sent to Ankara to collect all the information on all of their wrong doing there.⁷¹¹

In September 1767 chaos irrupted in Kamieniec as Russian troops were brought into the city, violating the Treaty of Pruth (1711), some of the members of the assembly, to which a few Ottomans from Hotin had attended, were killed and wounded. It was decided however that despite the stipulations of the Treaty of Pruth, Russian soldiers

⁷⁰³ *Gazette de France*, 31 juillet 1767, 269-270.

⁷⁰⁴ *Gazette de France*, 27 novembre 1767, 403.

⁷⁰⁵ *Gazette de France*, 28 décembre 1767, 443.

⁷⁰⁶ *Gazette de France*, 18 septembre 1767, 325-326.

⁷⁰⁷ *Gazette de France*, 5 octobre 1767, 346.

⁷⁰⁸ *Garde des sceaux*.

⁷⁰⁹ *Mudarizat Efendi*.

⁷¹⁰ *Chef des Emirs*.

⁷¹¹ *Gazette de France*, 21 septembre 1767, 328-329.

would stay there.⁷¹² In September 1767, Prince Repnin presented once again a memoir to the Polish assembly, in which he reiterated Russia's support for religious equality between Catholic and Orthodox Christians and for the Confederation of Radom that was led by Prince Radziwill,⁷¹³ and to which the powerful count Branicki officially joined by the end of September.⁷¹⁴ This ultimately meant that the pro-Russian faction led by the Prince Repnin was winning in Poland and at the start of October some 1000 Russian soldiers had arrived in Warsaw, while there were rumors coming from the Ottoman frontiers that they were mobilizing soldiers in Hotin.⁷¹⁵ The Polish diet under Radziwill and with major Russian military presence proposed an offensive and defensive alliance with Russia,⁷¹⁶ which was tantamount to official Polish subservience to Russia. At the start of November 1767, the Ottomans had sent an army towards the Black Sea, however the rubric about this news was from Amsterdam by the letters had come from Venice.⁷¹⁷

Overall this period was a quiet one but one that illustrated the power and prestige of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, whose ties to Mustafa III along with his capable administration made him really powerful and influential. The earthquake of 1766 was naturally the biggest event of his tenure as *Sadrizam* during this period, but increasing Russian aggression in Poland from 1767 onward led to major changes to the Ottoman administration, which Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa tried to prevent from happening.

⁷¹² *Gazette de France*, 5 octobre 1767, 343.

⁷¹³ *Gazette de France*, 19 octobre 1767, 359-360.

⁷¹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 23 octobre 1767, 363-364.

⁷¹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 30 octobre 1767, 371-372.

⁷¹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 16 novembre 1767, 391-392.

⁷¹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 11 décembre 1767, 425.

4.4 Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa the Quintessential Ottoman Aristocrat

On May 11th 1767 the *Gazette* published a rubric from Istanbul dating to April 1st 1767, in which the husband of Esma Sultan, Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, celebrated the marriage of his daughter to the oldest son of the former *Sadrazam* Seyyid Abdullah Paşa (August 1747-January 1750), who had died in 1761, on March 16th 1767. Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's daughter was brought with a lot of pomp to the home of her new spouse, while her father received Ottoman dignitaries that came to his home to congratulate him throughout the entirety of his daughter's marriage.⁷¹⁸ The marriage of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's daughter to Seyyid Abdullah Paşa's oldest son is interesting for a number of reasons, the first of which is it indicates wealth and status accumulation by Ottoman elites. Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa was the son of a former *Sadrazam* Muhsinzade Abdullah Paşa, between August-December 1737, and potentially either the son or step-son of Çorlulu Ali Paşa's daughter.⁷¹⁹ This meant that from his mother's side Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa came from was either a third or second generation of *Sadrazam* in his family, if in fact Çorlulu Ali Paşa's daughter was his mother. Even if his mother was not Çorlulu Ali Paşa's daughter, she still would have remained his step-mother, and would have played an important role as a potential patron of his and helped him establish ties with other elite Ottoman families.

Seyyid Abdullah Paşa was the son of a "well known" man named Firari Seyyid Hasan Paşa, and in the 1730s he had obtained the following posts: *silahşör*, *kapıcıbaşı*, *kapıcılar kethüdası*, and *büyük mirahor* in 1738.⁷²⁰ There is thus a really high probability

⁷¹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 11 mai 1767, 167.

⁷¹⁹ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman: Tome XIV*, 379.

⁷²⁰ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi: IV. Cilt, II. Bölüm: XVIII. Yüzyıl*, 367.

that Seyyid Abdullah Paşa's father had *askeri* and *ümera* status,⁷²¹ which would make Seyyid Abdullah Paşa second generation of *askeri* and *ümera* status, and since he became *Sadrazam*, he even reached *Vezir* status. Unfortunately no information was found on Seyyid Abdullah Paşa's potential mother and wives, thus an important link to his rise to power is missing at this point in time. In 1767 Seyyid Abdullah Paşa had been dead for approximately 6 years, while Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa was the reigning *Sadrazam* when he had his daughter marry the oldest son of Seyyid Abdullah Paşa, both fathers of this marriage had been *Sadrazams*, both of them were at the very least second generation members of the *askeri* class. This tells us that Seyyid Abdullah Paşa's son had either acquired a high rank among the *askeri* class, or that he was an extremely wealthy man, or a combination of both. Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa was a reigning *Sadrazam*, who was married to Esma Sultan, one of the more powerful sisters of Mustafa III, and he had his daughter, who was tied either biological or through marriage to Esma Sultan, marry the son of a former *Sadrazam*. A reigning *Sadrazam* would never marry his daughter to an unimportant man, the fact that he had his daughter marry at the height of his career to the oldest son of a former *Sadrazam* tells us that his new son-in-law was an important and wealthy man, that had also accumulated wealth and status through multiple generations of his own family. Unfortunately the *Gazette* did not provide the names of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's new son-in-law or to his daughter.

This was a marriage between two elite families and is a clear example of an 18th century Ottoman trend of what this author likes to call, the “nobilification” of the Ottoman elites in Istanbul and in the provinces, in which elites since at least the start of

⁷²¹ This author did not have enough time to fully search Seyyid Abdullah Paşa's father's back story, which is why he is not 100% sure of his *askeriye* and *ümera* background, although the likelihood are very high.

the 18th century had managed to accumulate wealth around their families through multiple generations. Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa is one of the more obvious cases of such a phenomenon, other examples from this period include the Ivazzades, the Dürri-zades, and in the provinces the Karaosmanoğlus and the Buşatlıs. The *Gazette* provided multiple examples of *Sadrazams* who lost their wealth and goods by *müsadere* or confiscation, however there were also increasingly *Sadrazams* who did not see their wealth confiscated when they were dismissed, as was the case of Hamza Hamid Paşa, which was discussed in a previous chapter. Even if the practice of *müsadere* continued during the entirety of this period, the *Sadrazams*, *Paşas*, and elite Ottomans increasingly found ways to hide their money from the authorities, as was shown previously with Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa. Ottoman elites during this period knew that they would eventually be dismissed and that the Porte would demand a certain amount of their wealth seized, and so they prepared for that eventually while holding positions of power. In fact, some of these powerful men like Gazi Hasan Paşa's protégé Kara Mahmud Paşa,⁷²² the Paşa of Scutari (İşkodra) between 1778-1796, was facing the threat of death as he had been declared a rebel by the Porte.⁷²³ He had been fighting against the neighboring Paşas, who had been ordered by the Porte to remove him as Paşa of Scutari (İşkodra), and with his patron Gazi Hasan Paşa busy with the Occupation of Egypt (1786-1787), he had been left isolated and very vulnerable. As a result of his increasing precarious situation, he had sent a large amount of his wealth to Ancona to make sure that he and his family could escape and live outside of the Ottoman Empire if he lost his territories to his rivals.⁷²⁴ The case of Kara Mahmud Paşa further solidifies the reality that Ottoman elites during the period of 1740-

⁷²² *Gazette de France*, 28 décembre 1787, 504-505.

⁷²³ *Gazette de France*, 17 mars 1786, 92.

⁷²⁴ *Gazette de France*, 25 septembre 1787, 380.

1787 prepared contingency plans and thus found ways to hide their wealth from the Porte or the authorities. His case also illustrated the increasing commercial ties between the Ottoman Empire, its elites, and Europe, with Ancona being an important commercial center for Ottoman, especially for those from Albania and Greece.

Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's daughter's marriage is proof of Ottoman elites increasing dependence on familial wealth and status to help establish and keep ties with other powerful families, and thus maintain their status. In addition, he was married to Esma Sultan, one of the most powerful women in the Ottoman Empire, who would certainly have acted as a patron to her daughter or her step-daughter. The oldest son of Seyyid Abdullah Paşa would as a result have tied both families together with his new wife, and he would have become, if he was not already, the protégé of both Esma Sultan and her husband Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa. Although nowhere near as important as his daughter, Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa had a brother named Ahmed Bey who in April 1766 was appointed *Ruznamçeci Evvel*.⁷²⁵ However the Gazette subsequently did not follow his career, or if it did then this author did not notice the subsequent coverage of his it.

On August 6th 1768, a major sign of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's upcoming dismissal appeared, the harem of his palace, where his wife Esma Sultan, sister of Mustafa III and full sister of Abdülhamid I,⁷²⁶ resided and she reportedly barely made it out of her palace, and most of her goods and jewelry were destroyed in the fire.⁷²⁷ Who was responsible for the destruction of the Harem of Esma Sultan is not clear, but it was not simply just an accident, as the use of fire was a way to demonstrate opposition and

⁷²⁵ *Gazette de France*, 16 mai 1766, 157.

⁷²⁶ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} avril 1774, 113-114.

⁷²⁷ *Gazette de France*, 26 septembre 1768, 317.

displeasure toward the administration or major figures in Istanbul throughout the period of 1740-1787. Interestingly the fire occurred in the Harem, if it was not caused by an accident but instead intentional, as this author believes it was done intentionally, then why was the Harem the part of Muhsinzade's palace that was destroyed by the father. Might the fire have been aimed at the Sultan's sister as a warning to her, her husband, and her brother? Was she viewed as the main force behind her husband and his opposition to the war, or did she come to symbolize the Porte's pacifist policies? This could all be coincidental, but it could also hint at the potential role that an Ottoman Sultane could play in politics or that was perceived to have played. In 18th century France, one of the major trends concerning elite women was the increasing opposition to them of having major political and public roles.⁷²⁸ Whereas in the mid 18th century, figures like Madame de Pompadour were omnipresent and extremely powerful, by the 1780s such figures as the queen Marie-Antoinette came to be despised for having major political roles. Could a similar trend have occurred in the Ottoman Empire, and if Ottoman women had a public role, what was it? How could a woman in the Harem have public roles? Or how could they have been perceived as having such a role by certain elements of the population? Some of these questions will be answered in the next chapter.

Overall Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's daughter's marriage to the oldest son of the former *Sadrazam* Seyyid Abdullah Paşa demonstrated the increased wealth accumulation and the "nobilification" of the Ottoman elites during the 18th century. There are other examples of this trend which will eventually be discussed in another work by this author,

⁷²⁸ Sarah Maza, "The Diamond Necklace Affair Revisited (1785-1786): The Case of the Missing Queen," in *Eroticism and the Body Politics*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 68-70.

as 18th century Istanbul had elite families that played major roles over multiple generation in its political culture. Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa was one of the most powerful, prestigious, and successful *Sadrzams* of the 18th century, his familial background, experience serving the Porte, and his marriage to Esma Sultan all led to his successful career.

4.5 The Events that led to the War in 1768

In April of 1768, the Sublime Porte told Russia to evacuate its troops from Poland,⁷²⁹ it also put a lot of pressure on king Stanislas II Augustus (1764-1795) and the Polish nobles to force the Russian troops out of Poland.⁷³⁰ However the Prince Repnin, Russian ambassador to Poland between 1763-1769, rejected Ottoman pressures for Russian troops to leave Poland in the same month.⁷³¹ The *Gazette's* coverage of the Confederacy of Bar, like that of other Polish Confederations to emerge during the war, along with its coverage of the Ottoman Empire during the war of 1768-1774 was heavily biased in favor of them. Already in an issue published at the end of May of 1768, the *Gazette* was writing and publishing rubrics that made the Confederates appear to have the edge over the Russian army.⁷³² This meant that Versailles, meaning Louis XV and Choiseul, his Secretary of Foreign Affairs (1758-1761 and 1766-1770) and chief minister throughout the 1760s, were openly declaring their side in this conflict, which was the

⁷²⁹ *Gazette de France*, 2 mai 1768, 149

⁷³⁰ *Gazette de France*, 6 mai 1768, 153.

⁷³¹ *Gazette de France*, 23 mai 1768, 173-174.

⁷³² *Gazette de France*, 27 mai 1768, 177.

Confederacy of Bar and later on the Ottoman Empire. For example, the *Gazette* stated the Confederation of Bar was gaining traction and advantages over the Russians after their “victory” against Russian troops.⁷³³ Its positive and biased coverage of both the Confederation of Bar’s and the Ottoman Empire’s performances against Russia would continue until around the summer of 1770, when its coverage of the Confederacy would fall off sharply, and it tried to avoid covering the Ottoman defeats at Çeşme and Kartal.

In mid May 1768, the sieur de Saul, the Ottoman ambassador sent by Moldavia to Poland, gave the Polish court at Warsaw a declaration from the Ottoman Sultan stating that the Ottomans would not help the Confederation of Bar, but that they hoped that Poland could deal and calm the situation by itself without having use of Russian soldiers.⁷³⁴ In June, the forces of Potocki were defeated by the Russians, forcing him to take refuge in Moldavia by way of the Ottoman fortress of Hotin.⁷³⁵ In July 1768, the Confederates of Zanoek controlled the city of Cracow,⁷³⁶ which the Russians would retake in mid August.⁷³⁷ In July a new Russian Army of 6 to 7000 men under the Prince of Dolgorouki had entered Lithuania, this went against Russian promises to the Porte, as they had promised the Ottomans that they would not send additional troops into Polish territory.⁷³⁸ In August 1768, the Porte demanded reparations from both Russia and Poland for the damages done to their territories, most notably to Balta, due to the war between the Confederacy of Bar and Russia on the Ottoman frontiers.⁷³⁹ This led to Ottoman mobilization throughout its provinces bordering Poland and Russia, and it began to send

⁷³³ *Gazette de France*, 3 juin 1768, 185-186.

⁷³⁴ *Gazette de France*, 13 juin 1768, 197.

⁷³⁵ *Gazette de France*, 27 juin 1768, 213-214.

⁷³⁶ *Gazette de France*, 5 aoust 1768, 257.

⁷³⁷ *Gazette de France*, 9 septembre 1768, 297.

⁷³⁸ *Gazette de France*, 19 aoust 1768, 273.

⁷³⁹ *Gazette de France*, 5 septembre 1768, 293.

orders for troops to be sent to the border fortresses, which all began at the end of July.⁷⁴⁰ By mid August 1768, Mustafa III had ordered the mobilization of an army of 80 000 men to be under the order of the Paşa of Konya,⁷⁴¹ this may have been Çelebi Hüseyin Paşa the Beylerbeyi of Anatolia,⁷⁴² as he was appointed commander of Bender and he was given one of the most lucrative *Sancaks*, that of Aydın to finance his operations at the start of August.⁷⁴³ At the very end of August, reporting from Warsaw, the Gazette observed that the Sublime Porte had increased the salary of the Janissaries and had prepared the *Sancak-ı Şerif*, which it noted was usually a declaration of war by the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁴⁴

4.6 The Fall of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, the Ottoman Declaration of War, and the Interim *Sadrazamlık* of Silahdar Mahir Hamza Paşa, August-October 1768

On August 6th 1768, a major sign of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's upcoming dismissal appeared, the harem of his palace, where his wife Esma Sultan, sister of Mustafa III and full sister of Abdülhamid I,⁷⁴⁵ resided and she reportedly barely made it out of her palace, and most of her goods and jewelry were destroyed in the fire.⁷⁴⁶ A month later on September 7th her husband Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa was dismissed as

⁷⁴⁰ *Gazette de France*, 12 septembre 1768, 301.

⁷⁴¹ *Gazette de France*, 12 septembre 1768, 302.

⁷⁴² Anatolia is referred to as Natolie by the *Gazette*.

⁷⁴³ *Gazette de France*, 16 septembre 1768, 305.

⁷⁴⁴ *Gazette de France*, 23 septembre 1768, 313.

⁷⁴⁵ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} avril 1774, 113-114.

⁷⁴⁶ *Gazette de France*, 26 septembre 1768, 317.

Sadrazam and was exiled to Tenedos (Bozcaada).⁷⁴⁷ The *Nişancı*, Yağlıkızade Mehmed Emin Paşa was declared *Kaymakam*, a position he would hold from September 7th to till October 23rd 1768,⁷⁴⁸ when he became *Sadrazam*. The man who immediately replaced Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa as *Sadrazam* was Silahdar Mahir Hamza Paşa, who seemed to have briefly replaced Çelebi Hüseyin Paşa the previous *Beylerbeyi* of Anatolia who had been appointed as Paşa or *Serasker* of Bender,⁷⁴⁹ and prior to becoming *Beylerbeyi* Hamza Paşa had been appointed to the Sancak of Aydın.⁷⁵⁰ Around the same time, Ivazzade Halil Paşa (Vâsıf referred to him as Ivazpaşazade),⁷⁵¹ who at the end of March 1768 had been promoted from *Kapıcılar kethüdâsı* to *Mîrâhur*,⁷⁵² the *Gazette* referred to him as a *Hacı* and stated that he was appointed as Paşa of Hotin in mid July,⁷⁵³ that he left Istanbul by the end of July for Hotin with a large amount of money,⁷⁵⁴ and arrived there around the time of Muhsinzade's fall mid September.⁷⁵⁵ In mid September, Tartars and Ottoman light troops began to cross the Dniester River and began raiding Polish territory, and the count Branicki one of the leading Polish commanders on the Russian side observed that the Ottomans put up red flags, a symbol of declaration of war, in Hotin, Bender, and Ochakov (Özi).⁷⁵⁶ Istanbul was increasingly being crowded with young men recently recruited for the war and on the 20th of September a fight broke out between the Janissaries and the *Topçus*, which saw a few of wounded but it was quickly

⁷⁴⁷ *Gazette de France*, 7 octobre 1768, 329.

⁷⁴⁸ *Gazette de France*, 25 novembre 1768, 385.

⁷⁴⁹ *Gazette de France*, 7 octobre 1768, 329.

⁷⁵⁰ *Gazette de France*, 22 avril 1768, 137.

⁷⁵¹ Ahmed Vâsıf Efendi, *Ahmed Vâsıf Efendi ve Mehâsinü'l-Âsâr ve Hakâ'iku'l-Ahbâr'ı*, ed. Nevzat Sağlam (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2020), 95.

⁷⁵² *Gazette de France*, 20 mai 1768, 169.

⁷⁵³ *Gazette de France*, 29 aoust 1768, 285.

⁷⁵⁴ *Gazette de France*, 12 septembre 1768, 302.

⁷⁵⁵ *Gazette de France*, 7 octobre 1768, 329.

⁷⁵⁶ *Gazette de France*, 10 octobre 1768, 333.

put under control.⁷⁵⁷ On September 20th, the Paşa of Hotin (Ivazzade) allowed the Confederacy of Bar to occupy uninhabited areas on the frontier of Hotin if they paid tribute to him.⁷⁵⁸ The Ottomans continued to prepare for war and the *Divan* discussed whether or not to go to war, with the *Ülema* and some of the *Vezirs* in favor of war, but it waited for the arrival of the *Sadrazam* before making its decision.⁷⁵⁹ This meant that the Porte had already made up its mind, and awaited the arrival of Mahir Hamza Paşa to implement its decision, namely to go to war against Russia. On September 22nd Mahir Hamza Paşa arrived two weeks after Muhsinzade's fall, who was exiled to Rhodes, on October 3rd a *Meşvere* was held,⁷⁶⁰ in which the decision was made by the Porte which led to its declaration for war against Russia.⁷⁶¹ Mustafa III gave a *Hatt-ı Şerif* to Mahir Hamza Paşa after his arrival, in which he told him that the Empire's fate were in his hands, and that his predecessor Muhsinzade fell because of his "avarice" and some of the people around him had "corrupted" the honor of the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁶² This meant that Mustafa III wanted war and that his new *Sadrazam* was meant to implement his wishes, if not then he would also face disgrace like his predecessor had.

On October 6th, Obreskov the Russian ambassador to the Ottoman Empire was called to an audience with the new *Sadrazam*, where they had a brief but heated debate, he was then put in a separate room to await the Porte's decision, Mustafa III then ordered him, his secretaries, and three Drogmans to be sent to Yedikule.⁷⁶³ Thus the Ottoman Empire had non-verbally declared war on Russia. On the 10th of October, the French

⁷⁵⁷ *Gazette de France*, 21 octobre 1768, 346.

⁷⁵⁸ *Gazette de France*, 21 octobre 1768, 349.

⁷⁵⁹ *Gazette de France*, 4 novembre 1768, 363.

⁷⁶⁰ The term *Grand Conseil* was used instead of *Divan*.

⁷⁶¹ *Gazette de France*, 14 novembre 1768, 373.

⁷⁶² *Gazette de France*, 11 novembre 1768, 369.

⁷⁶³ *Gazette de France*, 7 novembre 1768, 365.

ambassador to the Ottoman Empire the comte de Vergennes visited the new *Sadrizam*, he was followed by the English ambassador and then the others. Around the same time, Moldovancı Ali Paşa was appointed *Serasker* of Özi, he had previously been the Paşa of Adana and Maraş.⁷⁶⁴ Mahir Hamza Paşa's health was very bad and as a result he was dismissed on October 20th, he was then put on a galley for the Dardanelles, from there he would go to Crete, where he was appointed as Paşa there.⁷⁶⁵ However, he never made it to Crete, as he died at the end of October in the Dardanelles from whatever ailments he had had.⁷⁶⁶

Silahdar Mahir Hamza Paşa was a consequential inconsequential figure in 18th century Ottoman history, he made the Ottoman declaration of war against Russia, which would turn into arguably the most disastrous war in Ottoman history since the defeat of Bayezid I (1389-1402) against Tamerlane at the Battle of Ankara in 1402. Some would argue that the Siege of Vienna of 1683 and the war of 1683-1699 were disastrous for the Ottoman Empire, they were major defeats but not existentially disastrous, and it was a kind of defeat that other major European powers faced throughout the Early Modern Era.

But Mahir Hamza Paşa's decision was not really his to make, the *Gazette* made it clear that Mustafa III and a large portion of Ottoman elites wanted war against Russia, the dismissal of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa who had opposed the war was proof of that. The *Hatt-ı Şerif* told him that war is what the Sultan wanted and that his predecessor fell out of power because of his opposition to such an endeavor, thus even if he was against starting a war, he was forced to declare war or would have faced a quick fall from power.

⁷⁶⁴ *Gazette de France*, 14 novembre 1768, 373.

⁷⁶⁵ *Gazette de France*, 25 novembre 1768, 385.

⁷⁶⁶ *Gazette de France*, 12 décembre 1768, 405.

Thus a man that was *Sadrazam* for about a month and half, and who was dead even before Russia made its own rebuttal declaration against the Ottomans,⁷⁶⁷ officially started the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774. Even inconsequential pawns, can be consequential, and ultimately the swift downfall of Muhsinzade and Mahir Hamza's brief hold on power demonstrated that greater factors than mere individuals played in starting the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774. As previously stated, the Sultan and a large proportion of Istanbul elites were in favor, second France had been pressuring the Ottomans since 1763 to intervene in Polish affairs,⁷⁶⁸ the Ottomans had not gone to war since 1746, Russia had expanded its hold over Poland at the expense of the Ottoman Empire and saw increased influence in Europe. Its ally Sweden had seen its influence in Europe decline sharply since the Swedish-Ottoman defensive alliance of 1739, as the Russo-Swedish War of 1741-1743 saw it lose most of Finland to Russia. The Pomeranian War 1757-1762, which was a part of the Seven Years' War, began when Sweden and France asserted to the Holy Roman Empire that they entered the war to guarantee the Treaty of Westphalia,⁷⁶⁹ and it saw Sweden have almost no impact on the war while facing major financial problems for going to war. The close call of a potential Russo-Swedish war throughout the years 1749-1750 had shown most of Europe, and probably the Ottomans that Sweden was no longer a power capable enough to fight on its own. If the Ottomans did not stop Russian expansion into Poland in 1768, then Russia might have further expanded in Poland, which was a major factor into the Ottoman declaration of war.

⁷⁶⁷ *Gazette de France*, 23 janvier 1769, 29-32.

⁷⁶⁸ Marsangy, *Vergennes: Son ambassade à Constantinople*, Tome II, 248-251.

⁷⁶⁹ *Gazette de France*, 23 avril 1757, 198-199.

Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa, who had been *Kaymakam* for 43 days became *Sadrazam* on the 20th of October.⁷⁷⁰ By November 1768, the Ottomans had already built a bridge of boats on the Dniester so that their troops could raid Poland.⁷⁷¹ Mehmed Emin Paşa's career and achievements will be discussed in the following section .

4.7 The Rise and Fall Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa and Ottoman-Mughal Relations in the mid 18th century

The *Gazette* reported on the appointment of a certain Sâlim Mehmed Efendi as Ottoman ambassador to the Mughal Padishah Muhammad Shah,⁷⁷² in its 7th issue of February 13th of 1745, however the rubric was from Hamburg dated to February 3rd 1745, and there was no date attached to the news of the Ottoman ambassador's nomination.⁷⁷³ Sâlim Mehmed Efendi's embassy was intended to anger Nader Shah,⁷⁷⁴ and served as potential tool by the Ottomans to force him to end the war. On the 24th of September 1744 the Mughal ambassador sent by Muhammad Shah (1719-1748), had arrived at Üsküdar.⁷⁷⁵ The Mughal ambassador's name was Seyyid Atâullah (Sayyid Ataullah), who had travelled through Basra and then Bagdad to get to Istanbul, when he had reached Basra, Ahmed Paşa the Paşa of Bagdad (1723-1747) had informed the Porte of his

⁷⁷⁰ *Gazette de France*, 25 novembre 1768, 385.

⁷⁷¹ *Gazette de France*, 28 novembre 1768, 389.

⁷⁷² Le Grand Mogol.

⁷⁷³ *Gazette de France*, 13 février 1745, 74-76.

⁷⁷⁴ Şemdânîzâde, *Mürîr-Tevârih*, Cilt 1 , 114.

⁷⁷⁵ İzzî Süleymân Efendi, *İzzî Tarihi*, ed. Ziya Yılmaz (İstanbul: Türkiye Yazma Eserler Kurumu Başkanlığı, 2019), 56.

presence and mission.⁷⁷⁶ He was a merchant from Bukhara, who had spent 22 years in Istanbul after doing the Hajj to Mecca, during his stay in the Ottoman capital he received a letter from the then *Sadrâzam*, Nevşehirli İbrahim Paşa (1718-1730), for his ruler Muhammad Shah (1719-1748).⁷⁷⁷ Seyyid Hasan Paşa addressed a letter to two of Muhammad Shah's *vezirs* at the time, Qamreddin the Vezir, and Nizam ul-Mulk who had become Asaf Jah I (1724-1747).⁷⁷⁸ But the Ottomans only made polite and generic replies to the Mughal's, basically they were unwilling to do anything and were not particularly interested in India at this point in time.⁷⁷⁹

His ruler Muhammad Shah had seen large parts of the provinces of Gujarat and Malwa or the South-West of the Mughal Empire had been conquered by the Marathas under Baji Rao,⁷⁸⁰ the South had become independent under the infamous Nizam ul-Mulk had become the first Nizam ruler of Hyderabad as Asaf Jah I (1724-1747),⁷⁸¹ and the Bengals or the Eastern provinces of the Empire had come under the control of a new Nawab Alivardi Khan (1740-1756) who stopped paying tribute to Delhi.⁷⁸² However, Seyyid Atâullah's mission was mostly related to the Ottoman-Persian War of 1743-1746 against their common enemy Nader Shah, who had infamously conquered and pillaged North-West India and Delhi in 1739, holding the Mughal Padishah Muhammad Shah hostage.⁷⁸³ The *Mâliyye Tezkerecisi* Sâlim Mehmed Efendi from Trabzon was named the

⁷⁷⁶ İzzî Süleymân Efendi, *İzzî Tarihi*, 56.

⁷⁷⁷ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire ottoman: Tome XV*, 86-87.

⁷⁷⁸ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire ottoman: Tome XV*, 87.

⁷⁷⁹ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire ottoman: Tome XV*, 87.

⁷⁸⁰ Zahir Uddin Malik, *The Reign of Muhammad Shah, 1719-1748* (London: Asia Publishing House, 1977), 119.

⁷⁸¹ Satish Chandra, *Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court, 1707-1740* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 214.

⁷⁸² P. J. Marshall. *Bengal: The British Bridgehead, Eastern India 1740-1828* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 52.

⁷⁸³ Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, 148.

ambassador and the Kapucular Bölük Başı Ali Ağa was named the steward (Kethüda) of the embassy to India on the 7th of November 1744.⁷⁸⁴ However Sâlim Mehmed Efendi died on his way to India, and was replaced by a cloth merchant by the name of Hacı Yusuf Ağa, who came back from India to Istanbul in March 1750 with a great amount of gifts for the Sultan.⁷⁸⁵

On his embassy to India, Hacı Yusuf Ağa was accompanied by his son, Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin, who would become the groom of Mustafa III when he became engaged to his 9 year old daughter Şah Sultan (1761-1803) in January 1768,⁷⁸⁶ and subsequently replaced the sick and dying Silahdar Mahir Hamza Paşa (August 7th-October 20th 1768),⁷⁸⁷ who in fact died in Gallipoli at the end of October 1768,⁷⁸⁸ he was the *Sadrazam* between October 20th 1768-August 12th 1769. Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa would be the unfortunate courtier turned Paşa, who was highly regarded by Vergennes and other major figures of the time,⁷⁸⁹ but was tasked in 1769 of leading the Ottoman army to war against Russia, which led to disastrous results for the Ottoman army and for him,⁷⁹⁰ whose punishment was to have his head cut off and exposed at Topkapı with a written warning.⁷⁹¹

Mehmed Emin Paşa was Hacı Yusuf Ağa's son, together they had gone on 4 commercial trips between Mecca and India before his father became the Ottoman ambassador to the Mughal Empire, in which he accompanied his father on his embassy

⁷⁸⁴ İzzî Süleymân Efendi, *İzzî Tarihi*, 59.

⁷⁸⁵ Şemdânîzâde, *Mürit-Tevârih*, Cilt I., 153-154.

⁷⁸⁶ *Gazette de France*, 29 février 1768, 69.

⁷⁸⁷ *Gazette de France*, 25 novembre 1768, 385.

⁷⁸⁸ *Gazette de France*, 12décembre 1768, 405.

⁷⁸⁹ Boutaric, *Correspondance secrète et inédites de Louis XV: Tome I*, 393.

⁷⁹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 29 septembre 1769, 316.

⁷⁹¹ *Gazette de France*, 30 octobre 1769, 351.

to India.⁷⁹² When Yusuf Ağa returned to Istanbul in March of 1750, he brought his great wealth to the city and got his son a position in the Chancery (Kalemiye), where Mehmed Emin Paşa's beautiful writing and good looks greatly helped him rise up through the ranks.⁷⁹³ It is interesting to note that they probably had left India at the height of the Carnatic Wars (1746-1763) in Southern India, as they had gotten an audience with Nasir Jung (June 1748-December 1750).⁷⁹⁴ Northern India was in utter chaos at the end of the 1740s as Muhammad Shah and most of his elite *Mansabdar* or nobles died in the 1740s, causing a succession of familial wars or civil wars throughout India.⁷⁹⁵ Simultaneously the death of Asaf Jah (1724-1748) as Nizam of Hyderabad greatly destabilized the Deccan and the Carnatic, which led to an increasing tenuous position for the rulers of the Carnatic.⁷⁹⁶ This increased the military presence of the French and English in India along with the additional troops that both the French and the English had gotten during the Austrian War of Succession led to their armies becoming mercenaries for Indian Princes and rulers vying for power.⁷⁹⁷ Yusuf Ağa's embassy to India (1745-1750) would have coincided with the rise of civil wars within the various states that had emerged throughout India, the start of Ahmad Shah Durrani's raids into Delhi and Northern India, and the start of a series of wars between the French and the English led by Dupleix and Clive respectively. In stark contrast to the Ottoman Empire, the Balkans, and the Eastern Mediterranean region, India was in complete political crisis and anarchy, and the Mughal Empire by the death of Muhammad Shah in 1748 seized to be an Empire.

⁷⁹² Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire ottoman: Tome XVI*, 228-230.

⁷⁹³ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire ottoman: Tome XVI*, 228-230.

⁷⁹⁴ Ananda Ranga Pillai, *The Diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai: Vol. 7*, ed. H. Dodwell (Madras: Government Press, 1919), 42.

⁷⁹⁵ Malik, *The Reign of Muhammad Shah*, 258-259.

⁷⁹⁶ Marc Vigié, *Dupleix* (Paris: Fayard, 1993), 300

⁷⁹⁷ Vigié, *Dupleix*, 295.

The *Gazette* reported in April 1763, Yağlıkcızade Mehmed Emin Paşa as Kâhya received special treatment from Mustafa III, who in a Hat-ı Şerif, confirmed him in his post and gave him a sable caftan.⁷⁹⁸ The language that the *Gazette* used about Mehmed Emin Paşa clearly indicated that he was one of Sultan Mustafa III's favorites and a man that was expected to rise to a major position, which he ultimately did. The *Gazette* covered a mid level figure in great detail, when he was not directly involved in any key decisions, was not married to any of the Sultan's sisters, and had not previously held a position higher than that of *Kâhya*, thus this story implied that he was a person of interest and a potential ally of France among the Porte's emerging officials. As stated earlier he was the *Sadrazam* between October 20th 1768-August 12th 1769, he had been engaged to Mustafa III's oldest daughter Şah Sultan, and was a man qualified to be a great statesmen, however as *Sadrazam* he was tasked with doing something that he had had no prior skills or experience in, leading the Ottoman army.

Mehmed Emin Paşa is one of those figures that could have been a great statesmen for the Ottoman Empire, as his unique experience as a merchant and a man that knew a lot about the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, and India could have played an important role in the possible creation of an Ottoman policy towards those regions. He also would have seen and experienced the chaos that the Mughal Empire faced during the reigns of the Mughal Padishahs Muhammad Shah (1719-1748) and Ahmad Shah Bahadur (1748-1754/death in 1775), in which the Mughal Empire ceased to be an Empire.⁷⁹⁹ He would also have seen some of the impact and power of the French and the English in the Indian sub-continent, or at the very least he would have heard about them by Indians.

⁷⁹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 27 mai 1763, 193.

⁷⁹⁹ Malik, *The Reign of Muhammad Shah*, 407.

Based on Vergennes report on him and the Ottoman Empire at the start of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774, Mehmed Emin Paşa was also very adept at dealing with Europeans and their diplomats.⁸⁰⁰ He seemed like a figure that could have been uniquely qualified, much like Gazi Hasan Paşa was, in playing a major in the Sublime Porte's policies after the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, but his nomination as *Sadrizam* and his military inexperienced led to his sudden downfall and death. The one position that he had no real qualifications for, being a military leader, was what doomed him, which illustrates the Sublime Porte's continued difficulty in appointing men with some experiences to key posts. But it should always be remembered that they were not uniquely Ottoman problems, 18th century France had plenty of men who were appointed to powerful positions without any prior experience or competence in these positions, as was the case with Austria.

4.8 Mustafa III and his Reign

One of the advantages of systematically reading the *Gazette* throughout a relatively long period of time is finding patterns or changes in the patterns as it concerns the policies of a state or of a particular ruler. That was the case with the *Gazette's* coverage of Mustafa III's reign between 1763-1768, which made it abundantly clear that the men who it perceived to be in his favor or on the rise almost all were married or would marry either his sisters or his daughter. The gradual discovery of this policy, along

⁸⁰⁰ Boutaric, *Correspondance secrète et inédites de Louis XV: Tome I*, 393-394.

with a basic search of who these men were eventually led to the conclusion that he had had a deliberate policy of promoting the elites or rising stars of Istanbul to prominent positions that ultimately led to their marriages to one of his female relatives. Of the six men who were married to his sisters from 1758 onward, three became *Sadrzams*, Koca Ragıp Paşa, Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, Silahdar Mehmed Paşa; while the other three had either been or were promoted to the post of Kapudan Paşa with Küçük Mustafa Paşa in August 1762,⁸⁰¹ Nişli Mehmed Paşa who had been Kapudan Paşa since 1763 when he married Saliha Sultan in May 1764,⁸⁰² and Melek Mehmed Paşa in January 1767,⁸⁰³ who had previously been Kapudan Paşa (1752-1754) and later became *Kaymakam* between 1769-1774. The other prominent figure that played a prominent role in Mustafa III's administration throughout the 1760s was Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa who eventually married his daughter Şah Sultan, oddly the same Ottoman Princess that Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa had married in 1763.

Whereas the *Sadrzams* under Mahmud I and Osman III were unable to establish their own bases of power and were not the men that those two Sultans relied on, Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa succeeded in changing the pattern and earned the trust of Mustafa III and later on of his wife Saliha Sultan, the sister of the Sultan. Instead of relying on the *Kızlar Ağası*, Mustafa III relied on men that came from powerful families with multiple generations holding elite positions in either the palace or the empire, as was the case of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, Melek Mehmed Paşa, Silahdar Mehmed Paşa, Ivazzade Halil Paşa, and Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa. He also relied on men that came to distinguish

⁸⁰¹ *Gazette de France*, 24 septembre 1762, 355.

⁸⁰² *Gazette de France*, 29 juin 1764, 207.

⁸⁰³ *Gazette de France*, 20 mars 1767, 91.

themselves as was the case with Koca Ragıp Paşa himself and Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa, whose father Hacı Yusuf Ağa had been the replacement Ottoman ambassador⁸⁰⁴ to the Mughal Padishah Muhammad Shah (1719-1748) and to Nasir Jung (1748-1750) Nizam of Hyderabad, although he had been tasked with meeting his father Nizam ul-Mulk or Asaf Jah I (1724-1748), between 1745-1750.⁸⁰⁵

The only two *Sadrazams* during the reign of Mustafa III that were capable but not outstanding figures who were mostly known for their experience were Hamza Hamid Paşa, Silahdar Mahir Hamza Paşa, and Moldovancı Ali Paşa. Of the nine men who were *Sadrazams* during the reign of Mustafa III,⁸⁰⁶ three were married to his sisters: Ragıp Paşa to Saliha Sultan, Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa to Esma Sultan, and Silahdar Mehmed Paşa to Ayşe Sultan. Two were engaged to his oldest daughter Şah Sultan (1761-1803), the two *Sadrazams* that were executed during his reign, namely Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa and Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa. The remaining four *Sadrazams* Hamza Hamid, Mahir, Ivazzade Halil, and Moldovancı were all *Sadrazams* for less than a year.

Sultan Mustafa III like the French, expected the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 to be favorable to him and the Ottoman Empire. On numerous occasions throughout the war he had wanted to lead the Ottoman armies himself, which was not a unique Ottoman phenomenon. Both Louis XV and George II participated in battles during the Austrian War of Succession, the Battle of Fontenoy in 1745, the greatest French battlefield victory during his reign,⁸⁰⁷ and the Battle of Dettingen in 1743. Frederic II

⁸⁰⁴ The original ambassador to the Mughal Empire and the Nizam of Hyderabad had been Sâlim Mehmed Efendi, who died on his way to India.

⁸⁰⁵ Ananda Ranga Pillai, *The Diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai: Vol. 7*, 42.

⁸⁰⁶ Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa was *Sadrazam* twice between 1765-1768 and 1771-1774.

⁸⁰⁷ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 385-387.

famously led his armies during the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748) and the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), and less famously also led his troops during the Bavarian War of Succession 1778-1779. Most famous of them all, Napoleon led his armies throughout Europe as Emperor. Thus the notion of a ruler leading his armies was not uncommon, but it was increasingly becoming rare due to their importance as the respective centers of their states.

Throughout the Early Modern Era, ministers tried to prevent their respective rulers from leading their troops into battle, for the danger that it could bring to the monarchy or imperial dynasty. If the ruler was killed or his army was defeated, then it was a disaster, like the Battle of Zenta (1697) proved for Mustafa II (1695-1703), but it was also a major problem as it required a large section of the court to move with the ruler on the battlefield. Thus the costs of having the ruler go to war were frequently both financially and strategically too expensive and dangerous to be worth the undertaking. The same applied to the *Divan's* opposition to Mustafa III's wish to lead his troops, if he went to battle, who would watch over his brother and son? Who would watch over Istanbul? Would from the Saray would go with him to the frontiers? Who would stay, who would go? Could the person that stayed in Istanbul without the Sultan being there have the authority to keep public security? All of these questions point to the simple answer that there were no real benefits for the Sultan to go to the frontiers, contemporaries knew this, and managed to successfully oppose his wishes of doing so. Since at least the end of July 1768, Mustafa III had intentions of leading his troops to war, as he had ordered the former *Mimar Ağa*, Hafız Efendi, to go to Edirne and repair

and fix his palaces and living quarters there.⁸⁰⁸ At the end of 1768 he decided not to go to Edirne and head the army, instead letting his doomed *Sadrazam* Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa go, and so he stayed in the capital. After the *Sadrazam* Moldovancı Ali Paşa abandoned Hotin in October 1769 as a result of poor logistical planning of the supplies, Mustafa III once again wanted to lead his armies for the following spring.⁸⁰⁹ This started a trend that would only end with his death, namely that whenever Ottoman armies suffered serious defeats, Sultan Mustafa III would be reported as wanting to lead his armies to improve morale, only for Melek Mehmed Paşa and other major figures at the Porte and in the palace to dissuade him from doing so. For example, after the defeats at Çeşme and Kartal, whereas most of the *Divan* had sided with starting peace negotiations by the start of fall in 1770, Mustafa III not only opposed this, but again declared that he would personally lead his armies to battle.⁸¹⁰ In mid September 1770, the Sultan sent an engineer and a large number of construction workers to Edirne to prepare the palaces there to be fit for his eventual arrival there, which never occurred. This was also simultaneously around the same time that he had decided to appoint his brother-in-law Silahdar Mehmed Paşa, the husband of his sister Ayşe Sultan, as *Sadrazam*.⁸¹¹

On June 22nd Mustafa III fainted at the mosque, in what was probably a stroke during his Friday *selamet*, and was brought back to the palace in a chair as he was unable to ride a horse.⁸¹² On Friday June 29th he went to the mosque for the morning prayer and a massive crowd awaited him at the doors of the palace, but he looked in poor health. On

⁸⁰⁸ *Gazette de France*, 16 septembre 1768, 305.

⁸⁰⁹ *Gazette de France*, 24 novembre 1769, 379.

⁸¹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 22 octobre 1770, 344-345.

⁸¹¹ *Gazette de France*, 2 novembre 1770, 355.

⁸¹² *On l'y transporta en chaise*.

July 2nd he again went to the morning prayer, but still seemed ill.⁸¹³ On July 5th 1773, a letter dictated by Mustafa III was published and spread throughout the entire Ottoman army, in which he praised his brother-in-law and *Sadrizam* Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa. He talked about the old glories of the Ottoman Empire and of Muslim powers and lamented the current state of the Ottoman Empire, and blamed the Ottoman Empire's defeats on poor performances to insubordination and to a lack of discipline. He urged all Ottomans, most notably the Janissaries, in reestablishing the honor of the Empire by being more zealous, and the *Gazette* stated that this letter seemed to have succeeded in motivating the Ottoman army.⁸¹⁴ On January 21st 1774, Mustafa III died naming his brother Abdülhamid I as successor, he had probably died from a stroke and his goal of expanding the glory of the Ottoman Empire had become a complete disaster. However as disastrous as the war proved to be, the Ottomans by the end of 1770 had managed to stabilize the fronts and prevent further disasters from occurring, the Battle of Kozluca on June 20th 1774 was simply a result of the Ottoman Empire's exhaustion and lack of state of the art military knowledge that the Russians had acquired during the Seven Years' War. The reign of Mustafa III may have ended disastrously, but his reign up to 1769 was one of the politically more stable periods in the history of the Ottoman Empire, as his use of his sisters to build ties with prominent men led to political stability at the Ottoman center.

⁸¹³ *Gazette de France*, 13 aoust 1773, 287.

⁸¹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 23 aoust 1773, 305.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter was an examination of the reign of Mustafa III during its height from 1763 until 1769, it was a period in which the husbands of his sisters took on a prominent role throughout this period and during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774. The men in charge of the Empire during this period like Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa were some of the more qualified and talented men of their era. Other men were capable in different fields like Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa but were tasked to do things that were outside of their experience and abilities, like leading the Ottoman military. Some figures like Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa were capable at controlling the Janissaries but their exploitation of the people led to their downfall and violent death. This period also saw the height of Ottoman elites who had accumulated wealth, this was illustrated with the marriage between the daughter of reigning *Sadrizam* Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa and the oldest son of the deceased *Sadrizam* Seyyid Abdullah Paşa. Ottoman-Mughal relations were briefly discussed in this section to the role that Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa played in them.

CHAPTER V

Women and Power in the Ottoman Empire during the 18th Century

5.1 Introduction

The biggest revelation that this author made while researching and writing this dissertation was the political and diplomatic roles that Ottoman women played during the period of 1740-1787. The amount of influence that they held over their male relatives, although previously researched and known as it concerned the Valide Sultans, became a discovery while reading the *Gazette's* coverage of the reign of Mustafa III, as his sisters quickly became powerbrokers and centers of political factions. In order to understand how the Ottoman Princesses held an enormous amount of power and influence over their brothers, a look at the Sultans and their ages when they ascended the throne during the period of 1740-1787 is needed. Mahmud I was 34 years old when he became Sultan in 1730, his brother Osman III was nearly 55 years old in 1754, their cousin Mustafa III was

40 years old in 1757, and his brother Abdülhamid I was 48 years old in 1774. The average age of the Sultans when they ascended the throne during the period of 1730-1774 was 44 years of age, they were the product of the *Kafes* system, which meant that they had a limited life experiences and would not have been able to accumulate a lot of knowledge nor would they have gotten to have a variety of life experiences. The result of this was that the men who ascended the throne between 1730-1774 would have had very limited opportunities to build their own factions as princes, as they were stuck in the *Kafes* system.

However, the Ottoman Princesses who reached the age of 44, the average age by which the Sultans of this period ascended the throne, would have had a variety of life experiences and have had many opportunities to build up their own power base and wealth. For example by the age of 44, the sisters of the Sultans would have had multiple husbands, daughters,⁸¹⁵ accumulated certain forms of knowledge and life experiences. Ottoman Princesses would have accumulated wealth and have established ties to both men and women both inside and outside of the palace, and have formed potentially powerful factions around themselves and their deceased or current husbands. Each husband that an Ottoman Princess had was a potential new faction that they could add to their own pre-existing faction, they had as a result decades to accumulate wealth, power, ties, and factions of their own throughout Istanbul and the Ottoman Empire while their brothers were tied to the Palace and stuck in the *Kafes* system. Thus a large segment of

⁸¹⁵ There is conflicting evidence on whether or not the sons of Ottoman Princesses were killed during this period, since the author did not have time to research this topic, it is for the moment left untouched. A finished version of this dissertation should eventually be uploaded in the future with answers about the topic of nephews of the Sultans.

this chapter is focused on the underrated role that Ottoman Princesses had as sisters of the reigning Sultans.

Another major section of this chapter is on the role that other elite Ottoman women and in one case European woman had within the Ottoman Empire. These cases demonstrate the centrality that women could play within internal Ottoman conflicts, in one case the wife or widow of an important local figure in the region of Izmir became the cause of conflict between the *Yeniçeri Ağası* of Izmir and a local *Ayan*. The wife of an important official fled the *Ayan's* grip and managed to take refuge under the *Yeniçeri Ağası* of Izmir, causing a kind of cold war between the city and one of the region's major *Ayans*. Another case, illustrated the influence that the sister of a deceased *Ayan* could have in bringing upon the downfall of a powerful Ottoman official. There was also the case of the comtesse des Alleurs,⁸¹⁶ the wife of the French ambassador between 1747-1754, who played a major role in extending French influence and diplomacy to the Harems of powerful Ottoman women. Naturally the case of Şehsuvar Sultan, the sole Valide Sultan between 1740-1787, will be the first case to be discussed in this chapter. So this chapter is not chronologically based, but rather thematically based from royal women, to elite Ottoman women, then to Madame des Alleurs.

The theme of this chapter is the public role that women could have on Ottoman politics and diplomacy, despite the many limitations that the local culture would have had on them at the time. The role of women in Ottoman society was unique due to the limitations that they had in society, when compared to the rest of Europe, however there were also common similarities in the limitations that Ottoman and European women had

⁸¹⁶ Comtesse is the French equivalent of Countess.

throughout the 18th century, regardless of the religious or cultural background of the society that they lived in. There will also be some comparisons to French women of the same era such as Madame Adélaïde de France, Louis XV's and Marie Leszczyńska's third daughter. The issue of the decline of the public role that French women increasingly faced at the end of the 18th century will be discussed at the end of this chapter as well. Besides the *Gazette*, this chapter also heavily relies on Flachet, whose privileged position thanks to his patron Moralı Beşir Ağa, enabled him to have access to the Harem and to key figures of the reign of Mahmud I and to a lesser extent Osman III during the late 1740s and early 1750s.

Although Ottoman Princesses would play a major role in the architectural history of Istanbul as well as in its socio-economic history as a result of their patronage of *vakıfs* and *imarets*, the *Gazette* did not cover much of the architectural monuments built in the city, unless it was tied to the Sultans. This author also did not have the time to do further research on this important topic, but felt that the political role that Ottoman women played in the period of 1740-1787 was very important and worth discussing, and so their patronage of architecture will not be discussed, but their political role will be examined in detail.

5.2 The Valide Sultan Şehsuvar Sultan, her Protégés, and Failed Ottoman Statesmen under Osman III

The era of 1740-1787 only had one Valide Sultan, Şehsuvar Sultan (1682-April 29th 1756), the mother of Osman III (1754-1757). Although there was a Valide Sultan during the reign of Mahmud I, Saliha Sultan (1730-1739), she died just before the start of this period and as a result she will not be a topic of discussion in this dissertation. The *Gazette* provided some coverage of Şehsuvar Sultan, but the most valuable information on her was provided by Flachat, whose access to the Saray provided him with insider knowledge about the key figures of the palace. Flachat stated that Osman III's mother was a slave of Nuh Efendi, the father of Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa and the *Hekimbaşı* during the reign of Mustafa II (1695-1703).⁸¹⁷ After Nuh Efendi became the *Hekimbaşı*, he found and bought Şehsuvar Sultan as a slave, had her trained to learn new abilities, and then sent her to the Saray.⁸¹⁸ When her son became the new sultan at the end of 1754, she was released from Eski Saray and brought back to Topkapı,⁸¹⁹ as Osman III had declared her Valide Sultan.⁸²⁰ When she became Valide Sultan, she quickly learned that one of the sons' of her former patron, Nuh Efendi, was still alive,⁸²¹ and she managed to have her son name him *Sadrizam*, resulting in Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa becoming *Sadrizam* for the third and last time.⁸²² Osman III had initially appointed Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa as the Beylerbeyi of Anatolia by February 3rd 1755,⁸²³ but by the 12th of February, the current *Sadrizam* Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa's actions combined with the Valide Sultan's favor

⁸¹⁷ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 79.

⁸¹⁸ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 81-82.

⁸¹⁹ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 81-82.

⁸²⁰ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} février 1755, 49-50.

⁸²¹ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 81-82.

⁸²² Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa was one of two men to have had three terms as *Sadrizam* in the 18th century, namely in: March 1732-August 1735, April 1742-September 1743, and February 12th-May 18th 1755. The other man to have had three terms as *Sadrizam* was Çorlulu Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa in: July 1752-February 1755, April 30th-December 3rd 1756, and September 1763-March 1765, after which he was subsequently executed by orders of Mustafa III.

⁸²³ *Gazette de France*, 29 mars 1755, 145.

for Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa,⁸²⁴ had led to the latter's downfall and to Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa's nomination as *Sadrazam*.⁸²⁵ Bahir Mustafa Paşa was unsurprisingly aware of his approaching fall, as he had been appointed by Mahmud I in 1752, and so he had his treasurer a man by the name of Bogos prepare his finances and treasury for his eventual exile.⁸²⁶ In addition to his preparation for his exile, Bahir Mustafa Paşa even managed to get a pension of 5000 Sultanî from Osman III by the recommendation of his mother Şehsuvar Sultan after his fall from power in April 1755.⁸²⁷ This meant that at some point between February and April 1755, Bahir Mustafa Paşa had managed to make himself a protégé of the Valide Sultan, which was further confirmed by his receiving the administration of Morea and his eventual re-nomination as *Sadrazam* on April 15th of 1756.⁸²⁸ This was a mere 11 days before Şehsuvar Sultan died, which was on April 26th 1756, and the man that she almost certainly had had nominated as *Sadrazam* had yet to arrive in Istanbul when her funeral was held,⁸²⁹ as he only arrived in the Ottoman capital on May 3rd.⁸³⁰ Bahir Mustafa Paşa second tenure lasted less than a year and his dismissal on the 3rd of December 1756 famously led to the rise of his successor, Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa (1756-1763) who would have the second longest consecutive tenure as *Sadrazam* during the 18th century. After Bahir Mustafa Paşa's second dismissal as *Sadrazam* in December 1756, he was arrested at one of the islands in the Sea of Marmara and prevented from going to his place of exile, Rhodes, as his many creditors had demanded that the Porte have him pay his unpaid debt owed to them. In total his debts

⁸²⁴ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 82-83.

⁸²⁵ *Gazette de France*, 5 avril 1755, 157-158.

⁸²⁶ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 76-77.

⁸²⁷ *Gazette de France*, 24 mai 1755, 241.

⁸²⁸ *Gazette de France*, 29 mai 1756, 253.

⁸²⁹ *Gazette de France*, 19 juin 1756, 289.

⁸³⁰ *Gazette de France*, 17 juillet 1756, 337.

amounted to 1700 *kise*, and since he had claimed that he had no hidden money, which was highly unlikely as he had been given a generous pension by Şehsuvar Sultan, the Porte began to seize his properties and goods, and began to sell them, starting with his palace,⁸³¹ which he may have retrieved during his last term as *Sadrizam* between 1763-1765, as the *Gazette* made mention of his beautiful palace after his execution.⁸³² Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa was an interesting *Sadrizam*, but this author still needs to do more research on him in order to write about him and his *Sadrizamlık* in greater detail.

By the start of April 1755, Şehsuvar Sultan had already acquired a lot of influence over her son, the Sublime Porte, Ottoman high official, and even among ambassadors. She like many of the past Valide Sultans, also made a lot of philanthropic donations throughout the city and to major *Vakıf* and *Imarets*, and additionally she seemed to have been very favorable towards Christians.⁸³³ Her influence over her son Osman III, led to the appointments of at least two of his *Sadrizams*, Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa and Bahir Mustafa Paşa, and the only other major influence on Osman III that was of note by observers was that of the rising Silahdar Bıyıklı Ali Paşa.

Silahdar Bıyıklı Ali Paşa seems to have played a key role in the sudden downfall of Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa on May 18th 1755, as his rivalry with him led to the dismissal of this experienced *Sadrizam* along with the fires that irrupted in Istanbul in mid May 1755.⁸³⁴ During the big fires in Balata of May 1755, Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa and the Janissaries seemed to have done nothing to prevent it from becoming bigger, in fact many of the Janissaries looted the burning houses. Osman III saw this and combined with a lot

⁸³¹ *Gazette de Vienne*, 2 mars 1757, 1-2.

⁸³² *Gazette de France*, 28 avril 1766, 137.

⁸³³ *Gazette de France*, 17 mai 1755, 229-230.

⁸³⁴ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman: Tome XV*, 279-281.

of the gossip that he had heard from Silahdar Bıyıklı Ali Paşa and his allies that were opposed to Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa, it led to his downfall as *Sadrizam* on May 18th 1755.⁸³⁵ After the brief *Sadrizamlık* of Naili Abdullah Paşa (May 18th-August 24th 1755), Silahdar Bıyıklı Ali Paşa became *Sadrizam* on August 24th 1755, only for him to quickly fall from power and to his execution on the 26th of October 1755 at the age of 34. His corpse was displayed in public on a tree in front of the *Darphane*,⁸³⁶ with a piece of writing stating “Here is the corpse of the pervert Nişancı who betrayed the trust of the Sultan his master, and who deserves the contempt of his Highness, by the crimes that he was found to have committed.”⁸³⁷ Flachat, the main source on these events, was in Izmir waiting for a French ship to board on to go back to France when the fall and execution of Silahdar Bıyıklı Ali Paşa occurred.⁸³⁸ So he provided information or gossip on the fall of Bıyıklı Ali Paşa based from what he had heard in Izmir, not from his traditional contacts in the Saray. He added around the time of the fall of Bıyıklı Ali Paşa that there had been an attempt to poison Sultan Mehmed, one of Osman III’s cousins,⁸³⁹ which Flachat implied was related to the *Sadrizam*’s downfall. This same Sultan Mehmed ultimately did die during the reign of Osman III, in January 1757, the *Gazette* reported that he was 43 years of age and that his opium addiction had severely affected his health,⁸⁴⁰ unsurprisingly it made no mention of a potential attempt on his life in the fall of 1755.⁸⁴¹ Osman III fearing for his throne and life, held a *Divan* in which it was unanimously decided that

⁸³⁵ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome I*, 584-586.

⁸³⁶ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 362.

⁸³⁷ *Gazette de France*, 20 décembre 1755, 605.

⁸³⁸ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 334.

⁸³⁹ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 359-360.

⁸⁴⁰ *Gazette de France*, 5 mars 1757, 109.

⁸⁴¹ If Osman III had executed him then the *Gazette* would probably have reported it, but if Osman III had poisoned Sultan Mehmed, then it would not have reported the incident as it would have made the Ottoman Empire seem despotic. Besides, the *Gazette* would not want such notions of poisoning or murdering an heir being part of public knowledge, or at least not officially sanctioned knowledge.

Silahdar Bıyıklı Ali Paşa was responsible for the attempt at poisoning Sultan Mehmed, and he was subsequently put in the jail of Topkapı.⁸⁴² Despite being Osman III's favorite, Silahdar Bıyıklı Ali Paşa was condemned to death due to the Sultan's fears of a "public" reaction against him, especially since a certain portion of the ülema and of the population believed that Bıyıklı Ali Paşa was innocent.⁸⁴³ An additional reason for his fall may have been the wealth that he had accumulated during his brief tenure as *Sadrazam*, as it was reported by the *Gazette* that he had accumulated 3 millions silver coins (écus) within the span of three months.⁸⁴⁴ It is still unclear if there was actually an attempt on the life of Sultan Mehmed and whether or not it was the truth or an unfounded rumor, however there are currently no better explanations as to the fall and execution of Silahdar Bıyıklı Ali Paşa than his potential involvement in affairs tied to the palace. Naturally further research is needed to prove or disprove what Flachet had written on the topic.

Whether or not the Şehsuvar Sultan played an important role in the downfall of her son's favorite is not known, however his quick rise and fall demonstrated the power of a Valide Sultan vs. that of a Sultan's favorite courtier. Whereas a Valide Sultan was nearly untouchable, favorites of the Sultan, whether they be men or women, would always come and go. Ottoman women from the royal family held a disproportionate amount of influence over their male relatives until their deaths or the ascension of a cousin for sisters of a reigning sultan. It was difficult for powerful men to maintain their power if they did not have direct access to the Sultan on a regular basis and the possibilities for them to increase their influence on the Sultan was limited. As discussed

⁸⁴² Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 360-361.

⁸⁴³ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 361-362.

⁸⁴⁴ *Gazette de France*, 21 février 1756, 85-86.

in the previous chapter, marriage to a Sultan's sister proved to be the key to power during the reign of Mustafa III, while being a key financier for the palace, with extensive ties to the Kızlar Ağası proved to be the key for Ishak Ağa during the reign of Mahmud I, and the combination of military capabilities along with a great reputation and an extensive network proved to be key for Gazi Hasan Paşa under Abdulhamid I. Silahdar Bıyıklı Ali Paşa had close ties to Osman III, but they ultimately proved to be ephemeral as his downfall was quick and deadly.

There is also no clear evidence or signs that Silahdar Bıyıklı Ali Paşa's successor, the much discussed Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa (October 25th 1755-April 1st 1756), was tied to the Valide Sultan or not. He may have simply been a placeholder *Sadrazam*,⁸⁴⁵ while a more suitable candidate emerged for both Osman III and the Valide Sultan, but this is not clear at this juncture. During the brief tenure of Said Paşa, the opening ceremony of Nurosmaniye Camii, one of the greatest architectural landmarks of 18th century Istanbul,⁸⁴⁶ was held in December 1755.⁸⁴⁷ Besides the opening of Nurosmaniye Camii, which was one of the great achievements of the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century and the dawn of a new era for Istanbul's architectural history,⁸⁴⁸ the French Plenipotentiary Minister the comte de Vergennes, who had to quickly replace the comte des Alleurs whose death had been sudden, was promoted to the rank of Ambassador on February 9th. He thus received his first official audience with the *Sadrazam*, coincidentally Said Paşa on April 1st and on the 2nd he received his official

⁸⁴⁵ An interim *Sadrazam* until a better candidate was found or agreed upon.

⁸⁴⁶ Rüstem, *Ottoman Baroque*, 122.

⁸⁴⁷ *Gazette de France*, 21 février 1756, 85-86.

⁸⁴⁸ Rüstem, *Ottoman Baroque*, 1-2.

audience with Osman III.⁸⁴⁹ Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa brief tenure as *Sadrâzam* was well below the expectations that the French had of him, throughout the 1740s and 1750s they had had high hopes for his careers due to his triumphant embassy of 1741-1742. His career was therefore a disappointment to the French, who unsurprisingly did not understand the dynamics of Ottoman politics.

Before the death of Şehsuvar Sultan, one of her son's wives was reported to have gotten pregnant,⁸⁵⁰ but this news seems to have either been proven to have been false or she had a miscarriage. The brief reign of Osman III was dominated by his mother the Valide Sultan, whose power and authority was unmatched and that potential powerful men quickly fell out of power as was the case of his favorite Silâhdar Bıyıklı Ali Paşa. Whereas power held by women related to the Sultans could last until they died, elite men of this period did not have such a stable source of power as the female relatives of the Sultans had. This was one of the main reasons for the power of the Valide Sultans and the sisters of the Sultans was so strong, they were there until they died and were able to accumulate wealth, factions, power, and ties; while elite Ottoman men could do all of these things but could never permanently be tied to the Sultan unless they married his sisters or daughters, which is what Sultan Mustafa III did.

5.3 An Overview of the Era of the Sultan's Sisters, 1757-1774

⁸⁴⁹ *Gazette de France*, 3 avril 1756, 157.

⁸⁵⁰ *Gazette de France*, 3 avril 1756, 157.

Overall, the tenure of Şehsuvar Sultan was too brief to find too much about her, but what was found confirms what was already known about the role of the Valide Sultans. Her brief “reign” also serves as a nice set-up to the rise of the Sultans’ sisters as major power brokers throughout this entire period, but most notably during the reign of Mustafa III and to a lesser extent his brother Abdülhamid I. Ottoman women, like their European peers were not frequently highlighted by the *Gazette*, which usually focused on political matters and the men that were involved in it. Naturally, like their peers in Europe, the daughters and sisters of the Sultans were the most highlighted of the women in Ottoman society. The influence that they had on their brothers is often implied and when referred to directly it was during the reign of Mustafa III and the start of that of his brother Abdülhamid I.⁸⁵¹ The births, deaths, and marriages of Ottoman Princesses were frequently covered by the *Gazette*, but it depended on the time period, namely before and after 1762 when it became a bi-weekly paper, and on the overall amount of major events that were occurring and that the *Gazette* could cover. Thus its coverage of the Ottoman Princesses is not as reliable as one would hope, but the *Gazette* coverage’s of the Sultanes remains very interesting and important to the history of Topkapı and Ottoman women in the 18th century. The *Gazette*’s semi-regular coverage of the birth, marriages, and death of Ottoman Princesses demonstrates that they were perceived as having a public and political role for the French, and their coverage mirrored the *Gazette*’s coverage of other women of royal descent, whose births, marriages, and deaths were all covered by the *Gazette*. Thus Ottoman princesses were in many ways covered like European princesses were, thus the *Gazette*’s semi-regular coverage of Ottoman Princesses does illustrate a certain level of normalization of the Ottoman Empire and of Ottoman society.

⁸⁵¹ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} avril 1774, 113-114.

Ottoman Princesses were incredibly wealthy women and held a tremendous amount of influence over their male siblings, and the *Gazette* highlights the influence that the sisters of the Sultans had on them. One of the results of the *Kafes* system, in which Ottoman Princes were locked in the palace until they succeeded to the throne, or more often until they died there, was that their female siblings were not captives like they were. This meant that by the time that Mustafa III became Sultan in 1757, he had spent approximately 40 years living in the palace with only first 13 years being relatively free as the son of Ahmed III. His brother Abdülhamid I had spent about 49 years in the *Kafes*, and was only five years old when his father Ahmed III lost power in the Patrona Rebellion. This is in sharp contrast with their sisters Zeynep Sultan (1715-1774), Saliha Sultan (1715-1778), Ayşe Sultan (1718-1776), and Esma Sultan (1726-1788) who were all married before 1740, thus all of them would have gotten different life experiences outside of Topkapı and the other Imperial palaces. By the 18th century, Ottoman princesses had more life experiences than their brothers had, they were able to establish ties of their own, often through their husbands *Intisap* and networks, and ultimately build their own. All of the above mentioned Ottoman Princesses would have been married and have build their own palaces by the time they had reached their mid 30s, let alone their 40s. There was a major discrepancy in the life knowledge accumulated by the Ottoman Princesses as compared to their male siblings, this helped create opportunities for them to use their influence over their male relatives, most notably their brothers.

Whereas the role of Valide Sultans and that of the daughters of Sultans has been researched,⁸⁵² the role of the sisters, aunts, and cousins of Ottoman Sultans has yet to be fully examined by Ottoman historians. This is not a unique problem in Ottoman historiography as European and world historiography have largely overlooked if not ignored the role of sisters, aunts, and cousins of rulers in society. The author came to the realization of their importance simultaneously by reading the *Gazette's* coverage of Mustafa III's reign, in which his sisters played key roles, but also while reading about Louis XV's reign, as the role that his daughters, who became Louis XVI's aunts, most notably Madame Adélaïde, had played on French politics in the 18th century. However, contrary to their European counterparts, who for almost all of the 18th century did not acquire an adequate education as compared to their male sibling, Ottoman Princesses or Sultanes were usually more qualified than their brothers in the art of politics.

5.4 A French example of the Power of Royal Daughters: Adélaïde de France

The continued prominent role that Adélaïde de France received in the *Gazette de France's* coverage of the French royal family along with the interesting stories about her and the pivotal role that she played at the start of her nephew's reign played an important role in this author's realization of the importance of women played as sisters and aunts of

⁸⁵² See Ali Akyıldız's *Valide Sultan* and Leslie P. Peirce's *The Imperial Harem* for more information on them. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı's *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilatı* is also very useful for the history of the Harem and Palace.

kings and Sultans.⁸⁵³ This was combined with the *Gazette's* coverage of the marriages of Mustafa III's sisters to prominent Paşas, many of whom became *Sadrzams* or held other prominent posts, which all led to the creation of this chapter on elite Ottoman women. Before discussing some of the prominent Ottoman Princesses as sisters of reigning Sultans, a brief look on Adélaïde de France and the role that she played in 18th century France will be examined.

Adélaïde de France (1732-1800) was the third daughter of Louis XV and Marie Leszczyńska, she played an important role in factional politics at Versailles during her father's reign and played a decisive role during the early years of her nephew's reign, Louis XVI (1774-1792). She was the younger sister of the twins Élisabeth Duchess of Parma (1727, reign as Duchess 1748-1759), Henriette de France (1727-1752) and Louis the Dauphin de France (1729-1765).⁸⁵⁴ She managed to convince her parents to keep her in Versailles with her older brother and her older twin sisters,⁸⁵⁵ while her younger sisters were sent by order of the Chief Minister of France, the Cardinal Fleury to the Abbey of Fontevraud to live and be raised there to save on finances.⁸⁵⁶ Throughout the reign of her father Louis XV, she played the most prominent public role in France among her sisters, and seemed to have been the most talented and ambitious of her sisters, with the possible exclusion of her oldest sister Élisabeth Duchess of Parma (1748-1759).⁸⁵⁷ She and her older sister Henriette de France came close to marrying the Prince de Conti and the duc d'Orléans each respectively, but they never occurred due to their father's suspicion of the

⁸⁵³ See Figure 7.

⁸⁵⁴ Dauphin was the title of the French heir apparent.

⁸⁵⁵ Louis XV and Marie Leszczyńska had seven children reach adulthood in total, 6 girls known collectively as Mesdames and the Dauphin Louis.

⁸⁵⁶ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 469-470.

⁸⁵⁷ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 474.

cadet branches of the French royal family.⁸⁵⁸ Thus out of the 6 daughters of Louis XV, only the oldest Élisabeth ended up marrying her father's cousin Philip Duke of Parma (1748-1765), the son of Philip V of Spain (1700-1746) and brother of Carlos III (1759-1788).

Louis XV's inability to have only one of his 6 daughters marry is also an illustration of the disadvantages that European monarchies had as compared to the Ottoman dynasty. Whereas the Sultans could marry their daughters, cousins, and sisters to powerful men of their state in order to establish and extend their influences among various elites in Ottoman society, in France like the rest of Europe, having a royal princess marry someone that was not of royal background was usually viewed as socially unacceptable. This prevented the royal family in France to extend its influence and networks outside of the institution of the monarchy, whereas the Ottomans had no qualms about this, and thus could effectively use marriages as a way to bind important families and important figures to the House of Osman. The biggest disadvantage that the Ottomans had in terms of marriages, was that they could not use marriages to establish, maintain, or keep diplomatic ties with another power, for example France, as many of the European monarchies could and did make use of marriage to make diplomatic alliances as was the case of the marriage of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette in 1770.

Like her siblings, Adélaïde de France was strongly opposed to Madame de Pompadour, who became Louis XV's mistress in 1745. She was one of the leaders of the *Dévôt* faction, which was opposed to Madame de Pompadour, her brother the Dauphin

⁸⁵⁸ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 473-474.

was also vocally against his father's mistress,⁸⁵⁹ which caused major problems between the king and his children.⁸⁶⁰ After the death of her older sister Henriette in 1752, Adélaïde de France became the head of her sisters in Versailles.⁸⁶¹ Besides their feelings for their mother, there were class reasons why Adélaïde de France and her sibling opposed Madame de Pompadour, she was a bourgeois whose family had extensive ties with the Pâris brothers,⁸⁶² the Court bankers and main military supplies of the monarchy's armies during the mid 18th century.⁸⁶³ Unfortunately for them, Madame de Pompadour was an exceptional figure who managed to make herself even more powerful after her sexual relations with Louis XV ended in 1750,⁸⁶⁴ and so her faction became the most powerful and influential in Versailles even after her death in 1764, as her protégé the duc de Choiseul was chief minister until his demise on Christmas Eve of 1770.⁸⁶⁵ One of the main reasons that Madame de Pompadour became so powerful was that she was a fixture for Louis XV, he could be himself around her,⁸⁶⁶ and he described her at her death in 1764 as being "a friend of 20 years."⁸⁶⁷

Madame Adélaïde after the death of her brother Louis Dauphin de France in 1765, became the holder of his will and royal testament for his son, the future Louis XVI. This document would only be opened at the death of Louis XV on May 10th 1774, and between 1765 and 1774, her influence over her father increased, especially as his last mistress Madame du Barry, who was his official mistress between 1768-1774, did not

⁸⁵⁹ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 483.

⁸⁶⁰ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 496.

⁸⁶¹ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 477.

⁸⁶² Jones, *Madame de Pompadour*, 16-18.

⁸⁶³ Combeau, *Le comte d'Argenson*, 307.

⁸⁶⁴ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 500.

⁸⁶⁵ Butler, *Choiseul: Father and Son*, 947-948.

⁸⁶⁶ Jones, *Madame de Pompadour*, 144.

⁸⁶⁷ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 824.

have the abilities nor the ambitions of her predecessor.⁸⁶⁸ In May 1770, Marie Antoinette and the new Dauphin Louis (XVI) married, a project that had been done by Mercy-Argenteau, Austrian ambassador to France 1766-1790, and the duc de Choiseul, who Marie-Antoinette would remain loyal to until his death in 1785.⁸⁶⁹ Madame Adélaïde seemed to have been very hostile towards the young Dauphine, the wife of the Dauphin, and was the harshest towards her among her sisters, and of whom her mother Maria Theresa strongly disapproved of.⁸⁷⁰ Her treatment of Marie-Antoinette would eventually lead to the decline of her influence over her nephew Louis XVI as when his reign began to take hold, Marie-Antoinette was able to exert herself on the court and on her husband, as she was very capable at the game of politics and factions,⁸⁷¹ much more than her husband.⁸⁷² This eventually led to Madame Adélaïde and her sisters Madame Victoire and Madame Sophie to play a less prominent role at court by the late 1770s.

On May 10th 1774, Louis XV died and was succeeded by his grandson Louis XVI. Generationally, Madame Adélaïde (1732-1800) was roughly of the same generation as Esma Sultan (1726-1788) and Abdülhamid I (1725-1789), whereas her father Louis XV (1710-1774) was of the same generation as Zeynep Sultan (1715-1774), Saliha Sultan (1715-1778), Mustafa III (1717-1774), and Ayşe Sultan (1718-1776). Her nephew Louis XVI (1754-1793) was 19 years old when he became king of France in May 1774, his Queen Marie-Antoinette (1755-1793) was 18 years old, both were more or less the same generation as Şah Sultan (1761-1803) and her brother Selim III (1761-1808), while

⁸⁶⁸ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 887-888.

⁸⁶⁹ D'Arneth et Geffroy eds. *Correspondance secrète entre Marie-Thérèse et Mercy-Argenteau*, Tome III, 91.

⁸⁷⁰ D'Arneth et Geffroy eds. *Correspondance secrète entre Marie-Thérèse et Mercy-Argenteau*, Tome I, 82-83.

⁸⁷¹ Price, *Preserving the Monarchy*, 25.

⁸⁷² John Hardman, *Louis XVI* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 120-121.

their younger sisters Beyhan Sultan (1765-1824) and Hatice Sultan (1768-1822) were close to Louis XVI's and Marie-Antoinette's generations, but belonged more to Napoleon's generation (1768-1821). It is always useful to have a general sense of the generation of certain key historical figures, as it can illuminate their actions, and bring to light strange similarities between otherwise vastly different historical figures, both Louis XVI and Selim III were deposed and executed in different decades for political reasons that were both local and a product of a crisis caused by war.

When Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette became king and Queen of France in May 1774, they had had no political experience and were at a loss as to what to do. Whereas Marie-Antoinette could rely on her mother Marie-Theresa and on the Austrian ambassador to France Mercy-Argenteau (1766-1790), who was one of her main advisors and the head of the Queen's faction in Versailles.⁸⁷³ Louis XVI's parents had both died in the 1760s and so all he had was his younger brothers and sisters, his aunts and his father's testament under the care of Adélaïde. Naturally Adélaïde gave her nephew the testament, and in the late Dauphin's testament (1729-1765), there was a list of potential ministers and political appointments, and there was a list of three potential chief ministers.⁸⁷⁴ The three potential chief ministers were the current Secretary of Foreign Affairs (1771-1774) and since the start of the year Secretary of War, the capable courtier duc d'Aiguillon (1720-1788), the nephew of the 3rd duc de Richelieu who were both descendants of Cardinal Richelieu's (1585-1642) siblings. There was Machault d'Arnouville (1701-1794) one of Louis XV's best ministers,⁸⁷⁵ who served as Contrôleur-général or Finance

⁸⁷³ M. AD. De Bacourt, *Correspondance entre le comte de Mirabeau et le comte de la Marck: Pendant les années 1789, 1790, 1791: Tome I* (Paris: Librairie de le Normand, 1851), 139-141.

⁸⁷⁴ Price, *Preserving the Monarchy*, 14.

⁸⁷⁵ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 614-615.

Minister (1745-1754), Gardes des Sceaux or Justice Minister (1750-1757), and as Secretary of Navy (1754-1757). Then there was the comte de Maurepas (1701-1781), a member of the Phélypeaux clan, he had served as Secretary de la Maison du Roi or the King's Household (1718-1749) and as Secretary of Navy (1723-1749). The duc d'Aiguillon was immediately removed from the list as he was close to Louis XV's last mistress, Madame du Barry (1768-1774), who Marie-Antoinette despised,⁸⁷⁶ and so the duc d'Aiguillon was never an option for them, besides he knew that he would be dismissed and so resigned from his posts on the 2nd of June 1774.⁸⁷⁷ Marie-Antoinette would have liked to have had the duc de Choiseul as Chief Minister or return as Secretary of Foreign Affairs, but Louis XVI despised him for his ties to Madame de Pompadour and for his treatment of his late father.⁸⁷⁸ Thus there were two options left to be Chief Minister, Machault or Maurepas, both men had fallen out of power when Louis XVI was either not born yet or too young to remember. It seemed that Louis XVI was on the point of nominating Machault as Chief Minister,⁸⁷⁹ Austria's preferred candidate, when his aunt Adélaïde, who Mercy-Argenteau had tried to distance from Versailles along with her sisters, advised her nephew to pick Maurepas instead.⁸⁸⁰ Louis XVI did just that and nominated Maurepas as a member of his *Conseil*, which meant ending his exile, who proved to be a capable advisor and chief minister to the king, but was not the greatest figure of his generation, but his nomination did pave the way for the rise of Vergennes, the former French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire between 1755/1756-1768, as

⁸⁷⁶ John Hardman, *French Politics 1774-1789: From the Accession of Louis XV to the Fall of the Bastille* (London: Longman, 1995), 32.

⁸⁷⁷ Hardman, *Louis XVI*, 31.

⁸⁷⁸ Price, *Preserving the Monarchy*, 34.

⁸⁷⁹ D'Arneth et Geffroy eds. *Correspondance secrète entre Marie-Thérèse et Mercy-Argenteau, Tome II*, 146-147.

⁸⁸⁰ D'Arneth et Geffroy eds. *Correspondance secrète entre Marie-Thérèse et Mercy-Argenteau, Tome II*, 146-147.

Secretary of Foreign Affairs in 1774 and as Louis XVI's most trusted minister between 1781-1787.

Adélaïde played the decisive role in the rise of Maurepas as Chief Minister of France (1774-1781), as if it had not been for her and her sisters, Machault would have been Chief Minister. She advised her nephew to pick Maurepas over Machault as he had been a member of the Dévôt faction, he was a member of the Phélypeaux family that had served her father and famously Louis XIV, he had not been a part of Madame de Pompadour's faction and in fact was her first victim,⁸⁸¹ and he may have helped Adélaïde as a teenager with sensitive issues.⁸⁸² The police had discovered her reading a copy of *Tanastès*, an erotic novel about her father and one of his mistresses of the early 1740s.⁸⁸³ Whereas Machault was a better minister than Maurepas during the mid 18th century, he had been a key ally of Madame de Pompadour and he had turned into a major rival against his former patron the comte d'Argenson,⁸⁸⁴ who had been a good friend of the Queen, and Adélaïde's mother.⁸⁸⁵ Fifteenth years after the death of Louis XV, the French Revolution began, thus the nomination of Maurepas played an important role in some of the political developments that would lead to that event, and Adélaïde had played the decisive role persuading her nephew to pick him over Machault. The role of a French princess in French politics has been discussed, now the role of Ottoman princesses will be discussed in detail.

⁸⁸¹ Antoine, *Louis XV*, 613.

⁸⁸² Boislisle, *Lettres de M. de Marville au Ministre Maurepas: Tome III*, 8-9.

⁸⁸³ Graham, *If the King Only Knew*, 74.

⁸⁸⁴ Combeau, *Le comte d'Argenson*, 136-137.

⁸⁸⁵ Combeau, *Le comte d'Argenson*, 456.

5.5 Ayşe Sultan (1696-1752) and Safiye Sultan (1696-1778): Sisters of Sultans Mahmud I and the Role of Safiye Sultan in the Downfall of Moralı Beşir Ağa in 1752

Whereas Adélaïde de France had played a decisive role in the nomination of a chief minister at the start of her nephew's reign, Safiye Sultan and her husband had played a key role in the fall in the most powerful figure at the end of her brother's reign, Moralı Beşir Ağa. Safiye Sultan (1696-1778) and her sister Ayşe Sultan (1696-1752) were the daughters of Mustafa II (1695-1703), the sisters of Mahmud I (1730-1754) and of Osman III (1754-1757), they also had a lot of other brothers and sisters. Before discussing Safiye Sultan in depth, a brief discussion of Ayşe Sultan (1696-1752) will ensue, as the *Gazette* mentioned her death as being on October 3rd 1752, that she was the older sister of Mahmud, and that she was 58 years old at the time.⁸⁸⁶ The age of Ayşe Sultan stated in the *Gazette* would be incorrect, as that would have made her born in 1694, a year before her father would have become Sultan. The *Gazette* stated that Sultan Mahmud I was touched and saddened by the death of older sister, which was probably both true to a certain extent, and typical language of its coverage of royal deaths. Mahmud I then gave all of his deceased sister's retainers generous gifts or pensions for their service to her, and even promoted her treasurer (Hazinekar) as a Paşa of Tyrchala (Tirkale).⁸⁸⁷ No additional information was provided by the *Gazette* about Ayşe Sultan, but the generous treatment of her retinue and the major promotion that her treasurer

⁸⁸⁶ *Gazette de France*, 25 novembre 1752, 573.

⁸⁸⁷ *Gazette de France*, 25 novembre 1752, 573.

received all confirm Mahmud I's generosity and demonstrate the important role that some men could acquire by serving the sisters of a reigning Sultan.

Safiye Sultan (1696-1778)'s death was also noted by the *Gazette*, however unlike her sister Ayşe Sultan, the *Gazette*, Flachat, and Hammer all provided more information on her than on her sister. The *Gazette*'s coverage of her death was a short but informative, it was published in the 21st issue of 1779, on March 9th, but the rubric was dated from January 19th. The *Gazette d'Agriculture, Commerce, Arts et Finances* (1763-1783), also published the same rubric verbatim on the 20th of March 1779. It stated that she was the daughter of Mustafa (II) the deposed Sultan at the start of the 18th century. It erroneously stated that she died at the age of 95, she would have been around 83, but her wealth was added to the state's treasury and was estimated to be around 3 million *guruş*.⁸⁸⁸ This gives us an indication of the amount of wealth that an Ottoman Princess could accumulate during the 18th century, although Safiye Sultan was probably wealthier than most of the Ottoman Princesses of the 18th century, her brothers had died over two decades previously. However just how generous her cousins Mustafa III and Abdülhamid I would have been with her is difficult to say at this point in time and further research is needed on the relationship between Sultans and their female cousins.

Hammer provided a lot of information on the Ottoman princesses of this era, and Flachat provided key information on Safiye Sultan and her husband's political role during the reign of her brother Mahmud I, most notably as it concerned the fall Moralı Beşir Ağa (1746-1752), the *Kızlar Ağası*. Safiye Sultan married her fourth husband Hacı Ebubekir Paşa in 1739-1740, around the same time as her cousins Saliha Sultan and Ayşe Sultan

⁸⁸⁸ *Gazette de France*, 12 mars 1779, 99.

(1718-1776) married Sarhoş Ali Paşa and Hatip Ahmed Paşa respectively. On July 11th 1752, the powerful *Kızlar Ağası*, Moralı Beşir Ağa, was deposed and executed on the orders of Mahmud I.⁸⁸⁹ The downfall of Moralı Beşir Ağa began with his Çuhadar, Çerkes Rahtvân Hasan, who a few weeks before his fall had an argument with the Kadı of Üsküdar, Numan Efendi, it result in him whipping the Kadı.⁸⁹⁰ Numan Efendi then went to complain to Moralı Beşir Ağa, who promised him that he would punish his retainer according to his crimes, but instead he exiled him to wander Anatolia.⁸⁹¹ However, 8 days later the house of Numan Efendi was destroyed and he and his family were killed.⁸⁹²

Almost immediately the ülema reacted aggressively to the news of Numan Efendi's suspicious death. Flachat stated that initially the *Sadrazam* Divitdar Mehmed Emin Paşa (1750-1752), the *Şeyhülislam* Seyyid Murtaza Efendi (1750-1755), and Yeniçeri Ağası Macar Hasan Ağa (1750-1752) the all conspired together against Moralı Beşir Ağa.⁸⁹³ But they quickly turned on each other, as Divitdar Mehmed Emin Paşa blamed Macar Hasan Ağa in front of the Sultan for the fires that had broken out again, this led to the exile of the *Sadrazam*.⁸⁹⁴ Macar Hasan Ağa subsequently blamed Moralı Beşir Ağa for the fires and the disorders befalling the capital, but the *Kızlar Ağası* managed to keep the Sultan on his side with a generous gift. This led to the “exile” of Macar Hasan Ağa who died in an “accident,” by being thrown overboard from a ship into

⁸⁸⁹ Zeynep Aycibin, “Sultan I. Mahmûd ve Dârüssaâde Ağası Moralı Beşir Ağa,” in *Gölgelenen Sultan, Unutulan Yıllar: I. Mahmûd ve Dönemi (1730-1754)*, 1. Cilt, ed. Hatice Aynur (İstanbul: Dergâh, 2020), 76.

⁸⁹⁰ Aycibin, “Dârüssaâde Ağası Moralı Beşir Ağa,” 74.

⁸⁹¹ Aycibin, “Dârüssaâde Ağası Moralı Beşir Ağa,” 74.

⁸⁹² Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 138-139.

⁸⁹³ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 140.

⁸⁹⁴ Aycibin, “Dârüssaâde Ağası Moralı Beşir Ağa,” 74-75.

the sea.⁸⁹⁵ After the fall of both these men, Seyyid Murtaza Efendi acted quickly to prevent his own downfall, which led to the fall to that of Moralı Beşir Ağa, simultaneously if not in coordination, Divitdar Mehmed Emin Paşa wrote from exile to the Sultan Mahmud I about the dangers that he was facing in his continued support of the Kızlar Ağası.⁸⁹⁶

This is when Safiye Sultan and her husband Hacı Ebubekir Paşa came into the picture and both played a decisive role in the downfall of the powerful Moralı Beşir Ağa. Safiye Sultan came in tears to see her brother, Sultan Mahmud I, and him her goodbyes as the ülema were saying that the Janissaries were plotting against his life, and that the only way he could save it was by sacrificing his favorite, Moralı Beşir Ağa, his Hazinekar Süleyman Ağa, and the Armeninan Bezirgan Başı Yakub.⁸⁹⁷ She told her brother that there was very little time left for him, as the Janissaries would act against him at the next *Divan*, this forced Mahmud I to call an emergency *Divan* with the *Şeyhülislam* Seyyid Murtaza Efendi, the newly appointed *Sadrâzam* Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa (July 1st 1752-February 16th 1755) who had previously been the *Mîrâhur*,⁸⁹⁸ and the newly appointed *Yeniçeri Ağası* Sarı Mustafa Ağa (July 1752-February 1755).⁸⁹⁹ This is when Safiye Sultan's husband, Hacı Ebubekir Paşa, managed to get an audience at the *Divan* with his brother-in-law, Sultan Mahmud I, and told him that his wife Sultan Safiye had sent him to see his brother-in-law Sultan Mahmud I. Hacı Ebubekir Paşa then told the Sultan that they had to remove Moralı Beşir Ağa immediately to prevent a potential

⁸⁹⁵ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 140-141.

⁸⁹⁶ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 141.

⁸⁹⁷ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 141-142.

⁸⁹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 19 aout 1752, 397.

⁸⁹⁹ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 142.

Janissary uprising and to prevent a potential attempt on his life,⁹⁰⁰ this proved decisive as Sultan Mahmud I agreed to exile his favorite. The *Bostancı Başı* brought the doomed *Kızlar Ağası* to the Kız Kulesi, where after much debate it was decided to execute him instead of exiling him to Egypt as was tradition, so his head was cut off by the Kapıcıbaşı.⁹⁰¹ Süleyman Ağa was tortured by the *Bostancı*s and then brought to Alay Köşkü where his head was cut off,⁹⁰² and the Armenian *Bezirgan Başı* Yakub was put in prison and eventually he was also decapitated after providing the information that the Porte wanted, and his body was displayed in public for three days.⁹⁰³ Flachat's accounts of this should be considered as biased but reliable, it even included a French translation of an Ottoman poem about Moralı Beşir Ağa's downfall.⁹⁰⁴ Flachat was a protégé of Moralı Beşir Ağa's and in fact was Yakub's successors as *Bezirgan Başı* for the Porte, it was under the protection of the comte des Alleurs that he was unharmed by the fall of his protector.⁹⁰⁵ At the time of his death, Moralı Beşir Ağa was around 29 years old and his wealth was estimated to be around 50 millions gurus,⁹⁰⁶ considerably more than that of Safiye Sultan's wealth at the time of her own death in 1779.

The Ottoman *Vakanüvis* İzzî Süleyman Efendi does not cover the fall of Moralı Beşir Ağa at the very end of his history for the era 1744-1752, *İzzî Tarihi*, the most likely reason was that Moralı Beşir Ağa had become his patron and protector. İzzî Efendi was appointed as *Vakanüvis* on July 30th 1745 by the *Sadrızam* Seyyid Hasan Paşa (1743-1756) and the great Ottoman *Reisülküttap* Tavukçubaşı Mustafa Efendi, who died on

⁹⁰⁰ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 143.

⁹⁰¹ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 143-144.

⁹⁰² Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 145.

⁹⁰³ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 147.

⁹⁰⁴ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 148-151.

⁹⁰⁵ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 151.

⁹⁰⁶ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman: Tome XV*, 229-230.

September 1st 1749,⁹⁰⁷ to replace Subhî Mehmed Efendi.⁹⁰⁸ İzzî Efendi subsequently was also appointed as *Küçük Evkâf Muhâsebiciliği* on October 26th 1746 and then replaced the future Sadrazam Naili Abdullah Paşa (May-August 1755) as *Teşrifâtçı*, a post that he would hold until his death on April 1st 1755.⁹⁰⁹ The reason why İzzî Efendi almost certainly became the protégé of Moralı Beşir Ağa was that he received the two additional posts mentioned above under the tenure of Moralı Beşir Ağa and that he “resigned” from his post to do the Hajj on May 3rd 1753, which as Flachet noted was rarely done by wealthy Turks from Istanbul,⁹¹⁰ when he was replaced by Seyyid Mehmed Hâkim Efendi.⁹¹¹ Moralı Beşir Ağa was *Kızlar Ağası* between June 1746 until his fall and execution in July 1752, covering almost all of İzzî Efendi’s career as *Vakanüvis*, whose two additional posts were given to him during Moralı Beşir Ağa’s tenure, and half a year later İzzî Efendi decided to go on the Hajj. His motivations for doing the Hajj may have been sincere, but it would also have been a convenient excuse by all parties involved for him to have an “honorable” dismissal, besides which the period of 1740-1787 provided ample evidence of Ottoman elites who did the Hajj after their political downfall.⁹¹² There is no concrete proof that İzzî Efendi was a protégé of Moralı Beşir Ağa, but all of the evidence points towards that end. Unsurprising neither İzzî Efendi nor Hâkim Efendi covered the fall and death of Moralı Beşir Ağa, such sensitive details that involved the sister and the brother-in-law of a reigning Sultan was best left untouched. Official histories in the 18th century, whether in France or in the Ottoman can only be harshly

⁹⁰⁷ Hammer, *Histoire de l’Empire Ottoman: Tome XV*, 181-183.

⁹⁰⁸ İzzî Süleymân Efendi, *İzzî Tarihi*, XLVIII-XLIX.

⁹⁰⁹ İzzî Süleymân Efendi, *İzzî Tarihi*, XLIX.

⁹¹⁰ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome I*, 483.

⁹¹¹ Mehmed Hâkim Efendi, *Hâkim Efendi Tarihi*, Cilt I, LVIII.

⁹¹² Hathaway, *Beshir Agha: Chief Eunuch of the Ottoman Imperial Harem* (Oxford: One World, 2006), 59.

critical of powerful figures when most parties involved agree about that individual and even then the critiques will be based on the current ideology of the current power holders. For example, most of the critical works on ministers, kings, and other powerful elites in 18th century France were from unofficial or private works, pamphlets, or journals.⁹¹³ It was only in the reign of Louis XVI that an increasing liberal policy towards political writing allowed for current and former ministers to write and critique their colleagues,⁹¹⁴ even the Queen but never the king himself.⁹¹⁵ The *Vakanüvis* and similar official Ottoman sources, like the *Gazette de France* all followed the general 18th century pattern of official works of the state remaining quiet on major controversies involving key figures of the state. The lack of printing and alternative written sources in Ottoman society prevented the spread of unofficial writings from emerging, instead they would have been expressed verbally or in gossip at the coffeehouses, hamams, festivities, and homes of elite Ottomans living in Istanbul and major cities tied to it.

Overall, Safiye Sultan played a decisive role in the downfall of Moralı Beşir Ağa, it was probably due to her intervention and that of her husband Hacı Ebubekir Paşa, that Mahmud I finally sided with those opposed to him. Moralı Beşir Ağa was one of the most powerful and wealthiest of the *Kızlar Ağası* of the 18th century, but he was not the only *Kızlar Ağası* to fall from power and be executed. The *Gazette* reported one case of the fall and execution of the *Kızlar Ağası* Ahmed Ağa⁹¹⁶ at the start of Mustafa III's reign as

⁹¹³ Censer, *The French Press in the Age of Enlightenment*, 15.

⁹¹⁴ Robert D. Harris, *Necker: The Reform Statesman of the Ancien Régime* (London: University of California Press, 1979), 223-224.

⁹¹⁵ Jeremy D. Popkin, "The Gazette de Leyde and French Politics under Louis XVI," in *Press and Politics in Pre-Revolutionary France*, eds. Jack R. Censer and Jeremy D. Popkin (London: University of California Press, 1987), 99.

⁹¹⁶ Itzkowitz, "Mehmed Raghib Pasha," 141.

a result of his power struggle against the *Sadrâzam* Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa,⁹¹⁷ in December 1757.⁹¹⁸ Ahmed Ağa had had an enormous amount of influence over Osman III, his death and accession of Mustafa III gave Ragıp Paşa an opportunity to establish personal ties with the new Sultan,⁹¹⁹ and prevent his planned fall by Ahmed Ağa.⁹²⁰ Ragıp Paşa then used the appointment of the *Kızlar Ağası*'s favorite Osman Paşa as Paşa of Damascus in early 1758, to take him down, as the caravans for the Hajj had been raided by Arab tribes earlier that year.⁹²¹ Thus his personal connection with Mustafa III along with his strategic use of an embarrassing event enabled Ragıp Paşa to take down the *Kızlar Ağası*.⁹²²

In 1775, the *Gazette* also made mention of the arrival of the exiled *Kızlar Ağası* Mertcan Ağa, his suite of 14 people and his harem of five black females slaves and five female slaves. Mertcan Ağa on his way to Cairo, his designated place of exile, stopped in Larnaka on the island of Cyprus, a major stopping point for ships and travelers moving between the Aegean region, Syria, and Egypt. At Larnakaca, Mertcan Ağa, who was described as being Ethiopian by the *Gazette*, was received by all of the major Ottoman dignitaries along with all of the Consuls in the city.⁹²³ Thus even in exile, the *Kızlar Ağası* still held a great deal of authority and respect within Ottoman society, and was still a figure of power and influence.

⁹¹⁷ Itzkowitz, "Mehmed Raghîb Pasha," 147.

⁹¹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 28 janvier 1758, 45.

⁹¹⁹ Itzkowitz, "Mehmed Raghîb Pasha," 148-149.

⁹²⁰ Itzkowitz, "Mehmed Raghîb Pasha," 146.

⁹²¹ Itzkowitz, "Mehmed Raghîb Pasha," 150-151.

⁹²² Itzkowitz, "Mehmed Raghîb Pasha," 147.

⁹²³ *Gazette de France*, 5 juin 1775, 201.

Thus Safiye Sultan had major clout over her brother and used it to bring down one of the most powerful figures of his reign, and she used her husband as one of her vehicles to bring him down. It is possible that Hacı Ebubekir Paşa was the mastermind behind his wife's intervention towards the Sultan, but it is just as likely that Safiye Sultan was the architect of Moralı Beşir Ağa's downfall, and it is possible that they both worked together to bring him down. The reasons why she would act against him are hard to say, maybe she and her husband actually believed the rumors of a potential Janissary coup against her brother, maybe Moralı Beşir Ağa's wives or inner circle were hostile to them, at this point in time it is simply not clear what motivated their actions. What is clear was that they did play the pivotal role in convincing Mahmud I of exiling his *Kızlar Ağası*, and that they effectively both used their respective gender based positions to work cohesively together to bring upon his downfall. Ottoman Princesses like Safiye Sultan had major influences over their siblings and could serve as major political agents in their own right, and had faction's of their own, usually aligned with that of their respective husband's. In this case, Safiye Sultan was part of a faction that was opposed to Moralı Beşir Ağa and used her husband and other key figures to take him out of the picture.

5.6 Mustafa III's Matrimonial Policy: his Sisters Ayşe Sultan (1718-1776), Zeynep Sultan (1715-1774), and Esmâ Sultan (1726-1788), and their Husbands

The *Gazette*'s regular coverage of Topkapı, the *Tevcihat*, and of Ottoman political appointments meant that when the pattern started to change, as it did under Mustafa III,

the *Gazette*'s covered this change. Mustafa III had a clear policy as it came to his sisters and as it came to who should be *Sadrazam* and or major *Paşas* during his reign, namely his brothers-in-law. Mustafa III's had in total 9 *Sadrazam* with Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa serving two terms, 5/9 of his *Sadrazam* were married to his sisters and daughters and approximately 14 of the 16 years of his reign were under a *Sadrazam* that was married to his sisters or engaged to his daughter Şah Sultan (1761-1803), whose birth or that of one of her sisters' was reported to be on May 19th 1761,⁹²⁴ and was celebrated in Istanbul for a about week.⁹²⁵

Silahdar Mehmed Paşa, who was *Sadrazam* between October 25th 1770 to December 11th 1771, married Ayşe Sultan in 1758,⁹²⁶ which may have been around the same time as Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's marriage to Esma Sultan, as unfortunately the *Gazette* did not provide any details about their marriages as its coverage of the Ottoman Empire between 1758-1760 was at one of its low points due to the Seven Years' War. The marriage of Saliha Sultan to Koca Ragıp Paşa will be discussed bellow, while Zeynep Sultan was from approximately 1728 until 1764 married to her first husband Küçük Mustafa Paşa, who was appointed Paşa of Salonika in April 1762,⁹²⁷ he was appointed Kapudan Paşa in August of 1762.⁹²⁸ In April 1763 he replaced Hamza Hâmid Paşa as *Nişancı* and received the *arpalık* of Morea as a revenue source, he was replaced as Kapudan Paşa by Karabağlı Süleyman Paşa who was in his third term in that post.⁹²⁹ However Küçük Mustafa Paşa died in February 1764, leaving his wife Zeynep Sultan a

⁹²⁴ *Gazette de France*, 20 juin 1761, 297-298.

⁹²⁵ *Gazette de France*, 4 juillet 1761, 321-323.

⁹²⁶ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman: Tome XVI*, 20-21.

⁹²⁷ *Gazette de France*, 7 juin 1762, 203.

⁹²⁸ *Gazette de France*, 24 septembre 1762, 355.

⁹²⁹ *Gazette de France*, 27 mai 1763, 193.

widow,⁹³⁰ who would not stay in that state for long as it was announced at the end of the year that Melek Mehmed Paşa, who was then the Paşa of Belgrade would marry her.⁹³¹ A relatively detailed rubric on their marriage was published on April 1st 1765, in which they got married on the 6th of February 1765, and Mustafa III visited the newlywed couple on the 15th of February.⁹³² From that point onward Melek Mehmed Paşa became one of the most covered figures of the reign of Mustafa III until the Sultan's death on January 21st 1774.

Zeynep Sultan like her sisters seemed to have held a lot of influence over her brother, as Melek Mehmed Paşa held almost all of the most important posts of the empire throughout the 1760s. Ayşe Sultan's husband Silahdar Mehmed Paşa along with Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa frequently visited the Ottoman capital throughout the 1760s, Silahdar Mehmed Paşa was Beylerbeyi of Anatolia at the start of 1762 until he was appointed Paşa of Sivas in April 1762,⁹³³ in 1764 he was the Paşa of Aydın while Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa was Paşa of Bosnia, both brothers-in-law received permission from the Porte to come to the capital, despite the *Sadrâzam* Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa's best efforts to keep them away in the provinces.⁹³⁴ Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa arrived in the capital by the end of February 1764 while no mention was made for Silahdar Mehmed Paşa's arrival.⁹³⁵ Later in that year Silahdar Mehmed Paşa was named once again Beylerbeyi of Anatolia,⁹³⁶ while Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa was nominated Beylerbeyi of Rumeli, both men only left the capital at the end of September 1764 after

⁹³⁰ *Gazette de France*, 23 mars 1764, 93.

⁹³¹ *Gazette de France*, 22 février 1765, 57.

⁹³² *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} avril 1765, 101.

⁹³³ *Gazette de France*, 7 juin 1762, 203.

⁹³⁴ *Gazette de France*, 20 février 1764, 57.

⁹³⁵ *Gazette de France*, 16 avril 1764, 121.

⁹³⁶ *Gazette de France*, 10 septembre 1764, 291.

an extended stay at the capital.⁹³⁷ The *Gazette*'s near continuous coverage of the brothers-in-law of Mustafa III continued with the accession of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa as *Sadrizam* on March 28th 1765, and although Silahdar Mehmed Paşa never reached the height of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, he was the man that Mustafa III nominated as *Sadrizam* on October 25th 1770 after the disastrous Ottoman defeats at Çeşme and Kartal on July 5th to 7th and on August 1st 1770 respectively. When the Ottoman Empire was at its lowest point, Mustafa III called upon on Ayşe Sultan's husband, Silahdar Mehmed Paşa, to lead the Empire before calling on Esma Sultan's husband, Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, a year later to take over the fate of the Empire. While they were in charge of the war fronts, Melek Mehmed Paşa was in charge of the capital as *Kaymakam* and managed to keep Istanbul in relative control throughout most of the war. Interestingly he was Sultan Selim III's uncle, who seems to have favored him by his appointment as *Sadrizam* (1792-1794) after the Ottoman-Russo War of 1787-1792 and was allowed to live in retirement in his deceased wife's, Ayşe Sultan, palace for the last seven years of his life from approximately 1795-1802.⁹³⁸ One wonders what Selim III would have done had Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, Silahdar Mehmed Paşa, and Nişli Mehmed Paşa had still been alive in the 1790s, would he have honored these veteran ministers as well?

Ahmed III had many daughters, the one that seemed to have had the largest influence on both of her brothers was Esma Sultan, the woman behind the scenes. In 1758 she married Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa and by end of March 1765 her husband, not the husband of her sisters, became the *Sadrizam*. Leading up to the nomination of her husband as *Sadrizam*, the *Gazette* had clearly marked him as the most favored of the

⁹³⁷ *Gazette de France*, 5 novembre 1764, 355.

⁹³⁸ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman: Tome XVI*, 491-493.

brothers-in-law, as he was the most frequently mentioned figure after the death of Koca Ragıp Paşa. His reign as *Sadrizam* has already been discussed, but one of the events that showcased his looming fall happened to Esma Sultan herself.

On August 6th 1768, Esma Sultan's harem burned or was burned down a month before the dismissal of her husband, in fact it was reported that she had barely made it out of her palace, and most of her goods and jewelry were destroyed in the fire.⁹³⁹ One month later on September 7th 1768 her husband Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa was dismissed as *Sadrizam* and exiled to Tenedos (Bozcaada).⁹⁴⁰ It is possible that the fire that destroyed Esma Sultan's palace was an accident, but mid 18th century Ottoman political culture in Istanbul tells us that it almost certainly was done by those who wanted war and so were against her husband's opposition to starting a war against Russia. This author believes that the odds of it being an accident are lower than that of her palace being deliberately burned by her husband's rival faction. But it was not Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's section of the palace that was destroyed, but rather Esma Sultan's harem that was burned down, and so the question is was she the main target of the arson, or just an unintended victim?

It is possible that the Harem was the most easily destroyable or accessible part of the palace, and so it was burned. It may have been the part of the palace that the arsonists randomly decided to burn, but it may also have been deliberate. If she was in fact the target of the arson, what does that tell us about the potential political role that elite Ottoman women played in Ottoman political culture. If Esma Sultan was in fact the real target of the arson, then it meant that she was viewed as having a major influence on the policies of her brother the reigning Sultan and her husband. An attack on her harem was

⁹³⁹ *Gazette de France*, 26 septembre 1768, 317.

⁹⁴⁰ *Gazette de France*, 7 octobre 1768, 329.

an attack on both Mustafa III's and Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's policies toward Russia, it was an attempt by an opposing faction to manifest its great displeasure at their lack of action towards Russian aggression in Poland. She may have come to symbolize both the Sultan and the *Sadrizam* to certain elements of Istanbul society, it also demonstrated that Esma Sultan was considered a part of Ottoman political culture and fair game. This meant that certain elements of Ottoman society in the capital saw her as having a political role that, as the burning of her palace illustrated, had public ramifications, she was not just a female relative of the Sultan, but a major political actor and was perceived as such by certain elements of Ottoman society. A deliberate attempt at destroying her harem would also have meant that she was also fair game, that violence and opposition towards her could be physically manifested, which in this case was through the use of arson. This all depends on whether or not the fire that destroyed Esma Sultan's palace was an accident or done by arson, this author heavily favors arson as this was a common way for Ottomans to manifest their displeasure with powerful political figures. The *Gazette* demonstrated that arson was a major component of Ottoman political culture during its coverage of the Sadrazamlık Divitdar Mehmed Emin Paşa in the years 1750-1752, the various attempts to burn parts of Istanbul to the ground during the *Kaymakamlık* of Melek Mehmed Paşa between 1769-1773, and the fires of 1779 as a result of the rivalry of the reigning *Sadrizam* Kalafat Mehmed Paşa and Abdülhamid's favorite Silahdar Karavezir Mehmed Paşa. It was a means to manifest opposition to and displease with major political figures, usually the *Sadrizam*, and to physically manifest the opposition to the administration without taking major risks to one's own life like a rebellion or an attempted coups like in 1740 or between 1748-1750 could, as they usually led to the

death of many of the ringleaders. In this case it was Esma Sultan or her husband that was targeted by the arsonists, which is interesting as there were no real parallels in 18th century France to this. Certainly the 18th century saw increasing opposition in French political culture to powerful women like Madame de Pompadour and to Queen Marie-Antoinette, but these were the mistresses or queens of the kings, not the daughters of France. There never emerged strong opposition to Madame Adélaïde or her sisters, or even her nieces, in fact the French Revolution's execution of Madame Elisabeth proved highly controversial with the French public in 1794. Thus the overall influence of Ottoman Princesses had on their brothers and the potential opposition to that influence within Ottoman political culture seemed unique to the Ottomans and not something that followed European trends of the 18th century.

Esma Sultan like her sisters continued to hold an enormous amount power and influence over her brother Mustafa III, which would have increased greatly with the re-emergence of her husband Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa as *Sadrizam* between December 11th 1771 and August 4th 1774. Both the *Gazette* and Mustafa III praised him throughout his second tenure as *Sadrizam*, Mustafa III even wrote and published a letter addressed to him, which was full of praise and in which he put the hopes of the Empire on his shoulders.⁹⁴¹ How Mustafa III would have reacted to Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's defeat at Kozluca on June 20th 1774 and to the subsequent Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca will never be known as he had died in January 1774, but Abdülhamid I certainly reacted extremely harshly against it.⁹⁴² But the dynamics had changed as the new Sultan was Esma Sultan's full brother, as according to the *Gazette*, Esma Sultan and Sultan Abdülhamid I had the

⁹⁴¹ *Gazette de France*, 23 août 1773, 305.

⁹⁴² *Gazette de France*, 23 septembre 1774, 335-336.

same mother.⁹⁴³ Thus she was seen as a rising star and as the now de facto most influential of the Sultan's sisters by the *Gazette*, there is evidence that she was the patron of the successor of her now deceased husband Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, who died on August 4th, Izzet Mehmed Paşa,⁹⁴⁴ who was *Sadrazam* on two occasions (1774-1775 and 1781-1782).⁹⁴⁵ Izzet Mehmed Paşa was also noted as being the enemy of Gazi Hasan Paşa,⁹⁴⁶ which would explain his brief tenures as *Sadrazam*, but it would also indicate that Esma Sultan would have served as one of the pillars or heads of factions that would have been opposed to the powerful Gazi Hasan Paşa. Thus Esma Sultan proved to have had the most influence among her sisters on both of her brothers, and she played a major role in both of their reigns as one of the major figures behind the scenes, and Abdülhamid I's his first daughter may have even been named after her as she was also called Esma Sultan (1778-1848).

5.7 The Start of a New Era: Saliha Sultan (1715-1778) and her Marriage to Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa

Saliha Sultan is probably the most well known of Sultan Ahmed III's daughters as her fourth husband was one of the few well known *Sadrazams* of the 18th century, Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa. The *Gazette*'s longest rubric from Istanbul when it was published weekly (1740-1761) was on the marriage of Mustafa III's sister Saliha Sultan to the

⁹⁴³ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} avril 1774, 113-114.

⁹⁴⁴ If he was in fact Çelebi Mehmed Efendi then he was her protégé, see footnote 327.

⁹⁴⁵ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} avril 1774, 113-114.

⁹⁴⁶ *Gazette de France*, 28 septembre 1781, 359.

Sadrazam Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa (1757-1763), which was in the 21st issue of 1758, on May 27th.⁹⁴⁷ The rubric from Istanbul was dated from April 18th 1758, it was two pages long, with 4/5th of it on the marriage, the remainder on appointments and bread prices in Istanbul at the time. Ragıp Paşa was described by the *Gazette* as a man on the rise who received unheard of honors by getting a rich caftan called Kapanitza on the 22nd of March. The Kapanitza was last given by a Sultan to a *Vezir* or *Sadrazam* by Mustafa III's father Ahmed III when he gave one to Damad Nevşehirli İbrahim Paşa (1718-1730), the honor that was thus given to Ragıp Paşa was described as only being given to man who had accomplished great things. His marriage to the Sultan's sister Saliha Sultan, whose previous husband had been the late Hatibzade Yahya Paşa, a former Paşa of Belgrade and Beylerbeyi of Rumeli, was much celebrated and the dowry given to Ragıp Paşa was of 400 000 gurus.⁹⁴⁸

The marriage took place on April 6th 1758, Koca Ragıp Paşa sent the *Kâhya Bey* along with the *Kızlar Ağası*, the *Şeyhülislam* Mehmed Salih Efendi (1758-1759), the two *Kadıaskerler*, and the Istanbul *Kadısı* to Saliha Sultan's palace in Eyüp. Once they arrived at her palace, the *Kâhya Bey* stated the reason for their coming, while the *Kızlar Ağası* went to the harem to inform the Ottoman Princess of the marriage proposal. After her agreement or consent to the marriage, the *Şeyhülislam*, the two *Kadıaskerler*, and the Istanbul *Kadısı* worked on the marriage contract. Once they had finished, Saliha Sultan sent her *Kâhya* to the *Sadrazam* with the traditional expensive gift that Ottoman princesses make when they marry, in return for this present, the *Sadrazam* in turn gave Saliha Sultan's *Kâhya* a caftan and beautiful horse with an expansive harness. The

⁹⁴⁷ *Gazette de France*, 27 mai 1758, 249-251.

⁹⁴⁸ *Gazette de France*, 27 mai 1758, 249-251.

Şeyhülislam left Saliha Sultan's residence and went to those of Koca Ragıp Paşa's to congratulate him on the marriage, he went to the bottom of the stairs of the *Sadrizam's* palace, where he was received by him, and after an hour of discussion between the two, the *Şeyhülislam* was sent back to the Sultane's palace and received a beautiful horse with an expensive harness. The *Kâhya* once again got a caftan from the *Sadrizam*, and both he and Mehmed Salih Efendi (1758-1759) received caftans from Saliha Sultan,⁹⁴⁹ however the *Gazette* did not provide any information on whether the *Kızlar Ağası*, the *Kadiaskerler*, the Istanbul *Kadısı* received any gifts from either party.

At 9 in the morning on the 13th of April, the *Kâhya Bey* and his retinue arrived at Saliha Sultan's palace to transport her to her new husband's home. She got on a beautiful carriage with 6 horses, and was led by the *Çavuş* on horses who were at the head of her suit, followed behind them the Sultan's *Kâhya* and his *Çuhadars*, the *Kâhya Bey* and his party, followed by 300 *Baltacıs* on foot along with the *Bostancıs* of Sultan Saliha. Her carriage was surrounded by the black eunuchs or *Kızlar Ağaları* and they were followed by 12 carriages with the women and slaves from her harem. On the same day, Mustafa III sent his sister expensive presents, namely rare stones, diamond watches, a diamond ring, and a gorgeous fur coat that she was to give to her husband the next day, who was brought to her from the Porte by the *Kızlar Ağası* at 1.30 at night. The next day, the new couple prepared for Mustafa III who came to their home to congratulate them, they installed carpets from the entrance of their home to the upper rooms and put gold fabrics or drapes on the areas where the Sultan would walk on. He visited them with his entire court after the noon prayer at the Bayezid Sultan Mosque, the court and ministers stood in

⁹⁴⁹ *Gazette de France*, 27 mai 1758, 249-251.

rows, then the *Kâhya Bey* and Koca Ragıp Paşa met each other and bowed, and walked from the entrance to greet and meet the Sultan who got off his horse. Then Koca Ragıp Paşa took the Sultan's right arm and brought him to the room prepared for the Sultan. Around 4 in the afternoon, Zeynep Sultan, Ayşe Sultan, and Esma Sultan came in different carriages to congratulate their sister, then the *Sadrazam* gave a luxurious supper to the Sultan.⁹⁵⁰

The *Gazette's* long rubric on Saliha Sultan's and Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa's marriage was as stated above unusually long and detailed, it was surprisingly published at the end of May 1758. This is important for multiple reasons, the first was that the extended coverage of the marriage meant that Versailles considered this marriage and the people in it to be of great importance, this meant that Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa and Saliha Sultan were considered important. As previously stated, the *Gazette* often covered royal marriages, and the lives of royal women, most notably those of the Princesses du Sang⁹⁵¹ and the Bourbons in Spain and Italy, and increasingly after 1763 the marriages of Maria Theresa's children. Thus the *Gazette* did cover the marriages of important noble women, but they were usually from allied families, and many of their marriages were not covered in detail as the marriage of Saliha Sultan and her husband. This meant that Versailles viewed Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa as a man who had the potential to be an ally of France and who they expected would stay in power for long. There are also signs that they viewed Saliha Sultan as having a lot of potential as a possible source of French influence on her husband and her brother, as the then Secretary of Foreign Affairs Bernis

⁹⁵⁰ *Gazette de France*, 27 mai 1758, 249-251.

⁹⁵¹ The women from the minor branches of the French royal family, like the Orléans, Condé, Conti, etc.

(June 1757-December 1758) in one of his last instructions to Vergennes,⁹⁵² the French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire (1755/1756-1768), asked him to court her and the *Kızlar Ağası* to extend and increase French influence with the Porte,⁹⁵³ which had been the comte des Alleurs' tactics as ambassador. Another factor that illustrated the importance of the marriage from a French point of view, was the fact that the *Gazette* published it at the end of May in 1758 during the Seven Years' War. Based on this author's research, the month of May was usually when news started to pick up a lot, this meant that it was often not the busiest month, but a more news worthy month than the average.⁹⁵⁴ Thus the fact that the *Gazette* published such a long story about an Ottoman royal marriage, in a busier news period of the year during the biggest war of Louis XV's reign, when news about the war overwhelmingly dominated the news covered by the *Gazette* and the European press as a whole, meant that it was viewed as an important event by the French. The following months would see a sharp decline in the *Gazette's* coverage of the Ottoman Empire, in fact the years 1758 (after May 1758) until the start of 1761 would be one of the three least covered periods of the Ottoman Empire by the *Gazette*.⁹⁵⁵ Thus the *Gazette's* detailed coverage of Koca Ragıp Paşa's and Sultan Saliha's marriage and its ceremonies shows us that they understood and viewed these two figures as being very important and as persons of interest for France.

⁹⁵² Bernis gave his instructions to Vergennes on September 23 1758, he was dismissed and exiled by Louis XV on December 13th 1758.

⁹⁵³ Marsangy, *Vergennes: Son ambassade à Constantinople, Tome II*, 66.

⁹⁵⁴ The months of December, January, and February were the least news worthy months at least as it concerned the *Gazette*. The months of March, April, October, and November, were usually not particularly busy months but could be. The month of May was busy but not as busy as the months of June, July, August, and September, which were the busiest months of the year as it concerned the *Gazette's* coverage of news. There were more news worthy events that took place in the summer than in the winter during the period of 1740-1787.

⁹⁵⁵ The years that saw the least amount of Ottoman news from the *Gazette* were from approximately: June 1743-1747, June 1758-1760, and 1779-1782. All three periods saw France involved in major wars: the War of Austrian Succession (1740-1748), the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), and the American War of Independence (it started in 1775, but France joined in 1778-1783).

Prior to their wedding, both Koca Ragıp Paşa and Sultan Saliha had daughters, the names of Ragıp Paşa's daughters were Lebibe and Naile and he had a grand-child named Penbe.⁹⁵⁶ According to the *Gazette* Ragıp Paşa had a son named Rahim Paşa,⁹⁵⁷ who was appointed *Başdefterdar* in February 1760,⁹⁵⁸ it is possible that he was mistaken for a son-in-law, but that it is currently not clear. He was eventually dismissed as *Başdefterdar* in January 1764,⁹⁵⁹ but in April 1766 he was appointed *Defter Emini*.⁹⁶⁰ In March 1767 he replaced Mahir Hamza Paşa, who had been deposed by the Mamluks in Egypt, as governor of Egypt, which had become a dangerous post by the 1760s, and in fact he was the Governor of Egypt that Bulutkapan Ali Bey al-Kabir deposed in 1768.⁹⁶¹

The *Gazette* also referred to a Hüseyin Paşa, who was the newly appointed governor of Negreponte (Eğriboz) from his previous post as governor of Aydın on February 8th 1763, he was referred to as being the son-in-law of Koca Ragıp Paşa.⁹⁶² It is unclear which of Koca Ragıp Paşa's two daughters he was married to, he was subsequently promoted to Beylerbeyi of Rumeli at the end of March 1763, around the time that his father-in-law had become very sick.⁹⁶³ He was subsequently appointed as governor of Lepanto (İnebahtı) at the end of December 1763,⁹⁶⁴ and became governor of Vidin at the end of August 1764.⁹⁶⁵ In February 1765 he was replaced by Saliha Sultan's,

⁹⁵⁶ Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, IV. Cilt, II. Bölüm: XVIII. Yüzyıl, 396.

⁹⁵⁷ *Rahim Bassa*.

⁹⁵⁸ *Gazette de France*, 7 mars 1761, 114-115.

⁹⁵⁹ *Gazette de France*, 20 février 1764, 57.

⁹⁶⁰ *Gazette de France*, 16 mai 1766, 157.

⁹⁶¹ *Gazette de France*, 8 juin 1767, 203.

⁹⁶² *Gazette de France*, 28 mars 1763, 113.

⁹⁶³ *Gazette de France*, 13 mai 1763, 117.

⁹⁶⁴ *Gazette de France*, 3 février 1763, 37.

⁹⁶⁵ *Gazette de France*, 24 septembre 1764, 307.

his wife's former mother-in-law,⁹⁶⁶ new husband the former Kadudan Paşa Nişli Mehmed Paşa as governor of Vidin, while Hüseyin Paşa was once again appointed governor of Negreponte (Eğriboz).⁹⁶⁷

Saliha Sultan had a daughter, prior to her marriage with Koca Ragıp Paşa, called Fatma Hanım with her late husband Sarı Mustafa Paşa, who she was married to from 1728 until his death in 1731. Her daughter Fatma Hanım who born at some point between 1729-1732, around 1747-1748 she married Ibrahim Bey, the brother of the Beylerbeyi of Rumeli Hatibzade Yahya Paşa, who had been her husband during this period (married between 1745-1755).⁹⁶⁸ Thus Fatma Hanım married in 1747-1748 Ibrahim Bey, the brother of her mother's then current husband, Hatibzade Yahya Paşa. This author has not found much more about Fatma Hanım, but if she were still alive in 1758, then she could have been a useful tool or ally to Koca Ragıp Paşa and her mother Sultan Saliha, just like they could have been for her and her husband, if Ibrahim Bey was still alive. Hammer also discussed Mustafa III's fondness for one of his nieces, it could have been Fatma Hanım, or it could be one of her sisters or cousins. After the death of Koca Ragıp Paşa in 1763, Saliha Sultan married her 5th and last husband the then current Kapudan Paşa Nişli Mehmed Paşa (1763-1764) on May 8th 1764,⁹⁶⁹ they stayed married together until his death in 1770 and she eventually died in October 1778. Overall, Saliha Sultan's marriage

⁹⁶⁶ Either Naile or Lebibe were Hüseyin Paşa's wife, making Koca Ragıp Paşa his father-in-law and tying him to Saliha Sultan. However, after the death of his father-in-law, it is unclear what his and his wife's relationship with Saliha Sultan would have been. Since he continued to hold several of the most important *ümera* posts after the death of his powerful father-in-law then it can be assumed that the couple still had good relations with Mustafa III's sister. However whether or not she remained their patron is still unclear, and the question of his wife's relationship with her is also unclear, did she have formal or informal obligations towards her mother-in-law after the death of her father? It is not clear and further research is necessary in further understanding the role that spouses of powerful people played with their in-laws after the death of said spouse.

⁹⁶⁷ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} avril 1765, 101.

⁹⁶⁸ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman: Tome XV*, 163.

⁹⁶⁹ *Gazette de France*, 29 juin 1764, 207.

was an important event at the start of Mustafa III's reign, it may have given her brother the idea of using his sisters as a way to help expand his own political and social networks, and provided him with a series of loyal and capable men that would come to serve and head the Sublime Porte and its policies throughout the 1760s.

5.8 Ambassadors' Spouses as a Source of Influence over the Sublime Porte: The Case of the Comtesse des Alleurs

Roland des Alleurs' tenure as French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire between October 1747 until his death at the end of November 1754 was one of the most successful French embassies in the 18th century. As previously discussed, he managed to reestablish French influence over the Porte and brought their relations to the closest that it had ever been,⁹⁷⁰ coming close on two occasions of getting an actual alliance between the two states. One of the key components of his successful tenure was the use of his wife Constance-Frédérique Lubomirska, who will be referred to from this point onward as the Comtesse des Alleurs, as a means of influence over the Porte. The *Gazette* made a reference to her visit to Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa's wife and harem in 1752,⁹⁷¹ Hammer made references to the frequent visits of Moralı Beşir Ağa's wife,⁹⁷² who according to Flachat was called Rukiye Kadın (*Roquet Caden*),⁹⁷³ to the comtesse des Alleurs,⁹⁷⁴ and

⁹⁷⁰ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman: Tome XV*, 239.

⁹⁷¹ *Gazette de France*, 31 mars, 1753, 145-146.

⁹⁷² The *Kızlar Ağası* probably had a wife and a harem to imitate the Sultan and Ottoman elites, but they also would have served as useful agents for him to gather information and gossip from other women.

⁹⁷³ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 134-135.

Alfred de Curzon's articles on her husband's embassy had a 7 page section that was a near verbatim copy of des Alleurs letter to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs at the time the marquis de Puisieulx (1747-1751) dated to December 8th 1750.⁹⁷⁵ This section will begin with a summary of the comtesses des Alleurs' reception of these two Ottoman women, it will then be followed with an analysis of the cultural exchange and its significance.

It begins with a discussion by the comte des Alleurs of Moralı Beşir Ağa and his treasurer (hazinedar) Süleyman Ağa, who was a Georgian slave that had ties with Moralı since his childhood and who had the *Kızlar Ağası*'s complete confidence. So much so that by the end of 1750, all of the major figures at the Porte and outside of the Palace complex tried to get his patronage, Süleyman Ağa was a means to get the Moralı's favor. Des Alleurs then talks about the visit of the wives of both of these eunuchs, each of whom had a harem of their own, who visited his wife the comtesse des Alleurs. It seemed like it was the initiative of the wife of Süleyman Ağa, who remained nameless unfortunately, that asked for them to visit the French embassy and the comtesse des Alleurs. To the surprise of the French ambassador, she contacted her friend, the wife of Moralı Beşir Ağa to make the arrangements to visit the French embassy, and decided to come take a walk in Pera, and from there the French embassy would send a carriage to get them.⁹⁷⁶ Des Alleurs then gave the order that no male be present between the entrance of the French embassy to his wife's quarters, who greeted the two women and their suite at the antechamber of the embassy with her interpreter, a Frenchwoman born in Istanbul that spoke fluently Turkish and knew the two women. After the two Ottoman women entered the quarters of

⁹⁷⁴ Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman: Tome XV*, 209.

⁹⁷⁵ Curzon, "L'Ambassade du comte des Alleurs," 443-450.

⁹⁷⁶ Curzon, "L'Ambassade du comte des Alleurs," 444.

the comtesse des Alleurs, two black eunuchs armed with pistols stood guard at the doors. The two Ottoman women and their suite kissed the comtesse des Alleurs hand, then slowly moved back, standing up with their hands crossed on their stomachs. After their hostess' assurances that there were no men nearby, they took off their veils, and so they wore their style that they would normally wear inside their own homes, which included a fine dress with belts full of rare stones, and their hair was long and in the shape of a turban, with art, pearls, and rare stones attached to them.⁹⁷⁷ The wife of Süleyman Ağa was around the age of 22 and had ordinary looks, but the wife of the Kızlar Ağası was younger and beautiful.

The first thing that the two Ottoman women noticed in the residence of the des Alleurs was the portrait of Louis XV,⁹⁷⁸ which the comtesse des Alleurs remarked was a very mediocre portrait of the French king,⁹⁷⁹ both looked at it a lot and the wife of the Kızlar Ağası said that she was not surprised that Islam banned images of people as she felt that they could inspire love. The comtesse des Alleurs told them that Louis XV was in fact handsomer in reality than he was shown in that portrait. The wife of Süleyman Ağa then told her hostess that the "Emperor" of France must be a generous man that would never refuse a request. She replied that the "Emperor" of France was never asked personally for favors, that instead it was by his goodness or superiority that things were granted to those who made requests.⁹⁸⁰ They then had dinner together and the two Ottoman women granted permission for her interpreter to sit and eat with them, while the

⁹⁷⁷ Curzon, "L'Ambassade du comte des Alleurs," 445.

⁹⁷⁸ Louis XV (born in 1710, reign 1715-1774) was famously handsome and was still viewed as one of the handsomest men in Versailles in his later years. The portrait that they would have seen of him would have been one made in the 1740s when he was in his 30s.

⁹⁷⁹ See Figure 5 for an example of what Louis XV would have looked like at that time, but it was not the portrait shown to the Ottoman women.

⁹⁸⁰ Curzon, "L'Ambassade du comte des Alleurs," 446.

other women would eat in another room. All of the women in the comtesse des Alleurs' suite were either French or Greek women, and they had potage, which required the use of forks, which proved to be amusing to all as they had had little experience with them. The Ottoman women or slaves eating at the other table were unhappy that they were sitting on chairs instead of sofas and they struggled at eating with forks. None of the Ottoman women drank the wine and many of them ate very little until the comtesse des Alleurs assured them that it was halal, and then they went into a separate room to pray.⁹⁸¹ After their prayer was over, they ate fruits and jam and then played with flowers, and as they were getting more comfortable with each other, they began asking questions about clothes and hair styles. They asked their hostess if her style was the only way that women in France dressed, and she replied that both in court and outside of it that women in France had a variety of styles and clothes. At their request, she put some of her different clothes and some of her wigs on display for them to see, and they were all very interested and animated. The Ottoman women tried them on separately and were told by her that they had to wear all of the pieces together, to which they asked that she come visit them with these clothes to show them after her pregnancy would be over. She promised them that she would, and they told her that the *Kızlar Ağası* favored her husband and would continue to have nothing but goodwill towards him and France.⁹⁸² She then took the opportunity to give them a beautiful piece of cloth along with an amber box with gold, to which both women seemed embarrassed by the gift. They then asked to see her husband's quarters, the comte des Alleurs was told so, and left so that they could visit it, they sat on all the seats and enjoyed looking at the mirrors.

⁹⁸¹ Curzon, "L'Ambassade du comte des Alleurs," 446-447.

⁹⁸² Curzon, "L'Ambassade du comte des Alleurs," 448.

Afterwards the comtesse des Alleurs offered them to have coffee at the kiosk and then to take a walk, they all agreed and put back on their veils, and after they drank their coffee they explored the gardens, sang, ate fruits, picked up flowers, among other things. Before leaving the Ottoman women saw a harpsichord⁹⁸³ and learned that their hostess played it, and so naturally asked her to do so, which she did and also sang while playing the instrument. They seemed to have had a lot of fun, and before they left the comte des Alleurs approached them to thank them for their visit.⁹⁸⁴ When they went outside of the entrance of the French embassy, the Ottoman women were surprised to see so many people waiting around the embassy, some 2000 people according to the French ambassador. They then asked how the people knew that it was them that had visited the embassy, they were told that suites of 15 to 20 women usually signified that it was women from the palace that were visiting, they then left the French embassy.⁹⁸⁵

Unfortunately less than two years after their visit to the comtesse des Alleurs, the two Ottoman women would face disasters as a result of court intrigues that included previously discussed Safiye Sultan. Rukiye Kadın and her friend, Süleyman Ağa's wife, along with their harem saw all of their goods seized after the downfall of Moralı Beşir Ağa and Süleyman Ağa in July 1752, they were then sent to the Palace in Edirne. Eventually almost all of the women of both harems were able to remarry, mostly rich merchants, with the notable exception of Süleyman Ağa's wife who still mourned her husband's death.⁹⁸⁶

⁹⁸³ An instrument.

⁹⁸⁴ Curzon, "L'Ambassade du comte des Alleurs," 449-450.

⁹⁸⁵ Curzon, "L'Ambassade du comte des Alleurs," 449-450.

⁹⁸⁶ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 145.

There are a lot of interesting details and cultural exchanges that occurred in des Alleurs' letter to the marquis de Puisieulx, Secretary of Foreign Affairs (1747-1751). That des Alleurs wrote about his wife's hosting important Ottoman women meant that he either felt it was an important angle that they could use to further French interests in the Ottoman Empire, or to show the extent of his prestige and influence in Istanbul to the French Secretary of Foreign Affairs, and naturally it may be a combination of these two factors. Des Alleurs' ties and good relations with the *Kızlar Ağası* Moralı Beşir Ağa and his powerful *Hazinedar*, Süleyman Ağa, are partially shown by his wife hosting their wives at the French embassy. It also demonstrated to us that they were probably using their wives in the same way that he used his, to get privileged information and increase ties with in this case the French ambassador. It may in fact be the primary reason why *Kızlar Ağası* had a wife and harem, to further extend his ties and influence in different quarters, namely that of the world of women. Even if eunuchs had privileged access to the Harem, they were not women and their status was different, having wives would provide a means to keep up with gossip that women would spread, and it would be a means to impress other people and strengthen ties to other important people by the use of their wives. In this instance, the ties between Moralı Beşir Ağa were strengthened to that of des Alleurs, this could potentially lead to favors in the future, potentially finding new or cheaper ways to get French or rare goods for themselves and Mahmud I. In addition, Moralı Beşir Ağa's wife saw a portrait of Louis XV, she was then given details about who he was as a person by the comtesse des Alleurs, thus new information or confirmation of pre-existing information was obtained by his wife, who would of shared it with him afterwards. Although not necessarily crucial information, then again des

Alleurs may have omitted those in his letter, it still could played a useful role for Moralı Beşir Ağa if he was asked about the French by the Sultan. Likewise, des Alleurs would have learned that he was in favor with the *Kızlar Ağası*, by the mere presence of his wife's and the wife of Süleyman Ağa at his home, it may also have been used by Moralı Beşir Ağa as a way to emphasize to des Alleurs and France, who their ally in Istanbul truly was. It would be in France's interests to help him whenever he asked a "favor" as he was their ally, his wife and the wife of his *Hazinedar* visited and knew the comtesse des Alleurs, how much closer could you be?

Besides the political and diplomatic implications of this meeting, it was naturally important because of the cultural exchanges that occurred. Whereas elite Ottoman men living in Istanbul might have had weekly to monthly meetings with ambassadors by the mid 18th century, their wives and female relatives would not have had as many opportunities to interact with the wives or daughters of ambassadors. The Ottoman women's interest in Louis XV's portrait along with their comments about the impact that could have on making a woman fall in love with someone brings up an intriguing aspect about Ottoman society, namely what impact did portraits, statues, and paintings have on the uninitiated. Whereas many French peasants living in the poorer provinces in France would have seen paintings, but not on a regular basis, they still would have been exposed to statues of the king or major political or religious figures whenever they went to town. Ottomans were mostly unexposed, at least to our current knowledge on this issue, to paintings and statues, when exposed to them, how did they react? They could have been exposed to miniatures, but those were in books, an item that only elites had. Clearly the women were impressed by the portrait of the French king, it made them look differently

at France and certainly gave them ideas about what its king would have been like. Even if des Alleurs exaggerated the women's impressions on the king's looks, it does still seem to have left a mark on these women, and so having a simple portrait of Louis XV served a valuable purpose in influencing the Ottomans' perception of who the king or "Emperor" of France was.

The Comtesse des Alleurs influence with elite Ottoman women did not end with the death of the *Kızlar Ağası* Moralı Beşir Ağa in 1752, as the *Gazette* reported her visit to Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa's wife and harem at the end of February 1753. On that day she and her escort of women who spoke both French and Turkish, along with her pages crossed the Golden Horn (Haliç)⁹⁸⁷ from Galata. On the other side was the *Sadrizam*, his escort, 3 carriages, and horses for the men that escorted her, and had waited for her arrival there.⁹⁸⁸ They were brought to Bahir Mustafa Paşa's palace, where she was escorted to the Harem. At her arrival there, she was greeted by 24 "wonderfully" dressed slaves and brought her to Bahir Mustafa Paşa's wife's apartments. After complimenting each other they exchanged gifts, including valuable rich fabrics from Lyon, one of France's manufacturing centers, and the comtesse des Alleurs got likewise rich fabrics from Iran and India, whether these were some of the gifts that Yusuf Ağa brought back from India in 1750 is unclear. After the exchange of gifts, they ate, with the comtesse des Alleurs and the wife of the *Sadrizam* eating separately from their respective escorts at their own table, with the other women eating four at each table each divided equally between French and Ottoman women. The female translators or Dragomans were next to the main table to translate between the comtesse des Alleurs and the wife of Bahir

⁹⁸⁷ *Elle passa le canal avec ce cortège.*

⁹⁸⁸ *Gazette de France*, 31 mars 1753, 145-146.

Mustafa Paşa. Interestingly, after dinner the wife of the *Sadrazam* left the party to go in her own apartments by herself, and her ladies showed the comtesse des Alleurs and her escorts the harem. At night they were escorted back to the French embassy.⁹⁸⁹

The visit of the comtesse des Alleurs to Bahir Mustafa Paşa's wife and harem are interestingly for a multitude of reasons, but firstly it should be stated that it was probably reported by the *Gazette* because the year 1753 was a low news story year. Further proof of this was that was that she had visited the Harem in Topkapı, which the *Gazette* never reported on, and she had hosted important Ottoman women as mentioned above, these were also not reported by the *Gazette*. Since the year 1753 was a year low in eventful events that could be published by the *Gazette*, it meant that it needed stories to fill in its 12 page minimum, hence why it published this detailed rubric on the comtesse des Alleurs' visit. It is an interesting story, as it does illustrate the political role that was expected from the wives of ambassadors, and that their visits and social interactions with powerful local women were matters that concerned the state. The publication of this story in the *Gazette* implicitly meant that it had political dimension to it, thus it was not simply a dinner between a Turkish and French woman, but rather female representatives of their respective states. As the description above illustrated, a lot of the ceremonies between the two women mirrored the ceremonies and customs that their respective spouses would have done in their own meetings. The compliments, followed by gifts, and then dinner, in which the two main figures ate together separate from everyone else and with their own respective translators or dragomans. Whether or not coffee, şerbet, and perfumes were used at all was not stated, they may not have been, they may have been. Another

⁹⁸⁹ *Gazette de France*, 31 mars 1753, 145-146.

interesting element of this peace was that Bahir Mustafa Paşa's wife left early, which if not due to health reasons could have meant two things. The first was that it could have been a snub against the comtesse des Alleurs and France as a whole, and the second that she was probably an Ottoman woman from an elite family, which meant that could have snubbed another elite woman, but a woman from a lower background would not have been able to do such a thing. Finally despite what was just stated, this rubric demonstrated that the comte des Alleurs still had a certain amount of influence with the Porte, as he was able to continue to use his wife as a political agent or tool for French foreign policy.

One last thing should also be noted from this rubric, namely that Bahir Mustafa Paşa had a wife in 1753, and so the question must be asked, what happened to her a decade later when he was engaged to Mustafa III's daughter Şah Sultan in 1763. The most likely answers would be that she died, probably from childbirth or from the plague, but if she was still alive in 1763, would Bahir Mustafa Paşa have been forced to divorce her, as men who married the Sultanes were usually forced to do. If so, what happened to the previous spouse? Did she move back in to the home of a male relative or depending on her age remarry?

The influence that the comtesse des Alleurs had in Istanbul was also known in Paris, as the marquis d'Argenson, who had appointed her husband ambassador to the Ottoman Empire during his brief and unsuccessful tenure as Secretary of Foreign Affairs between November 1744-January 1747, mentioned her in his *Journal*. Initially he had a very hard time in understanding how her husband and her had had the level of debt that they had, as his predecessor the comte de Castellane (1741-1747) had made a large

fortune of 120 000 livres. D'Argenson simply thought that Louis XV was a fool for paying all of her late husband's debts and giving her a large pension.⁹⁹⁰ However in a later entry in his *Journal*, d'Argenson noted that the comtesse des Alleurs had a dignified conduct that reflected her Polish nobility as she helped the poor in Istanbul, which had led her to get access to the Harem at Topkapı and become friends with the Sultan's "favorite."⁹⁹¹ In fact, Versailles took the embassy of the comte des Alleurs and his effective use of his wife as a political blueprint to increase French influence with the Porte. In a dispatch dating to September 23rd 1758, the then Secretary of Foreign Affairs Bernis, later Cardinal Bernis in 1758, had ordered Vergennes to get influence over Mustafa III either by the new *Kızlar Ağası* or by his sister Saliha Sultan who was married to the *Sadrazam* at the time Koca Mehmed Ragıp Paşa (1757-1763).⁹⁹² It should be added that Bernis was one of Madame de Pompadour's protégés,⁹⁹³ and so he was fully aware of the power that women could have on rulers, as contemporary France and its elites were fully aware of the important political role that women could have on society,⁹⁹⁴ even if they did not fully understand the cultural differences that existed between elite French and Ottoman women. This case perfectly illustrated the impact of the comtesse des Alleurs had had on her husband's highly successful embassy to the Ottoman Empire between 1747-1754, as Versailles wanted Vergennes to imitate his predecessor and establish ties to elite Ottoman women, which he was not able to do at that point in time, as he was still not married then.

⁹⁹⁰ D'Argenson, *Journal et Mémoires*, tome VIII, 425-426.

⁹⁹¹ D'Argenson, *Journal et Mémoires*, tome VIII, 439.

⁹⁹² Marsangy, *Le Chevalier de Vergennes: Tome II*, 66.

⁹⁹³ Jones, *Madame de Pompadour*, 120.

⁹⁹⁴ Sarah Maza, *Private Lives and Public Affairs: The Cause Célèbre of Prerevolutionary France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 182-183.

Overall the case of the comtesse des Alleurs demonstrates a neglected aspect of diplomacy, the role of the wives of European ambassadors to the Ottoman Empire. They had access to the harem and key Ottoman women, this enabled them to have an increased influence over the Sublime Porte. Even if the political role of women was secondary or subservient to that of men, they still had a political role as any women related to or married to a powerful man could impact his views on affairs if she had a good relationship. This meant that the comtesse des Alleurs could leave a positive impact on the women in the Harem, whether that of the Sultans', the *Kızlar Ağası*, the *Sadrizam*, or of that of a Paşa's; these women in turn would talk to their husbands and male relatives along with other Ottoman women about the comtesse des Alleurs. If she was able to present herself and France in a positive light, then it could help increase the influence of France among elite Ottoman women and as a result the Sublime Porte as well. It could increase her access to elite Ottoman women and potentially help her husband get greater access to the Sublime Porte. The final important point about the role that the wives of European ambassadors could have on their respective embassies, was the privileged information that they could get from Ottoman women and the potential image that they could provide Ottoman women of their respective rulers and states. The comtesse des Alleurs showed portraits of Louis XV to the wives and women of the *Kızlar Ağası*, Moralı Beşir Ağa, this left a positive mark on them as they found him to be handsome and thought that he must be just as kind and good as he looked. The comtesse des Alleurs further played into these notions by telling those women that Louis XV was in fact handsomer in person than he was in illustration or painting.⁹⁹⁵ Thus she simultaneously confirmed to these women that her king was in fact a very handsome man, and

⁹⁹⁵ Curzon, "L'Ambassade du comte des Alleurs," 446.

subliminally confirmed their views on him being a just and good ruler. She thus could potentially have these women talk to their respective male patrons, relatives, or husbands about what they just learned about Louis XV, which in this case could potentially further strengthen Franco-Ottoman ties, as if Louis XV was indeed a handsome, just, and good ruler, would he not be worthy of an alliance or of receiving diplomatic or commercial favors?

5.9 Elite Ottoman Women and Regional Struggles for Power

The *Gazette de France* covered two major cases in which a woman played a key role as either the center of a conflict or as an active political agent. As discussed above, Ottoman Princesses and the wives of ambassadors could and did play key political roles in Ottoman society, politics, and diplomacy. The bellow two cases are examples of elite Ottoman women who became active agents in provincial power struggles that involved their male relatives and in which they became active political agents, which caused in one case led to a political crisis in their respective homelands, while in the other case the woman actively went to the Ottoman capital to seek justice for her spouse. The first case is set in Izmir in 1773, during the Russo-Ottoman War, and involved the Lady from Bergama, who became fled to Izmir from an *Ayan* that had kidnapped her, causing a

major local conflict. The second case happened in 1775 and involved the Lady from Konya, who wanted revenge for her brother's death and succeeded in her enterprise.⁹⁹⁶

The *Gazette* wrote two long stories or rubrics about the Lady from Bergama that it published on December 20th 1773 and on January 7th 1774, the rubrics were written from Izmir and dated respectively on October 18th 1773 and November 1st 1773. The Lady from Bergama came to Izmir with an escort of 50 men from Bergama on October 5th 1773. Her brother Araboğlu Ağa, who was probably the *Ayan* of Bergama, had been murdered by his Bölük Başı, a man by the name of Senseveli,⁹⁹⁷ around May 1773. She had been married to Faiz Ağa and had been kidnapped by her brother's murderer, Senseveli, who had seized all of her brother's districts and taken his goods.⁹⁹⁸ She had come to Izmir to seek the protection of Seyyid Hacı Halil Ağa,⁹⁹⁹ the Kul Kâhyası of the city, who had been appointed to bring order back to Izmir and arrived by the 1st of July 1773.¹⁰⁰⁰ She wanted the protection of Halil Ağa against her brother's murderer and planned to wait in the city for her husband Faiz Ağa, who had escaped an attempt on his life by Senseveli and had arrived to the camp of the *Sadrizam*, Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, to request justice from him as it concerned the attempt on his life and the murder of his brother-in-law.¹⁰⁰¹ However Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa's army had marched against Rumiantsev's army around the Danube in September¹⁰⁰² and the Russian commander was

⁹⁹⁶ The *Gazette* did not provide a name for either women, so the author named them from the respective region that they came from, they may not even have come from either Bergama or Konya.

⁹⁹⁷ This author unfortunately did not have time to find their Turkish names.

⁹⁹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 20 décembre 1773, 461-462.

⁹⁹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 27 septembre 1773, 347.

¹⁰⁰⁰ *Gazette de France*, 20 septembre 1773, 339.

¹⁰⁰¹ *Gazette de France*, 20 décembre 1773, 461-462.

¹⁰⁰² *Gazette de France*, 25 octobre 1773, 385.

still planning on raiding Silistra in October,¹⁰⁰³ so it would be difficult to know where and how her brother Faiz Ağa would have been able to reach him, and whether or not Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa would have cared about this significantly less pressing issue. It also brings up the question, of why he went to the *Sadrâzam* on the war front and not to the Kaymakam and to the Sublime Porte in Istanbul? Were Faiz Ağa and the late Arapoğlu Ağa protégés of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa? None of this is quite clear at this point in time.

Four hours after the Lady from Bergama arrived in Izmir, the brother of Senseveli entered the city with 150 men to take her back to his brother. But the Kul Kâhyası, Seyyid Hacı Halil Ağa, immediately put her in a secure location and ordered the brother and his men to leave the city. Three days later on October 8th 1773, the Kadı, the ülema, and the Priest of Bergama¹⁰⁰⁴ came to Izmir and declared that her husband Faiz Ağa was dead, and as a result the Lady of Bergama became the legitimate spouse of Senseveli. They added that the man who claimed to be her legal husband was going to come get her with 3000 men if they refused to give her “back” to him.¹⁰⁰⁵ Why the Priest or Christian ecclesiastical officials of Bergama would vouch for the death of Faiz Ağa is interesting for multiple reasons, the first of which would be were any of the three people involved Christians? They probably were all Muslims, but then why involve local Christian religious figure(s) into this conflict, were they the more influential religious figures of the area? There are no clear answers, but it is worth thinking about.

¹⁰⁰³ *Gazette de France*, 29 novembre 1773, 433.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Primats de Pergame.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *Gazette de France*, 20 décembre 1773, 461-462.

The threats made by Senseveli caused some alarms in Izmir, but Seyyid Hacı Halil Ağa, the Kul Kâhyası, declared that he would be her protector and inform the Sublime Porte of the affair. On October 16th the Ağa of Sandesli, a close friend of Senseveli, came to Izmir to bribe some of the officials and to kidnap the Lady from Bergama. However, the Lady from Bergama learning that he had entered the castle with Officials with the pretext of having a discussion with her, prepared to defend herself against him. So when the Ağa of Sandesli tried to kidnap her by force, she managed to stop him by taking a rifle and pointing it at him, after which the Janissaries came in beat him so severely that he had two major head wounds, all while his allies fled the scene. The Kul Kâhyası put the Ağa of Sandesli in prison and waited for the arrival of Faiz Ağa, who was expected with an escort from Hacı Ahmed Ağa Karaosmanoğlu.¹⁰⁰⁶ The Lady from Bergama was still armed with a rifle, two pistols, and a saber, she had killed men while on her way from Bergama to Izmir, as she had been attacked by 12 men sent by Senseveli, but had managed to kill two of them and caused the remaining 10 men to flee.¹⁰⁰⁷

As shown so far, the Lady from Bergama managed to escape two different kidnapping attempts thanks largely to her own abilities and was even willing and in fact managed to kill at least two men that had tried to kidnap her. Although she was related to relatively important men, who had ties to the powerful Karaosmanoğlu family, she did not have the status of any of the women discussed above or of the Lady from Konya, the case that will be discussed after this one. But she was still an elite local woman that knew how to use rifles, pistols, and potentially sabers, but was also the victim of kidnapping.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Nagata, *Tarihte Âyânlar*, 35.

¹⁰⁰⁷ *Gazette de France*, 20 décembre 1773, 461-462.

So far this case demonstrated the dangers and limitations that women faced, namely kidnapping and potentially forced sexual intercourse, and some of the abilities that some Ottoman women of relatively elite backgrounds were able to have or learn, namely the ability to use weapons. This shows us that she was not a woman of the rank of a Sultane, but she was the relative and wife of relatively high ranking officials and potentially the sister of a former *ayan* in the region, which illustrated that elite provincial women had considerably more freedom than previously thought.

The previous rubric or news story about the Lady from Bergama was written from Izmir on October 18th and published on the 20th of December 1773, this rubric was written 12 days later on the 1st of November of 1773 and published over two weeks later on the 7th of January 1774. It describes how the Lady of Bergama who was safe in Izmir in October 18th had fallen back into the hands of Senseveli, the murderer of her brother, by November 1st 1773. The Ağa of Sanderli, who had previously been put in prison by the Kul Kâhyası, had escaped with the help of the *Müsellim* and went to Bornova¹⁰⁰⁸ to get help from the famous Ayvaz Ağa.¹⁰⁰⁹ Ayvaz Ağa had built a fortress approximately 84km away from Izmir,¹⁰¹⁰ where he recruited all the Janissary deserters. Seyyid Hacı Halil Ağa protested to the *Müsellim* of his actions and sent an *ilâm* to Istanbul, informing them of events that had occurred. On the 24th of October, a Tatar sent by the Paşa of Scio (Sakız) came to Izmir with the orders not to allow the Lady from Bergama to be left in the hands of Senseveli, and to keep care of her until the Paşa of Sakız came to Izmir.¹⁰¹¹ On the 25th of October, by orders of the Porte the Kul Kâhyası and 15 of his men went

¹⁰⁰⁸ *Bournabat*.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Written as *Ayvas-Aga*, the *Gazette* also frequently made reference to an Ayas Aga, who was a rival *Ayan* to the Hacı Ahmed Karaosmanoğlu.

¹⁰¹⁰ *21 lieues d'Izmir*.

¹⁰¹¹ *Gazette de France*, 7 janvier 1774, 7.

“incognito” to an area 12km away from Izmir to detain and kidnap a Janissary named Ibn Cüsseli,¹⁰¹² who had been found guilty of excessive violence. He succeeded in capturing Ibn Cüsseli when the Ağa of Sanderli, the brother of Senseveli, learned by what way he was going back to Izmir, chased and captured him with 300 men, liberating their captive. They then brought Seyyid Hacı Halil Ağa, the *Kul Kâhyası*, without horses, weapons, and proper clothes to Bornova.¹⁰¹³ They offered to let him go if he gave back the Lady from Bergama and wife of Faiz Ağa to Ayvaz Ağa, but he rejected this stating that he no longer had the authority to command in Izmir since he was their prisoner, and remained under the control of the brother of Senseveli. On the 26th of October, Senseveli and Ayvas Ağa entered Izmir with 200 men and as a result of their coming, the castle was abandoned by city officials and the Janissaries, resulting in them easily kidnapping the Lady from Bergama and tied her to a horse despite her fierce resistance and screams. They brought her to Bornova, where the Kul Kâhyası, Seyyid Hacı Halil Ağa, was released after her arrival and returned to Izmir around 8 at night, this strongly implied that he facilitated her capture by Senseveli’s forces. On the 28th of October, a Tatar arrived in Izmir from Istanbul ordering the city’s official, notably the *Kul Kâhyası*, to keep the Lady from Bergama under their protection, as the Porte was naturally unaware of the recent changes of events. The Lady from Bergama was brought back to Bergama where she was given to Senseveli, and the *Gazette* remarked on its impatience in wanting to know what the upcoming events of this case would be, implying that the Porte would want the Lady of Bergama to be freed once again from Senseveli.

¹⁰¹² Ben-Juseli.

¹⁰¹³ *Gazette de France*, 7 janvier 1774, 7.

Unfortunately the *Gazette* did not cover what happened next, there were no reasons given as to why it stopped its coverage of this incident, but a few reasons can be surmised by this author. The first possible reason was the *Gazette's* correspondent in Izmir or Istanbul stopped writing about this case for whatever reasons. The second reason was that it did not have enough space to publish the continuation of this story, both the first and the second possible reasons for the *Gazette's* ending its coverage of the case are possible but unlikely. The third and most likely reason was that the Lady of Bergama met an unfortunate fate. She may have stayed kidnapped, or she was killed, or publicly violated, or committed suicide, and based on its coverage, this would not have been the outcome that the *Gazette* wanted, and so it would have preferred to ignore the story. The fourth reason, would be that this case became politically sensitive, thus making it diplomatically sensitive, and a risk to publish as it could anger the Porte or lead to an embarrassment in Franco-Ottoman relations if the Porte had read the *Gazette*, what it could have viewed as a sensitive topic or a story that made the Porte seem weak or not in control. As stated in the introduction, the *Gazette de France* was the official paper of the French monarchy, it reflected Versailles' policy, thus any issue that a foreign state had in its coverage was a potential diplomatic problem for Versailles. This author believes that the Lady of Bergama met an unfortunate fate, most likely that she stayed kidnapped and held against her will by Senseveli, and this story may also have shown the Porte's lack of control in the region, which would have made it seem weak, but this is conjecture.

The case of the Lady from Bergama shows us just how much danger there was in provincial and local politics involved for women, that even the wife and sister of prominent local officials fell victim to kidnapping and forced marriages or concubinage.

It demonstrated that the Porte had a strong base in the region, but it also showed the opposite as in if a relatively powerful local figure like an *Ayan* or an Ottoman official like Ayvaz Ağa, then it could and did supersede the Porte's base of power in the region. Women were pawns in local rivalries, but as was the case of the Lady from Bergama, they could be active agents in their own future, but ultimately 18th century Ottoman society favored and enabled male figures to supersede on the rights and agency of powerful elite women.

The case of the Lady from Konya was only published in one issue of the *Gazette* on August 28th 1775 and the rubric was dated to April 25th 1775 and it came from Anamur in Mersin. Emekçioğlu the Paşa of Karaman,¹⁰¹⁴ with two tails, had been given the task two years ago of eliminating the *Kapıcıs* and bandits¹⁰¹⁵ that infested the Southern interior of Anatolia. He succeeded in his mission by defeating and expelling them around the capital of the province, Konya, most notably by killing the “*Kapıcıs*” and the bandits' secret protector, Mehdi Bey.¹⁰¹⁶ However his sister, the Lady from Konya, was an extremely wealthy woman that wanted revenge for her brother's death, Mehdi Bey. She went to the Ottoman capital, where she brought accusations so serious against Emekçioğlu that the Porte sent orders to Vekil Osman Paşa¹⁰¹⁷ of İçil,¹⁰¹⁸ in today's Mersin and Antalya, to cut the head of Emekçioğlu. But Emekçioğlu had learned about the orders of his execution and so fled the region and took refuge with his friend the Commander of Saléphi,¹⁰¹⁹ who had offered him asylum. However his friend

¹⁰¹⁴ *Caramanie.*

¹⁰¹⁵ ...*Capouzis et les Brigands*...

¹⁰¹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 28 aoust 1775, 307.

¹⁰¹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 25 janvier 1773, 29.

¹⁰¹⁸ Vekil Osman Pacha d'İtchelu.

¹⁰¹⁹ This author is not sure where this is in Anatolia, and so has left the original French term for this place.

immediately betrayed Emekçioğlu and handed him to Osman Paşa, who decapitated him and sent his head to Istanbul. The death of Emekçioğlu led to the return of the “*Kapıcıs*” who once again resorted to banditry, undoing a lot of the public order that had been restored since the end of the war.¹⁰²⁰

The case of the Lady from Konya is very interesting for multiple reasons, the first was that her family and brother were probably local *Ayans*, as she was stated to have been an extremely wealthy woman, whose brother was viewed by both Emekçioğlu and the French, who reported on this, as being the local authority figure that enabled the banditry to occur. Thus she came from a family that played a role in destabilizing the interior of Southern Anatolia, between the regions just north of today’s Eastern Antalya to Western Adana. Her wealth in a region of the Ottoman Empire that was not wealthy in the second half of the 18th century, that the *Gazette* considered as a bit of a backwater region, which further hinted at an *Ayan* background for the Lady from Konya. The second interesting element of this story, was that a woman and not a male relative of Mehdi Bey, the brother of the Lady from Konya, took actions against Emekçioğlu, the Paşa that had him killed. She further went to Istanbul in order to get orders to bring down Emekçioğlu by the authorities themselves, showing us that a provincial elite woman could drive Istanbul’s policies towards the provinces and towards its own appointed officials there.¹⁰²¹ This adds additional questions and opens up new interesting possibilities as it relates to women and power in the 18th century Ottoman Empire. How did the Lady from Konya get to Istanbul? Who did she know and who did she contact?

¹⁰²⁰ *Gazette de France*, 28 aoust 1775, 307.

¹⁰²¹ The implications of the rubric from the *Gazette* were that he had been appointed to hand the anarchy and banditry in the province of Karaman (Caramanie).

Who gave her Himaye (protection) or were her Intisap (patronage)? Did she contact any of the still living Ottoman princesses such as Esma, Saliha, or Ayşe Sultan? It seems unlikely that she directly went to the Sublime Porte by herself with a petition, she must have had a protector. Was her protector in Istanbul a woman, or could elite provincial women have male patrons or protectors? The case of the Lady from Konya was very interesting, it helped this author and hopefully the reader have a better understanding of some of the dynamics and roles that elite Ottoman women had in the political culture of the Ottoman Empire, but it also opens up a series of questions and topics that need further research.

5.10 Conclusion

Under the *Kafes* system Ottoman Princes were replaceable, while their mothers, sisters, aunts, daughters, and cousins were irreplaceable and key figures to the extended networks of the reigning Sultan. They were the power brokers of 18th Istanbul and Ottoman political factions and networks, whereas the Sultans as Princes stayed in the *Kafes* and the palace until they were middle aged, their sisters would have had on average at least two husbands by the age of 44, and thus would have been exposed to potentially different network or intisap system from which they could build their lives, wealth, power, and ties on. Ottoman Princesses may not have had the public role that French Princesses had, but they could marry elite Ottoman men while French Princesses were doomed to marry other royalty or stay celibate for life. From a strategic standpoint, the

kings of France could not use their daughters to further their interest among the French elites, the Ottoman Sultans could use their daughters, sisters, nieces, and cousins to further extend the House of Osman ties to other elite families or capable men like Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa.

Women like men gossiped, in France they could gossip in mix company, in Istanbul and among the Ottoman elite, they could only do so with their husbands or their male relatives, or with other women. This was how the comte des Alleurs was able to use his wife to further French interests, as the wives of ambassadors played a key role in their husband's diplomatic projects, acting as alternative means of acquiring close ties to powerful figures, if the French could not be close to a reigning *Sadrizam*, then they might find the wife of another powerful figure to guarantee the embassy's continued influence with the Porte. The Lady from Bergama and the Lady from Konya illustrated the important role that elite women from the provinces could play in local affairs, with the first becoming the center of a regional conflict between *ayans* and *ağas*, while the latter was able to have an Ottoman official executed by orders of the Porte for having killed her brother. Ottoman women like European women of this era did not fully hold onto the reins of power, but a few of them could, and as shown in this chapter they did in fact took advantage of their position.

CHAPTER VI

Violence in the Ottoman Empire and Istanbul and the Kaymakamlık of Melek Mehmed Paşa

6.1 Introduction

The *Gazette de France* is a surprisingly important source for 18th century Ottoman social history, most notably as it concerns the Janissaries and the social history of Istanbul. One of the biggest differences between the *Gazette's* coverage of the Ottoman Empire and its coverage of the rest of Europe, was its more extensive coverage of Ottoman society. The Ottoman Empire was unique in Europe for being the only Islamic state on the continent, the Ottomans and Ottoman society were as a result a curiosity for the French public, which led to a certain demand by the readers of the *Gazette* and of other French language gazettes for stories on Ottoman social life. The height of the *Gazette's* coverage of Ottoman culture and society during the period of 1740-1787 were during times of peace, most notably the period between 1763-1768.

Naturally the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 received a great amount of attention from the *Gazette*, which covered the war extensively and gave coverage of the various war fronts along with stories about Ottoman society during the war.

The *Gazette's* coverage of Ottoman society has turned it and other 18th century gazettes into crucial sources for Ottoman social and cultural history. Previously Ottoman historians had primarily used Ottoman sources, European memoirs, travel logs, or archival materials; which are all useful and remain important sources for Ottoman social history, as this author's abundant use of Jean-Claude Flachat's works illustrates, but 18th century European gazettes are overall much more useful sources for Ottoman social history. Based on this author's reading of the near entirety of the *Gazette* between 1740-1787, he can state without a doubt that 18th century gazettes provided a consistent coverage of contemporary Ottoman society that will enable historians to establish a solid historical foundation for Ottoman society for this period in the future. From the *Gazette's* coverage of the Ottoman Empire during the period of 1740-1787, this author has also noticed an important reality about 18th century Istanbul, namely that it was by far the most dangerous city in Europe, and one of the most dangerous cities in the Ottoman Empire itself.

This chapter will begin with the many dangers that Istanbul faced during the period of 1740-1787 that most major European cities of this era did not face or faced on a much smaller scale than the Ottoman capital did. It will then discuss issues that played a unique role within Ottoman society, namely the Janissaries and address the issue of violence in Ottoman society before 1768. In fact, besides the dangers of Istanbul, which had a negative role on Ottoman political culture during this era, which is one of the main

topics of this chapter. The Ottoman Empire at least in its capital had a political culture, which included the use of gossip and rumors, as well as the use of arson as a way to show and manifest opposition towards an administration, and as discussed in the previous chapter, the use of marriages to form alliances.

After examining the role of Janissaries and Ottoman political culture in Ottoman society before the Russo-Ottoman, the *Kaymakamlık* of Melek Mehmed Paşa between 1769 until the start of 1774 will be discussed. As *Kaymakam*, Melek Mehmed Paşa was tasked with managing the Ottoman capital, making sure that it was adequately supplied with provisions, maintain public security and control the city, and as the war went on, make sure that gossip did not become too dangerous to the Porte. This chapter will end with the topic of the rise of a new kind of violence in the Ottoman Empire during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 that continued to plagued the Empire throughout the remainder of the period between 1774-1787.

This chapter will also use the term political culture instead of terms like “public sphere” or “public opinion,” as these terms were meant to describe what changed or occurred in the political culture of Western Europe from the mid 18th century until the fall of Napoleon. They are still widely discussed and debated, and books on these topics, especially as it concerns 18th century France, have had a major influence on this author but they were not used by historians with the Ottoman context in mind.¹⁰²² This author is not interested in discussing whether or not the Ottoman Empire had a “public sphere” by the 1780s, or whether or not it could have had, he is much more interested in finding some of the elements that the Ottomans had in terms of their own political culture, and

¹⁰²² See Darnton’s *The Business of Enlightenment*, Farge’s *Dire et Mal Dire*, Graham’s *If the King Only Knew*, Isherwood’s *Farce and Fantasy*, and Maza’s *Private Lives and Public Affairs*.

trying to define some of these. This author has decided to use the term political culture to describe Ottoman political life and the relationship between power, elites, the Ottoman “public,” and what was and was not acceptable during this period since the term political culture is both vague and easily understandable.

6.2 The Most Dangerous City in Europe: Istanbul in the 18th Century

At some point when reading the *Gazette* in the 1760s, this author came to the realization that Istanbul was not only a dangerous city for its era, but that it was the most dangerous city in Europe for the period of 1740-1787. The author came to this conclusion as a result of going through and reading all of the issues of the *Gazette*, the majority of which also discussed and provided a lot of information on other cities and states. Natural disasters and climate phenomenon were a staple of the *Gazette*’s coverage of events throughout Europe and even the world, as they still are in modern journalism. The *Gazette* both covered natural disasters out of interest and public demand, but also as a way to fill space to meet its page requirements of 12 pages between 1740-1761 and 4 pages between 1762-1787. Since the *Gazette* could not cover French politics and since it often was also heavily limited in what it covered as it concerned some of France allies,¹⁰²³ most notably Spain but also the Ottoman Empire too, it as a result covered a lot of natural disasters and rare phenomenon.¹⁰²⁴ Whenever there was a major fire, earthquake, flood, epidemic, famine, or other natural disaster in a city, town, or state, the

¹⁰²³ *Gazette de France*, 15 juin 1767, 212.

¹⁰²⁴ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} avril 1765, 103-104.

Gazette usually covered it and in great detail. From the accumulation of reading nearly all of the issues of the *Gazette* for the 48 years covered by this dissertation, it became quite clear to this author that Istanbul faced a lot of natural disasters and human related disasters that most major European cities either rarely faced or only faced one of these disasters to a similar scale as Istanbul.

Simply put, no other major cities in Europe faced the combination of the following natural and human disasters that Istanbul faced regularly in this period, namely: major fires that destroyed over 1000 buildings for almost every decade, two major earthquakes in 1754 and 1766, the plague and epidemics for most of the summers of this period, rebellions or uprisings caused by the security or military forces of the city, and from 1770 onward the threat of famine or high inflation as a result of an enemy's military presence kilometers away from the capital. The only major natural disasters that Istanbul did not face on a large scale or on a regular basis was surprisingly flooding. During the period of 1740-1787, only one major city had over 1000 houses or buildings destroyed by fires more than once and that was Moscow in the 1750s.¹⁰²⁵ No other major European city faced the scale of the fires of Istanbul nor did they face the regularity of the fires in the Ottoman capital.

Istanbul was a dangerous city because it faced the danger of having major earthquakes occur there, which occurred twice in 1754 and 1766 during this era. Of the major European cities of the 18th century, only Lisbon's earthquake of 1755 was as big or bigger than the earthquake that Istanbul faced in 1766,¹⁰²⁶ and all indications point to the

¹⁰²⁵ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} juillet 1752, 313-314.

¹⁰²⁶ *Gazette de France*, 22 novembre 1755, 563-568.

damages being greater in Lisbon than the earthquake in Istanbul was.¹⁰²⁷ Various regions of Italy similarly faced devastating earthquakes during this period, but they were either in sparsely populated regions like Calabria or in provincial towns like Messina in 1783.¹⁰²⁸ The *Gazette* also reported on the Lima-Callao earthquake of October 1746, which it published a rubric on from July 8th 1747 from the Spanish port of Coruna,¹⁰²⁹ which was about the only kind of news that the *Gazette* covered on the Spanish Empire in the Americas. The two major earthquakes of 1754 and 1766 in Istanbul were covered in great detail by the *Gazette*, but it did also cover to a much lesser extent some of the earthquakes that other Ottoman cities faced notably those in Cairo,¹⁰³⁰ Izmir,¹⁰³¹ and other towns throughout the Empire. Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Dresden, Saint-Petersburg, and other major cities in Europe never had to face the real threat of a major earthquake, while major cities such as Madrid, Rome, and Naples never faced major earthquakes during the period of 1740-1787. So the only European capitals that faced major earthquakes during the period between 1740-1787 was Istanbul and Lisbon, this automatically made both cities more dangerous than the other capitals and may have been one of the main reasons why most buildings in Istanbul were built out of wood.¹⁰³²

Famously the Ottoman Empire continued to face the plague throughout the entirety of the 18th century while the rest of Europe had managed to end the spread of that disease by the mid 18th century. There were a few notable cases of the plague or of an epidemic in Europe outside of the Ottoman Empire, notably in 1720 in Southern France,

¹⁰²⁷ *Gazette de France*, 4 juillet 1766, 213-214.

¹⁰²⁸ *Gazette de France*, 14 mars 1783, 98-99.

¹⁰²⁹ *Gazette de France*, 8 juillet 1747, 316-317.

¹⁰³⁰ *Gazette de France*, 30 novembre 1754, 568.

¹⁰³¹ *Gazette de France*, 16 novembre 1754, 539.

¹⁰³² *Gazette de France*, 4 juillet 1766, 213-214.

and in Italy during the Austrian War of Succession (1740-1748) when it faced a major epidemic that may or may not have been the plague.¹⁰³³ Poland throughout the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 was exposed to the plague,¹⁰³⁴ the Russian navy was devastated by the plague throughout the war,¹⁰³⁵ and Russia itself was inflicted with the plague in 1771-1772 even reaching and devastating Moscow by 1772.¹⁰³⁶ But these were the exceptions and not the standards, whereas Istanbul and most major Ottoman cities had to face plague throughout the majority of the years for this period.

Thus Istanbul during the 18th century was the most dangerous capital in Europe, the only other capital that faced any of the disasters that Istanbul faced were Lisbon for earthquakes and Moscow, which had been replaced by Saint-Petersburg, for fires. No European capital faced the real threat of the plague during this period, and cities like Paris, Vienna, Dresden, Berlin, Copenhagen, among plenty more other cities never faced any of these kinds of major natural disasters, and whenever fires occurred, they rarely destroyed over 100 buildings. The only other major cities that were comparable to Istanbul in terms of the level of dangers due to natural disasters were other Ottoman cities like Salonika, Izmir, and Cairo, or Russian towns in the Caucasus or Central Asia. Istanbul was not the most dangerous city because it was “out of control,” but rather because it faced on a regular basis natural disasters, which it could do little to oppose outside of adapting to them. The biggest legacy of natural disasters is frankly death, destruction, and increased costs for repairing the destruction that was caused, this put the

¹⁰³³ *Gazette de France*, 26 janvier 1743, 43-45.

¹⁰³⁴ *Gazette de France*, 28 septembre 1770, 315.

¹⁰³⁵ *Gazette de France*, 6 décembre 1771, 402-403.

¹⁰³⁶ *Gazette de France*, 11 novembre 1771, 369.

Porte in a disadvantage as it had to frequently spend large sums of money to rebuild homes and buildings destroyed by fires and the earthquakes.

6.3 The Janissaries and their Political Role in the Ottoman Empire

The Janissaries were one of the most unique elements within Ottoman society, none of the other regions of Europe had anything resembling them throughout the 18th century. They were simultaneously soldiers, militia men, police officers, agents of public security, firemen, and workers among other positions that they held throughout the period. By the 18th century most of Europe had either separated the task of war and public security into two different institutions like the army and the police, or they were in the process of doing so.¹⁰³⁷ Paris did not have a large military presence in its city, at most recruiters for the military and the kings Swiss guards were in the city, but the actual military during times of peace was almost always located in the border provinces. The French capital did have a large police presence in order to maintain public order, supply the city with grain, prevent “*mauvais mots*” from spreading, among other duties, but they were not the military nor did they have the authority or legitimacy to act against their masters. Most European capitals had a similar situation as Paris, although many of them may not have had as advanced of a police force as Paris did, and the Parisian police was responsible for preventing and extinguishing fires.¹⁰³⁸

¹⁰³⁷ Russia and Poland are the only states that this author is not completely certain did not fully separate the responsibilities and institutions of policing and of the army.

¹⁰³⁸ *Gazette de France*, 10 mai 1765, 147-148.

The Ottoman Empire still had the combination of public security forces and military forces as largely one institution or organization, namely the Janissaries. The Janissaries' role within Ottoman society had changed dramatically by the mid 18th century from what it had been in the past, but they still had this dual role of military and security force among other roles that they had acquired by the mid 18th century, during this period. This dual role made them a constant threat to the Porte, however after the *Sadrazamlık* of Seyyid Abdullah Paşa (1747-1750),¹⁰³⁹ who had successfully suppressed numerous Janissary attempts at rebelling against him,¹⁰⁴⁰ which had led to the death of a lot of their members,¹⁰⁴¹ they increasingly stopped trying to remove major political figures by force and instead began to use arson instead.¹⁰⁴² The role of arson as a tool in Ottoman political culture during the 18th century, a series of cases about the Janissaries will be discussed first.

The French public was fascinated by the Janissaries and the *Gazette* provided a lot of positive and negative news stories about them. The following cases are some of the highlights from the Janissary stories that the *Gazette* published during the period of 1740-1787, they all took place in the Balkans and a few happened just outside of the Ottoman capital. At the end of 1755 and at the start of 1756, the Janissaries in Belgrade had rebelled and taken over the city and were attacking the castle, the Paşa of Bosnia was ordered to go to Belgrade with an army and eliminate the rebellious Janissaries. The Austrian commander of Semlin,¹⁰⁴³ was asked by the Ottomans not to allow any of these

¹⁰³⁹ *Gazette de France*, 18 may 1748, 239.

¹⁰⁴⁰ *Gazette de France*, 24 aout 1748, 405-406.

¹⁰⁴¹ *Gazette de France*, 12 juillet 1749, 349-350.

¹⁰⁴² *Gazette de France*, 14 mars 1766, 85.

¹⁰⁴³ Semlin is today a part of greater Belgrade but was in the period of 1740-1787 a part of Austria.

rebellious Janissaries entrance into his territories, with which he complied.¹⁰⁴⁴ By April 1756, the Paşa of Bosnia had quelled the Janissary rebellion in Belgrade and restored order there, he executed by strangulation Ahmed Ağa, the head of the rebellion along with its other leaders.¹⁰⁴⁵ Another Janissary rebellion almost broke out in Belgrade at the end of 1762, when the new Paşa there severely punished the Janissaries, who had exploited their privileges and the population, this caused some of them to attempt to rebel, but the Paşa managed the situation and executed the ring leaders.¹⁰⁴⁶

The *Gazette's* coverage of the Ottoman Empire between 1763-1768 provided a gold mine for Janissary stories and rubrics on *hayduts*, which it usually just referred to as bandits, in the Balkans. Most of these stories were written from Salonika and came from nearby regions, they are quite detailed and many of these stories feel like the Spaghetti Westerns films of the 1960s. In the summer of 1764, Janissaries who had revolted in Salonika had fled the city for the country, of which they had tried to burn, in order to avoid punishment from the government as it had refused to pardon them. The rebellious Janissaries split up into groups of 18 to 20 men throughout the nearby country and committed various acts of banditry, including murder.¹⁰⁴⁷ A lot of travelers were murdered by them, including a rich Greek merchant from whom they stole 1500 *guruş*, 6 other Greek travelers were attacked and killed on the shores of the Vardar river, but they had managed to kill 8 of these bandits. The local commanders in the region had orders to chase, pursue, and capture these bandits dead or alive, however they had not done so due to their large numbers. In fact they had attempted to do so but it led to the bandits

¹⁰⁴⁴ *Gazette de France*, 7 février 1756, 61.

¹⁰⁴⁵ *Gazette de France*, 15 mai 1756, 230-231.

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Gazette de France*, 6 décembre 1762, 480.

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Gazette de France*, 30 novembre 1764, 383.

repulsing them, killing an officer and two cavalymen, which had led the *Gazette* to conclude that the Porte would give these bandits clemency.¹⁰⁴⁸ The Porte does not seem to have viewed these *hayduts* as a major problem to public order in the countryside of Salonika as in February 1765 it had ordered the governor of Salonika to raise 4000 *Sipahi* to send in Georgia to fight against the Georgians.¹⁰⁴⁹ Thus in early 1765, the Ottoman Empire's conflict with the kingdom of Georgia was viewed as more important than removing the region of Salonika of banditry, which the Porte may have viewed as being a problem that it simply could not really put an end to.

On October 12th 1767 the *Gazette* published a rubric from Istanbul dated to September 7th, in which Janissaries responsible for the postal service had come to the Ottoman capital on the 25th of August and reported that they had been attacked near the forests of Belgrade, not far from Istanbul. The Janissaries stated that 11 thieves had attacked them and tied them to trees, then searched their equipment and the mail, and stole some 20 000 gurus that the merchants of Belgrade had sent to their correspondents in Istanbul. The thieves also opened a considerable amount of the mail, but that they had not found anything of value and so left the mail with the Janissaries and fled into the woods. The Janissaries and their guide had a hard time in freeing themselves from the trees, but obviously managed to do so.¹⁰⁵⁰ This case again illustrated the problem of banditry in the Balkans and in this case, Janissary impotence at defending themselves against thieves a few kilometers away from the Ottoman capital.

¹⁰⁴⁸ *Gazette de France*, 30 novembre 1764, 383.

¹⁰⁴⁹ *Gazette de France*, 12 avril 1765, 113.

¹⁰⁵⁰ *Gazette de France*, 12 octobre 1767, 351.

On the 9th of November 1767, the *Gazette* published another rubric from Istanbul dated to October 1st of that year, it stated that the dispatches of the Austrian ambassador that had been sent from Istanbul to Austria on the 15th of September was attacked on the 16th by two thieves. The two thieves had faced a lot of resistance by those carrying the mail and so withdrew but followed the couriers to the village of Kumburgaz,¹⁰⁵¹ where the postmen carrying the mail went into a *han*. One of the robbers entered the *han* with two pistols and fired at the Janissary missing him on both occasions, the Janissary then shot him dead with his rifle. The villagers of Kumburgaz fearing reprisals for what had occurred, refused to let the Janissary leave town as well as the mail. The Austrian ambassador, Franz Anton Brognard (1766-1769), once he heard about the incident immediately sent replacements to get the dispatches, which they did and were sent to the Ottoman border, while the Janissary who killed the thief was brought to Istanbul, where Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa found him innocent of any wrongdoing and freed him, however the subaşı of Kumburgaz was found to have been negligent and was put in jail.¹⁰⁵² In this case the Janissary successfully defended himself and the package that he was carrying, however his arrest indicated that the thief may have had important local ties or that the public nature of the killing forced local authorities to arrest the Janissary. The Austrian envoy was naturally preoccupied with the dispatches being successfully sent to Vienna, while the Porte was probably happy that the Austrian dispatches had not been lost to thieves.

These Janissary stories are fascinating and are a great portrait into the dangers that lurked around Ottoman society during the period of 1740-1787. They illustrated the

¹⁰⁵¹ *Combougas*.

¹⁰⁵² *Gazette de France*, 9 novembre 1767, 383.

benefits to Ottoman society that they could provide while also demonstrating the threats to society that they could be. The following section however will mostly deal with the negative impact of the existence of Janissaries within Ottoman society, in this case Istanbul, and how they could be a destabilizing force within Ottoman political culture by their use of arson.

6.4 The Janissaries and the Fall of Hacı İvaz Mehmed Paşa in 1740

In the 1740s the Janissaries appeared to have been more aggressive at trying to directly remove and willing to use force against the *Sadrâzams* of that era. The case of the fall of Hacı İvaz Mehmed Paşa (March 1739-June 1740), is a good example of that, he had been facing opposition to his rule since April of 1740, when powerful *ümera* and the Janissaries tried to incite the population of Istanbul against him, the main grief of the Janissaries was stated to have been a result of his execution of a lot of rebellious Janissaries.¹⁰⁵³ In May 1740, İvaz Mehmed Paşa and the Porte were trying to decrease the taxation imposed on the inhabitants of Istanbul since the start of the Russo-Ottoman War in 1735, as the population was complaining a lot about these taxes.¹⁰⁵⁴ On August 13th the *Gazette* published a rubric from Vienna dating to July 23rd that stated, based on letters from the Ottoman frontier, that Sultan Mahmud I had been forced to depose his *Sadrâzam* İvaz Mehmed Paşa and replaced him with the *Kaymakam* Şehla Hacı Ahmed

¹⁰⁵³ *Gazette de France*, 11 juin 1740, 283-284.

¹⁰⁵⁴ *Gazette de France*, 2 juillet 1740, 321.

Paşa (June 1740- April 1742).¹⁰⁵⁵ On August 20th 1740, the *Gazette* published a rubric from Warsaw dating to July 24th, in which letters from Istanbul stated that the people had gathered on June 23rd to demand the dismissal of the Sadrazam Ivaz Mehmed Paşa, and in order to prevent further violence, the Sultan had been forced to dismiss his Sadrazam. The letters then stated that it was not the Treaty of Belgrade that brought the fall of Ivaz Mehmed Paşa, but rather the high prices of food in the capital that had caused his downfall.¹⁰⁵⁶ The *Gazette*'s last published rubric on the fall of Ivaz Mehmed Paşa was fairly long, it came out on October 8th 1740 and it came from Saint Petersburg dating to September 9th. It provided a lot of the context to the fall of Ivaz Mehmed Paşa, namely that his fall had been due to circumstances mostly outside of his control like the Russian occupation of Crimea had led to the Russian army either consuming or destroying most of the grain there and in the neighboring provinces, and as a result there had been really high inflation as well as the threat of famine in Istanbul.¹⁰⁵⁷ This had led to the population openly calling for the fall of the *Sadrazam*, his enemies got some of the people critical of him, probably Janissaries, to burn some of the *yalıs* on the Bosphorus, and an "Emir" then lead a group of homeless and the rabble to call for the dismissal of Ivaz Mehmed Paşa. All of the ministers of the Porte had been at their *yalıs* in the country when these events occurred, they all quickly came back to the city and the *Sadrazam* was then able to disperse the rabble opposed to him. However a few days later another riot occurred in the city, but it was quickly repressed as the shops in the city had stayed open during that period, and Ivaz Mehmed Paşa seemed to have kept the capital under control. However

¹⁰⁵⁵ *Gazette de France*, 13 aout 1740, 393-394.

¹⁰⁵⁶ *Gazette de France*, 20 aout 1740, 404-405.

¹⁰⁵⁷ *Gazette de France*, 8 octobre 1740, 489-490.

his fall came on June 23rd when the *ülema*, came to the Porte demanding his dismissal, which occurred on that same day, and Ivaz Mehmed Paşa fell from power.¹⁰⁵⁸

The downfall of Hacı Ivaz Mehmed Paşa illustrated the important role that Janissaries played in Istanbul's political culture, in this case the *ülema* also played an important role in the downfall of the Sadrazam and in the capital's political culture. However the Gazette did not cover the role of the *ülema* as much as it did other institutions and the overall impression that it gave on the role of the *Şeyhülislam* was that of a secondary political figure. This author does not think that they were secondary political figures, as multiple examples in this dissertation indicated otherwise, however he does not have enough information at the moment to make any comment on their political role. Finally, the various rubrics on the downfall of Hacı Ivaz Mehmed Paşa are what convinced this author on using the *Gazette de France* as the main source for his dissertation, as the detail on the events that led to his downfall had shocked him. The fact that the French public of that era could follow Ottoman political events with such detail completely changed this author's perception of almost everything as it concerned European-Ottoman relations and their perception of each other during the 18th century.

6.5 Fires, Arson, and their Role in the Political Culture of 18th Century Istanbul

Along with the plague, the most unique disaster that befell Istanbul every single decade of the period of 1740-1787 were the large fires that wrecked havoc in the city,

¹⁰⁵⁸ *Gazette de France*, 8 octobre 1740, 489-490.

usually multiple years per decade! The quietest period for fires in the Ottoman capital seemed to have been between 1758-1768, as this author found, or failed to find any major fires that destroyed over 1000 buildings during this period.¹⁰⁵⁹ The biggest fire found for the period of 1758-1768 was on March 30th 1765 when a fire destroyed over 500 buildings,¹⁰⁶⁰ which was the day of Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa's dismissal as *Sadrâzam*, almost certainly the product of his supporters. Thus for about the first decade of Mustafa III's reign, there were no real major fires that destroyed over 1000 buildings, with the one exception of March 1765, which was almost certainly political.

Before going into the details about the many fires that befell Istanbul during this period, a brief example of an attempt at reforming lighting in the city will be examined, as it naturally related to fires. In February 1786 a Spaniard who had recently been freed as a slave suggested to light the streets of Istanbul like they were in Europe to prevent fires in the city. He was given permission to try his experiment, the street that he was given to do his experiment had however a brothel, and when that street was brightened by the lights at night, the local residents reacted in anger, broke the lanterns, and chased the Spaniard to his home, where they almost set it on fire had it not been for the intervention of the Janissaries.¹⁰⁶¹ Thus the one attempt at improving both the lighting in the city and to try to reduce fires related to lighting that was covered by the *Gazette* proved unsuccessful. However the *Gazette* did not provide enough details as to just how serious this experiment had been, and so the "opposition" to it should be taken with a grain of

¹⁰⁵⁹ Which for other European cities would be an enormous and catastrophic loss.

¹⁰⁶⁰ *Gazette de France*, 17 mai 1765, 153

¹⁰⁶¹ *Gazette de France*, 28 février 1786, 171.

salt, it is probable that the new lighting actually did bother the residents of that neighborhood.

Typically, fires destroyed over 1000 buildings and homes on a fairly regular basis throughout this period. For example, the period between the second half of Mahmud I's reign and that of his brother Osman III, 1740-1757, saw the occurrence of multiple major fires that destroyed over 1000 buildings, for example one fire occurred in Balat on October 25th 1746 and destroyed over 1500 buildings.¹⁰⁶² The height of the fires during the period of 1740-1757 was during the *Sadrâzamlık* of Divitdar Mehmed Emin Paşa (January 1750-July 1752), when multiple fires destroying over 1000 buildings occurred,¹⁰⁶³ and were almost all politically motivated.¹⁰⁶⁴ In 1756 Istanbul faced a major fire that was reported to have destroyed 12 000 houses in the city, it killed at least 1000 of the inhabitants of the city, and some 300 men were executed and thrown into the Bosphorus by Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa for not trying to put an end to the fires.¹⁰⁶⁵ Sometimes the spread of fires were caused by a number of reasons, one of which could be for religious reasons, in 1770 a fire broke out at the house of a Jew in Tophane, but he refused to stop it as it was the Sabbath or Saturday, this led to the destruction of 500 houses in the neighborhood.¹⁰⁶⁶ Before moving to the role that fires played in Ottoman political culture, it should always be remembered that the *Gazette* may have exaggerated the number of houses destroyed by the fires as well as the amount of people killed. But these numbers are still useful as there always a lot of fires in the Ottoman capital, the

¹⁰⁶² *Gazette de France*, 7 janvier 1747, 1-3.

¹⁰⁶³ *Gazette de France*, 18 septembre 1751, 446.

¹⁰⁶⁴ *Gazette de France*, 12 août 1752, 385.

¹⁰⁶⁵ *Gazette de France*, 28 août 1756, 409.

¹⁰⁶⁶ *Gazette de France*, 8 juin 1770, 187.

numbers given by the *Gazette* provide a useful guide to the extent of the damages done by them.

The Janissaries played a major role in causing, enabling, and exploiting fires in Istanbul throughout the 18th century,¹⁰⁶⁷ they were not the only group that did this, as the *kalyoncus* also committed a lot of arson during the Russo-Ottoman War, but the Janissaries were certainly the biggest culprits. In the early months of Divitdar Mehmed Emin Paşa's *Sadrızamlık*, the Janissaries opposed his reforms and when he dismissed the *Yeniçeri Ağası* major fires broke out later that night.¹⁰⁶⁸ Major fires that irrupted a few months later were suspected by the *Gazette* of being caused by the Janissaries,¹⁰⁶⁹ which was the equivalent of stating that they had caused the fires. The role of Janissaries in Ottoman political culture led to big fires in the summer of 1779, as they opposed the influence and the emergence of Silahdar Karavezir Seyyid Mehmed Paşa and his brothers who were Sultan Abdülhamid I's favorites,¹⁰⁷⁰ ultimately Karavezir Paşa won as he became *Sadrızam* on August 22nd and would keep that post until his death on February 20th 1781.

Overall arson was a political tool in the Ottoman Empire's political culture during the 18th century, it was used against reigning or ruling figures to express and manifest into reality opposition to their policies. It frequently reflected factional opposition and usually involved Janissaries, but this pattern could change. Ottoman political culture was much more dangerous and aggressive than contemporary French political culture, but at the same time, the French could be imprisoned for saying something inappropriate about

¹⁰⁶⁷ *Gazette de France*, 22 avril 1771, 125.

¹⁰⁶⁸ *Gazette de France*, 28 mars 1750, 145-146.

¹⁰⁶⁹ *Gazette de France*, 20 juin 1750, 289-290.

¹⁰⁷⁰ *Courrier d'Avignon*, 29 octobre 1779, 349.

the king. As it will be shown below, the same could happen to Ottomans who said “*mauvais mots*” about the Sultan or about powerful figures of the Porte’s administration. The use of arson as a part of Ottoman political culture surprised this author, but it happened on at least 4 major instances. In 1750 against Divitdar Mehmed Emin Paşa, in 1752 during Moralı Beşir Ağa’s struggles against his enemies, in 1768 against Esma Sultan and her husband the Sadrazam Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, and in 1779 when the *Sadrazam* Kalafat Mehmed Paşa fought his rival Silahdar Karavezir Mehmed Paşa, who was on the rise and ultimately replaced him. There were more instances of the use of arson in Ottoman political culture, but these 4 cases are in this author’s views definite cases of the use of arson against Ottoman elites.

6.6 Istanbul under the *Kaymakamlık* of Melek Mehmed Paşa 1769-1774

All of the major wars against Russia or Austria during the 17th and 18th century impacted Istanbul, its security, and its economy. None proved to have had the impact that the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 would have on the city during and after the war, and the man who was charged with governing and ruling the city in the place of the *Sadrazams* during the near entirety of the war, from February 1769- to January 1774, was Melek Mehmed Paşa who was nominated as *Kaymakam* in February 1769,¹⁰⁷¹ and was appointed as Kapudan Paş in December 1773,¹⁰⁷² but Melek Mehmed Paşa seemed to have resisted the change in his nomination and had to be dismissed once again in January

¹⁰⁷¹ *Gazette de France*, 3 mars 1769, 73-74.

¹⁰⁷² *Gazette de France*, 4 février 1774, 39.

1774.¹⁰⁷³ Melek Mehmed Paşa was the husband of Zeynep Sultan, brother-in-law of Mustafa III, and as a result uncle to Selim III, Şah Sultan, Beyhan Sultan, and Hatice Sultan. The previous *Kaymakam* had been the unfortunate Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa who had held that post since the downfall of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa in 1768,¹⁰⁷⁴ and was appointed as *Sadrizam* to replace the sick Mahir Hamza Paşa.¹⁰⁷⁵ As previously discussed, Mehmed Emin Paşa was engaged to the 9 year old Şah Sultan and so was the groom of Mustafa III. Both he and Melek Mehmed Paşa were prominent figures in Mustafa III's reign throughout the 1760s,¹⁰⁷⁶ most notably under the administrations of Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa (1763-1765) and Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa (1765-1768).¹⁰⁷⁷ Thus it was unsurprising to this author and to contemporaries that Melek Mehmed Paşa was appointed as *Kaymakam* after Mehmed Emin Paşa's appointment as *Sadrizam*.

Like many of the major Ottoman statesmen and figures of the 18th, Melek Mehmed Paşa has not been seriously researched despite being one of the key figures of Mustafa III's reign and one of the most important Ottoman statesmen and *Vezir* during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774. Melek Mehmed Paşa was tasked with keeping public security in the city, making sure that Istanbul remained supplied and that inflation was at a minimum, and also had to make sure that the spread of gossip or "*mauvais mots*" was at a minimum during the war. Melek Mehmed Paşa was tasked with supervising all of these major tasks while thousands of naval and land troops were coming from the provinces into the capital and causing major problems. Being *Kaymakam* of Istanbul was a difficult task in times of peace, but the war of 1768-1774 brought these challenges to

¹⁰⁷³ *Gazette de France*, 15 avril 1774, 133-134.

¹⁰⁷⁴ *Gazette de France*, 7 octobre 1768, 329.

¹⁰⁷⁵ *Gazette de France*, 21 novembre 1768, 385.

¹⁰⁷⁶ *Gazette de France*, 22 février 1765, 57.

¹⁰⁷⁷ *Gazette de France*, 12 juillet 1765, 217.

unprecedented new levels of difficulty due to the game changing nature of the Russian fleet in the Mediteranean, that Melek Mehmed Paşa struggled with these challenges but he ultimately succeeded in dealing with all of these major issues. The Russian dominance of the Aegean after the Battle of Çeşme brought Istanbul into an extremely vulnerable situation that was only relieved with Gazi Hasan Paşa's successful invasion of Lemnos (Limni) in 1770.¹⁰⁷⁸ Unknown to Melek Mehmed Paşa, the Ottoman Empire faced favorable climatic and harvest circumstances throughout the war, despite the presence of the Russian fleet and army in the Aegean Sea, as the early 1770s were a time of abundant harvest and good weather for the Eastern Mediterranean.¹⁰⁷⁹

The biggest challenges that Melek Mehmed Paşa faced was coping with the continuous flow of soldiers or men or militia men meant for either the front in the Danube or the fleet in either the Dardanelles or the Black Sea, which began to be a problem from March 1769 onward.¹⁰⁸⁰ These men had no discipline and were the biggest cause of disruption throughout the period of the 1769-1774, with *Kalyoncus* being reported as the most chaotic and violent of the military or militia men that came and went into the capital or Izmir.¹⁰⁸¹ Immediately as mobilization began, Melek Mehmed Paşa and Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa, who was still in Istanbul, were forced to ban the making, selling, and distribution of alcohol in Istanbul as drunk soldiers had started to cause trouble in the city.¹⁰⁸² A new regulation for the bakers of the capital was distributed in which high quality and low quality flour were to be mixed, despite the fact that the grain warehouses were pretty full. The new regulation was done as a precaution and

¹⁰⁷⁸ *Gazette de France*, 23 novembre 1770, 379.

¹⁰⁷⁹ *Gazette de France*, 10 avril 1772, 131.

¹⁰⁸⁰ *Gazette de France*, 21 avril 1769, 129.

¹⁰⁸¹ *Gazette de France*, 18 mars 1771, 85.

¹⁰⁸² *Gazette de France*, 21 avril 1769, 129.

Mehmed Emin Paşa had travelled incognito or *tebdîl* in Galata and Pera to make sure that the bakers followed this regulation, and those that did not were put in prison as punishment.¹⁰⁸³ Around the same time, the Greeks, Armenians, and Jews of Istanbul were required to provide collectively 650 000 guruş to the Porte to finance clothing for the Janissaries, and Mustafa III promised them that he would not ask further financial contributions from them.¹⁰⁸⁴

There would be a major increase in violence throughout the war, but initially the violence was mostly on an individual basis, it would however become more widespread by the fall of 1770. Europeans naturally became increasingly targeted during the war, despite the fact that unsurprisingly they were not Russians. On December 17th 1768 the French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Vergennes, had his farewell audience with Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa and he left on a French frigate that had been in the city since October of 1768. At the end of December 1768, one of the officers of this frigate got into a fight with a Janissary who suddenly and violently took his sword and tried to stab this French officer with it. The French officer succeeded in avoiding his attacks till the guards came into the scene and took hold of the Janissary, who was put in prison and faced severe punishments for his actions.¹⁰⁸⁵

Violence irrupted in Istanbul when the *Sancak-ı Şerif* was unveiled in the capital, the Muslim inhabitants or more probable Janissaries, *kalyoncus*, and “soldiers” attacked Christians in the city, especially those who joined the ceremony. At the end of March, some 50 people were killed, several Armenians turned themselves into “Turks” to avoid

¹⁰⁸³ *Gazette de France*, 24 mars 1768, 97.

¹⁰⁸⁴ *Gazette de France*, 3 février 1769, 41.

¹⁰⁸⁵ *Gazette de France*, 24 février 1769, 65.

being killed.¹⁰⁸⁶ The Austrian envoy, his wife, his four daughters, his secretaries, his Dragomans, and his domestics had been at the event when the violence irrupted and were attacked by the violent mob.¹⁰⁸⁷ This proved to be a major diplomatic humiliation for the Porte as it immediately reacted harshly towards the culprits, and on May 5th the Ottoman Dragoman came on behalf of the Sublime Porte to the Austrian embassy to make its apologies to the Austrian envoy his wife, and family and told them that the Imam and Emir behind the riot were in prison and awaited severe punishments for their acts. They were each given a caftan and an expansive jewelry by the Porte as way to make amends for the humiliation that they had experienced.¹⁰⁸⁸ In fact the city was much relieved when both the Ottoman army under the *Sadrizam* Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa left Istanbul at the end of March,¹⁰⁸⁹ and the Ottoman navy under the Kapudan Paşa Eğribozlu İbrahim Paşa (1768-1770) left the city at the end of May 1769.¹⁰⁹⁰

A continuing problem throughout most of the war were the *gönüllü* or volunteers from Anatolia coming to the capital demanding and taking weapons and money by force.¹⁰⁹¹ Mustafa III planned on going to his summer palace at Davud Paşa in June when “young people”¹⁰⁹² attempted to incite a rebellion in the city, which caused him to stay at Topkapı to keep order in the city. The mob had forced their entry into Greek churches in the city, assaulted its priests and pillaged them, and planned on destroying the Church of Saint Demetrios and other major churches in the city but the city guards and militias prevented it. Ten of the men involved in these crimes against the churches and Christians

¹⁰⁸⁶ ... plusieurs Arméniens se sont fait Turcs pour se sauver la vie...

¹⁰⁸⁷ *Gazette de France*, 15 mai 1769, 157.

¹⁰⁸⁸ *Gazette de France*, 3 juillet 1769, 213.

¹⁰⁸⁹ *Gazette de France*, 15 mai 1769, 157.

¹⁰⁹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 3 juillet 1769, 213.

¹⁰⁹¹ *Gazette de France*, 3 juillet 1769, 213.

¹⁰⁹² *Jeunes genes*.

in the city were imprisoned and sentenced to life, the Porte then published a *ferman* that was put on all of the doors of the mosques, the residence of the *Sadrazam* and the *Yeniçeri Ağası*, that stated that anyone armed and causing problems in the streets of the capital would be brought to the Porte and condemned to death along with their relatives from both sides of the family.¹⁰⁹³

In January of 1770, *Levents* or *Kalyoncus* were extorting Europeans in Istanbul and if they did not pay then they would be killed, European ambassadors informed Melek Mehmed Paşa, who informed Eğribozlu Ibrahim Paşa the Kapudan Paşa (1768-1770), who increased the guards in both Galata and Pera to prevent further extortions from happening.¹⁰⁹⁴ However this was still a major problem by mid February 1770, and the Porte seemed constraint to make an example of some of the culprits.¹⁰⁹⁵ By the end of February Melek Mehmed Paşa and Eğribozlu Ibrahim Paşa, the Kapudan Paşa (1768-1770), had kidnapped a lot of vagabonds and homeless men that they sent either to repair a bridge on the Danube near Isaksa, which was eventually repaired by the end of May,¹⁰⁹⁶ or were sent on ships going to Varna.¹⁰⁹⁷ In mid April Melek Mehmed Paşa's ally Eğribozlu Ibrahim Paşa had been dismissed as Kapudan Paşa, probably due to the Ottoman navy's general unpreparedness for the arrival of the Russian navy in the Eastern Mediterranean, and he was appointed the governor of his home town of Negrepont (Eğriboz).¹⁰⁹⁸ He was replaced by the Kâhya of the Arsenal, Mandalzade Hüsameddin Paşa, the man that would lead the Ottoman navy to its defeat at the Battle of Çeşme in

¹⁰⁹³ *Gazette de France*, 4 aoust 1769, 251.

¹⁰⁹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 26 mars 1770, 97.

¹⁰⁹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 13 avril 1770, 117.

¹⁰⁹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 23 juillet 1770, 239.

¹⁰⁹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 23 avril 1770, 129.

¹⁰⁹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 8 juin 1770, 187.

July of 1770, interestingly this was the first issue of the *Gazette* to mention Cezayirli Gazi Hasan Paşa.¹⁰⁹⁹

The Russian invasion of and the rebellion in Morea had a well known impact on the war, but it also changed the dynamics in Istanbul. For starters, the city became a major center for naval construction and mobilization on a level previously unseen up to this point in time,¹¹⁰⁰ and it brought the scope and the stakes of the war to a new level. As a byproduct of this, the Porte began to restrict European ships' access to the Dardanelles,¹¹⁰¹ which would become a war zone by the end of the year.¹¹⁰² In mid June 1770, Melek Mehmed Paşa and the Porte paid the soldiers in the capital and sent them to the *Sadrazam* Ivazzade Halil Paşa (December 12th 1769-October 25th 1770) on the Russian border, where a large amount of money had also been recently sent.¹¹⁰³ On June 15th 1770, the carriage of the French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, the comte de Saint-Priest (1769-1784), which did not have him in it but had four people from his embassy in it, was attacked by five bandits while going to Tarabya from Pera. But Saint-Priest and other members of his embassy hearing noise came to the rescue of his carriage and forced the bandits to retreat.¹¹⁰⁴ Learning of a planned attack on his home, Saint-Priest kept a guard of 40 people during the night of June 18th, and the following day the Porte sent him Janissaries to guard his person and home. The *Bostancı Başı*, who the *Gazette* noted was responsible for policing the Bosphorus, as it is well known, personally came to his residence in Tarabya and assured him that the Porte would guarantee his

¹⁰⁹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 8 juin 1770, 187.

¹¹⁰⁰ *Gazette de France*, 15 mai 1769, 157.

¹¹⁰¹ *Gazette de France*, 2 juillet 1770, 215.

¹¹⁰² *Gazette de France*, 29 octobre 1770, 354.

¹¹⁰³ *Gazette de France*, 3 aoust 1770, 251.

¹¹⁰⁴ *Gazette de France*, 24 aoust 1770, 277-278.

safety. On the 28th of June, the Prussian residence in Tarabya also witnessed an incident when some “Arabs” tried to enter the residence after disembarking from a ship, but the *Bostancı Başı* immediately sent a corps of soldiers to disperse them, and the next they he forced them to go back on their ships and leave the region for their final destinations.¹¹⁰⁵ Interestingly, this rubric was neither published from Istanbul nor from Paris, but rather from Amsterdam, which may have been done to avoid the embarrassing situation of having its own ambassador attacked, but it’s still not clear as to why the story came from a rubric from Amsterdam.

The Battle of Çeşme between July 5th and 7th 1770 further changed the dynamics in Istanbul, Western Anatolia notably Izmir, and Rumeli, and by the end of August the Russians had taken the island of Scio (Sakız) and had closed off access to the Dardanelles,¹¹⁰⁶ which caused further violence against Greeks and the Christian population in the Aegean.¹¹⁰⁷ The Dardanelles themselves had to start fending off Russian ships around the same time, and succeeded in repulsing them,¹¹⁰⁸ and they were under the leadership of the former *Sadrizam* Moldovancı Ali Paşa.¹¹⁰⁹ In the wake of Russian advancements and attacks on the Dardanelles, and some 75 ships captured by the Russians around the island of Tenedos (Bozcaada) carrying grains for the capital.¹¹¹⁰ Melek Mehmed Paşa and the Porte increased the security in the capital to prevent a massacre like the one that occurred in Izmir on the 8th of July from happening in

¹¹⁰⁵ *Gazette de France*, 24 aoust 1770, 277-278.

¹¹⁰⁶ *Gazette de France*, 17 septembre 1770, 304-305.

¹¹⁰⁷ *Gazette de France*, 14 septembre 1770, 301.

¹¹⁰⁸ *Gazette de France*, 24 septembre 1770, 313.

¹¹⁰⁹ *Gazette de France*, 24 septembre 1770, 311.

¹¹¹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} octobre 1770, 321.

Istanbul,¹¹¹¹ which led to the Porte sending some of its troops in the capital over to Izmir.¹¹¹² The Russians began to attack the island of Lemnos (Limni) around the end of August and the start of September 1770,¹¹¹³ and took it by the end of September.¹¹¹⁴ The fertile island of Thassos (Taşoz) near Salonika was captured by the Russians on September 3rd 1770.¹¹¹⁵ On October 9th 1770, one of the turning points in favor of the Ottomans occurred, as the soon to be Gazi Hasan Paşa with 3 400 men retook the island of Lemnos (Limni), killing 2 500 enemy soldiers and only losing 400 of his men.¹¹¹⁶ Prior to the re-conquest of Lemnos (Limni), the Russian navy had been continuously expanding in the Aegean, this battle brought an end to Russian expansion in the region, it led to a kind of draw in the region, but with the Russians losing an increasing amount of men and money as a result of their presence there. The benefits of their continued presence in the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas was it isolated Istanbul from coastal provinces, and it enabled Russia to help Ali Bey al-Kebir and Zahir al-Umar al-Zaydani, along with the Druzes against the Ottomans who would eventually be led by the rising start Cezzar Ahmed Paşa in Beirut.¹¹¹⁷

The crushing Ottoman defeats at Çeşme and Kartal in July and August respectively destabilized the Ottoman Empire until Gazi Hasan Paşa retook the island of Limnos (Limni), which stabilized the Ottoman center and prevented a complete disaster from occurring after the end of the year 1770. The months of September and October of 1770 were thus a period of great alarm and fear in Istanbul, but Melek Mehmed Paşa

¹¹¹¹ *Gazette de France*, 24 septembre 1770, 311.

¹¹¹² *Gazette de France*, 8 octobre 1770, 327.

¹¹¹³ *Gazette de France*, 15 octobre 1770, 338.

¹¹¹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 29 octobre 1770, 351.

¹¹¹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 29 octobre 1770, 354.

¹¹¹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 23 novembre 1770, 379.

¹¹¹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 6 décembre 1773, 443.

succeeded in keeping order in the city by putting a lot of guards at every corner of the city. Besides these precautions, the positive news from both Moldovancı Ali Paşa the former *Sadrizam* in charge of the Dardanelles and of Gazi Hasan Paşa's exploits helped calm the city, especially the news of Gazi Hasan Paşa's successful defence of Lemnos (Limni) against an attack by the Russians under Orlov at the end of October, which forced the Russians to retreat Scio (Sakız).¹¹¹⁸ On November 3rd 1770, the Ottomans retook the island of Imbros (Gökçeada), and Ivazzade Halil Paşa was dismissed and was replaced by the husband of Ayşe Sultan, Silahdar Mehmed Paşa (October 25th 1770-December 11th 1771).¹¹¹⁹ The worst year of the war for the Ottoman Empire ended with a revival of Ottoman power and strength, it was a year that saw the rise of Gazi Hasan Paşa as a major figure in the Ottoman Empire, who would come to dominate the Empire between 1774-1787. It also saw the reemergence of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa as a major figure in the Ottoman Empire, and who would manage to lead the Ottoman army in the last two years of the war, and whose wife Esma Sultan, would hold a lot of influence in Istanbul during this period, but saw her influence rise even higher when her full brother Abdulhamid I became Sultan at the end of January 1774.¹¹²⁰

In November 1770 the plague came to an end in the capital,¹¹²¹ and in December Melek Mehmed Paşa's administration found a series of explosives in Pera, which were going to be used to burn parts of the city to the ground and potentially cause a rebellion, but luckily nothing came of it.¹¹²² By the end of the year the Ottoman capital also faced a

¹¹¹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 17 décembre 1770, 407.

¹¹¹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 24 décembre 1770, 417.

¹¹²⁰ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} avril 1774, 113-114.

¹¹²¹ *Gazette de France*, 14 janvier 1771, 13.

¹¹²² *Gazette de France*, 21 janvier 1771, 21.

massive coffee shortage,¹¹²³ which was further exasperated by Bulutkapan Ali Bey al-Kabir's coffee embargo on Istanbul.¹¹²⁴ The Kurban Bayramı of January 1771 went without any major problems thanks to Melek Mehmed Paşa's precautions, but on January 28th and 29th of 1771 the Janissaries that were supposed to leave for the war front in Istanbul attacked the prisons of the capital and freed most of the prisoners without Melek Mehmed Paşa's administration able to do anything about it, on the 30th of January the Porte paid them their *ulufe* so that they would leave the capital without major incidents. But that did not happen despite both the payment of the *ulufe* and the assurances of the *Sadrazam* Silahdar Mehmed Paşa who promised to pay them when they reached the army, the Janissaries and other militia forces in the city committed a lot of crime and murdered a lot of Greeks and Armenians throughout the months of January and February 1771.¹¹²⁵

The city subsequently saw a major spikes in the murder rates,¹¹²⁶ organized arson,¹¹²⁷ general violence often caused by the *kalyoncu*,¹¹²⁸ Janissaries kidnapping women from the *hamams* and the killing of Christians,¹¹²⁹ there was even gang violence in Galata.¹¹³⁰ On February 18th 1771, a fire broke out in Tophane and a second major fire broke out in Galata when Melek Mehmed Paşa was preoccupied with the first. This was a planned attempt at arson and led to the destruction of 50 homes in Tophane, where Melek Mehmed Paşa was and over 3000 in Galata, where he was unable to put an end to it until

¹¹²³ *Gazette de France*, 28 janvier 1771, 31.

¹¹²⁴ *Gazette de France*, 8 avril 1771, 111-112.

¹¹²⁵ *Gazette de France*, 25 mars 1771, 93.

¹¹²⁶ *Gazette de France*, 12 avril 1771, 113.

¹¹²⁷ *Gazette de France*, 22 avril 1771, 125.

¹¹²⁸ *Gazette de France*, 6 mai 1771, 141.

¹¹²⁹ *Gazette de France*, 24 juin 1771, 203.

¹¹³⁰ *Gazette de France*, 13 avril 1772, 135-136.

16 hours after it had begun. A lot of the inhabitants were forced to flee their homes half naked, many of whom were killed by thugs, who pillaged the burning homes.¹¹³¹ While the Porte was busy building canons and sending them to the Dardanelles, on March 8th 1771 the Janissaries and *kalyoncus* attacked the residence of the *Voyvoda* of Galata, and killed several people, but were repulsed and lost some 30 men, additionally around the same time more explosives were found by Melek Mehmed Paşa's administration.¹¹³²

In April 1771 Istanbul had gotten out of control as the militias, notably the *kalyoncus*, in the city were kidnapping and sexually assaulting women in *hamams*, they were murdering Greek, Armenian, and Jewish merchants, forcing them to stay in their homes, which led to most shops being closed throughout most of April.¹¹³³ Around the 6th of May, two women were kidnapped and sexually assaulted on the streets, and around the same time Melek Mehmed Paşa himself was attacked by soldiers who only let him go after he paid them 60 sequins.¹¹³⁴ This finally led the Porte to expel all of the *kalyoncus* or seamen from the city, as they were ordered on the 8th of May to all go back on their ships, additionally all soldiers were forbidden from travelling the streets with their weapons. All shops in the city were ordered to be opened and all Christians were permitted to defend their shops and kill anyone, including Muslims, who tried to rob them. Besides this, some 30 men were strangled for committing crimes during this period.¹¹³⁵ Unfortunately this author did not have enough time to finish this section, but the year 1771 was the low point of Melek Mehmed Paşa's *Kaymakamlık* of Istanbul, as by the end of the summer of 1771 things had significantly calmed down, and most

¹¹³¹ *Gazette de France*, 22 avril 1771, 125.

¹¹³² *Gazette de France*, 6 mai 1771, 141.

¹¹³³ *Gazette de France*, 24 juin 1771, 203.

¹¹³⁴ *Gazette de France*, 5 juillet 1771, 213.

¹¹³⁵ *Gazette de France*, 5 juillet 1771, 213.

soldiers were sent out of the capital. The Porte's policy would be to send soldiers and sailors to neighboring villages instead of the Ottoman capital, which would greatly help establish public order. Outside of the Laz *Çorbacı*s and *Kalyoncus* gang war of February 1772, Istanbul would become much quieter from the fall of 1771 as a result of the Porte's policy of avoiding having soldiers in the capital.

At the start of 1770, he held a special meeting with the Baron de Thugut, the Austrian envoy,¹¹³⁶ these meetings continued throughout February,¹¹³⁷ and played an important role in his promotion from a simple chargé d'affaires to ambassador in August 1770.¹¹³⁸ By the end of August of 1770, Mustafa III had held a *Divan* to decide on whether or not to continue the war, presumably under the leadership of Melek Mehmed Paşa, most of the members of the *Divan* opted for peace but Mustafa III refused and wanted to continue the war.¹¹³⁹ The negotiations with Thugut continued into 1771 with the Prussian envoy also involved and they were able to get the Russian ambassador Obreskov released from Ottoman captivity.¹¹⁴⁰ Obreskov and his family left Istanbul on the 3rd of May 1771, with 40 chariots and a Janissary escort of 200 men,¹¹⁴¹ eventually Obreskov would play a key role in the Congresses of Fokşiani and Bucharest. Unfortunately this author did not have enough time to finish this section, but what is clear was that Melek Mehmed Paşa was heavily involved in the negotiations that led to the failed or un-ratified Austrian-Ottoman Treaty.

¹¹³⁶ *Gazette de France*, 26 février 1770, 65.

¹¹³⁷ *Gazette de France*, 23 avril 1770, 129.

¹¹³⁸ *Gazette de France*, 8 octobre 1770, 327.

¹¹³⁹ *Gazette de France*, 22 octobre 1770, 344-345.

¹¹⁴⁰ *Gazette de France*, 10 juin 1771, 185.

¹¹⁴¹ *Gazette de France*, 21 juin 1771, 197.

Overall Melek Mehmed Paşa was *Kaymakam* for over four and a half years and things did get out of control during his tenure, especially in the first half of 1771, but afterwards he managed to fully take control over the city and severely limited the number of incidents. The war proved extremely challenging to the Ottoman Empire and the Porte, which was forced to use nearly all of its resources to maintain its positions against Russia, while only sending the bare minimum of aide to its forces in Syria fighting Bulutkapan Ali Bey al-Kebir. The fact that the city never seriously faced the threat of famine is a testament to the Ottoman administration's efficiency, but also to the favorable weather conditions. Melek Mehmed Paşa managed the city well for the Sultan and his wife Zeynep Sultan, who died in March 1774, two months after her brother Mustafa III. Unfortunately for Melek Mehmed Paşa, neither Esma Sultan nor Sultan Abdülhamid I favored him much, and as a result he along with the husband of Ayşe Sultan, who died in October 1776, Silahdar Mehmed Paşa became standard high ranking officials sent to the various provinces but without any close ties with the Porte and to the new Sultan.¹¹⁴² Whereas the brothers-in-law and sisters of the Sultan dominated the reign of Mustafa III, Abdülhamid I's reign was dominated by three major figures: his full sister Esma Sultan, Silahdar Karavezir Mehmed Paşa, and the Kapudan Paşa Gazi Hasan Paşa. The era of the brothers-in-law had come to an end, and Melek Mehmed Paşa was the last of these men to survive and came to serve his late wife's, Zeynep Sultan, nephew Sultan Selim III, which eventually led to his brief tenure as Sadrazam between May 1792 and October 1794.

¹¹⁴² *Gazette de France*, 11 novembre 1774, 391.

6.7 Gossip and “*Mauvais Mots*” during the *Kaymakamlık* of Melek Mehmed Paşa

Melek Mehmed Paşa had to deal with gossip or “*mauvais mots*”¹¹⁴³ during his *Kaymakamlık* of Istanbul, a topic that has started to be researched for the period after 1839,¹¹⁴⁴ but is still in its infancy for Ottoman history. Mustafa III’s *kaymakam* would have been tasked with making sure that the amount of “*mauvais mots*” were limited and that the spread of gossip that could hurt his authority, legitimacy, or that could hurt public order in general was contained. The *Kaymakam* had to prevent gossip that could lead to major fires, rebellions, or attempts at a coup against Sultan and his administration. Melek Mehmed Paşa naturally would have had the *Yeniçeri Ağası*, *Bostancı Başı*, *Seğmen başı*, among other important officials at his disposal as all previous *Kaymakams* would have had. The *Gazette*’s coverage of Istanbul during the Russo-War of 1768-1774 provided a few Ottoman cases of “*mauvais mots*” or “*libels*.” These cases are nothing groundbreaking as it comes to the topic of gossip and the Ottoman Empire in the era of 1740-1787, but they will help us have better understand what was socially acceptable and not acceptable, and what could and did lead to death. There are only two prominent cases of “*mauvais mots*” that this author found for the period of 1769-1774, but they are interesting. The first case involved a *libel* or slander against the Greek Patriarch Meletius II, while the second case involved a Derviş criticizing Sultan Mustafa III in a mosque.

On November 15th 1768 the Porte deposed the Greek Patriarch Samuel I Chatzeres (1763-1768) and exiled him to Monte Santo.¹¹⁴⁵ In the next year on April 19th

¹¹⁴³ The term came from Farge’s *Dire et Mal Dire*.

¹¹⁴⁴ See Kırılı’s *Sultan ve Kamuoyu*.

¹¹⁴⁵ *Gazette de France*, 30 décembre 1768, 427.

1769, the Greek Patriarch Meletius II (November 16th 1769-April 19th 1769), the successor to Samuel I, was arrested in his home and was brought to the Istanbul Kadısı,¹¹⁴⁶ and then brought to the Bostancı Başı for interrogation.¹¹⁴⁷ Saint George Cathedral was closed, Meletius II's papers were seized and sent to the Porte, where he was accused of treason and the proof of his treason seemed so overwhelming that Mustafa III had him deposed and replaced him with the Bishop of Salonika Theodosius II (April 1769- November 1773). In the first interrogation of Meletius II, he was confronted with a written order with his stamp and signature, that encouraged the Ottoman Greeks to pray for Russian success and to help them whenever possible. Meletius II stated his innocence and replied to these accusations that the signature was not his, and that three bishops had stamps similar to his, and had not stamped the order shown to him.¹¹⁴⁸ The main leaders of the Greek and Greek Orthodox Christian community in Istanbul presented the Sultan with a petition in which they stated that they did not like the Patriarch Meletius II, but that the Porte should examine his case with great care and to provide justice to the case. After examining the case the Porte found Meletius II to be innocent and eventually freed him and sent him to Gallipoli. The word on the street was,¹¹⁴⁹ that the person who had slandered the Patriarch had been apprehended and imprisoned.¹¹⁵⁰ In May 1769, the person who had committed a *libel* or slander against the Greek Patriarch Meletius II had been found to be a woman. She had presented to Sultan Mustafa III a petition accusing the Patriarch of treason, but she was found guilty of

¹¹⁴⁶ *Le Grand Prévôt*.

¹¹⁴⁷ *Gazette de France*, 19 juin 1769, 197.

¹¹⁴⁸ *Gazette de France*, 19 juin 1769, 197.

¹¹⁴⁹ *Le bruit court que...* , This author wished to illustrate that this section of the story was based on gossip and so used a modern North American slang equivalent phrase, "the word on the street," to demonstrate that this was typical gossip phraseology in the French language of the 18th century.

¹¹⁵⁰ *Gazette de France*, 19 juin 1769, 197.

slandering the former Patriarch and was put in a sac and thrown into the sea to drown. There had been a Greek doctor in Edirne who also had been accused of claiming that the former Patriarch had committed treason but he (the Greek doctor) was found innocent, unfortunately his disciple had his head cut off, but it was proved by mid May that he also had in fact been innocent.¹¹⁵¹

This case is interesting as it shows that a woman was executed the same way that the Muslim slaves who had attempted to rebel in Malta had been treated during the Paşa of Rhodes affair of 1748-1751. Was she executed by drowning because she was a woman, a *reaya* or *zimmi*, or because she had slandered a major figure of the Ottoman administration, it is currently still unclear on which of these options it would have been. But it seems that she was a low born woman, as if she had been a woman from an elite family that she might have been strangled instead of being drowned, as strangulation was usually the form of execution relegated to Ottomans of high status. The decapitation of the Greek doctor's attendant was no surprise, as that was a typical execution for low ranking figures in the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century. The Porte's verdict of innocence for Metius II almost certainly had a political and *intisap* ties to it, but it is unclear as to who or what it was. One of the obvious but still mostly under researched topics in Ottoman history is the ties between the Muslim and non-Muslim elites of the Ottoman Empire, it is clear that whoever was named Patriarch or Voyvoda of Wallachia and Moldavia not only acquired those posts due to financial payments to the Porte, but also due to family backgrounds or dynasties, ties or *intisap* to powerful Paşa or other major Muslim figures. Finally this case demonstrated one important element, namely that

¹¹⁵¹ *Gazette de France*, 3 juillet 1769, 213.

to slander a major figure of the Ottoman Empire's administration led to death if it was proven false in during this period. This may seem obvious, but it needed to be stated as we now have a concrete example of what happens when a false accusation is made against a major figure of the Ottoman administration, how they used evidence to try to prove if the accusation was true or false, what happened to that figure when proven innocent, and what happened to the person that falsely accused them of a crime. The answer was a disgraceful execution and the person that was slandered was not even a major Muslim, would the punishment have been the same if instead of Metius II the person accused of treason had been the current Şeyhülislam, Pirizade Osman Sahib Efendi (1768-1770), and what if it had been a Muslim woman who had falsely accused him of treason, would the punishment had been the same? Naturally we still don't know the answers to questions such as this, but it is worth thinking about it, as there are clearly many layers of the Ottoman Empire's political culture that awaits further research.

Another instance of "*mauvais mots*" that occurred during the war was published in the *Gazette*, however it was a very short rubric. The Porte had a Derviş strangled after he had harangued or insulted the Sultan or the Sublime Porte at a mosque during prayer time.¹¹⁵² The *Gazette* did not state whether or not it was on a Friday, but it heavily implied that the Derviş had insulted the Porte in front of a crowd, which hinted at it being during the Friday prayer. The fact that he was executed is not particularly surprising, but what was surprising was that he was strangled, which tells us that the Derviş was a somebody, as it was a form of execution done to men of high rank. In comparison, the former *Sadrazam* Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa was decapitated in 1765 and his head was

¹¹⁵² *Gazette de France*, 8 avril 1771, 109.

sent to the Porte to be displayed in public, this Derviş faced strangulation, a much more honorable death sentence which also implied that his crime of spreading “*mauvais mots*” was considered as not being as severe or dishonorable as were the actions and the exploitations that Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa had had done in Cyprus. As the reader can see, this element of 18th century Ottoman history, namely the relationship between the Porte, gossip, and public criticism still needs much more research, this author provided two examples that will hopefully be used by other Ottoman historians to further research this topic.

6.8 Provisioning Istanbul during the Russo-Ottoman War

The provisioning of Istanbul during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 proved much more difficult than it previously had been for two reasons, the first was the presence of the Russian fleet in the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean Seas by the summer of 1770, and the second because of the large Ottoman and Russian military presence in Crimea and around the Danube, which were two of the key resources of grain for the Ottoman capital. As the Ottoman Empire had served as a major source of provisions for Austria during the Seven Years’ War, Austria also proved to be a major source of provisions for the Ottoman Empire during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774. In October 1769 the Austrian government had given permission to its foragers to provide the Ottoman armies near the Danube with provisions for their winter quarters or

kışlak.¹¹⁵³ In November 1769 a lot of ships full of grain and wheat continued to come to Istanbul and its grain storehouses were nearly full.¹¹⁵⁴ At the end of August 1770, Austria had sold 8000 muids of wheat to the Ottomans at the Hungarian frontier, an additional 4000 muids of wheat might also have been purchased by the Ottomans, as Joseph II had given permission to do so if the Ottomans asked for more.¹¹⁵⁵ Whereas the Ottoman army on Danube's supplies were famously in disarray and had to import a lot of provisions from Austria to feed its troops.¹¹⁵⁶ Istanbul did not face major food problems throughout 1770 despite Russian ships blocking Ottoman ships from going through the Aegean Sea and passing the Dardanelles as a result of the Russian presence, a large amount of the grain shipments were transferred and transported by land to the Ottoman capital.¹¹⁵⁷ By September 1770 the Russian had near complete control of the Aegean Sea, as a result of which, the Ottomans were forced to retain all of their commercial ships in Istanbul, and Ottoman ships from the Eastern Mediterranean were ordered to avoid the Aegean Sea.¹¹⁵⁸ By the start of October Melek Mehmed Paşa's administration asked the comte de Saint-Priest, the French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire from 1768 to 1787, how much coffee was on French ships in the region, as the Porte was willing to buy all of it due to a shortage of Mocha coffee, which had been cut off by the Russians and by Bulutkapan Ali Bey al-Kebir.¹¹⁵⁹ Gazi Hasan Paşa's successful defense of Limnos (Limni) against the Russian offensive under the count of Orlov, forced the Russians to retreat farther away

¹¹⁵³ *Gazette de France*, 17 novembre 1769, 372-373.

¹¹⁵⁴ *Gazette de France*, 5 janvier 1770, 5.

¹¹⁵⁵ *Gazette de France*, 17 septembre 1770, 305.

¹¹⁵⁶ Aksan, *An Ottoman Statesman*, 138.

¹¹⁵⁷ *Gazette de France*, 19 octobre 1770, 340.

¹¹⁵⁸ *Gazette de France*, 29 octobre 1770, 354.

¹¹⁵⁹ *Gazette de France*, 19 novembre 1770, 375.

from the Dardanelles,¹¹⁶⁰ which enabled a lot of small ships full of olive oil to come to Istanbul, which dropped the prices of that good by a half.¹¹⁶¹ It enabled the continued arrival of ships to the capital, preventing the threat of famine from coming to the capital at the end of the year.¹¹⁶²

At the end of October 1771, Joseph II approved the export of 100 000 scheffels of oats to Belgrade.¹¹⁶³ At the start of 1772, provisioning and commercial ships were no longer being blocked and attacked by the Russian fleet at the island of Paros (Berre). Since around the 25th of January to the 3rd of February 1772, there were 12 ships full of grain that arrived in Istanbul, ending any possible fears of a famine or a major scarcity of food in the Ottoman capital.¹¹⁶⁴ By mid February 1772, the city was near continuously receiving provisions from ships that were coming to the Ottoman capital.¹¹⁶⁵ Due to a lack of time, the author was unable to finish this section of his dissertation, but the general trend was that the cease fire between the Ottoman Empire and Russia from the end of 1772 until the middle of 1773 meant that the provisioning of Istanbul no longer became difficult. The remainder of the war also saw Istanbul fairly comfortable and it did not face the threat of any food shortages throughout the first half of 1774. Overall had the Ottomans fought this war a decade later, than Istanbul almost certainly would have faced famine, which would have completely changed the outcome of the war, but the climatic factors were in the Ottoman Empire's favor during the war of 1768-1774, and as a result Istanbul never truly faced the threat of famine during this period.

¹¹⁶⁰ *Gazette de France*, 17 décembre 1770, 407.

¹¹⁶¹ *Gazette de France*, 24 décembre 1770, 415.

¹¹⁶² *Gazette de France*, 14 janvier 1771, 13.

¹¹⁶³ *Gazette de France*, 16 décembre 1771, 415.

¹¹⁶⁴ *Gazette de France*, 30 mars 1772, 117-118.

¹¹⁶⁵ *Gazette de France*, 10 avril 1772, 131.

6.9 The Most Violent Event in Istanbul during the Russo-Ottoman War: the Laz *Çorbacı*s and the *Kalyoncus* Gang War of February 24-26th 1772

In the Ottoman Empire the various Janissary corps had had rivals or even rival Janissary corps throughout the period of 1740-1787. Outside of inter-Janissary rivalries, the various Janissary corps frequently had rivalries and conflicts with the *Levants* and *Kalyoncu*, the sailors of the Ottoman fleet. In December 1742 sailors or *Levents* had caused a riot in Galata because one of their men had gotten into a fight with a servant from a hostel, resulting in the death of the sailor. The sailors went to the Kadiasker, presumably the Rumeli Kadiasker, and demanded that the servant of the hostel be given to them so that they could kill him, the *Sadrizam* at the time, Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa in his second tenure (April 1742-September 1743), arrived in Galata with Janissary corps.¹¹⁶⁶ He put Janissaries on the main streets of Galata which put an end to any potential disorders and that night he had the poor servant of the hostel impaled, and left the body for display on the streets, where the sailors disfigured it, and the potential for a riot dissipated. Hekimoğlu decided that he would only keep the necessary number of *Levents* and sailors in the city in order to prevent further riots in the city, and ordered the rest to either go on their ships and leave, or go back to their homelands.¹¹⁶⁷ The *Levents* were unhappy with these orders and planned another riot, but Hekimoğlu learned of it before

¹¹⁶⁶ *Gazette de France*, 23 février 1743, 85-86.

¹¹⁶⁷ *Gazette de France*, 23 février 1743, 85-86.

they did anything and executed the ringleaders among the sailors, in his interrogations he learned that other militias, potentially the Janissaries, were planning on joining the sailors if they had rioted again. But Hekimoğlu succeeded in establishing order in the Ottoman capital and prevented any further riots or plots from being realized and was as a result rewarded by Sultan Mahmud I by a receiving the honor of having him for dinner at his home.¹¹⁶⁸ In this case the Janissaries did not have any rivalry with the *Levents*, and Hekimoğlu was basically able to establish order in Istanbul as a result of his control over the Janissaries, who held no qualms in repressing the city's sailors. Another much minor event occurred during the celebrations of Osman III's accession at the end of 1754 and the start of 1755, the Levants and Janissaries had come to blows.¹¹⁶⁹ In these two cases the Janissaries acted as agents of order, the following case that occurred between the *Laz çorbacıs* and the *kalyoncus* was a completely different story.

One of the surprising and enlightening elements that the *Gazette* provided this author was its coverage in the 30th and 34th issues of 1772, of what we would call today a “gang war” that occurred in Galata between the 5 *Laz Ortalı* and the *Kalyoncu* at the end of February 1772.¹¹⁷⁰ The *Laz Ortalı* were stationed in Galata for a while when the *Kalyoncu*, who were meant for Anatolia (probably the Dardanelles), were also stationed there, this led to the *Laz Ortalı* and the *Kalyoncu* budding heads with each other, and angering the Janissaries.¹¹⁷¹ There then followed a series of individual fights between the two groups that only involved a few individuals and saw the *Kalyoncus* victorious. But on Tuesday February 24th the two gangs began a series of fights that lasted until Thursday

¹¹⁶⁸ *Gazette de France*, 23 février 1743, 85-86.

¹¹⁶⁹ *Gazette de France*, 22 février 1755, 87-86.

¹¹⁷⁰ *Gazette de France*, 13 avril 1772, 135-136.

¹¹⁷¹ *Gazette de France*, 27 avril 1772, 153-154.

the 26th of February.¹¹⁷² There were in total around 600 to 700 Laz *Ortalı* and *Kaloncu* between the Customs and Balık Pazarı in Galata up to the entrance of Pera,¹¹⁷³ in which some 40 000 shots were fired between the two gangs, leading up to 40 men being killed,¹¹⁷⁴ which was initially reported to have been only 8-10 people killed.¹¹⁷⁵ While these two gangs were firing at each other throughout the days and nights of the 24th to the 26th of February, the general population and the Europeans locked themselves in their homes during the “battles.”¹¹⁷⁶ The Laz blamed the *Kalyoncu* for the destruction of their ships, while the *Kalyoncu* accused the Laz of having sold their ship to the Russians in the Black Sea.¹¹⁷⁷ On the 26th of February, Melek Mehmed Paşa sent the *Çavuş Başı* along with Officers and veterans of the *Çorbacı Ortalı*, of which the Laz *Ortalı* belonged to, to disarm them all. The *Kalyoncu* were easily disarmed while the Laz *Ortalı* put up a lot of resistance but eventually complied.¹¹⁷⁸ In order to keep the peace between the two groups, they “needed victims,”¹¹⁷⁹ the Laz accused 2 Greeks of having shot at them, one of them was hanged at the Bedestan while the other converted to Islam to avoid death.¹¹⁸⁰

Besides being a riveting story, the conflict between the two groups shows us that gang violence did occur in Istanbul during the 18th century. The implication of both issues seemed to have been that the *Kalyoncu* were coming into the territory of the Laz *Ortalı*, they naturally resisted and opposed this and in the beginning the fighting was done on an individual level until it blew up into what was a gang war. In total some 40

¹¹⁷² *Gazette de France*, 27 avril 1772, 153-154.

¹¹⁷³ *Depuis l'Hôtel de la Douane jusqu'à Balouk Bazar (halle au Poisson).*

¹¹⁷⁴ *Gazette de France*, 27 avril 1772, 153-154.

¹¹⁷⁵ *Gazette de France*, 13 avril 1772, 135-136.

¹¹⁷⁶ *Gazette de France*, 13 avril 1772, 135-136.

¹¹⁷⁷ *Gazette de France*, 27 avril 1772, 153-154.

¹¹⁷⁸ *Gazette de France*, 27 avril 1772, 153-154.

¹¹⁷⁹ ..., comme il fallait des victimes pour sceller la paix entre les deux partis...

¹¹⁸⁰ *Gazette de France*, 27 avril 1772, 153-154.

people were killed in these shooting sprees within the span of 2 to 3 days in Galata, a substantial amount of death, illustrating that European quarters in Istanbul were not exempt from inter-Ottoman violence. Finally Melek Mehmed Paşa ended the conflict by sending the *Çavuşbaşı* and the Officers and veterans of the Laz's corps, the *Çorbacı*. The Laz *Çorbacı* and *Kalyoncu* gang war seemed to have been the biggest and bloodiest event to have happened in Istanbul during Melek Mehmed Paşa's *Kaymakamlık*, and considering the fact that it did not last over a week, one could argue that his administration of greater Istanbul effectively dealt with the problem. Shortly after this bloody event, an armistice between the Ottomans and Russians was announced around the month of April,¹¹⁸¹ so things might have gotten worse had there not been a ceasefire, but this can be stated for practically anything during the war.

6.10 The Impact of the Russo-Ottoman War on Violence within the Ottoman Empire

One of the defining legacies of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 was its introduction of a new kind of violence to Ottoman society, that of weaponized banditry or civil war. All periods of Ottoman history had varying degrees of violence that occurred within Ottoman society, but the levels of violence that was introduced in 1770 with the Rebellion of Morea, and the subsequent Egyptian invasion of Palestine and Syria in 1771 by Ali Bey al-Kabir, were new to Ottoman history. Historically outside of the border provinces, most of the Ottoman Empire had not experienced the level of violence that

¹¹⁸¹ *Gazette de France*, 15 mai 1772, 178-179.

most of the Empire did experience during the Russo-Ottoman War, with the possible exception of their initial Ottoman conquests. Even then, the level of violence that the Ottoman conquest of these respective provinces probably did not match the intensity and destructiveness that they experienced between 1768-1774 and the years that followed, in fact the *Gazette* even referred to the Ottoman conquest of Syria under Selim I as being nowhere near as destructive as the “civil war” that it faced there between 1771-1776.¹¹⁸²

The Russo-Ottoman war brought foreign intervention and support to bandits, banditry, and *Ayans*, giving these groups of people a level of power and independence that had previously not been possible. Zahir al-Umar al-Zaydani may have been a semi-independent ruler by the start of the war, he was however just a local *Ayan* whose base of power was no threat to the major Ottoman officials in the region like the Paşas Aleppo and Damascus. The same thing was also true of Ali Bey al-Kebir who was not the first Mamluk ruler of Egypt to be autonomous, but the Russian war and specifically the Russian navy’s presence in the Mediterranean and the Aegean Seas enabled these semi-autonomous men to invade Palestine and Syria without any real opposition from the Porte. The war also prevented the Porte from adequately helping its officials in Syria against Zahir al-Umar al-Zaydani, who was a close ally of Ali Bey, and their combined power overwhelmed the Ottoman forces in 1772.¹¹⁸³ The Ottoman Empire had dealt with powerful *Ayans* or regional lords before, it had however never dealt with the combined elements of direct foreign intervention that led to an alliances with these powerful *Ayans* along. The Porte was too busy with fighting the war on the Danube and in the Aegean Sea for it to effectively intervene before 1775, and the costs and expenses kept increasing

¹¹⁸² *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} mars 1773, 73.

¹¹⁸³ *Gazette de France*, 30 aoust 1771, 277-278.

every single year for the Porte while it was simultaneously losing revenue sources due to the its enemy's successful intervention in its provinces. It forced the Porte to make compromises with other powerful *Ayans* in order to get adequate funding and manpower to continue fighting the war, while using its policy of divide and conquer, by turning local forces against each other instead of directly intervening against these *Ayans*. This was the case in Egypt, when in 1772 the Porte successfully turned Ali Bey al-Kabir's leading commander, his son-in-law,¹¹⁸⁴ Abu al-Dhahab (1735-1775), who was on the point of conquering all of Syria against him.¹¹⁸⁵ This betrayal would be a turning point for the Ottoman "civil war" in Syria, that would lead to the exile of Ali Bey to Syria, where he along with his ally Zahir al-Umar would besiege numerous major Ottoman cities in the region, something that had not been done in centuries. In fact the *Gazette's* coverage of the war in Syria was frequently given within the historical context of the Crusades, and the level of violence and fighting was described on numerous occasions as unheard of and historic for the region.¹¹⁸⁶

The Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 caused a lot of Ottomans to become refugees, who fled their war torn homeland, most notably the Greeks from Morea. By the start of July 1770, Rome's port city of Civitavecchia had established a quarantine for the large number Greeks fleeing the Ottoman Empire due to the levels of violence in Morea after the rebellion and the Russian invasion.¹¹⁸⁷ There continued to be a large number of Greek families fleeing Morea during the summer of 1770 as Ancona became a major

¹¹⁸⁴ The *Gazette* referred to Abu al-Dhahab as both the son-in-law and the brother-in-law of Ali Bey. This author has not seen any concrete proof that showed that he was his son-in-law and not his brother-in-law, but the fact that they were both Mamluks, that historically alliances were made with daughters, increases the chances that he had married Ali Bey's daughter and not his sister.

¹¹⁸⁵ *Gazette de France*, 11 novembre 1771, 364.

¹¹⁸⁶ *Gazette de France*, 14 mai 1773, 167.

¹¹⁸⁷ *Gazette de France*, 30 juillet 1770, 248.

destination for these refugees.¹¹⁸⁸ However, the former *Sadrazam* and now *serasker* of Morea Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, also tried to prevent the local populations from fleeing Morea after the Russian army's retreat from there, and enacted a general amnesty for all of the Greek or Orthodox Christians who had fled to the Venetian islands of Zante, Cephalonia (Kefalonya), and Corfu, and threatened execution to those that harmed them.¹¹⁸⁹ Unsurprisingly, Muhsinzade's general amnesty did not work, as the Venetian Senate also attempted to get the Greek refugees to leave their island holdings and return to mainland Morea. However the Greeks refugees on the Venetian islands refused to leave, especially as stories of those who had attempted to return to Morea either led to them being forced to cultivate the lands for the production of wheat, or that they had been killed by the Ottomans. However another rubric from the same issue also pointed out that a lot of Turks were being murdered by the Greeks in Morea, thus by the end of summer 1770, violence had become rampant in Morea, causing the inhabitants there to take refuge from the violence.¹¹⁹⁰ In fact some of the Greeks in Cephalonia (Kefalonya) fell victims at the hands of other Greeks who killed local opponents to their plans to join the Russian navy and commit piracy.¹¹⁹¹

Overall the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 unleashed an unprecedented level of violence on the local populations on various Ottoman provinces such as Morea, Albania, Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, Wallachia, Moldavia, and even Egypt. For many of these regions the violence continued after the war, as Syria would only fully re-become a part of the Ottoman Empire by 1776, while Gazi Hasan Paşa would be forced to make

¹¹⁸⁸ *Gazette de France*, 3 septembre 1770, 288.

¹¹⁸⁹ *Gazette de France*, 3 septembre 1770, 288.

¹¹⁹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 5 octobre 1770, 324-325.

¹¹⁹¹ *Gazette de France*, 26 octobre 1770, 349.

several expeditions in Morea and Albania during the late 1770s and early 1780s. Egypt would remain out of Ottoman control until Gazi Hasan Paşa's occupation of it between 1786-1787, but this campaign proved to be fairly unsuccessful as he had a lot of trouble there and the war of 1787 ended the occupation. The general peace and quiet that the Ottoman Empire had had ended in 1768 and would never be fully restored, although the Porte managed to make great strides between 1774-1787, the war of 1787 as previously stated put an end to this Ottoman restoration.

6.11 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the dangers that befell Istanbul throughout this period, which made it the most dangerous city in Europe, with the possible exception of creating a fire department, the Ottomans could not really have done much about these natural and human made disasters as they were largely out of their control. The downfall of Hacı İvaz Mehmed Paşa in 1740 illustrated the difficulty of governing the Ottoman capital as it was facing high prices as a result of the Russian War of 1735-1739, this had caused the Janissaries to riot, leading to his downfall. The Janissaries were also discussed in detail and the *Gazette* published many interesting stories about them as they remained a topic of interest among the French public throughout this period. Istanbul also faced many hardships during the *Kaymakamlık* of Melek Mehmed Paşa, which illustrated the difficulty of governing the Ottoman capital despite having favorable harvests which helped make sure that the city never truly faced the danger of famine. There were simply

too many soldiers or militiamen in the city, they had weapons and used them to cause disruptions and show discontent throughout the city. The most striking thing from this period was the Laz *Çorbacı* and *Kalyoncu* gang war in February 1772, where dozens of men were killed fighting for territory in Galata for three days. This chapter ended with a similar theme of violence and the Ottoman Empire, which reached new levels throughout the numerous provinces of the Empire during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774. The rise of these new levels of violence never left many of the provinces that were badly impacted by the war such as Syria and Morea, despite the Porte's largely successful re-integration of these provinces throughout the period of 1774-1787. Finally the role of gossip and slander were also discussed as it related to Ottoman political culture, and it brought up the interesting potential of political culture as a topic for Ottoman history.

CHAPTER VII

Cultural Exchanges and Trade Between the Ottoman Empire and Europe in the 18th Century

7.1 Introduction

The Ottoman Empire and Europe underwent a tremendous amount of cultures and commercial exchanges throughout the period of 1740-1787. A lot of their exchanges and interactions were positive, and likewise a lot of their exchanges could be negative. This chapter will mostly focus on the positive interactions between Ottomans and Europeans during this period and the main theme of this chapter was that Ottoman society was very rich, vibrant, and lively. It saw major expansion in its commercial and cultural exchanges with its neighbors, specifically the Italian peninsula and on the Austrian-Ottoman Danubian border. Europeans came into the Ottoman Empire in greater numbers than they had previously done, and Ottomans also visited or migrated in greater numbers to

different areas of Europe. There was overall a lot of signs of European and Ottoman migration to each other's lands and territories, and naturally this led to religious conversions to many of those who migrated to foreign lands. The main goal of this chapter is to demonstrate that Ottomans were more comfortable in going to Europe while Europeans were more comfortable in going to the Ottoman Empire, and the cultural barrier between the two would remain but become more flexible.

This chapter will start with a brief examination of the data and statistics that the Gazette provided on the Ottoman Empire, almost all of which was published during the 1780s and probably all came from German sources. It will then examine European migration into the Ottoman Empire and Ottoman migration into Europe. The fascinating case of the New Julfan merchant Matheo di Owan whose bankruptcy led to an international manhunt and to Ottoman cooperation with the Netherlands, leading to his assets in Istanbul and Izmir being seized. It will then be followed by Austrian-Ottoman commercial and cultural exchanges on the Danube, which included Ottoman tourism in Hungary, with the towns of Belgrade and Semlin as important centers of their interactions. It will also briefly discuss the emergence of the Danubian trade and its ties to the rise of trade in the Black Sea region after the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774. Luxury and the attempts by sultans Osman III and Mustafa III to try to band or control it in Istanbul as a result of Sultan Mahmud I's reign and his patronage of the Ottoman Capital many festivities will be discussed briefly. The issue of European doctors in the Ottoman Empire, of religious conversions, and of inter-faith conflict will also be discussed in this chapter. It will then be followed by "True Crimes" type of issues such as murders that both occurred in the Ottoman Empire and in one case in the Papal States.

This chapter ends with the travels of Carsten Niebuhr and Pierre Joseph de Beauchamp throughout the Ottoman Empire and Iran, and discusses the rise of scholarly tourism and its relationship with the Ottoman Empire. The last section of this chapter briefly discusses the emergence of Hellenism in France and whether or not some kind of Ottoman version of Hellenism emerged during this period.

7.2 The *Gazette*'s Statistics and Data about the Ottoman Empire

The *Gazette* slowly started to cover statistics of birth, deaths, marriages, ships going and leaving ports for European cities in the 1750s,¹¹⁹² and it became consistent in its coverage of yearly statistic of major European cities, but not all, in the 1760s and 1770s. It was in the 1780s that it began to provide new types and varieties of statistics, like the size of the different armies and navies, and that it began to provide statistics for different regions of Europe like the Ottoman Empire. It frequently relied on statistics provided by other gazettes or by published works by well known authors, for example on February 13th 1784 it provided a rubric from Augsburg dated to January 7th 1784, which was about the size of the “Greek” population of the Balkans.¹¹⁹³ It estimated that the number of Orthodox “Greeks” living in Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, Bosnia, and Albania, but excluding Morea and the Greek islands, as being 3 970 000 men. It further stated that these figures contradict the numbers that travelers and

¹¹⁹² *Gazette de France*, 22 janvier 1757, 46-48.

¹¹⁹³ Orthodox Christianity throughout the period in question was referred to as the Greek Religion by the *Gazette* and French sources of the time. Thus its reference to “Greeks” probably meant Greek Orthodox Christians, but it is also possible, but less likely, that it meant Greek speakers or people culturally Greek.

geographers had previously estimated on the population of the Orthodox Christian population of the Ottoman Balkans.¹¹⁹⁴

In 1784 the *Gazette* reported from Hermanstadt that a voyager had observed that the Prince of Wallachia Michael Drakos Soutzos (1783-1786) had ordinary revenues worth up to 2 900 *kise* of 500 silver pieces on a yearly basis,¹¹⁹⁵ and up to 5000 *kise* for good years. Most of Soutzos money was spent outside of Wallachia on silks, drapes or cloths, furs, carriages, and other luxury goods. It was also calculated that Wallachia sold on a yearly basis to neighboring countries some 40 000 cattle and 10 000 horses, in exchange for 100 *kise* of honey and wax, and around 300 000 measures of wheat, wood or timber, skins, wool, among other goods.¹¹⁹⁶ The amount of cattle sold was over six times the amount that both Wallachia and Moldavia had officially sold to Austria during the Seven Years' War in 1757,¹¹⁹⁷ and it sold a 4000 horses more than in 1757.¹¹⁹⁸ Commercially, Wallachia had seen major expansion in its trade with its neighbors, however the numbers from 1757, were probably lower than they what actually were. As it can be seen, the data available on Wallachia's commercial relations and the Wallachian Voyvoda's own personal gains in the Principality's trading relations is inadequate to state the obvious. But the *Gazette* did provide something and it hinted at the source of the information as being from an Austrian source, whose archives could provide potential further details about the trading relations of its territories and Wallachia during this period.

¹¹⁹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 13 février 1784, 52.

¹¹⁹⁵ *Écus*.

¹¹⁹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 30 avril 1784, 142.

¹¹⁹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 12 mars 1757, 123-124.

¹¹⁹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 12 février 1757, 74-75.

The *Gazette* provided information on numerous former Ottoman territories, like Bukovina, which had been annexed by Austria in 1775. The former Ottoman territory of Bukovina was estimated to be 128 square miles in surface and to have a population of 80 055 inhabitants, who saw their poll taxes decreased from 45 florins under the Ottomans to 8, a decade after its annexation by Austria.¹¹⁹⁹ Depending on the reliability of the figures provided by the *Gazette*,¹²⁰⁰ an Ottoman historian using data from neighboring Hungary could potentially calculate the population of Bukovina when it was annexed by Austria. The *Gazette* also provided data on Transylvania, which had been lost to the Ottoman Empire after the Treaty of Karlofça in 1699, it was estimated to have had a population of 1 443 364 inhabitants in 1785.¹²⁰¹ The examples of data on the Ottoman Empire discussed in this section were not definite calculations of the populations of two former Ottoman territories, but they help give Ottoman historians a sense of the population of these regions and the neighboring Ottoman territories. The *Gazette*'s and other contemporary European periodicals' statistical information could help Ottoman historians better estimate certain elements within the Empire's social-economic history.

Finally it was not just the *Gazette* that increasingly gave importance to statistics and population figures, the Ottomans apparently were also interested in calculating their own populations. In 1784 a rubric from Warsaw stated that the Sublime Porte had decided to calculate the exact number of inhabitants in each province of the empire and to divide them by age, class, and sex.¹²⁰² However this almost certainly never happened, as

¹¹⁹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 31 mars 1786, 110.

¹²⁰⁰ The reliability of the *Gazette*'s data like most statistics provided from 18th century sources is always open to debate. Certainly the editor of the *Gazette* and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs felt that they were reliable enough, but that does not necessarily mean that they were reliable.

¹²⁰¹ *Gazette de France*, 20 avril 1787, 143-144.

¹²⁰² *Gazette de France*, 23 juillet 1784, 241.

even during the Tanzimat era in the mid 19th century the Ottoman state struggled to calculate and proportionally tax its own subjects.¹²⁰³ But it does tell us that the Porte was both its growing interests in fully understanding its territories and their potential, which demonstrated that the Sublime Porte was similar trends as many of the contemporary European chanceries in the last decades of the 18th century. The end of the 18th century saw the emergence of the French Revolution which fully embrace these trends toward acquiring a greater understanding of the state's own territories by the uses of statistics, data, and cartography.

7.3 Jewish Migration between the Ottoman Empire and Europe

The *Gazette* published a lot of cases of Ottoman migration into Europe and of European migration into the Ottoman Empire. This section deals with the question of migration and mostly deals with cases that had positive outcomes or were at the least not caused by violence. It will begin with Jewish migration between the Ottoman Empire and Europe, or vice versa.

Jewish migrations from the Ottoman Empire to Naples was recorded in 1740-1741, which occurred both prior to and after the recently acquired *Ahidname* by the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily in April 1740,¹²⁰⁴ which was ratified by Naples in July

¹²⁰³ Takamatsu Yoichi, "Ottoman Income Survey (1840-1846)," in *The Ottoman State and Societies in Change*, Kayoko Hayashi and Mahir Aydın eds. (London: Kegan Paul 2004), 45.

¹²⁰⁴ *Gazette de France*, 25 juin 1740, 307-308.

1740.¹²⁰⁵ The Ottoman-Neapolitan Commercial Treaty of 1740 also became the foundation from which the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily normalized relations with some of the North African Regencies like Tripoli.¹²⁰⁶ At the start of April 1740, a significant number of Jews arrived in Naples from Istanbul, one of these individuals requested the right to the tobacco monopoly in the Levant or Ottoman Empire.¹²⁰⁷ A week later the *Gazette* reported that a lot of rich Jewish merchants arrived in Naples and proposed various manufacturing or commercial projects, while another stranger came there and proposed a commercial company for the Ottoman trade on a similar basis as other companies like the English Levant Company.¹²⁰⁸ In June 1740, it was reported that the rich Ottoman Jews that were doing their quarantine at Manfredonia had the goal of establishing themselves in Naples,¹²⁰⁹ additionally a lot of merchants from Naples proposed to expand their trade with the Ottoman Empire.¹²¹⁰ At the end of October 1740, the Counsel of Commerce granted the right to a local Company to establish a factory to manufacture carpets similar to those made in Turkey.¹²¹¹ In May 1741, king Carlo VII/V of Naples and Sicily decided to promote manufacturer in his kingdoms, notably textiles, and as a result he prepared a series of privileges granted to Jewish manufacturers from Ottoman lands. He tasked his ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, the Finochietti, to help facilitate this enterprise in Izmir and other major Ottoman ports, and ordered his

¹²⁰⁵ *Gazette de France*, 20 aout 1740, 410-411.

¹²⁰⁶ *Gazette de France*, 10 septembre 1740, 443-444.

¹²⁰⁷ *Gazette de France*, 14 may 1740, 238-239.

¹²⁰⁸ *Gazette de France*, 21 may 1740, 250-251.

¹²⁰⁹ *Gazette de France*, 23 juillet 1740, 360-361.

¹²¹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 22 octobre 1740, 515-516.

¹²¹¹ *Gazette de France*, 3 décembre 1740, 589.

ambassador to ask the Porte to build a convent of the Franciscan order for the Sicilian community.¹²¹²

Thus Jewish migration to Naples and Sicily began before the *Ahidname* of 1740 granted by the Porte, and it seems to have accelerated the commercial ties between the Ottoman Empire and the kingdom of Naples and Sicily. The strong presence of Jewish merchants in Naples with ties to the Ottoman Empire in 1740-1741 implied that they may have played an important role in helping the two states in establishing official commercial relations. Their migration to Naples also demonstrated that they felt safe and secure as a community to migrate from the relatively Jewish friendly Ottoman Empire to a Catholic state. The potential knowledge that the Sublime Porte would give an *Ahidname* to Naples and Sicily may have led to their decision to migrate into these two kingdoms. However, after 1741 the Gazette stopped covering this commercial expansion between the Ottoman Empire and Naples, which may have been primarily a result of the Austrian War of Succession. As from 1742 onwards, English ships would harass Neapolitan and Sicilian ships throughout the Mediterranean,¹²¹³ and famously threatened to bombard the city of Naples if it entered the war in 1742.¹²¹⁴

One of the ways that the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 changed Eastern Europe and the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century was its role in increasing the anti-Semitic policies of the kingdom of Poland. From 1768 onward Poland began to attempt to expel large segments of its Jewish population both by the use of anti-Jewish laws,¹²¹⁵

¹²¹² *Gazette de France*, 24 juin 1741, 294-295.

¹²¹³ *Gazette de France*, 11 aout 1742, 362-363.

¹²¹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 29 septembre 1742, 449.

¹²¹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 26 mars 1782, 117.

and by force.¹²¹⁶ This led to a large amount of Jews migrating to mostly neighboring states but also far away like Venice¹²¹⁷ But the Ottoman Empire and Hungary,¹²¹⁸ the latter of the two seems to have received the greatest amount of Jewish migrants from Poland,¹²¹⁹ received most of the Polish Jews who left their country due to an increasing hostile environment for them.¹²²⁰ In August 1777, some hundreds of Jewish families came to Istanbul from the Black Sea as a result of Poland's new laws, which destroyed Jewish trade in their former homeland. When they entered the Ottoman capital, they stated that they would only stay for a short period as they were going on a "pilgrimage" to Jerusalem. However it became quite clear that their goal was in fact to stay in Istanbul or in cities nearby and that they were in fact willing to pay the *haraç* or poll tax on all Jewish families staying in the Ottoman Empire.¹²²¹ Ottoman officials in Istanbul continued to insist that the newly arrived Jews continue their "Pilgrimage" to Jerusalem, but it seemed quite clear from the rubric, that they in fact had no such intentions. Thus the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 and the First Partition of Poland in 1772 played important roles in Poland's increased hostile treatment of Jews, which led to an important migration of that population towards Hungary and Austria, followed by the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman Empire's relationship with Jews was well known to have been very positive especially when compared to the rest of Europe. The cases shown here illustrate that and they also add interesting possibilities as it concerns their role in Ottoman-

¹²¹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 25 mai 1778, 585.

¹²¹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 8 juin 1778, 203-204.

¹²¹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 22 juin 1778, 221.

¹²¹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 10 février 1784, 48.

¹²²⁰ *Gazette de France*, 10 octobre 1777, 411.

¹²²¹ *Gazette de France*, 10 octobre 1777, 411.

European trade during the 18th century. In fact there is a possibility that were agents of their own trade but also may have played an important role in facilitating the trade of Muslims from the Ottoman Empire, in April 1755 the Porte told European ambassadors that it did not want a war between Algeria, the Dutch Republic, and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.¹²²² The rubric from the *Gazette* further added that Turkish and Armenian merchants used both Dutch and Livorno ships to send their goods to Europe, and a war with Algeria would put their enterprises at risk. Livorno had a strong Jewish presence who seem to have dominated trade between that city and the Ottoman Empire,¹²²³ while the Netherlands were famously a center of religious tolerance in Western Europe during the early modern era. Thus some cases of Jewish migration into the Ottoman Empire were a result of growing anti-Semitism in Europe, and Jewish migration from the Ottoman Empire into Europe were a product of trade and may have helped build official ties between the Ottoman Empire and some states in Europe.

7.4 Christian Migration between the Ottoman Empire and Europe

This section examines the migration of some Ottoman Christians to other regions of Europe, most notably in the Mediterranean. In April of 1754, several Greek families established in Corsica asked, with the permission of the Republic of Genoa,¹²²⁴ the King of Sardinia Charles-Emmanuel III (1730-1773) to settle on the island of Sardinia, who

¹²²² *Gazette de France*, 31 mai 1755, 253.

¹²²³ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome I*, 32-33.

¹²²⁴ Corsica was under the Republic of Genoa between 1284-1768, when France bought the rights to the island and then subsequently conquered it between 1768-1769. Napoleon was born there on August 15th 1769, history is full of such odd coincidences.

approved of the migration and gave them land for them to cultivate.¹²²⁵ In October 1753, a few Catholic families from Albania, wanted to leave the Ottoman Empire, and asked the Pope the permission to settle in the Papal States. Pope Benedict XIV (1740-1758) granted their request and had them settle in the Duchy of Castro, where they also acquired some tax exemptions for a couple of years.¹²²⁶ In June 1756, another group of Catholic Albanian families came to the Papal States to settle there, Pope Benedict XIV (1740-1758) once again assigned them land to settle on.¹²²⁷ At the start of the year 1755, the son of a prominent Turk, probably from Albania, told a Greek friend about his desire to convert to Christianity. His friend told him to come to Rome to be taught in the ways of Christianity (Catholicism), and so he abandoned his home and came to the Papal States with 5 slaves that he liberated from captivity. He then arrived in Ancona, from there he went to Rome at the end of September 1755, and was lodged in one of the nice loges of the Vatican, where he got baptized.¹²²⁸

Ancona is a potentially interesting city for Ottoman studies as it was Rome's and the Papal States' main port city in the Aegean Sea,¹²²⁹ and had extensive ties with the neighboring Ottoman lands like Albania and Greece.¹²³⁰ As demonstrated above, it was one of the entrances for Ottoman subjects who wanted to migrate or visit Italy, most evidently Rome. For example at the end of November 1749, several Orthodox Armenian merchants¹²³¹ arrived in Ancona with the purpose of participating in the ceremonies and

¹²²⁵ *Gazette de France*, 18 mai 1754, 235.

¹²²⁶ *Gazette de France*, 10 novembre 1752, 535-536.

¹²²⁷ *Gazette de France*, 10 juillet 1756, 332.

¹²²⁸ *Gazette de France*, 25 octobre 1755, 511.

¹²²⁹ Alberto Caracciolo, *Le Port franc d'Ancône: Croissance et impasse d'un milieu marchand au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: SEVPEN, 1965), 24-25

¹²³⁰ Caracciolo, *Le Port franc d'Ancône*, 17.

¹²³¹ ... professant la Religion Grecques, ...

celebrations for the start of the New Year,¹²³² they remitted to Rome 12 000 sequins for the expanses of their trip in the Papal States.¹²³³ Thus Armenian merchants came to Rome by way of Ancona to take part in religious ceremonies of another Christian sect, they were Orthodox while the Papal States was the center of Catholicism, demonstrating that Ottoman Christians were aware of the religious celebrations in Italy and travelled there as tourists by the end of the 1740s.

The examples shown here hint at major cultural exchanges between the Eastern and Western Mediterranean, with Italy being potentially the center of this exchange. The cultural and economic relations between the Italian peninsula and the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century has, like the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century, been understudied. The proximity of the Italian peninsula to the Ottoman Balkans as well as the Republic of Venice's control of Balkan territories next to the Ottoman Empire should make the 18th century an era with potential rich possibilities for cultural history. Ottoman historians have preferred to study Ottoman relations with the Italian peninsula when they were in conflict, but times of peace are frequently more interesting as they have the potential to establish long term ties between different regions and peoples of the Ottoman Empire and the Italian peninsula.

7.5 The bankruptcy of an Armenian Merchant in Amsterdam: The Case of Matheo di Owan

¹²³² L'Année Sainte.

¹²³³ *Gazette de France*, 27 décembre 1749, 642-643.

In November 1753, it was reported from Istanbul that an Armenian merchant by the name of Matheo di Owan, who been a merchant or financier in Amsterdam, had left that city bankrupt and without paying his debts owed to his partners. The Dutch ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, the baron Hochepiet, asked the Sublime Porte to have his goods on Ottoman territory seized, the *Sadrizam* at the time Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa (1752-1754, April-December 1756, 1763-1765) ordered all individuals with Owan's goods to declare them to the authorities.¹²³⁴ By the end of December 1753, the Porte had found goods belonging to Matheo di Owan of up to 140 000 *guruş*.¹²³⁵ In the summer of 1754, the Porte had Armenian merchants in Izmir examine Owan's books there and they found that he had a great deal of goods in Russia.¹²³⁶ In October 1754, the Empress of Russia Elizabeth I (1741-1762) ordered that all of Owan's goods and possessions be sequestered by the state. As a result, Russia sequestered 30 000 rubles worth of goods that belonged to him in Moscow and in Astrakhan.¹²³⁷ On October 18th, Matheo di Owan was arrested on the Persian frontier in Kizlyar, which is a city that is approximately 300km to the South of Astrakhan.¹²³⁸ The Dutch extraordinary ambassador to Russia, Zuart, asked for Owan to be transferred to Saint Petersburg and to have him declare all of his goods that had not been seized by either the Ottomans or Russia. The Dutch envoy also wanted clarifications on the extraction of the goods seized in Izmir in order for Matheo di Owan to pay his debtors back.¹²³⁹

¹²³⁴ *Gazette de France*, 19 janvier 1754, 25.

¹²³⁵ *Gazette de France*, 16 février 1754, 73.

¹²³⁶ *Gazette de France*, 19 octobre 1754, 493.

¹²³⁷ *Gazette de France*, 23 novembre 1754, 552.

¹²³⁸ This author used Google Maps to calculate the approximate distance between the two cities, he is fully aware that this would not reflect the historic road or travelling networks, but stating the distance helps the reader have a better understanding of just how close he came to escaping to Iran.

¹²³⁹ *Gazette de France*, 23 novembre 1754, 552.

The case of Matheo di Owan is a fascinating look at the increasing commercial and cultural ties that tied the Ottoman Empire to the rest of Europe. It also illustrated the Ottoman Empire and Russia as intermediaries between commercial agents from Western Asia and centers of European capital like Amsterdam.¹²⁴⁰ This case demonstrated that a wealthy Armenian merchant who was probably a New Julfan, Owan's attempt to escape his creditors by going into Iran should be evidence of that, was able to be heavily involved in financial and commercial affairs in Amsterdam while holding large quantities of goods in Istanbul, Izmir, and Saint-Petersburg. This story is even more interesting because of the Porte's role in helping the Dutch seize his assets at their ambassador's request. The Porte complied with the Dutch ambassador's request to sequester his goods, even though he would have gotten bankrupt in Amsterdam, not in the Ottoman Empire itself. ? Besides this, both the Ottoman and Russian authorities seemed to have complied to Dutch pressures as it concerned seizing and returning Owan's goods and assets back to his creditors in the Netherlands. It would have been highly unlikely that both states would have complied at all if this event had occurred in the second half of the 17th century. Both the Ottoman Empire and Russia increasingly integrated themselves to what could be called European "international law," namely doing things like seizing assets of a bankrupt subject of another state at their ambassador's request and giving them to that state's authorities.

There is also the issue of the status of someone like Matheo di Owan, was he considered by the Porte as a reaya, would a New Julfan merchant born in Iran be considered a reaya or zimmi. What about a New Julfan who had lived in Izmir, had then

¹²⁴⁰ James Riley, *International Government Finance and the Amsterdam Capital Market, 1740-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 3-4.

spent a decade in Amsterdam, only to come back to Izmir, what would have been his status? Were all Eastern Christian from outside the Ottoman Empire automatically considered as reaya or zimmi? Naturally these questions could also have been asked of the Dutch, what status would they have given to someone like Matheo di Owan?

7.6 Ottoman-Austrian Commercial and Cultural Interactions on the Danube and in the Black Sea Region

When he started to read the *Gazette*, this author expected to eventually read a lot of details on Franco-Ottoman commercial relations, instead there was substantially more on Ottoman trade with other regions of Europe than with France. Between the years 1740-1787 the greatest amount of details on the Ottoman Empire's commercial relations were published in the 1780s. This section thus examines Ottoman-Austrian commercial relations around the Danubian region, with the city of Belgrade and Semlin, today a part of Belgrade but during this period it was under Austrian control as key cities of Ottoman-Austrian commercial and cultural exchanges. This section also includes a few cases of Ottoman tourists going to Europe to visit monuments for religious and touristic reasons, it also includes Austrian commemorations of the Siege of Vienna.

On the 12th of November 1785, several Tyrolese had arrived and briefly stopped at Belgrade, they then left for with the required passports, that they had gotten from the Paşa of Belgrade. They were carrying birds that were common to Tyrol, that are a species of serins or canaries, that sold at a high price in Istanbul, where only one of these birds

could sell for 10 to 16 guruş, and were frequently given as gifts to high ranking Ottoman officials.¹²⁴¹ Orthodox Christian merchants from the Temeşvar went to Croatia to buy a considerable amount of furs to sell at Ottoman markets and festivals, most notably the Fair or Festival of Zoncsova.¹²⁴² Around the same time that these Tyrolean bird merchants were arriving and leaving from Belgrade, two Ottoman merchants Hamza Paşa and Osman Paşa arrived in Belgrade.¹²⁴³ Their goal was to go to Vienna in order to purchase glass and other goods from Bohemia,¹²⁴⁴ with which they loaded them on two large ships that they carried on the Danube up to the city of Rusçuk, from where they would transport the goods on land to Istanbul.¹²⁴⁵ In June 1785 the *Gazette* reported from Semlin, a town next to Belgrade, that a lot of Turkish workers came there to settle in Austrian territories, they were mostly construction workers with a specialty in brick making to build houses on the Ottoman frontiers.¹²⁴⁶

Ottomans like their European contemporaries also went on voyages during the 18th century, historically the Hajj was one of the principal and most traditional manifestations of tourism within the Islamic world. The case to be discussed shortly involved a religious pilgrimage of sort by a Muslim man to Hungary. On May 4th 1786 a Derviş arrived in Semlin, he left on the 5th of May for Budapest where he was doing a Hajj or pilgrimage to a mosque that was still there from when the Ottomans held the city during the 17th century. He had with him a retinue of two Turks on horseback, who provided him with bread and water as he did not eat or drink anything else. A lot of

¹²⁴¹ *Gazette de France*, 6 décembre 1785, 404.

¹²⁴² *Gazette de France*, 15 juillet 1785, 235.

¹²⁴³ *Hamsa-Bassa et Osman-Bassa*.

¹²⁴⁴ Today's Czech Republic.

¹²⁴⁵ *Gazette de France*, 13 janvier 1786, 16.

¹²⁴⁶ *Gazette de France*, 24 juin 1785, 211-212.

people in Semlin gathered around him as they were curious about him and his motives for coming to Semlin.¹²⁴⁷ The attention that the Derviş received in Semlin, an Austrian town next to Belgrade, which as shown above had regular interactions with the Ottomans demonstrated that it was used to Janissaries, Ottoman officials, Ottoman Christians, and Ottoman merchants, but that Ottoman religious figures were a rarity in Semlin, hence why they were an attraction there. The Austrian-Ottoman borders were exposed to large segments of Ottoman Balkan society including people from Istanbul, but one of the groups that was underrepresented in their interaction on the Danubian border were Muslim religious figures. Thus this short case illustrates that *ülemas* and *derviş* were not frequent visitors to the Austrian lands during this period, but it also does illustrate that they had started to visit the Austrian border area by the mid 1780s.

Another Austro-Ottoman related issue occurred in 1786 that involved the city of Budapest, namely the celebration of its 100 years anniversary of Austrian rule. On the 10th of September 1786, the city of Budapest and Austria celebrated its reconquest by the Habsburgs from the Ottoman Empire on September 2nd 1686.¹²⁴⁸ This was not a unique case, as the *Gazette* throughout the period of 1740-1787 covered Austria's celebration of its victory at the Siege of Vienna (1683), which it celebrated every year,¹²⁴⁹ and every decade of this period had at least one mention of its annual celebration in the *Gazette*, which usually occurred in Vienna between the 10th to the 15th of September. Vienna celebrated the Habsburg victory on the 11th of September in 1746,¹²⁵⁰ in 1750 it was on

¹²⁴⁷ *Gazette de France*, 20 juin 1786, 201-202.

¹²⁴⁸ *Gazette de France*, 13 octobre 1786, 339.

¹²⁴⁹ *Gazette de France*, 2 octobre 1772, 362.

¹²⁵⁰ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} octobre 1746, 470-471.

the 13th of September,¹²⁵¹ in 1765 it was on the 15th of September,¹²⁵² in 1772 it was on the 13th of September,¹²⁵³ and the 100th anniversary of its victory over the Ottomans at the siege of Vienna of 1683 was held on the 14th of September in 1783.¹²⁵⁴ The 100th anniversary of its victory was unusually big both because it was the 100th year but also because Austria had fully expected to go to war against the Ottoman Empire and Joseph II was waiting for an Ottoman declaration of war against Russia for him to use Austria's alliance with Russia to declare war on the Ottomans, which fortunately never happened as the Porte wisely decided not to go to war that year. Malta also celebrated the 200 anniversary of the end of the siege of Malta of 1565 on September 8th 1765.¹²⁵⁵ In Istanbul, European or Christian holidays were frequently celebrated by European embassies, as was the case for France, whose embassy celebrated the Saint-Louis Holiday during the summer.¹²⁵⁶

Based on the *Gazette's* coverage, the period between the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774 and the Russo-Ottoman War of 1787-1792 saw major commercial growth on the Austro-Ottoman border. The Danube served as its main transit, which for example saw a lot of timber from Wallachia and Moldavia being transported on it for the Ottoman capital,¹²⁵⁷ and some of its tributaries like the Sava river saw relatively big Ottoman ships going up to Petrovaradin to get goods from Austria there in 1781.¹²⁵⁸ In early May 1786 12 ships full of goods from Styria like iron and lead left Semlin for

¹²⁵¹ *Gazette de France*, 10 octobre 1750, 482-483.

¹²⁵² *Gazette de France*, 30 septembre 1765, 310.

¹²⁵³ *Gazette de France*, 2 octobre 1772, 362.

¹²⁵⁴ *Gazette de France*, 7 octobre 1783, 353.

¹²⁵⁵ *Gazette de France*, 4 novembre 1765, 350.

¹²⁵⁶ *Gazette de France*, 14 octobre 1763, 355.

¹²⁵⁷ *Gazette de France*, 19 avril 1785, 131.

¹²⁵⁸ *Gazette de France*, 11 septembre 1781, 339.

Ottoman lands, while on the 8th of May a man named Osman Ağa boarded a Viennese ship at Semlin with 250 cases of glass and other goods, and was headed in the same direction as the 12 ships previously mentioned.¹²⁵⁹ In July 1786 there were large Ottoman ships leaving Vienna on the Danube with shipments of glass, iron, porcelain, drapes from Moravia, and jewelry from Nuremberg.¹²⁶⁰ There were in September of 1787 some 30 Ottoman Christian families that asked to settle in Austria's borders,¹²⁶¹ possibly due to the coming war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia that had just started on August 19th 1787.

The Banat of Temesvar was an important center for grain purchasing by Ottoman merchants or *kapan tüccarları*, who bought large quantities of grain from there in the 1780s.¹²⁶² The Gazette recorded a record amount of Ottoman cotton and cloths coming into the Banat of Temesvar at the start of 1786, it also recorded Austrian merchants' frustrations and problems that they had had with Ottoman customs, as they had to pay customs dues on multiple occasions after they had already paid prior customs dues.¹²⁶³ Similarly Ottoman merchants were not happy with Austrian customs, which impacted the fair in Leopold, near Vienna, where there was little cotton from Macedonia due to Ottoman merchants' frustrations with Austria's customs.¹²⁶⁴

In 1786 Semlin attracted a large number of Ottomans during its festivals, unsurprisingly a lot of Turks from Belgrade came during the festivals, they participated in the balls and made their own shows at the festivals of Semlin. It was reported that the

¹²⁵⁹ *Gazette de France*, 27 juin 1786, 210.

¹²⁶⁰ *Gazette de France*, 29 aout 1786, 285.

¹²⁶¹ *Gazette de France*, 26 octobre 1786, 423.

¹²⁶² *Gazette de France*, 21 février 1786, 61-62.

¹²⁶³ *Gazette de France*, 7 mars 1786, 79.

¹²⁶⁴ *Gazette de France*, 29 septembre 1786, 323-324.

music, the lighting of the rooms, and the dance styles all grabbed the attention of the Ottomans at the festival, and they were happy at the polite reception that they had received there. Coffee, fine wine, jam and sugary goods were some of the drinks and sweets at the festival that they enjoyed eating and drank a lot of it, and used these same goods as an opportunity to court the local women.¹²⁶⁵ Earlier in the century in the summer of 1741, a fair had been held in Panzova in Temesvar, where in contrast to the one held in Semlin in 1786, it went poorly as a major fight broke out between the local Christian population and the Turks that had come, which seemed to have been caused by the local Christians potentially exploiting the Turks that had come there.¹²⁶⁶ But certainly the 1780s, prior to the start of the war in 1787, saw major Austro-Ottoman commercial and cultural exchanges that seemed to have gone quite well, as the *Gazette* did not report many negative stories about the Danubian regions during the second last decade of the 18th century.

Besides the *Gazette*'s increased coverage of commercial affairs in the 1780s, there were multiple reasons why Austro-Ottoman commercial relations may have seen major commercial growth between 1774-1787. One reason was the continued good relations and peace between the two powers, although Austria's annexation of Bukovina in 1774-1775 certainly hurt Austrian-Ottoman relations, it may have indirectly improved commercial relations between the two Powers. With all of his faults Joseph II (1765-1790), had ambitious plans for his provinces, which seemed to have partially helped commercial growth on the Danubian frontier. He saw the annexation of Bukovina as a commercial opportunity for his territories and attempted various commercial and

¹²⁶⁵ *Gazette de France*, 24 mars 1786, 101.

¹²⁶⁶ *Gazette de France*, 19 aout 1741, 385-386.

agricultural reforms and experiments in the provinces bordering the Ottoman Empire.¹²⁶⁷ He also personally visited the various cities on the frontier like Semlin,¹²⁶⁸ and he especially wanted to expand the ties between Austria's holding in the Adriatic Sea and the Ottoman Empire,¹²⁶⁹ most notably for the free trading city of Trieste, which due to his policies saw major commercial growth as a result of its expanded trade with the Ottomans.¹²⁷⁰ In February 1784, Austria began making major agricultural and infrastructure investments in Bukovina to help improve transportation and the local economy.¹²⁷¹

Some of Joseph II's aggressive commercial ambitions for Austrian-Ottoman commercial relations may have partially caused a specie shortage at the start of 1787, as most of the Austrian currency produced in the capital went to the Ottoman Empire.¹²⁷² However there were other factors, besides peacetime Austrian-Ottoman commercial relations, that caused a specie shortage in Vienna, for starters Gazi Hasan Paşa's occupation of Egypt between 1786-1787 would have increased the Porte's spending,¹²⁷³ which would have caused an increased demand for money by the Ottoman Empire as it needed to pay for its occupation of Egypt. There were also plenty of non-Ottoman factors that led to a shortage of specie in Vienna at the start of 1787, potentially remission payments to different parts of the Empire for additional grain imports to the capital would have played a factor as the harvest of 1785-1786 was bad for most of Europe including

¹²⁶⁷ *Gazette de France*, 28 avril 1786, 141.

¹²⁶⁸ *Gazette de France*, 15 aout 1786, 270.

¹²⁶⁹ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} aout 1786, 454.

¹²⁷⁰ *Gazette de France*, 17 novembre 1786, 379-380.

¹²⁷¹ *Gazette de France*, 2 mars 1784, 71-72.

¹²⁷² *Gazette de France*, 2 mars 1787, 78.

¹²⁷³ *Gazette de France*, 19 janvier 1787, 21.

parts of the Austria's territories,¹²⁷⁴ like Bukovina.¹²⁷⁵ Even the grain rich Baltic region was facing major problems with its own supplies of grain as a result of bad harvest, Gustavus III was forced to suspend the production of spirits to prevent a famine from happening in Sweden.¹²⁷⁶

The Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca along with Joseph II's commercial reforms seem to have had a major impact on the rise of the role of the Sava and Danube rivers as entries into the Black Sea. Certainly the *Gazette* covered in greater detail the increasing commercial relations between Austria and the Ottoman Empire. In 1782 Joseph II gave the Baron de Tensester the monopoly of the timber trade from Habsburg lands to Istanbul, the timber would pass through the Sava river, the Danube, and then into the Black Sea. Hungary, which had large forests supported this trade, it played a key role in the Ottoman-Austrian timber trade by sending its timber on the Danube to the Ottoman Empire,¹²⁷⁷ which due to Gazi Hasan Paşa's large navy and to the wooden houses in Istanbul, was in near constant demand for timber. A recently established society of commerce in Vienna tasked one of its agents, S. J. B. Olivier, with exploring the Crimea to find anything of note and worth. This society had bought another ship, which it loaded with wines and spirits in Hungary, from there it sent it through the Sava and Danube into the Black Sea to the town of Kilia, where it was transferred onto a Russian ship, which then transported the wines and spirits to either Istanbul or the rising city of Kherson.¹²⁷⁸ By the summer of 1786, it was noted that navigation on the Danube between Hungary and the Black Sea region had greatly increased and that Greeks and Turks were buying an

¹²⁷⁴ *Gazette de France*, 17 mars 1786, 91-92.

¹²⁷⁵ *Gazette de France*, 25 juillet 1786, 246.

¹²⁷⁶ *Gazette de France*, 16 janvier 1787, 17.

¹²⁷⁷ *Gazette de France*, 5 juillet 1782, 258-259.

¹²⁷⁸ *Gazette de France*, 5 juillet 1782, 258-259.

enormous amount of drapes or cloths from Moravia, and the Turks were also buying a lot of porcelain from Vienna.¹²⁷⁹ The dynamics illustrated in this paragraph did not exist during the 1740s and the 1750s, as the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca may have in the long term been the worse treaty in the Ottoman Empire's history, but it does seem to have greatly help it expand its commercial ties with Austria and even with Russia by way of the Danube and the Black Sea. The increased coverage of trade on the Danube may have been a byproduct of the opening of the Black Sea region to trade with Europe.

The emergence of Kherson further helped expand trade in the Black Sea with the French increasingly coming to use it as a means of importing Russian goods, like timber and other naval goods.¹²⁸⁰ It was in the early 1780s that Russia began to build up Kherson, a small town, into its major port in the Black Sea.¹²⁸¹ In November 1781 Catherine II started her plans to turn the new city of Kherson into a major naval arsenal for her forces in the Black Sea, and she planned to have a fleet of 12 ships of the line at that port.¹²⁸² By 1785 Russia was using its Polish territories to drive Polish wheat to Kherson in exchange for Ottoman goods.¹²⁸³ Russia's annexation of Polish territory and the Crimea led to a policy of expanding its Black Sea ports like Kherson, at the expense of what was historically the most commercially dominant Polish port, Danzig. There was thus major shifts in the commercial dynamics between the Baltic and Black Sea regions as a result of Russian expansion into the latter, as Russia chose to send wheat into Kherson instead of the town of Danzig that it never controlled, and which would

¹²⁷⁹ *Gazette de France*, 4 juillet 1786, 217.

¹²⁸⁰ Faruk Bilici, *La Politique française en mer Noire, 1747-1789: Vicissitudes d'une implantation* (Istanbul : ISIS, 1992), 121-122.

¹²⁸¹ *Gazette de France*, 15 février 1782, 69.

¹²⁸² *Gazette de France*, 28 décembre 1781, 493.

¹²⁸³ *Gazette de France*, 9 septembre 1785, 304.

eventually come under Prussia after the Second Partition of Poland in 1793.¹²⁸⁴ Further expanding the Black Sea trade was the Porte's authorization of Poland to export its grain into and through the Black Sea if its grain ships had flags of European ships allowed by treaty to trade in the Black Sea.¹²⁸⁵

The economic growth of the Austro-Ottoman borders and the Black Sea region was in stark contrast to Iran during most of the century, which saw its trade collapse in the mid 18th century, with only the silk trade from Gilan and the Caspian trade as a whole not completely ruined by the wars that ravaged Persia.¹²⁸⁶ Even with the rise of Kerim Khan who ruled most of Iran between 1765-1779, Persian trade and the power of Iran became peripheral for the Sublime Porte, who paid very little attention to the threats of Kerim Khan until he took Basra in April 1776.¹²⁸⁷ In fact the Ottoman Empire's focus in the 1770s was not on Iran, but rather in restoring control and order over Syria and Egypt, with Gazi Hasan Paşa's primary goal in 1774-1776 was in destroying the forces and the family of Zahir al-Umar al-Zaydani,¹²⁸⁸ which he succeeded in doing with his protégé Cezzar Ahmed Paşa in the summer of 1775.¹²⁸⁹ The *Gazette's* publication of Pierre Joseph de Beauchamp's journey from Baghdad to Rasht between 1786-1787 further confirmed Iran's irrelevance to the Porte and its bad economic situation as a result of the continued wars there after the death of Kerim Khan.

Overall Austrian-Ottoman commercial relations were in full expansion during the 1780s and only the start of the war in 1787 put an end to this commercially and culturally

¹²⁸⁴ Jerzy Lukowski, *The Partitions of Poland: 1772, 1793, 1795* (London: Longman, 1999), 154.

¹²⁸⁵ *Gazette de France*, 4 juillet 1786, 217.

¹²⁸⁶ *Gazette de France*, 27 aout 1762, 311.

¹²⁸⁷ *Gazette de France*, 16 aoust 1776, 295.

¹²⁸⁸ *Gazette de France*, 10 novembre 1775, 401.

¹²⁸⁹ *Gazette de France*, 24 novembre 1775, 417.

rich period in the Danube's history. There were Derviş tourists, Ottomans joining Austrian festivals, dancing, eating, drinking, and even courting the local women, there was a fairly consistent of Austrian-Ottoman trade on the Danube, that had begun to merge into the Black Sea region. All of this was found using the *Gazette de France*, one can only wonder what German language papers would have to say about the booming commercial relations between the Ottoman Empire and Austria.

7.7 Luxury, Clothes, and Alcohol in the Ottoman Empire

The Ottoman Sultans after the death of Mahmud I seemed to have been much stricter than he had been as it concerned luxury items, clothes, and alcohol consumption. Although there were major celebrations under each of the Sultans of this period, none were as festive as had been Mahmud I, especially from 1740 until his death in 1754,¹²⁹⁰ the scope of the festivities during his reign was quite grand.¹²⁹¹ His brother Osman III began his reign by instituting stricter rules on alcohol consumption in Istanbul, whereas he had been informed that most Muslims typically did not drink, he decided to give harsher punishments to Muslims who did drink.¹²⁹² His successor Mustafa III also implemented stricter laws on luxuries that Greeks and Armenians could wear on the streets,¹²⁹³ he banned the selling of wine in coffeehouses, he also wanted to ban luxury on

¹²⁹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 31 octobre 1750, 517-518.

¹²⁹¹ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 13-14.

¹²⁹² *Gazette de France*, 22 février 1755, 85-86.

¹²⁹³ *Gazette de France*, 28 janvier 1758, 45.

Jews and did not want Europeans wearing Turkish clothes.¹²⁹⁴ Mustafa III's ban on luxury clothes and jewelry for the non-Muslim population of Istanbul was poorly received in Venice, where an important part of their trade with the Ottoman Empire was in luxury clothes and goods.¹²⁹⁵ However, Mustafa III's *ferman*'s banning luxury clothes for the non-Muslim population of the capital were not followed at all, so in June of 1758 he enacted three more that were stricter than the previous ones.¹²⁹⁶ This time the Sultan's *ferman*'s were more closely enforced than the ones at the start of 1758, and Mustafa III himself went incognito or *tebdîl* throughout the city to find anyone not following his decrees.¹²⁹⁷ But it seems to have mostly been in vain as by the fall of 1760, the non-Muslim population of Istanbul were still wearing extremely expensive and luxurious clothes, that the Sultan was still trying to ban.¹²⁹⁸

The lack of success of the *fermans* banning luxury clothes was unsurprising as the banning of clothes or alcohol consumption in large cities like Istanbul, cities where there was always a high demand for luxury goods, so it was almost always in the interests of most merchants and elites to not implement laws restraining the purchase and consumption of luxury goods. Powerful men like Ishak Ağa had made a large amount of their fortunes from the profits of trade between the Ottomans and Europeans, which in Istanbul always included the trade in luxury goods, why would a powerful men like Ishak Ağa or someone else of his stature wish to see their profits decrease because the Sultan did not want to accept what was the reality of his capital. The answer was simple, elites

¹²⁹⁴ *Gazette de France*, 11 mars 1758, 117.

¹²⁹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 18 mars 1758, 135.

¹²⁹⁶ *Gazette de France*, 29 juillet 1758, 357.

¹²⁹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 5 aout 1758, 369.

¹²⁹⁸ *Gazette de France*, 22 novembre 1760, 557-560.

and the people involved in trade with Europeans did not want to see luxury decline as they made money from the trade in luxury goods.

Besides elites and the wealthy, whether Muslim or non Muslim had to show status by what they wore, banning expansive or luxurious clothes would hinder their ability to demonstrate social status, which arguably could have hurt the traditional hierarchy in Istanbul had these laws been fully implemented. In fact the Porte's renewal of the *fermans* again at the start of November 1764, illustrated the continued impotence of the state. Orthodox Christian, Jewish, and European elites would continue to wear clothes to demonstrated status, even if they were banned from wearing caftans or flower patterned vest made in India, to which only the traditional Ottoman elites were allowed to wear along with sable caftans.¹²⁹⁹ Naturally alcohol consumption could never be fully implemented in which a large proportion of the population was non-Muslim and involved the consumption of wine in religious rituals. Large segments of the Muslim populations would also have consumed alcohol, why would they not drink something that tasted good and was probably safer to drink than water for a book that they could not read. Obviously not all Muslims thought this way, and certainly an important proportion of the Muslim population did not drink alcohol, but still, it would have been very common in the city. Besides Istanbul was a Balkan city, tied to the Aegean, the Mediterranean, and the Black Seas, all regions that had historically strong and traditional drinking cultures, the location of Istanbul itself made it difficult for the city not to have a rich and strong drinking culture.

¹²⁹⁹ *Gazette de France*, 14décembre 1764, 399.

Sultan Mahmud I was a very festive ruler, whose capital enjoyed many of the best festivals in that city's history, most notably the Kurban Bayramı, were noted for their large scale and festiveness, Flachat even compared them to Louis XIV's celebrations at Versailles.¹³⁰⁰ Both Osman III's and Mustafa III's reigns seemed to have been a reaction against the excessiveness of Mahmud I's later reign. They attempted to eliminate some of these excesses that Mahmud I may have allowed if not outright patronized, but they failed as luxury goods, clothing, and alcohol were all too crucial to the Ottoman capital's culture and its elites all profited from having these all be widespread in the city. Why would anyone would to change the status quo, when they all gained from it, and ultimately things going great in the Ottoman capital.

7.8 European Doctors and Charlatans in the Ottoman Empire

This section starts with the issue of European doctors within the Ottoman Empire, the opportunities and dangers that awaited them. This section is above all else about people who simultaneously were of marginal backgrounds while having access to certain levels of authority or power as a result of that very background. As discussed in a previous chapter, the Valide Sultan during the reign of Osman III, Şehsuvar Sultan, was a slave of Nuh Efendi the Hekımbaşı during the reign of Mustafa II.¹³⁰¹ Flachat who provided us with this information, tells us the story about how Nuh Efendi, the father of Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa, converted to Islam and subsequently became the Hekımbaşı under

¹³⁰⁰ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 13-16.

¹³⁰¹ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 79.

Mustafa II. Nuh Efendi was a Venetian doctor for the top Venetian official in Crete in the second half of the 17th century, one day he was found in bed with a Turkish woman, and brought by force to a Kadi court, where he managed to avoid the death penalty by getting circumcised and converting to Islam. Considering the severity of the penalty that forced him to convert to Islam, there is a high probability that the woman he was with was from an important family, if what Flachet wrote is to be believed, as European men had sexual relations with Christian women and prostitutes, some of whom must have had a Muslim background. Nuh Efendi then moved to Istanbul where his abilities as a doctor quickly led to his nomination as Hekimbaşı.¹³⁰² Flachet then stated that as Hekimbaşı Nuh Efendi managed to make it a very profitable post by having the post of Hekimbaşı have the right or monopoly over approving practicing doctors and surgeons in the city, meaning that men who practiced or wanted to practice either of these professions had to pay the Hekimbaşı for the right to do so.¹³⁰³ It is highly doubtful that Nuh Efendi created this “system,” but he may have excelled at it or brought the profits of the post of Hekimbaşı to new levels. His son’s prominent role during the reign of Mustafa II’s own sons, Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa was Sadrazam on three occasions, and his probable ties to Şehsuvar sultan all hint at a man that was both lucky and influential in the Palace.

In January 1786 the *Gazette* reported that a large number of foreign doctors and charlatans had taken the title of doctor and had abused the trust of the people in the Ottoman Empire, which had determined the Porte to change policies towards physicians. The Porte wanting to prevent further abuses by these people had ordered that nobody could exercise medicine in the Ottoman Empire without having met with the Hekimbaşı.

¹³⁰² Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 79-80.

¹³⁰³ Flachet, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 80-81.

They now needed to show him proofs of expertise or education in the field of medicine, if they do then they will get a *tezkere* or diploma.¹³⁰⁴ This may have been an attempt by the Porte to increase the quality of doctors and to decrease the amount of frauds, and it almost certainly would have acted as a means of financing for the *Hekimbaşı*. It also demonstrated that Nuh Efendi's "system" had lost control over the medical community in the Ottoman capital, this may simply have been a result of Istanbul's increased population, and the possible increased number of European doctors in Ottoman lands.

European doctors were one of the most frequently mentioned groups of peoples in the *Gazette*'s coverage of individuals that had migrated to the Ottoman Empire primarily for reasons related to employment and financial opportunities. The *Gazette* also covered doctors in Europe as well, and one of the most humorous rubrics that this author read from the *Gazette*, was when it covered Pope Clement XIII (1758-1769)'s illness in late 1760 and early 1761, the Pope's doctors told him that he needed to take walks in the country to prevent further health problems.¹³⁰⁵ The *Gazette*'s coverage of European or Ottoman doctors in the Ottoman Empire were not as wholesome as the case above was, but they hinted at the potential large amount of Italian doctors present throughout the Ottoman Empire, like Nicolas Caro the Neapolitan doctor of the Sublime Porte and Mustafa III in the mid 1760s.¹³⁰⁶

The *Gazette* also covered less fortunate individuals who claimed to have had medical expertise only for it to backfire on them with grave consequences, the following case is an example of the dangers that could befall a European doctor who failed in

¹³⁰⁴ *Gazette de France*, 6 janvier 1786, 5.

¹³⁰⁵ *Gazette de France*, 14 février 1761, 79-80.

¹³⁰⁶ *Gazette de France*, 18 avril 1766, 125.

properly helping a sick and powerful patient. In July 1785 the *Gazette* published a rubric from Istanbul dating to May 25th, in which a Neapolitan missionary, Father Vincent Ruso, had been in Mosul when he was called by the Bey of Cezîre (South-Eastern Anatolia) to see him as he was sick. The missionary had claimed medical expertise and assured the Bey that his ailment was not serious and that he would make it disappear in a short amount of time. The Bey felt that his ailment was worse than what the Father had told him and wanted assurances of Ruso's abilities as a doctor, and so Father Vincent Ruso swore on his head that he would heal him. He prepared a potion for his patient, who drank it and died hours later, immediately the recently deceased Bey's retinue grabbed the poor Father and cut him into pieces.¹³⁰⁷ The case of Father Vincent Ruso's demise illustrates the dangers that doctors could face in the Ottoman Empire, however his case may not have been typical as Cezîre was a far away outpost from the Ottoman center, and would have been about the same distance to Istanbul as Vienna was. But the danger to doctors and more importantly the danger to patients of doctors or charlatans acting as doctors were real, and the execution of a doctor may have been uncommon in Europe, but the death of a patient due to medical malpractice would have equally been common in Europe.

7.9 Religious Conversions and Inter-Faith Conflicts within the Ottoman Empire

¹³⁰⁷ *Gazette de France*, 12 juillet 1785, 231.

The Gazette provided more news about inter-Christian conflicts than it did between Christians and Muslims, although events throughout the war of 1768-1774 did include a lot of stories about violent acts committed by Muslims and Christians against each other. This section however deals with the times of peace for the Ottoman Empire, namely from 1746-1768 and 1775-1787. This section clearly illustrates that the Porte continuously supported existing hierarchical institutions along with the status quo, if it did not need to act when it concerned Christian related issues, then it did not act. Besides inter-faith Christian issues and conflicts were not topics that the Porte would have been fully comfortable in dealing with, hence why existing hierarchical Christian structures within the Ottoman state would have been supported, as they were the ones that had the authority, given to them by the Porte, in dealing with such issues. Besides why have a Christian hierarchy within the state's apparatus if it cannot keep its own house in order, it exist so that it can deal with Christian related problems.

At the end of 1757, during the administration of Koca Ragıp Paşa (1757-1763) and the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), several Christian slaves had escaped their chains and fled to various neighborhoods in Istanbul. One of the slaves had been a Spaniard who had taken asylum with a Greek priest, who hid him, but he was found there and brought back to prison. He was even forced to convert to Islam even though he remained a slave, while the Greek Priest was executed.¹³⁰⁸ There arose a major controversy in early 1766 between the Catholics and the "Schismatic" Orthodox Christians of Chio (Sakız), the latter of whom brought an *arzuhal* to the Porte requesting that they expel the Europeans from the island and accusing them of horrible things. The Porte however found no proof

¹³⁰⁸ *Gazette de France*, 10 février 1759, 61-62.

of any wrongdoing by the Catholics on the small island and sent a Ferman to the Kadi there, ordering him to keep the Europeans away from the local Greeks there.¹³⁰⁹ The Porte's actions in both cases was typical of the era, namely of continuing the status quo and traditions, no new rules or laws are needed, things should stay the way they were before the specific issue occurred, the Christian slave could not be allowed to be free, execution or conversion were the only two possible solutions for him, as a Christian slave that fled prison committed a crime in doing so, if they were brought back in prison and stayed a Christian, then there was no consequences for their actions, if they converted to Islam then they could eventually become free. While the problem between the "Schismatic" Orthodox Christians and Europeans in Chio (Sakız) led the Porte to tell them not to bother each other, showing that there was no real need for it to intervene and that they should come to an agreement themselves, which would ultimately lead to a restoration of the status quo.

In the early summer of 1761, the Gazette reported on the destruction of three convents of Saint-Francis near Sarajevo in Bosnia,¹³¹⁰ which had been burned by Schismatic Orthodox Christians of the region, who impaled the convents' custodian, and decapitated one bishop and 25 priests.¹³¹¹ In July 1767 Schismatic Armenians had repaired their churches without the authorization of the Porte, when it found out about it, it destroyed the reparations that had been done by the Armenians to their churches.¹³¹² In the summer of 1781 after listening to various protests from European ambassadors, notably that of Austria's, the Porte decided to dismiss and exile the schismatic Armenian

¹³⁰⁹ *Gazette de France*, 18 avril 1766, 125.

¹³¹⁰ *Capitale de Bosnie*.

¹³¹¹ *Gazette de France*, 8 aout 1761, 391-392.

¹³¹² *Gazette de France*, 11 septembre 1767, 315.

Patriarch, however his supporters immediately rallied in great numbers to try to prevent his exile, which forced the Porte to send several Janissary corps to guard him and prevent this tumult from turning into a riot.¹³¹³

On July 20th 1767 the *Gazette* published in a rubric from Amsterdam,¹³¹⁴ dated to July 14th 1767, a story from letters from Izmir dated to the 18th of May 1767, in which the local Greek priest complained about the marriages of local Greek girls to European men, these local women had converted to their husband's Christian sect, Catholicism.¹³¹⁵ The Greek Priest went to the Tribunal of Justice,¹³¹⁶ to press an official complaint and claimed that all marriage contracts outside of his Church, by the members of his flock, meaning Orthodox Greeks from the area, were not valid and thus void. The Priest's actions led to a great tumult between European Catholics and Greek Orthodox in Izmir, he even managed to get most of his community to rally against the *Franks* or Europeans. Many members of his flock had planned to take away the Greek wives of Europeans and punish them for what they stated was libertinage.¹³¹⁷ This was the biggest inter-Christian conflict within the Ottoman recorded by the *Gazette*, there were a few smaller cases of inter-Christian conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean, but they were not reported as detailed as this story was.

The problem of inter-Christian conversion was something that both the Ottoman Empire and European states like France strongly opposed, but regardless of official rules,

¹³¹³ *Gazette de France*, 10 aout 1781, 292.

¹³¹⁴ During the period of 1763-1768, the *Gazette's* rubrics from Amsterdam or other cities in the Netherlands, frequently acted as non French sources on the Ottoman Empire and West Asia. Most of the Janissary stories were from rubrics from Amsterdam or other cities in the Netherlands.

¹³¹⁵ *Gazette de France*, 20 juillet 1767, 257-258.

¹³¹⁶ Presumably an Orthodox Christian court, although it is also possible that he would have gone to a Kadi court.

¹³¹⁷ *Gazette de France*, 20 juillet 1767, 257-258.

the reality of having men of different Christian sects living in prominent Ottoman cities would always lead to inter-faith marriages, and to the subsequent question of which sect dominated the family. The issue would have impacted the Greek community the most, as they seemed to have been overall the closest Ottomans to Europeans throughout this period. As demonstrated in a previous chapter, the comtesse des Alleurs' female staff consisted of European and Greek women. Flachat lived in Fener and initially stayed at his Greek friend's home, Doctor Michel, who introduced him to the French ambassador the comte de Castellane at the end of 1741 or the start of 1742,¹³¹⁸ he was also the one who introduced Flachat to the Kızlar Ağası,¹³¹⁹ who at the time was Hacı Beşir Ağa, Moralı Beşir Ağa's powerful predecessor.¹³²⁰ Another famous case of Europeans living and intermarrying with the Greek community was the French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire between 1755/1756-1768 who later became the French ambassador to Sweden between 1771-1774, and then became the French Secretary of Foreign, the comte de Vergennes. He married a local girl from Pera by the name of Anne Duvivier (1730-1798),¹³²¹ whose father was a Savoyard, which had become a term associated with low level entertainers and peddlers.¹³²² Her father was a commoner, and her mother was probably a local Greek girl. Initially they had children and lived together, and eventually they got married, which angered Choiseul and Louis XV, whose authorization had not been asked before the marriage took place.¹³²³ It was one of the factors that led to his dismissal by Choiseul and his brief disgrace, as an ambassador had to ask the permission

¹³¹⁸ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome I*, 375.

¹³¹⁹ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome I*, 252-253.

¹³²⁰ Hathaway, *Beshir Agha*, 74.

¹³²¹ Orville T. Murphy, *Charles Gravier, Comte de Vergennes: French Diplomacy in the Age of Revolution, 1717-1787* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), 167.

¹³²² Isherwood, *Farce and Fantasy*, 156.

¹³²³ Murphy, *Charles Gravier, Comte de Vergennes*, 167.

of his minister and king before he could marry someone abroad, and marrying a commoner,¹³²⁴ of Savoyard origins and possibly from an Orthodox Christian sect were highly controversial and not deemed “suitable” to the position of ambassador. Eventually when he became Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Minister in 1774, his wife like all wives of ministers had a public introduction with the Queen. But Vergennes’ wife, who had previously not been allowed to go to Sweden with him when he was ambassador there between 1771-1774,¹³²⁵ was not a woman ordinarily suitable for such an honor, however her husband held the most prestigious post of the government, and thus eventually Marie-Antoinette honored his wife in a public meeting.¹³²⁶

In the summer of 1755 the Porte was faced with the difficult and uncomfortable problem that resulted from the emergence of a major division among the Orthodox Christian’s clergy on the issue of baptism. A priest in Istanbul had declared that only baptism by immersion was valid,¹³²⁷ which had caused a large segment of the clergy to oppose and denounce his views on baptism as being heretical, while another portion of the clergy was in agreement with him. The Porte was forced to intervene as it was causing major social and political problems in the Christian communities of the capital, and its solution to the problem was that all the priests that did not follow the Greek Patriarch Cyril V (1752-1757)’s views on this issue were to go back to their dioceses and leave the city.¹³²⁸ It was a typical solution of the Porte’s during this period, keeping the status quo by supporting the ruling institutions and its current leadership. It probably

¹³²⁴ Murphy, *Charles Gravier, Comte de Vergennes*, 165-166.

¹³²⁵ Marsangy, *Le comte de Vergennes: Son ambassade en Suède*, 48.

¹³²⁶ D’Armeth et Geffroy eds., *Correspondance secrète entre Marie-Thérèse et Mercy-Argenteau*: Tome II, 266.

¹³²⁷ Baptism by putting the whole body of a person under water, today most Catholics pour water on the forehead of an infant, as it was done to this author as a baby.

¹³²⁸ *Gazette de France*, 16 aout 1755, 385-386.

worked as the *Gazette* did not bring up another controversy of this nature again, although this may have been due to the Seven Years' War or the *Gazette's* discomfort with potential religious controversies.

The *Gazette de France* did occasionally report on unorthodox Muslim figures. In two of its January issues of 1786, the *Gazette* reported on Şeyh Mansur or Imam Mansur (died in 1794) the Chechen leader opposed to Russia. In its first rubric about him, it began by stating that three impostors had showed up in different regions of the Ottoman Empire, all worrying the Porte, the most dangerous of the three was considered to be Imam Mansur, who had exploited the people's naivety and had turned himself into a powerful force in the area around the Taurus mountains. He defeated Georgian soldiers who attacked him there, and the local population had become fully proselytized and zealous of him and his teaching, which had led the Porte to take steps to eliminate this group before they become too dangerous or powerful.¹³²⁹ In another issue published in January 1786, the *Gazette* continued its reporting on Şeyh Mansur's continued progress. In order to remove the threat of heresy and of Şeyh Mansur as a potential powerful regional leader, the Porte planned on sending some of the members of *ülema* to the region, to examine and disprove the dogmas that he was teaching, but considering the level of zeal of his followers, the *Gazette*, probably reflecting the Porte's own views on the issue, felt that these sorts of measures rarely worked.¹³³⁰

¹³²⁹ *Gazette de France*, 17 janvier 1786, 19.

¹³³⁰ *Gazette de France*, 24 janvier 1786, 29.

7.10 True Crimes within and without the Ottoman Empire

The following cases illustrate some of the more difficult and dubious positions that men of different cultures found themselves in the Ottoman Empire and in Europe during this period. On August 29th 1766 the *Gazette* published a curious case of “true crimes” like kind of story that involved the Danish consul of Salonika. The rubric was from Utrecht and was dated to August 22nd 1766, but the events transpired in June of that year. Haldimand the Danish consul of Salonika had gotten into a fight with a Jew named Samuel Moliano, the Danish consul had loaned Moliano a large amount of money, while he stated that Haldimand owed him 70 000 guruş. Haldimand went in front of the *Müsellim*, the *Gümrük Emini*, and the *Yeniçeri Ağası* of the city and demanded justice or his money back from Moliano. He then showed them his bills of exchange¹³³¹ that had Molinao as his borrower, but these bills were not accepted by the Ottoman authorities.¹³³² Haldimand was once again asked to appear before the tribunal, but he used his privileges as consul and so refused to appear in front of the court, and asked to be judged by the *Divan* in Istanbul. The *Kadı* offered to write an *ilam* for him if he paid 600 guruş, Moliano had already offered the *Kadı* pay for an *ilam* of his own. However the Danish consul refused to pay the sum and was arrested by the local authorities in front of the French consulate, a humiliation for Haldimand, he was then brought to his own home by the *Çuhadar* of the *Müsellim* on the 23rd of June. Two guards¹³³³ and three Janissaries guarded his home during the night and he was found dead in his room, stabbed three

¹³³¹ ... *billets de Moliano*...

¹³³² *Gazette de France*, 29 aoust 1766, 282.

¹³³³ *Menzars*.

times with severe wounds on his hands, the next morning.¹³³⁴ This author is still not exactly clear on what transpired in this very interesting story, the Danish consul's death does not appear to have been a suicide, as his hands were injured, thus there is a strong likelihood that when he refused to comply with the local Ottoman authorities, they decided to end his life. If the local authorities were responsible for his death, and if it was not a suicide, then they must not have wanted to have the *Divan* deal with the issue, which meant that either they were hiding something their own involvement in the affair, or they had done unrelated things that could cause them major problems if the Porte started to pay attention to their actions in Salonika. The death of the Danish consul is a very intriguing story, but this author still lacks some of the context to fully understand the different pieces that are missing from this story, and in the end it could still just be a suicide.

In two other less dramatic cases, the Porte after demanding that the ambassador from Naples fire his dragoman, an Armenian named Pierre Baron, arrested him at the start of the year 1765 for reasons unknown.¹³³⁵ On August 4th 1766, the *Gazette* published excerpts from a letter from Venice dated to July 11th, in which Valsamaki, the Venetian consol of Patras in Morea, had come to Istanbul and approached Sultan Mustafa III during one of his *selamets*. He offered to give the Sultan the island of Corfou if he was named the governor of Morea and he even offered to convert to Islam. Mustafa III did not even bother to give an answer to this offer and handed Valsamaki over to the *Sadrazam* Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa, who gave him up to the Venetian ambassador, who sent him

¹³³⁴ *Gazette de France*, 29 aoust 1766, 282.

¹³³⁵ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} mars 1765, 65.

in chains to Venice.¹³³⁶ On September 12th 1786, it published another unusual story that had a kind of “true crime” feel to it, it involved the marquis Saint-Giliano of Catane, who had committed the horrible act of killing his wife and son, but who had avoided the authorities for the past few years. The *Gazette* stated that the authorities had believed that he had drowned, but trusted sources had found him in Mecca,¹³³⁷ where he had become a Muslim.¹³³⁸

The final case in this section involved an Ottoman in the Papal States committing murder there. In October 1764, a young Turkish men at the age of 18 that had recently converted to Catholicism, had been learning printing at the general Hospital of Saint-Michael in Rome. However while he was learning his apprenticeship there, he had stolen a few things from the Hospital, but was seen by a coworker. He had his coworker come to an isolated place not far from the hospital with the excuse that they could share “cookies” together. Once they were isolated from the others, he strangled his coworker, but he was almost immediately arrested.¹³³⁹

These cases demonstrate some of the kind of crimes or punishments that were committed or exacted during this period. The most complex and interesting case was the one about the Danish consul’s death, but it remains the most muddled of these stories. The story of the young Ottoman killing his coworker in the Papal States as well as the Italian renegade in the Arabian peninsula are also interesting and again hints at deeper questions as it concerns migration between the Ottoman Empire and the Italian peninsula during this period of time.

¹³³⁶ *Gazette de France*, 4 aoust 1766, 250-251.

¹³³⁷ *Gazette de France*, 12 septembre 1786, 305.

¹³³⁸ *Qu’il y a pris le turban*.

¹³³⁹ *Gazette de France*, 12 novembre 1764, 365.

7.11 In Search of the Biblical Land of Moses: Carsten Niebuhr and the Danish Arabia Expedition, 1761-1767

As the examples of Ottoman migration to European territories shown above have demonstrated, there were Ottoman migrants to European territories in the 18th century, just as there was European migrants to Ottoman territories. What this section will demonstrate is not migration but rather tourism, a big and rising, but not unique phenomenon of 18th century Europe. The mid 18th century saw European elites, scholars, and artists go on trips for inspiration, often under the sponsorship of the state to Italy.¹³⁴⁰ European elites in the 18th century increasingly travelled to other parts of Europe, both for travel and for employment, famously Voltaire migrated to Prussia and served Frederick II there,¹³⁴¹ Bonneval migrated to Istanbul to serve the Sublime Porte,¹³⁴² Saint-Séverin left Parma to serve France.¹³⁴³ And increasingly scholars and artists travelled to different parts of Europe, even the Ottoman Empire to acquire historical knowledge and knowledge of the lands visited. The *Gazette* covered some of these travelers, one of the most famous European travelers to Istanbul and the Ottoman Empire was Lord Baltimore who led a controversial life and wrote memoirs of his travels. He arrived in Istanbul in August 1763,¹³⁴⁴ and he left at the start of summer in 1764,¹³⁴⁵ and the *Gazette* provided

¹³⁴⁰ Albert Boime, *Art in an Age of Revolution, 1750-1800* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 15.

¹³⁴¹ A. Owen Aldridge, *Voltaire and the Century of Light* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 182.

¹³⁴² Vandal, *Une Ambassade française en Orient sous Louis XV*, 141.

¹³⁴³ Butler, *Choiseul*, 572.

¹³⁴⁴ *Gazette de France*, 23 septembre 1763, 331.

next to no details about his stays in Istanbul, instead it simply noted that he had come and arrived there, this was a result of him simply being a famous tourist in the Ottoman Empire. This was in sharp contrast to the *Gazette's* coverage of Carsten Niebuhr and of Pierre Joseph de Beauchamp, both of whom were tourists visiting the Ottoman Empire, but who also had clear intellectual and scientific goals or purposes in being in the Ottoman Empire. The first will be covered here while Beauchamp will be covered in the next section of this chapter.

One of the most remarkable figures that this author discovered while reading the *Gazette* was the Danish scholar Carsten Niebuhr's journey between 1761-1767 throughout the Ottoman Empire. The *Gazette's* coverage of his expedition throughout the Southern lands of the Ottoman Empire was fairly unique as it actually did follow Niebuhr and provided fairly regular coverage of his expedition, demonstrating the increased French and European interests in both the Ottoman Empire, Antiquity, and the Ancient religious history of Christianity. Niebuhr along with 4 other Danish scholars went to the lands of the Old Testament, and thus travel to the Southern lands of the Ottoman Empire, their goal was to find evidence related to the Moses and the Old Testament. In January 1761, the *Gazette* reported that four Danish scholars, namely Frederik Christian von Haven a philologist, Peter Forsskal a botanist and natural scientist, Carsten Niebuhr a cartographer, Christian Karl Kramer physician and one artist and painter named Georg Wilhelm Baurenfeind had left Copenhagen for the Ottoman Empire.¹³⁴⁶ By December 1761, the Danish scholars were in Istanbul and had obtained passports from the Porte that allowed them to travel to Alexandria, Cairo, Mount Sinai, and the Arabia Peninsula. They

¹³⁴⁵ *Gazette de France*, 13 juillet 1764, 223-224.

¹³⁴⁶ *Gazette de France*, 31 janvier 1761, 49.

were going to the Christian Holy Land to examine certain writings and monuments that were said to be tied to Moses and his era.¹³⁴⁷ On May 27th 1763 the *Gazette* published a rubric from Copenhagen dating to May 7th 1763, that detailed the Danish Arabia Expedition in the Red Sea region. They had left Cairo on August 27th 1762 after buying a lot of Arabic and possibly Ottoman Turkish manuscripts including some written in Hebrew. They arrived at Suez on the 30th of August and stayed there for 19 days, visiting many of the historical monuments and areas nearby including Mount Sinai. They had found numerous tombs with hieroglyphs near Suez, they then visited Saint-Catherine's Monastery near Mount Sinai, where they found a lot of ancient writings on tombs nearby written in unknown scripts, which were written in cuneiform, and which they copied or drew to bring back to Denmark. However the Danish scholars did not believe the region to be the "real" biblical Mount Sinai, they left Suez on October 7th and arrived at El Tor on the 11th, from there they planned on going to Bab el-Mandeb, Jeddah, and Mocha in the Arabia of Happiness.¹³⁴⁸

On May 27th 1765 the *Gazette* published excerpts of letters dated to February 11th 1765 from the Persian town of Bushehr. It reported that a large English ship arrived in the town from the Indian cities of Bombay and Surat, and dropped a large amount of Indian textiles for Persia and Basra, and one Danish scholar also came off that ship. Unsurprisingly Carsten Niebuhr was the Dane that arrived in Bushehr, his four colleagues had died in either the Arabian peninsula or in India, and he was as a result the sole survivor of the expedition. His current plans according to the *Gazette* were to go to

¹³⁴⁷ *Gazette de France*, 22 janvier 1762, 31.

¹³⁴⁸ *Gazette de France*, 27 mai 1763, 193-194.

Aleppo in order to go to Baghdad and Diyarbakir.¹³⁴⁹ From a rubric written from Copenhagen dated to June 15th 1765, the *Gazette* briefly wrote about Niebuhr and stated that due to fatigue and the difficulty of the voyage, he planned to leave Persia on an English ship that would go to Surat in India, and from there he would go back to Europe.¹³⁵⁰ This proved to be false as Niebuhr would go to Persepolis and spend a considerable amount of time there, before going to the Ottoman Empire, which the *Gazette* reported from Copenhagen in a rubric written on the 5th of October. In which the lone Danish scholar was expected in Baghdad at the start of August 1765, but that he planned to go to Shiraz, Isfahan, and then visit the ruins of Persepolis.¹³⁵¹ On December 9th 1765 the *Gazette* published a rubric that stated that Niebuhr had arrived safely at Persepolis on March 13th 1765, and that he had spent 14 days examining the ruins and monuments of this ancient city, and that he planned to leave for Shiraz on the 15th of April.¹³⁵² Another rubric from Copenhagen dating to January 25th 1766, stated that Niebuhr had spent 26 days in Persepolis until his interpreter died, which forced him to leave. He was forced to stay in Shiraz for a prolonged stay due to the war in Iran but arrived in Basra by the end of August 1765, his last letter was dated to August 30th 1765, and he planned to go to Baghdad, Mosul, and Diyarbakir.¹³⁵³

In July of 1766, the *Gazette* reported that Niebuhr had arrived in good health from Basra to Baghdad at the end of February of 1766.¹³⁵⁴ A rubric from Copenhagen dated to February 3rd 1767 mentioned that Niebuhr's last letter had come from Aleppo and was

¹³⁴⁹ *Gazette de France*, 27 mai 1765, 165.

¹³⁵⁰ *Gazette de France*, 5 juillet 1765, 209-210.

¹³⁵¹ *Gazette de France*, 21 octobre 1765, 334.

¹³⁵² *Gazette de France*, 9 décembre 1765, 390.

¹³⁵³ *Gazette de France*, 14 février 1766, 49.

¹³⁵⁴ *Gazette de France*, 28 juillet 1766, 241.

dated to September 18th 1766. It stated that he had arrived in Cyprus from Palestine and Syria, where he had visited Jerusalem, Damascus, Sayda, Tripoli, and Latakia.¹³⁵⁵ He had made astronomical calculations from and about Syria and he planned to travel by land to Istanbul, and so he was expected in the Ottoman capital for the summer of 1767.¹³⁵⁶ He arrived much earlier than the summer of 1767, as a rubric from Istanbul dated to March 2nd 1767, stated that he had arrived in the city at the end of February 1767, and planned to go back to Denmark by way of Poland.¹³⁵⁷ By August 1767 Niebuhr had arrived in Warsaw from Istanbul,¹³⁵⁸ and on October 26th the *Gazette* published in an issue from Hamburg dated to September 25th 1767, its last rubric on Carsten Niebuhr and his voyages. It remarked that he had left Warsaw for Gottingen, and carried with him the notes of his deceased colleagues along with the answers to 100 questions that Michaelis, a professor at Gottingen, had given them before their departure for the Eastern Mediterranean. The *Gazette* and the European public showed a lot of excitement for the eventual publication of Niebuhr's many illustrations, plans, writings and that of his colleagues on the religious or sacred history of Christianity and on his voyage.¹³⁵⁹

The Danish Arabia Expedition (1761-1767) and Carsten Niebuhr's voyage through Ottoman lands, the Red Sea region, the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, Iran, and the Eastern Mediterranean was one of the wonderful surprises and discoveries that this author experienced while reading the *Gazette de France*. Prior to having read the *Gazette*, this author had not previously heard of Niebuhr and the Danish Arabia Expedition, and the *Gazette's* coverage of it helped him have a better understanding of the uniqueness of

¹³⁵⁵ *Catakia*.

¹³⁵⁶ *Gazette de France*, 2 mars 1767, 72.

¹³⁵⁷ *Gazette de France*, 13 avril 1767, 119.

¹³⁵⁸ *Gazette de France*, 11 septembre 1767, 315-316.

¹³⁵⁹ *Gazette de France*, 26 octobre 1767, 368.

such expeditions. It was extremely dangerous as Niebuhr 5 companions all died, leaving him all by himself, it was also a public event in Europe that certainly inspired future scientific and scholarly expeditions similar to it. Its goal was also a recent phenomenon, namely in trying to have a better understanding of the Old Testament, and to find evidence of certain events described in the Bible. This reflected the emergence of the European public's interest in both its own "secular" historical past, but also in its "religious" past. In the arts this movement was often called or associated with Neo-Classicism, Niebuhr's travels were a much more dangerous and innovative version of the traditional Italian journey that many Europeans, most notably artists did throughout the 18th century.¹³⁶⁰ European elites increasingly travelled for leisure in the 18th century, scholarly travels were another if not more serious version of what we call today tourism, and Niebuhr findings proved to be pivotal for creating the foundation on which Europe's understanding of the ancient Eastern Mediterranean and Ancient Persian history would be based on. Finally, Niebuhr's travels as covered by the *Gazette* also indicated that the Ottoman Empire's territories, with the possible exception of the Red Sea region, were considerably safer than the territories in India and Iran, at least prior to the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774. Throughout the *Gazette's* coverage of his travels, there is no real sense of danger for him and in the beginning for his companions when they were in Ottoman lands, but when Niebuhr had arrived in Basra, the clear implication from the *Gazette* was that Iran was a dangerous place. Naturally the Red Sea and India were also dangerous, but this was due to environmental reasons, namely diseases.

¹³⁶⁰ Boime, *Art in an Age of Revolution*, 62.

7.12 A French Scholar in the Levant: Pierre-Joseph de Beauchamp Journey through the Ottoman Empire's Eastern Provinces in the 1780s

Another European figure that travelled through the Ottoman Empire for religious and scholarly purposes and that was covered in detail by the *Gazette* was Pierre Joseph de Beauchamp, vicar general of Bagdad.¹³⁶¹ He was a correspondent of the French Royal Academy of Science and a contributor to the *Journal des Sçavants*, the scholarly equivalent of the *Gazette* and the *Mercure de France*. In an issue of the *Gazette* dating from December 15th 1786, it was announced that Beauchamp had sent to Paris a new map of Mesopotamia, the Tigris, and Euphrates.¹³⁶² He had made observations about the position of the planet Mercury as it related to the Sun's own position, and he planned to spend the winter of 1786-1787 in Isfahan and the Caspian Sea.¹³⁶³ In May 1787 the *Gazette* published information from Beauchamp's letters dating from the 8th of February 1787, in which he stated that every day he saw the planet Mercury from Isfahan. He planned to go to the province of Gilan in Iran and in the Caspian Sea region, but that Persia was still in a civil war¹³⁶⁴ and that Baghdad itself was on the point of falling prey to a civil war as well. Süleyman Paşa (1780-1802)¹³⁶⁵ had left a void in the region from his withdrawal from an expedition, which had caused Arabs in the region to revolt. Besides the threat of revolt, the plague was ravaging Aleppo and Damascus, which the *Gazette* had noted that the plague had previously rarely entered Iran. Baghdad itself was

¹³⁶¹ *Vicaire général de Babylone*.

¹³⁶² See Figure 9 for a map of his journey.

¹³⁶³ *Gazette de France*, 15 décembre 1786, 430.

¹³⁶⁴ Jafar Khan (1785-1789) ruler of the Zand dynasty was fighting against Agha Mohammad Shah (1742-1797), the founder of the Qajar dynasty (1789-1925), for control of Iran.

¹³⁶⁵ *Soliman Bey*.

currently facing a famine, wheat prices in the region were five times greater than they usually were, thus bread prices were extremely high in the region of Bagdad.¹³⁶⁶ As previously stated in other chapters, the high bread prices in Baghdad reflected the inflation that was not only felt in most parts of the Ottoman Empire, but throughout most of Europe as well. The 1780s saw climate become colder than it had previously been, which caused harvests to be disastrous for most of the decade, an additional factor that would have affected Ottoman cities, but not Baghdad, would have been Gazi Hasan Paşa's occupation of Egypt, which began in August 1786.¹³⁶⁷ The occupation of Egypt ended on November 3rd 1787 when Gazi Hasan Paşa left Egypt to return to Istanbul for the Russo-Ottoman War of 1787-1792,¹³⁶⁸ it had had largely cut off grain, coffee, and Red Sea region goods from being exported from Egypt to the rest of the Ottoman Empire, causing inflation in many of the Empire's large cities like Istanbul.¹³⁶⁹ On October 12th, the *Gazette* published a short rubric on Beauchamp, who had left for Persia on the 4th of April 1787 and planned to go to Rasht the capital of Gilan to determine the geographic position of the Caspian Sea. But the continued instability in Iran nominally under Jafar Khan of Zand (1785-1789) could prevent Beauchamp from successfully reaching his destination.¹³⁷⁰ On December 25th the *Gazette* published another rubric about Beauchamp, who had arrived close to Rasht, he had calculated the longitude and latitude of the region, which was noted as having high altitude, and he noticed the large amount of snow during winter and the heat during the summer in the region near Rasht. The rubric ended with details about the struggles between Jafar Khan of Zand (1785-1789)

¹³⁶⁶ *Gazette de France*, 25 mai 1787, 194.

¹³⁶⁷ *Gazette de France*, 3 octobre 1786, 327

¹³⁶⁸ *Gazette de France*, 21 décembre 1787, 495.

¹³⁶⁹ *Gazette de France*, 22 juin 1787, 243.

¹³⁷⁰ *Gazette de France*, 12 octobre 1787, 404.

and his rivals for control of Iran.¹³⁷¹ The *Gazette* would continue to cover Beauchamp's expeditions, scientific discoveries, and his reports on the local political and economic situation of the places that he visited. Beauchamp eventually returned to France in 1790, and was later a part of the scientific or scholarly team that joined Napoleon in his invasion of Egypt in 1798. The *Gazette's* coverage of Beauchamp introduced this author, and surely hundreds if not thousands of his contemporaries to his existence, and it illustrates an important trend that was usually associated with the 19th century, namely that of European scientific explorers or tourists traveling in the Ottoman Empire. They were simultaneously gathering information on the Ottomans and locals, while doing scientific works with often the goal of discovering new scientific phenomenon or of confirming existing ones, they were also further building the scientific knowledge of regions of the world outside of Europe. Most of the *Gazette's* coverage on Beauchamp had details about his observations of the planet Mercury and the sun from the regions he travelled to, while also providing news about the local area's current political and economic situation. Both Niebuhr and Beauchamp were somewhat 18th century versions of what we call today celebrities. They were not figures known for their origins, nor were they public figures whose actions impacted the readers of the *Gazette*, and yet their exploits were followed by the *Gazette* and its readers, even though the people who read about them were not directly impacted by their exploits or findings. Besides the rise of "celebrities," figures like Beauchamp, Niebuhr, and the countless nameless people, further confirms the basic premise that Europeans were more and more comfortable in going to the Ottoman Empire, while Ottomans were also increasingly more comfortable in going to Christian Europe.

¹³⁷¹ *Gazette de France*, 25 décembre 1787, 502.

7.13 Hellenism and the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774

The Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 played an important role in the emergence of Hellenism in France and Europe, which the *Gazette* beautifully illustrated in its coverage of the war. Prior to 1768 there had been coverage of Ancient Greek archaeological findings, there were announcements from some of the classics from Ancient Greece, most notably a translation of Homer's *Iliad*.¹³⁷² There were many academic discussions about Ancient Greece throughout the period of 1740-1768, however they all compared poorly to the coverage that the *Gazette* gave to the ancient Romans. It covered a lot of ancient Roman findings throughout the period of 1740-1768, whether it be coins,¹³⁷³ manuscripts,¹³⁷⁴ statues,¹³⁷⁵ or even ancient cities.¹³⁷⁶ In fact, one of the highlights of the *Gazette* during the period of 1740-1759, when king Carlos III of Spain (1759-1788) was king of Naples and Sicily, were the rubrics from Naples that contained a lot of details about the discoveries and excavations of the ancient Roman cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii.¹³⁷⁷ By the mid 18th century, the French public was fully engaged with its ancient Roman past, while that of ancient Greece still seemed too distant, until the Russo-Ottoman War changed everything. One of the most astounding moments that this author experienced while reading the *Gazette* was its coverage of the

¹³⁷² *Gazette de France*, 18 janvier 1765, 20.

¹³⁷³ *Gazette de France*, 25 mai 1754, 252.

¹³⁷⁴ *Gazette de France*, 1^{er} janvier 1757, 7.

¹³⁷⁵ *Gazette de France*, 5 mai 1766, 146.

¹³⁷⁶ *Gazette de France*, 17 mars 1775, 103-104.

¹³⁷⁷ *Gazette de France*, 2 aout 1749, 391-392.

discovery of Homer's tomb on the island of Naxos (Nakşa Adası).¹³⁷⁸ It was reported on February 3rd 1772 that the Count de Grunn a Dutch Officer serving Russia during the war had discovered a sarcophagus 14 feet high, 7 feet long, and 4 feet wide.¹³⁷⁹ There was a carved inscription written in Greek that "probably the same that had been reported by the historian Herodotus, that according to that historian was put on Homer's grave long after his death."¹³⁸⁰ The skeleton of this "famous" poet was found sitting in the interior of the sarcophagus, but the opening of the sarcophagus led the skeleton to immediately turn to dust. According to the *Gazette*, the fact that the body was found sitting proved that the practice of burning dead bodies in Ancient Greece was not a general or universal phenomenon of that ancient era. They found a vase and writing equipment in the tomb, which they *Gazette* argued proved that the Ancient Greeks had a writing culture during the era that Homer lived in, confirming the theory that the Sieur Freret had published on the ancient roots of writing in his Memoir at the Academy of Inscriptions and Fine Arts.¹³⁸¹ The count of Grunn found other sarcophagi on the island, and tried to find that of Clymene, Homer's mother. The rubric then ended with its discussion of these finding with a biography of Homer, which tells us simultaneously what they knew at the time, and that Homer was famous but not famous enough in France. In other words, he was a name that many educated Frenchmen knew or were increasingly becoming familiar with him, but the public as a whole was not completely familiar with him and of his overall importance. This meant that in France, Homer was not yet associated as a foundational figure of Mediterranean or "European civilization" like he has become today.

¹³⁷⁸ Naxie.

¹³⁷⁹ *Gazette de France*, 27 avril 1772, 153.

¹³⁸⁰ *Gazette de France*, 27 avril 1772, 153.

¹³⁸¹ L'Académie des Inscriptions & Belles-Lettres.

This story shows us that the French public's exposure to Ancient Greece greatly increased during the Russo-Ottoman War, making such figures as Homer familiar or even more familiar with the French public than he had previously been. The increasing frequency of the advertisement of the French translation of the Iliad in the *Gazette* after the war is proof of that.¹³⁸² The French were almost certainly not the only people to have seen increased exposure and interest in Ancient Greece as a result of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774, how it impacted other cultures is not known to this author, but it certainly did not just impact French society. Further proof of this rise of Hellenism in France as a result of this war, was Choiseul-Gouffier's voyage to Ottoman Greece after the war,¹³⁸³ and his publication in two volumes of his *Le Voyage pittoresque de la Grèce*, which was advertised in the *Gazette*.¹³⁸⁴ Interestingly, both the Ottomans and the Russians seemed to have courted Greeks throughout the war, with the Ottomans creating a school for Greeks in 1772.¹³⁸⁵

Flachat has provided interesting stories that hint at a certain level of Hellenism within the Ottoman Empire's elites in Istanbul, certainly they indicate that Ottoman elites in Istanbul highly valued and tried to ingrate this Byzantine heritage within 18th century Istanbul. When his patron Moralı Beşir Ağa the Kızlar Ağası between 1746-1752 had him visit Topkapı, his patron told Flachat that they had a lot of weapons of the Greek Emperors (Eastern Roman Emperors).¹³⁸⁶ Flachat also emphasized the fact that Moralı Beşir Ağa and the Ottomans seemed particularly proud of having these artifics in the

¹³⁸² *Gazette de France*, 3 janvier 1783, 4.

¹³⁸³ Choiseul-Gouffier was the last French ambassador to the Ottoman Empire under the Ancien Régime between 1784-1792.

¹³⁸⁴ *Gazette de France*, 20 février 1778, 65-66.

¹³⁸⁵ *Gazette de France*, 22 octobre 1773, 379-380.

¹³⁸⁶ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 165.

palace, as a kind of mark of pride for them. This could have been them trying to find something to brag to a Western European, as traditional Islamic artifacts might not have impressed him as much, so they decided to show byzantine relics. Flachat also mentioned that the Ottomans in Istanbul frequently tried to integrate remnants of Byzantine monuments or architectural structures like column within Ottoman buildings.¹³⁸⁷ He also noted that Ottomans in the mid 18th century were very curious about Byzantine architecture and heritage, for example they had found a Byzantine column when some of the houses had been burned down in 1754, and it attracted the attention of the *Sadrazam* of the time Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa (1752-1755) and other major officials of the Porte, who all went to see the column.¹³⁸⁸ At the start of fall in 1773 and near the end of the Russo-Ottoman War, the Porte and the Patriarch Samuel I (1763-1768 and 1773-1774) enacted an elaborate ceremony at his accession as Patriarch for a second occasion, a sign of French Hellenism as the *Gazette* had previously not described any ceremonies related to the Patriarch in Istanbul.¹³⁸⁹ The ceremony was done in lower Istanbul where the new Academy for Greeks would be established in order for Ottoman Greeks to learn the language of Sophocles, Demosthenes, which the Gazette noted that the Ottoman Greeks no longer spoke, and the Porte also established there an Academy for the philosophy of Aristotle along with sections that will be on theology and medicine. The Porte further declared that in the future no Greek could become Voyvoda of Moldavia if they had not studied in this Academy.¹³⁹⁰

¹³⁸⁷ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 224-225.

¹³⁸⁸ Flachat, *Observations sur le commerce: Tome II*, 226-227.

¹³⁸⁹ *Gazette de France*, 22 octobre 1773, 379-380.

¹³⁹⁰ *Gazette de France*, 22 octobre 1773, 379-380.

Both Flachat during the later reign of Mahmud I and the Gazette de France during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 demonstrated major indications that the Ottoman Empire had its own version of Hellenism. It probably was not a movement like it became in Western Europe, but still the Ottomans in Istanbul were actively engaged with their Byzantine and Ancient Greek past. The Russo-Ottoman War sparked major French interest in Ancient Greek culture and civilization, and it also may have increased Ottoman or Istanbul interest in its ancient and Byzantine Greek heritage. But it also should not be forgotten that violence towards Greeks and other Christians increased significantly during and after the war, this does not cancel the potential presence of an Ottoman version of Hellenism, but it should not be forgotten that the relationship between Ottoman Istanbul elites and Greeks would start to change and become more confrontational with time.

7.14 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the Ottoman Empire during the period of 1740-1787 saw major cultural and economic interactions with its Italian and Austrian neighbors. Trade on the Danube and increasingly in the Black Sea region were booming, with Belgrade and Semlin as the centers of Austrian-Ottoman cultural and economic exchanges. There were frequent cases of Europeans converting to Islam just like there were Ottomans converting to Christianity after they migrated to Europe. There were cases of inter-Christian conflicts throughout the Ottoman Empire, an issue that was fairly

awkward for the Porte, which usually sided with existing hierarchical institutions within the Ottoman Christian elites. There were cases of murder both of Europeans in the Ottoman Empire and of an Ottoman murdering a colleague in the Papal States. The Ottoman Empire seems to have started to follow the 18th century European trend that led to the emergence of tourism, as there were Ottomans who travelled for leisure in Europe. Famously Carsten Niebuhr and Pierre Joseph de Beauchamp travelled throughout the Ottoman Empire, both demonstrated that it was considerably safer than Iran and in Niebuhr's case, India. They helped normalize travel to the Ottoman Empire and confirmed that it was not necessarily as dangerous as other places in the world. The case of Matheo di Owan also illustrated the increasing integration of the Ottoman Empire within Europe as it collaborated with the Netherlands in seizing his assets. Finally this chapter showed strong evidences of a potential Ottoman version of Hellenism, which will require more research, but is still interesting in its possibilities for what it could say about the Ottoman Empire. Overall life seems to have been pretty good in many regions of the Ottoman Empire during this era especially between 1740-1768 and between 1777-1787. However as the previous chapter demonstrated, the rise of new kinds of violence did devastate and would continue to harm Ottoman society throughout many different regions.

CHAPTER VIII

Conclusion

8.1 General Overview

The period of 1740-1787 was the last half century of the calm before the storm that would fundamentally change the Ottoman Empire's relationship with Europe, the Porte's relationship with the provinces, the Porte's relationship with its non-Muslim and Muslim populations, and the Porte's relationship with itself. The period of 1740-1787 was a simpler time in Ottoman history, when things went quite well for the Ottomans until the war of 1768-1774, which began to change everything for them. But signs pointed to renewal and the Porte's successful ability to slowly restore its authority and power over the provinces, only for that to come to an end after the start of the war in 1787. It was a period in which the Ottoman Empire made many diplomatic innovations including offering to mediate a peace between European powers in the War of Austrian Succession, in which it was not directly involved in. It saw the Porte successfully use

Ottoman diplomacy on France to deal with Malta over embarrassing events. It was a period in which Ottoman elites had throughout the near entirety of the century saw wealth accumulation over multiple generations, the high point being the reign of Mustafa III before 1769, with Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa being the most emblematic of these major figures. It was a period in Ottoman history that saw elite women, especially the sisters of the Sultan, play prominent roles in the political culture of the Empire, in establishing their own networks and building up or adding to those of their husbands. It was period in which Istanbul was the most dangerous city in Europe, largely due to factors outside of the Porte's control such as an abundance of fires, earthquakes, the plague, and Janissary attempts at rebellion. It was a period in which not only did Franco-Ottoman trade flourished, but so did commercial ties between Austria and the Ottoman Empire on the Danube. Finally it was an interesting period in the Ottoman Empire's history that has largely been ignored by Ottoman historians, hopefully this dissertation will help contribute to the rise of this period as an era of study in Ottoman historiography.

The second chapter of this dissertation focused on the Ottoman Empire's successful navigation of the mid 18th century European wars and its shrew use of diplomacy during this period. The role of the powerful *gümrük emini* Isha Ağa within the Porte's diplomacy during this period was also discussed in this chapter as well as his influence over the Mahmud I. The third chapter illustrated the Ottoman Empire's effective use of its traditional diplomacy, which was using diplomatic pressure on diplomatic envoys in Istanbul, which it did with the French ambassadors during this period when it concerned Malta. The fourth chapter examined the height Mustafa III's reign and the dominance of Paşa who were married to his powerful sisters. Many of the

dominant figures of Mustafa III's reign in the 1760s had had multigenerational accumulation of wealth and services to the Porte, best illustrated by Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa. The fifth chapter looked at the crucial role that elite Ottoman women could have in establishing their own factions and networks and help their respective husbands become dominant figures during the reign of their brothers. The sixth chapter examined Istanbul and the many dangers that it faced during this period, and the *Kaymakamlık* of one of Mustafa III's brothers-in-law Melek Mehmed Paşa, Zeynep Sultan's husband, was also examined. The last chapter looked at the cultural interactions between the Ottoman and Europeans, whether it be about migrations, tourism, commercial relations, religious conversion, or even murder. This dissertation provided a variety of topics and issues that all took place between 1740-1787 and all focused on the Ottoman Empire.

8.2 The *Gazette de France* a Crucial Source for Ottoman History

The *Gazette de France* and 18th century periodicals are a crucial source for Ottoman history between approximately the period of 1650-1839. Many of the major gaps that Ottoman sources do not provide can be filled in by the use of European periodicals, especially for the 18th century, which does not have the many disadvantages of the 19th century press, of having aggressively hostile coverage of the Ottoman Empire. Like official French sources, official Ottoman sources were frequently quiet about its political culture because it was sensitive information and the men who wrote these official sources like the editors in chief of the *Gazette* or the *Vakanüvis* had to please their

patrons. If they lost favor with their patrons, or most often if their patron's faction fell out of power then so did they, and it was best not to leave any evidence that could be turned against them. Sainte-Albine the editor in chief of the *Gazette* between 1733-1749 and 1751-1762 was tied to the marquis de Verneuil and later Meslé, both of whom had extensive ties to Versailles and the ministry of Foreign affairs. Much like Izzi Efendi, who was probably the protégé of Tavukçubaşı Mustafa Efendi and Moralı Beşir Ağa, these men had to please their masters, and when their patrons were no longer in the picture, these men whether in France or the Ottoman Empire rarely lasted much longer in their respective posts.

The *Gazette de France* was the French equivalent of *Tavkîm-i Vekâyî*, except it was in the 18th century, and the closest Ottoman equivalent to it was the works of the *Vakanüvis*, whose faults are really put in perspective after reading all of the *Gazette* between 1740-1787. The fact of the matter is that official sources have major liabilities because they cannot say all that they could say, and frequently they could not even imply what they had to say. Their primary job was to make the monarchy or the Sublime Porte appear in all of its glory, show the holy or sacred rituals that were passed from generation after generation whether in Versailles or in Istanbul. Their patrons were also highly depended on their respective rulers and “aimed to please” them whenever they could, this was one of the responsibilities of the editors in chief of the *Gazette* much like it was of the *Vakanüvis*. The greatest advantage that 18th century European history has over 18th century Ottoman history is the plethora of unofficial sources that provided a lot of the details that have given a lot of life to 18th century history, while the Ottoman Empire had some unofficial works, they were nowhere near the same level nor did they have the same

impact on Ottoman society that unofficial sources had on European society of the same period. Ottoman historians who will eventually read 18th century periodicals on a regular basis will be exposed to the printing culture that existed in Europe but did not exist in the Ottoman Empire, and if they read the *Gazette* they will also be exposed to the French equivalent of the *Vakanüvis*, which will help them have a better understanding and appreciation of these sources.

A multitude of random information on the Ottoman Empire was provided by the *Gazette* as a result of its regular coverage of the Ottomans. For some this “random” information will be an interesting anecdote on the Ottomans during this period, for others it could serve as useful information to be used with other sources for their research, for other Ottoman historians this piece of “random” information may already have been known or read somewhere else, which may lead them to asking questions about the origins of their sources. But for other historians, the “random” information provided by the *Gazette* and other gazettes from this era could be the topic of an article, a master thesis, or even possibly a book. The best example for this was the story about the Tyrolese bird merchants going to Istanbul, it was random information that this author ultimately used to discuss the growing commercial interactions on the Danube between the Ottomans and the subjects of Austria. For this author it was not the most interesting piece of information about the Ottomans found while reading the *Gazette*, but for many of the people with who this author discussed his dissertation, this simple and short news story, it was only 13 sentences long,¹³⁹¹ was one of the elements that a lot of Ottoman historians gravitated towards the most. What may be a footnote in a dissertation, could be

¹³⁹¹ A standard middle page, the second or third page of a standard issue, of the *Gazette* between 1762-1787 would have slightly over 100 sentences.

the subject of another scholar's own work, like those whose interests lie in the Ottoman Empire and animals, or the animal trade between the Ottomans and Europeans. That is the greatest value that 18th century European gazettes provide for Ottoman studies, consistent information that may be useful for some, but crucial for others.

8.3 The Ottoman Empire in the 18th Century

The Ottoman Empire in the 18th century was in an interesting period of its existence as it simultaneously did quite well throughout the century, but its successes were overshadowed by the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 and the subsequent crises that it faced afterwards for what feels like the rest of the Empire's existence. Naturally it had led to Ottoman historians to misunderstand the era, with the biggest mistake being that the period of 1683 to 1792 being a continuous period of decline or crisis, which it was not. The Ottoman War of 1683-1699 was a major defeat for the Ottoman Empire, much like France suffered a major defeat in the Seven Years' War in 1756-1763, these were major defeats but not wars that fundamentally changed the respective states or brought them into the brink of major crises. All major powers during the early modern era faced similar defeats, they were normal aspects of warfare of that era, just like the Ottoman Empire lost Hungary and other territories in 1699, France lost Canada in 1763. That is how Ottoman historians need to start looking at the 18th century, it was not a century of crisis, quite the contrary, the Ottoman Empire fared quite well during the first three quarters of that century. It was militarily not the most successful period of the

Empire's history, but culturally and commercially it did see a lot of growth. The true crisis that caused the Ottoman Empire to start making major changes was the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774, and even then, it actually performed somewhat okay for most of the period between the end of 1770 until the Battle of Kozluca in the summer of 1774. Like France and the rest of Europe in the 18th century, things went well for the Ottoman Empire just like certain other elements went poorly for them. Ottoman historians need to start focusing on the period and its details instead of trying to come up with general narrative, which are only useful when a certain period is already well researched, which is currently not the case for the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century. As illustrated in this dissertation, the *Lale Devri* was an interesting moment in the Ottoman Empire's 18th century history, it was however neither the most interesting period nor the period that saw the most "experimentations" by the Porte during century. As illustrated throughout this dissertation, the reign of Mahmud I and of his successors were a continuation and an expansion of the reign of Ahmed III and of the *Lale Devri*.

8.4 Epilogue: The Ottoman Empire after 1787

This dissertation examined the Ottoman Empire within the wider context of Europe during the period of 1740-1787, which was previously one of the least studied and least understood periods in Ottoman history. It was a period that saw partial Ottoman integration within Europe, in which France viewed the Ottoman Empire as a crucial part of Eastern Europe, and in which the Ottomans themselves were actively engaged with

Europe. It was a period in Ottoman history in which the Empire was esteemed and still feared in Europe and in which the Ottomans felt confident in their empire's power and wealth. The Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774 changed everything to the shock of both the Ottomans and Europe, none of whom expected the Ottomans to fare as poorly as they had during that war. The post Küçük Kaynarca era of 1774 up to 1787 led to some important changes to the Ottoman Empire and its elites, namely it led to the rise of new kinds of men like Gazi Hasan Paşa and some of his protégés like Cezzar Ahmed Paşa and Koca Yusuf Paşa.

In the period after 1774, the Porte came to rely more on military men when it came to quelling rebellions, re-establishing control over provinces, or starting new wars. Whereas in 1769 the capable statesmen and courtier Yağlıkçızade Mehmed Emin Paşa, who had been a trained merchant and bureaucrat slowly led the Ottomans to war, in 1787 the veteran military commander Koca Yusuf Paşa led his troops to battle and fared considerably better than his predecessor had had. The Ottoman Empire in 1787 entered into a war that it was prepared for but for which the external circumstances would not be in their favor. Austria under Joseph II had wanted to expand since the War of the Bavarian Succession (1778-1779) but had failed to do so, which had led him to ally with Russia in 1780.¹³⁹² Both Austria and Russia were expecting an Ottoman declaration of war over Russia's occupation of Crimea in 1783, it wisely did not occur and as a result Joseph II who had been itching for war to expand his domains was forced to look elsewhere. By 1787 climate and harvests had been worsening and would continue to do so in the last two years of the 1780s, both Russia and Austria faced major climatic and

¹³⁹² Scott, *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers*, 256.

agricultural problems near the end of the decade, just like the Ottoman Empire. When the Ottomans declared war on Russia, Austria under Joseph II was increasingly facing internal problems, but was forced to go to war against the Ottoman Empire because of its alliance with Russia and for potential gains.

All three powers were facing major problems as it concerned harvesting, but only the Ottoman Empire saw its ability to get provisions from Eastern Europe, like Poland, severely restricted due to both Russian and Austrian intervention, while these two powers were able to maintain their own provisioning. In other words, from 1787 until 1792 the three powers faced poor circumstances to fight a war, but the Ottomans faced the biggest disadvantage at having to fight two powers at the same time and seeing some of its provisioning supply routes cut off by the war. However by 1789 Austria also faced enormous problems in the Austrian Netherlands, where there was a revolution, which forced Joseph II to divert his troops, putting Austria on the brink. The outbreak of the French Revolution in July 1789 did not immediately impact the three powers, and only began to do so by the time the war had finished in 1792. Leopold II who was briefly Holy Roman Emperor and the ruler of Austria (September 1790-March 1792), was able to remove Austria out of the war with the Treaty of Sistova (1791), which gave back the lands conquered by Austria to the Ottoman Empire, so that he could focus on reestablishing order in the Austrian Netherlands. He died in March 1792, his inexperienced son Francis II (1792-1835) faced the increasingly aggressive French Republic which led to the start of the French Revolutionary Wars in July 1792.

From that point onward, Europe and the Ottoman Empire would face the chaotic and deadly French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars from approximately 1792 to

1815. This era famously saw the emergence of *Nizam-ı Cedid* under Selim III (1789-1807, death in 1808) along with one of the low points in the Ottoman center's history in which Istanbul held little control over many of its provinces. The war of 1787-1792 combined with the European and Ottoman wars between 1792-1815 unraveled the reforms and the reestablishment of Ottoman order throughout the provinces that Cezayirli Gazi Hasan Paşa had done under Abdulhamid I (1774-1789). Whether or not Gazi Hasan Paşa's successful reintegration of several Ottoman provinces that had been in the hands of rebels like Syria or Albania, would have continued after his eventual death is debatable, but the war of 1787-1792 definitively undid his efforts and successes in reestablishing the Sublime Porte's authority through most provinces of the Ottoman Empire. The objective here is not to show what could have been, but rather to illustrate the negative impact that the Ottoman war of 1787-1792 had on Ottoman society, the integrity of the Empire, and on the Porte's authority throughout the realm. The subsequent period of 1792-1815 saw the rise of wars on previously unheard of scales that completely destabilized and exhausted all of Europe including the Ottoman Empire. The Porte also faced uniquely Ottoman factors that are outside of the scope of this dissertation, which resulted in a major reaction against certain elements of the *Nizam-ı Cedid*, which combined with the Russo-Ottoman War of 1806-1812 led to the downfall of Selim III in 1807.

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APPENDICES: FIGURES

Figure 1: Map illustrating the cities where the French language gazettes were published in the 18th century. It was taken from the following website: [Les gazettes européennes du 18^e siècle | Gazettes européennes du 18^e siècle \(gazettes18e.fr\)](http://Les_gazettes_europeennes_du_18e_siecle/Gazettes_europeennes_du_18e_siecle_(gazettes18e.fr).).

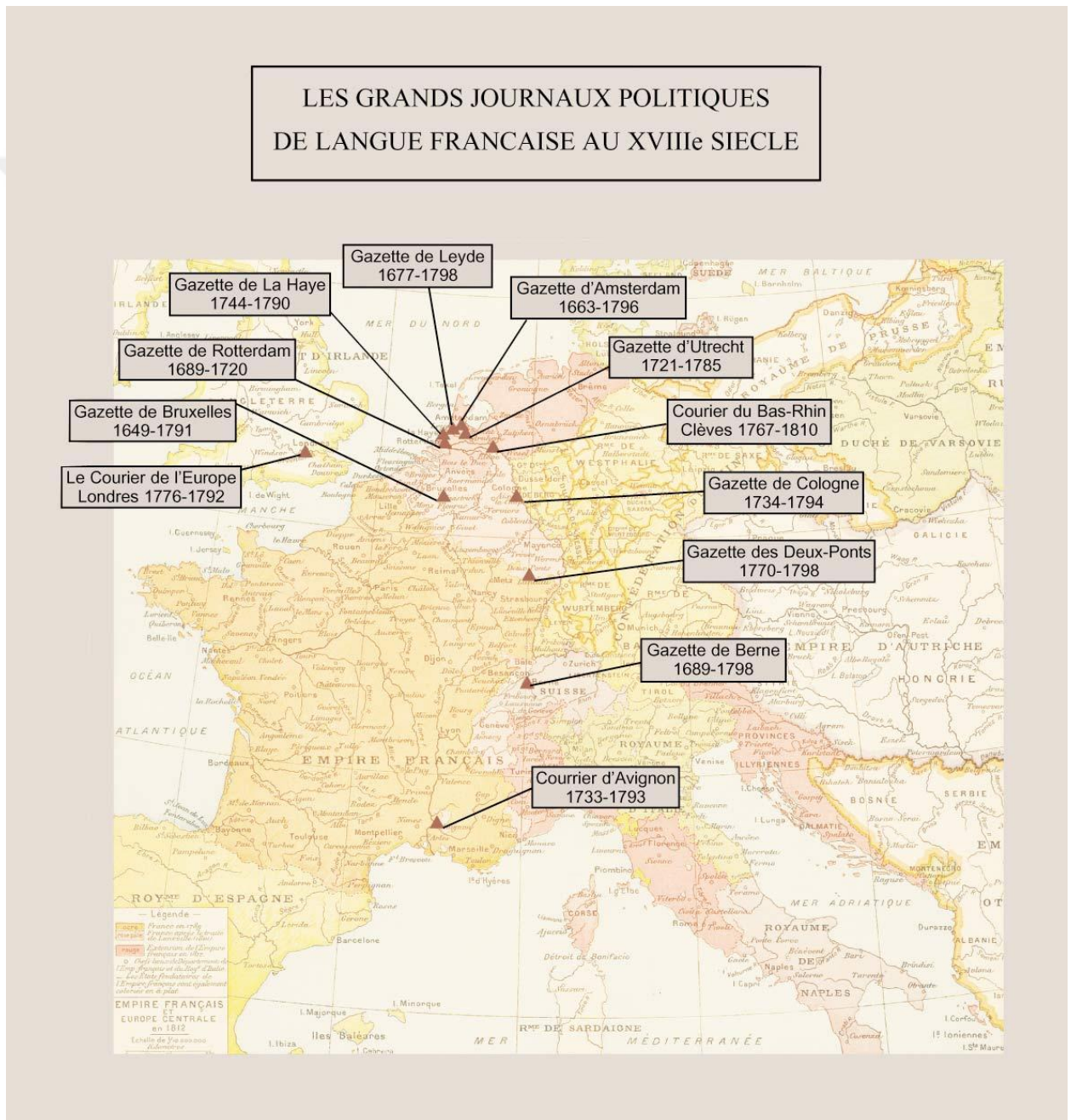


Figure 2: The Official Statement from the Sublime Port on the successful Ottoman defense of the fortress of Hotin against a Russian attack in May 1769.



Figure 3: A commemorative coin showing the role that France played in mediating the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739. The coins were made between 1740-1742 and depict on the left Louis XV. In the middle of the opposite side of the coin is a woman representing France, giving olive branches to a woman representing the Ottoman Empire with a crescent on her shield on the right side. On the left side, from left to right is a woman with a helmet representing Austria and to her right is a woman representing Russia.



Figure 4: Louis XV receiving the Ottoman ambassador Yirmisekizzade Mehmed Said Paşa at Versailles on January 15th 1742. A major event in 18th century Franco-Ottoman relations that left a major mark on Louis XV and on a large segment of the French nobility.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Figure 5: A portrait of Louis XV done in 1748 by Maurice Quentin de la Tour, the French king would have been around 38 years old and in his prime. This was almost certainly not the portrait that the comtesse des Alleurs showed Rukiye Kadın and Süleyman Ağa's wife in 1750, but this was what Louis XV would have looked like. How much of an impression would such a portrait leave on Ottoman men and women who were mostly unexposed to them? Certainly Rukiye Kadın and her companions were impressed by the French king's appearances.



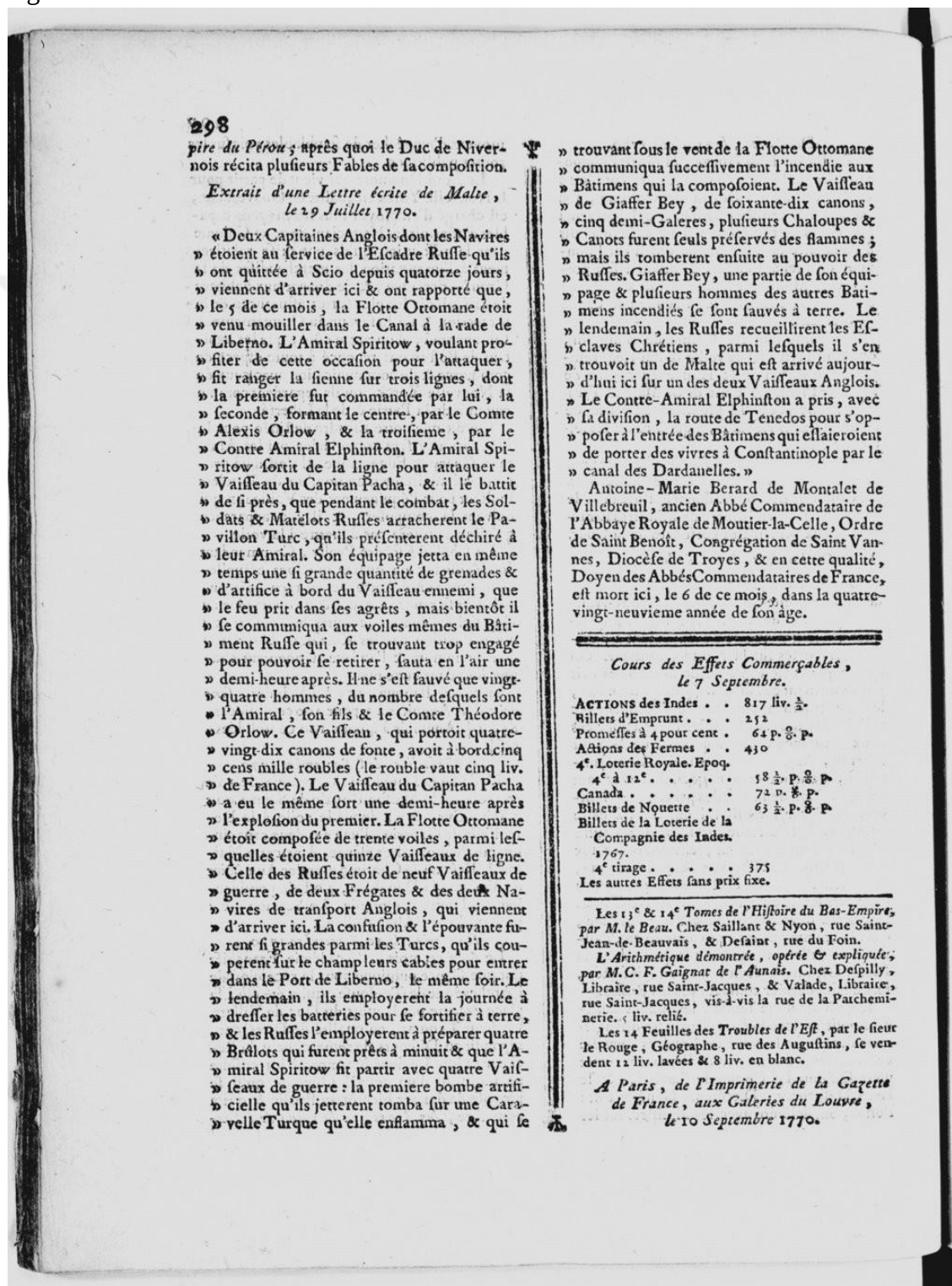
Figure 6: The *Gazette de France*'s announcement of the execution of Köse Bahir Mustafa Paşa in the 4th paragraph of the 1st page from its 49th issue that was released in Paris on Friday June 21st 1765.



Figure 7: A painting of Madame Adélaïde de France by Jean-Étienne Liotard from 1753, she was the 3rd daughter of Louis XV and Marie Leszczyńska. She is wearing a “Turkish” outfit and the painting is representative of *turquerie*.



Figure 8: The details on the Battle of Çeşme were published on the *Gazette's* September 10th issue of 1770, two months after the Battle had taken place. It was published on the last page of the 73rd issue, which meant that it had both recently arrived in Paris and was urgent news.



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pire du Pérou ; après quoi le Duc de Nivernois récita plusieurs Fables de sa composition.

Extrait d'une Lettre écrite de Malte ,
le 29 Juillet 1770.

« Deux Capitaines Anglois dont les Navires
» étoient au service de l'Escadre Russe qu'ils
» ont quittée à Scio depuis quatorze jours ,
» viennent d'arriver ici & ont rapporté que ,
» le 5 de ce mois , la Flotte Ottomane étoit
» venu mouiller dans le Canal à la rade de
» Liberno. L'Amiral Spiritow , voulant pro-
» fiter de cette occasion pour l'attaquer ,
» fit ranger la sienne sur trois lignes , dont
» la première fut commandée par lui , la
» seconde , formant le centre , par le Comte
» Alexis Orlov , & la troisième , par le
» Contre Amiral Elphinston. L'Amiral Spi-
» ritow sortit de la ligne pour attaquer le
» Vaisseau du Capitan Pacha , & il le battit
» de si près , que pendant le combat , les Sol-
» dats & Matelots Russes arrachèrent le Pa-
» villon Turc , qu'ils présentèrent déchiré à
» leur Amiral. Son équipage jeta en même
» temps une si grande quantité de grenades &
» d'artifice à bord du Vaisseau ennemi , que
» le feu prit dans ses agrès , mais bientôt il
» se communiqua aux voiles mêmes du Bâti-
» ment Russe qui , se trouvant trop engagé
» pour pouvoir se retirer , sauta en l'air une
» demi-heure après. Il ne s'est sauvé que vingt-
» quatre hommes , du nombre desquels sont
» l'Amiral , son fils & le Comte Théodore
» Orlov. Ce Vaisseau , qui portoit quatre-
» vingt-dix canons de fonte , avoit à bord cinq
» cens mille roubles (le rouble vaut cinq liv.
» de France). Le Vaisseau du Capitan Pacha
» a eu le même sort une demi-heure après
» l'explosion du premier. La Flotte Ottomane
» étoit composée de trente voiles , parmi les-
» quelles étoient quinze Vaisseaux de ligne.
» Celle des Russes étoit de neuf Vaisseaux de
» guerre , de deux Frégates & des deux Na-
» vires de transport Anglois , qui viennent
» d'arriver ici. La confusion & l'épouvante fu-
» rent si grandes parmi les Turcs , qu'ils cou-
» perent sur le champ leurs cables pour entrer
» dans le Port de Liberno , le même soir. Le
» lendemain , ils employèrent la journée à
» dresser les batteries pour se fortifier à terre ,
» & les Russes l'employèrent à préparer quatre
» Brûlots qui furent prêts à minuit & que l'A-
» miral Spiritow fit partir avec quatre Vais-
» seaux de guerre : la première bombe artifi-
» cielle qu'ils jetterent tomba sur une Cara-
» velle Turque qu'elle enflamma , & qui se

» trouvant sous le vent de la Flotte Ottomane
» communiqua successivement l'incendie aux
» Bâtimens qui la composoient. Le Vaisseau
» de Giaffer Bey , de soixante-dix canons ,
» cinq demi-Galères , plusieurs Chaloupes &
» Canots furent seuls préservés des flammes ;
» mais ils tombèrent ensuite au pouvoir des
» Russes. Giaffer Bey , une partie de son équi-
» page & plusieurs hommes des autres Bâti-
» mens incendiés se sont sauvés à terre. Le
» lendemain , les Russes recueillirent les Ef-
» claves Chrétiens , parmi lesquels il s'en
» trouvoit un de Malte qui est arrivé aujour-
» d'hui ici sur un des deux Vaisseaux Anglois.
» Le Contre-Amiral Elphinston a pris , avec
» sa division , la route de Tenedos pour s'op-
» poser à l'entrée des Bâtimens qui essaieroient
» de porter des vivres à Constantinople par le
» canal des Dardanelles. »

Antoine-Marie Berard de Montalet de
Villebreuil , ancien Abbé Commendataire de
l'Abbaye Royale de Moutier-la-Celle , Ordre
de Saint Benoît , Congrégation de Saint Van-
nes , Diocèse de Troyes , & en cette qualité ,
Doyen des Abbés Commendataires de France ,
est mort ici , le 6 de ce mois , dans la quatre-
vingt-neuvième année de son âge.

Cours des Effets Commerçables , le 7 Septembre.

ACTIONS des Indes . . .	817 liv. 3.
Billets d'Emprunt . . .	252
Promesses à 4 pour cent . . .	64 p. 3. p.
ACTIONS des Fermes . . .	430
4 ^e . Loterie Royale. Epoq.	
4 ^e à 12 ^e	58 1/2 p. 3. p.
Canada	72 p. 8. p.
Billets de Nourture . . .	63 1/2 p. 8. p.
Billets de la Loterie de la Compagnie des Indes.	
1767.	
4 ^e tirage	375
Les autres Effets sans prix fixe.	

Les 13^e & 14^e Tomes de l'Histoire du Bas-Empire,
par M. le Beau. Chez Saillant & Nyon , rue Saint-
Jean-de-Beauvais , & Desfaint , rue du Foin.
L'Arithmétique démontrée , opérée & expliquée ;
par M. C. F. Gaignat de l'Aunais. Chez Despillay ,
Libraire , rue Saint-Jacques , & Valade , Libraire ,
rue Saint-Jacques , vis-à-vis la rue de la Parchemi-
nerie. 1 liv. relié.

Les 14 Feuilles des Troubles de l'Est , par le sieur
le Rouge , Géographe , rue des Augustins , se ven-
dent 12 liv. lavées & 8 liv. en blanc.

A Paris , de l'Imprimerie de la Gazette
de France , aux Galeries du Louvre ,
le 10 Septembre 1770.

Figure 9: The itinerary of Pierre-Joseph de Beauchamp in the Eastern Mediterranean, Persian, and Caspian Sea regions between 1781-1789.

