Ottoman Constructions of the Morea Rebellion, 1770s:
A Comprehensive Study of Ottoman Attitudes to the Greek Uprising

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Abstract

The topic of our dissertation concerns the Greek uprisings against the Ottoman Empire, which took place in the context of the Ottoman-Russian struggle of 1768-1774. That is, our research focuses on the Morea Rebellion which is often claimed as not only the first crucial step on the way towards creating an independent Greek state, which came into being in 1829 with the treaty of London, but also occasionally as one of the most significant turning points both for the history of the Ottoman Empire and for the struggle of Greek independence. The meaning of the Morea Rebellion has long been under discussion among Greek historians. While we will deal with Ottoman side of the issue, this study will shed light on matters of Greek historiography which has been generally been created without taking account of the Ottoman side of the story.

In the light of Ottoman archival documents as well as writings of earlier, more contemporary sources, we will argue for the complexity and intricacy of the Morea Rebellion, as reflected in the Ottoman documents, many of which have not been used before. We have tested
the veracity of narratives in contemporary chronicles, many of which have been subsumed into
the narratives that are current still, by comparing them in Ottoman archival documents. Accordingly, we have revisited many widely accepted assumptions, such as those describing
Ottoman society of the time as being divided into homogenous groups clearly defined religion,
nation or other identity. In opposition to the earlier explanations of this uprising, our primary
sources lead us to see the Morea Rebellion as predominately an international issue. Our
conclusions invalidate the long held assumption that the Ottomans were ignorant of Russian
initiatives in the Morea. Last but not least, the Ottoman attitudes towards the rebels as well as
Ottoman preoccupation with Russia long after the collapse of the rebellion are considered in
greater detail. On balance, we believe that, with the help of a better analysis of the secondary
literature and the major new primary sources, we have provided an original and comprehensive
story of the Morea Rebellion.
To Biricik Eşim
Birsen Gündoğdu
Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Virginia H. Aksan for her guidance, encouragements, cogent critiques and suggestions, as well as support on various points throughout the process of the work. She really inspired me with her erudition, vast knowledge in Ottoman history and kind words. Without her guidance and support, this thesis could not be finalized. I am truly blessed to have such a perfect and cheerful supervisor.

I am also deeply indebted to Victor Ostapchuk for devoting his very precious time for editing my dissertation and encouraging me to continue my studies in Ottoman history. I also would like to express my gratitude to my professor Ömer Turan at the Middle East Technical University, who has showed the way and who has always supported me during my undergraduate and graduate education, without whose assistance I could not have had a career in history. Not to forget the thanks I owe to my doctoral committee members, Linda Northrup, James Reilly and Robert Zens for their invaluable comments on my thesis draft.

Special thanks go to my friends, Murat Yaşar, Sait Ocaklı, Metin Bezoekoğlu and Halil Şimşek, without their companionship I could not have put up with the difficulties of life in Canada and without their encouragements the present study could not have been what it is now. I would like to thank Elif Bayraktar, not only for her help to read sources in Greek but also her friendship. A lot much thanks to my graduate administrator, Anna Sousa, for her kindness and consideration, whenever I go to her she always welcomes and supports me.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my family for the all support and sacrifices. My wife Birsen Gündoğdu deserves special thanks for her unfailing love, support and encouragement throughout our marriage. On the occasions when I felt unable to continue with my studies and felt enormous hardships, she always stood by me and made sure I never gave up. Finally, I would like to express my deep affection for my son Taha Erol and my little daughter Ayten Beyza. Their love provided my inspiration and was always my driving force. I owe all my achievement to them. My deepest gratitude goes to my mother, Zeliha Ayten Gündoğdu, whom I have always longed for since she passed away in 2001 and whom I shall never forget.

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Introduction: The Ottoman Presence in the Morea and the Morea Rebellion

The Morea (Mora/Peloponnese) Rebellion in the Ottoman Historiography

This thesis concerns a particular rebellion which took place in the Morea (Mora in Turkish) in the 1770s, one of the Ottoman provinces of the time located on the Peloponnese peninsula.¹ Our research will focus on the Morea Rebellion which occurred in the context of the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774. This rebellion is often claimed as not only the first crucial step on the way to creating an independent Greek state, which came into being in 1829 with the treaty of London, but also occasionally as one of the most significant turning points both for the history of the Ottoman Empire and for the struggle of Greek independence. The significance of the Morea Rebellion has long been under discussion among Greek historians. The purpose of this thesis is to analyze Ottoman documents available in the imperial achieves in Istanbul which were generated by this insurrection of 1770. We will particularly look at Ottoman constructions of this uprising, which have been largely understudied as we will shortly see in greater detail.

This dissertation contributes to various topics regarding the eighteenth-century Ottoman historiography which have been long under discussion, but first it will construct an elaborate history of the Morea Rebellion, particularly from the Ottoman perspective. The significance of this study is not limited to the Ottoman side. Many Greek historians, who pay little attention to Ottoman perception of the Morea Rebellion, will find a chance to test the validity of some of their arguments. This thesis will also contribute to the general historiographies of the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire. The question of national identity among Ottoman minorities and that of centralization or decentralization in the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire will also find a

¹ See maps.
place here where previous arguments have made general assumptions without examining. Last but not least, this dissertation might be seen as a case study where we can test the reliability of theories made for international relations and balance of power in eighteenth-century world politics.

The Morea as an Ottoman Province from the Beginning to the Eighteenth Century

Ottoman incursions into the Morea began in the reign of Murad I (1359-1389) with gazi begs such as Evrenos, and continued during the sovereignty of Beyazid I (1389-1402). It was throughout Beyazid’s time that the Greeks of Morea not only accepted the suzerainty of Ottomans for the first time, but also started to pay tribute to the Ottoman sultans. Following the Battle of Varna in 1444, the Despotate of Morea became a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire. Afterwards, in 1458, Mehmed II (1451-1481) himself occupied one-third of the Morea, and two years later, Zaganos Pasha – as a commander of the sultan – brought most of the peninsula under the sway of the Ottoman Empire. However, the Ottomans had to wait another eighty years in order to seize full control of the peninsula at the expense of the Venetians, who had managed to maintain control of important port cities situated in the Peloponnese such as Modon, Koron, and Navarin till the second half of the sixteenth century.²

After the conquest of the Morea, the Ottomans reorganized the peninsula by introducing the tımar system and other classic Ottoman institutions. As time went on, the peninsula not only gained a substantial number of Christians but was also repopulated with Muslims coming from other Ottoman territories. As a result, the number of reaya (members of the tax-paying population) increased enormously within a short period of time after the Ottoman conquest of the Peloponnese. To be exact, the tahrir defteris (Ottoman tax registers) of Morea clearly indicate

that the population in the Morea doubled within thirty-two years after the initial capture, and reached 50,176 Christian households and 5,330 Muslim households, including military and civil citizenry. Therefore, only 9% of the population was Muslim at that time. But interestingly enough, 40% of the muhafiz (guardian/soldier) in the fortresses of the Morea consisted of non-Muslims who were exempt from certain taxes. The number of the Muslims increased slightly to 11% in the last quarter of the sixteenth century. More significantly, with the conversions of Christians to Islam, combined with the further immigration of Muslims to the region, the growth rate of the Muslim population increased greatly during the seventeenth century, until 1687.3

It is often argued that the reaya of the Morea enjoyed prosperity and peace under the authority of the Ottoman Empire, which continued for almost two centuries. Accordingly, the Christians there maintained most of their former privileges thanks to the help of the Orthodox Church. Greek culture in the Morea also survived because the Greeks were allowed to govern their own communities as long as they acknowledged the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire. This does not necessarily mean that they were left totally free to govern themselves without the intervention of central government; the Ottomans often interfered by appointing their own delegates as local rulers of the Greeks. Furthermore, the seventeenth century brought about some issues that disturbed the serenity and peace of the Morea. On the one hand, natural diseases like the plague, and negative climate changes resulting in harvest failures, decreased the population. On the other hand, the removal of former privileges as well as substantial increases in taxes led to the emergence of a number of small families who survived to the harsh conditions of the seventeenth century. On balance, however, nothing in and of itself actually gave rise to a significant economic collapse which was an unbearable burden to the society, since the economic depression of the seventeenth century was alleviated through an increase in the economic

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3 İslam Ansiklopedisi (İstanbul Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2005), s.v. "Mora."
efficiency of other productions such as silk, cotton and olive oil. Interestingly enough, in spite of this turmoil, the Ottomans continued to maintain tight control in the region until the second siege of Vienna in the years between 1683 and 1699. To give but one example, following the Wars of Crete, even the district of Mani (Manya or Mania) [where Ottoman domination had never been entirely achieved] was brought under the control of the empire by Köse Ali Pasha in 1670.4

Just one year after the debacle of the second siege of Vienna, however, the Venetians under the command of Francesco Morisini began invasions of Morea, and by 1686, the whole peninsula had become a province of Venice. The Venetian conquest did not lead to immediate tranquility and peace in the region, however. First of all, immediately after the capture, the Muslim population of the peninsula was greatly reduced. Natural as well as economic disasters of the time negatively affected Venetian rule as well. Not only did problems such as famine and plague become more widespread, but banditry also became an endemic problem all over the Peloponnese. Consequently, it was only with great difficulty and expense that the Venetians were able to establish control of Morea in the early 1700s. Nonetheless, this does not inevitably mean that they succeeded in satisfying the expectations of their subjects. For instance, during his short stay at the port of Modon in 1709, Sir Aubry de La Motraye learned that the Greeks were yearning for Ottoman domination as in previous decades since the Ottomans not only took fewer taxes from them, but did not interfere with Orthodox Christians’ way of life.5

This lack of contentment in the population is often seen as the reason why the Ottomans were so easily able to re-conquer the Morea under the command of Damad Ali Pasha in the summer of 1715. In fact, other than a few strong fortresses defended by the Venetians, the imperial soldiers did not encounter any tangible resistance coming from the Greeks. In the end,

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4 Ibid.
the peninsula was once again integrated into the Ottoman territories with the Treaty of Passarowitz, signed on June 10, 1718. Immediately following the re-establishment of Ottoman power, the empire spent a substantial amount of money to re-construct the peninsula by building examples of Islamic architecture, and once more tried to repopulate the region with Muslim subjects.\(^6\) With only slight differences, the traditional system of the Ottoman Empire was re-implemented in the Peloponnese.

Accordingly, between the years 1715 and 1780, the Morea was ruled by a governor (vali) who served with the title of vizier, and who was given three tuğs (horse-tails, a sign of his high state position). The peninsula was also divided into 22 districts, where the local Christian authorities began to gain more and more power and were given political and administrative duties within the state apparatus. In a similar vein to the early Ottoman capture of the Morea in the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, following this latest re-conquest, the years between 1715 and 1764 are described as one of the most joyous and peaceful time periods for the Christian reaya under Ottoman suzerainty by scholars like Deligiannes. He even argues that during that time, Greeks not only were ruled by their own elites based on the wishes of most of the people, but also became free from arbitrary intervention of the central government.\(^7\) But, this did not impede the Greeks from taking up arms against the Ottomans – with the incitement of Russia – at the outset of 1770, which is going to constitute the main topic of our dissertation.

On July 21, 1774 the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca brought about a new era when Russia claimed the right to protect Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire – a claim refuted by Ottoman officials. One way or another, however, relations between the Greeks and the Russians or those between the Greeks and Europeans became more and more intimate following the third

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\(^6\) See İsmail Bienç, *Yunanistan'da Türk Mimari Eserleri* (İstanbul: İsar, 2003).

quarter of the eighteenth century. Disappointment resulting from the Treaty of Paris, signed in 1815, compelled the Greeks to believe that they could only relieve themselves of the Ottoman “yoke” through their own means. In the spring of 1821, another rebellion broke out among the Christian subjects of the Morea. This rebellion became so intense that the central government was not able to put it down, and requested help from Mehmed Ali Pasha (1769-1849), a powerful Ottoman autonomous governor of Egypt at the time. Consequently, Ali’s son Ibrahim Pasha was sent to the Morea with 70,000 soldiers and was able to quell the rebellion in February 1825. At this juncture, through the combined help of Britain, France and Russia – whose military forces annihilated the Ottoman-Egyptian navy at the battle of Navarino on October 20, 1827 – Greek fortunes changed for the better. A second unsuccessful campaign of Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808-1839) forced the Ottoman Empire to accept the articles of the Treaty of London (previously refused by the Sultan) on September 14, 1827. According to this truce, the Greeks succeeded in setting up their own small, independent state in the Morea under the protection of European states in return for paying certain tribute to the Ottoman Empire.

This brief history of the Morea clearly shows that the Peloponnese was not only important from the Ottoman point of view throughout its long history, but also became a source of struggle: both between the Ottoman Empire and its foe(s), and between the Ottomans and their Muslim and non-Muslim subjects. This cannot be explained simply because of an indispensable economic value to the Ottoman Empire. After all, the peninsula was not only far from being fertile soil for farming, it also cannot be regarded as a great industrial or commercial center of the Ottoman Empire. Economic vulnerability and poverty of the Morea throughout its long history overtly contradict any assumption that the Peloponnese’s importance stemmed from its
significant financial contribution to the Ottoman state. The Morea always played an essential role in external and domestic policies of the Ottoman Empire on account of its geostrategic and geopolitical significance. In opposition to the central lands of the Ottoman Empire, therefore, Ottoman Morea had to keep a substantial long-term military presence in the Peloponnese. To give but one example, as a frontier zone between Ottomans and Venetians the Morea turned into a field of constant battle during the Ottoman-Venetian wars in 1463-1479, 1499-1500, 1537-1540, 1570-1571, 1645-1669, 1684-1699, and 1715-1718. Many of these wars determined who was going to dominate the next decades in the Mediterranean basin. Stubborn Ottoman efforts to keep the peninsula for themselves first against Byzantium in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, then Venice, Austria, Russia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and finally against Britain and France in the nineteenth century show that the Peloponnese constituted an intrinsic region in Ottoman foreign policy. In this connection, this dissertation will give us a clear demonstration of the commitment of the Ottomans to appropriate and maintain this province of high value.

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8 Economic shortcomings of the Morea can be easily observed in many contemporary sources of the Peloponnese. For instance, see Bernard Randolph, *The Present State of the Morea, Called Anciently Peloponesus* (London: T. Basset, 1686).

9 As compared to other Ottoman cities in the Mediterranean Sea, the Morea had only modest economic importance to the Ottoman Empire. See Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade, and the Struggle for Land, 1600-1800* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 30-32.


Russia emerged as an important European power when it claimed territorial concessions from the Ottoman Empire towards the last quarter of the eighteenth century.\(^{12}\) The reign of Peter the Great (1696-1725) is justifiably chosen as the beginning of Russian involvement in the Eastern Question. Peter’s wide-ranging domestic reforms, including the establishment of a new bureaucratic state, the creation of a new standing army trained on the European model, as well as a more centralized administration allowed the Russian Empire to play a significant role in Europe – a position never before achieved by Russian leaders.\(^{13}\) The Russian capture of Azov in 1696 (restored to the Ottomans in 1713) can be taken as the beginning of Russian ascendancy over the Ottomans. The Russian attempt to appeal to Orthodox Christian subjects of the empire – such as Moldavians and Wallachians – to rise against the Ottomans during the Battle of Pruth in 1711 is the very beginning of a new regime where the tsar, for the first time, named himself as the rightful leader of the Orthodox Christian Ottoman subjects, in defiance of the imperial dynasty in Istanbul. However, Russian incitement of the Orthodox millet had only limited effects in Montenegro and some parts of Serbia. Also, though some important figures in the Balkans, such as Cantemir of Moldavia, took the Russian side, it was in vain.\(^{14}\) Although Peter’s efforts brought no efficacious results for the Russians and ended with the humiliating treaty of Pruth in

\(^{12}\) As a matter of the fact, Marriott describes the second phases of the Eastern Question encompassing the years 1702 to 1820 as the relations of Ottomans and Romanovs. He does not deny the role Austria played but he emphasizes the fact that her role became subsidiary towards the end of the eighteenth century. J. A. R. Marriott, *The Eastern Question: An Historical Study in European Diplomacy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1917), 5.

\(^{13}\) Peter’s was one of the best (maybe the best) reformist(s) in Russian history, who created an empire from a trivial state. In order to understand his great reformations and achievements before his death in 1725, see Alexander Bitis, *Russia and the Eastern Question: Army, Government, and Society: 1815-1833* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press for The British Academy, 2006), 36-41.

\(^{14}\) This policy of alluring the Orthodox bore first fruit in the person of Cantemir of Moldavia, who joined the Russian expedition at the last moment, but his limited help came too late to stop the debacle on the Pruth. See Alexandru Dutu and Paul Cernovodeanu, eds., *Dimitrie Cantemir* (Bucharest: Association internationale d'études du sud-est européen, 1973).
the short run, this policy of the new Russian Empire as the champion of the Orthodox was never
discarded, and became a commonplace thereafter. Russia continued to support Orthodox
coreligionists groaning under the Ottoman “yoke” for the next hundred and fifty years or so.\textsuperscript{15}

Needless to say, Peter the Great was not only unable to fulfill his ambitious dreams, but
his policy was put into practice at a time when the Ottoman Empire was still potent enough to
maintain its integrity and even to regain some of its former territories. But after the death of Peter
I in 1725, the balance of power between the Ottomans and the Russians leaned in favour of the
latter, and Peter’s legacy of expansion at the expense of the Ottomans was fulfilled, though
sporadically, by his ancestors over the next hundred years.\textsuperscript{16} In fact, during the interval between
the death of Peter the Great and Catherine II’s seizure of power in 1762, Russia progressed very
little in the fulfillment of Peter’s intention to expand over the Ottoman territories. That is, the
war of 1736-1739 during the reign of Empress Anna brought nothing more than the recapture of
the Azov, which had been lost following the defeat of Peter the Great at the Battle of Pruth. The
turning point in the emergence of Russia’s power occurred with the accession of Catherine the
Great (1762-1796). Only then did the early dreams of Peter begin to come true. For the first time
in history, the Russian Empire of the Romanovs achieved two devastating victories over the
Ottomans, which resulted in the occupation of several principalities in the Balkans, as well as
Crimea on the coast of the Black Sea.

The story of the Morea Rebellion as known to us cannot be separated from the Ottoman-
Russian Wars of 1768-1774 during the reigns of Mustafa III (1757-1774) and Catherine the

\textsuperscript{15} On Russia’s role in the Eastern Question in the reign of Peter the Great, see Adolf Beer, \textit{Die Orientalische Politik
Österreichs Seit 1774} (Prag, Leipzig: F. Temsky and G. Freytag, 1883), 27-28; B.H. Sumner, \textit{Peter the Great and
the Ottoman Empire} (Hamden: Archon Books, 1965).

\textsuperscript{16} It is claimed that Peter the Great wrote a proclamation stating that he wanted his successors to follow his policy of
expanding at the expense of the Ottomans, and Catherine II was later specifically considered to be the best candidate
to make it happen. About the authenticity of this testament see, Beer, 28-29.
Great. On the one hand, we see Russia, which strategically organized the insurrection of 1770 for the purpose of its policy of southern advancement. On the other hand, we see a reaction of the Ottoman Empire determined to fight back in order to keep its integrity intact. The narrative of these two empires and their clashing interests in the Peloponnese is well known, and actually, most Ottoman and European sources agree that Russian moves to incite the Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire in the Morea began about five years before the Morea Rebellion really took place at the beginning of 1770.

As a matter of fact, some sources argue that the Russian policy of influencing the Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire goes back as early as the 1730s. As such, it was the idea of Russian general Marshal Burchard Christoph Münnich, who planned to conquer the Crimea and Moldavia, that the Greeks – who supposedly saw Empress Anne as their true ruler – might be used against the Ottoman Empire during the 1736-1739 wars between the Ottomans and Russians in the Balkans. However, it was only during the reign of Catherine II that this policy of inciting the Ottoman Orthodox subjects to the Russian cause was really carried into effect. That is, the tsarina pardoned Münnich in spite of his former support to the accession of Peter III against her in 1762 and adopted his plan to raise a revolt among the Greeks during the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1769-1774.

The Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, signed following the disastrous Ottoman defeats between 1768 and 1774, gave huge concessions to the victorious Russians and therefore ended a so-called equilibrium of Europe, and almost became synonymous with the Eastern Question in literature.

17 Ragsdale argues that it was not Münnich but the chief advisor of Peter I, Count A.I. Ostermann, who actually offered the idea for the partition of the Ottoman Empire immediately following the death of Peter the Great and put it into implementation in 1737. Hugh Ragsdale, "Evaluating the Traditions of Russian Aggression: Catherine II and the Greek Project," The Slavonic and East European Review 66, (Jan. 1988): 93.
on the period. According to the treaty, the Ottomans not only confirmed the independence of Crimea but also accepted Russian protection of Christian subjects in the empire, which was later subject to widely varying debates between the two states. The Ottoman Empire was no longer self-reliant, and by the time of the treaty, apparently there was no other state of significance in Europe willing to actively take the Ottoman side in its struggle against Catherine II.

This was not an end of Russian aggression toward the Ottomans, though. The second round of the Ottoman-Russian Wars took place in the years between 1787 and 1792. Unlike the wars of 1768-1774, another European state i.e., Austria, for a short period of time (1788-1791) half-heartedly took part in the struggle in favour of the Russians. Indeed, the Ottoman Empire was not disturbed by the Austrian involvement in the war, since in a little while Austria found itself in the middle of a war with Poland and Prussia, and chose to give up its activity in the east. Hence, it first withdrew from the war through an armistice in September 1790, and soon after, signed the Treaty of Sistova in 1791, in return for acquiring only Old Orsova from the Ottoman Empire. In spite of that, however, the Ottoman Empire was unable to stop further Russian assaults coming from the north, which not only totally destabilized its economic and social balance but also destroyed the shaky prestige of the empire. In addition, with the Treaty of Jassy, signed in December 1791, the Ottomans not only gave up Ochakov in return for regaining the lands and strategic strongholds initially surrendered on the border of Danube, but also were

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19 This was the very moment when Russia emerged as a major power in Europe, a fact confirmed by European diplomats, such as Joseph Kaunitz. See Hamish M. Scott, *The Emergence of the Eastern Powers: 1756 - 1775* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 242-244.

20 As a matter of the fact, it was on account of French mediation that the Ottomans gave their consent to the Convention of Aynalikavak. French diplomatists of the time, supporting Ottoman interests in jeopardy from the Russian expansion over Ottoman territories under French commercial influence, recommended it as the best way to protect the Ottomans from being crushingly defeated by the Russians once more. By doing so, they claimed to have saved “the dignity of the Porte in her present depressed situation”. It immediately becomes evident that this convention of 1779 also failed to hinder another war between the Ottomans and Russians which culminated in the final annexation of Crimea by Russia just four years later. Ali İhsan Bağış, *Britain and the Struggle for the Integrity of the Ottoman Empire : Sir Robert Ainslie's Embassy to Istanbul, 1776-1794* (Istanbul: Isis, 1984), 9.

obligated to pay an exorbitant war indemnity which dragged the empire into even greater financial difficulties. Last but not least, the Ottomans gave way to Russian traders, allowing them to sail on the Black Sea, effectively reConfirming Russian protection of the Orthodox subjects living under Ottoman domination, and this soon became an essential catalyst of the nationalist movement in the Balkans.22

Friends and Foes in the International Community and the Eastern Question

Before going into further detail about the Morea Rebellion, we need to set the international context of the Russian policy which started to gain currency from the beginning of the eighteenth century onward – what is familiarly referred to as the Eastern Question. The Eastern Question can be described here as the European concern at the growing weakness of the Ottoman Empire in contrast to the increasing strength of Russia. In this regard, British, Austrian and French involvement in eastern affairs needs to be understood in order to comprehend both the Eastern Question and its impact upon international politics of the time. In other words, the once-powerful Ottoman Empire became a target of its neighbors – particularly Russia – since the empire was no longer able to maintain the territorial positions that had been spectacularly achieved in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The growing naval and military weakness of the Ottoman Empire and the slowness to reform (which might have fixed the problems of the empire) became more apparent in the eighteenth century, and raised the very questions of what to do about “the sick man of Europe.” How were the Ottoman territories to be disposed of, or which state(s) was going to take the control of those territories? Was the Ottoman Empire to

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22 Virginia H. Aksan, *Ottoman Wars 1700-1870: An Empire Besieged* (Harlow: Longman/Pearson, 2007), 160-179. Both the Treaty of Kaynarca and that of Jassy firmly increased the Russian sphere of influence. Russian territorial expansion at the expense of the Ottomans as well as the lands taken from Poland made Russia the most impressive European power in the second half of the eighteenth century. Moreover, following the Ottoman debacle at Çeşme in 1770, the Russian navy not only proved its ability to sail in international seas but also within the reign of Catherine II, became the fourth best fighting fleet in the world after Britain, France and Spain. Scott, 249-258.
irretrievably disappear? As the most powerful claimant, Russia was not only resolved to take possession of the Ottoman territories in the Balkans as well as the Crimea, but was also ready and eager to face any other state which might stand in the way of reaching this long-desired objective in the second half of the eighteenth century.

A closer examination of the Eastern Question shows that it had become an issue of international significance as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century, and this is what we will specifically deal with in this discussion. To give but one example, before the emergence of Russia as a formidable enemy of the Ottomans, Austria had a great opportunity to benefit from the weaknesses of the empire. In the years between 1683 and 1718, and following the Treaty of Passarowitz in particular, Austria acquired a stronghold on the right bank of the Danube which might have been used as a stepping point for further campaigns to expel the Ottomans from Europe. However, Austria was never able to mobilize and seize this opportunity due to internal domestic difficulties, and the frontier between the Ottomans and Habsburgs became firmly delineated in the first half of the eighteenth century.

In other words, the Hapsburgs kept their countenance while observing the growing weakness of the Ottoman Empire, since it brought the danger of a former formidable enemy to a close. The Russians saw the increasing feebleness of the Ottomans as a golden opportunity not only to expand its border to the Black Sea, the Balkans and ultimately to Istanbul, but also to become a great European power. Soon, Austria realized the great danger that Russian territorial expansion over the Ottomans might pose to the Hapsburgs. Nevertheless, European politics of the time, with Austria and Prussia in constant struggle, not only hindered an Austro-Prussian

23 Even if Marriott gives voice to the argument that the Eastern Question can be traceable as far back as the Battle of Lepanto when Christian navies scored a spectacular victory over the Ottoman imperial fleet in 1571, there is no obvious reason to pick this date as a starting point. Marriott, 2.
alliance against Russian expansion in eastern Europe, but also occasionally forced the Hapsburgs into alliance with the Russians, at the risk of great danger to Prussia.

In the end, by directly taking the Russian side at least twice (1739 and 1789), even Austria supported the ambitious Russian project to partition Ottoman lands in the Balkans, and watched warily Romanov expansion on the northern coast of the Black Sea. However, it is crucial to note that neither reluctant Austrian support of Russian expansionist policy nor Ottoman inability to find a dependable European ally against the tsarina, allowed Russia to benefit fully from its victories in both the wars of 1768-1774 and 1788-1792. In other words, continuing struggles among European powers as well as domestic problems faced by almost every significant state during the second half of the eighteenth century prevented the Russian dream of the “Greek Project” from being realized.\(^{25}\) The term *equilibre d'Orient*, which Catherine II believed to have been invented in France,\(^ {26}\) began to appear in international diplomacy, which basically targeted ending the Russian growth at the expense of the Ottomans.

To give but one example, even by the end of 1770, Catherine II had become aware of the need to modify her overly ambitious expectations from the Ottoman Empire since neither Prussia nor Austria tolerated Russian acquisition of extensive concessions at the expense of the Ottomans. Even the Austrian ambassador in Berlin at the time criticized Catherine’s imposed peace terms upon the Ottomans as being “*exhorbitant*es, intolerable.” Austria even went as far as signing a secret treaty with the Ottomans on July 6, 1771, committing to come to Ottoman aid in return for Ottoman financial assistance (20,000 purses of 500 piasters), as well as a small

\(^{25}\) For the “Greek Project,” which aimed at overthrowing the Ottoman Empire and re-founding the Byzantine empire under the suzerainty of Russia, see Ibid., 162-168. See also Edgar Hösch, "Das Sogenannte „Griechische Projekt“ Katharinas Ii. Ideologie und Wirklichkeit Der Russischen Orientpolitik in Der Zweiten Hälfte Des 18. Jahrhunderts," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* Neue Folge 12 (1964); Ragsdale. As a matter of fact, founding a Greek state was not limited to Russia. To give but one example, there were people dreaming of establishing a Greek Empire under the protection of France rather than Russia or Austria. See Constantin François de Volney, *Considérations Sur La Guerre Actuelle Des Turcs* (Londres [i.e. Paris]: 1788).

\(^{26}\) Isabel de Madariaga, *Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great* (London: Phoenix, 2002), 221.
territorial compensation (that is, the Ottomans promised to cede parts of Wallachia to Austria). Having discovered the secret treaty signed between the Ottomans and the Hapsburgs, Russia began a diplomatic counter-attack by alleviating some Austrian worries about the partition of Poland and seizure of Ottoman territories. Eventually, the Hapsburgs changed their minds and abandoned the Ottomans in exchange for further territorial concessions in Poland that had been promised by Catherine the Great in return for Austria’s agreement not to intercede on behalf of the Ottomans. The most significant point to be made in this example of complex diplomatic relations as far as our study is concerned, is the fact that even as early as 1771-1772, the future of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans and Crimea was being decided through negotiations going on among European powers including Russia, Prussia, and Austria as well as France and Britain. Therefore, before the Treaty of Kaynarca was signed in 1774, the Eastern Question had been under discussion with significant involvement of the major powers. There is no doubt that the Eastern Question gained even more currency during the Ottoman/Russian/Austrian Wars of 1787-1792.

At this juncture, two European states in particular are of great importance in the discussion of the Eastern Question. Being a long-standing friend of the Ottoman Empire, France eagerly supported the Ottoman cause as a part of its policy to maintain trade networks in the east. This French policy could not tolerate threats by any other major power to gain access

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27 During the Ottoman/Russian Wars of 1768-1774, Poland was partitioned for the first time by its three powerful neighbours, e.g. Russia, Austria and Prussia. Accordingly, 30% of Polish lands as well as 35% of her people were divided among these big powers. At the outset, the main concern of these powers was not the Ottoman territories but the partitioning of Poland. With the Ottoman involvement in this very issue, which was rather unexpected for Russia, international diplomacy became much more intricate. For the partition of the Poland, see Scott, 187-224.
28 Madariaga, 220-225.
29 Ibid., 393-426.
30 French Eastern trade with the Ottomans became so important in the eighteenth century that France would not dare to tolerate any power that might endanger its privileged status in the Mediterranean. It is important to note that French commercial activity covered most of the Ottoman major cities, but on the top of that, we also see Morea, the Archipelago and southern Greece, where the insurrection of 1770 was more or less influential and operative. For the
either to the Black Sea or the Dardanelles for obvious strategic and economic reasons. Therefore, during the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774, when the Russian Baltic fleet – which appeared at the beginning of 1770 in the Mediterranean Sea – burned the Ottoman fleet at the port of Çeşme on July 7, 1770 and followed that up with continuous defeats of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans – finalized by the devastating catastrophe at Kartal on August 1, 1770 – it was proven early on that the Ottomans were far from able to defend themselves against the mighty Russian Empire, let alone score any victory against the tsarina’s army. Consequently, France became eager to take action as the conspicuous threat to its political and economic interests became apparent. For example, during the Ottoman-Russian struggle, Baron de Tott and some other French officers aided the Ottomans by strengthening defenses in both the straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosporus. The ensuing series of Ottoman defeats which ended with a humiliating peace treaty of Küçük Kaynarca further extended the scale of French help in favour of the Ottomans in the short run.  

At the very same time, a second international player of significance appeared, continuing its preoccupation with relentless competition against France all over the world. Not surprisingly, Britain saw no harm in the aggrandizement of Russian power in the Mediterranean, first at the expense of French interests, and then Ottoman, until the 1790s, when British alarm over Russian power in Central Asia demanded the construction of a policy which included the preservation of the Ottoman state as a buffer against Russian aggression and the threat to British India. Worried about Russia's expansionism during the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1787-1792, in particular following the capture of the Ochakov fortress in 1788, British Prime minister William Pitt tried

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in vain to convince the parliament to send in the navy in order to stop Russian aggression. But, Pitt was so vehemently opposed, he was compelled to abrogate his plan.\textsuperscript{32} However, in the long run the issue resulted in development of a new British policy in favour of the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{33} According to this policy, Britain not only became more and more involved in eastern affairs but also openly supported the Ottoman Empire, first against French expansion during the Napoleonic Era, and then against Russian southerly territorial growth in the nineteenth century. Indeed, by the late 1820s fears of Russia’s expansion against the Ottomans became such a concern of European states that Britain and France, as well as Austria and Italy took the side of the Ottoman Empire against seemingly unstoppable Russian gains during the Crimean War of 1853-1856. In this respect, the Eastern Question can be described as a balance of power issue, which ultimately garnered the involvement of all the important powers in Europe at the time.\textsuperscript{34}

The Russian Navy Arrives in the Eastern Mediterranean

So how does the Morea Rebellion fit into the larger picture of the Eastern Question? Prior to the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774, Russia had incited the Orthodox subjects of the empire to rise in revolt. To a certain degree, Russia was able to persuade some, but the main goal of gathering a significant number of Orthodox subjects was not achieved. Nonetheless, the Russians at least succeeded in dispersing the power of the Ottoman Empire by forcing them to battle on many fronts. In this respect, the Morea Rebellion can be seen as one of the many

\textsuperscript{32} Bağış, 117-118.
\textsuperscript{33} This does not actually mean that Britain always supported the Russian growth over the Ottomans before the 1790s. Namely, what we know from other sources is that immediately after Catherine II seized the throne, she asked for British help against the Ottomans during future wars. Yet, at that time, Britain not only overtly rejected this offer but also did not look on her reduced demands in Poland and Sweden with favour. Isabel De Madariaga, Catherine the Great: A Short History (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 41. Simon Dixon, Catherine the Great (New York: Ecco, 2009), 187-188.
\textsuperscript{34} In order to understand the change in the attitudes of the great powers to the Eastern Question, see Aksan, 11-17.
ambitious projects of the Russian desire for control of Ottoman Orthodox subjects, which later became a significant part of the Eastern Question, as we have seen above.

As to the insurrection of 1770 in particular, more or less every source posits that Papazoğlu Mavromihali (Yorgi) took the initiative in the development of the Morea Rebellion. Starting in 1765, Papazoğlu, as well as many other spies, entered Ottoman lands in order to convince the Orthodox subjects of the empire to rebel against their masters. For the purpose of motivating and inspiring these people, the Orthodox Christian religion was quoted and emphasized and Catherine II was presented as their rightful and legitimate leader. As a result, these interlopers succeed in getting the support of some figures of high importance, including Orthodox priests, *kocabaşı* (non-Muslim administrative leaders), and Mainiotes, who persuaded the non-Muslim subjects of the Morea to get involved. These interlopers also claimed to be financially supported by wealthy Greeks as well as Europeans who desired the disappearance of Ottoman domination from the peninsula in favour of either Russia or any other European power(s).

The first Russian fleet constructed to sail to the Mediterranean was commanded by a British officer, Admiral Grigory Spiridov, in June 1769. Alexis and Theodor Orlov, assigned as the leaders of the campaign by Catherine, soon joined Spiridov. This first Russian fleet consisted of only several galleys, frigates and troopships which carried about a thousand combatants. Their number increased slightly with additional galleys, frigates, troopships and transport ships of the Orlov brothers. English Admiral Elphinstone, who constructed the second Russian fleet, had to wait until the beginning of 1770. This second navy was composed of not more than a few galleys, frigates, and troopships with ammunition, which carried half the soldiers of the former
navy. The second fleet did not arrive in the Mediterranean before April, 1770. There is no doubt that British assistance in the creation of these two fleets was absolutely indispensable.

Toward the end of December 1769, the first Russian fleet with the Orlov brothers reached the Ionian Sea, where they began to incite both Ottoman Orthodox subjects and other Christians against the Ottoman Empire. However, in February 1770, a few Russian ships had to anchor at one of the ports in the peninsula on account of bad weather, leading unpredictably to the mobilization of the Greeks to take up arms against the Ottomans. Alexis Orlov could not do anything, and was forced to support this premature uprising. Consequently, just a few hundred Russian soldiers, as well as a substantial number of Christian subjects of the empire, joined together and ignited the first spark of the insurrection of 1770.

Most of secondary and contemporary literatures on the Morea Rebellion repeatedly argue that the Ottoman Empire was completely unaware that the Russian navy would show up in the Mediterranean Sea, and that Ottoman statesmen persistently ignored any intelligence reports arguing such a possibility. In other words, they totally rejected the possibility that the Russian fleet would/could appear on the coasts of the peninsula, on the grounds that there was no sea connection between the Baltic and the Mediterranean.\(^{35}\) Even if some accepted the existence of a geographical link, they did not concede that the Russians had already constructed a fleet to sail all the way up to the Morea. Therefore, the Ottoman statesmen were unprepared by the time the Russians had appeared on the coast of the Peloponnese. In brief, according to this argument, the Ottoman Empire was totally ignorant of the intrigue initiated by Russia and which was partly controlled by local Christian powers.

This approach of the scholars arguing for complete ignorance of the Ottoman Empire is neither plausible nor provable as far as the primary documents are concerned. Suffice it to say that the story which is going to be written in light of our research in the archives contradicts any assumption or claim denying Ottoman competence in dealing with the Morea Rebellion. After all, the rapid success in suppressing the insurrection of 1770 is not in accord with the assumption that the Ottoman statesmen of the time were ignorant of its possibility. Nevertheless, as we will see, this does not deny the fact that some Ottoman dignitaries deliberately refused to recognize the possibility of the Greek rebellion that was about to begin right under their noses.

The Morea Rebellion and the Ottoman Response

At the beginning of March 1770, the Christian subjects of the Morea rebelled against imperial authority in the peninsula. As a result, the Ottoman *reaya* left their hometown(s) for safer places such as islands in the Aegean Sea, or strong fortresses in the Peloponnese. Although the insurgents were largely victorious in small villages, they were not powerful enough to get control of strongholds supported by Ottomans ammunition. More significantly, however, the Ottoman Empire was quite successful in giving succor and strength to those who resisted the rebels. Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha was supported by local *ayan* (Muslim provincial magnates) powers, and imperial forces were soon able to rescue a few important cities from the hands of their besiegers. This did not prevent the rebels from initiating further assaults in vain. In the end, however, imperial as well as *ayan* forces left them no choice but to withdraw from inner Morea in order to attack important fortress on the Peloponnesian coasts. Toward the end of May 1770, Aleksi Orlov realized that he could no longer hold ground against resolute Ottoman assaults, and in the beginning of June decided to set sail to join the Russian fleet in the Mediterranean Sea. Consequently, although the Morea Rebellion came to an end in the peninsula in mid-1770, the
struggle between the Ottoman and Russian navies in the Mediterranean Sea continued until the end of the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774.

The main objective of the uprising is often given as total freedom of the Greeks from the Ottoman Empire. In practice, however, the Russians and their Greek supporters in the peninsula were not able to cooperate well enough to achieve their ultimate goal of putting up a resolute resistance which might have formed a new structure in the Peloponnese. Each side blamed the other for the failure of the Morea Rebellion. Accordingly, the Russians left the insurgents in the lurch and went back to the sea in order to face the Ottoman navy in the Aegean Sea. As for the Greeks, they were not only entirely disappointed but now had to pay dearly for their acts of unfaithfulness committed against the Ottomans.

After (and even during) the Morea Rebellion, the Albanian soldiers of the empire who had played a big role in the suppression of the insurrection became troublemakers for the Morea. Muhsinzade, who had to put things back in order after the rebellion first granted amnesty to a substantial number of the insurgents, and even forgave those who were seen to be among the leaders of the mutiny. Nonetheless, state authority could not be established in the Morea until Cezayirli Gazi Hasan Pasha gained control in 1779. Before that time, Albanians ran most spheres of activity in the peninsula for their own benefit, which caused a fiscal collapse in the region. As such, they not only oppressed the reaya and forced them to meet their excessive monetary demands, but also seized their property and even enslaved some people, and had them put on the slave market. 36 Consequently, a substantial number of reaya living in the Peloponnese either

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36 Alexander, 52.
took flight to mountainous regions, or migrated to other territories of the Ottoman Empire or neighboring states such as Venice, Austria and even Russia.\textsuperscript{37}

Analysis of the Morea Rebellion through Ottoman Eyes

The brief narrative above sets the context for the study that forms the basis of this thesis, and illustrates the deficiencies in the historiography of the Morea Rebellion. First and foremost, we do not have a proper narrative of this uprising from beginning to end. Instead, we have rather fragmentary narrative threads that frequently contradict one another. The features and characteristics of the sources available to us will be discussed in great detail later. What is particularly noteworthy here is the fact that these narratives contain many inaccuracies and contradictions, but they can be easily rectified by comparison with the extensive documentation available in the Ottoman archives in Istanbul. Namely, both the Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives (BOA) and the Topkapı Palace Archive (TSA) have revealed sufficient material such that we are able to re-write the story of the Morea uprising from the point of view of Istanbul.

After scrutinizing hundreds of documents in the archives, we found that some archival sources share noteworthy similarities with writings of the contemporary historians of the time. By revealing the biases and contradictions of these historians we are able to discern a totally distinct and new narrative that will constitute an alternative story of this revolt. In other words, with the help of extensive archival discoveries from Istanbul we will not only illustrate extensive mistakes and shortcomings of the contemporary historians, but also those of present-day scholars who have often taken the arguments of former scholars at face value. In this respect, this dissertation is an attempt to reevaluate what has been already written about the insurrection of

\textsuperscript{37} Yuzo Nagata, \textit{Muhsin-Zâde Mehmed Paşa ve Âyânlık Müessesesi} (Izmir: Akademi Kitabevi, 1999), 91-93.

George Finlay, \textit{The History of Greece under Ottoman and Venetian Domination} (Edinburgh and London: W. Blackwood and Sons, 1856), 314.
1770. More importantly, however, it is an effort to eliminate some of the most widely-accepted misinformation currently circulating, through the examination of Ottoman archival documents which have not been used before. Last but not least, the contribution to understanding the diversity and complexity of Ottoman rebellions – using the example of the Morea Rebellion – increases the importance of this study.

The characteristics of the documents consulted during our research at the Ottoman archives in Istanbul need to be taken into consideration here. First and foremost, our documents were not written down with the intent to narrate the whole story of the Morea Rebellion. Instead, as is often the case with any documents, they were either written for a very specific purpose (which may or may not offer anything more than speculation with no possibility of validation) or for very specific small towns and cities (which does not allow us to get a complete picture of the uprising as a whole). Furthermore, our primary sources occasionally contradict one another, thus preventing us from inferring comprehensive and complete explanations concerning the Morea Rebellion. For instance, one frequently comes across documents where the empire simply forgave certain kocabaşı who had been admittedly involved in the rebellion. In another document, however, we see some other leading figures of the rebellion who were neither granted amnesty, nor were they even allowed to re-enter Ottoman lands under any circumstance. In addition, such documents – including government reports, official letters, international correspondence or imperial decrees and so forth – simply do not offer any logical grounds or even clues that would give us reason to make anything other than assumptions. In fact, most of our archival sources frequently open new frontiers for researchers by challenging some widely-accepted assertions and allegations about the uprising, especially because we are now able to
cautiously check and cross-check the reliability and validity of their arguments with other sources concerning the period long before and after the insurrection of 1770.

The shortcomings and deficiencies of those primary sources highly dependent on state documents can be eliminated with the help of other supplementary sources, as is often the case in contemporary European historiography. However, there are no documentary sources such as diaries, biographies or auto-biographies, which record the understanding of certain people outside the state apparatus, and also specifically offer us an opportunity to evaluate the findings of official manuscripts from a different perspective. Nor do we have anything written by someone outside Ottoman elite circles who might have presented a different story concerning the insurrection of 1770. Some correspondence sent between state officials and the imperial council or exchanged between the rebels and Ottoman statesmen occasionally include the personal observation and inference of their writers. But it is quite difficult to generalize for the whole peninsula, or to produce a new narrative of the Morea Rebellion that is free from all the errors and false representation extant in the currently accepted story.

As a matter of the fact, we do have two significant contemporary memoirs (perhaps more aptly called advice for the sultan)\(^{38}\) which at first glance might be considered as offering an alternative story of the uprising. After all, among other features, they at least incline toward narrating the story of the Morea Rebellion as a whole. The former, written by Süleyman Penah Efendi, is one of the well-known counsels for Ottoman statesmen. The second one is written by an anonymous author whose background and position are not substantially different from Penah

\(^{38}\) Even if we can easily define his early pages of so-called the History of Morea Rebellion as a memoir of that uprising that we have largely interested in here for the sake of this dissertation, Penah’s main desire in the creation of his booklet was to use his fresh memory of the rebellion as a main field of study in his advice for the sultan. By doing so, he can not only show current problems and shortcoming of the empire in the time of the Morea Rebellion but also offers his advice and solution to high dignitary in Istanbul by using that particular example. After all, Penah devotes most of his pages to current issues of the empire rather than anything else.
Efendi. Naturally, we know much more about Penah Efendi and his life story. He was born in Istanbul in 1740, and as an Ottoman officer he performed some administrative and bureaucratic duties in the empire, which shows that he held a modest state position in the Ottoman administrative stratum. He was quite familiar with the Ottoman capital and lived there for a long time, and according to author of *Sicil-i Osmani*, he died of the plague in Istanbul in 1785.\(^{39}\)

Coming from the Morea region, having worked as an Ottoman officer in that area and being there throughout the insurrection of 1770, he was also very familiar with the Morea and what happened in that region before and during the Ottoman-Russian War of 1768-1774 and, of course, throughout the Morea Rebellion.

As for his writing, there is no doubt that Penah Efendi took his subject quite seriously and wrote an elaborate work. It is not surprising, therefore, that his *History of Morea Rebellion* has attracted more attention than many other works in the study of eighteenth century Ottoman-Russian relations. Penah’s telling of the Morea events remains a unique eye-witness account of which most historians are aware.\(^{40}\) Even a quick glimpse into his work is enough to realize that his information can be easily corroborated by other Ottoman and European chroniclers of the time in order to reach a fairly consistent understanding of the rebellion.

The second narrative of the insurgency discovered during my research at the BOA has not actually been consulted before.\(^{41}\) As mentioned, we do not really know when and by whom it was written. Yet we can still assume that it would have been recorded not long after the suppression of the rebellion, since its author’s suggestions make clear that he is talking about the

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\(^{41}\) KK, 60-1.
situation immediately after the rebellion and what should be done thereafter. To be clear, all we know about the author comes from his first paragraph, where he basically claims nothing more than having personally participated in many battles and sieges against the Morea rebels and being well aware of what happened during the revolt. Furthermore, we realize that he was not only a member of the Ottoman askeri sınıfı (military class) but he also had education enough to allow him to write this piece. Last but not least, there is no doubt that the insurgence had a great impact on him and that is, in a sense, why he could not keep himself from writing about it. On balance, however, neither this first paragraph nor the rest of his booklet – which consists of a mere twenty-four pages – give us any clues to the question of why he might have recorded such a pamphlet, or what his position in the Ottoman Empire was.42

A quick analysis of the two authors and their writings is of importance in order to understand the nature of both Penah and the anonymous author who not only share a remarkable number of similarities but also some notable differences. Starting with the similarities, they are so obsessed with Ottoman-Russian relations that both the anonymous writer and Penah Efendi could not help mentioning either the longstanding struggle between two enemies beginning with the battle of Pruth, nor from suggesting some important reforms in order to keep pace with the already accepted feats of the Russians. Furthermore, they must have been aware of one another’s writing or have had some common sources because they do frequently reiterate their arguments or information in a very similar manner. Their reasoning for why things went so wrong for the Ottomans, and their proffered solutions to ongoing issues faced by the empire were not that different from one another either.

42 “...Manya’da Mora ceziresinde vaz’ olan keyfiyet-i ihtilâl ve muharebe asar-ı acizanem olmak üzere müriyvet bir tarih tertip ve ekser muharebe ve muhassrada bulunduğum hasebiyle ... teşkiline acizanem her hussu zabı olunup ve lüzumu mertebesince ihtisar üzere iş bu cezireye derc ve dikkat hale göre cezirenin keyfiyyetlerinden bazıları ... ” Ibid., 1.
As for their differences, each author had his own way of dealing with the revolt and what could be done following its conclusion. To begin with, when we compare the two accounts of the uprising, Penah Efendi’s history is not only much more voluminous but also quite elaborate in discussing the issues that incited the insurgence and what should be done following its quelling. However, our anonymous author is not that interested in advising the authorities about saving the empire. At first glance, each for the most part shares a story of similar incidents, but their motives for supporting a particular individual or faction appear to have prompted their writing up the Morea Rebellion. In brief, the character of the two works is not actually that different from our official documents which predominantly constitute most of sources for this dissertation. Consequently, it is not easy to – or even likely that we can – answer questions such as who was considered trustworthy and honourable in state service, and who were the malefactors or who abused their authority. Both individual reports and the collections of archival documents were produced in an environment of intimacy and rivalry that is often difficult for us to comprehend as we will shortly see.

Filling the Gaps

This dissertation is an attempt to fill the gaps in the history of the Morea Rebellion by looking at almost all extant official documents as well as two personal accounts of considerable importance mentioned above. The aim is to retell the story of the Morea Rebellion from the perspective of the Ottoman central authorities. In the first chapter of this thesis we start by placing the Morea Rebellion in the international context as it was from the end of the seventeenth century to the 1750s. Our departure point in this chapter is to reveal the transformation of the Ottoman Empire after shocking debacles of the empire against its formidable enemies following the second siege of Vienna in 1683. Evidence points at Ottoman attempts first to restore lost
territories, and then to maintain the integrity of the empire against further assaults, which compelled the empire to change its socio-economic and political structure, as well as its relationship with its subjects. As a result of this transformation of the state structure, which brought about a so-called “redistribution of power” in the empire, new Ottoman elites (first Muslim and then non-Muslim) emerged in the course of the first half of the eighteenth century. These new notables not only became more and more concerned about state affairs and the possible benefits to which they saw themselves as being entitled, but also developed enormous power in order to achieve their ambitious goals. Most important of all, however, they constituted the main actors in the insurrection under discussion here.

Having taken into the consideration conditions and circumstances which brought about the appearance of new Ottoman elites across the empire from the end of the seventeenth century until the 1750s, we will observe what happened to these new leading figures of the empire up to the eve of the Morea Rebellion, so that we might find some possible reasons behind their behaviour either in favour of the insurrection of 1770 or against it. Accordingly, we will attempt to set out the reasons why one might (or might not) have joined a rebellion like the insurrection of 1770 in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. The place of either a particular ideology or any sort of group identity in the development of civil unrest will be particularly questioned. An elaborate analysis of Mustafa III (1757-1774), his political and social approaches towards non-Muslims, the Ottoman economy of the time, and Greek citizenry under the sultan are just a few issues to take into account for a clearer perspective of the international and domestic situation of the Ottomans approximately two decades before the uprising.

The third chapter starts with an attempt to understand Ottoman rebellions/banditry in general from 1500 to 1800. Ottoman rebellions in general will be examined for the sake of
contextualizing the insurrection of 1770. More importantly, however, we will analyze stories of contemporary Ottoman and European sources of the Morea Rebellion which have not only predominantly marked off the boundary of the discussion about the Morea Rebellion but also were accepted as the explanation for the uprising in the secondary sources today. Therefore, this chapter is going to offer us early historiography of the uprising as well.

Chapter four offers new as well as old evidences about the Ottoman knowledge of and reaction to the events before the Morea Rebellion took place. The analysis of the sources extracted from the Ottoman archives in Istanbul throws light on the Ottoman participation in the Morea Rebellion in 1770, which constitutes a study of the Ottoman comprehension and interpretation of the Greek uprising. In the fifth and sixth chapters we will elaborate on the rebellion in order to test the veracity of the contemporary Ottoman and European sources in light of the primary archival sources. In chapter 5, we will scrutinize the Ottoman primary sources written during the insurrection of 1770 and in the last chapter we will look at the documents written after the uprising in greater detail. We will investigate each in sequence in order to understand not only the Morea Rebellion itself but the change in the perception of the Ottomans over the course of time.

The conclusion raises further questions about the Morea Rebellion. These questions about the revolt itself, as well as the nature of studying rebellions in general, need additional research in order to achieve a better understanding of the meaning of insurgence in the period under discussion.
Chapter 1: Ottoman Transition of Power from 1683 until the 1750s: From a Single Sovereignty to Multiple Sovereignties

Although our ultimate aim is to explain the Ottoman perspective on the Morea Rebellion, we should be also cognizant of the internal and external politics of the empire before the uprising that had not only a great influence on the way the empire operated but also on the social, political and economic activity of the time. Even if it is not possible to pinpoint finite turning points in Ottoman historiography, there were still some stepping stones which impacted upon some eras and basically changed history. For the sake of this chapter we will look at three stages that not only paved the way for the Morea Rebellion but also greatly changed the course of the empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This examination will help us to comprehend the Ottoman transition from sultanic authority to numerous autonomies of first Muslim and then non-Muslim elites of the Ottoman Empire from 1683 until the 1750s. By the end of this period we will see new Ottoman notables who were preoccupied with penetrating deep into the state apparatus and benefiting more and more from the new system.

The first period of time begins with the second siege of Vienna in 1683 and continues to the Treaty of Karlowitz signed in 1699. During that time interval, we see the emergence of Muslim power players at the expense of sultanic authority. In the second stage, encompassing the years between 1699 and 1730, we observe the sultans’ attempts to revive their authority with no success. In the third and last period of time, from 1730 into the 1750s, we witness the emergence of non-Muslim notables who came into power with the help of both sultans and external powers. At the end of this last stage, not only did the authority of Ottoman sultans decrease enormously, but a new era evolved, where Muslim and non-Muslim leading figures both fought and cooperated with one another for a new distribution of wealth in the Ottoman Empire.
The point of this thesis is to explain the Morea Rebellion and position this rebellion as an international issue since, we will argue, Ottoman relations with other major European powers of the time became a largely determining factor for Ottoman socio-economic and political policies throughout the period at issue. We will examine Ottoman historiography of the time in a wider perspective where the Ottoman Empire and other important states of the time are seen to greatly affect one another. And as we will see in greater detail, primary documents clearly describe the Morea Rebellion as an international issue rather than a domestic one. Not surprisingly, therefore, our classification of historical stages mentioned above will require a close examination of the international history of the empire within its wider context.

A New Beginning in a Traditional Empire (1683-1699)

The Ottomans did not really accept that the empire lagged behind the other major European powers until the second siege of Vienna in 1683. As many Ottomanists have already argued, this first stage in our classification, which came to an end with a humiliating treaty of 1699, began a new era in the Ottoman Empire. It was a moment when the Ottomans finally began to think about the question of what had gone wrong in the empire, and to find solutions for the problems it had been experiencing for many decades. This catastrophe essentially and dramatically forced the Ottomans to change their old (kadim) structure and traditional system, and allowed for the emergence of new Muslim elites who were not only quite different from earlier leading figures, but were also willing to challenge with the empire for the sake of their newly established power within the state, if need be.

By the end of this first stage these Muslim elites were less dependent on the sultans for maintaining their positions, and more and more willing and able to make decisions in opposition to central government. In the end, the empire (and the sultans at its head) lost its external prestige
– which became much more obvious as a consequence of unending military debacles – and imperial domestic authority and influence fell in favour of members of the new elites, including pashas and pasha households, leading military figures, the ulema (i.e. learned religious class) and other Muslim notables in many provinces of the empire. The sultan no longer had authority and right to rule everything, but instead his wishes started to be challenged by his leading subjects. Nevertheless, the Ottoman sultans did not entirely lose the battle, nor were they eager to give up and accept this new situation altogether, as we will see in examining the years between 1699 and 1730 in greater detail.

Not long after the Ottoman defeat in Vienna the empire lost substantial territories in the Balkans, including Belgrade to Austria, thus marking the end of further Ottoman westward expansion. Even if they were far from the glory days of being a real rival to the Ottoman Empire, having launched an expedition into Ottoman Greece, the Venetians also took full possession of Dalmatia, the Morea and some Aegean islands. Moreover, the Ottoman-Russian War, which had begun in 1686, not only ended with the Russian capture of the crucial port of Azov in 1693, but also proved the power of Russia as a newly emerging enemy in the north. Following the final battle at the hands of Prince Eugene of Savoy at Zenta in 1697, the Ottomans were forced to acknowledge defeat and permanently ceded almost all of Hungary, Transylvania, Croatia and Slovenia to Austria. Last but not least, Poland, which had helped the Habsburgs against the Ottoman imperial army at a very crucial moment in the war, took southern Ukraine from the Ottoman Empire.

Not surprisingly, this was a tremendous blow to the Ottoman Empire and its long rightful claim of being a world empire, and also to the imperial ideology itself. The Ottoman ideology of a superior Islamic empire was openly shattered as a result of sixteen years of defeat at the hands
of Christian Europe. This gravely diminished Ottoman position as a great military power and it became evident that “the Turkish menace” was a thing of the past, particularly in the second half of the eighteenth century. Soon after the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, it is understood, that the empire went from hunter to the hunted in bloodthirsty struggles for power, despite the fact that they were still able to win victories long after the debacle of 1683-1699. The problems had been present since the second half of the sixteenth century, but it was only following the devastating Ottoman losses to Austria, Poland, Venice and Russia that these problems became a matter of life or death from the Ottoman statesmen’s point of view. It was in fact the first occasion that the Ottomans not only officially accepted the mediation of neutral European states, but also admitted to the defeat of the Ottoman Empire. In the end, Ottoman unilateral diplomacy of earlier centuries was replaced with more moderate diplomatic and multi-lateral relations with the European powers.

Even before the immediate loss of international prestige, however, domestic policy in the empire began to be determined by those high-ranking officials who had either forged an alliance through marrying a princess of Ottoman dynasty, or maintained authority simply due to their personal charisma. Moreover, the vizier and the pasha, who were responsible for providing their supporters with employment, protection, training and the right contacts, reserved most official appointments for their closest cohorts.¹ To give but one example, in 1656, Mehmed IV had already given over executive power to Köprülü Mehmed Pasha, who became de facto ruler of the Ottoman Empire with the help of members of his household. What is particularly important here

¹ El-Haj argues in his book that towards the end of the seventeenth century, about half of the central and provincial administrators were members of one pasha household who were either raised by, trained by, or attached to viziers and pashas. Rifaaat Ali Abou-El-Haj, The 1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics (Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituutte Istanbul, 1984), 9.
is the fact that the diversion of executive power to the vizier or pasha, and the new power arrangement following, were kept intact long after Köprülü Mehmed Pasha died in 1661.²

Traditionally, state officers of palace origin who held the highest positions in the empire were to be appointed by an absolute ruler. All their prerogatives and privileges relied upon none but the sultan himself and with the accession of a new sultan they simply lost all their rights unless they were renewed by a new sultan. Following 1683, however, the power of the imperial Ottoman household was significantly weakened. Now, it was not the sultan but grand viziers and their households, as well as other leading Muslim figures that began to decide who would fill vacancies in the highest positions of the empire. Namely, the chance to obtain a high position in the Ottoman Empire began to depend on a relationship with these new figures instead of with sultans. Thus, immediate family members of viziers or pashas, including their brothers, sons-in-law and other relatives, became favoured candidates for the vacancies available in state administration. Relatives of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha who got the highest positions in state administration during and after his rule were prime examples of this new inclination. To be precise, in the 47 years following Köprülü Mehmed Pasha, the Ottoman grand vizierate was held for 38 years by members of Köprülü family including the direct descendants of Mehmed Pasha, Köprülü Ahmed and Mustafa Pasha; his nephew Amcazade Hüseyin Pasha; his son-in-law Kara Mustafa Pasha; and other members of the Köprülü family, such as Kara Ibrahim, Köprülü Mehmed Pasha and his son-in-law Abaza Siyavuş, among others.³

Actually, vizier and pasha households were not that different from those of the sultans. That is, viziers, pashas and sultans all acquired slaves with specific skills for use in strengthening their position within the state apparatus. In theory, of course, the sultan remained the only ruler

² Ibid., 88.
who had the right and power to appoint anyone to any position in the empire. But in practice, his power was not much different from those viziers or pashas who sought to reserve the best positions for their own men. The number of these burgeoning households was not truly significant until the third quarter of the seventeenth century. However, El-Haj’s studies clearly prove that in the period between 1683 and 1703, other than the grand vizierate, important state positions were frequently filled with more members of vizier and pasha households than those of the sultan’s household, who had traditionally graduated from palace schools in the past. At this juncture, during and following the wars of 1683-1699, it is reasonable to question whether the sultan retained any ability to influence state affairs or potency to press his will over these increasingly powerful pasha households. Suffice it to say that by this time, Ottoman sultans were far from being seen as *de facto* rulers of the empire, let alone as universal absolute rulers.

For example, members of the Köprülü family, who had acquired the positions of the highest dignitaries in the empire between 1683 and 1703, were powerful and confident enough to overthrow the sultans who fought against their domination following the failed siege of Vienna in 1683. That is, with the “Edirne Event” of 1703, the Köprülü family made an attempt to annihilate its opponents Mustafa II (1695-1703) and Fethullah Efendi who were struggling to eliminate (or at least restrain) the power of the Köprülü households. As a result, a military uprising was triggered in Istanbul, which not only deposed Sultan Mustafa but also took the life of Feyzullah Efendi in 1703. El-Haj concludes that “the growing power of the vezir and paşa households, here demonstrated by the Köprülü and its satellite *kapilar*, made them equal to the supreme task of creating and deposing Sultans.”

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4 Ibid.: 443.
5 Ibid.: 446.
In other words, after signing the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699 and that of Istanbul in 1700, Mustafa strove to regain traditional sultanic power over leading pasha households. However, reasserting and solidifying his threatened position required Mustafa II’s dependence on his former mentor, Feyzullah Efendi, who represented the ulema class at that time. In this case, even if he had not been deposed in the coup attempt of 1703, the sultan’s power and stature would have been considerably diminished since he would not have the freedom to manage the state without interference from the other interested party, i.e., ulema. Consequently, by 1703, the sultan lost his traditional claim to absolute rule. The problem is even further complicated by the contradiction between the Ottoman theory of power, where none but the sultan could claim to be an absolute ruler, and the reality that had evolved by the end of the seventeenth century. On balance, the Ottoman debacle of 1683-1699 and the subsequent “Edirne Event” brought about a period where neither the sultan nor the Ottoman dynasty itself was indispensible or even very significant in the decision-making of eighteenth century Ottoman society.6

Although the right to rule of the Ottoman dynasty was not really questioned at this stage, the sultan was left powerless in practice. The “Edirne Event” totally guaranteed that if the sultan wished to have any effect in the empire, he had to take interested parties into consideration and hope they would support his policies.7 That is, the relationship between the sultan and pashas and their households became one of mutuality and interdependence, especially during times of trouble. From this point on, the sultan did not make unilateral proclamations. Negotiation became the mode by which the sultan become nothing but primus inter pares – as it had once

6 Uzunçarşıli mentions that as the rebels of 1703 marched to Edirne for the purpose of deposing Mustafa II, they were even thinking of overthrowing the Ottoman dynasty in favour of either the Genghis Khanid dynasty or the Ibrahimzades. İsmail Hakki Uzunçarşıli, Osmanlı Tarihi vol. 4/1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1956), 33-34. El-Haj also argues that a rebellion like that of 1703 would provide an opportunity either to reassert one’s power or to maintain existing control. This is a struggle that might have been launched against any interested parties not excluding the Ottoman dynasty itself. Abou-El-Haj, The 1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics, 10.
been in earliest part of its long history (1301-1453).\(^8\) At this point, El-Haj argues that the “Edirne Event” of 1703 – which had constrained the power of the Ottoman household and elevated that of pasha households – might have led to the emergence of provincial powers in the eighteenth century.\(^9\) More importantly, in opposition to the Ottoman style at the time, monarchs in Europe were not only concentrating state power in their own hands, but also taking the power away from state elites or notables.\(^10\)

The **Malikane System and Economic Transformation of the Ottoman Empire After 1683**

Before analyzing what happened after the Treaty of Karlowitz one should answer the question of what this long war and subsequent treaty brought to the Ottoman Empire and how this related to the emergence of new Muslim elites. To start with, the sixteen-year war devastated the existent Ottoman system, which had already been under threat throughout the seventeenth century. The introduction of the lifelong tax farm system (*malikane*), indicating a desperate and urgent need of cash, is of significance here.\(^11\) What is particularly noteworthy is that implementation of this system began in the Morea. Therefore, what will be presented as the effects of the *malikane* system upon the Ottoman Empire in general will be true for the Morea, as well. Özvar’s study of the *malikane* system including a period of 30 months immediately after it

\(^8\) Erdenen notes that following the “Edirne Incident” and deposition of Mustafa II, the rebels and their supporters obtained the highest positions in state administration and Ahmed III was no longer able to trust even his guards (*bostancı*), who were supposed to protect the Sultan against any danger. As a result, he dismissed 700 *bostancı* from the palace and replaced them with new *devşirmes* till the end of his reign. It was only by doing so, Erdenen argues, that Ahmed III was able to create a staff on whom he could rely. Orhan Erdenen, *Lâle Devri ve Yansımları* (İstanbul: Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı, 2003), 19-20. In a sense, as a response to the threat of increasingly powerful pasha households, he intended to create his own households that were of course much less powerful than their predecessors in sixteenth century.


\(^10\) Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire: 1700-1922* (New York Cambrige University Press, 2005), 43.

\(^11\) Cezar argues that the introduction of the *malikane* system was the first radical change in the Ottoman fiscal system. Before that, the empire endeavored to keep the traditional system, making minor adjustments if need be. Yavuz Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalım ve Değişim Dönemi: XVIII. Yı’dan Tanzimata Mali Tarihi* (İstanbul: Alan Yayıncılık 1986), 33.
was implemented in 1695 openly indicates that it was widely applied in the Morea.\textsuperscript{12} Uzunçarşılı also agrees that the Morea was one of two provinces where the \textit{malikane} system immediately took hold.\textsuperscript{13} Last but not least, Zarinebaf posits that in the second half of the eighteenth century, a substantial number of \textit{malikanes} had been held by Ottoman princesses not only in the Morea but also in the Aegean Islands – both regions that took an important part in the rebellion.\textsuperscript{14}

The continuing wars against the Holy League triggered a devastating financial crisis and forced the state to take some decisions at the expense of the old system. Accordingly, the Ottoman Empire had to introduce this new tax farming system in 1695 in order to raise more cash for the prolonged wars, which continued till 1699. The emergence of \textit{ayan} or local magnates should be seen in this context. Mehmet Genç’s study at the BOA gives some clear evidence for this dramatic reality. He states that the deficit of the Ottoman budget in 1669-1670 was 44,677,388 \textit{akçe}s and by 1690-1691, it had multiplied approximately six times to 247,116,957 \textit{akçe}s.\textsuperscript{15} Urgently seeking income to support ongoing military campaigns, the state was forced to accept a new form of tax contract, i.e. the \textit{malikane}, which changed state infrastructure forever. Unlike the \textit{iltizams}, which were short-term farming of taxes,\textsuperscript{16} \textit{malikanes} were assigned for life (\textit{bervech-i mâlikâne}) on the condition that owners paid a large initial payment (\textit{muaccele}), and then regular annual payments (\textit{mal}) thereafter. More importantly, in return for paying these amounts, \textit{malikane} owners also gained important privileges and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12} Erol Özvar, \textit{Osmanlı Maliyesinde Malikâne Uygulaması} (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2003), 133-146.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Uzunçarşılı, 438.
\item \textsuperscript{14} Zarinebaf, 39.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Mehmet Genç, "Osmanlı Maliyesinde Malikane Sistemi," in \textit{Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Devlet ve Ekonomi} (Istanbul: Ötügen, 2002), 104.
\item \textsuperscript{16} \textit{Il tízams} were usually given for three years, and after that, their owner lost all of their rights. They did not even have unlimited or uncontrollable privileges of ownership within the set period. To give but one example, if for one reason or another certain incomes of an \textit{iltizam} increased, other entrepreneurs kept the right to offer to state more money in return for this \textit{iltizam} before the end of the three years. In that case, either the owner of this \textit{iltizam} had to contract to pay more, or lost all of his rights coming from the \textit{iltizam} before the end of the prescribed time. Basically, the \textit{iltizam} could have been transferred to someone else who offered more money to the state in return. See Özvar, 3 and 20-21.
\end{itemize}
immunities, which, in a sense, turned state lands into private properties, as we will see in greater detail below. Salzmann not only argues that *malikane* facilitated privatization of state revenue, but also called it the “fiscal privatization” of the Ottoman Empire. Nonetheless, this privatization does not necessarily mean that the *malikane* holders soon started to invest their money in fields other than state lands, as had frequently been the case in Europe. Instead, obtaining tax revenues was much more lucrative than making an investment in any other part of the Ottoman Empire. The *malikane* system is actually given as the very reason the Ottomans were able to keep control in the provinces long after its power had faded away there. After all, the perpetuation of the state remained important to the *malikane* holders, who continued to earn under this new system.\(^{17}\)

Similar to the *esham* (a form of long-term domestic borrowing), which was initiated following the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774 due to Ottoman economic bankruptcy, the *malikane* was an attempt to cope with the late seventeenth-century crisis that had reached its apogee with the sixteen-year wars of 1683-1699. Yet, when we take into consideration the hard conditions the empire had experienced during these war years, at first glance, the *malikane* does not really seem to be a radical change in Ottoman structure. After all, the Ottomans had been working with the *iltizam* system for centuries, and in many respects, the *malikane* was similar. In addition to eliminating problems of the *iltizam* system, which had been rightly blamed for being a huge financial burden to *reaya* and for decreasing productivity of Ottoman lands in the long run, the *malikane* system could also be thought to provide better protection for both these lands and the Ottoman *reaya*.

\(^{17}\) Salzmann convincingly argues that the Ottoman Empire succeeded in keeping political loyalty intact by providing significant investment opportunity for interested parties from either the administration or the upper classes. The continued material interest resulted in ongoing political loyalty to the Ottomans even long after they had lost most of their power. See Ariel Salzmann, "An Ancient Regime Revisted: Privatization and Political Economy in the 18th Century Ottoman Empire," *Politics & Society* 21, (Dec. 1993): 393-423.
However, when we look closely at the *malikane* system and what it brought to the Ottoman Empire, its great influence on the evolution of a new Ottoman system – which changed the state structure once and for all – cannot be described as a simple modification of the *iltizam* system. For instance, unlike the *iltizam* system of early decades, in the *malikane* system, the Ottomans to a great extent targeted small-scale entrepreneurs.\(^{18}\) That is, the state intended to sell small properties at auction or to divide large properties into smaller parcels (*mukataas*), so that even small entrepreneurs could take their place in this new system.\(^{19}\) Without a doubt, there were a substantial number of *malikane* owners who were members of the military class or had a close affiliation with it, or other leading Muslim subjects of modest origin (*ayan*). Not surprisingly, therefore, the *malikane* system reached a wider variety of people, including the non-military subjects of the empire. As a result, now we have not only members of the military class, i.e., pasha households (whose property and future were no longer directly dependent on sultans), but also Muslims elites who were eager to construct political and economic bases both in Ottoman provinces and the countryside, as well as those big cities that were relatively far from the direct influence of Istanbul.

The privileges and prerogatives of the *malikane* system exceeded, beyond comparison, those of the *iltizam* system. To give but one example, upon their death, *malikane* holders were not allowed to bequeath the *malikanes* to their heirs. Nonetheless, heirs of *malikane* holders still enjoyed preferential rights of bidding on properties, which more or less left the transfer of the *malikane* lands in the hands of the same family. In practice, *malikane* holders had the power to

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\(^{18}\) Indeed, as it is understood from Özvar’s studies on the *malikane* system, the Ottomans first targeted small entrepreneurs rather than big ones but the system became widespread all over the empire in no time. To be exact, just two years after implementation, the *malikane hasas* and *ocaklık mukataas* started to be included within the system. It was only after this that the state started to make a huge income from the *malikane* system. Özvar, 29-50.

\(^{19}\) Genç, 107. Özvar’s statistic concerning the numbers of shared *malikane* showed that for the years between 1695 and 1697, it was far from being negligible. Accordingly, 37% of all *malikane* sold during that period were owned by two or more owners. Another noteworthy point in this study is that, again, 37% of all shared *malikanes* were shared by fathers and sons. Özvar, 84-85.
leave their lands to both male and female heirs as if these lands were mülk (private property) or religious endowments. Suceska’s example of the Rizvanbegoviç family in Bosnia clearly proves the fact that as malikane holders, they succeeded in keeping malikane lands under their own control for more than a hundred years. In the end, malikane holders emerged as privileged groups in both political and social realms of the region. Such families whose powers relied upon the malikane system, Suceska argues, not only created their own feudal system within the empire but later became the source of anarchy throughout the entire eighteenth century.20

Moreover, the malikane owners had total freedom to put the lands on the market (kasrıyed) as if they were not miri lands (state owned lands). İnalcık argues that with the malikane system lands “became virtually like property, leasers actual landlords, and peasants their tenants. In other words, the whole class of lease-holders (eshâb-i mukâta`a) now intervened between the state and peasants.”21 As such, unlike in previous centuries, for the first time in Ottoman history, state lands to a large extent became a commercial commodity from which one could benefit – to the detriment of state interests.22 Another significant feature of the malikane system that contributed to the state’s loss of full and rightful possession of lands is that as long as the malikane owners paid predetermined taxes on time, the Ottoman Empire guaranteed that the malikane tax would not be increased against the malikane owners’ will. Consequently, tax income could only be increased by 10% over the whole eighteenth century, while real prices

22 We come across a large number of examples where the malikane owners or their heirs misused this right and made large amounts of money to the detriment of the Ottoman treasury. For example, according to the contract the state kept the right to resell malikanes after the death of their leasers (mahlûl). But, often the state was not informed about mahlûl and the lands either sold to another leaser(s) or was used by the heirs of the dead malikane holders. Later, the Ottomans had to take measures to prevent such misusages. Genç, 108.
increased by four times. In particular, when we take the high inflation rate of the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire into consideration, this guarantee obviously became a great burden for the treasury and forced the Ottomans to find other forms of income in order to pay the exorbitant military and social expenses of the empire.

Last but not least, other than kâdis – who were the head of legal courts in the Ottoman Empire – only the malikane owners had the benefit of full immunity from administrative interference (mefrûzü’l-kadem ve maktûü’l-kadem min külli’l-vücûh serbesiyet üzere tasarruf etmesi içün or cümle tekâliften ve mezalimden serbestiyet üzere tasarruf). Furthermore, the malikane holders functioned as policemen as well as administrators of the region(s) under their control. More importantly, however, they were not only responsible for collecting the usual taxes, but also for gathering other taxes including resm and harç as well as some extraordinary taxes such as avarız-i divaniye and tekâlif-i örfiye.

Besides the obvious economic factors, the malikane system brought about significant social and institutional changes in the Ottoman Empire, too. Not surprisingly, the malikane owners were often members of the military class in Istanbul or at least had a close connection with the palace. Consequently, the line between the members of the askeri class and the reaya began to blur, since buying malikane lands also made the askeri land owners responsible for paying tax to the state as if they were reaya. More importantly though, they usually preferred to subcontract their malikane lands to second or even third parties called as mültezims/mütesellims.

23 Ibid., 27.
24 Cezar claims that not being able to discover the mahlül on time was the very grounds for the state decision to increase the malikane lands in order to meet with the expenses of the time. As a result, more and more lands were sold at auction and the malikanes became quite widespread throughout the whole empire. Cezar, 34 and 72.
25 Suceska: 279.
26 According to one estimation, 36% of the value of regional holdings in the Balkans, 17% of those in Aleppo, and 5% of those in Anatolia were held by Ottoman high dignitaries in the year of 1703. See Salzmann, “Centripetal Decentralization”. On the other hand, Genç argues that according to a decree (KK, 5040, 5) issued in 1714, the state was strictly forbidden to give the malikanes to people of reaya origin. Genç, 107, n. 16.
In that respect, the *malikane* system did not abrogate the *iltizam* system all together but rather it was integrated into the *iltizam* system, as will be seen below.\textsuperscript{27}

Relations between the *malikane* holders and subcontractors – usually local notables – were not always harmonious. These *mültezims*, who were the most powerful and influential people of their regions, used the *malikane* lands to increase their influence over the *reaya* and soon they constituted the *ayan* of the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire. By means of these subcontractual positions given to the *ayan* first with the *iltizam* system, and then more elaborately with the *malikane* system, influential local families not only acquired an important source of economic power but also had the opportunity to reinforce their influence in the provinces.\textsuperscript{28} As İnalcık argues, unlike the *ayan* of earlier centuries, the *ayan* of the eighteenth century were given an opportunity to be part of the Ottoman ruling class, since they began to take advantages of some official titles, such as *mütesellim*.\textsuperscript{29} In the long run, starting from the end of seventeenth century, local notables were appointed to official positions with the new titles including *kapicibaşi*, *agha*, *bey*, which had been not only extremely uncommon among them in previous years, but also a privilege exclusively for members of the military class of *kapıkuşu* origin. This is interpreted as “the direct delegation of sultan’s authority.”\textsuperscript{30} At this point, we now have members of pasha households and a substantial number of local notables given the privileges and prerogatives previously held only by the military class. Unlike the earlier *askeri*

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., 111.
\textsuperscript{28} During the time of the *iltizam* system there was a struggle going on among *mütesellims* to maintain their positions. Their opportunity to hold either *mukataas* or any source of revenue permanently was facilitated by the conversion of the lands into *malikanes*. See Halil İnalcık, "Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration " in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Islamic History*, ed. Thomas Naff and Roger Owen (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1977), 33.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 32. In their articles, both Uzunçarşılı and Mert argue that the *malikane* system played a great role in the development of the *ayanlık* institution. That is, Uzunçarşılı agrees by saying that the *malikane* holders gained influence in the administration of the empire following this new land system. *İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul1944), s.v. "Âyân." As for Mert, he posits that by means of the *malikane* system, local notables not only started to take advantage of state revenues but also they were given an opportunity to use state authority. *Diyanet İslam Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul1991), s.v. "Âyan."
\textsuperscript{30} İnalcık, "Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration ", 40.
class, however, they did not possess a burning desire to support the sultan and his policies, nor did they hesitate to bolster other interested parties at the expense of state stability.

Throughout the eighteenth century the ayan made themselves indispensable to the state by means of providing whatever the state needed during wartime. The Ottoman experience at the end of the 1683-1699 wars and during the first half of the eighteenth century had already demonstrated that the best and most effective way of collecting taxes could be provided with the help of local ayan. It was also well-proven with the introduction of the malikane system in the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the eighteenth century. There can be no doubt that the malikane system bolstered the emergence of provincial notables who then became eager for governmental positions in the eighteenth century. İnalcık concludes “the malikane system made a major contribution to the rise of a new landlord class with the rights, as free holders, over large tracts of state lands (miri), and it is in this practice that one has to look for the origins of the çiflik system, and the rise of the village aghas (landlords) and the renowned eighteenth-century dynasties with large mukataa estates in their holding”.31

Taking everything into consideration, the malikane owners were equipped with huge financial and political privileges which not only threatened the central state’s control over tax revenues and reaya, but also opened the way for ayan over time, especially in the countryside. Many other studies confirm this fact. For instance, Akdağ states that following the example of Egypt, where land ownership was granted for life, the Ottomans made local notables much stronger than before, and as a result the local landlords turned into feudal lords.32 In a similar vein, Özkaya also asserts that this new system brought grist to the mill of the local notables who

had already gained ground beginning around 1669-1670.\(^{33}\) It even became, he argues, the *raison d’être* for the increased power of local notables in the Ottoman Empire.\(^{34}\) Last but not least, Suceska posits that the *malikane* system not only increased the social and political power of *mültezims* (tax-farmers) but also led to the emergence of wealthy *ayan* who soon became quite influential in the political life of the empire.\(^{35}\) Examples of such empowerment for individuals can be clearly observed throughout the eighteenth century. Karaosmanzades, Çapanoğlus and Caniklzades are just a few examples. Detailed studies of each family reveal the fact that the *malikane* system played a role of importance in their economic rise in the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire. To give but one example, between the years 1737-1808 the Caniklzades held significant *muhassillik* of *malikane* in the Canik region where they were later firmly established as a family enterprise of significance, especially between 1768 and 1792.\(^{36}\)

As for non-Muslim subjects of the empire, they were legally banned from acquiring *malikane* lands. But, Pamuk posits, as brokers, financiers or accountants, etc., they were indirectly involved in this new system.\(^{37}\) Namely, the necessity of paying the first installment in advance forced Muslim lessees to cooperate with money-lenders, most of whom were presumably non-Muslims. As a result, they had not only a great investment in the *malikane* system but were also highly interested in what it brought to the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, it is not reasonable to claim that such investments of the non-Muslims allowed them to gain status the same way the Muslims did.

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\(^{33}\) Özkaya, 27.

\(^{34}\) Ibid., 109-110.

\(^{35}\) Suceska: 281.


\(^{37}\) This relationship between Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire is called “Islamic business partnerships.” Şevket Pamuk, "Institutional Change and the Longevity of the Ottoman Empire, 1500-1800," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* XXXV 2, (Autumn, 2004): 241.
The role of the malikane system within the Ottoman Empire increased dramatically from 1695 to 1774. To be exact, the number of mukataas registered as malikane multiplied by 220 to 680. As a result, the total revenue acquired from the new system provided more income to the state toward the end of the eighteenth century (375,171,600 akçes instead of 199,838,944 akçes i.e., 88%). In the same period, the number of the tax revenues (vergi kalemi) sold as malikane increased from 115 to 514 (347%) and then the Ottoman acquired 161,619,480 akçes income instead of former 10,752,920 akçes (1,400%). And in 1697-1698 malikane revenues constituted only 5.3% of the total income but in 1774 this increased to 43%, a clear indicator of the system’s increasing importance, from its first implementation to 1774. Sahillioğlu’s study also proves that the income and expenditure of the Ottoman treasury were continually on the increase between 1683 and 1740. When we bring Genç and Sahillioğlu’s arguments together, the impact of the malikane system becomes almost indisputable.

Essentially, following the wars of 1683-1699, the Ottoman Empire was forced to reconsider its functionality, and with a military debacle followed by fiscal shortfalls, the redistribution of wealth and position was its only option. The door was opened for the renegotiation and reorganization of the empire in the face of changing socioeconomic and political conditions. Most malikane owners were either members of high-ranking state offices such as viziers, bureaucrats, and so forth, or members of the Ottoman dynasty, including female descendants. As Özvar states, by means of the malikane system, high-ranking state officers found a great opportunity to transfer their temporal income coming out of the hass lands into a

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38 Genç, 117.
39 Halil Sahillioğlu, "The Income and the Expenditure of the Ottoman Treasury between 1683 and 1740," in Studies on Ottoman Economic and Social History (Istanbul: Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture, 1999), 65-82.
40 Özvar’s study clearly indicates that between the years 1695 and 1697, 71% of the malikane holders were members of the military class and the rest were civilians. He also argues that pashas and their households were among the most important beneficiaries of the malikane system. Özvar, 60-68 and 92-94.
permanent income.\footnote{Ibid., 48-49.} Namely, they had previously benefitted from state lands during their period of office, which continued only for a very short period of time. However, when they purchased the \textit{hass} lands as \textit{malikane}, not only did they acquire a permanent source of income, but as have mentioned above, complete freedom and immunity from state intervention for a life time. Frequent deposition of state officers and confiscation of their property at the hands of the empire, which had largely prevented the emergence of the aristocracy in the past, were simply not in effect within the \textit{malikane} system. There is no doubt that this opened the way for the emergence of a social strata – aristocracy – who had once been employed within the state apparatus, but did not necessarily remain faithful supporters after personally acquiring \textit{malikane} land as their own private enterprise.

By permitting local citizens to attend at \textit{malikane} auctions, the Ottomans spread economic and social benefits beyond members of the state class alone. A new class, composed of important figures from outside the capital, enjoyed the benefits of a new Ottoman system which basically turned them into members of the ruling strata with the bonus of being granted some official titles. Although some of these new interest groups became members of the ruling class, they were totally different from the ruling strata of the sixteenth century, whose rewards or punishments had been at the hands of the sultan himself. These new members of the ruling strata were not terribly concerned about what the sultan expected them to do, nor did the sultan have the right or power to dispossess them of their lands, state positions or any other gained interests that this new era offered to them. After all, both the \textit{malikane} system and pasha households eliminated the right of the sultan to distribute the lands and state offices according to his will, as we have discussed above.
The Ottoman Empire dealt with the issues that emerged with the war of 1683-1699 by means of changing traditional socioeconomic and political structures by depriving the sultan of his traditional rights and renouncing his claim to be an absolute ruler in practice. This Ottoman flexibility and openness to necessary change revealed hopes for recovering all territories that had been lost following the sixteen-year war at the end of the seventeenth century. In a positive rebound, the Ottoman Empire succeeded in defeating Russia at Pruth in 1711 and Venice in the Morea in 1715. Nevertheless, the Ottomans suffered another shattering defeat by Austria in 1717. But again, the Ottomans recovered and succeeded in scoring important military and diplomatic victories against both Austria and Russia in 1736 and 1739. In the meantime, the empire was also involved in a series of alternately disastrous and successful wars against Persia in the East. In the first half of the eighteenth century, the Ottoman Empire underwent some of the most disruptive economic, political, social and religious changes in its entire history. Nevertheless, it continued to be good at adapting to new eras and also largely succeeded in maintaining its integrity. After all, the empire was not only still successful to recruit soldiers, weapons as well as a good supply of ammunition for new military campaigns against its formidable enemies but also continued to be seen as the most important center of privileges and reward in the eyes of the Ottoman subjects through the malikane system. That is, obtaining the malikane was a bonanza for malikane holders and this is given as the very reason why the central government was still able to maintain some control in Ottoman provinces in spite of its lack of military power. The Ottomans were thus saved from the threats of the first half of the eighteenth century, and retained economic and political integrity long after the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699. This period between 1699 and 1730 constitutes the second stage of this chapter.

42 Salzmann: 393-423.
Longing for Past Glories of the Empire and Sultanic Authority in Vain (1699-1730)

The second era where the Ottomans are seen to be victims as well as victors will answer the question of what happened following the Treaty of Karlowitz. On the one hand, it began an era where both the redistribution of tax revenues and the decentralization of Ottoman administration indicated a shift in power to those outside the palace. On the other hand, the Ottoman sultan did not give up all of former claims absolute rule and struggled to keep a tight rein on the newly emerged Muslim notables who had already begun to grow in the social, political and economic structure of the Ottoman Empire. After all, Ottoman statesmen believed that the worst had passed and the empire was once again on the right track (at least for a while). First example of this feel-good factor can be observed in the 1710-1711 Ottoman-Russian War known as the “Pruth Campaign.”

Following the famous battle of Poltava in 1709 (where Peter the Great’s outnumbered army defeated Charles XII), the Swedish monarch took refuge in the court of Ahmed III. This incident, as well as Ottoman eagerness to regain its former influence north of the Black Sea, brought about Ottoman involvement in a new campaign to avert Russian expansions continuing both in Crimea and in Western Europe. In this new struggle, Peter’s miscalculation and unpreparedness cost Russia dearly. The Russian strike force, composed of 32,000 infantry and 12,000 cavalry, attempted to prevent Ottoman soldiers from crossing the Danube in vain. In the meantime, shortage of supplies impaired the strength of the Russian army. The two armies met on the Prut River and their first encounter indicated the limits of Russian capabilities at that time. Conversely, however, we see the Ottoman Empire was pretty well prepared for the campaign. The Ottomans had sent orders to recruit soldiers from both Anatolia and Rumelia and were able
to put more than 100,000 soldiers on the Prut River against the small Russian army. In the end, the war broke out and Peter barely saved himself from a catastrophe on the banks of the Prut River in July 1711. That is, only significant territorial, political and diplomatic concessions allowed Peter to turn back home safe and sound. Russia not only had to give up fortresses and fleets at Azov and Taganrog, but also the squadron based on the Prut itself, as well as other holdings on the Black Sea – all of which had been gained following the 1683-1699 wars and the Treaty of Istanbul in 1700. Again, Russia lost its former right of representation in the capital of the Ottoman Empire and gave the Swedish king safe passage back home. Lastly, Peter also promised to withdraw from Poland. Further arguments between the two states on the articles of this treaty were settled in the Treaty of Adrianople in 1713, which basically confirmed the agreement made on the Prut River. Most important of all, however, this was the very first time that Russia had tried to benefit from Orthodox subjects of the sultan. Peter had placed too much reliance on his intrigue and wrongly assumed that his army would be able to find all the supplies required in the liberated lands or from Christian subjects of the sultan longing for relief. The Ottoman Empire not only counteracted all Russian incitements but also eliminated Moldavian and Wallachian rebels who had supported the Russian cause throughout the war.

The Prut campaign of 1711 testified to the strength and enduring success of the Ottoman Empire following the catastrophe of 1683-1699. More importantly, it wiped out the disgraces of the previous wars and allowed the Ottomans to reassert their self-confidence, which had been shattered during the sixteen-year war. Russia was one of the most rapidly growing states in early Modern Europe and had scored great victories in many battlefields before and after the Prut

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43 By one estimation, almost 130,000 Ottoman soldiers faced the Russian army of less than 45,000. Paul Dukes, The Making of Russian Absolutism 1613-1801 (London, New York: Longman, 1990), 72.
River conflict. As a result, it is not surprising that the victory at the battle of Pruth bolstered Ottoman confidence and Ahmed III, who had been hesitant in declaring war in 1711, did not falter in declaring another war against Russia on account of Peter’s reluctance to abide by the treaty agreements. The Ottoman timidity of 1711 was replaced with the regret that Baltacı Mehmed Pasha could have easily scored a better victory against Russia and possibly even annihilated Peter’s army once and for all.

The Phanariotes and the Emergence of Non-Muslim Elites in the Ottoman Empire

Dimitri Candemir, who became a source of conflict between the Ottomans and Russia during that time, deserves a mention here as well. Just one year before the war, he had been appointed as the ruler of Moldova by the Ottomans. Soon, however, the empire deposed him from office when he promised to have food and supplies ready for Russian troops and joined in tsar’s campaign against the Ottoman Empire during the battle of Pruth. His aim was to use the Russians against the Ottomans by placing Moldavia under Russian suzerainty. According to the treaty signed between Cantemir and Peter at Lusk in Poland on April 13, 1711, Moldovia was to be restored to its ancient formulation, and then accept the domination of Russia. Besides, Cantemir and his successors were to enjoy the sovereignty of the lands and no other family could

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44 To give an example, between the years 1700 and 1831, Russia engaged in so many wars and lost only three of them, including the Pruth battle in 1711, Austerlitz in 1805, and Friedland in 1807.
45 Sultan Ahmed seems to be so confident in conducting another successful campaign that Fındıklı Mehmed Ağa argues that when he was informed about Peter’s disobedience of the articles of the Pruth treaty, he wrote a hatt-ı şerif saying that if Russia continued to flout the articles of the treaty, he himself was going to make a campaign against the Russian infidels. (Moskov keferesi üzerine seferim var, bı’z-zât kendim giderim, ana göre müşâvere olunub din-ı devleti layık ne ise rıkâb-i hümâyûnuma arz olunsun.) Silahdar Fındıklı Mehmet, Nusretnâme, ed. İsmet Parmaksizoğlu, vol. 2/2 (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basimevi, 1969), 277.
46 One should not downplay the Russian defeat at the battle of Pruth. After all, not long after 1711, Peter counterbalanced this defeat with the successful campaign of 1722-23 against the Ottoman Persian vassals. For the time being, however, the Ottomans started to believe that all that had been lost during the disastrous wars of 1683-1699 could be recovered once again.
be allowed to rule Moldavia until there remained no member of the Cantemir family. Despite being a failure, this agreement became important for two reasons. First of all, Cantemir’s affiliation with Russia can be seen as the first moment when Russia was seen as liberator of the Christians from Ottoman yoke. More importantly, however, it opened the way for prominent Greek as well as Hellenized Romanian and Albanian families known as the Phanariotes to govern and dominate, first in Moldavia (1712), and then in Wallachia (1716), in the name of Ottoman sultans, thereby contributing to the emergence of the non-Muslims state officials within the empire.

Incidentally, other than two voyvoda (local rulers) of the twin principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, there were many other state positions that were already controlled by inhabitants of the Phanar district. That is, the dragoman of the court functioned as a middleman between European ambassadors and the imperial council as well as the Patriarch of Constantinople. The position of dragoman of the Ottoman navy was also granted to the Phanariotes and was second in importance after the Ottoman admiral (Kapudan paşa), and acted as de facto ruler of the Aegean islands as well as the coasts of Anatolia. There were other dragoman positions held by the

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47 Dutu and Cernovodeanu, eds., 289.
48 Üzünçarşılı puts forward that Ahmed III was well aware of the Russian intrigue in the Rumelia. He quotes a document sent to the guardian of Selanik, i.e. Hasan Pasha, and governor of Özi, i.e. Yusuf Pasha. According to this note, the Ottomans warned them about some Russians who disguised themselves as merchants in order to provoke Christian reaya in the Balkans. Russian intrigue in the Ottoman territories bore fruit and the reaya of Montenegro rebelled against the Ottomans on the eve of the Pruth campaign. Üzünçarşılı, Osmanlı Tarihi 67 and 70-72. Another striking document about Peter’s attempt to romance the Orthodox subjects is provided by Hasan Kurdi. According to his story, Peter saw all Orthodox Christians as a single nation, and regarded himself as the ruler of this nation. He later urged Christians (Rum taifesi) to rebel against their Turkish overlords, which brought nothing in the end, however. Aksan, 92.
49 We are not sure exactly when the Phanariotes as a new institution emerged. Philliou mentions that its origin can be traced back as early as 1669, when Grand Vizier Fazıl Ahmed Köprüfülü remunerated Panagiotis Nikousios for his help throughout the siege of Crete. If we accept this as the beginning of the Phanariot era, we should also admit the fact that they rose to power roughly at the same time with the Muslim ayans. Even if we accept this as the beginning of the Phanariotes, this single example is far from resembling the elaborate power of the ayans at that time, which had been long established by then. Consequently, one should at least wait till the Treaty of Pruth in order to compare these two groups on any meaningful scale or terms. However, this does not deny striking similarities that helped them gain strength and climb the ladder in Ottoman administration. Christine M. Philliou, "Communities on the Verge: Unraveling the Phanariot Ascendancy in Ottoman Governance," Comparative Studies in Society and History 51, no. 1 (2009): 176.
Phanariotes, the most important of which, for the sake of our study, is dragoman of the imperial army and that of the Morea.\textsuperscript{50} It is clear that the Phanariotes were already established in the Morea as a potent and powerful community by the first quarter of the eighteenth century.

At first glance, the term Phanriot is mistakenly used to identify Ottoman subjects of the empire who were not only Greek in origin but also came from traditional Greek lands. As Philliou explicitly shows, however, using nationalistic and regional terms like Greek or Balkan in explaining the constituency of the Phanariotes is far from reflecting the complexity of group identity created among the Phanariotes. In spite of sharing some common features such as being Orthodox in religion, speaking Greek as \textit{lingua franca} – and therefore being Hellenized – the Phanariotes came from a variety of backgrounds, significantly different from one another. In fact, their members consisted of distinct personalities including Romanian, Albanian, Tatar, Circassian, Serbian/Slavic, Vlach and even Armenian origins.\textsuperscript{51} Consequently, it is not accurate to call them Greek notables of the empire. Their membership was open to any non-Muslim who could speak Greek and other foreign languages (especially French, which was quite widespread as a language of diplomacy at the time). By means of the position given to them after the Pruth War, the Phanariotes not only gained further wealth and increased the political influence of non-Muslim aristocracies in the Ottoman Empire;\textsuperscript{52} they also distinguished themselves as being the earliest channel through which European affairs became known to non-Muslim subjects of the empire.\textsuperscript{53}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{50} Ibid.: 156.
\item \textsuperscript{51} Ibid.: 170-172.
\item \textsuperscript{52} Masters convincingly argues that members of the Phanariot families succeeded in dominating much of the wealth and commerce of the empire in the Balkans by the eighteenth century. Bruce Masters, "Christians in a Changing World," in \textit{The Cambridge History of Turkey. Volume 3, the Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839}, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 2006), 279.
\item \textsuperscript{53} Trypanis argues that with their stimulation of education for the Greek nation, the Phanariotes not only opened the way for a Greek War of independence but also prepared other Balkan nations for freedom from their Turkish overlords. C.A. Trypanis, "Greek Literature since the Fall of Constantinople in 1453," in \textit{The Balkans in Transition};
\end{itemize}
In many respects, the Phanariotes resembled the pasha households of the Ottoman Empire. In practice, their future and fortune were at the hands of their masters rather than sultan himself. According to Stoianovich, prominent Muslim figures who were able to bequeath state positions to their heirs were mirrored by the Phanariotes, who also started to enjoy state titles such as bey or prince, indicating their elevated status in Ottoman administration.\(^{54}\) Sadat also argues the same fact, saying that just like the ayâns and âshraf of the empire, the Phanariotes in cooperation with local leaders of Moldavia and Wallachia – took the benefit of converting lands into hereditary properties.\(^{55}\) This trend becomes more believable when we learn that from 1711 until 1770, there were only three Phanariot families that were considered for the position of voyvoda in Moldavia and Wallachia.\(^{56}\) What is particularly remarkable is that the monopoly of these three families did not end until the last quarter of the eighteenth century, when we see more and more Phanariot families becoming involved in the administration of these two provinces.\(^{57}\)

The Phanariotes, one way or another, opened a channel through which non-Muslim subjects of the empire acquired a right to rule two provinces of the empire on behalf of the sultan. Not surprisingly, over time this led to further influence of non-Muslims in the empire, as we will see below. Suffice it to say that throughout the eighteenth century, crucial state positions in the Ottoman bureaucracy – including grand dragoman, undersecretary of grand viziers, dragoman of the imperial navy and undersecretary of the fleet – were monopolized by

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\(^{57}\) For the possible reason for this change, see Christine M. Philliou, “Worlds, Old and New: Phanariot Networks and the Remaking of Ottoman Governance in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century” (PhD, Princeton University, 2004), 28, n. 31.
prosperous non-Muslim elites. Such important ranks, as well as that of voyvodas or governors of Moldavia and Wallachia, created very powerful non-Muslim elites who occasionally shared common interests with and contributed to expansion of the Greek merchant class.  

However, one should not exaggerate the power of the Phanariotes and describe it as being totally equal in importance to pasha households in the empire. After all, their patrons had to be on friendly terms with dominant figures of Istanbul in order to protect their positions either in the twin principalities or anywhere else in the empire. Unlike the pasha and their households who held the highest state offices in the capital more permanently, the will of the sultan would have been grounds for deposing a Phanariot or replacing one with another. Furthermore, unlike the ayan, the Phanariotes were neither military commanders nor allowed to acquire iltizam or malikane under any circumstance. As non-Muslim subjects of the empire they were also occasionally subjected to second-class status in the Ottoman Empire despite the fact that they were still able to accumulate certain lands and unique privileges as governors of Wallachia and Moldavia. Philliou still concludes that in spite of their difference in acquiring political and economical power both the ayan and Phanariots took important role in the Ottoman governance in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In the end, they created their own authority

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59 A striking example to show how these new Muslim elites were successful in keeping their positions is that a member of Ottoman high aristocracy was always involved in the question(s) of deposing Ottoman Sultan(s) in the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries. Abdüllaïham (chief jurist consul of the empire at the time) approved the position of Ibrahim I in 1648. About forty years later in 1687, Abdüllaïham’s son Mehmed (the chief justice of the Asian and African provinces) acknowledged the regicide of Mehmed IV (son of Sultan Ibrahim). Last but not least, Yahya (son of Mehmed the Judge) attained the position of the chief justice of the Asian and African provinces in the Ottoman Empire following the deposition of Mustafa II (son of Sultan Mehmed) in 1703. To make long story short, “Mustafa II came to be deposed, among others, by a jurist whose father had deposed his father and whose grandfather had deposed and executed his own grandfather.” Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 6.
through their military, diplomatic and political skills desperately needed by the central government at that time.\textsuperscript{60}

One should also take into consideration the relationship between the Phanariotes and the Orthodox Church in Istanbul. The Church had the right to sanction the \textit{voyvoda} who had been appointed by the imperial council. There was even a special ceremony enacted each time a new \textit{voyvoda} was sent to Moldavia and Wallachia. This does not mean, however, that the Patriarch had something to do with the appointment of a candidate or had the right to give him civil authority. It was the duty of the imperial council in general and grand viziers in particular to nominate certain candidates and decide who was to be a \textit{voyvoda} of the twin principalities. At this juncture, the Patriarch of Constantinople had no choice but to reiterate the appointment and bless the new initiate on behalf of God.\textsuperscript{61} Dominance of the Ottoman Sultan over the \textit{voyvoda} became solidified after their nomination by grand vizier(s) and blessing by the Patriarch were completed. That is, investiture of a Phanariot was only legitimate after the main ceremony held before the Ottoman Sultan. As a rule, this ceremony of investiture was to start on a Tuesday not only as a reminder of the Ottoman conquest over the Orthodox, but also as a demonstration of the symbolic entrance of the \textit{voyvoda} into the sultan’s chamber. The \textit{voyvodas} were also accepted to military rank the Ottoman Empire by enjoying the special soup prepared and shared by the Janissaries during this ceremony.\textsuperscript{62} All together, they symbolize the sultan’s secular hegemony over Christians in general and Phanariotes in particular. In a similar vein to the previous century, therefore, they might have been more likely to see the Sultan as the source of

\textsuperscript{60} See Philliou, "Communities on the Verge: Unraveling the Phanariot Ascendancy in Ottoman Governance," 176-178.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid., 44-46.
reward or punishment, as compared to the Muslim pasha households who held a more elevated status and did not suffer Sultanic interference the same way.

**New Ottoman Self-confidence and Attempts to Strengthen Sultanic Authority**

Starting with the Treaty of Karlowitz, the Ottoman Empire refrained from engaging in another battle in Europe until the battle at Pruth. Despite being hesitant at the outset, however, at the battle by the Pruth in 1711, the Ottomans proved their strength and ability to recover some of the lands they had lost during the devastating wars of 1683-1699. Following the Pruth victory, the next adventure that the Ottomans undertook would be completed with greater ease. At this time, it was well-known to any Ottoman statesman that Venice had lost the strength of its glorious past and therefore was far from matching the Ottoman Empire. Besides which, scholars accept that Venetian officials and priests were proving predictably unpopular with the Greeks, who preferred the rule of the Ottomans rather than that of Venetians.63 Last but not least, the Ottomans were now self-confident enough to confront Venice in another campaign. After all, the last significant Ottoman victory before the wars of 1683-1699 was also scored against Venice with the conquest of Crete in 1669, after a 21-year siege. Further, the empire had only lost control of the Morea only because it was forced to confront all states of the Holy League at the same time. Therefore, the victory of the empire against Russia in 1711 cannot not be seen as the only reason for Ottoman confidence at the outset of the Ottoman Venetian War of 1715, but rather it served to trigger another campaign at the expense of Venice, whose weakness was too

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63 The transition from Venetian to Ottoman rule in the Morea was most welcome by the Orthodox people who thought the Ottoman system to be more tolerant than the rule of Catholic Venice. As a matter of the fact, there was a surprising degree of similarity between Venetian and Ottoman rule, which made the transition either from Ottoman to Venice rule, or vice versa, quite easy. The Orthodox’s preference of the Ottomans therefore resulted not from a distinct system between Venice and the Ottoman Empire, but rather from the difference based on religious toleration. See Benjamin Brue, *Journal De La Campagne Que Le Grand Vessir Ali Pacha a Faite En 1715 Pour La Conquête De La Morée* (Paris: 1870), 14-19; Davies; Motraye, 333-334.
alluring to be ignored by Ottoman statesmen looking for the restoration of the lucrative lands previously lost to this opponent.

Two reasons had been given for the declaration of war in December 1714. Venetian support of Montenegrin rebels was one of them. Accordingly, the Ottomans blamed Venice for urging the people of Montenegro to take up arms against the Ottomans and even accused Venice of protecting those insurgents who had rebelled against their Turkish overlords. The second cause for Ottoman aggression was the Venetian breach of the terms of the Treaty of Karlowitz. Namely, Venetians were not allowed to take part in any pirating activities against Ottoman vessels in the Mediterranean Sea, yet, it was argued that Venice did not refrain from attacking them and committing piracy. As a matter of fact, although the issue had cropped up immediately after the Treaty of Karlowitz, the Ottoman Empire was so afraid of inflaming hostility in the first decade of the eighteenth century that rather than directly suppressing the rebellion in Montenegro (Karadağ) at the outset, the Ottomans followed a policy of reintegrating the rebels into the Ottoman system without provoking any of the European states of the 1683-1699 wars. The empire followed such policy until 1713, when the Treaty of Adrianople was signed and there was no further need to fear a Russian attack. Only after that did the Ottomans take this rebellion seriously and delivered an ultimatum to Venice: do not protect or support the rebels against the Ottoman Empire in any way.

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64 According to this treaty, piracy or engaging in any illegal activities in the Mediterranean was to be avoided. The first article says that there would be no attack neither from the Morea to Ottoman coasts in Aegean Sea nor from Ottoman lands to the Morea. Article 19 also says under any circumstance, Venetians are not allowed to protect pirate vessels. See Mehmet Yaşar Ertaş, Sultanın Ordusu: Mora Fethi Örneği 1714-1716 (Istanbul: Yeditepe, 2007), 21, n. 25.

65 When the governor of Bosnia, Numan Pasha, was sent to suppress the rebellion, the rebels ran away to some Venetian-ruled islands. Numan Pasha did not dare to follow them so that he would not violate the articles of the Treaty of Karlowitz. Mehmed Raşid, Tarih-i Raşid, vol. 4 (Istanbul: İstanbul Mataba-ı Amire, 1865). To observe the close relation between Venetians and the rebels, see Silahdar Fındıklı Mehmet, 22-23.

66 It does not necessarily mean that the Ottomans were certain that Russia would not take part in favour of Venice. In other words, during the campaigns the orders sent to the leaders of the Crimean Khanate proved that the empire did its best not to provoke Russia and warned the Tatars to obey the articles of the Treaty of Karlowitz so that Russia would have no reason or excuse to attack Ottoman territories. See Ertaş, 24.
The empire did not have a completely free hand to face the Venetians, though. In spite of being well aware of Austrian disarray due to the Spanish succession quarrels in Europe, the Ottoman Empire had no desire to have another war with Austria, which had been the guarantor state of the Treaty of Karlowitz. Consequently, Ibrahim Müteferrika was sent as ambassador to Vienna to justify the forthcoming Ottoman attack on Venice and to fulfill Ahmed III’s wish to keep the Austrian monarch out of this war. Ibrahim argued that the Ottomans respected the Treaty of Karlowitz, but must end Venetian greed both in the Morea and Mediterranean, which had been undermining Ottoman interests in violation of the articles of the treaty. In addition to Austria, the empire felt compelled to justify its actions in the presence of the embassies of England and Holland. Accordingly, the Ottoman statesmen officially explained the reasons why they had no choice but to attack the Venetians in the Morea. It is now clear that since 1699, the Ottomans had been trying to avoid facing two enemies at the same time, and did its best not to commit the same mistake as in the wars of 1683-1699. Especially after the Pruth war, therefore, the empire was well aware of its strengths and limitations, and endeavored to take advantage of the diplomacy which had already started to develop the upper hand for Ottoman decision-making towards the end of the seventeenth century.

Ottoman policy bore fruit, and Venice had to stand alone against the Ottoman attack which began in the spring of 1715. As had been rightly predicted by the Ottomans, Venice was

67 Silahdar mentions that the empire was very worried about possible Austrian participation in the war due to the fact that the Habsburgs might have thought that they were to be the next target of the Ottoman Empire after Venice. Silahdar Fındikli Mehmet, 37 and 330.
68 Roider, 41.
69 Ertaş, 24, n. 35.
70 Kurat argues that long before the Ottoman expedition in the Morea in 1715, the Ottomans were afraid of Austrian participation in a struggle that would end in favour of the former member of the Holy League. Accordingly, even before the Ottoman expedition of 1711 against Russia, the Ottomans did their best to prevent the Habsburgs from taking the Russian side. For that purpose, the empire not only sent an embassy to Austria but also tried to persuade Talmann, the Austrian ambassador at the time, that they desired nothing but friendly relations with their neighbor. Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Prut Seferi ve Barışı, 1123 (1711)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1951), 198-200.
too weak and insufficiently prepared for the assault. Soon, the Ottoman naval and military operation against Venice brought the republic to its knees, and in just a few months (to be exact, 101 days), the Ottoman Empire was not only able to re-conquer the Morea, but also put an end to Venetian control of some of the islands which had never been under Ottoman domination before.\footnote{During the Morea expedition the Ottoman Empire was also able to capture some of islands that had been ruled by Venice for a long time. Egine and Çerigo can be given as examples for those islands. As well, some other fortresses in Crete which could not be taken earlier were also brought under Ottoman domination. Suda and İsperlonga were just two of them. Ertaş, 27-28. Canım Hoca Hacı Mehmed Pasha also conquered Tinos (İstendil) and Çerigo/Çuka islands. Machiel Kiel, "The Smaller Aegean Islands in the 16th-18th Centuries According to Ottoman Administrative Documents," in Between Venice and Istanbul, ed. Siri ol Davies (Athens: The American School of Classical Studies, 2007), 38.} There is no doubt that despite the difficulties the imperial army had experienced during the Morean expedition, this immediate capture of the Morea not only increased Ottoman self-confidence which had begun to be restored after the Pruth, but also Austrian suspicion that they would be the next target of the Ottomans.\footnote{Silahdar quotes Ahmed III’s statement that “there was no need to worry about the enemy. In just thirty days I was able to reconquer the Morea which had been conquered thirty years before by my ancestors.” And he decided to make a further campaign against the Venetians. (ahâl-i düşmen hiç de hiçbir imiş, iste varub gördüm, ecdadın otuz senede mälık olduğu mülke otuz günde muvaffak kaldım, hayf geçen vüzerâya, işleri ihânet imiş, ancak cümle mülük-i nasârâ hareket ider ise de din-i Muhammed Ali cümlesine inşa ‘Allah cevab virülür, taraf taraf yani ki, berr-ü bahrden Venedik keferesi üzerine sefer idelüm.) Silahdar Fındıklı Mehmet, 336-337.}

Before going any further, one should look at the important changes that the empire had to make following the Treaty of Karlowitz. It was only by making these alterations that the empire was victorious both at Pruth and in the Morean expedition. Accordingly, local ayan not only started to play an important role in the imperial army, but consequently they also enjoyed the benefits that the new system brought about. These changes are illustrated in the writings of Mehmed Raşid and Küçük Çelebizade Asım. To give just one example, Raşid talks about an ayan called Müminzade Abdülmümin Efendi, and his increasing influence in Yenişehir. Müminzade not only made his fortune, but his enormous wealth allowed for his acquisition of one of the ulema’s titles (Bosna pâyesi). He later abused the privileges this title brought for his own personal gain. Again, he used his fortune to bribe high-ranking Ottoman officers for their
protection, and hired vagrants to bother kadi who had no desire to affiliate with him. As a result, the reaya of Yenişehir sent a letter of complaint to the commander of the imperial army, i.e. the Grand Vizier Damat Ali Pasha, who led the conquest of the Morea in 1715. In response, the ulama title was taken from Müminzade and was replaced with a military title (Bosna pâyesi alâiye beyliği), and he was sent to the Morea expedition with a thousand soldiers.73

This is very important to our understanding the change that occurred in Ottoman mentality following the long wars of 1683-1699. Namely, the Ottomans opened the way for local notables to obtain financial benefits and also utilized that wealth for further gains within the empire. One can safely argue that this trend came into being after the Treaty of Karlowitz and started to bear fruit by 1715. On the other side of the coin, the Ottomans intended to use their increasing power and influence over the ayan for the benefit of the state, in particular during times of war. The example mentioned above is also significant in showing that long before the suppression of the Morea Rebellion in the 1770s, the Ottomans had not only called up the ayan as a military power in the Morea, but also (possibly in return) gave them distinguished official titles as was the case of Müminzade Abdülmümin Efendi. In conclusion, by the first quarter of the eighteenth century, in the eyes of Ottoman statesmen, the military and economic power of the ayan was so significant that the empire could not help taking advantage of their presence in the Morea and possibly many other regions.

Aside from Ottoman chroniclers, we have many other authors discussing the increasing influence of the ayan throughout the eighteenth century. In his book, Cezar scrutinizes some of these examples and comes to the conclusion that starting from the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the ayanlık institution took root and the Ottoman state began to give it more and more

73 Mehmed Raşid, 60-61. See also, Küçük Çelebizade Asım, Tarih-i Çelebizade: Küçük Çelebizade (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Âmire, 1865), 441-442.
responsibilities and duties, including recruiting and transporting troops to military fields, protecting the countryside against banditry, and other military duties of importance. Not surprisingly, the ayan did not refrain from abusing this newly endowed authority for their own benefit. Cezar concludes that ayan power reached its apogee during the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774 when they were given all responsibility for the creation of the Ottoman army.\footnote{Cezar, \textit{Osmanlı Tarihinde Levendler} (Istanbul: Çelikcilt Matbaası, 1965), 337-338.}

Ottoman self-confidence supported by the help of the ayan even led Damad Ali Pasha to send another fleet to capture Venetian headquarters on the island of Corfu in 1716.\footnote{Uzunçarşılı, \textit{Osmanlı Tarihi} 109.} At this time, however, Ottoman fortune turned for the worse: the Habsburgs declared war on the Ottomans under the pretext of Ottoman violation of the Treaty of Karlowitz. Soon, everything turned upside down, and once again things went out of control in the Ottoman Empire. In fact, by sending a letter, Ali Pasha had endeavored to receive Austrian approval for the Morean expedition, or at least tried to persuade Austria that the Ottomans had no intention of breaking the articles of the Treaty of Karlowitz, but rather, wished to preserve the peace before launching the campaign. Yet, Austria did not respond positively and tried to buy some time in order to detain the Ottomans from immediately taking any further action against Venice. In response, Ali Pasha replied that it was not reasonable to keep so many imperial soldiers under arms for an indeterminate period of time, and decided to attack the Morea without waiting for any official approval from Austria. But he did not burn all bridges with Austria, of course, and left a door open for future negotiation with the emperor.\footnote{Mehmed Raşid, 197-198.} Indeed, Ali Pasha hoped that Austria would not take part in another campaign after having been defeated by France and signing the Treaty of Rastatt following the Spanish wars of succession in 1714. After all, this had been the Austrian attitude toward the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1711. Thus, early Austrian hesitancy let the
Ottoman Empire mistakenly believe that the Habsburgs were going to reiterate this same policy of neutrality in 1714 as well.

The Ottomans were forced to wake up from careless confidence and were thrown into a complete state of confusion. Instantaneous victories of the imperial army against Russia and Venice had already worried the Habsburgs, who now found it pointless to believe that the Ottomans would stop pursuing their policy of revenge. Rather quickly, Austria decided to declare another war on the pretext of restoring the *status quo ante* in favour of Venice. Consequently, it struck another devastating defeat over the Ottoman imperial army at Varadin in August 1716 which opened the way for the loss of both Banat and the fortress of Belgrade in 1717. The Treaty of Passarowitz, signed after the capture of Belgrade in 1718, sealed not only the dramatic alteration in the balance between the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires, but also represented a new century for the Ottomans, as we will shortly see in greater detail. Suffice it to say that on the eve of the second siege of Vienna, the border between the Ottomans and Habsburgs was not in favour of the latter, i.e. just a few days’ march from the capital of the Habsburg Empire. After the Treaty of Passarowitz, however, the Danube and Sava Rivers now became borders between the two long-standing enemies, which of course reversed the military balance in favour of Austria. From this point on, it was not the Ottomans but rather the Habsburgs who had penetrated deep into the Balkans, and presented a very real threat to the existence of the Ottoman hegemony there. In brief, it was a well-known fact to both enemies and friends of the Ottoman Empire that it was no longer a military danger to its former adversaries in the West.77

Nevertheless, even if Austria’s power reached its apex at the expense of the Ottomans with the Treaty of Passarowitz, the Ottoman Empire continued to attempt to prove its strength and launched successful campaigns against its old enemy in the following decades, as well. That is, the Ottoman Austrian Wars of 1737-1739 and 1788-1791 indicated that the Ottomans succeeded in firmly holding ground, repelling their opponents and even occasionally gaining some lands long after 1718. However, military humiliation of the Ottomans – a product of the Treaty of Passarowitz – dealt a deadly blow to the self-confidence of Ottoman high dignitaries, at least in the West. This pact brought into the sharp relief that, for the Ottomans, there could be no going back to the glorious ages of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the empire had been merely stating terms for its big enemies rather than hoping for mediation or conciliation to stop any devastating war. On the one hand, the Treaties of Karlowitz and Passarowitz marked the end of European fear of the “Turkish menace” in Europe. On the other hand, the Ottomans started not only to accept the superiority of its Western opponents but also explicitly to imitate military formation and equipment of the West, as well as a Western culture and way of life. This last point can be seen as a tremendous blow to long-standing principle of Muslim superiority over Christian infidels. Last but not least, necessity of building a network with European states after the Treaty of Passarowitz in particular) a few decades earlier not only created a prosperous non-Muslim class but also and increased its power and influence in the government.

From the Treaty of Karlowitz until Passarowitz, the Ottoman Empire apparently recovered from the catastrophe of 1683-1699 and began to look at the future with hope and confidence rather than fear and anxiety. Soon, however, the Ottoman Austrian War of 1717 and the Treaty of Passarowitz thereafter illuminated the fact that the time interval between these two treaties had not actually helped the empire to regain the spirit of the sixteenth and seventeenth
centuries. The illusion of successes at the Pruth against Russia, or in the Morea against Venice, did not result from Ottoman adaptation to a new system of military conflict, but rather from temporary solutions such as incentives given for encouragement of individual valour, and the annihilation of the technical difficulties of moving troops and supplies that the empire had faced in the long wars of 1683-1699. With only such slight rearrangements in the imperial army, they could only save the day at best. As we understand from some writings of the contemporary sources, the impetuous fighting style and unruliness of the imperial army were still in practice, and Turkish discipline and drills were constantly poor even during successful expeditions of Pruth and the Morea. These continued to be the most vulnerable points of the Ottoman Empire throughout the whole eighteenth century, as we will see below.

One thing needs to be kept in mind, though. Both victories at the Pruth and the Morea led Ahmed III (1703-1730) to attempt to revive the Sultanic authority which had reached its lowest ebb following the deposition of Mustafa II in 1703. After all, both successes gave Sultan Ahmed good reason to reclaim the power of his successful predecessors. The first sign of this inclination can be observed immediately after the re-conquest of the Morea in 1715. The Sultan ordered the re-implementation of the timar system in the Peloponnese instead of the malikane system, which

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78 Yıldız’s studies on the Ottoman imperial edicts and documents proved that there is a substantial number of official documents in the Ottoman archives which were sent to threaten or warn undisciplined soldiers of the Pruth campaign. Hakan Yıldız, Haydi Osmanlı Sefere! Prut Seferi’nde Organizasyon ve Lojistik (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2006), 129-131. A contemporary eyewitness, Sir Robert Sutton, wrote on April 6, 1711 that “The Vizier decamped with the Forces assembled at Daud Pashaw the 26 past, pursuant to a Hattescheriffe or Order under the Grand Signore’s hand. This sudden departure, which happened 15 or 20 days sooner than the Vizier expected, was chiefly occasioned by the Sultan's uneasiness at the great disorders, insolences and quarrels of the Soldiers, which were indeed extraordinary, they being under no obedience, discipline or Order, and neither Government nor their own Officers daring to punish them, insomuch that there was no other remedy found but dispatch them away.” Robert Sutton, The Despatches of Sir Robert Sutton, Ambassador in Constantinople (1710-1714), ed. Akdes Nimet Kurat (London: The Royal Historical Society, 1953), 45. Benjamin Brue’s book is full of examples indicating how the Janissaries got out of control during the whole Morea expedition. To give but one example, even though they were not allowed to plunder one of the places in the Morea as a result of the agreement made between Reis Efendi and the Venetians, they were eager to loot there and attacked the Venetians. In the meantime, some of gun powder had caught fire and caused the deaths of many people. Ottoman officers were simply not able to stop them from putting Venetian soldiers and officers on the sword and killing all inhabitants – Greek men, women and children. Brue, 17-19.
took root in the Ottoman territories immediately after it began. After all, the *malikane* system was a catalyst for the emergence of the Muslim notables after 1695 as we have seen. Therefore, an attempt to re-implement the *timar* system, where none but the Ottoman sultan was seen as the source of reward or punishment, might be interpreted as Ahmed III’s desire to revive the former prestige and power of the Ottoman sultans. Additionally, not long after victory of the Morea in 1715, the Sultan decided to abolish all *malikane* lands on account of having realized a huge tax loss in the imperial treasury about 20 years after its implementation. Apart from seeing this as an attempt to increase the taxes, which the *malikane* system had not allowed for such a long time, one can see this change as an attempt to take back the possession of economic sources from the hands of the Muslim notables. In the end, however, as mentioned above, the empire suffered devastating defeats at the hands of Austria between the years 1716 and 1718. Consequently, not only was the implementation of the *timar* system abolished in the Morea, but also the state declared the re-implementation of the *malikane* system all over its territories by reselling its lands with better value in 1717.

This was not the end of Sultan Ahmed’s attempts to retake control of the Ottoman Empire at the expense of the newly emerged notables of the time, however. For example, Quataert argues that there was an important similarity between the court of Louis XIV at Versailles and that of Sultan Ahmed III during the Tulip Era, a time of extravagance, conspicuous consumption, and cultural borrowing from the West. During this time, the Sultan and Ibrahim Pasha intended to keep tight reins on members of the pasha households as Louis XIV of France had targeted his elite citizens about fifty years earlier. That is to say, by creating some costly commodities such as tulip breeding, luxury goods, pleasure palace building and festivities, etc., the Sultan and his son-in-law sought to eliminate or at least pacify the pasha

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79 Genç, 113.
households or the Ottoman elites who had became quite influential in administrative decision-making by that time. What is particularly important here is the fact that their main target was none but the *malikane* holders who had already gained enormous and political economic power by then.\(^{80}\)

In a similar vein, Finkel argues that Ahmed III used his daughters in order to consolidate his authority by assuring the loyalty of Ottoman statesmen to the dynasty by offering his daughters to them in order to establish affinity by marriage. In other words, Ahmed had thirty daughters, many of whom married (even more than once, after being widowed) high-ranking state officers. It was the Sultan’s intention to create a new stratum that might become much more eager to serve the Ottoman dynasty with utter faithfulness and obedience because they had access to the rewards of association with the royal dynasty.\(^{81}\) We do not know what the Sultan and his Grand Vizier really aimed at achieving during the Tulip Era, but what we know for sure is that if they had desired to keep control over the newly emerged class, they were not successful in attaining their objectives in the end.

**Ottoman Westernization and New Attempts to Regain Ottoman Prestige in the East**

The Peace Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718 forced the Ottomans to rethink their position. At first glance, Ottoman belligerency was replaced with peaceful relations with the West. After all, the defeats of the Ottomans, which attested to the military, organizational and technological

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\(^{80}\) Quataert, 43-44 and 148. In a sense, having looked at Ottoman elites of the Tulip Era who were interested in festivities, luxury, expensive habits and pleasure seeking, Barkey also agrees with Quataert by saying “The Sadabad was the Versailles of Istanbul.” Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 214. In a similar vein, Eldem also sees striking similarities (as well as differences) between the Ottoman Empire and France during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Edhem Eldem, "Osmanlı Devleti ve Fransa: 17. ve 18. Yüzyıllarda Devlet-Ekonomi İlişkilerine Karşılaştırmalı Bir Bakış," in *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Problemler, Araştırmalar, Tartışmalar: 24 - 26 Mayıs 1993 Ankara*, ed. Hamdi Can Tuncer (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1998).

supremacy of European armies, convinced the Ottomans that the danger of new military
adventure in the West was too big to be pursued. In addition, just like the devastating impacts of
the 1683-1699 wars upon the Ottoman economy, the wars of Venice in 1715 and especially that
of Austria in 1718 once again forced the Ottomans to solve its urgent need for money to restore
the empire after Passarowitz. As a result, one of the most burdensome taxes called *imdad-ı
seferiye* that had rarely been collected before started to be assessed annually after 1718, and
increased the agitation among the population. In other words, before 1718 *imdad-ı seferiye* had
only been collected during war-time, but now, with the name of *imdad-ı hazariyye*, it was
imposed during peace-time, as well. Most important of all, the collection of the *imdadiye* was
given to local leaders called *mutasarrıfs*, thus both enriching Muslim notables and increasing
their influence in the Ottoman Empire.

In the meantime, the Ottomans also gave up sending governors of slave origins to
provinces and towns in 1726. Instead, leading figures of each *vilayet* or *sancak* were supposed to
choose their governors among local notables. Kaymaz calls it nothing less than the transition of
the Ottoman regime to the *ayan* regime since it fundamentally changed Ottoman government,
society, economy, culture, and even policy in favour of the *ayan*. It means that the monopoly of
the *kapukulu* and *ulema* of Istanbul who had been at the center of all important decision-making
in the empire before now started to lose their power with the emergence of *ayan* in provinces.
From this point on, the power of the *ayan* needed to be taken into consideration in almost all

82 Barkey, 203.
83 Raşid states how this extraordinary tax became a great burden to the *reaya* after 1718 and notes the state’s attempt
to eradicate abuses made in the process of the collection of *imdad-ı seferiye*. During that time, it became a source of
income given to the *mutasarrıfs* of *eyelet* and *sancak*. Mehmed Raşid, 384-385. This arrangement in tax increased
state revenues, as we understand from the contemporary writings. For example, by looking at the report of Chief
*Defterdar* El-Haj Ibrahim Efendi, Belin states that the total income of the empire increased 1,140,027 *gurus* from
See also, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Divanataş, 2000), s.v. "İmdâdiyye."
affairs of the empire. To be precise, between 1683 and 1730 the Ottomans enjoyed less than twenty years of peace, and the Ottoman economy was less and less able to afford wars. It was only through the changing socioeconomic system of the empire that the Ottomans raised the required money. Whether deliberate or not, this opened the way for the arrival of new elites, i.e. ayan, as discussed above.

Following the Treaty of Passarowitz – which marked the beginning of the Tulip Era – Ottoman dignitaries looked at the European states differently than in previous centuries, and started to appreciate some of the developments in the Western states. European culture as well as technology came into value and began appearing in Ottoman agenda. For instance, almost three hundred years after the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg, the first printed text in Ottoman Turkish was published in 1727 by a Hungarian convert called Ibrahim Müteferrika (1674-1745). In a similar vein, light artillery and a new corps of firemen in the European style were also introduced by Comte de Bonneval (1675-1747) who was known as Humbaracı Ahmed Pasha after he was converted to Islam. It was also a time when Western tastes had great influence on Turkish culture, including architecture, music and so forth.

This was the advent of a huge change in the Ottoman attitude toward the West. This alteration can first be observed in Ottoman documents sent to France and Austria. Unlike in the previous centuries, in imperial edicts we begin to see expressions like “Our grand/supreme/majestic friend” before the names of Western rulers. More and more Ottoman

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84 Nejat Kaymaz, *Kuruluştan 'Lale Devri'ne Osmanlı İmparatorluğu: Çıplak Gözün Gördükleri* (Istanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2002), 145-146. Akdağ also state that this change in the appointment of the governors through eliminating people of slave origin might have caused the emergence of the ayan in some areas, who soon became strong enough to resist the Ottoman authority in the lands under their control. Mustafa Akdağ, "Osmanlı Tarihinde Ayanlık Düzeni Devri 1730-1839 " *DTCF Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi* VIII-XII no. (1970-74): 51.
85 Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi* 170-171. A short time later, a similar change to Ottoman references to the heads of foreign states can be observed in Persia as well. According to Belin’s account, following the treaty signed between the Ottomans and Persians in 1742, the former agreed to using the title châh and qâân to refer to Nadir Shah of Persia, which had not been the case before. Belin, 228.
envoys started to be sent to European capitals, but unlike previous centuries, their task was not simply giving or receiving letters or attending coronations; they were now required to observe the European states so that they might imitate their style in conducting international relations such as negotiating alliances, treaties and agreements. To give but one example, Yirmisekiz Çelebi Mehmed Efendi was sent to Paris between the years 1720 and 1721 in order to observe the features of Western civilization and education which might be beneficial if they were applied in the Ottoman Empire. The earlier Ottoman sense that their superiority was indisputable was replaced with the desire to understand and even to admire Western civilization. It is safe to argue that the Treaty of Passarowitz caused some Ottoman officers to imitate their “infidel” foes who could neither be ignored nor looked upon with contempt any more. Indeed, it is not reasonable to think that there had been no contact between the Ottomans and the West before the eighteenth century. Yet it is only after Passarowitz that the Ottomans acknowledged defeat and realized the superiority of the Western system, which became the stimulus for the emergence of a new Ottoman approach to the West. McGowan argues that “after a second round of punishment, ending with the Treaty of Passarowitz (1718) we see the first evidence, at the very top of society, of experimentation with Western models.”

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87 Berkes’s study gives an important example of changing Ottoman attitudes of the time. Accordingly, İbrahim Müteferrika, founder of the first Turkish printing press in Istanbul, wrote a book under the title ‘Usül al-Hikam fi Nizâm, where he looked for an answer to the question ‘what went wrong in the Ottoman Empire?’ in opposition to Christian nations who had defeated the empire. This book is particularly important on account of having been written immediately after the Patrona Rebellion in 1731, when the reaction to everything coming from the West was so widespread. But nothing prevented Ottoman statesmen like Müteferrika from admitting the fact that the Ottomans had lagged far behind the West, and maybe more importantly, his only solution was to scrutinize Western culture the way Russians had done successfully before and imitate its new methods in defending and protecting their lands. As a result, ‘ignorance of the new methods of the Europeans’ was given as the main causes of Ottoman failures. Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964), 42-45.
88 Ibid., 24.
89 Bruce McGowan, "The Age of the Ayans, 1699-1812," in *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire 1300-1914*, ed. Halil İnalcık and Donald Quataert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 640.
There is no doubt that Ibrahim Pasha was firmly resolved to keep the peace and have good relations with the European states long before the Treaty of Passarowitz was signed in 1718.\textsuperscript{90} Not surprisingly, during his period of office (1718-1730) this became an unchanging Ottoman foreign policy of the empire especially in the West. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily mean that the empire completely gave up its belligerent posture toward all its neighboring states. That is, Ottoman determination to gain further lands at the expense of other states continued after 1718. But from this date forward, the target was no longer the West, which no longer proved to be easy prey for the Ottomans, but the East, which not only shared common difficulties with the Ottomans at that time, but had recently begun to suffer from the Persian wars of succession.

The Ottoman Empire was at peace with Iran for almost a century following the Treaty of Zuhab in 1639, in spite of ongoing sectarian clashes and conflicts that had sparked many wars throughout their history before. However, the extreme weakness of Iran following the death of Hüseyin II tempted not only the Ottomans but also the Russians to attack Persian provinces in the north. Afterwards, in return for recognizing Peter the Great’s conquest in the Caspian, Russia gave consent to Ottoman annexation of the provinces Azerbaijan, Kermanshah and Luristan. It is noteworthy to throw into sharp relief here that the Ottomans were obsessed with new diplomacy when searching for alliance, negotiation and cooperation with possible comrades, replacing the former Ottoman one-sided dominance of earlier centuries.\textsuperscript{91}

\textsuperscript{90} Ahmet Cevdet, \textit{Tarihi Cevdet} vol. 1 (Istanbul: Osmanlı Matbaası, 1858-1883), 148-152.
\textsuperscript{91} Even if Persia was not in a position to reciprocate Ottoman attacks at that time, Ahmed III could not help searching for alliances and looking for international consent for his actions. See Ariel Salzmann, \textit{Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire: Rival Paths to the Modern State} (Boston: Brill, 2004), 39. In addition, Berkes argues that the reason why the Ottomans looked for intimate relations with the West throughout the eighteenth century was the newly emerging power of Russia in Eastern Europe. Berkes, 24. In both cases, the unilateral policy of the sixteenth century was replaced with a diplomatic approach, taking advantage of peaceful solutions in lieu of wars in order to achieve imperial aims.
At the outset, the Ottoman Empire was victorious in the lands of what had been their chief Muslim rival, the Shi’i Safavid shah of Iran. However, this success did not actually bring about the self-confidence of the successes scored against Russia or Venice. Lewis posits that the Ottoman imperial army was as efficient as before, but it was European innovation on the military field that indeed changed the balance of power against the Ottomans. If we accept his argument, it is no wonder that the Ottoman succeeded in the East, since both the Ottomans and Persians more or less kept their traditional armies on the battle field and neither was really able to keep pace with the changes in Europe. Therefore, the Ottoman achievement – facilitated by a series of devastating civil wars going on in Persia – did not lead to another war against the West as had happened previously following successful campaigns of the Pruth and the Morea. Instead, the Ottoman victory in the East was taken with marked composure by Ottoman statesmen. Later on, however, Ibrahim Pasha mounted another major campaign led by the Sultan following the defeat of the Ottoman army in the East at the hands of an even less-modernized Persia. This loss resulted in an increase in food prices and taxes as well as a scarcity of food supplies in Ottoman society, and later became the catalyst for the tumultuous uprising in Istanbul named after its leader, the Patrona Rebellion in 1730s. This not only shattered Ottoman society, but also totally changed the Ottoman understanding of the world as we will see in examining in detail the third stage of the long eighteenth century. Suffice it to say that the Patrona rebels,

93 Olson argues that just like the economy of Persia, the Ottoman economy in the eighteenth century which had lagged far behind the Christian West was unable to meet its imperial ambitions. This was the very reason for many significant conflicts that the empire experienced, and more importantly, however, it was introduced as a source for the exacerbation of tension among the Ottoman millets in the long run. Robert W. Olson, "The Ottoman Empire in the Middle of the Eighteenth Century and the Fragmentation of Tradition: Relations of Nationalities (Millet), Guilds (Esnaf) and the Sultan, 1740-1768," *Die Welt Des Islam* (1976-1977): 73.
94 As a contemporary eyewitness of the Patrona Rebellion, Abdi Efendi gives Ottoman defeats against the Persian as the stimulus for the rebels who were looking for the deposition and punishment of Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha. Abdi Efendi, *1730 Patrona İhtilali Hakkında Bir Eser: Abdi Tarihi* ed. Faik Reşit Unat (Ankara: Türk Tarih
who had obtained the support of higher elite society (in particular members of the ulema), both
deposed the Ottoman Sultan and killed the Grand Vizier Nevşehirli Ibrahim Pasha who had been
*de facto* ruler of the Ottoman Empire since 1718.

**Changing of Allegiance: The Sultan, Muslim and Non-Muslim Elites (1730-1750s)**

All these avenues that introduced a Western spirit into the Ottoman Empire came to an end with the eruption of the Patrona Rebellion in 1730, when Ahmed III was replaced by Mahmud I (1730-1754). This insurrection dramatically changed Ottoman state structure, especially the balance of power. The decreasing emphasis on the sultan’s role in government functions and the inability of the Ottoman dignitaries to protect their positions opened the way for some non-Muslim individuals in this third stage of our discussion. That is to say, it is striking to note that out of the five sultans who reigned between 1648 and 1730, only Süleyman II (1687-1691) and Ahmed II (1691-1695) escaped from deposition, not to mention the number of Grand Viziers and highest Ottoman dignitaries who were often executed or, if they were lucky, expelled after their properties were confiscated. What is more striking here is that all three Ottoman sultans who were either deposed or forced to abdicate the throne had to face up to their destiny following the imperial army’s debacles against its enemies.95

With the Patrona Rebellion, attempts to reform the traditional system such as introducing military training on the Janissaries failed. It did not put an end to the Ottoman westernization, though. The new Sultan, Mahmud I, followed the tracks of the fallen regime at least in military reforms. The French nobleman Comte Bonneval carried out some military reforms with no

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95 Özkaya puts forward that first the failure of the second siege of Vienna in 1683 and then that of Iran following the Ottoman campaigns initiated in 1723 had a great influence on the development of ayans in the Ottoman Empire. Özkaya, 134-135.
noticeable results. He intended to reorganize the entire Ottoman army in the European style, but was faced with tremendous opposition either from the Janissaries and ulama, or foreign ambassadors during the decade following the rebellion of Patrona. The reason Bonneval’s efforts brought only limited success in spite of continuing support from the Ottoman administration for western-inspired reforms is given as “lack of a determined and stable leadership that could sustain them in the face of strong popular opposition.”

The Patrona Rebellion of 1730 allowed a number of rebels and their supporters to obtain some of the highest state offices. However, Mahmud I was resolute enough to restore order to the capital first by eliminating the leader of the revolt – i.e., Halil and his comrades – and then reestablish the authority of the state with the help of other interest groups within the empire. In other words, as Olson posits, it was none but esnaf (artisans and skilled craftsmen) and merchants who had been the constant opponents of the sultan before who now took the place of the ulama and the Janissaries in terms of supporting the sultan and his policies. In the spring of 1731, they came to aid the cause of the new Sultan, hoping to bring continuing disorder – which had so long threatened their business interests in Istanbul – to an end. This new allegiance between the Sultan and esnaf (merchants), most of whom were non-Muslim, is presented as one of the most crucial changes which began to have effect during the reigns of Selim III (1789-1807) and his successor Mahmud II (1808-39).

Before 1730, the Sultan’s power essentially relied upon elite members of the military class and the ulama. However, following the rebellion, the military elite and the ulama started to collaborate with the anti-Sultan forces. Accordingly, they were against new European military

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97 Olson: 74. Abdi Efendi does not clearly say who had really fought for the Sultan on March 27, 1731 (Ramadan 17, 1143). All he is saying is that (other than members of the imperial army) citizens of Istanbul attacked the rebels as if it was a holy war. (...şehirli umumen mezkür haydutlar üzerine gayzay-i ekber niyetiyle...) Abdi Efendi, 62.
techniques and the Europeans themselves did not like the idea of seeing European (basically called French in the documents) customs and ideas in Ottoman society. Even though ten years had passed since the suppression of the Patrona Rebellion, supporters of this uprising remained a potential menace to the Ottoman Sultan. It was during this time that the Sultan had to look for supporters other than ulema and Janissaries who had, together, overthrown the former regime and were not inclined to support the new regime of Sultan Mahmud. As a result, this uprising created a new era that gave rise to a realignment of the factions who either supported the Ottoman dynasty or opposed new Sultan’s policy of continuing relations with Europe. Olson puts forward that, in the long run, this reversal of support for the Sultan brought about the centralization of power in the hands of the Sultan in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.98 However, what is particularly important is who filled the gap that had been created by the military elite and the ulema who had essentially pulled the rug out from under the Sultan. The question that also needs to be raised here is what impact did this change have upon the Ottoman Empire?

The first impact of this change of support in favour of the Sultan was increasing tension between Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the empire. As a matter of the fact, the tension between Muslim and non-Muslim artisans of the empire was not new. During the Tulip Era, when Ottoman integration into the world economy gathered strength, the main benefactor of this alteration seems to have been non-Muslim members of the guilds. As being more likely to speak European languages, they were preferred by foreign agents. Tension between Muslims and non-Muslims became quite pronounced, especially when the Ottomans started to experience difficulties in financing the wars against Iran, and imposed more extraordinary campaign taxes.

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98 Robert W. Olson, "The Esnaf and the Patrona Halil Rebellion of 1730: A Realignment in Ottoman Politics?," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 17, no. 3 (Sep., 1974): 343.
Before and after the uprising, the ulema – who acted together with the rebels owing to economic and idealistic reasons – also took the initiative and condemned not only Western ways of life, but also non-Muslims, who were associated with these evils of the West. Not surprisingly, soon their attitude further damaged relations between the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the empire, especially those living in Istanbul.99

The switch of allegiance of the esnaf to Mahmud I following the Patrona Rebellion is given as one of the most important changes of the era. With the words of the British ambassador of the time, Lord Kinnoull, the Sultan became even stronger after the uprising of 1731 since he got now a new source of power i.e. esnaf on whom he could safely rely.100 The continuing Persian wars and newly opened wars of 1736-1739 first against Russia and then Austria exacerbated the poor relations between the Sultan and military class. Consequently, during the summer of 1740, another insurrection was initiated and some rebels in the capital began fighting in opposition to the government, just as it had happened a decade earlier. At this point, however, the Sultan was able to take advantage of his 1731 alignment with the esnaf who were armed, on his order, to crush the rebellion.101

It is understood from the history of Subhî Mehmed Efendi that the crowds of esnaf were given no choice but to attack the insurgents if they wanted to keep themselves safe and sound. After all, with an imperial degree the Sultan ordered them to keep their shops open during the rebellion and attack and kill the troublemakers if need be. If they ignored their orders, they were identified as rebels and punished accordingly. Consequently, some non-Muslim esnafs who had

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101 Olson, "The Ottoman Empire in the Middle of the Eighteenth Century and the Fragmentation of Tradition: Relations of Nationalities (Millets), Guilds (Esnaf) and the Sultan, 1740-1768," 75.
been armed by the Ottomans for the retaliation suppressed another attempted rebellion against
the Sultan, and helped the state to exterminate all of its participants.\footnote{Olson, "Jews, Janissaries, Esnaf and the Revolt of 1740 in Istanbul: Social Upheaval and Political Realignment in the Ottoman Empire," 195-198.} No matter what their
reasons might have been, taking arms against Muslims (even they were rebels) further
deteriorated the strained relations between the Muslims and non-Muslims.\footnote{ibtidâr iden mel’anetkârların bu def’a virilen fetvâ-yi şerife mücibince demleri heder olduğuına binân, her ne zaman zuhûr iderler ise cümle ittifâkıyla katlû i’dâmlarına ikdâm olanup, bir ferd dükkânını sedd ü bênd itmemek ve her kim dükkânını kapamak sevdâsında olur ise eşkây-yi merkûme ile ma’an ol dahi katl ü tedmîr olanup, hilâfina hareket idenlerin cezâ-yi sezâsi şer’an icrâ olunmak üzere sâdî olun hatt-i hûmâyûn-i şeyket-makrûn mücibince tara taraf çarşu ve bâzâr ve sâîr esvâk u mahâllâtîda münâdîler nîdâ ve Bezzâzîstan kethûdâsi ve sâîr esnaf kethûdâlara dahi ber-mucib-i fermân-i ali gereği gibi tenbih ü te’kid olundu." Subhî Mehmed, Subhî Tarihi: Sâmi ve Şâkir Tarihleri İle Birlikte, ed. Mesut Aydın (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2007), 630. See also, Findikli Süleyman, Şem’dâni-Zade Findikli Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mür’Tü-Tevârih 1, trans., M. Münnir Aktepe (Istanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Matbaası, 1976), 97.} 

The story of the alliance between Mahmud I and his non-Muslim \textit{esnaf}s was also narrated
by Sir James Porter approximately two decades later. He acknowledges the enormous role that
non-Muslims (his term: Greeks) had played in the suppression of the rebellion of 1740. In fact,
Porter claims, it was not on account of the order of the Sultan, but either their “ancient spirit” or
desire for security that most of the Greek shop-owners in Istanbul did not refrain from attacking
the rebels who had started to take the control of the whole city at that time. Here, the story is a
little different from what we find in the writings of Subhî. Namely, Porter does not accept that
the Greeks had been armed by the Sultan and were given no choice but to attack the rebels.
According to Porter’s story, Greek shopkeepers took the initiative and murdered all Muslim
rebels whom they caught with the only weapons that they had i.e., poles. However, soon they
were frightened on account of having killed the “true believers” and sought asylum against any
revenge that might come from coreligionists of dead rebels. Only at this juncture does
cooperation between the Sultan and the Greeks appear in Porter’s writings. That is to say, due to
his “equitability”, the Sultan come to their help and did not let anyone to strike back at the them
Instead, by means of getting a *fetva* from *müfti* (jurist counselor of Islamic law) the Sultan not only gave amnesty to the Greeks but also fully sanctioned the execution of any troublemaker felt to be threatening individual security.¹⁰⁴

Porter’s explanation on the revolt of 1740 is of importance in order to understand its impact upon the Ottoman Empire. That is, even about twenty years after the incident had taken place, someone like Porter still found it noteworthy. First and foremost, this indicates that the revolt of 1740 and its suppression by the Sultan were not just mundane events. Instead, it is understood from Porter’s writing that Ottoman citizenry of the 1760s in Istanbul still remembered well what had happened in 1740s, and the way they interpreted it was not that different from the contemporary writings of Subhî at that time. Porter illuminated the conclusive impacts of this revolt upon Ottoman subjects, especially the non-Muslims, and how they interpreted their position in the rebellion. On balance, Porter’s writing once again reminds us of the increasing power of the non-Muslims in general and the Greeks in particular, starting with the revolt of the 1740s.

Although similar social and economic conditions initiated the rebellion of 1730 and that of 1740, Sultan Mahmud seems to have learned much from his predecessors’ mistakes and found a way to remain protected in the presence of danger resulting from the new insurgents in 1740. What is particularly important here is the fact that the non-Muslims had no choice but to throw their support in with the Sultan if they wanted to keep their property and prosper even further. After all, Mahmud I had a free hand to either protect or have them annihilated, particularly after 1740. Accordingly, if they did not acknowledge and hold his policies, he could simply let them perish by turning the discontent of Muslim crowds on them. Consequently, the *esnaf*, who had

been confronted with threats to their business and even their lives, became one of Mahmud’s main bases of support during his reign. However, the social revolution of 1740 did not allow the *millet* to suffer at the hands of the rebels, in opposition to the social upheaval and revolt of 1730-1731, which had had a devastating impact upon the non-Muslim *esnafs*. It was only through the nationalism of early nineteenth century that the *millet* (nation) found a chance to free themselves from this contract that they got into in 1740s.\(^\text{105}\)

Non-Muslims as an alternative source of power to either members of the military class or those of the *ulema* need to be taken into consideration in every study of Ottoman history from the 1730s onward. We have already mentioned how the Muslims who were not associated with the Ottoman military class found a chance to wield enormous influence over state economy and politics by means of the *malikane* system. Non-Muslim subjects of the empire did not seem to find much chance to take part in this system other than providing money for the entrepreneurs of the *malikanes*.\(^\text{106}\) Nevertheless, now we see non-Muslims taking sides in the future of the Ottoman Empire through supporting the Sultan and his policies. In other words, they were now in the middle of the Ottoman decision-making process to determine the future of the empire. On balance, the realignment of 1731-1740 between Sultan Mahmud and his non-Muslim subjects as a mainstay of his reign should have changed the balance of power in favour of the non-Muslims.

**International Influence upon the Emergence of non-Muslim Elites**

Another turning point in the third stage of the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire is the Ottoman, Russian and Austrian Wars of 1736-1739. Russia declared another war against the Ottomans in April 1736 on the pretext of Tatar raids in Ukraine. Soon, Austria joined the war on

\(^{105}\) Olson, "The Ottoman Empire in the Middle of the Eighteenth Century and the Fragmentation of Tradition: Relations of Nationalities (Millet), Guilds (Esnaf) and the Sultan, 1740-1768," 76.

\(^{106}\) Out of 1,113 *malikanes* sold in the first three years after implementation, only five were bought by non-Muslims. Özvar, 164.
the side of its ally, Russia, in spite of being hesitant at first. Quite unexpectedly, once again the Ottomans showed their strength to its two most formidable enemies of the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire. What is particularly important for us here is the capitulations given to France immediately after signing the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739. Among other things, this treaty contributed a lot to the emergence of non-Muslim subjects of the empire. We have already mentioned the political reversal of the non-Muslims who began supporting the Sultan after the 1730s. With the help of these capitulations, the non-Muslims also began to gain the upper hand in Ottoman economy as well. Over time they became no less important than Muslim *ayan* of the empire who had already acquired political and economic powers following the first stages of the eighteenth century discussed above.

Despite the initial successes of Russia in Crimea, neither the Ottomans nor the Russians were able to take the full control of the region again. In the meantime, the Ottomans were also engaging in wars with Persia since a treaty with Nadir Shah was not finalized until October 1737. Therefore, the Ottomans did their best not to face another Holy League that had led the empire into devastating defeats at the hands of Christian Europe more than fifty years earlier. At the outset, however, the worst happened and the Ottomans were lost since Austria decided to support Russia as an ally in January 1737. At the same time, the empire was simply not able to overpower either Russia in Crimea or Persia in the Caucasus. At this point, the Ottomans did not really seem to be ready for a struggle against any of these powerful foes separately, let alone keeping wars going on in opposition to Russia, Austria and Persia at the same time throughout 1736-1737.  

107 Not surprisingly, from the very beginning of the war the empire was very eager to accept mediation and construct a peace with all of its formidable enemies. The imperial army launched a campaign against Russia on June 16, 1736 and only one day after this initial step, the Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire Mehmed Pasha sent a letter to both Britain and Holland begging for their mediation between two opponent parties. Ivan Parvev, *Habsburgs and*
Soon, however, the Ottomans’ luck turned with the crushing victory scored against Austria. What is particularly important in this victory is that it was not the regular imperial army which brought the victory to the Ottomans. Instead, it was a local militia population who showed their strength and endurance against the enemies.\textsuperscript{108} Successful campaigns against the Habsburgs and then the Russians – who were unable to follow their previous victories in the face of resolute Ottoman defenses – forced these enemies to accept the triumph of the Ottomans. By the Treaty of Belgrade signed in December 1739, the Ottomans not only gained Belgrade and the territories previously lost in the Treaty of Passarowitz, but also forced the Russians to sacrifice all conquests other than Azov, which would be razed to the ground and whose lands belonged to none. More importantly for our discussion, however, in return for French help and mediation at the Treaty of Belgrade, the Sultan bestowed France with trading privileges, which not only allowed France to take full control of the Ottoman markets,\textsuperscript{109} but also gave a great opportunity to non-Muslim subjects of the empire who were looking for more benefits from the state apparatus.\textsuperscript{110}

With the Treaty of Belgrade came a long period of peace on both the northern and western frontiers of the empire which would partly shape the fate of the empire leading up to the

\textit{Ottomans between Vienna and Belgrade (1683-1739),} East European Monographs, No. 431 (Boulder; New York: East European Monographs ; Distributed by Columbia University Press, 1995), 214.

\textsuperscript{108} To give an example, see Hekimoğlu Ali Pasha and his local army, from Aksan, 110-112. Ottoman tenacity, which was mainly based on local militia, proved the fact that the empire had already tested the importance of local powers during the Morea Rebellion. Thus, it should not have been surprising to anyone to that local powers were called back on the eve of the revolt of the 1770s. After all, they represented the last successful Ottoman resilience and resistance against two formidable opponents of the empire, and there is no doubt they might have been more successful against Russia in the 1770s as compared to soldiers of the imperial army. In conclusion, the Ottoman attempt to take advantage of the local armies which were mainly under the control of the newly emerged class, i.e. ayan, was not a new phenomenon by the time of the Morea Rebellion, and Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha was just as determined to resort to them once again for the sake of a successful suppression of that rebellion when it arose.

\textsuperscript{109} To understand the extent of the privileges that the Ottomans gave to France in 1740 and how they were interpreted from a contemporary account’s point of view, see Albert Vandal, \textit{Une Ambassade Française En Orient Sous Louis XV: La Mission Du Marquis De Villeneuve, 1728-1741} (Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit et Cie, 1887), 416-420.

1770s. An Ottoman Iranian peace treaty was reached not too long after the Treaty of Belgrade in 1746, where a return to the border of 1639 was settled. Besides, from this point forward, Persia could not be regarded as a heretic state – good reason for the Ottomans to attack previously. Instead, it was seen as another Orthodox Muslim state that needed to be a friend rather than an enemy (at least in the rhetoric).\(^\text{111}\) Of further importance here is the fact that it had already been a long time since the Ottomans gave up their offensive campaign against opponents in the West. The Treaty of 1746 between the Ottomans and Persians proved that the empire lost any further desire to make an attack in the East as well. It was a time when the Ottomans realized their limit of power and shaped a future policy and plan that did no longer include any aggressive action against their neighbors. Both in the West and in the East, the best the Ottomans could dream now was to keep the status quo intact, and to avoid engagement in a fight or being a target of any of its opponents by using its already cultivated Ottoman diplomacy.

It is a fact that with the wars of 1736-1739 the Ottomans once again demonstrated their powers of endurance and eagerness to maintain ground and acquire some further gains when it was possible. However, unlike the years following the Treaty of Karlowitz it was now well-known to anyone in Istanbul that the days of great expeditions had gone forever. Everyone in the empire longed for a sustained peace now. On the one hand, between 1699 and 1740 the Ottomans were able to score victories against all of their opponents including Russia, Venice, Iran and Austria. On the other hand, however, there were many devastating defeats that in the long run destroyed the Ottoman euphoric confidence generated by the victories that had been celebrated in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Both the Ottomans and their enemies were quite cognizant of the fact that Ottoman victory at the Treaty of Belgrade came not from the

\(^{111}\) Finkel, 364. To understand the Ottoman justification of the wars against Persia in 1722, see Münir Aktepe, 1720-1724 Osmanlı-İran Münâsebetleri ve Silâhşör Kemâni Mustafa Ağa’nın Revân Fetih-Nâmesi (Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1970), 13-14.
empire’s own power but rather from international diplomacy which took sides with a feeble Ottoman Empire against the increasing powers of Austria and Russia. As a result, the Ottomans not only relied to a greater extent on the diplomatic support of big powers but also accepted this repulsive fact in opposition to the years immediately after the Treaty of Karlowitz. Otherwise, one cannot explain the lack of Ottoman hesitancy in signing the capitulations of 1740 with France. After all, throughout its long history the empire had never given such commercial privileges to any European state without actually getting anything in return (other than a fragile hope of further diplomatic support from France in the future). In other words, the empire agreed to give full commercial freedom to French merchants in their commercial activities in the Ottoman territories, and perhaps more importantly, the Ottoman Sultan disclaimed their former right to abrogate this treaty forever.\footnote{To get an idea of Ottoman policy of giving capitulations during its history see, Ali İlhan Bağış, \textit{Osmanlı Ticaretinde Gayri Müslüman} (Ankara: Turhan Kitabevi Yayınları, 1998), 1-18.} Indeed, throughout its long history the Ottoman Empire had also signed other treaties of capitulations with important European states such as England in 1675 and Holland in 1680. But not until 1740 did the Ottomans have to accept the status of its non-Muslim subjects as representatives of foreign consulates, which gave those non-Muslim subjects of the empire a unique status as we will shortly discuss in greater detail.

One of the most important effects of the French treaty of 1740 is that it provided a new opportunity to the non-Muslims subjects of the empire who were looking to enhance their power over other interest groups in the Ottoman Empire. It is a fact that the capitulations freed the hands of foreign traders who overcame local ones. Following the treaty, Ottoman traders simply lost their competitive character and had no choice but to cooperate with the European traders. What is particularly important here is the fact that it was largely the non-Muslim subjects of the empire who fully enjoyed this new opportunity. They not only became mediators between the
foreign and Muslim traders but also gained full privileges of foreigners through acquiring the status of protégé, i.e. beratlı, which had been previously granted only to dragomans and interpreters of foreign embassies.\footnote{At the outset, foreign states including Venice and France intended to cultivate people of their own origin who could manage Ottoman language and work as dragomans during their commercial activities with the Ottomans. However, soon it was understood that the best and cheapest way of communicating with the Ottomans was to use the Ottoman dragomans who were composed exclusively of non-Muslim citizens. Ibid., 25-27.} In the second half of the eighteenth century, there was a huge demand for beratlı status that not only put them on an equal footing with the foreign merchants, but also liberated them from any disadvantage that Ottoman subjugation would have been likely to impose upon them. In this respect, we have found many similarities between the malikane and beratlı applications. Suffice it to say that both gave complete freedom and immunity to the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the empire from state intervention for a lifetime.

The non-Muslim subjects of the empire started to enjoy almost all benefits that had been previously given only to foreigners. For example, those who had berat did not have to pay haraç or cizye, nor were they subjected to other customary levies including extraordinary (avarız) and butchery taxes (kasabiye), non-canonical taxes (tekelif-i örfiyye) or masdariye.\footnote{For the tax exemption and huge privileges given to the dragoman including his sons and servants as well, see Maurits H. van den Boogert, The Capitulations and the Ottoman Legal System: Qadis, Consuls, and Beratlıs in the 18th Century (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2005), 66-68.} There is no doubt that the beratlı subjects of the empire did their best to abuse their status and achieved exclusivity and protection that could have only been gained by bribing officials. What needs to be emphasized here is that the original intent of giving berat status to dragomans who were supposed to facilitate commercial activities between Europeans in the Ottoman Empire changed over time. Namely, owing to those enormous privileges bestowed on the beratlıs, foreign envoys of European states, who were free to employ anyone they liked as beratlı, started to purchase

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\footnote{84}
berats for non-Muslim subjects of the empire.\textsuperscript{115} This created a substantial number of non-Muslims who not only made a fortune out of this protected status but also were keen on furthering their prosperity within the empire just like the Muslim ayan of the empire.\textsuperscript{116} Furthermore, they did not limit themselves to commercial gains that status of beratl\i or hizmetk\är had opened, but they took the chance on tapping other important sources of making themselves rich and acquiring prestigious positions in the Ottoman Empire. In other words, apart from working under the jurisdiction of the foreign ambassadors, beratl\i subjects of the Ottoman Empire became also kocabaş\is and mütessellims, which made them essentially on a par with Muslim local ayan of the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{117} The Ottoman attempt to issue imperial edicts to stop them from acting as ihtiyar (pir or şeyh of a guild), tax farmer, or from taking part in local matters is a clear example of the early administrative reaction to this trend.\textsuperscript{118}

Another striking similarity between the beratl\is and ayan that deserves mention here is that during the selection of prospective protégés, foreign embassies or consulates preferred the members of the same families they employed before. As a result, although the post of beratl\i was not officially hereditary in theory, it evolved into a hereditary position that passed from father to son, called the “dragoman dynasty.”\textsuperscript{119} Therefore, one can posit that such changes in the Ottoman system which had often been triggered by foreign interferences created ayan and beratl\is (and later kocabaş\is), who could transfer these rights to their heirs without difficulty.

\textsuperscript{115} Bağış, Osmanlı Ticaretinde Gayri Müslümanlar, 28-33. Boogert also accepts the fact that even if the empire had promised to let the foreign envoys choose whomever they wanted as beratl\i without any restrictions, it is only through the French capitulations of 1740 (art. 43) that “this privilege was universally applied.” Boogert, 66.

\textsuperscript{116} The number of dragomans who enjoyed these privileges throughout the whole empire is quite difficult to estimate. However, Boogert’s study on ecnebi devletler defterleri offers us invaluable information at least concerning Great Britain, France and the Dutch Republic. His conclusion is worth mentioning here: in the course of the eighteenth century, not only did the number of protégés rise, but also the protection system spread steadily all over the empire. Boogert, 86-89.

\textsuperscript{117} Bağış, Osmanlı Ticaretinde Gayri Müslümanlar, 40.

\textsuperscript{118} Ibid., 108.

\textsuperscript{119} Bağış, Osmanlı Ticaretinde Gayri Müslümanlar, 84.
Not surprisingly, this made their power in the Ottoman Empire much more permanent – a development unheard of during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

As the importance of the beratlıs became clearer, Ottoman sources began to register beratlıs and their servants by name in the second half of the eighteenth century. This should be seen as an Ottoman attempt to keep a tight rein on them so that they would not be able to abuse their positions in disfavour of state interests. The result was an elaborate registration of the beratlıs that made it easier to discover abuses of the system.¹²⁰ However, one should keep in mind that it is not until Russia started to benefit from the capitulations that this system brought about a devastating impact upon the empire. And it was only at this juncture that the empire successfully created its own protection system against the misuses stemming from the beratlı status. That is, even though Ottoman-Russian commercial relations began in the fifteenth century, it did not fully develop until the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774. It was only then that Russia began to enjoy all the benefits that had already given to other big powers of Europe.¹²¹ What we learn from Boogert’s studies that European states such as England and France did not actually like the idea of increasing the number of the protégés under their jurisdiction since they both interpreted it as a great danger to their own commercial privileges.¹²² Nonetheless, this was an opportunity for the Russians, and they took full advantage. In the end, it was not the European states but the Russians who in fact took the concept of communal

¹²⁰ Ibid., 97.
¹²¹ In fact, İnalcık argues that there was a big difference between the capitulations given to Russia and other important European states. The former acquired these privileges as a result of a treaty that forced the empire to accept Russian demands. Previously, the Ottomans had been supposed to admit unilaterally the capitulations to be given to the European states, but now they had no choice but to accept Russian capitulations as a part of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774. Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi (İstanbul: Divantaş, 2000), s.v. "İmtiyâzât."
protection as an important target, and they got their chance from the Ottomans after the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca.¹²³ By the end of the eighteenth century, Zinkeisen argues, those who were under Russian protection as protégés numbered as high as 200,000 people.¹²⁴ If this actually was the case, there is no doubt that the Russian style of distributing berats must have been quite distinct from that of other European states, but this is beyond the scope of my study.

Conclusion

Although the Ottoman Empire had lost some battles at the hands of both Christian Europe and Shi’i Persia before (and even long after) the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, the empire never actually felt that such debacles were irreversible. Nonetheless, following the Treaty of Belgrade, the Ottomans were totally convinced that there was no going back to the time of earlier centuries when the sense of the absolute superiority of their empire vis-à-vis the European states could be countenanced. In spite of gaining what had been lost at the Treaty of Passorowitz in 1718, and signing one of the most favourable treaties of the eighteenth century in 1739, the empire was now certainly aware of its weaknesses and limits. Therefore, the Ottomans simply abstained from conducting external relations within the earlier dichotomy of Dar ul-Islam versus Dar ul-Harb. Following 1739, however, this was simply unsustainable even in rhetoric both in the East and the West. After all, this dichotomy required a permanent state of war against the infidels living outside the borders of the empire, but the empire was already aware of its inability to follow such a policy into the second half of the eighteenth century. The Ottomans had already tested their strength in acquiring the huge territories previously lost to Holy League powers (let

¹²³ See also, Boogert, 103-104.
alone gaining further lands for the *Dar-ul Islam*). This brought about an integration of the Ottoman Empire into the diplomatic system of Europe because the empire was now so determined to implement a peace-seeking policy for the rest of the eighteenth century.\(^{125}\)

The transformation of the landholding and military systems of the empire and the decentralization of its urban and provincial administration opened the way for the emergence of Muslim (*ayan*) and non-Muslim (*beraths*) elites in the Ottoman Empire. They became so important in Ottoman administration and finance that their power could no longer be ignored by Ottoman sultans in the second half of the eighteenth century. This proliferation of power bases (both at the local level and in the central state) was the result of a long process of consolidation of power that had been stimulated as a result of three distinct eras outlined in this chapter. In the acquisition of economic and political power, the state lost its early monopoly and right to distribute this power to whomever it wanted. As a result, by the 1750s, Ottoman sultans had already lost their invulnerable and authoritative position of command. More importantly, however, they could no longer play the role of the benefactor who had earlier provided protection, arms, provisions and booty to members of their military bureaucracy.\(^{126}\)

Taking all into consideration, the period between 1683 and the 1750s is an era of transition from a single sovereignty of the sultan to multiple sovereignties of first Muslim and then non-Muslim notable figures, who were not only more concerned about their influence in the empire but also had the means and desire to acquire further gains from a newly created Ottoman system. In the following chapter we will investigate these new elites on the eve of the Morea Rebellion (between 1750 and 1770). We will argue that in opposition to the Ottoman elites of

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\(^{125}\) To understand the Ottoman attitude towards Christian Europe in the eighteenth century, see Nuri Yurdusev, "The Ottoman Attitude toward Diplomacy," in *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional?*, ed. Nuri Yurdusev (Basingstoke, Hampshire, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 5-35.

later decades, who started to dominate the empire in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, these new elites who emerged before the insurrection of 1770 were not really interested in anything other than their own personal gain. We cannot associate their behaviour with either religious or national ideological grounds during the period under discussion. In other words, this new class that emerged as a result of the changes in the Ottoman system cannot be seen as a group of people who were desperately looking salvation from the “Turkish yoke.” Instead, they were actually looking only to enhance their own interests, which did not necessarily require an ideology or set of beliefs to take action, in opposition to what it is often claimed in the secondary literature of the Morea Rebellion. Of course, some of these people had taken part in some important insurrections against state authority long before the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, by the second half of the eighteenth century, they gained huge power, supported by the central state’s policies of earlier decades, some of which we have already mentioned here. It is also important to keep in mind here that it would take about another three decades to split the potential unity between Muslims and non-Muslims. Before the Morea Rebellion, the Russian attempt to engage the Orthodox millet against the empire never actually took hold in the non-Muslim population. As we will also see in the following chapter, new Ottoman elites systematically looked for more and more preferable means of using the state system, or should the occasion arise, of taking advantage at the expense of the state.
Chapter 2: New Ottoman Elites and Possible Causes of an Uprising in the Ottoman Empire, 1750s-1770s

Defining the Borders of Our Study

In the previous chapter, we saw how new Muslim and non-Muslim leading figures began to emerge in the first half of the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire. In this chapter, we will try to understand what happened to these new prominent figures of the empire until the eve of the Morea Rebellion so that we can determine the possible reasons for their support or condemnation of the insurrection of 1770. In this connection, we will make an attempt to set out the reasons why one might (or might not) have joined a rebellion like the insurrection of 1770 in the second half of the eighteenth century. Therefore, here we aim at discovering possible underlying motives that might or might not incite the members of new Ottoman elites to take up arms against their masters. Religious, nationalist and/or philhellenism, as well as political or economic pressures are often claimed to be the catalyst(s) of the Morea Rebellion. The reliability and validity of such arguments are going to be tested in light of both Ottoman historical sources and European accounts largely written during Mustafa III’s era. The role of group identity/dependence in the behaviour of insurgents will be particularly questioned. Last but not least, Muslim and non-Muslim relations on the eve of rebellion will also be analyzed.

On the one hand, we do accept that the Morea Rebellion occurred in the middle of a transition period: new local powers emerged and made efforts to cooperate with or fight against the empire; ayan increased their strength, and were not only powerful enough to challenge the very existence of the empire, but also did not hesitate to ask for the help of external powers for
the purpose of founding their own sovereignty within or outside the Ottoman Empire.\(^1\) On the other hand, what is argued in this thesis is that the empire had encountered many rebellions before the eighteenth century, which might have shared some common features with the insurrection of 1770. However, the latter were not only highly distinct from their predecessors but also the conditions under which rebels of 1770 joined the Morrea Rebellion were unique and should be evaluated accordingly.\(^2\)

We need to distinguish between rebellions which occasionally appeared in regions that had never been really brought under direct state control such as Egypt, Syria, Iraq and North Africa and those we are particularly addressing here. The ways they came into being were entirely different from what we are discussing in the Morea Rebellion. Our definition of rebellion using the Morea Rebellion might or might not be valid for such rebellion(s) that took place outside the direct control of the Ottoman state. Even at the height of the Ottoman Empire, one comes across some leading figures who intended to establish their own independent or semi-independent states in regions where the direct control of the state had never been established.

\(^1\) For example, Khoury argues that trouble-free relations going on between the central government and provincial elites started to change in the second half of the eighteenth century. The Ottoman Empire, which had not had any difficulty in mustering the loyalty and support of the local elites previously, started to face strong challenges to the supremacy and legitimacy of the Ottoman dynasty. However, this change in the understanding of provincial power-holders came into existence only after the devastating wars of 1768-1774. But, again, the empire was quite able to meet these challenges to its hegemony until the nineteenth century. Dina Rizk Khoury, "The Ottoman Centre Versus Provincial Power-Holders: An Analysis of the Historiography," in The Cambridge History of Turkey: The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839, ed. Suraiya Farooqi (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 135. Adanır argues that with these major ayan, the relationship between ayan and state which previously targeted optimizing tax collections as well as protecting the reaya against bandits changed for the worse. Namely, from this point onward, Ottoman legitimacy was considerably challenged. Even bandits of this late era, such as Kırcaali eşkiyası, present a different character, so that they now possessed an ideological defiance against the Ottoman political order. Fikret Adanır, "Semi-Autonomous Provincial Forces in the Balkans and Anatolia," in The Cambridge History of Turkey: The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839, ed. Suraiya Farooqi (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 178-179.

\(^2\) To differentiate previous ayan from those powerful ayan of the eighteenth century, scholars such as Uzunçarşılı and Cezar tend to use a different term for the previous ayan (i.e., kaza ayanı). Accordingly, the kaza ayan were quite distinct from the powerful ayan of the last quarter of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, who both dominated over vast territories and were influential and eager enough to challenge the state authority, should the occasion arise. For the discussion concerning the meaning of the ayan at different centuries see Nagata, Muhsin-Zâde Mehmed Paşa ve Âyânlık Müessesesi, 13-14. A similar distinction is also made by Özkaya. For example, see Özkaya, 129-145.
throughout the long history of the empire. Not surprisingly, they cannot be seen in the way that we have seen Ottoman leading figures in the eighteenth century. After all, in opposition to the notables living free from direct control of the central government, the Muslim and non-Muslim elites who emerged in the first half of the eighteenth century were either created or supported by the central state. On balance, it is simply not possible to classify all rebellions that occurred in the Ottoman Empire under one single category. For the sake of our study, we have basically scrutinized those rebellions which happened either at the very center of the empire or in those regions which one way or another were under direct control of the central administration such as Anatolia and the Balkans.

General Policies in the Reign of Sultan Mustafa III (1757-1774)

None of our sources provides an elaborate account reflecting every possible reason that might have incited the insurgents to take up arms against the empire. Instead, in light of what is available to us we can merely address several documents which more or less summarize and cover the potential catalysts known to have prompted the Morea Rebellion. Needless to say, in Mustafa III’s early reign, the Ottoman Empire had continued enjoying a period of peace that had

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3 To give an example, see clear distinctions made between Canbuladoğlu and other Celali rebellions. William J. Griswold, The Great Anatolian Rebellion 1000-1020/1591-1611 (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1983).
4 Özkaya, 22-27. Khoury also posits that transformations of provincial officers into local elites did not immediately result in the creation of certain groups that challenged the Ottoman hegemony. The ayan in the eighteenth century were more interested in state positions and negotiating for better position in lieu of standing up against the state authority. In this connection, in opposition to later semi-autonomous warlords “their challenges were minor, undertaken in the spirit of preserving an order, or of returning it to the practice of an idealised past.” She puts forward that in some (but not all) Ottoman Arab lands, Ottoman policy not only enabled more local figures to have access to state properties as well as positions, but also more and more people became “Ottomanised” and continued to be part of the new system in spite of all insurrections and political turmoil. Khoury, 155-156. In the example of Mosul, she even argues that Ottoman state power spread over this province more than at any time before. Accordingly, integration of this province into the Ottoman system was complete in the late eighteenth century when decentralization of the Ottoman Empire is often claimed to have been the case. Dina Rizk Khoury, State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540-1834, Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 213-214.
begun with the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739. Although at the outset Sultan Mustafa desired to end this period of tranquility in favour of Ottoman expansion – especially in Europe⁶ – the real administrator of the empire in the first six years of Mustafa III’s reign, Koca Ragib Mehmed Pasha, pursued a policy of peace and neutrality in lieu of launching another campaign on the pretext of great opportunities that international conjuncture of the time claimed to offer to the empire. In other words, most of the sources agree that it was mainly on account of the Grand Vizier Mehmed Pasha that the empire refused to play a role in the Seven Years’ War (1756-1763) and was kept out of any conflict with either the East or the West.⁷ Therefore, in the reign of Mustafa III, the Ottoman Empire was not only afraid of being involved in an external affair, but was also worried about initiating any domestic reform that might bring about another conflict between the state and interest groups, as had happened throughout the reigns of both Mustafa II (in 1703) and Ahmed III (in 1730), as well as that of Mahmud I (in 1731 and 1740).

In a similar vein, although the political chaos following the assassination of Nadir Şah in 1747 in Iran, which had offered numerous opportunities for the Ottomans to retake lands previously lost to Persia, the Ottomans preferred to remain faithful to the last peace treaty which had been signed with Nadir before his death. Even in 1762 an Afghan leader named Ahmed Şah Dürrānī offered an alliance to the Sultan in order to annihilate all Shi’ites in Iran. Mustafa III had no wish to become embroiled in another war with Persia and refused this offer on the pretext that

⁶ Refik argues that on the first days of his accession to the throne, Sultan Mustafa III made a visit to the Janissary barracks. After drinking şerbet (soft drink) he said “My Comrades! I hope, in next spring we shall drink this şerbet in front of (Bender) fortress.” Ahmed Refik, Tarih Sahifeleri (Istanbul: Matbaa-i Ahmed İhsan, 1907), 72-73. About the Sultan’s intention to adopt a more belligerent policy in the affairs of Europe, see also Lord Kinross, The Ottoman Centuries: The Rise and Fall of the Turkish Empire (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1977), 395-396. For the question why the Ottoman Empire did not take part in the Seven Years’ War, see Virginia H. Aksan, "The Ottomans and the Seven Years War," in unpublished paper.

“even if it is easy to gain control of the whole of Iran for the Ottoman Empire it would not befit his dignity to attack Iran that had been currently suffering from serious weakness.”\(^8\) As shown in the previous chapter, the Treaty of Belgrade did not bring another era of Ottoman aggression like we saw after the Treaty of Pruth in 1711, following recapture of Morea against Venice in 1715, or even the defeat at the hand of Austrians in 1718, which could be seen as the *raison d'être* for the ensuing Ottoman campaigns against Iran in 1724.\(^9\)

Just like his predecessors, Mustafa III indicated an interest in Western-inspired military reforms. But he was not resolute enough to achieve such reforms, which required direct intervention in governmental affairs. It does not mean that he was against making reforms in the empire, but rather he preferred to pursue a reform policy that would not endanger the harmony of the existing balance of power in the Ottoman Empire. Nonetheless, Ottoman policy was shaped with the influence of external powers rather than internal ones in the first half of the eighteenth century. The lack of challenge from external powers after the Treaty of Belgrade resulted in most reforms for the Tulip Era either going astray or being completely ignored, and essentially, they disappeared by the time they were most needed by the state.\(^10\) To give an example, Baron de Tott’s reform efforts in the creation of mobile artillery units were not sustained by the empire as they had been before, and soon his all efforts went to ruin. Basically, any attempt to initiate a

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\(^9\) There was continued peace between the Ottomans and Persians between the Treaty of Kasr-a Şirin in 1639 and that of Passarowitz in 1718. During that time interval, and especially throughout the latter seventeenth century and beginning of eighteenth century, the Ottomans engaged in many indecisive and often devastating battles in Europe. Therefore, Olson argues that “it was only when the frontiers of southeastern Europe became closed to their armies that the Ottomans again turned with full attention to the east”. On balance, one can interpret Ottoman adventure in the east following the Passarowitz Treaty as a new attempt to compensate for what had been already lost over and over again in the west against the European powers. Robert W. Olson, *The Siege of Mosul and Ottoman-Persian Relations 1718-1743* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1975), 31.

\(^10\) What deserves mention here is the fact that most noticeable reforms of Mustafa III, such as the foundation of a small artillery school in 1772 and a Naval Engineering School in 1773, and a project to found European style rapid-fire artillery corps (*Sür'at Topcuları Ocağı*) in 1774 were either implemented in the middle of the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774, or just before this war came into an end in 1774. Again, external powers as stimulus for Ottoman reforms need to be kept in mind.
new reform that threatened the increasing interests of high-ranking officers was simply opposed. Most importantly, however, the Sultan was simply not eager to face possible challenges coming from the new Muslim and non-Muslim elites, and so the issue of developing new reforms was dropped.

Political and Social Approaches of Mustafa III toward His Subjects in General

Before going into any detail concerning the attitudes of the newly emerging class in the second half of the eighteenth century, our classification of Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the empire does not mean that there was a society strictly divided into two distinct groups according to their religion (or *millet*) at the time. Nor are we talking about two homogenous groups whose members were preoccupied only with their own interests. Our documents clearly indicate cooperation between members of the two groups, as well as clashes between members of the same groups, quite common during the reign of Mustafa III. It seems that even they themselves did not think of themselves as belonging to a specific entity whose interests were more important than anything else.

For the sake of this study, however, we have delineated two distinct groups: Muslim and non-Muslim elites. The reason for dividing the prominent figures of the empire into two such groups is twofold. On the one hand, they had acquired power in the empire by identical means, since they both owed their position to imperial policies created specifically for these two groups. On the other hand, through the long tradition of the Ottoman *millet* system, Ottoman subjects of the empire were more and more merged into distinct *millet(s)* that had not been so vigorous previously. Kunt explicitly argues that in the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire, not only did the state start to define borders among the subjects of the Ottoman Empire according to which *millet* they belonged to, but also the religious community of each *millet* seems to have been
better organized in the eighteenth century, and it was this aspect that began to determine the future of its followers more than any other influence in the empire.\footnote{Metin Kunt, "Siyasal Tarih (1600-1789)," in Türkçe Tarihi 3: Osmanlı Devleti 1600-1908 ed. Sina Akşin (İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi 1988), 62-63.} One should still keep in mind that it is not possible to speak about one single policy applied for the entire non-Muslim population of the empire, especially by the second half of the eighteenth century. That is, the non-Muslim subjects of the empire were already divided themselves into two main groups, Orthodox and Catholic, often fighting with each other on such questions of who enjoyed the rights to maintain and protect Christian holy places under Ottoman control.

As for Mustafa III’s approach to his subjects, one sees immediately that on the whole, none of his policies can be truly interpreted as a sign of sultanic oppression against the non-Muslim citizenry. Sultan Mustafa was neither interpreted as an oppressor of the non-Muslim millets from their point of view, nor was the Sultan seen as an obstacle to their rise to affluence. This does not necessarily conflict with the fact that Mustafa III did in fact implement certain policies and practices to the detriment of the non-Muslim subjects of the empire. All in all, however, there is no reason to believe that sumptuary regulations were the causes of the Morea Rebellion.

One of the first things that Mustafa III attempted to do immediately after 1757 was to assure the security and safety of pilgrimage routes, which can be seen as a significant effort to revive the Sultan’s authority in the eyes of his coreligionist subjects. De Tott argues that the assault on the pilgrims in Damascus and seizure of the admiral’s ship by slaves on board while anchored at Malta deeply damaged the legitimacy of the Sultan who now had to find a way to consolidate his position as the head of the empire.\footnote{Tott, 103-104.} Accordingly, great importance was attached to the safe passage of the pilgrims, and the Sultan not only punished those who had attacked
pilgrims on their way to Mecca, but also took economic and social measures to renew the reliability of the pilgrimage and guaranteed much-needed supplies of grain for Mecca and Medina.\textsuperscript{13} Just as with providing security for the pilgrimage, the Sultan was so determined to get the admiral’s ship with its crew back safe and sound for the prestige of the empire, that he did not refrain from menacing France with an Ottoman expedition to Malta and expelling the French ambassador from Istanbul, or even initiating diplomatic negotiations with Frederick II of Prussia, who was at war with France at the time.\textsuperscript{14}

Furthermore, just like some of his predecessors and successors (especially after 1740) Sultan Mustafa not only strictly forbade the consumption of wine, but also the usage of tobacco in order to get the support of his conservative Muslim subjects as a reaction to the increasing power of non-Muslims in state apparatus.\textsuperscript{15} Following the policy of his predecessor Osman III (1754-1757), Mustafa III also forced non-Muslim subjects to wear distinct clothing to differentiate them easily from Muslims in daily life.\textsuperscript{16} Consequently, non-Muslims were not


\textsuperscript{14} Ahmed Refik, \textit{Osmanlı Alimleri ve Sanatkârları}, 274-278.

\textsuperscript{15} Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson, \textit{XVIII. Yüzyıl Türkiyeinde Örf ve Adetler} (İstanbul: Tercüman, 1972), 62.

\textsuperscript{16} It is a well-known practice of the eighteenth century that for their own benefit, Ottoman high-ranking statesmen did their best to divert the Sultan’s attentions from government affairs to other activities. De Tott argues that Mustafa III seems to be subjected to the same treatment. In other words, it was Ragıp Mehmed Pasha who actually incited the Sultan to renew the clothing laws of the earlier Sultan Osman III in order to keep him away from state affairs and to have a free hand to rule Ottoman subjects. “Le fameux Racub Pacha qui venait d’enterrer son ancien maître & d’installer le nouveau, s’aperçut le premier que Sultan Mustapha, aussi ignorant, mais plus actif qu’on ne l’avoir prêséme, avait besoin d’être occupé...On ne sera pas surpris d’apprendre que ses premiers soins furent d’exciter inhumanément son Maître à renouveler les Loix somptuaires, & à les faire executer lui-même à toute rigueur; il voulait aussi entretenir l’ignorance du Prince, & render son autorité odieuse au public.” Tott, 103.

However, Uzunçarşılı’s studies indicate that it was not the Grand Vizier but the Sultan himself who personally imposed the clothing regulations on his subjects. The story goes that no sooner did Mustafa rise to the throne than he ordered Christians and Jews to wear black clothes. Even if Ragıp Pasha did not want to implement this order on the pretext that the non-Muslims were useful in the Ottoman fleet, the Sultan did not change his mind. Consequently,
allowed to appear in any way similar to Muslims, and dressed in a fashion which set them apart. In a similar vein, Muslims were also supposed to avoid any resemblance to non-Muslims both in and outside the empire (e.g., Ottoman ambassadors had to wear Ottoman clothing as they travelled through Europe).

Actually, the Sultan issued an imperial decree in 1758 that banned non-Muslims from wearing any dress other than what they had traditionally been assigned. He seems to have been so determined to implement such regulations that he not only personally monitored public standards but he also even ordered some subjects put to death – especially the non-Muslims – if they did not obey this strict regulation. For instance, De Tott states that Greeks, Armenians and Jews were punished on account of having worn clothes of a colour that had been forbidden to them. Another Christian beggar who had been caught wearing yellow slippers – which were to be worn only by Muslims at that time – was simply put to the death due to breaking the Sultan’s laws. It is important to keep in mind that such regulations also applied to the Muslim subjects of the empire. Muslim women were not allowed to wear certain clothing in public that made

the Grand Vizier invited the Patriarch and Chief Rabbi to the palace and explained the Sultan’s order (probably the most euphemistic way he could put it) by saying that on account of the turmoil going on in the empire the Sultan is sorrowful and thinks it more proper when his subjects wear black rather than anything else. Ismail Hakki Uzuncaşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi* vol. 4/2 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1959), 395-396. In a similar vein, following his accession to the throne, Mustafa III impeded the Orthodox Church’s affairs since he “nourished the strongest antipathy for Christians, and it was only thanks to his prudent and experienced Vizier that his impetuous and capricious behaviours were bridled.” Theodore H. Papadopoulos, *Studies and Documents Relating to the History of the Greek Church and People under Turkish Domination* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1990), 173.

18 Tott, 103. In addition to the Christian executed by the order of the Sultan, Refik also mentions another non-Muslim, this time Jewish, who had been also put on the death due to not obeying the clothing laws of Mustafa III. Ahmed Refik, *Osmanlı Alimleri ve Sanatkârları*, 261-262.
them voluptuous. De Tott also mentions that the Sultan dictated the precise kind of clothes every rank was supposed to wear, and the headdress of Muslim women.

By the second half of the eighteenth century, many non-Muslims had already obtained substantial prosperity, especially by means of their commercial connection with Europe. Besides, the close association between the non-Muslim subjects of the empire and Europe brought about an imitation of European styles of attire in conflict with imperial laws. This relationship with the West brought about a desire to wear certain (Western) clothes indicating wealth and high rank, which had been exclusively enjoyed by Muslims previously. Therefore, the Sultan’s new regulations prevented non-Muslims from disregarding the markers of their cultural inferiority in the public arena of the Ottoman Empire, because they were forced to wear clothes representing low status, in spite of their increasing prosperity in the empire.

Mustafa III demolished some religious buildings of the non-Muslims in Istanbul to satisfy the conservative Muslims who had complained about the existence of such edifices in the capital. D’Ohsson also posits that although it had been a custom of an earlier time to allow the Christians to celebrate certain days and let them entertain during those days, Sultan Mustafa brought some limitations to this old tradition and did not give them permission to wear colourful dresses and to ride on horses as a part of their ceremonies. Moreover, it is also understood from the sources that the Sultan was sometimes suspicious of his non-Muslim servants such as

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19 Findikli Suleyman, "Sem'dani-Zade Findikli Suleyman Efendi Tarihi Mur'ta Tevarih 2/B", 36. For specific details for the dos and don'ts of the women of the time, see Madeline C. Zilfi, *Women and Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire: The Design of Difference* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 75-76.
20 Tott, 103. One should keep in mind that sartorial regulation was not limited to Mustafa III, nor did he bring anything new to this regulation. Other Ottomans Sultans also often used clothing laws in a similar effort to either enhance or maintain their power and legitimacy. For instance, in addition to Osman III, Abdülhamid I (1774-89), Selim III (1789-1807), Mustafa IV (1807-1808), and Mahmud II (1808-1839) went even further in such regulations. Zilfi, 52 and 86-90. Quataert posits that such clothing laws issued by Sultans helped them to reinforce their legitimacy a ruler “at a time when they neither commanded armies nor actually led the bureaucracy.” Quataert, 44.
22 D'Ohsson, 250-251.
doctors, dragomans and money-lenders. Consequently, he accused some of them of being spies, and as a result they were executed with an imperial order of the Sultan on account of this suspicion.  

In addition, Bağış’s elaborate studies in the BOA prove the fact that immediately after Mustafa III took the throne, he intended to do away with abuses of the system resulting from beratlı status. Beratlı subjects of the Ottoman Empire not only shared the same privileges and opportunities as the foreign merchants who had acquired inviolable rights stemming from peace treaties, they also liberated themselves from the disadvantages that Ottoman subjection might impose upon them. Accordingly, the Sultan strictly limited the number of dragomans’ servants (hizmetkâr) who shared almost the same immunity to Ottoman law with the European citizens in the empire. He also forbade holders of berat from wearing the same clothes as foreign merchants, so that they would not be excluded from any tax (such as poll tax) to which they should normally have been subjected. Last but not least, he advised foreign ambassadors not to assign more dragomans than what they were allowed according to the ahidnâme (capitulation). However, it was only after the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca that the Ottoman Empire took such problems of beratlı seriously and not until the time of Selim III that the empire could really succeed in eliminating the abuses of the system coming from the beratlı status.

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23 Ibid., 37.
24 Unlike Bağış, D’Ohsson argues that the number of the protégés increased twofold for the benefit of foreign ambassadors in the Ottoman Empire. In a similar manner to D’Ohsson, Masters inclines to support the argument that claims an increase in the number of beratlı. See for example, Masters, The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East: Mercantilism and the Islamic Economy in Aleppo, 1600-1750, 96-97. Nevertheless, Boogert contradicts this hypothesis by stating that he does not come across a single clue in Ottoman archives that might support D’Ohsson’s thesis. Boogert, 89.
25 Bağış, Osmanlı Ticaretinde Gayri Müslümanlar, 37-38. Bağış’s study on Mühimme 161 written in 1758 shows that there were 154 dragomans registered in some Ottoman cities, including the Morea, who dressed like foreign merchants, in violation of the rule. We do not know, however, how many of them were exclusively registered in the Morea, but this document provides us with reasonable grounds to argue that their number was more than negligible, and among other cities of the empire their area of interest included the Morea as well. See Bağış, Osmanlı Ticaretinde Gayri Müslümanlar, 38 n. 59.
26 For Ottoman attempts to keep the beratlı under control, see Bağış, Osmanlı Ticaretinde Gayri Müslümanlar, 39-41.
In a similar vein, on the eve of the Morea Rebellion, in 1765 the empire had to issue a law by which the Sultan not only intended to keep the ayan under control but also to prevent their misconduct such as over-taxation and torture imposed upon the reaya. Accordingly, central government first decided to investigate candidates for the position of ayan and then their appointment was made with the approval of the grand viziers. By these measures the empire targeted local governors and prevented them from issuing an illegal certificate of ayanlık. A few years later with the outbreak of the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774, however, the Ottomans had no choice but to abandon this reform for the sake of providing immediate provisions and soldiers best supplied by the ayan.27

Taking all into consideration, Mustafa III’s attempt to revive his prestige did not really go beyond maintaining a lofty position, while the Grand Vizier and other leading figures and notables either in the capital or in the provinces actually controlled governmental affairs at the expense of the Sultan’s already restricted authority. It is reasonable to argue that in the struggle between the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the empire, Mustafa III preferred to take the side of his Muslim subjects and ignored the potential power of the non-Muslims in order to bolster his regime and muzzle opponents of his policies. Well aware of his greatly reduced power, Mustafa III never confronted the Muslim interest groups including ulemas, members of the military class, Muslim notables and so forth. For example, Mustafa Kesbî argues that in response to Ragib Pasha’s complaints about the Sultan’s refusal to conclude a military alliance with Prussia against the aggression of Austria and Russia, in spite of having accepted the necessity of such an alliance, Sultan Mustafa said that “members of military class, notables and ulemas might be suspicious of such a treaty and we seriously need to take their attitude and

27 İnalcık, Centralization and Decentralization, 48-49.
position into consideration.” As a result of the Sultan’s hesitation, Kesbi concludes, only a commercial treaty was signed between the imperial court and Prussia in 1763.  

Another striking example has been found in Cevdet. According to him, Mustafa III sought advice and counsel from Defterdar Hilmi Efendi (official head of the imperial treasury at the time) to put the empire in order. In spite of having accepted the necessity of organizing a new army in order to overcome the powers in Europe, Sultan Mustafa was not pleased with Hilmi’s suggestion of rehabilitating the Janissary institution. In response to the Sultan’s further question of whether Janissaries would accept new orders, Hilmi confidently replied in the affirmative. Mustafa interpreted Hilmi’s confidence as a sign of his affiliation with the Janissaries and became suspicious of him. Worried that his intention of military reforms would become known to the Janissaries, the Sultan first expelled the defterdar to Mosul as mukataa holder and then executed him.

These are clear signs that Sultan Mustafa III was fearful of critical reactions from Muslim interest groups and did not dare be seen to take a position against them under any circumstance. In an affirmative manner to Mustafa’s character, after describing the new Sultan’s physical features, Baron de Tott explains the reason why Mustafa III was allowed to be the ruler of the

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28 “...benim vezîrim, bu böyle, lâkin senin ile ben bu işi bu dereceye getürdük. Lâkin ocaklu ve kibâr ve ulemâ ne derler, işin şer’isini dahi mülahaza edelim, deyû ref’î meclis eyedîkde Râgıb Paşa bu işi var ise Osmân Monla ve Nakşî bu sûrete koymuşlar ammâ çî fâ’ide fesh olmuş ve yalnız Âsitâne’dede elçi âhneti ile ticâret maddesine nizâm verîp bu gam ile kendüsi dahi âhrete gitmiş.” Mustafa Kesbi, İbretnûmây-ı Devlet, trans., Ahmet Öğreten (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2002), 29-30. Indeed, Kesbi’s argument contradicts the historical truth of the time. That is to say, most contemporary or present-day scholars agree with the fact that it is not Sultan Mustafa III but Ragib Pasha who was against the war and endeavoured to keep peace in the Ottoman Empire. But still, Kesbi’s quotation is quite important to understand the mentality of the time and the Sultan’s place in it. Heinrich Friedrich von Diez, Wesentliche Betrachtungen: oder Geschichte Des Krieges Zwischen Den Osmanen und Russen in Den Jahren 1768 Bis 1774 (Berlin: Comm. der Buchh. des Hall. Waisenhauses, 1813), 6-7. Kemal Beydilli, Büyük Friedrich ve Osmanlular: 18. Yüzyılda Osmanli-Prusya Münasebetleri (İstanbul: 1985), 33-78. Last but not least, see also Virginia H. Aksan, An Ottoman Statesman in War and Peace: Ahmed Resmi Efendi, 1700-1783, The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage, V. 3 (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1995), 66-67. Nevertheless, after the death of the Grand Vizier, Mustafa III sent Ahmed Resmi to Berlin in order to conclude the military treaty resisted by Fredrick the Great previously. This time, Fredrick refused the Sultan’s offer by saying “it is now too late.” Türkiye Diyanet Vakфи İslâm Ansiklopedisi (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfi 2006), s.v."Mustafa 3."  
29 Ahmet Cevdet, 123.
empire because “Les Grands le croyaient faible & se flattaient de le gouverner.” It is also noteworthy that during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to strengthen the power of the Sultan at the expense of grand viziers, new Sultans usually preferred to keep the duration of grand vizierate short, especially in the early years of their reign. Unlike his predecessors and even successors, including Mahmud I (1730-1754), Osman III (1754-1757), and Selim III (1789-1807) who had replaced many grand viziers in the early years of their respective reigns, Mustafa III kept Ragıb Pasha in his position until his death in April 1763.

The reign of Mustafa III was a time when the empire had long preserved peace with all of its external enemies. Consequently, the Sultan did not take the trouble of initiating any elaborate reforms which might have caused him to face the objections of Muslim interest groups. When we take his father Ahmed III into consideration, it becomes easier to understand Mustafa III’s mentality – he was well aware of the importance of throwing lessons of the past to the winds. As a result, he did his best not to make the same mistakes that his father had, about twenty-seven years earlier. Therefore, it would be safer to posit that unlike Mahmud I, he neither thought of the non-Muslim subjects of the empire as the mainstay of his reign, nor did he refrain from punishing them, should the occasion arise.

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30 Tott, 99. Ragıb Pasha has been depicted as someone who intended to get absolute power on his own hands at the expense of anyone in the state. See Porter, 104-118.

31 In this line, Kinross argues that Ragıb Pasha’s power in the state was comparable to that of his predecessor about one hundred years earlier, i.e. Köprülü. Kinross, 394. Mustafa’s submissive personality and tendencies can easily be observed in his verses: The world is in decay, Do not think it will right with us; Base Fate has given the state over to the mean; Now the men of rank about us are all cowards; Nothing remains for us but immortal compassion. Berkes, 54. To further understand the state of mind of Sultan Mustafa, look at his utterances/verses quoted by Heinrich Friedrich von Diez. For example, “Umgestürzt ist dies Reich; denke nicht, dass es sich unter uns wieder aufrichten werde!” Diez, 17 and also 11.

32 To discover the great impact of Ahmed III upon his son Mustafa III, see Porter, 107-108.

33 In this connection, to some degree we agree with Olson arguing that the millets were kept as captives, in particular following 1740. Accordingly, they had no choice but to support the Sultan. Otherwise, he reserved his right to turn resentment of the Muslim masses against the millets and this is, in a sense, what Mustafa III preferred to do during his reign. Olson, “The Ottoman Empire in the Middle of the Eighteenth Century and the Fragmentation of Tradition: Relations of Nationalities (Millet), Guilds (Esnaf) and the Sultan, 1740-1768,” 76.
regicide of earlier decades, and therefore was not preoccupied with holding a new power base by relying on the non-Muslims, as his predecessor had done approximately two decades earlier. He presented himself as protector of the pilgrimage routes and caliph of the Muslim world while trying to revive Ottoman prestige abroad.

Those accounts written about non-Muslim subjects of the empire in the reign of Mustafa III are mixed, however.34 For instance, D’Ohsson mentions that in the reign of Mustafa III, the Chief Admiral of the Ottoman fleet, Kapudan Paşa, and a Greek doctor met by chance on the street and the latter let the admiral pass, but did not dismount. In response to the perceived insult, the admiral ordered him to come closer, took the doctor’s whip and hit the doctor several times. Having heard of this incident from the enemies of the admiral, the Sultan not only removed the admiral from office but also expelled him from the capital. Additionally, D’Ohsson posits that even if considerable incentives were given or offers were made to convert non-Muslims, especially those who were thought of as being beneficial in state affairs, a policy of forced conversion was a rare exception in the time of Mustafa III, who, in one case personally dissuaded a distinguished Christian from converting to Islam, by granting him some favours and a high position in the empire.35 Another important example is that the Sultan continued to assign the non-Muslim subjects of the empire to the state positions of the highest significance. For instance, without interruption, the management of the imperial mint was given to an Armenian family called Düzüoğlu during the reign of Mustafa III.36

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34 It is likely to find some European sources claiming that Sultan Mustafa intended to pass a policy to eradicate the whole Christian population in the empire, but there is neither proof nor a convincing argument or intuitive reason to believe that this was the case during his reign. For example, see W. Eton, A Survey of the Turkish Empire (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1801), 100.
35 d’Ohsson, 120-121 and 227-228.
36 Şevket Pamuk, A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire (New York, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 202. To observe the increasing influence of the Armenian family in the reign of Mustafa III in greater detail, see also Onnik Jamgocyan, “Les Finances De l’empire Ottoman et Les Financiers De Constantinople 1732-1853”
In Sir James Porter’s observations on the Ottoman Empire, there is little evidence of Mustafa III's oppression of non-Muslim population in general and that of Greeks in particular. On the contrary, Porter argues that in spite of being against Islamic laws, where neither the establishment of new churches nor repair to old churches were permissible in principal, Mustafa III gave grants for repairs to the Greek churches which were in ruin at the time of his accession to throne. According to the story following the birth of the Sultan’s first child (meaning his first male descendant, i.e., Selim III, born in 1761), the Grand Vizier suggested the Sultan do a favour to his Christian subjects by letting them repair the church which had gone to ruin on account of a great conflagration that had occurred in Istanbul. The Sultan gave the Greeks ten days to repair this church and soon every Greek mason in the capital came to rebuild the church from the ground up within the allotted period of time. It is also worth mentioning that during the vizierate of Ragib Mehmed Pasha, the control of the chapel at Bethlehem was also given to the Greeks rather than Romanians (Catholics), which not only increased the prestige of the Orthodox Church in the eyes of Christians, but also should be interpreted as an Ottoman favour of the time to its Christian subjects in their struggle with the Catholics. Bruce Masters’ work on Aleppo shows that this competition was not limited to a religious quarrel about holy places, but spread over economic and social levels between the two sects of Christianity. Increasing commercial interchange between the Catholic European states and representatives in Aleppo, for instance, paved the way for the influence of the Catholic sects in Aleppo at the expense of the Orthodox who were mainly supported by the Sultan. The protégé status provided by the European


37 He became a British ambassador to the Sublime Porte of the Ottoman Empire in Istanbul after having worked in Vienna. Porter served in this position for fifteen years, encompassing the time interval from 1747 to 1762.

38 Porter, 340-341.

39 Ibid., 344. For the competition between the Orthodox and Catholic Christians for the custody of the Holy Places in Jerusalem, see Finlay, 290-293.
embassies allowed the Catholics to benefit from legal as well as economic and political
privileges and concessions that they had never enjoyed before. Last but not least, the Ottoman
Empire favoured the Greeks among other Orthodox nations of the empire. We have already
discussed the major role that the Phanariotes played for about a century after 1716, when they
acquired the office of hospodar of Moldavia and Wallachia. Suffice it to say that due to the
pressure they had put on the Ottoman administration, the empire not only brought an end to the
patriarchate of Serbia in 1766 and that of Ohrid in 1767 (just a few years before the Morea
Rebellion), but also put them under the direct control of the Greek Patriarchate in Istanbul.

Nevertheless, one should not leap to the conclusion that the Greek people in the reign of
Mustafa III enjoyed a freedom that had not been granted to them previously. After all, it is a
well-known fact that from time to time, Ottoman sultans let their non-Muslim subjects both
repair their religious buildings and construct new ones, even if this ran contrary to Islamic law.
As for the prerogatives given to the Orthodox in the chapel at Bethlehem, it was common
practice in the empire that the imperial council sometimes favoured the Catholics and sometimes
the Orthodox for the maintenance and upkeep of the Christian holy places within the Ottoman
Empire. However, when we take Porter’s entire book into consideration – wherein he had no
reason to refrain from severely criticizing the empire’s negative attitude toward the non-Muslims
– we should at least concede the fact that in the eyes of the Christian people who were the

42 For example, as a consequence of the capitulations given to France, the Ottoman Empire had given Catholics under the leadership of France the right to repair Christian holy places in Jerusalem in 1740.
primary sources for Porter’s book during his tenure in the Ottoman Empire, Sultan Mustafa III did not inevitably prevent their acquisition of power and status.

Beyond such anecdotal evidence, we have little information on Mustafa III and his policies either in favour of certain interest groups or against some others. But when we look from the Ottoman subjects’ point of view to their Sultan, we can make some further assumptions about the social and political environment on the eve of the Morea Rebellion. Prominent Muslims of the time did not see Mustafa III as an absolute ruler but at best as a primus inter pares in the administration of the empire. Particularly concerning the mechanism by which a citizen made a complaint to the Sultan in the time of the Morea Rebellion, Sultan Mustafa was either kept from knowing about them, or was in no position to respond them positively. He was not viewed as a distributor of justice to his downtrodden subjects. This vacuum of power was enthusiastically filled with the newly emerged notables who had become more and more effective, particularly in the geographic regions in which they dominated. In this connection, Porter and his observations concerning Mustafa III and his reign are of special importance in this discussion. By contrast with many other European observers, he understood that the Sultan lived within a system of checks and balances.

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43 Porter argues that high state officers like kızlar ağası or Grand Vizier prevented any complaint from reaching the Sultan and always found a way to shift the Sultan’s attention to other matters. Porter, 260-261.
44 For details, see chapters 4, 5 and 6.
45 Tezcan names this new empire starting from regicide of Osman II as ‘the Second Empire’. Unlike the previous patrimonial empire, the state was symbolized by a spiderweb, at the center of which we see the Sultan, who was accordingly no longer seen as being at the top of the state apparatus. Yet, this web somehow connected those who were closer to the center and those who were further away. Tezcan, 192-193.
46 Porter, xiv-xxxvi. For further discussion on the question of how contemporary European observers of the time interpreted Ottoman sovereignty and the Sultan’s place on it, see also Tezcan, 7-9. Increasing power of the ulema at the expense of the Sultan’s authority is illustrated in Zilfi’s article. Namely, unlike the seventeenth century, the support of some Sultans such as Ahmed III (1703-1730) and Mustafa III, created powerful and durable ulema families which monopolized important ilmiye positions for members of these families and their shared interests. Madeline C. Zilfi, "The Ottoman Ulema," in The Cambridge History of Turkey: The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press 2006), 223-224.
Ottoman Economy in the Reign of Mustafa III

Was there anything in the economic policies of Mustafa III which might have incited the rebellion in the Morea? The financial crises during in the reign of Mustafa III might help to explain the outbreak of the rebellion. While there is no evidence of a general financial depression that might have incited insurgents, the redistribution of wealth evident over the half century before the events might well have caused considerable discontent. Scholars are inclined to agree that the economic conditions of earlier decades changed for the better under Mustafa III, but that the pace of financial consolidation by individuals also accelerated. After a very long time of unstable finances, the Ottomans did not run a budget deficit, but instead had a 449,500 ğuruş (piaster) surplus in 1761. During his reign, Sultan Mustafa and his vizier Ragıp Pasha took proactive measures to increase the wealth of the state, including establishing a strict fiscal policy and regulating coinage. There is no doubt that this was not a unique success of this reign per se, but rather it was a clear reflection of the long peace which was attained following the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739. This explains why Mustafa III was easily able to distribute cülüs (accession money) twelve days after his enthronement, unlike his successors Abdülhamid I (1774-1789) and Selim III (1789-1807). In addition, the Sultan could even relinquish his rights to collect some customary taxes usually paid for the renewal of berats. Still, this growth was not enough to eliminate all the economic deficiencies of the empire. For example, although the Sultan was able to pay the accession money, he could not increase the salaries paid to the Janissaries at that

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47 Genç, 115.
48 Belin, 240-241. As a matter of fact, this was not unique to Mustafa III, since Osman III had been also able to scatter cülüs and did not collect some customary taxes in favour of taxpayers. M. Belin, Türkiye İktisadi Tarihi Hakkında Tetkikler, trans., M. Ziya (İstanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1931), 231.
By observing the careful use of Ottoman financial sources, as well as confiscations and other economic policies to increase revenues, Sultan Mustafa also made an important contribution to the growth of the Ottoman economy during the period under issue. However, the Sultan’s desire to raise revenues for the state treasury gave him such a bad reputation among his contemporaries that he was blamed for avarice for having introduced new taxes and being fond of confiscations.

Sagacious economic policies and political measures of the Grand Vizier Ragib Pasha deserve particular mention here in order to comprehend the reasons behind the growth of the Ottoman economy in the reign of Mustafa III. Having spent most of his career in scribal offices, Ragib Pasha was quite adept at finding the financial means to regularize and balance the Ottoman economy as well as its budget. That is to say, attempts were made to restore the value of Ottoman coins and to reduce the expenditures of the state, especially those of the palace, in order to save more and more money for the imperial treasury. But again, such regulations had their limits, as was the case for the socio-political policies of the time. Namely, neither the Sultan nor the Grand Vizier could dare go all the way to abolishing financial abuses for the sake of a full imperial treasury. On the eve of the Ottoman-Russian Wars in 1768, the Sultan decided to abolish the esame(s) (pay tickets) of the Janissary Corps, which had been bought and sold as if it was a commercial commodity after 1740, and had therefore caused great loss to the imperial

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50 Confiscations can also be seen as attempts to reestablish the Sultan’s authority through curbing the power of officials who might become independent forces in the empire. In this respect, it is noteworthy that after the death of Ragib Pasha, the Sultan confiscated 60,000 purses of akçe from Pasha’s belongings. Ziya Karamursal, Osmanlı Mali Tarihi Hakkında Tetkikler (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1940), 62. On the fear of the confiscations, Augustin, who wrote in 1770s, states that “the few rich merchants who are to be found among the Turks, dare not make known the property they possess, but hide it with extreme caution and diligence. In Egypt, where they are more free and left exposed, they are equally careful in concealing their wealth.” Pierre Augustin, A Sentimental Journey through Greece vol. 1 (London: Cadell, 1772), 16.
coffers. Nevertheless, having been informed by the Commander of Janissaries (Yeniçeri Ağası) that only half of the money paid for the esame passed into the hands of the soldiers and the rest was taken by either the ulema and bureaucrats at the palace or governors of the empire, Mustafa III did not take any further action and called off his project.\(^{52}\)

In spite of this relative growth in the Ottoman economy,\(^ {53}\) the empire was hesitant to take advantage of this expansion, particularly because of the change in mentality of the empire that we have mentioned before. In other words, as Özvar posits in his research concerning Ottoman budgets between the years 1509 and 1788, a close link is found between the growth of Ottoman incomes and big military campaigns which almost always followed such economic expansions. That is to say, during the era under discussion in Özvar’s study, it was common practice that a few years before the Ottomans were going to launch a serious campaign against its foes, the empire enjoyed a budgetary surplus that either enabled or at least facilitated a war.\(^ {54}\)

However, the budgetary surplus of 1761 and the years following did not result in Ottoman participation in the Seven Years’ War or any other campaign until 1768, when the empire was indeed left no choice but to declare war on Russia.\(^ {55}\) Therefore, conspicuous economic expansion experienced in the reign of Mustafa III was not sufficient for the empire to


\(^{53}\) To give but one example, see "III. Mustafa Dönemine Ait 1761-62 (Hicri 1175) Tarihli Bütçe," in *Osmanlı Maliyesi Kurumlar ve Bütçeler*, ed. Mehmet Genç and Erol Özvar (Istanbul: Ofset Yapımevi, 2006), 370-414.

\(^{54}\) To be exact, some years of surplus following the years 1527-1528 allowed the empire to open campaigns both to conquer Budin and then to besiege Vienna in 1529. Again, before the second siege of Vienna in 1683, the Ottoman economy experienced a similar financial growth that put the empire at ease on the eve of this war. Last but not least, economic ease of the years following the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699 led the empire to launch another serious campaign on the river of Pruth against Russia in 1711. Erol Özvar, "Osmanlı Devletinin Bütçe Harcamaları (1509-1788)," in *Osmanlı Maliyesi Kurumlar ve Bütçeler* ed. Mehmet Genç and Erol Özvar (Istanbul: Ofset Yapımevi, 2006), 235-236.

\(^{55}\) One should always keep in mind that what we have described here as an economic expansion or revival should not blind us to the fact that on account of various reasons, the empire continued to experience economic repressions in the reign of Mustafa III, as well. For instance, as being the most important commercial partner of the Ottoman Empire, the French debacle of 1763 not only gave rise to an economic wrench in the Mediterranean, but also destroyed the stability of Ottoman finance at that time. Linda T. Darling, "Public Finances: The Role of the Ottoman Centre," in *The Cambridge History of Turkey: The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press 2006), 129.
regain its self-confidence to assert aggression against its opponents either in the West or in the East, even if opportunities had been offered to the empire from both sides. After all, now we are talking about an empire ruled by many interest groups instead of one single authority under the leadership of the Sultan, which likely contributed to the Sultan's reluctance or inability to declare another campaign when financial conditions allowed, a trend that the empire had followed since the Treaty of Belgrade in 1739.

The growth in the Ottoman economy does not necessarily mean that revenues of the state increased enormously, especially when we take into account the trade privileges previously given to the European powers. In the years following the 1739, curbing the advantages given to European states was simply out of question, since the Ottomans were inclined to maintain the balance of power with the help of these commercial privileges in order to guarantee continued peace in the empire. For the time being, the empire just kept enjoying what peace had offered to the state. After all, Ottoman reliance on the reviving economy did not pan out. That is, soon after the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774 began, the imperial treasury ran out of money and the Sultan had to send 3,500 purses of akçe to imperial army headquarters, which had already gone bankrupt at the beginning of the war. As a result, the empire looked desperately for economic and military contributions from the ayan in order to continue the exorbitant war. Hence, Ottoman ability to take part in a war before 1768 proved that the Ottoman Empire was weaker than appearances indicated. In fact, it was no secret to any reasonable Ottoman statesman of the time that the empire was not in a position to initiate a war, and no one was eager to bring the empire to the edge of testing this well-known fact. Cevdet’s story about a conversation between Sultan Mustafa and his vizier Koca Ragıp Pasha states expressly the dilemma the empire had been experiencing at that time: according to the story, the Sultan intended to take active sides in the

56 Karamursal, 62.
struggles of European states, believing the reviving economy following the Treaty of Belgrade would sustain him. Nonetheless, being fully aware of the inadequacies and chronic problems of the Ottoman army, Ragıb Pasha persuaded the Sultan to follow a strict policy of keeping the state away from any aggression at all costs. As details of this conversation illustrate, the Ottoman economic revival in the reign of Mustafa III was far from building up the empire enough to take on another military operation.

In fact, during the period of Mustafa III we observe the old problems of inflation, the plague, shortage of food, overcrowded cities, unemployment, bandits and insubordinate notables prevailed throughout the empire. Added to that, some natural catastrophes such as epidemics, conflagrations and earthquakes greatly damaged the empire either during or immediately before the reign of Mustafa III. For example, on May 22, 1766, the capital was destroyed by an earthquake, which undoubtedly affected the balance of economy and productivity in the empire. After the earthquake, an elaborate construction plan was implemented, sponsored mainly by the imperial treasury. The total cost of this disaster was given as 22,000 purses of akçe, which would have been an enormous burden on the Ottoman economy on the eve of the Ottoman-Russian Wars. Another example of special importance is the plague – originating in Egypt – which ravaged the Morea for a period of five years after 1756. It is even claimed that this disease annihilated half of the population living there.

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57 Ahmet Cevdet, , 78. Ragıb Pasha was also noted as saying he was not keen on changing the current system on the pretext that "I am afraid that we shall be unable to re-establish order (nizâm) if we once break the harmony of the existing institutions." Berkes, 53.
58 İsmail Hami Danişmand, İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi vol. 4 (Istanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1972), 42.
59 François Pouqueville, Voyage De La Grèce (Paris: Chez Firmin Didot Père et Fils, 1826), 332. We have not encountered any other sources confirming Pouqueville’s claim that half of the population in the Morea perished on account of this disease. But at least we can presume that economic indications of the empire in the reign of Mustafa III deny the possibility of the great economic depression that losing half of the population in the Morea might have brought about. So we are inclined to take this demographic data with a grain of salt even if we do take into consideration the possibility of such a plague and its possible impacts on the reaya living in the Morea. But relying
Nonetheless, such disasters were by no means unique to the reign of Mustafa III. Examples of such disasters can be observed throughout the whole eighteenth century. Istanbul suffered enormously from the great conflagrations of 1718, 1750, 1756, 1782, and 1787. To be more specific for the sake of our study, the Morea, especially the city of Patras, was stricken by earthquakes in July 1714, in January 1750, on June 4, 1804; on April 7 and 15, 1821; and finally on June 11, 1846. As a matter of the fact, Panzac argues that no Ottoman region, including Syria, Crete, Anatolia, the Peloponnese or the Bosporus was immune to the earthquakes which occasionally annihilated the people living there, and made life unbearable for the survivors. Within 150 years, these regions suffered from such catastrophes five or six times. Every disaster would have been crippling; for a time, the empire was paralyzed by natural disasters. As for the plague in the Peloponnese, we see a similar trend for the eighteenth century. Namely, between 1701 and 1750, the epidemics appeared 12 times; between 1751 and 1800 we come across 14; and lastly, between the years 1801 and 1850, we have only five. There is no doubt, the number of diseases decreased dramatically in the first half of the nineteenth century, but once again, we do not see the reign of Mustafa III as the worst period of the plague that struck the people living in the Morea. Moreover, as compared to other areas of the Ottoman Empire such as Egypt, Istanbul, central Anatolia and Asia Minor, the Peloponnese and small islands of the Aegean Sea were relatively less affected by the plague, which further contradicts the idea that the diseases were particularly devastating in the Morea.

exclusively on Pouqueville’s testimony for the explanation of the Morea Rebellion is neither reasonable nor acceptable without finding further proof for this argument.
60 For details on the natural disasters in the eighteenth century, see McGowan, "The Age of the Ayans, 1699-1812," 651-652.
62 Ibid., 198.
63 Ibid., 199-200.
Nonetheless, this does explain why people like Ragıp Pasha concentrated their attention on internal matters and tried to alleviate domestic burdens Ottoman subjects resulting from such catastrophes. That is to say, Ragıp Pasha not only sponsored major state initiatives in Istanbul to expand the capacity of urban installations that would alleviated grain shortage, but also made an attempt – unsuccessful, sadly – to link the gulf of İznik with the Black Sea in order to provision the capital with foodstuffs and fuel. We do not know precisely how effective these projects were in eliminating the bad conditions that had often dragged Ottoman statesmen into clashes with inhabitants of the capital. But we do know from historical accounts that there was no particular food revolt or anything similar that dramatically endangered the life of a substantial number of people living during the period under discussion.

Another striking initiative from the vizierate of Koca Ragıp Pasha summarizes Ottoman finance of the time. We know the empire endeavoured in vain to keep under control the increasing power of the upper class at the expense of the state authority. Accordingly, mukataa owners were supposed to pay their taxes punctually and were not allowed to take illegal tax payments from any Ottoman subjects under any circumstance. To enforce this law, the imperial council appointed inspectors to control whether these regulations were obeyed as described in imperial orders. However, these measures did not succeed in keeping the notables from doing what they used to do, since the basic financial problems existing during Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774 were still ongoing. The empire was forced to accept the notables as holding significant power as the military activity unfolded. Hence, even if the empire did not experience any severe financial difficulty before the wars, the major economic sources of the

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64 For the adaletnames issued in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, see Yücel Özkaya, "XVIII. Yüzyılda Çıkarılan Adaletnamelere Göre Türkiye'nin İç Durumu," Belleten XXXVIII, no. 151 (July 1974): 468 and 476.
empire were no longer in the hands of the central government. Instead, the leading financial
tures of the empire, which had been established long before the Ottoman-Russian Wars, took
full advantage of the dwindling Ottoman economic resources, and favoured the empire only
when they thought it was also beneficial to their own interests. More importantly, however, the
d empire had no choice but to look for help from these interest groups outside the empire’s control,
who continued to profit and thrive.

The Greeks under Mustafa III

During the period under discussion, the Greeks not only developed an economic and
political relationship with Europe, but also, as shown previously, monopolized some important
state positions in the Ottoman Empire. International conflicts that had started in Europe
following the Seven Years’ War opened the way for Greek merchants, who took full advantage
of this disastrous European war, which had prevented French merchant ships from sailing
through the eastern Mediterranean. Greek merchants therefore gained a great opportunity to fill
up the economic and commercial vacuum in the Mediterranean Sea. To be more specific, just
before this war (1754-1756), the average number of French caravanners in the Mediterranean
was 30. This number fell to less than 10 in the years between 1756 and 1760, ultimately dropped
to zero in 1761-1762. These French ships were replaced with the Greek vessels sailing with the
British flag, which further discouraged some French captains. After the Treaty of Paris was
signed in 1763, French ships started to return to the Mediterranean, but they needed to wait until
1766-1767 in order to regain the prominence enjoyed previously, prior to the Seven Years’
War.66 Indeed, one of the contemporary French documents mentions that in the year 1766, the

66 Daniel Panzac, "Négociants Ottomans Et Capitaines Français; La Caravane Maritime En Crète Au Xviiiie Siècle,"
the conditions created to the advantage of the Greek merchants during these two devastating wars of Europe, see
growth of Greek merchant marine activity reached such a degree that it became the most destructive factor to French commercial interests of the time. And perhaps more importantly, these sources also imply that by means of the Grand Seignior, the Greek merchants were able to navigate in many cities in Europe, including London.67

Ottoman documents concerning the years 1750-1770 do not give us any clue that Ottoman sultans of the time impeded the emergence of Greek merchant power in the region before the Morea Rebellion in the 1770s. As a matter of the fact, the truth is just the opposite. Frangakis’ research on Armenian, Greek and Jewish communities of Smyrna in the second half of the eighteenth century supports the fact that the Ottoman Empire not only assisted Ottoman merchants carrying on commerce in the Ottoman territories, but also defended their interests outside the empire. Her example deserves mention here: that is, in return for the protection that the Ottoman Empire provided to British tradesmen as they travelled through Ottoman lands, Ottoman envoys of the time asked that the same privileges and concession be granted for the Ottoman reaya in their commercial activities with Britain and Dutch. In response, the latter permitted non-Muslim traders to settle down in the capital city of Holland. Frangakis concludes that in the 1750s, such a considerable number of Greeks installed themselves there that a famous Greek scholar of the time (Adamantios Korais) was dispatched to Amsterdam in the 1770s to represent his family enterprise in Smyrna.68

Other general studies made for eighteenth-century Ottoman finance also support the same idea that the Ottoman economy truly developed then, especially from 1750 on. Wallerstein’s

theory of world-economy argues that starting from seventeenth century, but in particular during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the capitalist world-economy of Europe so expanded that the Ottoman economy was also incorporated into the world-economy and the “peripheralization” of Europe in the mid-eighteenth century. Transformation of the Ottoman economy with the introduction of the iltizam system in lieu of the previous tımar system – which was widespread from c. 1300-1600 – as well as the expansion of capitulatory rights to foreign traders in the eighteenth century, gave a remarkable autonomy to the Ottoman production system now based on accumulation of products for market. Increasing European demand for industrial products including cotton, grains, tobacco, etc., is also interpreted as the very reason for the further capitulations that were finally granted by the Ottomans by the mid-eighteenth century. As a result, in the middle of the eighteenth century it is claimed that for the first time in its long history, Ottoman imports from European states started to go beyond its export in quantity and quality. Despite later Ottoman attempts to recentralize the empire, this process of Ottoman incorporation into the world-economy continued into the nineteenth century without losing pace. As many articles by Frangakis clearly illustrate, there is no doubt that one of the beneficiaries of these changes in the Ottoman economy was the non-Muslim Ottoman merchant class, at the top of which sits the Greeks.


70 See her collection of the articles, Elena Frangakis-Syrett, Trade and Money : The Ottoman Economy in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries, Analecta Isisiana, 93 (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2007). Stoianovich even argues that changes in the Ottoman economy after the sixteenth century were in favour of the European merchants. But, more importantly, it worked for the benefit of the Balkan Orthodox merchants who started to make a great fortune out of this alteration in the system. He posits that “European traders' ignorance of market conditions in the Balkans, moreover, gave Balkan merchants and peddlers the opportunity to obtain control of most of the overland carrying trade, part of the maritime carrying trade, and virtually the entire commerce of the Balkan interior.” Stoianovich, "The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant," 263.
In a similar vein, Reşat Kasaba also supports Wallerstein’s theory. In the second half of the eighteenth century, approximately 40% of the grain and over half the cotton and tobacco production of Macedonia and Thessaly was sent to Europe, which was mainly encouraged because of the price inflation in Europe. Another striking example is that between 1720 and 1800, cotton production in both Macedonia and Anatolia increased three times, again on account of the increasing demand from Europe. More importantly, in the eighteenth century both in the Balkans and Western Anatolia the classical prebendal system vanished to be replaced by the çiftlik system as a result of the capitalist world-economy. This new system brought two important changes. That is, unlike the timar, çiftlik holders enjoyed de facto rights of private property. Hence, their personal interests gained the kind of currency such that they were not only interested in taking full advantage of their property, but also in improving their position in the Ottoman Empire. More significantly, they used their lands for more commercial products of the time, such as cotton and maize. As a result, towards the end of the eighteenth century, their preference in agricultural crops began to be determined according to the demand of European markets. Again, Kasaba argues that all these commercial activities on the Thessalian, Macedonian, and the Western Anatolian coasts, as well as in Hungary, were driven by the hands of the Greek merchants. Another impetus to the development of the Greek monopoly in the Aegean, Adriatic, and Black Seas as well as in the Eastern Mediterranean was the Patriarchate of Istanbul, which worked as the political power of the Greek millet. As a result of all these factors favourable to the Greek merchants, they firmly established themselves in important cities

73 For the Ottoman preference of the Greek millet at that time, see Richard Clogg, "The Greek Millet in the Ottoman Empire," in Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society, ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1982), 185-190.
of the Europe, e.g., Vienna, Leipzig, Paris, Marseilles and London.\textsuperscript{74} Last but not least, just like Frangakis, Leon argues that they became so powerful in commerce that they went as far as France, Spain and even the Atlantic at the very beginning of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{75}

However, both Wallerstein’s and Kasaba’s arguments on the incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the world-economy is convincingly challenged by McGowan. He comes up with a rather different approach to the çiflik. He chooses Macedonia as his research field, where çiflik formation was particularly intensified. He starts with denying the affiliation between the large çiflikts and market demands by giving examples of plantation-like estates in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.\textsuperscript{76} Besides this, he regards the çiflik owners as landlords instead of entrepreneurs. However, the most common çiflik type was the small one, consisting of approximately 50-70 acres; there were rarely large çiflikts with 2,000-2,500 acres. He concludes, “the average Balkan çiflik was a rental operation, far closer in its character and its scale to the Grundherrschaft past from which it evolved, than to the Gutsherrschaft character which has been frequently imagined for it.”\textsuperscript{77} More importantly, however, he refuses the argument of huge growth in the Ottoman export trade and posits that the increase in the production of export-oriented crops only grew very slowly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Again, for the time period at issue, he does not accept the existence of larger estates in general, and therefore does not see the çiflikts as a source of lucrative prosperity.\textsuperscript{78} As we can easily understand from his study, similar to Wallerstein, Kasaba, Frangakis and Stoianovich,

\textsuperscript{74} Kasaba, 20-29.
\textsuperscript{75} Leon, 30.
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., 79. Stoianovich argues that the eighteenth century brought an expansion of French, German, English and Russian commerce in the Balkans. Most significantly, however, there was increased development of the Orthodox traders, mostly the Greeks. Stoianovich, "The Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant," 234.
\textsuperscript{78} Indeed, Kasaba also states that most of the çiflikts either in the Balkans or Western Anatolia were small estates and the existence of some big çiflikts cannot be really interpreted as a consequence of economic development that took place in the later eighteenth century. Kasaba, 24-25.
McGowan also supports the development of the Ottoman economy in the second half of the eighteenth century, in spite of the differences in his emphasis. He also accepts the Greeks as one of the beneficiaries of the international and domestic conjuncture of the time, both during the reign of Mustafa III and thereafter, in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.79

The Question of Philhellenism

What we have asserted above does not deny the fact that European attitudes towards the Greeks changed for the better following the third quarter of the eighteenth century, which, in the long run, definitely made Greek integration with Western Europe much easier than before. In other words, a wave of Philhellenism spread throughout the European states following the second half of the eighteenth century, and it was reflected in the Europe’s understanding of the Greek subjects of the Ottoman Empire. To give an example, when we compare two accounts of importance written about the Greeks under Turkish domination, we easily observe the tremendous change in the mentality of European travelers toward the Greeks between the first and second half of the eighteenth century. The first account, The Present State of Turkish Empire, written in the 1740s, includes a section about the Greeks and their lifestyle and religion. Even if its author did not hide his admiration for the ancient Greeks, he seriously criticized “modern” Greeks of his time as having “deviated from the footsteps of the ancestors” and put them in “diametrical opposition to honour, worth and industry.” Their nature had evolved for the worst, and the author simply could not find anything noble that might somehow have reminded him of their glorious past. In conclusion, they were harshly blamed for blindly following the Turks, having already accepted the status of slavery under Turkish domination. Similar opinions

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79 See for example, McGowan, Economic Life in Ottoman Europe: Taxation, Trade, and the Struggle for Land, 1600-1800, 23-27.
in his descriptions of Orthodox religion also demonstrate his bias, describing it being full of wretched regulations. ⁸⁰

In a similar vein, about 25 years later, just like the previous account, Sir James Porter also spared two chapters for the Greeks, one concerning his observations on the Greeks and the second concerning his observations on their religion. Surprisingly enough, however, this time a strong resemblance was found between the “modern” Greeks and their ancient forefathers. In spite of not denying some corruptions and ignorance existing in Greek society, he also described the Greeks as being quite adept at living successfully despite the oppression of the Turks. Their piety was admired and orthodox Christianity’s similarities to Catholicism were specifically emphasized. Last but not least, their ability to have good relations with Europe and the Ottoman governors for their own benefit was clearly displayed. Unlike the previous account, rather than blaming the Greeks, this account tended to accuse the Turks of almost everything that went bad for the Greeks. Porter tends to posit that if the Greeks had some corruptions in the “modern” world of his time, it was not because of their own faults, but on account of their wretched masters who were in cultural darkness. After all, the Greeks were introduced as sharing many things in common with their ancestors, whom any European traveler of the time could not help admiring. ⁸¹

There is no doubt that international events, such as the Seven Years’ War and the War of Austrian Succession, and the changing attitudes of the European states over time worked well for the benefit of the Greeks in the long run. However, as argued before, only after the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774 did the power of the Greek merchants rely predominantly upon foreign interference and aid. Even after that, their success did not come with the help of European

⁸¹ Porter, 314-351.
commercial states – which had had long interest in the Mediterranean Sea – but by means of the Russians who acquired the right to sail into the Mediterranean through the Black Sea via Kaynarca. Only after that, but still over the course of time, the Greeks no longer required any essential support from the Ottoman administration in order to do commerce either in the Mediterranean or the Black Seas. Not surprisingly, this gave great impetus to Greek commerce and created an alternative to the Ottoman Empire in the mind of the Greeks who had previously owed their commercial privileges to their Turkish overlords exclusively. Studies prove the fact that from the mid-1770s onward, not only did numbers of Greek merchant ships, but also the quantity of commercial intercourse increase dramatically during and after the last quarter of the eighteenth century.\footnote{It has been argued that in the year 1771 there were about 50 large Greek ships making voyages in the Aegean Sea, and by the time of the French Revolution, this number reached 400. On the other hand, trading activities started to spread as far as Italy and a document of 1783 clearly proves that commercial intercourse between the Archipelago and Italy was quite substantial and provided valuable benefits for its participants (1,524,265 livres 5 sols in total). See Leon, 31-32.} On balance, to talk fully about the impact of Philhellenism upon the Greeks we would have to wait another quarter-century, or so, after the Treaty of Kütük Kaynarca, which is obviously beyond the scope of the present study.\footnote{Eldem puts great emphasis on what the berati status provided the non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire. Unlike the bourgeoisies of France who were allowed to be members of the military class, at that time the non-Muslim millet could not see any path to advance their position and power under the existing ideological and political structure. At this juncture, the status of berati came into prominence as an alternative solution to the problems of the non-Muslims. Accordingly, beratis started to look for asylum in the European states. However, it was only in the nineteenth century and with nationalism and the patronage of the Western powers that they practically separated from the empire. Before that, in the face of Ottoman monopoly of power and violence none dared to stand against the Ottoman state. Eldem, "Osmanlı Devleti ve Fransa: 17. ve 18. Yüzyıllarda Devlet-Ekonomi İlişkilerine Karşılaştırmalı Bir Bakış," 28-29.}

As for possible changes in the mentality of the Greek subjects as a reflection of Philhellenism, we do not really have many sources explicitly written by or about Greeks and their alteration in attitude toward the Ottoman state over the course of the time. Nevertheless, an article based on the diaries of Phanariotes written between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries gives us at least some clues about changing feeling and opinion of the Phanariotes
regarding the Ottomans. Accordingly, until the third quarter of the eighteenth century, they describe the Ottomans using vocabulary with positive connotations such as wisdom, honesty, literacy, etc. Afterwards, however, they contain terms including barbarism, villainy, bigotry and illiteracy, in identifying Ottomans. Words with positive connotations were used more and more for the Europeans to whom the Phanariotes, such as Kodrika, now felt themselves deeply indebted and attached.\footnote{Alexandra Sfini, “Fenerlilerin Günlüklerinde Değerler Sistemi ve Milletler (17. Yüzyıl Sonundan 19. Yüzyıl Başına),” in \textit{Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Problemler, Araştırmalar, Tartışmalar: 24 - 26 Mayıs 1993 Ankara}, ed. Hamdi Can Tuncer (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1998).} Once again, however, this change in their attitude took place long after the Morea Rebellion came to an end.\footnote{There are some scholars interpreting Phanariotes in Moldavia and Wallachia as Christian imperial officers who remained in office after the collapse of the Byzantium Empire. See for example, Nicolae Iorga, \textit{Byzantium after Byzantium} (Iasi, Romania, Portland: The Center for Romanian Studies, 2000).} Before the insurrection of 1770, therefore, it is more reasonable to assume the submission of the Phanariotes to Ottoman sovereignty, as is obvious from the Ottoman investiture ceremony described in the writing of Philliou.\footnote{Philiou, “Worlds, Old and New: Phanariot Networks and the Remaking of Ottoman Governance in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century”, 19-89.} Last but not least, it is of high importance to keep in mind that the Phanariotes were so interconnected with Muslim state officers in order to climb the social ladder within Ottoman society that their personal interests fastened them together very tightly for the same cause of benefitting from the existing structure. This is especially true for the time interval under discussion here.

Cyprus as a Rehearsal for the Morea Rebellion?

This economic growth during the reign of Mustafa III does not mean that the empire did not experience any economic shortcoming or disasters that might be associated with financial deficiency of the empire before the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774. For example, on account of exorbitant tax increases in Cyprus between the years 1763 and 1765, the \textit{reaya} became insolvent to the extent that none could pay the tax that had been illegally asked of them.
Especially during the time of Çil Osman Agha, who had been appointed as governor of the island in 1764-1765, a substantial tax was imposed on both the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the empire living on Cyprus. As a result, the reaya could not find a way other than sending an official complaint to the imperial council against this illegal increase in their tax burden. In response, the empire ordered the case to be examined through judicial process. Yet, Osman Agha found a way to escape from this trial and invited leading figures of the island to his residence including a judge, notables and those reaya who were clever, as well as bishops, on the pretext that he was going to set up a tribunal there to assess the case. In fact, it was nothing but an ambush during which he wounded and killed some of the invited guests. Nevertheless, soon his ambush backfired and the reaya of the island gathered in front of Osman Agha’s residence. Then they killed him and plundered all the belongings in his residence (sarayını Uryâni Dede Tekyesi’ne döndürdüler).

As a result of these incidents the Ottoman imperial council had no choice but to intervene immediately in the dispute by appointing Yemlîhâ Hasan Efendi to put things in order in Cyprus once again. The measures taken by Hasan Efendi did not bring about any permanent relief though. When he returned to Istanbul it was understood that the rebels were ready to take more risk at the expense of the state authority. That is to say, they not only occupied Değirmenlik, which was the center of provisions in Cyprus at the time, but also attacked the fortress of Magosa under the leadership of a bandit named Tabanlı Halil. Soon, the island became chaotic and things went totally out of control. These events aroused indignation in the capital and Grand Vizier Bâhir Mustafa Pasha was instantly deposed from his position because of his apparent role in the

87 “Ertesi gün hâkim ve a’yân ve fukara ve re’ayâdan söz anlarları sarayında odalara duhûl eylediklerinde...” Fındıklılı Süleyman, Şem’dânî-Zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mûr’î-tevârih 2/A, 105.
emergence of the rebellion and his inefficiency in suppressing it quickly. It was only with great
difficulty that the empire was able to suppress the rebellion and bring order to Cyprus once more
during the vizierate of new Grand Vizier, Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha. In the meantime, the
d empire not only had to relieve people from previous tax burdens, but also spent a substantial
amount of money to put down the rebellion.89

The insurrection on Cyprus approximately five years before the Morea Rebellion is of
special importance as far as our study is concerned. First of all, there were great similarities
between Cyprus and the Morea in terms of both the characteristics of people living in these two
islands, and state administration applied there. To give a few examples, both had a population of
Greek majority and Turkish minority, and therefore shared a common socio-political
background. Their economies were basically based on commercial activities in the
Mediterranean Sea, and Greek merchants and religious figures of the time were of great
importance in decision-making of state affairs there. The Ottoman Empire for its part took
similar measures to quell these rebellions, such as asking for help from the wealthy ayân,
sending new governors to put things order, and playing the card of granting tax exemption or
relieving the reaya from exorbitant burdens of previous applications in order to facilitate their
attachment to the central government again.

The Ottoman subjects’ reaction to the rebellion in Cyprus was not that different from that
of the Morea five years later. In other words, some of them took part in the rebellion and others
preferred to cooperate with the Ottoman Empire in the suppression of the insurrection.
Nevertheless, there was neither a consensus nor a sense of common ideological or religious
grounds for the rebels to be part of this insurrection in Cyprus. Among other things, personal

89 See Findiklı Süleyman, Şem'danı-Zâde Findiklı Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mür'î't-Tevârih 2/B; Nagata, Muhsin-
interest seems to be the most significant explanation behind their actions, as we will see in the case of the Morea Rebellion, as well. In addition, both the rebels of Cyprus and the Morea received financial and military support via the Mediterranean Sea: in the case of the Cyprus Rebellion the origin of this support is not known to us. The only conspicuous difference between these two rebellions is the fact that so far we do not know whether there was any Russian interference either in the emergence of the Cyprus Rebellion or in its sustenance. We strongly believe that further research on this particular rebellion of 1763-1765 would provide invaluable data in the interpretation of the Morea Rebellion, too. So far, however, the lack of an elaborate study on the Cyprus Rebellion does not allow us to bring out more than what we have discussed above in a very general manner.

Nagata’s limited study on the Cyprus Rebellion gives us certain clues to understanding the general mentality of the time on the eve of the Morea Rebellion. First and foremost, the most distinguished figures of Cyprus, including the archbishop and bishops of the island, seem to have taken the side of the Ottoman Empire and either implemented orders of the central government to suppress the rebellion, or out of fear, they took a flight to Istanbul, probably to save their lives and positions on the island by showing loyalty to the Ottomans. This reminds us of the fact that important religious figures of the island preferred a future under the Ottoman Empire (even if we do not really know whether this was the case for all clergy in Cyprus). What is particularly important here, however, is the fact that when it was understood that the measures taken by the imperial council were not sufficient to quell the rebellion, some prelates applied to the British ambassador situated on the island, and invited him to mediate between the empire and the rebels.

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90 Nagata, Muhsin-Zâde Mehmed Paşa ve Âyânîk Müessesesi, 32.
91 For further information on the question of the Cyprus, see also Antonis Hadjikyriacou, “Society and Economy on an Ottoman Island: Cyprus in the Eighteenth Century” (PhD, University of London, 2011).
92 Nagata, Muhsin-Zâde Mehmed Paşa ve Âyânîk Müessesesi, 33.
for the sake of having immediate peace in Cyprus.\textsuperscript{93} We do not really know what role the British ambassador played in this conflict after this demand was made, but it is quite thought-provoking that some non-Muslim subjects of the empire whose power had relied upon state authority other than anything else considered an ambassador of a European state as an appropriate negotiator between the Ottoman Empire and its rebellious subjects.

It is of course problematic to make any further assumptions out of such limited information but at least we can observe sprinklings of changes in the minds of the non-Muslim subjects of the empire in the second half of the eighteenth century. In other words, as we mentioned in the previous chapter in greater detail, unlike the Muslim notables of the eighteenth century,\textsuperscript{94} the emerging power of the non-Muslim subjects of the empire was highly dependent on either Ottoman westernization – which had opened the way for high-ranking state appointments for the non-Muslims – or the capitulations given to the European states, which had laid the groundwork for prosperous non-Muslim figures in the empire. In our example of the Cyprus Rebellion, this close connection between the non-Muslims and Europe showed itself in the former’s attempt to ask for help from a European power to bring peace to the island. Asking for such aid from an ambassador in the empire reminds us of the importance of the protégé status of this newly emerged elite that we have mentioned previously as well. Again, more research needs to be conducted on the Cyprus Rebellion in order to come to any reasonable conclusion, but increasing influence of Western powers upon the non-Muslim \textit{reaya} (even for the people

\textsuperscript{93} Ibid., 33-34.

\textsuperscript{94} To give an example, Anastasopoulos’s study on the Ottoman \textit{ayan} of Karaferye who rebelled between the years 1758 and 1759 clearly proves the fact that \textit{ayan} leaders never wanted to excite the attention of the Ottoman government much less take up arms against it. In lieu, they desired to perform unlawful acts without being outlawed by the Ottoman state. Antonis Anastasopoulos, "Lighting the Flame of Disorder: Ayan Infighting and State Intervention in Ottoman Karaferye, 1758-59," in \textit{Mutiny and Rebellion in the Ottoman Empire}, ed. Jane Hathaway (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2002).
whose legitimacy relied upon the support of the central state) ought to be kept in mind, especially from the last quarter of the eighteenth century onwards.

In spite of all these indications, that a European state was introduced as either an alternative to the Ottoman Empire or a negotiator between the empire and its rebellious subjects should not be granted exaggerated importance. After all, this connection between the non-Muslims and the European states did not really bring any satisfying result, and so far we do not have any proof that their relationship went beyond reciprocal goodwill before the 1770s. In spite of the empire’s obvious impotence in preserving order and keeping a tight rein on its subjects, most members of minority communities saw the empire as necessary for their own interests. Our document study on the non-Muslim leading figures of the Ottoman Empire will support this very argument in the following chapters. Suffice it to say before the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the non-Muslims subjects of the empire were neither ideologically nor mentally ready to expect anything more than what the eighteenth century had offered to them previously, under the control of the Ottoman Empire. Namely, it was only after the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, and especially in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, that we can really talk about unconditional European help for non-Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire, and its resulting impact upon the Ottoman state. Before that, the European states were not eager to support the non-Muslims as such an attitude was not beneficial to their commercial interests.

**Conclusion**

Essentially, all evidence points to Sultan Mustafa III’s reign as a time of great uncertainty for the dynasty, but no particular watershed for a shifting balance of power between Muslims and non-Muslims. Mustafa III simply did not have the power to stop the emergence of elite powers among Ottoman subjects who did not adhere to sultanic authority. On the contrary, these citizens
became more and more involved in state affairs and found opportunities to spread their influence within the empire. This facilitated the emergence of multiple sovereignties of the empire, where the Sultan had lost his domination and control, to the newly emerged notables, creating significant instability in the empire on the eve of the Morea Rebellion.

During the Ottoman transition period from a traditional to modern society, the reign of Mustafa III can be at best described as modest attempts to ensure the survival of the state in the presence of danger coming both from within and outside. As far as the external and internal threats of time are concerned, Karpat’s argument made for the reigns of Mustafa III and Abdülhamid I (1774-1789) are most reasonable. Economic change and advancement in Europe – which had already proved its military dominance over the Ottomans – became the external challenges. Resistance to autonomy in the provinces and a clashing desire to have internal order and protection constituted internal challenges to the state. Karpat argues that internal challenges were nothing but the by-product of the external one. Accordingly, during the eighteenth century a new society was created, with new attitudes about and expectations from the state. The traditional understanding of the state where the sultan and the central bureaucracy were conceptualized as the all-powerful state was no longer an acceptable expectation during this era.\footnote{Kemal Karpat, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908," in \textit{Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History} (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2002), 29-30.}

Under these circumstances, the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the empire, who had already acquired substantial power bases in society at the expense of the traditional order, started to look after their own interests, with aspirations and ambitions beyond that which the Ottoman state might allow. At this juncture, it is crucial to understand the multifaceted and entangled nature of Ottoman society at the time, which neither denied the distinctions among Ottoman
subjects, nor allowed the existence of any sort of caste system within Ottoman society. Even if the differences among Ottoman subjects became more and more conspicuous by the second half of the eighteenth century, by the 1770s it is simply not possible to talk about the existence of ideologically and functionally homogenized groups whose interests were more significant than the personal interests of their members.

We have focused on how the empire treated its non-Muslim subjects on the eve of the Morea Rebellion, and if the impact of this treatment upon the non-Muslims affected their decision whether or not to get involved in the Morea Rebellion. Although during the reign of Mustafa III some regulations which seem to disadvantage the non-Muslim figures in the empire, such restrictions did not really impede them from acquiring more economic, political and social gains from the Ottoman Empire. Our focus on the Greek subjects in particular also indicated that the reign of Mustafa III provided them with great opportunities to accumulate more money and also opened the way for Greek incorporation and integration into Europe in the long run. Nonetheless, before the insurrection of 1770, it was the Ottoman Empire itself that drove the spread of its power all over the empire. During the time period under discussion, more and more people in the empire began to look after self-interests rather than anything else, and most of them sought to reach those individual aims while maintaining loyalty to the empire so as to benefit from privileges such loyalty begat.96

96 Khoury posits that transformations of provincial officers to the emergence of local elites did not immediately result in the creation of certain groups that challenged the Ottoman hegemony. The ayan in the eighteenth century were more interested in state positions and negotiating for better position in lieu of standing up against the state authority. In this connection, in opposition to later semi-autonomous warlords “their challenges were minor, undertaken in the spirit of preserving an order, or of returning it to the practice of an idealised past.” She puts forward that in some (but not all) Ottoman Arab lands, Ottoman policy not only enabled more local figures to have access to state properties as well as positions, but also more and more people became “Ottomanised” and continued to be part of the new system in spite of all insurrections and political turmoil. Khoury, "The Ottoman Centre Versus Provincial Power-Holders: An Analysis of the Historiography," 155-156. In the example of Mosul, she even argues that Ottoman state power spread over this province more than at any time before. Accordingly, integration of this province into the Ottoman system was complete in the late eighteenth century when decentralization of the Ottoman
The Ottoman unwillingness to partake in any further military action either in the West or in the East throughout the reign of Mustafa III has also been demonstrated. The Sultan used traditional methods such as imposing sumptuary laws, regulating churches or negotiating merchants' rights with foreign powers. At this juncture, there is no particular reason to believe that Mustafa III has a special place in the enforcement of the laws that might have had devastating effects on either the economic interest or the prestige of the non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire. Instead, during his long reign, the non-Muslims found a good chance to increase their prosperity and strengthen their status in the empire. In a similar vein, the Sultan was more cautious not to take any action that might have brought him face to face with his Muslim subjects. In return for these cooperative policies of the Sultan, unlike some of his predecessors, he was able to keep his position intact as the head of the Ottoman Empire.

In the following chapters of this dissertation, new documents reinforce explanations of the Morea Rebellion as residing in individual stories rather than in a united population with a single set of aims. None of these individuals were geographically, ethnically or ideologically united in the sense that most scholars have been inclined to see until now. We will first start with contemporary Ottoman and European accounts of the Morea Rebellion, which have been the most commonly used sources for the explanation of the cause of the rebellion to date.

Empire is often claimed to be the case. Khoury, *State and Provincial Society in the Ottoman Empire: Mosul, 1540-1834*, 213-214.
Chapter 3: History of Rebellion from Early Historians’ Point of View: A Hybrid of Myths and Facts

Ottoman Rebellions and Banditry in General from 1500 to 1800

Before discussing early explanations for the Morea Rebellion, one should also be aware of other studies written about rebellions that took place between 1500 and 1800 in the Ottoman Empire. However, there is no comprehensive explanation of Ottoman rebellions (banditry as a part of them) for that time period that encompasses the entire history and genealogy of rebellions in the Ottoman Empire. Many studies of individual rebellions do exist, such as for the Celali rebellions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the 1703 Rebellion, the sekban and sarıca rebellions, ayan rebellions, Patrona Rebellion in 1730, etc. By and large, there has been no attempt at all to construct an explanatory template for “rebellion” in the Ottoman context. At the outset, we should also admit the fact that any attempt to offer a generalized theory of Ottoman rebellions in general and the place of banditry within the big picture would fall short of showing the complexity and intricacy of the topic under discussion. It is important to recognize that every rebellion had its own dynamic, which therefore does not allow us to make any oversimplifications or generalizations.

One of the earliest and most elaborate studies of Ottoman rebellions comes from Mustafa Akdağ, whose work covers an important period of the Celali rebellions between the years 1550 and 1603. First and foremost, when we collate most of his arguments his approach to the subject can be best classified as an archetype of the traditional way of looking at Ottoman rebellions. He puts great emphasis on the social and economic background of the uprising, where a drop in crop production, shortage of precious metals, trade deficit, abuses of the state or government officials are all presented as the very factors which brought about both a general economic breakdown
and the Ottoman rebellions for the time period in his discussion. For example, his reason for why the Ottomans experienced a dearth of precious metals is totally identical with that of the Ottoman chroniclers writing about the period of time between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. That is, Akdağ states that beginning with the reign of Mehmed II (1451-1481), the scarcity of precious metals became a chronic problem within the empire. Accordingly, the empire kept importing such materials from the East and West, which enormously decreased the number of valuable metals within the empire as a whole in the fifteenth and especially sixteenth centuries. In response, the state not only banned the export of gold, silver and even copper to the East but also took many other measures such as prohibiting the sale of war materials to the West. Nothing seems to have worked well enough to maintain balance in the Ottoman economy though.¹

Indeed, the crisis of the sixteenth century was not limited to the Ottoman state; there was widespread world economic turmoil at the time. The lack of fertility on Mediterranean lands is presented as the very factor which caused population pressure in the Mediterranean. However, unlike Europe which modernized itself during the second half of the sixteenth century, Akdağ states, the Ottoman Empire was neither able to follow the same path nor to lead its population to new economic fields where people might have been employed. Hence, this disorder and unrest gave rise to levendization (levend being landless vagrant peasant) of the Ottoman peasants since the empire was simply not able to alleviate this economic pressure by other means.²

The interpretation of the Ottoman “decline” has been heavily influenced by Ottoman chroniclers of the mid-sixteenth to mid-seventeenth centuries who wrote advice literature for the

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¹ Mustafa Akdağ, *Celâlî İsyanları: (1550-1603)* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1963), 13-22. His understanding of the problems has remarkably similarities with the *History of Morea Rebellion* where a substantial number of pages is devoted to suggest what the Ottomans ought to do now in order to surmount now obstinate problems of dearth of precious metals in the Ottoman Empire. See *Mora İhtilali Tarihçesi veya Penah Efendi Mecmuasi*.

² Ibid., 44-48 and 68-72.
Sultan (*nasihatnames*). This theory of decline has a great impact on Akdağ as well. For example, he posits that the Ottoman Empire reached its apogee between the death of Mehmed II (1481) and enthronement of Selim I (1512). Afterwards, things went from bad to worse for the empire.  

Akdağ’s arguments on the *Celali* rebellions also relied upon this “decline paradigm” which falls short of providing us with a satisfactory explanation of the rebellion in general. After all, the decline paradigm – which has been compellingly denied by a substantial numbers of scholars – is far from explaining the Ottoman Empire, which was actually quite competent at adapting itself to changing circumstances.  

Akdağ proposes various other reasons that we also read in contemporary chroniclers of the empire, such as unjust taxes, mistreatment and abuses of Ottoman officers, usury, mismanagement of state affairs, wars, and so on, that are given particular importance as explaining the *Celali* rebellions. On balance, to a large extent his approach to the rebellions is closer to that of the Ottoman chroniclers in the early modern era, who saw rebellions as both forerunner to and verification for the breakdown of Ottoman domination.  

The end of rural prosperity was followed with large-scale rebellions in Anatolia and the relative peace so essential for the well-being of an agricultural empire rapidly deteriorated. However, Akdağ divides rebellions of the time into several parts and explains them separately. First of all, he is not concerned with those rebellions such as Şeyh Celal and Baba Zinnun, which were based on religious ideology of the Shia sect of the Muslim population. These people neither

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3 Ibid., 69.  
4 Traditional scholars often use Ottoman advice literature in addition to archival documents with no awareness of their essentially literary character. The way that we should approach these sources are well discussed by several scholars of importance. See for example, Rifaaat Ali Abou-El-Haj, "The Ottoman Nasihatname as a Discourse over “Morality”," *Mélanges Robert Mantran (Revue d'Histoire Maghrebine)* (December 1987); Pál Fodor, "State and Society, Crisis and Reform, in 15th–17th Century Ottoman Mirror for Princes," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 40, (1986); Douglas Howard, "Ottoman Historiography and the Literature of ‘Decline’ of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Journal of Asian History* XXII, (1988).  
5 Brummett: 93.
accepted the legitimacy of the Ottoman Empire nor had any personal connection with Ottoman high dignitaries. Instead, they aimed for the total destruction of the Ottoman state and its high officials. As for the Celali rebels, however, its participants had no intention of demolishing the empire but instead looked after their own self-interests in a time of difficult social and economic conditions. In this respect, unlike former religious uprisings, their movements cannot be associated with any ideological or political destruction of the Ottoman Empire. That is why Celalis saw no harm in switching sides between rebels and loyal subjects of the Ottoman state.\(^6\)

Akdağ concludes that the Celali rebels neither created a coterie to fight against the state or Ottoman households, nor became a nationalist movement militating against the devşirme institution. That is why he finds it more appropriate to call Celali rebellions (Celali isyanları) the “struggles” of Celali (Celali mücadeleleri).\(^7\) In brief, he is against the argument that Celali rebels intended to break with the Ottoman state and to establish their own government. Their main goal was to acquire state positions (mansıb) and be part of the state apparatus.\(^8\)

On the one hand, William Griswold accepts many of Akdağ’s explanations for the question as to why the Ottoman system might have broken down in the sixteenth century, namely, alterations in the tümar system, maladministration, scarcity of successful leaders, negative balance of trade as a result of bad effects of the European price revolution, etc. On the other hand, however, he also makes some valuable contributions to the discussion of the Great Anatolian Rebellions. For example, he denies the intrigues of Persia as a major factor in the emergence of the Celali rebellions.\(^9\) More importantly, however, while conceding that the Celali rebels intended to be part of the Ottoman system in lieu of destroying it or founding

\(^{6}\) Akdağ, Celâlî İsyanları: (1550-1603), 1-2.

\(^{7}\) Mustafa Akdağ, Büyük Celâlî Karışıklıkların Başılaması (Erzurum: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1963), 1.

\(^{8}\) Akdağ, Celâlî İsyanları: (1550-1603), 244-250.

\(^{9}\) Griswold, xix-xx.
a new state, Griswold also argues that there were also separatist rebels such as Canbuladoğlu Ali Pasha, who aimed to establish an independent state in northern Syria at the very same time. In other words, the Celali insurgents thought their interests matched up with the Ottoman Empire instead of Iran or the European states. They were able to hold their ground against Ottoman attacks since they did not use traditional weapons, but firearms instead. Nonetheless, their ultimate goal was to find a means to reenter the Ottoman state apparatus. That is why Griswold does not think of Canbuladoğlu within the context of the Celali rebels of Anatolia. That is, Canbuladoğlu’s attempt to establish a new state is to be associated with personal reasons, such as retaliation for the execution of his uncle, or his personal ambition of founding another state of his own in Aleppo. His ambitious desire was later followed by other examples in the seventeenth century as well. In either case, the dynamics that brought about rebellions in Anatolia are completely distinct from those of Aleppo and should be investigated accordingly.\(^\text{10}\)

In the writing of Griswold there are several things which resonate with other historians of the Ottoman rebellions that we will investigate shortly. For example, he shows that the Ottoman Empire was quite adept at employing the tool of negotiation with the rebels, such as offering them official status (often for a very short period of time) in order to either reintegrate some into the Ottoman system under more favourable terms, such as Zülfikar Pasha and Karakaş Ahmed,\(^\text{11}\) or eliminate them once and for all, as was the case in Canbuladoğlu Ali and Kalenderoğlu Mehmed. Furthermore, the Celali rebels were not alone but had important advocates and supporters among high dignitaries living in Istanbul, and therefore they were even able to depose

\(^{10}\) Ibid., xxi-xxii.

\(^{11}\) Ibid., 55-56.
certain state officers or place them in jeopardy by making false claims about them.¹² Last but not least, we see the insurgents like Canbuladoğlu and Ma’noğlu Fahreddin as seeking support from external powers, such as the Shah of Persia in the East and the Duke of Tuscany in the West, to establish their own state in Aleppo.¹³

Unlike Akdağ’s study, Ahmet Yaşar Ocak’s deals with a totally different kind of rebellions: sufi insurrections not only entirely denied the legitimacy of the Ottoman dynasty, but also threatened the very foundation of the state’s existence. At the outset, he makes a clear distinction between isyan (rebellion) and kıyam (revolt). Accordingly, Ocak puts forward that these two terms cannot be seen as one and the same, as it is now, since they had different connotations at the time. That is, Ocak reveals the fact that isyan is referred to those armed movements which emerged as a result of the oppressions of central state. But kıyam is thought to refer to those armed uprisings which did not stem from state pressure or injustice, but which rather carry a direct political aim with an ideological background and messianic inspiration.¹⁴

Unlike the Celali rebellions, kıyam puts the very legitimacy of the Ottoman household in question and in fact totally denies both the religious and earthly power of Ottoman sultans.¹⁵

Ottoman response to these sufi movements became so rigorous that the empire not only executed their followers, but also compelled Ottoman intellectuals to create counter arguments against the ideologies supported by members of the kıyams. More importantly, the empire did not interpret them as a reflection of social and political change, and instead responded to them as a rebellion against state authority, ideology and religion.¹⁶ Ottoman political authority was more

¹² Ibid., 107-108.
¹³ Ibid., 128-132 and 155.
¹⁵ Ibid.: 54.
¹⁶ Ahmet Yaşar Ocak, Osmanlı Toplumunda Zındıklar ve Mülhidler: (15-17. Yüzyıllar) (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2003), vii-x.
concerned about the threat to its power instead of a conflicting religious ideology. However, in condemning such movements the empire made it a religious issue. On balance, it is neither reasonable nor plausible to see these kıyam rebellions as coming from theological separation between the state and rebels, but instead as a reaction that emerged against the official state ideology by using the norms of this very ideology rather than anything else for the political and social purpose.\textsuperscript{17}

Jack Goldstone argues against Eurocentric notions of seventeenth-century crisis, the presence of war and the growth of capitalism as the reasons for dynamic structural changes in Europe. Instead, he accepts a global crisis of agrarian absolutist states that had an effect upon not only empires in the East but also in the absolutist West. He comes to the conclusion that the whole early modern period was full of consecutive crises.\textsuperscript{18} However, among these successive crises there were two marked “waves” of state breakdowns on a worldwide scale. The first one happened in the period 1550-1650 which was followed by a century of stability; the second wave of crises took place in the period after 1750.\textsuperscript{19} More importantly, Goldstone finds remarkable similarities the way state breakdowns took place in the Eastern and Western states. He argues that previous, widely-accepted explanations of early modern history fall short of elucidating the state breakdown. For instance, he does not accept the “military revolution” of the sixteenth century as an explanation for increasing costs of the war which later arguably brought about state fiscal crises. After all, he argues, there was no drastic technological change in military equipment between the years 1550-1850. Instead, changes in population not only increased the number of soldiers taken under arms and consequently caused a huge increase in costs and salaries are

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 328-331.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 17.
offered as the very reason why the East as well as the West experienced such crises during the period under discussion. In brief, Goldstone puts forward that state breakdowns were caused by the incapacity of agrarian economies and of their attendant social and political institutions to cope with the pressures of this sustained population increase. More significantly, as far as our discussion of rebellion is concerned, he posits that all political and social turmoil that emerged from this uncontrollable population increase led to persistent price inflation, rural misery, urban migration, as well as fiscal crisis.

This incapacity of the Ottoman agrarian economy to cope with the population pressure resulted in extensive civil wars in the empire. Unlike Akdağ, however, Goldstone describes the Ottoman Empire as economically and administratively as sophisticated as European states (and even more superior than the West until the very end of seventeenth century). He posits the existence of the same wave pattern of simultaneous population increase in Europe and China. Moreover, in opposition to most of the scholars mentioned so far, he finds no correlation to importations of excessive amounts of silver from America, by positing that prices either remained the same or were reduced in many states in the late seventeenth century. Instead, it is not excessive silver but the scarcity of grains that resulted from the population pressure that increased the prices dramatically. In the meantime, we observe a decrease in taxation and an

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20 Ibid., 20-21.
21 As a matter of fact, the idea of population pressure for Mediterranean countries is first stated by Fernand Braudel. However, having done research for the years 1450-1575 of villages in Anatolia, M.A. Cook argues in particular that “population growth was more rapid than the extension of cultivation” and consequently there was a considerable population pressure on the Anatolian plateau because the population grew faster than the extension of arable land. Although he accepts population pressure as one of the most important factors for the explanations of the breakdown in social order, he does not see population pressure as “the only possible precipitant”. M. A. Cook, *Population Pressure in Rural Anatolia, 1450-1600* (London; New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 10 and 43.
23 Ibid., 355-357.
24 Ibid., 361-362.
increase in state expenditures due to the increased number of salaried imperial troops. All these conditions paved the way for the emergence of popular uprisings, with the help of increasing landless and impoverished peasants.

All in all, Goldstone’s attempt to explain the socio-economic and political turmoil that took place in the Ottoman Empire for a period of three centuries simply does not stand the test of Ottoman facts. Suffice it to say that his two marked “waves” of state breakdowns, i.e., 1550-1650 and 1750-1850, with a century of stability in between, is far from being a satisfactory explanation for one of the most chaotic periods of the Ottoman Empire (1650-1750). In other words, what Goldstone refers to as a peaceful interval actually featured a plethora of uprisings and breakdowns as far as the Ottoman Empire is concerned. It is even more difficult to find any correlation between the population increase and the outbreak of the rebellions. Goldstone’s overemphasis upon population growth neither works for the Ottomans nor other European states, where we also see many incidents that do not fit the arguments made in Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World. To give but one example, Niels Steensgaard posits that the seventeenth-century crisis was not a worldwide reversion to backwardness, since it is not possible to identify a certain period of time hit by a general economic depression. Conversely, we can even observe substantial economic advances and an expansion in various sectors of European states at different times and to a different extent. He states that “the seventeenth century crisis was a distribution crisis, not a production crisis.”

In opposition to Goldstone, studying Ottoman state-society relations in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Karen Barkey denies that state formation proceeded in the same way in all societies. Generally speaking, European states first followed a more feudal pattern where

25 Ibid., 365-367.
noblemen dominated the state apparatus, then moved to a more direct centralized pattern where government officials controlled the state administration. However, the Ottoman state was first controlled with state appointed officials and then a mixed center-periphery control gained currency. Eventually, we see the indirect control of the state apparatus by means of provincial elites.27 Her main argument sounds similar to what Griswold presented for the Celali rebels of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. That is to say, in opposition to the European states, the Ottoman Empire neither encountered anti-feudal or anti-state resistance, nor experienced peasant or elite defiance on account of patrimonial characteristics of the Ottoman state. In this connection, she finds the Ottoman Empire more aligned with the Russian and Chinese empires rather than the European powers.28 More importantly, however, she repeatedly argues that banditry in the Ottoman Empire was making a strong comeback into the Ottoman system again. In this connection, the empire used banditry in order to both centralize its power and maintain its predominance over scattered regions of the empire.29 Thus, there is no reason to posit that the empire experienced any sort of state breakdown – in direct opposition to the arguments made by Goldstone.30

Ottoman strategies of incorporating peasants and rotating elites not only kept those citizens dependent on the state, but also prevented the devastating impacts of the bandits who were more concerned with gaining state resources rather than challenging state authority. In other words, through deals, bargains, and patronage, the Ottoman Empire was able to “present itself as the sole center for rewards and privileges” which ergo developed an imperial state

28 Ibid., 8-9.
29 Ibid., 18-19.
30 Ibid., 238-239.
Therefore, Barkey’s arguments cannot be taken within the “decline paradigm” in which the Ottoman state lost control of its provinces bit by bit, and decentralized throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. On the contrary, Barkey puts forward that the Ottoman Empire not only used bandits as a part of an ongoing process of state consolidation, but also actively incorporated them into its strategies of state centralization. After all, unlike the European states, the Ottoman Empire neither encountered the united protest of a certain class, nor was challenged with an ideology that denied the legitimacy of the Ottoman household. Last but not least, Barkey’s critique of Eric Hobsbawn is a pretty valid one. Hobsbawn describes bandits as being “considered by their people as heroes, as champions, avengers, fighters for justice, perhaps even leaders of liberation, and in any case as men to be admired, helped and supported.” Contrary to this romantic view, she rightly states that the bandits were evildoers in their communities, who did not refrain from attacking society in a variety of ways.

On the one hand, Barkey admits that the bandits could threaten the state apparatus, but they had no intention of completely abolishing it. They simply wanted to benefit from the Ottoman system as much as possible. On the other hand, since the empire was not really endangered by insurgents, the Ottoman rulers chose to respond to the bandits with negotiation and incorporation, which rather strengthened Ottoman centralization in the seventeenth century. Consequently, she concludes that unlike the eighteenth century, the Ottoman Empire in the seventeenth century was powerful and efficient because it was not only able to manipulate disruptive action stemming from the brigands, but also shrewd enough to use then for its own

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31 Ibid., 13.
32 See for example, Ibid., 186.
34 Barkey, Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization, 20-21.
good.\textsuperscript{35} In brief, the Ottoman Empire confronted changing circumstances with bargaining, cooptation and annihilation, which should be seen as flexibility and strength of the empire rather than weakness. Therefore, there was neither decline nor breakdown of the Ottoman state in the first half of the seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{36}

Gabriel Piterberg criticizes Barkey’s binary opposition between state and bandits by putting Abaza Mehmed Pasha’s example in the center of his discussion. Abaza not only survived the total suppression of \textit{Celali} rebellions by Kuyucu Murad Pasha, but also created a career of his own through the pasha household and later became a provincial \textit{Osmanlı} rather than a bandit. Here, Piterberg accuses Barkey of excluding Abaza’s story in which he affirmed his place within the state as having obtained “an \textit{Osmanlı} socio-cultural status.” Last of all, he disapproves of Barkey’s “positivist approach” to her Ottoman historical sources. That is, having used merely the informational side of these historical texts and ignoring their ideological parts, Barkey is far from understanding the “historical corpus” of these sources which are firmly connected with one another. Without taking these interdependencies into account, Piterberg states that Barkey is not able to benefit from these texts properly.\textsuperscript{37}

Thomas Gallant contributes to the study of bandits, particularly by denying the arguments made by Eric Hobsbawn.\textsuperscript{38} Basically, Gallant does not see much difference between peasant families and bandits as far as the factors influencing their behaviour are concerned. He argues that bandits did not have a special importance that might force us to think of them as a separate entity from peasant societies. Most important of all, however, Gallant finds a close relationship

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., 239-241.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 236.
\textsuperscript{38} Hobsbawn argues that bandits were “often kinless men…living with the peasantry not so much like Mao’s proverbial fish in water, but rather like soldiers who leave their village for the semi-permanent exile of army life.” Hobsbawn, 73.
between kinship and banditry, as opposed to Hobsbawn and many others who see the bandits through romantic eyes. That is, his examination of sources other than bandit songs demonstrates that Greek bandit bands consisted of kinsmen, who were an integral part of society, not isolated groups separate from their communities. His examples such Kolokotronis and Mavromati clearly demonstrate that the Greek gangs operated only with those descended from the same ancestors, related by marriage, or at least with a fabricated family member. His conclusion is as important as his analysis. Namely, consanguineous relations were to be found at the heart of bandit gangs and anyone else not connected with them either through marriage or blood was thought of as an enemy until proven otherwise. Last but not least, in a similar vein to the peasant family, the bandits established a social network, which rather proves that banditry was a family affair.

In terms of our present study, Gallant’s conclusions reveal the fact that natural instinct, such as having a common ancestor, might offer more significant and plausible explanations than simply sharing ideologies of high importance such as nationalism and religion, for the discussion of banditry and rebellions. After all, as we will discuss in greater detail in the case of the Morea Rebellion, most activities of bandits (and rebels, for that matter) can be much more easily explained if we take kinship or personal relations among insurgents into consideration.

One of the earliest and most successful attempts to understand Ottoman rebellions comes from Palmira Brummett. She tries to suggest a provisional categorization of Ottoman rebellions by means of scrutinizing some accounts of uprisings. First and foremost, she clearly points out that rebellions in the Ottoman Empire were much more diverse and various than most of the studies usually claim. For instance, salary, food, the desire to go home, injustice or cruelty might only partially explain mutinies. There were the insurrections which were not seen as an attack

39 Thomas Gallant, "Greek Bandits: Lone Wolves or a Family Affair?," Journal of Modern Greek Studies 6, no. 2 (1988): 269-274.
40 Ibid.: 281-284.
against the Ottoman state, but as the intent to be integrated within the state. In addition, there were those uprisings which targeted the very existence of the empire, and there were others which only came into existence at certain times and places with totally different criteria, etc. On the one hand, she also argues, the state first tried to minimize or alleviate resentment. Afterwards, the state used its weapons of either negotiation or threat. On the other hand, rival groups used the rebellions in order to expand both their power and prosperity. It was “a calculated risk” where one can win or lose everything. More importantly, however, both sides preferred negotiation and comprise and abstained from going all the way through either to suppress the uprising at all costs or to turn it into a revolution against the very existence of the state.\footnote{Brummett: 104-107.} Brummett’s arguments are critical in revealing the fact that rebellions are both diverse and complicated, and more importantly, each uprising is of its own kind and should be scrutinized accordingly.

Rifat Abou El-Haj\footnote{We have already taken into consideration his arguments as we have attempted to draw the historical background of the Morea Rebellion in the eighteenth century. For greater detail, see the first chapter.} and his study on a specific rebellion, the 1703 Rebellion, seems the most credible interpretation of an Ottoman rebellion. He does not see this rebellion as an isolated incident but instead interprets it as an event which revealed the structures and relationships of power within the Ottoman state at the time. El-Haj argues that domination of the vizier and pasha households had already prevailed for about half a century prior to the 1703 Rebellion. Accordingly, the changes in status and needs of the Ottoman state required different skills in its administrators and the result was the predominance of the households over traditional sources of recruitment. By the end of the seventeenth century, nearly half of all key posts in the central and provincial administration of the Ottoman state were staffed by men who were trained in and attached to at least one vizier-pasha household. They gained so much power that they not only
deposed Mehmed IV (1648-1687), but also posed a significant obstacle to Mehmed’s sons Mustafa II (1695-1703) and Ahmed III (1703-1730). Domination of the political structure by the vizier and pasha households gave rise to the factions in the empire that, in the long run, carried out the 1703 Rebellion. Through either cooperating with other factions or fighting against opponents, various factions tried to assert both their supremacy and their privileges in the Ottoman state. Therefore, El-Haj puts forward that the rebellions were begun either to strengthen a position in jeopardy or secure a newly won position over the other faction(s).43

Most important of all, however, El-Haj describes the Ottoman household nothing more than a faction among many that were struggling for supremacy in the Ottoman Empire. In this respect, unlike Barkey who sees the uprisings as a by-product of state centralization, El-Haj argues that such rebellions might have been a major challenge to the very existence of the Ottoman dynasty. After all, the 1703 Rebellion exposed the reduced power of the Ottoman household. From this point onward, the Sultan had no choice but to take the advice of increasingly powerful citizen groups if he wanted to carry out the business of government with any effectiveness. As a result, the palace and the military had taken secondary roles in both the formulation and execution of policy. El-Haj concludes that the 1703 Rebellion not only brought about a more decentralized state but also further secured the predominance of the viziers and pasha households as well the *ulema* in the empire.44 Last but not least, in opposition to Barkey, El-Haj brings the rebellion in question closer to the reality of the time. Namely, Barkey is right to posit that the Ottoman Empire was quite able to deal with the rebels in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But that does not necessarily mean that the empire was not truly threatened. As El-Haj’s study on the insurrection of 1703 and those incidents before and after it

44 Ibid., 91-92.
clearly demonstrate, there were the times when the empire in general and the Ottoman dynasty in particular remained under great danger of being totally destroyed.

Having accepted the complexity and intricacy of rebellions, Jane Hathaway sets forth several universal features of rebellion that should be mentioned here. Firstly, rebellions did not come into existence out of nothing but instead there are arguably certain common characteristics at the heart of all insurrections, such as scarcity of material, a dearth of foodstuffs, deferred payments, etc. More importantly, though, enduring financial problems, unending wars, class inequality as well as newly emerged ideologies of nationalism or revolution stood against traditional regimes. Besides, she describes Ottoman revolts as restricted phenomena rather than a massive social revolution. After all, we do not observe a revolution in the extreme sense of a violent and permanent subversion of the entire structure of the Ottoman Empire. Last but not least, a sense of unbearable injustice imposed upon a considerable number of people is also compulsory for a national uprising to take place.\textsuperscript{45}

Additionally, even after a rebellion takes deep root and follows a series of violent actions, insurgents usually desire an agreement with the state, such as by demanding the attention of the rulers instead of going to extreme, murderous ends for the purpose of acquiring a radical transformation. To give an example, the Ottoman Janissaries’ ritualistic regulation of refusing the sultan’s food before taking action opened the way for negotiation and bargaining between government officials and rebels. In this way, both sides were given an opportunity to abstain from more serious occurrences.\textsuperscript{46} However, despite all these factors enumerated above, what we see here is that the rebellions might have been very harmful to the state. They occasionally caused the dethronement of one sultan in favour of another one; murders of sultans; replacement

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., xvi.
of ruling dignities with others; creation of new political and economic institutions; a new structure with new personnel, and so on. Such serious consequences of the rebellions cannot be seen as consolidating the Ottoman power nor in harmony with traditional Ottoman structure.

The results of a rebellion might not necessarily be radical and revolutionary. Yet the significant effects of rebellion on the structure of the empire should not be denied. Robert Olson’s study clearly indicates that the threat of rebellion and war caused a total realignment of the traditional Ottoman foundations. To be exact, the rebellion of 1730 brought about a rearrangement of those groups either endorsing or opposing the sultan’s policy of increased contact with Europe. Before 1730, major support of the sultanate had come from the military elite and the ulema. However, after that, elements of the military elite which opposed the introduction of European military techniques and the ulemas who were opposed to infiltration of European customs and ideas in the Ottoman society began to collaborate with the anti-sultan forces. However, the esnaf (artisans) and merchants who had been some of the prominent opponents of the Sultan and Grand Vizier started to throw in their support with the new Sultan i.e., Mahmud I (1730-1754) when confronted with a threat to their businesses by continued disorder in Istanbul. And following the alignment of 1731, the 1740 Rebellion astonishingly resulted in the Sultan providing arms to non-Muslim guilds, who assisted the Sultan in suppressing this uprising. This switch of allegiance mentioned above is interpreted as one of the most sudden and significant changes of eighteenth century Ottoman history in Olson’s writing. This explains why Olson finds the era under consideration indispensable for the understanding of

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47 For greater detail concerning Olson’s arguments, see the first chapter.
the nationalistic movements of the nineteenth century and accompanying problems of modernization.\textsuperscript{48}

In conclusion, there is no doubt that Ottoman rebellions in general (and banditry in particular) as a subject of study are not well researched as yet. Any attempt to explain them for the purpose of founding a general theory not only falls short of achieving the desired results, but is also far from reflecting the complexity and intricacy of the subject at issue. Thus, a preliminary study of each rebellion as a separate topic seems to be essential before we are able to offer any sustainable prospect of this kind for Ottoman rebellions in general. At present, however, there is no single study to explicate everything for the history and genealogy of rebellions between the years 1500 and 1800. Each current study has its weaknesses and strengths as shown above. What is particularly important here, however, is that none of the arguments above provides us with all the means required for discussing and understanding the Morea Rebellion, which has its own unique and dynamic features. Nonetheless, there remains some aspects that are valid and useful for our study of the Morea Rebellion, such as the impact of the catastrophic upheavals before 1770, the role of political households and factions, as well as the influence of kinship in the explanation of rebellions that are valid and useful for our study of the Morea Rebellion, as we will see shortly. On balance, the Morea Rebellion cannot be explained solely by comparing it to the fragmentary and inadequate discussions of other Ottoman uprisings – which are largely valid only for separate and particular uprisings anyway.

The Morea Rebellion According to Early Ottoman Historians

The Ottoman sources concerning the Morea Rebellion can be classified into two major categories according to the time they were created. The first ones are those written either in the

\textsuperscript{48} Olson, "The Ottoman Empire in the Middle of the Eighteenth Century and the Fragmentation of Tradition: Relations of Nationalities (Milletts), Guilds (Esnaf) and the Sultan, 1740-1768."
middle of the uprising or immediately after the rebellion had been suppressed, and the second ones were written long after this uprising was put down in the mid-1770s. The latter do not often take advantage of the contemporary Ottoman documents which are at the heart of this dissertation. Instead, they have a bent for ideological explanations of the Morea Rebellion in their narratives. Accordingly, Ottoman contemporary sources have either tended to narrate a story from a religious point of view or – especially if they were written at the end of the eighteenth or beginning of the nineteenth centuries – the explanation of the rebellion occurs within the framework of the discussion of the Greek nationalist narrative. As we will see in the archival study of our thesis, the ideological explanations of the Morea Rebellion fall far short in revealing the history of the period.

As for the European sources written concerning the insurrection of 1770, one should keep in mind that they either had no access to the Ottoman documents, or never really intended to make use of them in their stories of the uprising anyway. Not surprisingly, their writings are quite different from what we find in light of the Ottoman archival documents. More importantly, however, their efforts to explicate the insurgence by relying on the ideology of the post-rebellion period mean that such sources frequently fall into anachronism.

On balance, we argue that neither the Ottoman nor European sources of the Morea Rebellion have been sufficiently examined. For the Ottoman contemporary sources, we will review Sadullah Enveri and his chronicle; Şemdanizade Fındıklı Süleyman Efendi and *Mür'i't-Tevârih*; Ahmed Vâsîf’s *Mehâsinü'l-Âsâr Ve Hakaikü'l-Ahbâr*; Mustafa Nuri Pasha and *Netayic_ül-Vukuat*; Ahmed Cavid Bey and *Müntehebat*; and Kâbrislî Mehmed Kâmil Pasha and *Tarih-i Siyasi Devlet-i Aliyye-yi Osmaniyye*. We will take our sources in chronological order,
beginning with sources more contemporary to the Morea Rebellion, so that we can evaluate the change in attitude of the Ottoman sources and the way they approached the insurgence over time.

Among the Ottoman sources, Sadullah Enveri is of special importance here, since he was not only serving as official chronicler of the time that we are predominantly interested in here (between March 22, 1769 and January 20, 1774), but also his writings were often quoted by the other chroniclers or historians mentioned above. At the outset, however, it should be kept in mind that Enveri wrote a chronicle preferring to narrate events with little comment (if any), partly because of having no direct access to the region while he wrote, and partly because of having no interest in giving a detailed account of the insurrection. Hence, he was also frequently and reasonably criticized by his successors owing to his ineptness and superficiality as an Ottoman chronicler. Nonetheless, none of Enveri’s deficiencies seem to have deterred other scholars of the Morea Rebellion from using his history as a source for their own writings about the insurrection.

Enveri obviously made use of the contemporary writings of historians as he was creating his chronicles, such as Şemdanizade Süleyman Efendi (d. 1779), Halil Nuri Bey Efendi (d. 1799), Mehmed Emin Edib Efendi (d. 1802), Ahmed Vâsif Efendi (d. 1806), Ahmed Cavid Bey (d. 1803), and so forth. However, in his first volume, where he deals largely with the Morea Rebellion, he does not seem to have cited any other chronicler. Instead, he predominantly relies upon his own observations and what he hears from the people around him without really questioning the reliability or dependability of their testimonies. More importantly, Sadullah Enveri was not an eyewitness to the Morea Rebellion, but was informed about what was happening in the Morea exclusively from official correspondence and documents either sent

from the Morea to imperial headquarters situated on the battlefronts with the Russians, or those conveyed from the headquarters to the Morea in the middle of the uprising. Enveri prefers to quote Quranic verses, hadiths from the Prophet, proverbs, poems, etc., in order to express his vague idea about the specific events under consideration. Of course, this style obviously prevents us from determining the true position and understanding of an Ottoman statesman like Enveri at that time.\(^{50}\)

What is particularly important to point out here is that his sources simply remain silent on the question of what had happened before the rebellion took place in 1770. Therefore, his writings concerning the Morea Rebellion should be carefully taken into consideration. After all, it is a one-sided narrative that omits at least half of the whole story. In addition, his limited sources hinder him from doing any elaborate analysis or interpretation of the rebellion (nor did he really intend to do so). As a matter of the fact, his style of cataloguing or analyzing events was a very common method of writing history in the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire. This style altered with later Ottoman scholars and historians like Cevdet, Vâsıf and Ahmed Resmi.\(^{51}\) In other words, Enveri just mentions how and where the Ottomans summoned soldiers in order to protect certain fortresses in the Morea, or to provision these strongholds with the imperial orders sent all over the empire. Yet he does not take the trouble of explaining the reasons and instincts behind state policies, nor does he make any comment on the policies followed by the Ottoman Empire during this revolt in the Morea.\(^{52}\)

Moreover, Enveri neither bothers to discuss how the state really reacted against the rebels or the way imperial headquarters interpreted the rebellion. In fact, he only mentions how the

\(^{50}\) Ibid., XVII-XXXV.


\(^{52}\) Sadullah Enveri, 98-99.
Ottomans recruited soldiers and provisioned them for the protection of the Morea against the rebels and the Russians. Neither does he inform us about the details of Russian interference and the great role that Russians played in the creation of the Morea Rebellion. All he says is that spies informed the imperial headquarters that Russians with a few ships were sailing in the Peloponnese.\textsuperscript{53} Indeed, Enveri does not deny the alliance made between the rebels and Russians against the Ottomans, but he clearly ignores the details and, therefore, the importance of this alliance in the construction of the Morea Rebellion.\textsuperscript{54} His chief justification for the rebellion is the close religious ties between the Russians and Orthodox subjects of the empire which is the heart of his discussion, such that the former incited the latter to take part in their struggles against the Ottoman Empire. Just like many other religious groups in the Ottoman Empire, Enveri concedes that the Orthodox population in the empire was under constant attack from Russian intrigues targeted at instigating a threat to Ottoman imperial dominance. Enveri states that the close relationship between Russians and Orthodox subjects of the empire resulted from nothing more than sharing a common religion – something which was abused by Russia in order to influence the Orthodox subjects for its own cause. More importantly, however, Enveri professes that the Ottoman investigation conducted under the leadership of Muhsinzade Mehmed showed that most of the \textit{reaya} in the Morea tended to take the Russian side, and if the state kept ignoring this fact and tolerating Russian influence, there was no doubt that soon all Orthodox subjects of the empire would take up arms against the Ottomans for the Russian cause.\textsuperscript{55}

Enveri sees the Morea Rebellion as an international phenomenon where not only Russia and England got involved but many other European states played a great role in its evolution. Rebels’ activities against the Ottomans depended upon Russian support and provisions, which

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., 110.  
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 112.
could only be provided by other Christian states such as England. Enveri does not bother to explain why the Christian states came to the aid of the Russian cause in the Morea, but does emphasize the fact that they were in fact Christian states too (İngiltere ve săir düvel-i nasârdan isticâr olunmuş sefîneler ile irdâl olunub). Information concerning the number of ships sailing in the Mediterranean to help Russia should be mentioned here: Russia claimed to have only five ships of its own, but there were also 25 ships manned by English soldiers, also supported by other Christian states of the time. Once again we see religion at the center of Enveri’s argument to explain the insurrection of 1770.

Enveri's narration of events generally is not in agreement with the documentary evidence available to us. For instance, he states that the reaya of the Morea were already determined to take the Russian side and longed for Russian ships to appear. In this respect, he supports the idea that after Russian ships arrived at the coast of Mani, local reaya and those from eleven other towns in the Morea joined in the rebellion in a few days, despite the fact that only three Russian ships out of seven succeeded in anchoring on the Mani coasts. Immediately after Russia landed, the number of Greeks who joined the rebels rose to at least 80,000. These rebels later attacked the city of Mezistre and not only enslaved 400 Muslim soldiers but also killed 300 more. In the meanwhile, they killed a few children by throwing them from minaret and then attacked Gastun and Balyabadra.

If we accept these figures as true there is no reason to deny that Russia met almost all of its expectations in the Morea since, as we will see in other sources, Russia expected 100,000 Greeks to join them once they arrived in the peninsula. Nevertheless, it is often claimed that the

56 Ibid., 112-113.
57 Ibid., 126.
58 Ibid., 113-114.
59 Finlay, 304.
Russians were less welcomed than they expected. But, if we take Enveri’s figure of 80,000 Greeks in solidarity as correct, we cannot find a reasonable answer for the question of how such a limited number of Ottoman forces (at best guess 15,000) were able to suppress such a huge number of Greek insurgents within just two months. Yet, we cannot simply blame Enveri for exaggerating the number of people who somehow became involved in the Morea Rebellion and thereby for ignoring the reliability of all statistical information provided in his chronicle. For example, just a few sentences later he gives quite reasonable figures for soldiers (mostly ayan soldiers) conscripted by the Ottoman state: in order to face this enormous number of rebels, imperial edicts were sent from the military headquarters of the Ottoman Empire in order to summon a respectable number of Muslim soldiers. To be exact, Enveri argues that Nimeti Bey was assigned to bring 2,000 soldiers to battle. Furthermore, Yenişehirli Müdderris Osman Bey summoned 1,500 troops; 1,000 more were brought by Yenişehirli Ismail Agha; another 1,000 by Çatalcalı Ali Agha; 2,000 by İzdinli Yusuf Agha; and lastly more than 4,000 soldiers were recruited from the inhabitants of Livadiye, İstefe and Sarıgöl.60 We do not have any reason to doubt these figures because they are not only hand in glove with our other findings extracted from the Ottoman archives, but also those of other chroniclers.61 Enveri’s proximity to the Ottoman letters sent to the Morea is the very reason for this accuracy. The same accuracy is unlikely to be achieved in assessing the number of Greeks who joined the uprising since he probably had no source of information on the rebels other than what he had been told as rumours during the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774.

Enveri’s chronicle shares lots of similarities not only with other Ottoman sources, but also with what the archival materials offer us too. In this respect, some of his arguments fall

60 Sadullah Enveri, 114.
61 See for example, Fındıklılı Süleyman, Şem'dâni-Zade Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Tārihi Mürʾıt-Tevārih 2/B, 28.
precisely in line with the historical reality to the extent it can be determined. For example, Enveri illustrates one of the most common policies of the Ottoman Empire that was frequently practiced in times of turmoil in the empire. According to the story, Kurd Ahmed committed some malicious acts of a harmful nature, and in response the empire abrogated his title as a state officer of mirimiran. However, when the insurrection started – which naturally pressed the empire for a supplementary force – Ahmed was officially forgiven in return for his future aid for the suppression of the uprising.\(^62\)

Enveri puts particular emphasis on the great role that ayan and pasha households played in the suppression of the Morea Rebellion. Most of the imperial orders sent for the collection of Muslim soldiers against the rebels did not target Ottoman government officials, but ayan such as Nimeti Bey, Yenişehlerli Müderris Osman Bey and İsmail Agha, Çatalcalı Ali Agha and so on. Besides, since Enveri had access to the imperial orders sent for the appointments of state positions in the Morea we have been well informed that many ayan and their households [including Derbendan Ali Pasha, Tırhala Osman Pasha, Mirimiran Arslan Bey (Kethüda of Osman Pasha), Yenişehlerli İsmail Agha etc.] were not only rewarded with high state positions in the Morea, but also with official titles which had previously been exclusively reserved for members of the askeri class.\(^63\) Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha’s reliance upon these ayan long after the repression of the Morea Rebellion can be easily detected in this chronicle as well. Enveri argues that Mehmed Pasha kept asking for help from Çatalcalı Ali Agha against Russia in Silistre. Ali Agha responded positively by providing 1,000 soldiers for the state, and was later rewarded with the title of vizier.\(^64\) The importance of pasha households is also greatly

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\(^{62}\) Sadullah Enveri, 113.

\(^{63}\) See for example, Ibid., 329, 337, 343, 355-356.

\(^{64}\) Ibid., 370.
emphasized. Lastly, Enveri talks about the role that Albanian soldiers played in the repression of the insurrection in the Morea but does not explain how their contribution to the imperial army affected Ottoman sovereignty in the Morea after the suppression of the uprising.

Other than the information given above, Enveri does not talk about anything directly or indirectly related to the Morea Rebellion which, of course, hinders us from making any further interpretation about his approach to the insurrection. Therefore, it is quite impossible to make a reliable analysis in light of Enveri’s history. What is more important here, however, is that reflections of his superficial arguments concerning the Morea Rebellion can also be observed in the writings of other chroniclers and historians. That is, in spite of all of his deficiencies, Enveri’s successors frequently quoted from his work and carried forward his mistakes. Therefore, his generally weak arguments still provide the basis for some of the most widely-accepted theories for the insurrection of 1770.

Another history of importance for the Morea Rebellion is *Mür’i’t-Tevârih* written by Şem’dâni-zade Fındıklı Süleyman Efendi. We do not know the exact date of this work. Münir Aktepe argues that in the year 1769, Süleyman Efendi was kadı of Ankara and in 1771 he was appointed to service of Tokat. The second volume of *Mür’i’t-Tevârih*, in which the Morea Rebellion is discussed, is said to have been finished when he was in Egypt in 1776. One of the copies of *Mür’i’t-Tevârih* states that he wrote his history while he was working as the clerk (*katib*) of a judge in Istanbul. In either case, Süleyman Efendi would not have been an eyewitness to the Morea Rebellion, but rather created his work using the materials available to him at the time. As a matter of the fact, in *Mür’i’t-Tevârih* he states that he used 400 books in order to finalize his work, but he does not identify the sources concerning his writing on the

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65 Ibid., 114.
66 Ibid., 114-115.
Morea Rebellion in particular. He was never appointed as an official historian (vak’a-nüvis) of the Ottoman state but still wrote the work because of an apparent interest in writing history. *Mür‘i’t-Tevârih* was written following thirteen years of long study and then submitted to Sultan Abdülhamid I in 1777. It should also be mentioned that for the events after 1731 he mainly relies upon the writings of vak’a-nüvis efendi whose works were available only to a few wealthy people in the empire, according to Süleyman Efendi. Therefore, Süleyman Efendi relied on most of the contemporary chroniclers as he was writing the story of the Morea Rebellion in *Mür‘i’t-Tevârih*, some of which we will mention in this chapter. But even where he simply quotes the writings of the vak’a-nüvis, he still offers us different ways of looking at the events on account of his distinct background and of having never held the position of official state historian during his life.

The similarities between the writings of Sadullah Enveri and those of Süleyman Efendi are obvious to the reader: they sometimes use almost the exact same sentences to explain events that occurred during the Morea Rebellion. For example, as with Enveri, Süleyman Efendi emphasizes Orthodox Christianity – commonly practiced by both Russians and Greeks – as cause for the “infidel” Greeks of Morea to be inclined to take Russia’s side. Seven Russian ships closed in on the port of Mani, where two were lost due to a storm, but the rest succeeded in anchoring safely. “Having communicated (reached an agreement for an alliance) with the people of Mani and then those members of eleven towns, the Russians succeeded in finding eighty thousand supporters for their cause in the Morea. They later attacked Mezistre and not only enslaved four hundred Muslims but also killed three hundred of them. They also killed a few

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67 Fındıklılı Süleyman, *Şem‘dânî-Zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mür‘i’t-Tevârih* 1, XVIII-XXII. 68 Ibid., XXIII-XXIV.
children by throwing them from *minaret* and then attacked Balyabadora.” This quote clearly indicates a strong adherence to the earlier writings of Sadullah Enveri.

All in all, we cannot argue that Süleyman is concerned if the information he provides is accurate or not. For example, when discussing Gazi Hasan Pasha and his great prowess in the struggle against the Russian navy before the Çeşme catastrophe, Süleyman Efendi posits that with only 30 Ottoman soldiers Hasan Pasha attacked one of the Russian ships and began a fight against 1,000 infidel soldiers. It was only after Hasan Pasha was wounded by a Russian bullet that the Muslims decided to turn back to their own ship. In doing so, they succeeded in coming back with 20 soldiers out of 30 safe and sound. In the meantime, however, they had killed 40 Russian soldiers.69 Basically, we can argue that Süleyman Efendi could not help duplicating the mistakes of other chroniclers, especially when discussing events that were known to him only through other sources. However, just like Sadullah Enveri, he was much more accurate when discussing topics about which he had been informed through Ottoman official documents – for example, the number of Ottoman soldiers sent for the suppression of the Morea Rebellion.70

After the suppression of the Morea Rebellion under the leadership of Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha, Süleyman Efendi argues, if the Ottomans had not taken the necessary measures the empire would have not only lost the Morea but also the whole of Rumelia, since most of the people living in Rumelia were infidel Greeks (*kefere-i Rum’dur*).71 One should be very careful in analyzing this citation. The term *Rum* here does not refer to the Greek nation but the Orthodox Christian subjects of the empire – most of the people living in Rumelia were not Greek in origin but Orthodox in religion. Hence, one should admit the fact that here the term *Rum* is used

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70 Ibid., 27-28.
interchangeably with Orthodox as was often the case in Ottoman documents. As such, Ottoman statesmen like Süleyman Efendi were afraid that all Orthodox subjects of the empire in the Balkans would join their coreligionists in the Morea had the Ottomans not successfully repressed the rebellion in the region at the right time. This is also a clear indication of the fact that Ottoman statesmen of the time interpreted the Morea Rebellion as a religious upheaval rather than a nationalistic movement, in opposition to the historical writings of the nineteenth century, some of which we will also deal with here. Once again, the technical and military support for the Russians from other Christian states (especially England) would have not only strengthened the argument that the Morea Rebellion was a struggle between Islam and Christianity from the Ottoman point of view, but Ottoman statesmen would have instinctively interpreted it as an international issue rather than a domestic one. Süleyman Efendi states it was only through the generous help and support given to the Russian navy by other Christian states that the Russians were able to attack the Morea with an expanded fleet of fourteen big ships.72

In a similar vein to Enveri, Süleyman Efendi mentions that the Ottoman Empire was highly dependent upon the ayan and pasha households in the suppression of the Morea Rebellion and rewarded them with official titles and state positions immediately after the repression of the Morea Rebellion in the mid-1770s. For instance, Yenişehirli Osman Efendi, the grandson of a former high state officer named A’rec Osman Pasha, brought 1,500 men to the field even though as a müderris this was not one of his duties. Having realized his great contribution to the suppression of the revolt, Muhsinzade not only favoured him with an official title of vizier but also gave him one of the highest ranks in the Ottoman Empire i.e., three horsetails [which had not been given to anyone before, other than the famous vizier Köprülü Ahmed Pasha (son of

72 Ibid.
Köprülü Mehmed Pasha) about hundred years earlier]. Süleyman Efendi also adds that Osman Efendi was given first 500, then 750, and lastly 2,500 purses of money. It is debatable to compare the power and prestige of Köprülü Ahmed Pasha and Osman Efendi, but it is safe to argue here that on account of his contribution to the imperial army against the rebellion, Osman Efendi was rewarded just like many other ayan, some of whom we have already mentioned above. What we know for sure is that Yenişehirli Osman Efendi was not an exceptional figure: due to their great help in the suppression of the Morea Rebellion, many ayan were also later rewarded similarly after 1770. In this respect, the Mür’i’t-Tevârih mentions only some ayan by name, yet it is sufficient to prove ayan and pasha households were indispensable for the Ottoman state at that time. It is worth mentioning here that in opposition to Yuzo Nagata by looking at these sources there is no reason to conclude that asking for the help of the ayan or pasha households was a new phenomenon nor was the system of reward for contributions to the protection of the state a unique happenstance.

To sum up, just like Sadullah Enveri, Süleyman Efendi argues that it was due to the Russian intrigue – based on the fact that they shared a common religion – that the Greek subjects of the Ottoman Empire were convinced to take up arms against their Turkish lords. As a matter of the fact, none of our sources denies this argument made both by Enveri and Süleyman Efendi. However, the statistical data provided by both authors is far from reflecting the truth that a substantial number of Greeks remained faithful to the Ottoman state. In this connection, their

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73 Ibid., 37.
75 See for example, Fındıklı Süleyman, Şem'dâni-Zâde Fındıklı Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mür’ı’t-Tevârih 2/B, 25, 122, 91-92, and also Fındıklı Süleyman, Şem'dâni-Zâde Fındıklı Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mür’ı’t-Tevârih 3 19.
76 Nagata, Muhsin-Zâde Mehmed Paşa ve Âyânlık Müessesesi.
argument that Orthodox Christianity is the institution that stimulated all Greeks to rise up against
the state is not reasonable.

We have already noted that for one reason or another, both Enveri and Süleyman Efendi
concentrate on what happened after the Morea Rebellion and tell us almost nothing about the
events leading up to the insurrection. In this respect, as a more elaborate chronicle of the Morea
Rebellion, Ahmed Vâsıf’s history is of special importance since he not only talks about the
reasons for the outbreak of the Morea Rebellion, he makes worthwhile comments on the events.
First of all, it should be kept in mind that Vâsıf also has many common arguments with both
Enveri and Süleyman. To give but just one example, he also accepts that either during or
immediately after the suppression of the rebellion the Ottoman Empire rewarded some ayan
either by giving them official titles or high state positions. What is more important here,
however, is the question why Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha called the ayan into duty rather than
the imperial soldiers. Namely, having realized that there was not enough time for summoning a
regular imperial army, Muhsinzade ordered Tırhalalı Niğmetizade, Yenişehirli Müderris Osman
Bey, Kapucubaşı İsmail Agha, Çatalcalı Ali Agha and İzdimli Beyzade to bring their soldiers to
battle. About 5,000 rebels had already left the port of Mani and so Muhsinzade brought members
of his own households and other soldiers collected by Hasan Efendi in order to protect Tripoliçe
against forthcoming attacks.⁷⁷

Vâsıf agrees that other Christian states aided Russia, which had neither enough ships nor
skilled seamen. However, Vâsıf also posits that in addition to England, Venice and other
neighbouring Christian states helped enormously to provide what the Russians required to be
able to sail in the Mediterranean Sea. More importantly, Vâsıf also states that one of Russia’s
enemies had informed the imperial council that the Russian navy was about to sail in the

⁷⁷ Ahmed Vâsıf, Maḥāsin ül-Āsār ve Ḥaḳāʻik ül-Āḥbār, vol. 2 (Cairo: Bulak, 1890), 43.
Mediterranean, but Ottoman statesmen continued to refuse to believe that Russia would be able to do so until they had spread terror to the Muslims on the coast of İnebahtı (Lepanto).\textsuperscript{78} To explain every failure of the Ottoman Empire as the result of incompetent Ottoman statesmen is commonly acceptable in the traditional writings on Ottoman history (both in Europe and in the Ottoman Empire). However, as we will discuss in the following chapter, the accusation of both European and Ottoman sources about Ottoman ineptitude concerning the Russian danger in the Morea is totally groundless and unsupported, especially when taking into account the archival documents written before the Morea Rebellion began in 1770.

Vâsıf also argues that the people of Mani had already responded positively to the Russians, and the latter sent ten ships to persuade the rest of people in the Morea to join them. Five out of ten Russian ships anchored on the coast of Mani and, in cooperation with the resident infidels, they led the reaya of the Morea to take up arms against the Ottomans. Afterwards, approximately 60,000 rebels in total attacked Mezistre and they enslaved 3,000 and killed 400 Muslims there. In addition, they put a few children to death by throwing them from the minarets of Mezistre.\textsuperscript{79} There is no doubt that the story of Ahmed Vâsıf is not that different from the two stories mentioned previously. In spite of negligible differences in statistical data the essence of all the stories is identical and there is no reason to believe that the authors were not aware of each other while they each created their story of the Morea Rebellion. Thus, most of our criticisms of the previous chroniclers are also valid for the writings of Ahmed Vâsıf as well.

As a later historian Mustafa Nuri Pasha (1824-1890), who published his book in 1877, is highly dependent on the writings of the official historians, and not surprisingly, repeats most of the information given above. To start with, he also accepts that the Ottoman statesmen were

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., 42-43.

\textsuperscript{79} Ibid., 43.
unaware of the fact that the Russian navy could sail from the Baltic Sea all the way through the Mediterranean to the coast of the Morea, in spite of the intelligence provided by France that the Russians were about to come to the Mediterranean. Again, the accounts of international aid given to the Russians are reiterated in Netayic Ül-Vukuat: namely, in addition to the few ships the Russians had in the Baltic Sea, they also bought war ships as well as seamen and merchants from England, Holland and Venice. Last but not least, Russia incited the people of Mani as well as other troublemakers to rise up against the Ottomans. As a matter of fact, Mustafa Nuri holds Russia responsible for everything that happened in the Morea and clearly states that during the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774, Catherine the Great put a plan into practice which had been suggested by Marshal Münnich in order to cause the Ottomans to be preoccupied with domestic insurrections. This is why the Russians tried to arouse the Orthodox Greek population in the Morea peninsula to revolt.

As many Ottoman historians argue, Mustafa Pasha also posits that Russians were the main troublemakers both in the Morea and in Egypt. According to him the Russians not only incited the reaya in the Morea to take up arms against the Ottomans, but also supported those who had already rebelled against the Ottomans. In other words, after Russian defeats in the Mediterranean against Cezayirli Gazi Hasan Pasha, Alexi Orlov joined with Bulutkapan Ali Bey who had intended to separate Egypt from the hands of the Ottomans. Lack of confidence

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80 Mustafa Nuri, 62.
81 Ibid., 198.
82 Having heard of the Ottoman debacles at the hands of the Russians, Bulutkapan Ali Bey is argued to have said that “this is the very moment for the Abkhazian to seize the power.” Then, he invaded Egypt and took possession. His actions both in Egypt and Damascus not only facilitated the Russian attack at the expense of the Ottoman Empire but also forced the Ottomans to divide their soldiers in order to meet the challenge coming from Ali Bey. Fındıklılı Süleyman, Şem’dâni-Zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mür’î’t Tevârih 2/A. For the activities of Bulutkapan after he rebelled against the Ottoman authority in Egypt, see Jane Hathaway, The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdaglis (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 47.
between Ali Bey and Pizo, (Russian officer sent as captain of the Russian fleet to Egypt previously), rendered the plan abortive in the end though.\textsuperscript{83}

One of the most widely-accepted falsehoods common among the writings of the Ottoman historians is admitted by Mustafa Nuri too: that is the idea that the Morea Rebellion was totally unexpected for the Ottoman statesmen who were struggling with land wars with Russia at the time. It is again claimed that France informed the Ottomans about the forthcoming Russian voyage to the Mediterranean Sea, but this intelligence was simply ignored by Ottoman statesmen. Moreover, the imperial court in Istanbul did not even take domestic intelligence into consideration either. That is, Beylerbeyi of Algeria informed the Cezayirli Hasan Pasha that a Russian fleet composed of 27 ships was anchored at the port of Mahon on Minorca Island by a letter, and Hasan Pasha sent this information to the central state. Yet, the Ottoman statesmen paid no attention to this letter and their ignorance allowed Russian occupation of Mediterranean islands and a catastrophe at Çeşme thereafter.\textsuperscript{84}

Ahmed Cavid Bey wrote \textit{Müntehebat} in order to evaluate the history of Ottoman-Russian relations from the very beginning up until his own time. At the outset, one should mention that his work relies heavily upon the former official historians of the Ottoman Empire. Although \textit{Müntehebat} is composed of writings of the official historians between the years 1622 and 1791 it is very significant for the study of Ottoman history, especially Ottoman-Russian relations in the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{85} Not surprisingly, Cavid argues that the close religious connection between the Russians and Greeks became the very catalyst to incite the Greeks to join the Russian cause. He also adds that this was achieved through the help of Orthodox priests. Cavid argues that the

\textsuperscript{83} Mustafa Nuri, 63.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., 198-199.

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Morea was just one of the many regions where the Russians intended to use the Orthodox subjects of the empire for their own cause. In a similar manner, the Russians sent priests and ships to Georgia in order to lead them to take up arms against the Ottomans, as well.\textsuperscript{86}

Once more, it is claimed that the reaya of the Morea had been waiting for just such an opportunity for a long time. More importantly, Russia’s goal was given as preventing the Ottoman Empire from concentrating its power on the Balkan war launched against Russia in the north. Moreover, the Ottomans were blamed for being late in recognizing the impending rebellions. Namely, having realized that Russian ships had landed at Zakisu and Kefalonya in March/April 1770, the Ottoman Empire was informed about what had happened and only then requested soldiers and provisions in reply to the attack. The same story of the Morea Rebellion had become standard by the time Ahmed Cavid wrote. In sum: when the Russians came to the port of Mani, the reaya of Mani and the “traitorous people” of eleven other towns in the Morea whom had been convinced to join them eventually reached 80,000 in number. The insurgents attacked Mezistre with that number. There they not only enslaved 400 Muslims but also killed 3,000 more. Having been informed about the impending attack on Gastun and Balyabadra, Muhsinzade summoned approximately 10,000 soldiers including members of his own households in order to face the rebels.\textsuperscript{87} Additionally, Cavid reiterates that in a few months Russia effectively created a navy in the Mediterranean Sea with the help of England, and how unexpectedly they were successful first in the sea and then at the port of Çeşme. Last but not least, the cooperation between Bulutkapan Ali Bey and Russia against the Ottoman Empire is

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnotesize\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., 745.
\footnotesize\textsuperscript{87} Ibid., 339.
\end{footnotesize}
given as one of the many amazing achievements of the Russians scored during their expedition in the Mediterranean Sea.\textsuperscript{88}

Another source for the Morea Rebellion is Kâbrish Mehmed Kâmil Pasha’s work \textit{Tarih-i Siyasi Devlet-i Aliyye-yi Osmaniyye}. First and foremost, unlike the contemporary sources of the insurrection of 1770 this work was written in a time of nationalism, more than 100 years after the rebellion was suppressed. Not surprisingly, it tends to explain the cause of the uprising as nationalism rather than religion, in contrast with the Ottoman sources mentioned so far. Nevertheless, he also shares similar pieces of information with the previous works. For instance, Russia sent some officers disguised as priests to incite the Greeks against the Ottoman state. After transacting negotiations with the leader of the Greeks (Panayotti Benaki) these officers persuaded the Greeks to come under the protectorship of Russia which in return promised to release the Greeks from the Ottoman yoke. Soon, a Russian army and navy including twelve big ships, twelve frigates and many small ships set sail from the port of Kronstadt in order to reach the Morea.\textsuperscript{89}

Although they had been informed about the incoming Russian fleet, the Ottoman statesmen simply did not believe in the possibility that the Russian ships could sail from the Baltic Sea to all the way through to the Mediterranean Sea. Only when the Russian navy showed up in the Mediterranean did the reality of this rumour finally confront the Ottoman statesmen as well. In return, the empire not only accused Venice of having permitted the Russians to sail in the Mediterranean, but also immediately summoned soldiers and called local forces into duty against enemies. Again, foreign help, i.e. military and economic assistance of England, for the

\textsuperscript{88} Ibid., 746.
Russians in their preparation to attack the Morea, is greatly emphasized. 90 What is more important, however, is that the number of Greeks joining the rebellion is given as 50,000. According to the story, Orlov came to the Morea with only 500 Russian soldiers – not enough to control this huge number of Greek rebels. They soon attacked the city of Mezistre and massacred 400 Muslims as well as some children who were thrown from the minarets. 91

Although Kâmil Pasha explains the Morea Rebellion as a nationalistic phenomenon he cannot help conceding the important role that religion played in this uprising. To give but one example, following the success of the Greek rebels in the Morea, Alexi Orlov published a written statement inviting all Greeks (Orthodox) including those in Wallachia and Moldavia to protect the freedom of the sect to which they all belonged. 92 Here again, the term Rumlar should be interpreted as members of the Orthodox Christianity rather than Greek nationals. Kâmil Pasha is sometimes so preoccupied with a war of religion going on in the Ottoman Empire that, he argues, three days after the Çeşme catastrophe the Muslims attacked not only the Greeks but also other non-Muslims (Europeans) in Smyrna, and killed more than 800 of them. 93

So far we have looked at the contemporary Ottoman sources for the Morea Rebellion and the way they explain the uprising. On the one hand, they all focus on the role the Russians played during the insurrection: it was on account of the Russians who used Orthodox Christianity in order to incite the Greeks against their Turkish overlords. On the other hand, they did not interpret this rebellion as sui generis but instead they were inclined to believe that almost simultaneously with the Morea Rebellion, there emerged other insurrections in the Ottoman

90 Ibid., 173-174.
91 Ibid., 174.
92 “Aleksi Orlof tarafından umum Rumlara hitaben bir beyanname icraj olunub bunda Effak ile Boğdan ibtidâr olan muhârebenin beyanıyla hem mezhepleri bulundukları cihetle cümlesi din ü hüriyetlerinin müdâfasına davet olunmuşdur.” Ibid.
93 Ibid., 175.
Empire, all of which were also explained within the context of Russian policy. According to this policy, the Russians targeted at weakening the Ottomans from all quarters in the middle of the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774. Another Ottoman historian of the late nineteenth century summarizes well the arguments of the Ottoman sources that we have already talked about above: in order to debilitate Ottoman power and put the empire on the spot from everywhere, Russia incited *reaya* of the Morea (i.e. Greece, meaning people in the Morea), as well as those of Serbia and Montenegro with malice against the Ottomans. Russian activities against the empire spread all over the Ottoman provinces as far as Egypt (in cooperation with Bulutkapan Ali Pasha) and Akka (in cooperation with Şeyh Zahir).\(^94\)

The Morea Rebellion Through Early European Historians

The European historians who wrote not long after the end of the Morea Rebellion are no less important than Ottoman historians since the former have also greatly contributed to information taken for granted in the writing of the secondary sources today. For this section will discuss Charlemont, *Travels of Lord Charlemont in Greece and Turkey, 1749*; Pouqueville, *Travels through the Morea and Albania*; Claude Carloman de Rulhière, *Oeuvres Posthumes De Rulhière*; William Martin Leake, *Travels in the Morea*; William Deans, *History of the Ottoman Empire, from the Earliest Period to the Present Time*; George Finlay, *Greece under Othoman and Venetian Domination*; Thomas Milner, *The Turkish Empire: The Sultans, the Territory and the People*; and Sir Charles Eliot, *Turkey in Europe*. Once again, we will follow a chronological pattern from the contemporary sources of the Morea Rebellion to more recent ones in order to bring into the sharp relief the changes in the way European scholars interpreted the insurgence over the course of time. The main criterion for the selection of the aforementioned sources is an

obvious one. That is, they offer us the most elaborate explanations of the Morea Rebellion extant in the European literature. Other European sources either do not provide us with much important information concerning the insurrection of 1770 or frequently pay no attention to it at all in their discussion of the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774.

Before going into any detail about their writings one should keep in mind that, unlike some Ottoman sources mentioned above, most of the European sources look at the insurrection either from a nationalistic or Philhellenistic point of view. Nevertheless, as we will argue in the following chapters in greater detail, neither the contemporary Ottoman sources of the Morea Rebellion nor our archival documents reveal any sign of nationalism or Philhellenism as a stimulator of the insurrection of 1770. In this respect, just like the Ottoman sources, the works of European historians are to be used with caution – as we hope to do in this dissertation.

In *Travels of Lord Charlemont in Greece and Turkey, 1749* Charlemont spares a whole section where he remarks on the people of Mani long before the Morea Rebellion came into existence. His uncritical sympathy for the Greeks under the Ottomans can be easily observed. For instance, he posits that the Ottomans never sent substantial forces to the region to bring the Maniots under control, and the Maniots never accepted Ottoman dominance. That is, the Maniots obstinately defended their land, and the Ottomans did not deem it worthy to attack these stubborn outlaws in the Morea. Under the domination of Venice, moderate tribute was requested from these people as a sign of acknowledgement of Venetian domination in Mani, but the Maniots successfully rejected this demand. Only once, through Venetian treachery, did the

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95 The name given for the Greek inhabitants of the Mani region situated in the southern Peloponnese (see, maps). This region is not only quite mountainous but also almost inaccessible (except for by sea) to the Ottomans. That is in a sense explains how the Maniots easily engaged in piracy and easily escaped from direct control of the Ottoman administrations for a long time.
Maniots have to accept paying taxes, but even this did not continue for long. The extraordinary prowess of the Maniots is described in great details: they were not only portrayed as exceptional warriors but also brilliant seamen and pirates who were totally free to take full advantage of the ports under their control. Even those Maniots closer to Muslim settlements and living under the direct control of Ottoman sovereignty in the Morea were free from Ottoman oppression. They were even brave enough to attack their neighbors and occasionally to kill Muslim inhabitants of the region. Even though they sometimes paid a small tax to the state, they were able to take back more than they had paid by robbing Ottoman tax officers. The region is even described as a shelter for Christianity against possible attack coming from Muslims in the empire. For example, Charlemont argues that those Muslims who changed their religion to become Christians preferred to take refuge in Mani because this was a place where they could be safe and sound.

Charlemont gives important information about the number of people living in Mani and in the Morea which actually contradicts what most of our contemporary or near contemporary sources have posited so far. Namely, there were not more than 3,000 Greek families in Mani and 3,000 more in other parts of the Morea as far as Charlemont is concerned. Consequently, in total there could not be more than 6,000 families in 1749. But it is soon understood from his writing that Charlemont is not meticulous in giving statistical information since in later sentences he reveals his meaning by saying that even if there were indeed just 3,000 families, they were able to defy millions of slaves (possibly meaning the Janissaries). Therefore, it is likely that the number given for Greeks living in the Morea cannot be interpreted as anything other than another attempt to glorify the bravery of Maniots.

97 Ibid., 117.
98 Ibid., 118.
Pouqueville has a slightly different approach to the Morea Rebellion, especially when we take into consideration the era in which he created his work. In other words, even if he wrote *Travels through the Morea and Albania* in an age of nationalism he did not introduce nationalism as the main motivator of the Morea Rebellion. Instead, in his argument, Orthodox Christianity gains currency among other reasons that might have possibly incited the Greeks to take up arms for the Russian cause. Even if the Greeks speak of liberty with great passion and attempt everything to get their freedom, Pouqueville posits, what they actually mean is not the freedom from the hands of their oppressors, but their desire to revive Orthodox Christianity as the dominant and most influential religion of the time. He adds that “though they hate the Turks they probably detest much more those Christians who acknowledge the authority of the Pope.” Again, the reason why they undertook a rebellion against the Ottomans and attacked the Muslims is given that the Greeks “leisurely bathed their hands in the blood of the Muslims not because they considered them as terrible enemies but simply because they were infidels.”

He also accuses Greek *köçabaşı* of being the greatest obstacle to the revival of the ancient glory of the Greeks. In this connection, he sees the *köçabaşı* and the Ottomans as one and the same. For instance, he puts forward that a city of the Morea, i.e. Vostitza, was far from enjoying its previous grandeur since the Ottomans and the Greek *köçabaşı* oppressed the Greek inhabitants of this town. The close connection between the Ottomans and the *köçabaşı* (the latter explicitly described as the greatest enemy of the Greeks) is condemned as follows:

These are the *köçabaşı* who though of Greek origin, have prostrated themselves at the feet of the Turks, and who irritate in every way those whom they ought to protect and console. By their insolence, pride and ignorance; they have established a line of demarcation between themselves and the Greeks. They may be considered as a

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99 François Pouqueville, *Travels through the Morea, Albania, and Several Other Parts of the Ottoman Empire to Constantinople: During the Years 1798, 1799, 1800 and 1801* (London: Phillips, 1806), 48-49.
degenerate species, who possess all the vices of slaves, and do not feel degraded by the extreme humiliation to which they are subjected by the Turks. In the temples, they occupy a place contiguous to the altar, and there they display all the pride of the Pharisee, being satisfied with a contemptible prerogative, purchased at the expense of the happiness of their countrymen.100

Greek *kocabaşi* supported by the Ottomans as leaders of their nation did not necessarily mean that they used their position for the benefit of other Greeks. Instead, they preferred to be in good with their masters at the expense of their coreligionists and in return they were given the right to keep their privileged positions under Ottoman domination. On balance, Pouqueville’s account not only puts religion at the center of the discussion but also lays great emphasis upon individualism and personal interests in the discussion of the Greeks under Ottoman domination in general.

Rulhière’s explanation for the Morea Rebellion shares a common feature with many European accounts written largely in an era when scholars were preoccupied with the idea of nationalism. For instance, after mentioning the close connection between Papazoğlu and Benaki (the richest Greek person of the Morea at the time) Rulhière implies that Benaki had no particular reason to stand against the Ottomans since he was not only in good relations with them, but also they gave him huge authority in the Peloponnese. On account of his religious passion and desire to emancipate the Greeks from the Ottoman yoke in the Morea, however, he not only accepted Russian suzerainty but also did not refrain from risking everything he had been generously given under the protection of the Ottomans.101

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100 Ibid., 35.  
Rulhière also has a slightly different story of Papazoğlu who is described as being an unknown young Ukrainian of the time. His trip all the way through the Morea gave him a hope and expectation for a large revolution, which was supposed to be hugely supported by the Greeks. Actually, they were so convinced that they would be relieved from the yoke of the Ottomans via the tsarina that they regarded her as a saint protecting their religion. They even purchased Catherine portraits in order to venerate her during their prayers. Therefore, both religion and Russian influence dominate Rulhière’s explanation for the support given for the Russian cause. More importantly, however, Papazoğlu was not alone in his expectations for the Greeks, and we see another Ukranian by the name of Tamara who also emphasized the strength of the Greeks, namely, that all the Greeks needed at the time were weapons and ammunition which were soon to be brought by Russian ships. Once armed it was just a matter of weeks until the rebels would annihilate all Turks and Muslims in Greece. For this sudden and great revolution, he calculates, they would not need more than 1,500,000 francs. Provided that honest men were assigned for this job of supplying money required for the cause, “a word of the tsarina would be sufficient to rouse the Greeks into action.” He also mentions the name Maruzzi, this time a Greek who was also ready to sacrifice the wealth of his family for the success of the rebellion. Last but not least, the Greek people of Italy whose religion was supposedly tolerated by Venice were not only eager to spend all their belongings for the cause of the Russians as well as Greeks, but also to pray for their success in Catholic churches.102

The naval aid generously granted to the Russians by Britain is also noted in the writings of Rulhière. It is claimed that a substantial number of British officers such as Admiral Spiritov

102 Ibid., 336-341.
and Admiral Gregg joined the Russian naval forces. More importantly, Papazoğlu advised the Greek rebels to be outfitted in the Russian uniform in order to dishearten the Ottomans who were accustomed to seeing the Greeks in their slave clothes. His advice was taken into consideration and then carried out. Although it is not overtly stated in the writings of Rulhière, this might also be interpreted as an attempt to conceal the significant dearth of Russian soldiers who took part in order to assist the Greeks in the Morea. It is also argued that it was through the priests who knew the Morea well that the Russians effectively incited the Greeks to take up arms against the Ottomans. Last but not least, it is repeated that Russia simultaneously intended to incite the Georgians to take up arms against the Ottomans. This is why a Russian general with 4,000 men was sent in order to persuade them to take their side against the Ottomans.

French intelligence was informed about the coming of the Russian fleet to the Mediterranean and warned Ottoman statesmen by means of its envoy in Istanbul. Ottoman stubbornness and unwillingness to accept the possibility that the Russian fleet was sailing to the Mediterranean are not emphasized any better than in Rulhière’s account. That is, one of the Ottoman statesmen took a map and asked the envoy to explain how a fleet could sail all the way through from Petersburg to the Mediterranean Sea. In the mind of this statesman there was no Russian fleet in the north and therefore no need to fear any threat coming from there. When it became a widely-known fact in Europe that the Russian fleet had already passed the Sound, a new communiqué was given by the French ambassador but this time the Ottomans asked, “What

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103 Three reasons are given for British support for the Russians. The first argues that unlike during the time of Peter I, British statesmen did not see the Russians as a threat to their naval hegemony especially after their great victory against France in the Seven Years’ War. Secondly, British statesmen wanted to renew the commercial treaty previously signed between Britain and Russia and worked hard for the benefits of the former. And it seems that to support the Russian cause in the Mediterranean was the cheapest and best way to achieve their goal. Last but not least, it was a great opportunity to enfeeble the power and influence of France in the Mediterranean, which was the archenemy of the British Empire at the time. Ibid., 354-355.

104 Ibid., 348-351.
105 Ibid., 359.
106 Ibid., 364-365.
is the Sound?” 107 The ambassador explained it to no avail. Soon the Ottomans were instructed that the Russian navy was in Britain and many British officers and sailors had joined the fleet. The Ottomans did not still take any precaution at all. In the end, when the French ambassador warned the Ottomans for the last time that the Russian fleet entered the Mediterranean Sea the Ottoman statesmen came to the conclusion that the Russians had no friends among the Christian states and all these “intelligence reports” were nothing but a treacherous plan to divert Ottoman forces from the real issue on the Danube. It was only after the Russian attack that the empire sent seven vessels and a few half-galleys which were armed at the port of Constantinople in order to face the Russian navy in the Aegean Sea. 108

A similar story about the Russian fleet that anchored at the port of Mani is also given by Rulhière. That is, there were seven ships, four frigates and several boats for transporting as well as 1,200 soldiers when the Russians first came to port in the middle of September 1769. No sooner did they show up on the coasts of the Morea due to the bad weather than the Greeks thought it as a sign of rebellion and rose against the Ottomans. Not being able to avert this fait accompli, the Russians had no choice but to join this premature rebellion inadvertently initiated by some enthusiastic Greek rebels of the Morea. Soon after, they started to massacre Muslims in the Morea. 109 Indeed, this does not mean that every Greek in the peninsula was impatient to take their place in the insurgency of 1770. Instead, they set up some conditions in order to get into the act which were either partially granted or appeased with anticipated booty and prizes of captured property in the future. In the meantime, promises were given to the Greeks so that they would take the Russian side. Accordingly, it was claimed that a new Russian fleet with 60 vessels already loaded with troops, weapons, munitions and artillery were about to land on the

107 The strait that separates the Danish island Zealand from the southern Swedish province of Scania.
108 Rulhière, 386-387.
109 Ibid., 367-369.
Peloponnese in order to free the whole of Greece from the hands of the Ottomans. Only after these promises were given by the Russians, and other commitments were made by the Bishop of Montenegro did a substantial number of Greeks finally agree to take up arms.\textsuperscript{110} As a result, personal interests of the participants became more of an issue. Thus, they not only massacred and took all possessions of the Muslims, but also did not refrain from plundering their own coreligionists. In addition to all this intelligence, Pasha of Algeria, who had seen the Russian fleet at Gibraltar, informed the imperial council but this did not change the Ottoman attitude either.\textsuperscript{111}

What we have also learned from Rulhière is the fact that Malta also joined the Russian fleet at the request of Catherine II.\textsuperscript{112} He also reiterates that the Russians attacked the Ottoman city of Trabzon from the Caucasus with 4,000 soldiers and Georgia constituted a part of this force fighting for the Russian cause. The role that Benaki played in the Morea Rebellion is also described. Accordingly, as the head of the intrigue he was quite successful in hiding his intention to join the rebellion until the very end.\textsuperscript{113}

We do not have many personal stories of the rebels and why they joined the Morea Rebellion in particular. But several examples available to us either from the European sources or from Ottoman ones (as we have already see in the second chapter in greater detail) call attention to the fact that other than nationalism and religion, personal interests might have also been the incentive that led at least some Greeks to take up arms against the Ottomans. To give but one example, three cousins of Exarch Gligorakis who had been killed by an Ottoman pasha wanted to

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., 369-373.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., 386-388.
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., 362-363. We have also learned that the relations between Petersburg and Malta existed long before the insurrection of 1770. Namely, some young Russian officers were sent to Malta on the pretext of learning the art of navigation. Following their departure some ambitious knights of Malta decided to join the Russian fleet in the Mediterranean in order to totally remove the Ottomans from the sea. Rulhière, 344-345.
\textsuperscript{113} Rulhière, 364-365.
avenge their exarch’s death. It is important to note that they were also sons of Demetrius Zanetto (one of the leading rulers in the Mani). Consequently, they massacred 700 Ottomans without making any distinction in terms of age or sex to retaliate for the death of Exarch Gligorakis. In return, the Ottomans were simply not able to do anything against the Maniots.¹¹⁴ Last but not least, like many European authors writing in the nineteenth century, Rulhière also cannot help citing Greek nationalism as an explanation for the Morea Rebellion. For example, the chief of the Maniots, Zanembey (possibly the individual referred to as Zaimbey in the Ottoman sources), is claimed to hate the oppressors of his nation and was passionately preoccupied with the idea of rescuing the Greeks from the Ottoman “yoke.”¹¹⁵

We are not informed about what happened after the Morea Rebellion other than the fact that the Ottomans took revenge for the crimes committed by Greeks in the Morea. At least for a while the Ottoman state gave (unofficial) permission to the Albanians to torture the Greeks and plunder insurgents’ properties as a reward for their help in the suppression of the Morea Rebellion. We will deal with Ottoman reaction to the Morea Rebellion after its repression in the light of our archival documents, but there are also some European sources that give hints about Ottoman policy after the destruction of the Morea. One of the most striking examples is a book written by William Martin Leake about half a century after the insurrection came to an end.

Similarly to Charlemont, Leake posits that even if Morean residents were subjected to a tax of fifteen purses they never did pay that amount to the Ottoman state before the 1770s. However, after their uprising was suppressed and Cezayirli Hasan Pasha was appointed as the governor of the Morea, they were given no choice but to pay a yearly tribute of 30 purses to the

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 6.
Ottomans and five more to Hasan Pasha.116 Interestingly enough, however, during his travel in Kalamata, Leake came across the ruined mansion of Benaki, one of the most important Greek leaders of the time. According to the story, Benaki’s house was wiped out by the Ottomans after the insurrection of 1770. He continues to argue that a son of Benaki was now working for the Russian council at Corfu and, more strikingly, he was still able to possess substantial territory in Kalamata by means of his married sister.117 Accordingly, the Ottomans were unable to stop relatives of significant Greek rebels of the Morea insurrection from enjoying the rents of a considerable estate in the Morea long after the suppression of the rebellion, despite the fact that at the time they were still in close contact with the Russians.

Another European historian of the nineteenth century who sees the Morea Rebellion as merely a plan of the Russians is William Deans. According to him, the Russians wanted to play the faith card in order to incite the Christian subjects of the empire against their Turkish masters. To be exact, Orlov with the help of Papazoğlu attempted to revive the spirit of freedom in the Greeks who were the successors of the Spartans and Athenians. The Greek male population of 1770 in the Morea is given as approximately 100,000 ready to take up arms in favour of Russia. However, Deans states, before the Morea Rebellion came into existence there is no reason to believe that inhabitants of the Morea had a burning desire to fight against the Ottomans whose treatment of the Greeks had not been oppressive at all. That is why they preferred to be subjects of the Ottomans in lieu of the Venetians in 1715. Nevertheless, Papazoğlu in cooperation with Benaki promised the Russians that by the time Russian soldiers appeared in the Morea, 100,000

116 William Martin Leake, *Travels in the Morea*, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1830), 316. Some Ottoman documents also support the same fact that certain residents of the Morea accepted to pay more taxes in return for their forgiveness. See chapter 6.
117 Ibid., 326-327.
Greeks would be ready to take up arms for the cause.\textsuperscript{118} Relying on the report of Papazoğlu the Russian fleet composed of seven ships, four frigates, a few transports and 1,200 soldiers anchored at the port of Coron in the summer of 1770. Neither the expectations of the Russians nor those of the Greeks were met by the time they came together, however. In other words, the Russians had expected that all Greeks would take part in their fight against the Ottomans as soon as they appeared in the Morea. As for the Greeks, they had been expecting a Russian army equipped with all materials and soldiers required for the battle against the Ottomans, so that Greek services would not be prerequisite for a successful insurrection.\textsuperscript{119} Ambitious Russian policies to besiege the Ottomans from all directions are explicitly stated by Deans too. As such, the Russians not only spread terror in the Danube and Archipelago but also in Trabzon (by sending an army from Georgia), Palestine (in cooperation with Şeyh Zahir), and in Cairo with help of Bulutkapan Ali Bey, who dreamed of gaining full control of Egypt at the time. In spite of all these attacks from every side, Deans concludes, the Ottomans were able to show a resolute resistance against the aggressions initiated by their formidable adversary.\textsuperscript{120}

One of the most elaborate European sources for the Morea Rebellion is \textit{Greece under Othoman and Venetian Domination} written by George Finlay. Just like other historians of the Morea Rebellion, Finlay reiterates that the main factor behind the Greek insurrection was Russian aggression: Russian propaganda which targeted at convincing the Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire to take up arms for the cause of Russia served as the catalyst for the revolt under discussion. What is more important, however, is the fact that Russia started to implement this policy in Montenegro a few years before the insurrection of 1770 took place. In other words,

\textsuperscript{118} William Deans, \textit{History of the Ottoman Empire, from the Earliest Period to the Present Time} (London: A. Fullarton, 1854), 150.
\textsuperscript{119} Ibid., 151.
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid., 156.
the reaya of Montenegro were so determined that they could not wait for Russian help and took up arms against their Turkish overlords in 1767. Yet, before Russian assistance came to support the insurgents of Montenegro, the Ottomans were successfully able to suppress this uprising on the spot. This narrative throws fresh light on the subject at hand. Namely, the Russian intrigue in the Morea was not the first of its kind but there had been others since Peter the Great’s time, which should have already put the Ottomans on alert long before the 1770s. As for the Morea, the Greeks seem to be less ready to take the risk of rebelling against their Turkish masters at all costs. Finlay argues Papazoğlu’s visit to Mani could not have actually brought about any reasonable conclusion unless Russia had promised to reward them generously for their incorporation. This became even more obvious when inadequate Russian forces showed up on the coast of Mani. Namely, the Maniots who had been expecting to see 10,000 Russians were strongly discouraged when they only saw 500 soldiers on board Russian ships. Their expectations for a sufficient supply of artillery and ammunition as well as means of transportation and ships required for a rebel army were not properly met by Feodor Orlov either. It was only through substantial bribes given to the leaders of Mani in anticipation of acquiring plunder during the struggle, and the guarantee/commitment of a strong navy with plentiful soldiers (which would shortly be brought by Alexis Orlov) that the Maniots were finally convinced to take up arms against the Ottomans.

In a similar vein to other European historians mentioned above, Finlay explains the main motivation either through Greek nationalism or the Philhellenistic view of outsiders. On the one hand, one of the most powerful Greek elites, Benaki, is claimed to have relied heavily upon “the relative military power of nations, his patriotism.” Then he promised Papazoğlu to provide

121 Finlay., 302-303.
122 Ibid. 307-308.
100,000 Greeks in return for Russian support for the forthcoming uprising in the Morea. On the other hand, however, Finlay also asserts that Tamara, who had not only increased the Philhellenism in the region but had been also highly affected during his education in Greece, was sent to Italy to coordinate the conspiracy with Alexis and Feodor Orlov.\(^{123}\)

This nationalistic or Philhellenistic approach to the Morea Rebellion is not limited to a few important figures like Benaki and Tamara. That is to say, the author occasionally implies that for most of the Greeks who joined in the rebellion, the ultimate goal that led them to fight against the Ottoman state could not be anything other than establishing an independent Greek state in the Morea. In this respect, the reason why the Russians did not find the necessary support from the Greeks is given as Feodor Orlov’s policy whereby only those Greeks who took the oath of allegiance to Catherine the Great were supported with weapons and provisions by Russia. Hence, the rest of the Greeks who had been dreaming of founding their own independent state were forced to make a choice between being subjects of the Ottomans and those of Russia. In the end, Finlay concludes that the Greeks of Morea had no desire to be slaves of Catherine in lieu of those of the Ottoman sultan. Nonetheless, he does not totally deny the fact that for many other Greeks, religious fanaticism was sufficient enough to convince them to rebel against the Ottomans in favour of Orthodox Russia.\(^{124}\) Finlay even posits that “the bigotry of Orthodoxy is more powerful than the feeling of patriotism.” That is why the Greek insurgents always preferred Russia instead of any Catholic state from Europe, e.g. Venice, despite the fact that the Greeks were repeatedly inveigled and humiliated by the Russians.\(^ {125}\)

Finlay blames the Ottomans for being ignorant of the conspiracy of Benaki in spite of being, to some extent, cognizant of the Russian intrigues in general. More importantly, however,
he argues that the Ottomans simply failed to take any preventive measure on the grounds that the Greeks were too cowardly to take part in such a conspiracy against the empire, and the Russians could not possibly send a navy from the Baltic Sea to all the way through the Mediterranean Sea. Moreover, he accuses the Ottomans of simple-mindedness for accepting Russian assurances of maintaining peace with the Ottoman Empire at all costs.\textsuperscript{126} Again, when the Ottoman army showed up in the Morea he blames the Ottomans for not identifying the Greek leader of the rebellion (Benaki) who secretly returned to Kalamata and succeeded in concealing the fact that he had taken part in the rebellion until the coming of the Russian fleet in early 1770.\textsuperscript{127}

Finlay admits that the rebels massacred some Muslims and plundered their belongings. But he also argues that they did not refrain from attacking property holdings of their coreligionists in the towns they assailed. It was only with great difficulty that the Russians were able to establish partial control and introduce some discipline among the Greek rebels.\textsuperscript{128} The problem of keeping soldiers under control was not unique to the Russians as far as the author is concerned. That is, once Muhsinzade took control of the peninsula, the great difficulty of keeping Ottoman forces – mainly Albanians – under control came about. Muhsinzade’s attempt to restore order and peace in the region became only partially successful since irregular Albanians continued to be real troublemakers in the region even after the suppression of the uprising in the summer of 1770.\textsuperscript{129}

There is no doubt that continuing wars in the north or in the Morea and Mediterranean Sea strained relations between the Greeks and the Ottomans. For example, just like Kâmil Pasha claimed, Finlay also posits that after the Ottoman navy was burnt into the ground by the Russians

\textsuperscript{126} Ibid., 304-305.
\textsuperscript{127} Ibid., 308-309.
\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., 309.
\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., 313-314.
at Çeşme, Muslims in Smyrna reacted by killing every Greek they caught in the streets of town. Besides, the foreign ministers in Istanbul were in jeopardy of Muslim attacks too, and it was, to some extent, because the plague hit the capital of the empire at the same time that Muslim rage simmered down and was replaced with tranquility. More importantly, however, the Russian navy continued sailing in the Mediterranean Sea until the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca was signed in 1774. In the meantime, however, Finlay states that they refused to take any further action other than guaranteeing continued Greek support for their cause. After the treaty was signed, however, the Russian fleet simply turned back to Russia and the Greeks were left on the hook despite all of the risks they had taken for the Russians. The Ottomans now not only increased oppression over the Greeks but also let the Albanians plunder Greek belongings for several years. It was not until the year 1779 when Gazi Hasan Pasha succeeded in putting a leash on the Albanians that the Ottoman Empire was able to reestablish order in the Morea once again. It is also stated that the Maniots did not seek amnesty till the year 1777 when Hasan Pasha with the sanction of Istanbul accepted their solicitation provided they would pay the taxes the same way that members of other districts in the Morea used to pay.

Thomas Milner, another European historian writing in the second half of the nineteenth century, also sees Russia as the single cause of the Morea Rebellion either by means of using Orthodox Christianity or money and pledges partially touched upon above. In other words, British as well as Dutch and Danish contributions to the Russian fleet are explicitly shown as the means through which the Russians were able to reach the Mediterranean Sea in 1770. In a similar manner to the other historians, Milner also accuses the Ottomans of the ignorance of

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130 Ibid., 319.
131 Ibid., 320-321.
132 Ibid., 323.
133 Ibid., 324.
geography and not accepting the possibility of a Russian maritime expedition in the Mediterranean Sea.\textsuperscript{134}

Most of the other European sources either mention nothing about the rebellion or say nothing that is indispensably essential for a good analysis of the Morea Rebellion. For instance, Sir Charles Eliot occasionally talks about the Morea Rebellion in his book \textit{Turkey in Europe}. All he argues is that from Peter the Great’s time onwards it was the intention of Russia to use their connection with Greece against the Ottomans. It was actually a plan of Marshal Münnich during the reign of Empress Anna to incite the Greeks to raise a revolt in the Morea. The plan seems to have been implemented more successfully and elaborately during the reign of Catherine II. In the end, it came to nothing and both Greeks and Russians started to blame one another for the unsuccessful rebellion initiated in the Morea against the Ottoman Empire. An exaggerated number of 50,000 Greeks was given as having been massacred at the hands of the Ottomans, survivors left without any property or villages which had been totally plundered by the Albanian forces of the empire in the region. It was only through Cezayirli Hasan Pasha who partially restored a kind of the order there in 1779 that the Albanians were efficiently removed from the Morea.\textsuperscript{135}

\textbf{Conclusion}

In this chapter we have investigated both the Ottoman and European sources discussing the Morea Rebellion and the way they interpreted this uprising. Examining these contemporary arguments for the Morea Rebellion not only allows us to reveal the main sources for today’s writings but also gives us a chance to compare these arguments with our findings extracted from

\textsuperscript{134} Thomas Milner, \textit{The Turkish Empire: The Sultans, the Territory and the People} (London: Religious Tract Society, 1876), 168.

\textsuperscript{135} Charles Eliot, \textit{Turkey in Europe} (London: Edward Arnold, 1908), 286-287.
the Ottoman archives in Istanbul. The number of such sources might be increased but what we have already taken into consideration for the sake of this chapter is enough to bring into the sharp relief the contemporary understanding of the insurrection of 1770. More importantly, however, their arguments almost totally define the limits of the material concerning the Morea Rebellion that is known to us at present. Namely, today’s secondary literature about this revolt takes the arguments made by aforementioned Ottoman and European scholars as granted. Most tragically, however, the secondary sources do not really add anything to what we have covered in the light of the Ottoman and European historians in this chapter.

A general analysis of all these sources proves that they share not only important similarities but some large differences in their approach to the Morea Rebellion. For example, they all seem to agree on the great role that Russia played in the construction of the revolt and explain Russian attempts to incite the Greeks to rebellion against the Ottoman Empire as being religion, nationalism or even personal interests. Despite differences in their emphasis they also agree that the Ottoman government utterly failed to recognize the forthcoming revolt of 1770, and was therefore unable to take required measures against the rebels in advance. Their detailed accounts, however, often contradict one another or emphasize disparate causes and concerns.

The Ottoman sources which are more or less based on the writings of Sadullah Enveri remind us of the significant role that the Russians played throughout the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774. From the Ottoman statesmen’s point of view, Russian activities were not restricted to the Morea Rebellion. In this connection, the repression of this insurrection was seen as a matter of life or death and the empire was encouraged to take necessary precautions accordingly. This explains, on the one hand, why the number of Greeks who took part in this revolt is usually exaggerated and, on the other hand, why the Ottoman sources prefer to describe
the Greek (Orthodox) subjects of the empire as being eager supporters of the Russian cause. The Ottoman approach to this rebellion especially before it was launched is severely criticized, however. Accordingly, these sources frequently blame the Ottomans for ignoring the possibility that the Russians would take an initiative in the Mediterranean Sea, despite the fact that they had actually been informed about the Russian approach in advance, through domestic and foreign intelligence.

Our study of the Ottoman sources also proves that the way they explain the uprising varies little from source to source apart from some minor details. This slight difference comes from the dates of their creation or from various characteristics of authors, who enjoyed varying positions within the Ottoman Empire. Their access to the primary sources also answers why we observe such distinctions in the way they elucidate the Morea Rebellion. Last but not least, all Ottoman sources demonstrate that the *ayan* and pasha households played a great role in the suppression of the Morea Rebellion, and that they were favoured enormously immediately after the insurrection of 1770. Accordingly, they were not only rewarded with official titles but also high state positions and financial gains. The empire thought of them as the best way to get rid of a chronic military weakness of the time, which became more and more conspicuous toward the end of the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774. Having accepted defeat by signing the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774, the Ottomans not only decided to favour these elites within society, but also delegated huge responsibilities to them in the Ottoman state apparatus.\(^{136}\)

As for the European sources, in particular those written in the nineteenth century, they are inclined to explain the Morea Rebellion within the nationalist narrative where the Greeks were fighting for their independence with the help of their Russian coreligionists. Unlike the Ottoman

\(^{136}\) As a matter of the fact, what we have summarized here in light of the near contemporary Ottoman sources is also supported by extensive archival sources in more recent literature of the Morea Rebellion. See for example, Nagata, *Muhsin-Zâde Mehmed Paşa ve Âyânlık Müessesesi*. 
sources, however, some deny the assumption that all Greek subjects of the Ottoman Empire responded to the Russian intrigue positively. Instead, these historians tend to answer the question of why the insurrection failed as lack of good relations between the Greeks and the Russians, neither of whom found what they had expected to get from their partner in the Mediterranean Sea and the Peloponnese. The European sources also greatly emphasize the religious reasons behind the rebellion, but they do not limit their argument with the religion. Instead, they occasionally spotlight other factors in the creation of the Morea Rebellion such as personal and economic reasons as well as ideological ones, e.g. Philhellenism.

We cannot reasonably eliminate any of the arguments made either by the Ottoman or European sources in contemporary histories of the Morea Rebellion. As we pointed out earlier, there are some important arguments which are not only commonly stated by many Ottoman and European sources mentioned above, but are also reasonably supported by our primary sources. In the following chapters we will elaborate on the rebellion and test the veracity of these narratives in light of the primary archival sources that we have assembled for that very purpose.
Chapter 4: Pre-Rebellion Conditions in the Morea and Awareness of the Upcoming Rebellion: A Critique of the Early Sources in Light of Ottoman Documents Written Before the Uprising

The Conditions in the Morea Before the Rebellion

We simply could not find any satisfactory answer to the question of what might have convinced the reaya of the Morea to fight against the Ottomans. There were of course certain socio-economic and political shortcomings of the Ottoman administration on the eve of the uprising which had put pressure not only on the sultan’s subjects in the peninsula but also on other provinces of the empire prior to the uprising. Nevertheless, these factors fall short of explaining why the Greeks of 1770 could not help taking part in the insurrection in favour of the Russian cause in the Morea. At this juncture, our documentary studies concerning the Ottoman understanding of the conditions prior to the rebellion shed light both on the upcoming revolt in general, and on the reasons that may have incited insurgents to fight against the state authority in particular. More importantly, however, this chapter will offer a comprehensive and extensive analysis of pre-rebellion conditions and Ottoman preparations against the Morea Rebellion. Available secondary and primary sources of the Morea Rebellion taken into consideration so far are mostly based on ideology, assumptions, overgeneralization, and even fiction, rather than a comprehensive understanding of the uprising. Here, we will not only reveal deficiencies and shortcomings in the literature of the uprising, but also reveal the Ottoman position on the rebellion in the light of the archival documents dated prior the insurrection of 1770.
Immediately after the re-conquest of the Morea from the Venetians in 1715, the traditional Ottoman system was once again applied to the Morea. Accordingly, Morea province (eyalet) was re-established, with an assigned governor of the Morea (Mora valisi). In addition, it was subdivided into administrative districts (kazas), each with a judge (kadi) who was also appointed by the Ottoman state. Finally, we see several guardians (muhabiz) of certain strongholds of high importance, such as Tripoliçe and Anabolu. Thereby, the Ottoman administration was re-installed in the peninsula, not much different than how it had been set up before. This Ottoman structure remained more or less unchanged until the insurrection of 1770.

By contrast with earlier conditions, though, we now see a substantial number of military personnel located in certain regions of the peninsula, for several reasons. First, continuing struggles between the Ottomans and Venetians even after the Treaty of Karlowitz had increased the number of fortresses during Venetian occupation considerably, and these forts were still in service after the Ottoman re-conquest. Thus, the Ottomans not only furnished the castles with soldiers for the express purpose of defense and military service, but they also manned the rest of the Morea with a substantial number of imperial soldiers against possible Venetian and later Austrian onslaughts. Second, the socio-economic and political turmoil of earlier decades that had made banditry (klepht) dominant over the Peloponnese forced the empire to use more and more local military forces (armotoloi) in order to keep the brigands under control and to protect reaya from assault and battery by bandits. As a matter of fact, this problem already existed during the Venetian occupation of the Morea (1687–1715), and the Venetians had not been that successful

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1 As we mentioned in the first chapter, the empire even desired to re-implement the tımar system of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in Peloponnese, which had been replaced with the malikane system starting in 1695. Soon, however, the tımar system was abolished in favour of the malikane system.
2 See Kiel, “The Smaller Aegean Islands in the 16th-18th Centuries According to Ottoman Administrative Documents.”
3 Alexander, 15-27.
at eliminating troublemakers. The Ottoman policy of re-establishing order in the Morea did not really seem to work well, either.

To give but one example, Abbé Michel Fourmont complained about the perpetual problem of security during his travels in the 1730s. It was difficult to travel without an escort for protection, and he occasionally had to hire additional escorts in certain areas since one janissary was not enough. More importantly, after mentioning the misery of the people living in cities, he posited that they were so aggrieved and despondent that almost all of them had turned to banditry. Indeed, most travel accounts, especially those written by European travelers about the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire, also describe desolate cities, uncultivated lands, a dearth of population and the extreme poverty of the reaya living under Ottoman domination. We do not know with any certainty how dire the conditions of the Ottoman subjects in the Morea were. More ironically, even now, we are not really certain if the misery of the reaya following the Ottoman re-conquest of 1715 was real. That is, we have some historians, such as Deligiannes and Finlay, giving an appraisal of the Ottoman’s sound management of public administration in the peninsula. The former argues that the years between 1715 and 1764 were among the most prosperous for the Christian reaya, who were allowed to be ruled and controlled by their fellow Christians, that is, the kocabaşis. Accordingly, these kocabaşis were not only selected by Christian reaya, but they were also free from any Turkish interference, especially in matters

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4 For public order under the Venetians, see Ibid., 29-36.
5 A special study has been made of the situation in Anabolu following the re-conquest of Morea in 1715. Nejat Göyünç, “XVIII. Yüzyılda Türk İdaresinde Nauplia (Anabolu) ve Yapıları,” in İsmail Hakki Uzu ncolslı’ya Armağan (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1976).
6 One of the best-known travelers, who was particularly interested in relics of ancient Greek inscriptions. He wrote diaries composed of more than a thousand texts between the years 1729 and 1730 in Greece.
8 See for example, Hill; Porter.
related to dispersion of the tax load.\textsuperscript{9} The later also says that the inhabitants of Morea were exempted from some taxes and that in fact the Ottomans encouraged newcomers to settle in the Morea in order to increase the productivity under their control.\textsuperscript{10} A number of imperial decrees indicate that the Ottomans gave important financial privileges to Orthodox clergymen and permissions for the restoration of old churches as well as the construction of new ones during the time period under discussion.\textsuperscript{11}

The lack of information and a dearth of historical studies concerning the Morea prior to 1770 prevent us from finding a satisfactory answer for the question of what exactly happened after the Ottoman re-conquest of Morea in 1715 and how the people were affected by the new Ottoman administration in the Peloponnese. Under these circumstances, one could still safely argue that since the Morea was totally re-integrated into the Ottoman socio-economic and political system, the conditions there should not have been that different from the general situation of the non-Muslims, as described in the first two chapters. Accordingly, there is no particular reason to think that the \textit{reaya} of Morea were relentlessly persecuted and suppressed before the rebellion actually took place. Quite the contrary. Finlay argues that following the Treaty of Passarowitz, the conditions of Greeks as a whole improved considerably throughout the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{12} Moreover, the prominence of the Christian elites paralleled that of the government officials. That is to say, it is a well-known fact that in contrast to what happened during the Venetian era, when Greek notables had not been allowed to attain important state positions, the \textit{koçabaşı} of the Ottoman Empire managed to acquire certain key functions, and their authority therefore increased under the Ottoman hegemony. Alexander argues that, on the

\textsuperscript{9} Alexander, 38.
\textsuperscript{10} Finlay, 283-300.
\textsuperscript{11} \textit{İslam Ansiklopedisi} (Istanbul Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2005), s.v. "Mora."
\textsuperscript{12} Finlay, 280.
one hand, these koçabaşıs did their best to eliminate the economic power of the Muslim ayan in the Morea after 1715, and on the other hand, by 1750 they often consolidated their power by joint action with Muslim ayan against their competitor(s), be they Muslim or koçabaşıs. What is particularly important to know here is the fact that sultanic authority could not be totally installed in the Morea after 1715. Instead, both Muslim and non-Muslim notables of the empire filled a long-existing power vacuum, even if it sometimes meant crossing the line between the two so-called separate societies (Muslims and non-Muslims).¹³

The Morea After 1750s: Who Sided with Whom and for What Reason(s)?

From the 1750s onward, however, most of scholars believe that for the regular subjects of the empire, things went from good to bad and, even later, to worse. In contrast to the period between 1715 and 1750, when Ottoman subjects had lived in a state of relative peace, after 1750s we see the peninsula full of struggle, trouble, intrigue, and disorder. For example, in two reports by Ahmed Aghazade [guardian (naib) of Kalamata] we are informed about the affairs of Halil Bey of Corinth, who started to control almost all the tax farms of Morea in 1750s. Halil Bey not only extorted a substantial amount of money (180,000 kuruş) from several districts of Morea, but also cooperated with a Chief Maniot (bandit) named Theodorakes Koumoundouros. Accordingly, this bandit was responsible for terrorizing the reaya in Kalamata for booty that was later shared with his partner Halil, who, in return, took Koumoundouros under his wing. After a while, Halil even invaded Kalamata and fought with the soldiers of Mustafa Pasha (governor/vali of Morea), who was ultimately defeated by Koumoundouros. Mustafa Pasha’s later success against the bandit did not bring about any positive change, on account of Halil’s unending assistance to Koumoundouros. Finally, both Mustafa Pasha and his successor, Halil Pasha, were

¹³ Alexander, 40.
removed from office with the help of Halil Bey of Corinth’s powerful friends in Istanbul. In this manner, Halil Bey of Corinth continued to be a real troublemaker even during the governorship of another [Bahir] Mustafa Pasha (successor of Halil Pasha), who did not even dare to fight back against Halil Bey of Corinth during his tenure (between June 18, 1755 and May 1756).\(^\text{14}\)

The problem of banditry was so obvious in the peninsula that there are many documents that mention this burning issue in the empire long before 1770. However, the situation was even more complex and intricate than what is described in these documents. For example, there was also an important struggle between Muslim ayan and kocabaşis in the Peloponnese. According to Deligiannes, the Ottoman governor of the Morea between 1762 and 1764 was Ahmed Pasha, who acted against the oppression of the Muslim ayan in favour of the reaya. Consequently, these ayan tried to persuade the imperial council (divan) to depose Ahmed from his position. In return, Ahmed and kocabaşis including Ananias, Petros Deligiannes, Krevattas, Zaimes and Notaras decided to send Greek messengers to Istanbul in order to defend their cause against emissaries of the Muslim ayan. In the end, the Greek messengers not only won the case before the imperial council but also got the ayan executed in the Morea. When Ahmed Pasha was replaced with Hamza Pasha in 1764, however, Hamza found a way to kill all of these kocabaşis. Among them, the execution of Konstantinos Zaimes deserves a mention here. An imperial order was sent to the chief tax collector (muhassil) of Morea, that is, Mehmed Emin Pasha, asking him to implement the death penalty for Zaimes in 1765. Zaimes was found guilty of extorting unjust tax from the Ottoman subjects and killing two hundred Muslims after taking their 15,000 kuruş. Indeed, at first he was punished with an exile to Cyprus, which he did not accept. In response, the state decided to have him put to death. Interestingly enough, the empire granted Zaimes’ position of

\(^{14}\) Ibid., 40-43.
kocabaşı and all his belongings to his brothers, who in return accepted to pay Konstantinos’ debts to leading figures in the Peloponnese.\textsuperscript{15}

One should not be too quick to conclude that the kocabaşıs of Morea were united and acted together against either the Muslim ayan or the state before the insurrection of 1770. We see a leader (başbuğ) of the Maniots with the name Komandoraki making an official complaint about some of his coreligionists and leading members of Mani society, who had been engaged in piracy both in Mani and in the Mediterranean Sea. Komandoraki asked the government’s help to impede them in their malicious acts. He argued that the Maniots suffered a lot from mischievous behaviour from the part of the rebels and begged for the rebels’ total annihilation. It is also understood from this petition that he sent an important sum of money for the execution of his wish. Consequently, if the reaya of Morea are to be defined with a “supra identity,” this can be neither a religious nor a race affiliation with certain societies (the Maniots, in our case), since religion and race were far from explicating their behaviour.\textsuperscript{16}

Harassment, oppression and violence of the bandits in the Mani continued without interruption up until the insurrection of 1770. For instance, Muslim and Christian subjects of the empire went to the kadi of Kalamata in July 1761, asking for a guard to be re-established against the brigands of Mani. The imperial council wanted to respond positively to this request by assigning a regiment of 54 men, but this regiment later proved ineffectual against the bandits of Mani. The Maniots were not the only community fighting for their own benefit in the peninsula. An imperial decree (ferman) of mid-December 1765 claims that the Ottomans intended to prevent Albanian vagrants (serseri) from coming into the Morea on the grounds that Albanians

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 47.
\textsuperscript{16} E 2929.
had forced the reaya to accommodate them and provide all they needed in this peninsula. At the same time, the anonymous writer posits that some kocabaşıs joined the Maniots, who had been real troublemakers for the Ottoman Empire from the beginning. We are also informed here that there was a constant competition going on between the Albanians, kocabaşıs and Maniots at that time. Accordingly, during what was in fact the first phase of this revolt, the Albanians were attacked by the allies of the kocabaşıs and the Maniots just a few years before the beginning of the Morea Rebellion.

The peninsula was not a place of peace for Ottoman officials, nor for the state itself either. We observe some further outlaw figures, who were basically involved in banditry to the point where they killed state officers and made forays to state buildings. On July 17, 1766, for example, the empire ordered the tax collector (muhassil) of Morea, El-Hac Mehmed Emin Pasha, to catch a zimmi named Reşmo and his relatives on account of their crimes in Balyabadra. According to the story, Reşmo and his kinsmen avoided paying poll-tax (cizye) by disguising themselves as Venetians, and they did not obey state rules. Instead, they tortured people and committed other evil in the region. What is more striking here is that Reşmo and his brother, together with his uncles and other kinsmen, murdered one of the local guards (sipahi) named Miço Mehmed and plundered all of Mehmed’s possessions. Last but not least, with the help of other bandits they even dared to make a foray into the state customs house and attempted to kill the customs protector (emin), another El-Hac Mehmed Emin. In other words, about four years before the Morea Rebellion we see some individuals who in one way or another stood against the state authority. They were not only able to act as the de facto power of the peninsula (Balyabadra, in our case), but were also audacious enough to

17 Alexander, 44-47.
18 CDH, 1122.
attack a state officer and kill him. More importantly, they attacked an important state institution, where Ottoman authority was supposed to be presented in its highest power, and made an attempt on the life of its head officer. It is impossible to say whether this was the case all over the Morea at that time. But, as we have seen above, it is unlikely that this was the first time the empire experienced such a malady in the Morea. Instead, the Ottomans had already accepted the tumult and disorder in the region and tried to fix at least some of it when an opportunity arose. Nevertheless, government officials were not that successful (or sometimes did not really intend to be) at putting things in order or keeping a tight rein on the lawless people of Morea. After all, although Reşmo was caught, he later escaped at the hands of state officers (likely with the help of important figures who might have included the Muslims as well). When the state wanted to bring him to the court in Istanbul, this order (*hüküm*) was sent to catch him in Balyabadra, where the clerk who wrote this *hüküm* anticipated Reşmo may have returned.  

Things seem to have gone out of control just before the Morea Rebellion. A summary of the judicial report of the Benfeşa fortress in the Morea is important here. It was written just one or two year(s) before the rebellion began and is quite important to understanding the situation in the Morea on the eve of the revolt. With two ships (each with seventy bandits on board), the Maniots attacked the people living in the Benfeşa fortress. Their leaders were named as Yorgo and Golgori, who acted “like unbelievers of Malta” and attacked both Muslims and other

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19 Another thing that attracts our attention in the analysis of this document is that Reşmo was disguised as a Venetian. We cannot know his intention from this document. However, the Ottomans must have been suspicious of the Venetians in the Morea, who had captured the peninsula less than eighty years ago. Hence, by putting on Venetian clothes Remço disguised himself at the expense of attracting Ottoman attention. In this connection, one might think that there was a close relation between some bandit groups and the Venetians, the previous owners of Morea, or that Remço simply desired to take advantage of being excused from poll-tax as a foreigner in the empire. Even if this was the case, one should raise the question why he preferred to be a Venetian rather than anyone else. After all, Venice was far from having the most privileged status within the border of the Ottoman Empire at that time. We cannot know from this document to what extent ideology or policy influenced the bandit Remço in his actions, but we do know that he was not alone. His family members stood by him even if it meant facing the prospect of imperial punishment (possibly capital punishment). CDH, 1122. See also, Gallant: 283.
subjects of the empire in order to either seize the belongings of Ottoman subjects as spoil or enslave some reaya for the purpose of selling them in slave markets.\textsuperscript{20} What is particularly significant here is the story narrated about the kidnapping and killing of some important state figures by the Mani bandits. The bandits attacked the fortress where Seyyid Mehmed Efendi (Commander of Janissaries), Seyyid Molla Abdulrahman (Mehmed’s son), Mahmud Agha (Mehmed’s son-in-law), and Cebeci Molla Ali (Mahmud’s son) were residing. These important state officers were attacked when they were in their garden. Seyyid Molla Abdulrahman and one of their guests, named Ahmed Efendi, were killed, and Seyyid Mehmed Efendi, his brother-in-law, and Molla Ali were wounded during the struggle with the brigands. The latter took Seyyid Mehmed Efendi, his brother-in-law, and Molla Ali as prisoners in the hope of getting ransom from their prominent relatives in the future. Moreover, the bandits not only plundered all their belongings including clothes and money, they also kidnapped Molla Ali’s six-month-old child. In the end, they sold the spoils and offered to release their state prisoners in exchange for six bags of akçe. In response to what they had done, the kadi of the region sent a petition to the imperial council to stop them from doing any further evil.\textsuperscript{21}

On the eve of the Morea Rebellion, bandits in the Morea became so strong that they were able to attack the head of the Janissary soldiers and all his family members without worrying about the fact that they were high ranking state officials of the Ottoman Empire. More importantly, the empire seemed to be too feeble and weak to force them to give up their unlawful activities in the peninsula. Even the state officers themselves, who were supposed to protect the reaya, were not in a position to protect themselves from the bandits’ assaults. Besides, the way the report summarizes the incident once again implies that this was not uncommon in the region.

\textsuperscript{20} AE Mustafa III, 23593. \\
\textsuperscript{21} AE Mustafa III, 23593.
at all. The Ottomans did not remain indifferent to what the bandits had done before and assigned certain people to catch the rebels and put things in order again. We do not know how effective they were in doing so, but what we know for sure is that it was none other than the reaya of the region who were going to pay the bill for the campaign launched against these bandits. In fact, they were supposed to pay 1,500 gurus to the state for the expenditure of this campaign. One should also keep in mind the possible impact of such economic pressure imposed upon the reaya on the eve of the uprising. To give but one example, the imperial council sent an order to the towns of İnebolu and Gördos asking the reaya to prepare the necessary wheat for Istanbul just before the uprising on September 23, 1769. Accordingly, 8,200 sacks of wheat (İstanbul hintası) were taken by the state from the above-mentioned towns in the Morea. So, during the same year when the rebellion broke out the empire took a substantial amount of wheat from the area where soon after we see the rebellion occurred. On balance, the economic pressure on the reaya resulting from the demand of the empire may be another reasonable explanation for the question why some reaya of the empire reacted against their Turkish overlords. After all, it is an accepted practice for the state to force its subjects to sell products to the state at a price that is lower than market price, and there is no doubt that this strained the relations between the reaya and the Ottoman Empire.

When we take aforementioned order and the judicial report above into consideration, it is quite feasible to argue that before the insurrection of 1770, the Ottoman subjects of Morea (both Muslims and non-Muslims) had enough reasons to be unhappy on account of the assaults from the Maniots/bandits without the additional aggravation of being economically exploited by both the banditry and state itself. On balance, the few materials mentioned above show that the reaya

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22 AE Mustafa III, 23593; (Cemaziyelvelvel 22, 1183 AH).
23 What is interesting here is that this load of wheat was going to be carried out of the Morea with a French ship.
24 AE Mustafa III, 5201.
of Peloponnese already had a substantial number of reasons not to be satisfied with living in the Morea prior to the uprising. More importantly, though, all these reasons did not necessarily come exclusively from either an international source, such as Russia, or the Ottoman Empire itself.

There is no reason to believe that the mayhem at issue was confined to the Morea at the time. Just before the Morea Rebellion (around June 1769) the kadi of Rodos Hacı İsmail and trustee of an endowment (mütevelli), named Ahmed, sent a petition to Istanbul in order to criticize those in charge of ruling people in a district of Rhodes. 25 On the one hand, as far as demographic structure was concerned, Rhodes was not much different from the Morea, where non-Muslims in general and Orthodox Christians in particular constituted a majority of the population. On the other hand, most of the leading figures who were in charge of ruling this island were Christian kocabaşı and were here blamed for torturing their coreligionists on the island. 26 Like Rhodes and Morea prior to the insurrection of 1770, many other places on the coast of the Aegean and Mediterranean seas likely had a majority of Orthodox Christians. More importantly, at the very time the Morea Rebellion was about to commence, their torturers were their coreligionists rather than Ottoman officers. Such complaints by non-Muslim Ottoman reaya were likely much more widespread than a single study of this kind can ever reveal.

The Circle of Justice Out of Reach: Risks of Making Official Complaint(s) to the Imperial Council

So far we have talked about how bandits, state officials, kocabaşı and other prominent figures of the Peloponnese acted until the Morea Rebellion. More significantly, however, one

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25 The problem that the Christian reaya of the empire had been experiencing at the hands of their coreligionists of course brought about a lack of integrity and a dearth of cooperation within the Orthodox Christian community against the Ottoman Empire at the time of the Morea Rebellion. Therefore, to some extent this explains why an attempt to rally the Orthodox Christians for the Russian cause failed in the short run. At this juncture, Rhodes presents us just another example where we can overtly observe and understand reasons for the hesitancy of the Orthodox Christians to take part in the uprising against the Ottomans.

26 E 7508/296 (Gurre-i Safer, 1183).
should question how ordinary *reaya* of the peninsula reacted against the oppression and persecution that surrounded them on the eve of the uprising. İnalcık argues that as a reflection of Near-Eastern state philosophy, Ottoman legitimacy as a ruling dynasty was linked to its ability to guarantee justice to its subjects. Accordingly, oppressed *reaya* of the empire had an absolute right to bring their complaints before the sultan, who was supposed to correct any injustice committed against his subjects. 27 Any subject of the empire, irrespective of his social status, could directly send a petition to the imperial council in order to bring his case before the sultan. State investigations in order to enforce justice and call villains to account were one of the most significant responsibilities of the imperial council. 28 However, as Penah Efendi argues through his booklet, the chain binding the *reaya* and the central government together had been broken long before the revolt. In other words, even if people in the Morea sometimes intended to make their claims at the imperial court, they were punished for their acts either by those who had been complained about or by state officers, who were in danger of losing their position in the Ottoman administration if the *reaya*’ complaints were taken into consideration in the imperial court.

Vlachopoulou’s study on the Record Book of Complaints for the Morea (*Mora Ahkâm Defteri*) 29 offers us the earliest examples discussing Ottoman inability to stand for justice, approximately a decade before the uprising took place in the Morea. Her examples were intentionally picked up among members of various military groups who became involved in suppression, torture and murder in order to identify such crimes not only with lack of state authority but also with possible involvement of the state in crimes committed in the peninsula. To give but one example, in 1760 Şeyh Hasan brought the case of his brother Mehmed Emin

28 Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire; the Classical Age, 1300-1600* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), 91.
29 For the details on the *Mora Ahkâm Defteri*, see *Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Rehberi*, (Istanbul: Devlet Aşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2000), 81.
before the imperial council. Accordingly, Deli Mahmud and a janissary officer kidnapped Mehmed Emin and brought him to a stronghold close to the fortress of Anabolu. They not only beat him up but also extorted all his belongings and money. Although the imperial council ordered Mehmed Emin to be freed with his possessions, Deli Mahmud did not take this order into consideration. Instead, Ali got 1,050 kurşun in order to set Mehmed Emin free but did not keep his promise in the end. Afterwards, Mehmed Emin also paid 300 Venetian gold ducats to Deli Mahmud, and later still a large sum of money to the former substitute judge (naib) Hafız Mustafa in exchange of his freedom. Yet, none filled their promise. Before two Ottoman agents showed up in order to investigate the case in Anabolu, Deli Mahmud vanished into the thin air with his captive Mehmed Emin. Vlachopolou’s further documentary search in the archive discusses that Mehmed Emin’s kidnap and disappearance may have resulted from his previous competition with other members of the military class.30

Her second example once again illustrates how complex and complicated the relations among government officials were. In 1764, Molla Ali made a claim against Mustafa Agha before the imperial council. Ali blamed Mustafa not only for getting him tortured, oppressed and robbed, but also for making false claims against him before the divan. As a result, Molla Ali acquired a fetva from Şeyhülislam, who had convicted Mustafa Agha of committing the aforementioned crime. Afterwards, Molla Ali was reported to have been killed by Hüseyin Usta, a former member of the sixth Janissary company (bölük). Hüseyin’s brother Halil (a member of the same bölük) asked the imperial council to investigate the case, claiming that his brother was not guilty. Vlachopolou argues that the reason Molla Ali was murdered was that military members of Anabolu seem to have punished him on the grounds that Molla Ali had made an

official complaint against the Anabolu military before. Lastly, Hüseyin Usta was later murdered by Haşim Ahmed and his three soldiers in front of the fortress of Anabolu. In return, Janissaries asked the imperial council to have Haşim captured and executed. Again, Vlachopoulou argues that the possible reason why Hüseyin Usta was killed is the mistake he had previously committed in having brought his case before the imperial council. Taking all the evidence into consideration, the author concludes that “encroachments by members of the military class did not simply occur in occasional isolated cases but, rather, followed a pattern.”

Vlachopoulou’s study of the *Mora Ahkâm Defteri* reveals only one aspect of the whole story. More importantly, regular *reaya* of the empire had already lost their legitimate right to complain about their superiors, governors, seniors and so forth; although Ottoman subjects sometimes intended to make a formal complaint about governors to the imperial council, they had already denied the power to do so. After all, governors or *köcabası* seemed to have a better chance to make counter complaint or even a false claim to the state, a possibility that always needed to be taken into consideration by the *reaya* of Morea. Ordinary *reaya* were already aware that such false claims could be grounds for their total destruction on the order of Ottoman central administration, and they therefore had to act accordingly.

Immediately before the insurrection, people were not able to make complaints to the imperial council, either and, even if they did so, they somehow were punished by those about whom they had complained. For instance, in the year 1766/1767, the *reaya* were explicitly discouraged from sending an official complaint letter to Istanbul, which clearly proved that locals had already lost faith in their ability to obtain justice from the imperial council on the eve of the Morea Rebellion. The story goes that one of the *köcabası* in Karetna overtaxed the people, against their will. In response, the *reaya* in Karetna wanted to make an official complaint

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31 Ibid., 130-132.
about this particular kocabaşı to the governor of Morea, Tevkii Pasha. Even though they succeeded in reaching the governor, two men of the kocabaşı had tried to prevent them from doing so. In the end, people became afraid of making further complaints because they realized that kethüdas of kocabaşıs would disclose their complaints to the government official and that this might be a good reason for kocabaşıs to take revenge on them. Then, they decided not to inform Tevkii Pasha, with whom they had been pleased. What is of special importance here for us is that someone like the kocabaşı of Karetta was able to give the Ottoman subjects a hard time with the help of his close connection to important figures, either in the Morea or in Istanbul.32

One of the most striking examples revealing this lack of trust among even government officials comes from Penah Efendi’s report. Having praised the competence of Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha, Penah posits that, on account of being expelled from the vizierate in 1768, Mehmed Pasha preferred not to share everything with the central government officials, both in Anatolia and later in the Morea.33 To have contact with the central government was always quite problematic, even for high dignitaries such as Muhsinzade. Even if some decided to do so, this became a ground for them to get into trouble at the hands of the Ottoman statesmen or those who were supported by them in Istanbul. Wise man like Muhsinzade who had learnt a lot from his previous experience in Istanbul as the Grand Vizier did not find it appropriate to inform the

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32 CML, 284. Hence, it is hardly possible to define who was with whom on the eve of the uprising (and this is even truer after collapse of the Morea Rebellion as we will discuss later). See for example, the anonymous author of KK, 60-1, who, as is understood from his writing, had worked as an intelligence officer, was sometimes informed about what had been going on in Morea through two kocabaşıs. As we often see in the writings of Penah Efendi, this anonymous author also claims that he had been well informed beforehand about the revolt which was about to take place in Morea (Tripoliçe, in this case). According to him, when he was in Tripoliçe, somehow (bir tarikiye) he learnt that some infidel reaya had allied themselves with the Russians. In addition to his unknown source, he also gives the name Benaki, who accused a priest of bringing a certain number of Christian reaya under the pretext of founding a Bazaar. At the end, the priest succeeded in summoning 3,000 people, and they started to attack the Ottoman subjects in Tripoliçe and later moved to Gastun with the same purpose. There is no doubt that some of the aforementioned information became available to the author through the Christian reaya, who had been against the rebels for one reason or another. KK, 60-1, 2.

33 Penah Efendi, 156.
imperial council about every piece of information, which ideally needed to be sent to the capital. As we will also discuss later, things went further downhill after 1770. Trust among the Ottoman reaya, state officers and the imperial chamber ceased to exist in the eyes of many Ottoman figures, including Penah Efendi, the anonymous author, Muhsinzade and many others.

One can envisage how difficult it was for the Ottoman subjects, having observed the way the ruling class acted, to live under the Ottoman state as it was then. They had neither influential friends to help them nor a chance to take advantage of their ideally legitimized right to make a complaint to the sultan. Possibly as a result of this constant mayhem, even before the insurrection of 1770 we have been informed that some reaya started to leave their lands for safer places in the empire. For instance, the reaya of Eskinos, a small town in the Morea, migrated to other towns of the Ottoman Empire. No sooner had they left their lands than the remaining reaya of Eskinos had to take on the responsibilities of the fugitives (by paying more taxes), which gave the inhabitants of Eskinos an additional burden. As a result, they asked the imperial council to bring the fugitives back to their former lands by means of judges in the towns to which they had moved.\footnote{AE Mustafa III, 29501.} We are not sure what happened or what the state decided to do after that, since we do not come across any other document on this particular issue.

One can make so many speculations based on the previously mentioned primary source, written just before the uprising (June 11, 1769). For example, as it is often the case in the Ottoman Empire (and in many other states as well), local officials just run away if they are not properly protected by the state. The reaya of Eskinos may not have liked to stay on their lands once these became a source of trouble rather than a source of income—either because of the banditry and state officials or because of other reasons that have (or have not) been mentioned above. Nevertheless, based on this single document, such a big assumption may be somewhat
exaggerated. After all, it might have been an exceptional case, or the reasons behind it may have been anything other than economic. And, unfortunately, we are not able to understand them all by scrutinizing merely a limited number of the sources. However, with the support of other documents that have been taken into account so far it is at least safe to argue now that the conditions in the Morea just before the rebellion were far from peaceful or quiet.

Both the anonymous author and Penah Efendi give us further clues about why this mayhem might have been the case before the revolt. For example, having argued that the Maniots used to be a problem for the Ottomans, particularly when they had been required to pay taxes, the former posits that both *ayan* and *kocabaşı* started to collect taxes from the *reaya* of Morea for their own benefits before the rebellion. In that respect, they acted as if they were state officers and gathered taxes such as poll and emergency taxes for their own benefit. In a similar manner to Penah Efendi, the anonymous author talks about how the taxes ought to be registered and what methods the empire should follow in order not to have the problems it had previously. After all, he argues that both *ayan* and *kocabaşı* extracted more taxes than what the imperial council had asked from them and embezzled the surplus. Lastly, he recommends the *kocabaşı* to be forbidden to administer the *reaya* of Morea. To be exact, poll taxes should not be collected by local leading figures, but rather by state tax collectors who are directly appointed by the state.

In conclusion, on the eve of the Morea Rebellion it is not that easy to decide who was with whom. In other words, in contrast to popular nationalist or even religious understanding of

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35 KK, 60-1, 11. Penah also supports that even as early as 1715 the people of Mani passed the tax on to the *reaya* of Morea and even imposed extra tax upon them for their own benefit. Although the empire occasionally did try to put things in order in the Mani, the rulers never found a chance to make it happen. Penah makes some suggestions like constructing a fortress in the Mani to keep them under control, as Ali Pasha had once intended. Penah concludes that something must be done to get them under control once and for all. Penah Efendi, 155.

36 KK, 60-1, 12-13.

37 KK, 60-1, 15.
two distinct societies fighting for the supremacy in the peninsula, we cannot identify any homogenous community that can be characterized chiefly by a strong sense of common identity forcing them to act together. Sometimes a kocabaşı cooperated with government officials in order to eliminate a Muslim ayan. At other times Christian reaya of the peninsula hoped for help from the imperial council against their co-religionist ruler—to no avail. In addition, on the one hand we see a state officer making a false claim against his colleague with the help of a non-Muslim bandit, and on the other hand, we see a brigand fighting for the cause of a government officer who later protected this bandit against state’s interests. The complexity of the relations either between the reaya and government officials or between Muslim and non-Muslim elites becomes clearer as new work is published. Suffice it to say that the existence of two homogenous societies struggling for their common interest before the revolt is nothing but a fiction of later historians. There was neither a common enemy nor an unchanging and faithful friend, so we cannot simply talk about a constant line dividing Christian and Muslim reaya of the Ottoman Empire in the Morea. As it is often the case in the rebellions of the time, the self-interest that set individuals free to cooperate with or to fight against anyone in the empire likely leads to a much more complicated story than what we have today. On balance, the turmoil was so widespread in the peninsula in pre-1770 that the only difference the Morea Rebellion brought to the scene was Russia. Russia further exacerbated the violence and disorder in the peninsula, rather than being its sole cause. The year 1770 was not the first time that the Ottoman Empire had experienced turmoil encouraged and supported by the Russians. For example, simultaneous to the Morea Rebellion we see another rebellion taking place in Wallachia as we will see in the fifth chapter.\textsuperscript{38} Even before the Morea Rebellion, however, there is no particular reason to believe that the Ottomans were both surprised and astonished to discover that the reaya of Morea

\textsuperscript{38} See E 9288-27.
also took up arms against the state with the incitement of Russia at the beginning of 1770 as we will now argue in greater detail.

Ottoman Awareness of Other Russian Intrigues Prior to the Uprising

One of the primary discoveries to be made in the documentary evidence is that the Ottomans had sufficient reason for accusations of Russia long before the uprising. It is clear not only that they were cognizant of the Russian machinations on their own terrain, but also that they had struggled with Russian intrigues exclusively targeted at getting the Ottomans into constant trouble in various imperial lands. Thus, the subsequent activity of the Russians in the Morea should have been neither unexpected nor new from the Ottoman statesmen’s point of view. As early as 1751–1752 (1163 AH) we come across the clues about Russia claiming to having incited Ottoman subjects against the state. That is, according to Penah Efendi, the earliest attempt by the Russians (with the help of Greek priests) to incite the Orthodox people was in Ethiopia (Habes). In the end, however, most of the priests were not able to find accommodation among native people and therefore they either gave up and returned or perished there. Nevertheless, Penah also argues that he was informed that some remained there since they were still supported by the Russians.\(^{39}\)

Penah Efendi’s account provides the earliest example of Russian machinations, although this has no or little relation with the region under discussion here. But archival documents offer further evidence of Russian intrigue on the eve of the Morea Rebellion in the Balkans as well. For example, a document written in 1768–1769 (1182 AH) claims that Moldavia (Boğdan) had been the source of Russian intrigues for about three to five years. And now Russia started to provoke the reaya of Wallachia (Eflak) and conceivably also causing them to rise against the

\[^{39}\] Penah Efendi, 66.
Ottoman authority.\textsuperscript{40} It is quite likely that Russia had intended to incite the \textit{reaya} of Moldavia and Wallachia the same way that they did in the Morea a little bit later. In other words, Russia did not limit its influence and impact merely to the Morea, nor were the Ottomans indifferent to what Russia had already implemented in the Ottoman territories prior to the insurrection of 1770. More importantly, however, Russian influence upon the \textit{reaya} of Moldavia and Wallachia was fruitful and caused much trouble to the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottomans’ immediate reaction against the rebels of Moldavia was quite a traditional one. The empire gave orders to forgive those who had repented of their former disloyalty and to punish only those who were resolute and insistent in fighting against the empire.\textsuperscript{41} As we will see in the case of the Morea Rebellion as well, the Ottomans always kept the door open for negotiation and amnesty so that at least some rebels would change their mind and start to act for the Ottoman cause.\textsuperscript{42} The examples suggest that the Ottoman officials were more aware than is generally assumed about Russian interference in the Ottoman territories. The Morea Rebellion fit a pattern that had been already implemented against Russia previously by the Ottomans as a reflection of a highly developed policy of protection.\textsuperscript{43}

Russian activities on the Danube at Silistre at the beginning of the 1769 campaign are of special importance for two reasons. First and foremost, an Ottoman document written on May 26, 1769 argues that a rebellion took place in Silistre on account of the Russian incitement of the \textit{reaya} on the grounds that they were Orthodox brothers (\textit{Mosko keferesi tarafindan muktezay-ı

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\textsuperscript{40} E 2380/31.  
\textsuperscript{41} E 3947.  
\textsuperscript{42} For example, according to E 5777 the punishment of the \textit{reaya} in the Morea was allowed on the condition that they insisted on rebelling against the Ottoman Empire (\textit{usat u reaya ... itaatine duhulde israr ider ise kahr u tedmirleri ilanını}).  
\textsuperscript{43} The number of documents concerning the insurrection of Moldavia is not limited to what we have already mentioned above. The relation between the Moldavia Rebellion and the Ottoman-Russian Wars is strongly emphasized and the \textit{reaya} of Moldavia were seen to be favouring the Russian cause during the time of the troubles. See for example, E 4026/1 and E 4026/2 (written on November 18, 1769).
cinsiyet ve mezhebi melanetlerine istinaden ... reayayı iğfal ve ihtilal iderek takiben vaki bulan isyanları). Second, in order to suppress this revolt the empire followed very similar policies, predominantly relying on local officials who were supposed to provide imperial forces with all needed soldiers, money and grain. The story unfolding in Silistre was not really that different from the insurrection of 1770, therefore.\(^44\)

Almost simultaneously with the Moldavia, the rebellion of Montenegro also occurred in October 1769. The document indicated that the empire had already suppressed a rebellion of Montenegro, but now the same reaya were re-encouraged to take up arms against their Turkish masters, with the provocation of the Russians and the obsequious supporters of Russia in Montenegro. Accordingly, insurgents of Montenegro acquired what they required to resist the Ottomans from one of the ports named Ankuna under the jurisdiction of the Pope (... papa memleketinde vaki Ankuna iskelesine varub mühimmat-ı cebhaneden kürşun ve siyah barut ve tüfenk ve kılıç ve alat-ı saire ...).\(^45\) This detail also demonstrates the willingness of some Christians outside the Ottoman Empire to help Russia and to support Russian policy against the Ottoman state prior to the insurrection of 1770. In response, the empire sent orders to recruit soldiers and to supply what they needed for the suppression of the rebellion. Clearly the Morea fits into a pattern occurring elsewhere in the empire. What was common throughout this turmoil from the Ottomans’ point of view was the fact that Russia claimed to be the main catalyst behind any action causing troubles to the empire before 1770.\(^46\)

Taking all of them into consideration, one can posit that the Morea Rebellion did not come into existence out of blue, nor was it unexpected to any Ottoman statesman who was in

\(^{44}\) CHR 4628.
\(^{45}\) E 2846.
\(^{46}\) One can easily increase number of the documents that relate to other turmoil before 1770. The substantial number of other documents centered on Wallachia, Moldavia, Montenegro begs a further study on the uniqueness of the Morea Rebellion.
charge of governing the empire in 1770s. Consequently, one should look at the Morea Rebellion in a broader perspective, where it can no longer be defined with the term *sui genesis*, or unique. We do not know if there was a close connection between the struggles for power among leading figures in the Morea mentioned above and these earlier rebellions. Every uprising that occurred immediately before the insurrection of 1770 requires examination in order to compare it, elaborately and reasonably, with the Morea Rebellion. This is beyond the scope of our dissertation. As far as the uprising in the Morea is concerned, however, clashes of interest among Muslim and non-Muslim notables as well as leading state officials were greatly exploited by Russia in order to ripen the rebellion in the Morea, once more to the detriment of the Ottoman Empire.

The Question of Ottoman Ignorance Before the Insurrection of 1770

Most of our sources take it for granted that the Ottoman Empire was either indifferent or unaware of the Russian intrigues going on in the Morea and therefore did not take any measure in advance against Russia prior to the insurrection of 1770. To give but one example, it is often argued that the Ottomans were quite ignorant of the Russian capability to sail from the Baltic all the way through the Mediterranean Sea, despite the fact that both French officials and the beylerbeyi of Algeria informed the state about the coming of the Russian navy. In his

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47 The French found Russian appearance in the Mediterranean Sea to be against their interest and therefore preferred to take the Ottoman side in the struggle between the Ottomans and the Russians. Anderson expresses it in this way: “All Europe was surprised and alarmed at seeing, for the first time, the Russian flag flying among the islands of the Archipelago.” *An Authentic Narrative of the Russian Expedition against the Turks*, trans., R. C. Anderson (London: 1772), 8-9.

48 In *Gazavatı Hasan Paşa* it is claimed that when the Russian fleet came to the port of Mahon, the beylerbeyi of Algeria informed Patrona Hasan Bey about their coming from the Baltic with 27 ships, four of which had sunk on the coast of the Britain. According to this intelligence report, 12 of the 23 Russian ships came from Gibraltar, and 11 of the 23 from Port Mahon. Patrona Hasan Bey (the famous Cezayırli Gazi Hasan Pasha) transmitted this intelligence to the Grand Vizier, Mehmed Pasha. Fevzi Kurtoğlu, *1768-1774 Türk-Rus Harbinde Akdeniz Harekâtı ve Cezayırli Gazi Hasan Paşa* (İstanbul: Deniz Matbaası, 1942), 7 n. 1.

49 Ibid., 2.
memoirs Baron de Tott argues that Ottoman statesmen did not accept the possibility that Russian ships could come to the Mediterranean Sea, on the grounds that the Russians had no ships. Even were they to have the ships, he continues, the Ottomans assumed that there was no communication between the Baltic and the Archipelago. By Tott’s account, the presence of neither Danish nor Swedish ships sailing on the coasts of the Ottoman territories was enough to change the Ottomans’ mind and persuade the imperial council of the likelihood that the Russian fleet could appear on the Ottoman lands.  

As a matter of fact, many Ottoman sources do mention the ignorance of at least certain state officials. For instance, one of the primary sources, Ahmed Vâsıf (the official chronicler of the latter half of the eighteenth century), posits that, in their way of thinking, Ottoman dignities of the time did not believe that the Russian navy could come from Petersburg to the Mediterranean Sea and regarded it as false words and unsubstantiated. As a result, they arrogantly refused the advice of those who contradicted these ideas. Consequently, until the Russians appeared off Lepanto and started to attack the Ottoman reaya, who later asked for help from the government, the empire continued to deny any possibility that the Russians would appear on the coasts of Morea. Then, “those who had thought the Russian success impossible were drowned in a sea of shame.” These Ottoman statesmen could not comprehend that the Russian fleet could come to the region with the help of Britain. Consequently, it was too late for the empire to take the necessary precautions and to send imperial soldiers in order to protect

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50 Tott, 245-246.
51 "O vaktin rical ve kibari bu keyfiyeti mugalataya haml ve adem-i tasdik ile Petersburg'dan Akdeniz'e Moskovlu'nun donanmaiharçını bir vechile mütalealarına tatbik edemeyip umur-i müstahileden ad ve muaraza edenlerin delalini mükabere-i mahz ile red ılediler; nagah düşman-ı ru siyah İnebahtı açıklarında nümayan ve sevahilinde bulunan ehl-i İslama dehsı tesini olmalaryyla mercaniden devlet-i aliyye'ye arz-u macari ve zahire ve asker talebiyle kalli ianet istidâ Moskovlu'nun Bahr-i Şefid'e donanmaiharçını müstahil addedenler gark-ı bahr-i şerm ..." Ahmed Vâsıf, 42-43.
52 It is also claimed that, since the Russians were not good at the art of sailing, in reality they were under the command of Englishmen. Iskit, 2576-2577.
the Aegean islands and the Ottoman coasts. The Ottomans were totally astonished when the 
*reaya* were asking for soldiers, stacks of foodstuffs, as well as other ammunitions now required 
against the enemy.\(^{53}\) This attitude, which argues for complete ignorance and unawareness of the 
Ottoman Empire about the Russian intrigue going on in the Morea, is well expressed in the 
writing of George Finlay.

The Porte was aware of the rebellious disposition of its Greek subjects; nor was it entirely 
ignorant of the intrigues of Russia, though it obtained no knowledge of the conspiracy of 
Benaki. With its usual carelessness it neglected to take any precautions, induced partly by 
its contempt for the cowardice of the Greeks, and partly from conviction that it was 
impossible for Russia to send any force from the Baltic into the Mediterranean ... It was 
only the ignorant insolence which characterized the intercourse of the Ottoman 
government with the Christian powers, which prevented it obtaining proofs of the 
complicity of Russian agents in exciting the Greeks to rebellion at the very time when the 
court of St Petersburg was giving the Sultan the strongest assurances of its wish to 
maintain peace ...\(^{54}\)

Nonetheless, several documents imply that the Ottomans were not only quite cognizant of 
the Greek potential to get involved in an activity against the state interest but also that they took 
measures to prevent them from engaging in any such activity.\(^{55}\) To start with, as early as

\(^{53}\) Ahmed Vâsıf, 54. See also Iskit, 2578.

\(^{54}\) Finlay, 304-305.

\(^{55}\) To give but one example, KK, 60-1, 4 talks about how the rebellion was inaugurated in Morea. As a matter of 
fact, its explanation is no different from those of the other Ottoman and European sources. That is, on account of bad 
weather conditions in the Aegean Sea a few Russian ships had to cast anchor at one of the ports in Morea. Despite 
the fact that the *reaya* of Morea had been ordered not to raise a revolt until all Russian ships were anchored at the 
ports, they could not help rebelling against the Ottoman authority in the peninsula. In the end, the Russians had no 
choice but to join them in this premature rebellion. What needs to be emphasized here is the fact that the author of 
KK, 60-1 also argues that this was not the first time the Russian ships had appeared in Morea. Namely, before the 
rebellion took place on account of the unintended anchoring of a few Russian ships, some ships had already come to 
Morea for ammunition and other provisions. This also proves the fact that the Russians and some *reaya* were already
December 12, 1768, orders (irades) were sent to state officials in the Morea [such as judges and their naibs (assistants)] instructing them to round up whatever weapons were to be found in the hands of the reaya of Morea and to sell these armaments to the imperial soldiers. We see that 306 muskets (tüfeng), 70 ?, 58 pistols (piştov) and only 27 swords and knives (kılıç ve biçak) were discovered. More importantly, the imperial council ordered the state officers to sell these weapons (füruht) to the soldiers of Islam (İslam askerine) and to retain/keep the rest in one of the districts (baki kalanın bir mahalde hıfzı) of Morea. Last but not least, we also have three copies (sureti) of this order sent out to Anatolia, the Chief Captain of the Ottoman Navy, officers of the islands in Aegean Sea, commanders of Rumelia and so on.

A further set of reports from the same period includes an elaborate list of the weapons that were taken from the reaya of Morea approximately a few months before the beginning of the rebellion in the Peloponnese. Each order highlights special features of Morea that bring us closer to understanding the uprising itself. That is to say, they give us detailed data of the weapons that were collected from the whole Morea region or from single towns of the peninsula, such as Londar and Gastun. Accordingly, the imperial council ordered a state agency (mübaşir) to collect the weapons in the hands of Christian reaya (zimmi), which were supposed to be sold (füruht) later. The first order talks about a small village in the Morea (named Londar) where Ottoman officer(s) collected 400 muskets (tüfeng), 35 pistols (piştov) and 10 knives (biçak). Needless to

in a good contact long before the rebellion actually occurred. As we have shown before, the Muslim subjects of the empire were cognizant of this relation and later informed the state officers what was going on in their lands. We do not exactly know how adequately the Ottomans were prepared for the rebellion, but at least we can presume that the state officers were quite prepared to react against this expected revolt and to a large extent they were good at dealing with the Christian reaya on the eve of the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768–1774. To give but one example, we have been informed that before the Russian fleet appeared in the Mediterranean in September 1769, a mütesellim of Morea named Hasan Efendi sent a petition to the imperial council asking for permission to check out conditions at all the fortresses in the Morea (CAS, 50034). More importantly, the imperial council responded positively to the request of mütesellim (CAS, 49667).

56 “Mora ceziresinde vaki reaya ellerinde bulunan tüfenk, piştov vesair eslihanın cem ve ahz olunarak İslam askerine füruht ile baki kalanın bir mahalde hıfzı ...” CZB, 378.
57 CZB, 378.
say, almost all of the seized weapons were firearms (95.55 percent of all weapons). In the second report, where the source talks about the Morea and many of the districts in it, we see 1,468 muskets (tüfeng), 430 pistols (piştov) and 540 knives (bıçak) collected by mübaşir Mustafa Agha in November/December 1769 (Receb, 1182 AH). It also includes very detailed information about where he got all of these weapons and their exact number, as well as to whom they belonged. Firearms were not as conspicuous as at Londar, but still, 75.12 percent of the seized weapons were firearms. Last but not least, we have a list of weapons registered in one of the courts in Ayapetros. State agents captured 249 muskets (tüfeng), 85 pistols (piştov) and 12 knives (bıçak) from Christians (zimmis). Once again, only a small proportion (3.46 percent) is traditional weapons. The document also informs us that out of 249 muskets, 20 were separated (ihraç), maybe because they were not in good condition. In the end, there remained 229 muskets in the hands of the court. In total, some 2,117 muskets, 550 pistols and 562 knives are registered in this report, and out of 3,229 weapons, 67.71 percent were firearms.

It is most interesting that the imperial orders required the judge and his assistants to register all the weapons in the hands of the Christian reaya. Accordingly, they were supposed to write down the names of the weapons’ owners, the number of the weapons, where they had been taken and so forth. Such information gives us an idea not only of the power of the Christian reaya in the Morea on the eve of the rebellion, but also of the Ottoman aptitude to collect those weapons. To give another example, the register of the weapons taken from the reaya provides us with further information about how many arms were collected and their type, that is, muskets (tişenk), pistols (piştov), swords and so on. In total, we see 7,900 muskets, 2,159 pistols, 1,546 battle axes (nacak), 4 swords (kılıç) and 1 long sword (şinşir). All together, we see 11,610
weapons taken from the *reaya* of Morea. Only 13.3 percent of all weapons were traditional and the rest were modern weapons of the time.\(^{58}\)

Again just one month before the rebellion broke out in February 1770, the Ottomans collected weapons in the hands of the Christian *reaya* of the Morea by forcing them to sell their arms to either Muslims or imperial soldiers on January 1, 1770 (*talebleri olan tevatıf-ı askeriyyeye ve sair ehl-i İslamdan ... olanlara füruht*). In case they did not find purchasers, the weapons were to be concealed under state control until they could be sold (*satulmayup kalanlari hitamı mahallere vaz’ı ve taliyyi zuhur idüb satıldıkça bahaları eshabına eda olmak babında*). The owners of these unsold weapons were to be paid at that time.\(^{59}\)

On balance, the Ottoman policy on weapons in the hands of the Christians involved not a true confiscation but a forced collection. The aforementioned documents do not actually consider the owners of the weapons as having committed a big crime, in opposition to the general Ottoman regulation. In other words, usually when Ottoman state officers discovered that certain subjects of the empire had arms illegally, they not only confiscated the weapons but also often punished the owners because of the crime that they had committed.\(^{60}\) But in our reports and orders punishment was neither discussed nor was it thought of as a possibility in the mind of the Ottoman clerks. Instead, the empire pledged that its owners would get paid in return for the weapons taken from their hands (*değer bahalar taifey-i askeriyye ve tüccar ve sair ehl-i İslam füruht oldukça akçesi kendülerine verilmek üzere*) and even ensured that the owners whose weapons were not sold yet would get paid when their arms could be transferred to a third person.

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\(^{58}\) CDH, 3189.

\(^{59}\) CZB, 2567.

Confiscation of their weapons without payment—or even punishment—might have been grounds for further persuading the *reaya* to take up arms against their Turkish overlords. The Ottomans apparently intended to avoid that spark. After all, as we will see in other documents later on, immediately after the Morea Rebellion was completely suppressed, the empire did not offer money in return for weapons, nor did it avoid mentioning additional punishments, such as more taxes. But on the eve of the uprising, such policy of harsh punishment was simply too risky to be implemented or even taken into consideration for the Ottoman state.

Two reasons given for the collections of these weapons from the Christian subjects of the empire in an imperial order are highly significant. First of all, the imperial army was about to launch a campaign against Russia in the spring of 1770 and therefore Ottoman troops were in a desperate need of the weapons, which were to be used in the upcoming war. It was quite normal for any state of the time to be in need of weapons on the eve of a war, and the Ottoman Empire was no exception to this rule. More importantly, however, the *reaya* (basically Christians) of Morea had plenty of weapons in their possession despite the fact that it had been officially forbidden for them to possess firearms. Since this prohibition was neglected and people did not really pay sufficient attention to the adherence to or enforcement of this rule, the inhabitants of Morea became the owners of abundant weapons and ammunition. The order completes this second reason by saying that for the *reaya* to have possession of such weapons was neither advisable nor appropriate. As a result, the imperial council issued an order in favour

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61 AE Mustafa III, 5836.
62 AE Mustafa III, 5836.
of the Ottoman state to take all the weapons in the hands of the Christian reaya in the Morea.\textsuperscript{63} On balance, the Ottomans should have been suspicious about the Christian reaya living even on the islands of Aegean Sea and they should no longer have taken the risk of letting them carry weapons. They were obviously seen as a potential danger to the integrity of the empire, and that is why they were additionally covered with this sureti. As we have also mentioned above, we even have a sureti, which was sent to Anatolia probably for that very reason, which overtly shows how cautious the empire was about keeping the Christian reaya’ use of firearms under tight control on the eve of the Morea Rebellion.

The order explicitly stated that the possession of weapons by the reaya was banned under Ottoman regulations/legislations, but they were still somehow able to possess weapons. How can we explain that? As a general rule, we know for sure that the subjects of the Ottoman Empire were not allowed to use any weapons, let alone ammunition or other stuffs required for that purpose. Nevertheless, we also know that there were always exceptions to that general rule in cases where the empire found it appropriate. Accordingly, the Ottomans had definitely allowed certain people to possess weapons in the peninsula when it served to advance Ottoman interests, perhaps as means of self-defense. To keep trading activities secure was another well known reason why the empire let some reaya (merchants) have arms to be used against attacks from either bandits or other unlawful persons. The thrust of the order merely asserts that possession of these arms by the Ottoman subjects is not appropriate (ahyâr olmadıktan naşi) and does not truly remark on the large number of firearms other than to say the number of the weapons at their hands negligible (yedlerinde kati vafir silah).

More importantly, however, the numbers of the weapons that had been sold (füruht) were registered, as well. Only 1,115 muskets out of 7,900 (14.1 percent), 230 pistols out of 2,159

\textsuperscript{63} AE Mustafa III, 5836.
(10.6 percent) and 486 battle axes out of 1,546 (31.4 percent) had been sold, and the rest were sent to the Ottoman fortresses in the Morea. Some speculations can be made by making use of these statistics in greater detail. For example, when we look at the numbers of weapons sold to both the Muslims and imperial soldiers together, we can easily see that only a very limited number of the confiscated weapons were actually sold and that the rest were sent to one of the Ottoman fortress in the Morea. It may be that the number of the Muslims living there was very small, or that the Muslims simply could not afford to buy weapons. In the context of supporting our former argument, however, it should be noted that less than one-fifth of all weapons was sold, which rather endorses the fact that they were not specifically taken for the campaign against Russia. Although the Ottomans did not really need all of the weapons of the Christian reaya for the upcoming campaign to be used against the Russians, the Ottomans simply did not dare to leave them at the hands of the Christian subjects of the empire, whose loyalty had already been in question.

To be exact, only 15.7 percent of all weapons were bought by the Ottoman officials. We do not know exactly from how many people the empire had collected these 11,610 pieces of weaponry. It is quite likely that sometimes one person had more than one weapon, and, conversely, that sometimes more than one person shared the same weapon. But if we assume that there was one weapon for each person, then we can also posit that the Ottomans took these weapons from approximately 11,610 Christian reaya living in the peninsula. If we do the same estimation for the Muslims, we come to the conclusion that roughly 1,857 Muslims had bought the weapons. We do not know exactly how many Muslims (or Christians, for that matter) were living in the Peloponnese on the eve of the Morea Rebellion. But, we can safely argue that the number of Muslims, which had dramatically diminished after the Venetian invasion of Morea in
1700s, was much less than the number of Christian subjects of the empire in 1770s. After all, the Muslims were only able to buy less than 16 percent of the whole collection of weapons. If our assumption made in this paragraph is correct, we can therefore again state that the number of the Muslims in the Morea far from matched the number of weapons collected from the Christians. Despite that the empire could not help confiscating all weapons at the hands of Christian subjects for the sake of (on the pretext that they were needed by) limited number of Muslim reaya.

Last but not least, we have an important summary of court decrees (ilam) that was written on March 4, 1769, less than two months before the Ottomans were able to launch their first attack against the Russians in the Balkans, on May 1, 1769. One of the decrees in this summary was sent to a sergeant of the imperial navy called Mustafa, who was supposed to read court decisions in Midilli (Mitylene), Kalavina?, Sultan Hisari, Labseki, and Bozcaada. According to this verdict, the Christian reaya living in these Mediterranean/Aegean islands and towns had to reveal their weapons and sell them to the Muslims (Bahr-i Sefidde vaki adalar ve sair mahallerde reaya yedlerinde bulunan eslihanın zahire ihraçı ve ehl-i İslam füruht olunması.

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64 To give but one example, the Ottoman population register of Anavarin in 1716 proves that there was no Muslim reaya in the countryside, or even in the old and new fortresses of the city. Again, no one is seen as paying the çift resmi or ispence, which were supposed to be paid by Muslim subjects of the empire. As for the population of the Morea towards the rebellion, we simply do not have any register valuable enough to make a reasonable argumentation. Jack L. Davis, John Bennet, and Fabian Zarinebaf, "An Analysis of the Ottoman Cadastral Survey of Anavarin, 1716," in A Historical and Economic Geography of Ottoman Greece: The Southwestern Morea in the 18th Century, ed. Fabian Zarinebaf, John Bennet, and Jack L. Davis (Athens: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 2005), 159-160.

65 CDH, 3189.

66 As a matter of fact, the title of this document makes it clear that original documents must have been drafted some days or possibly a month before, since at the top of this document it states that this document is nothing but a summary of the final court decisions: “Sultan hisari kalesi tarafından vürud iden ilamların hülâsasıdır.” CDH, 7701.

67 Despite declaring war on Russia on September 25, 1768, the empire was not able to send an army against the Russian till May, 1, 1769. In the meantime, we see a substantial number of documents that were issued to prevent the Christian subjects of the empire from lending a hand to the enemy.
Again, the Christian *reaya* of the empire were supposed to sell their weapons not to imperial soldiers (*İslam askerine*) but to ordinary Muslims (*ehl-i İslama*). Consequently, this material shows that the empire was not primarily concerned about providing the imperial soldiers with weapons required in the upcoming campaign. Instead, the Ottomans were preoccupied with transferring discovered weapons from non-Muslim to Muslim subjects of the empire. The fact such small islands as Bozcaada and Mitylene drew the attention of the Ottoman dignitaries, one cannot underestimate the Ottomans’ awareness of the potential dangers that could come from Christian–Russian collaboration in the Mediterranean, and the precautions they took against such an eventuality.

Christians were not allowed to send foodstuffs or grain to the Russians under any circumstance.\(^{69}\) How did the Ottomans think there was even a possibility of provisioning the Russians from a small island such as Mitylene, which was not only far away from Russia but also had to have ships available to carry the grain to the Russians, all the way through the lands and seas under direct Ottoman domination? Since this scenario emerged from the imperial court as a possibility, there must have been grounds for it. After all, the empire took the trouble of issuing such documents in spite of being in the middle of a huge campaign and having lots of problems to take care of. In brief, if the empire found it worth drafting these documents, it should have had at least a moderate knowledge of what the Christian subjects of the empire might be inclined to do in disfavour of the Ottoman Empire long before the insurrection of 1770 in the Morea.

All things considered, the documents mentioned above clearly demonstrate that there were important numbers of the weapons in the hands of the Christian subjects of the empire just

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\(^{68}\) CDH, 7701.

\(^{69}\) This document was an imperial order. CDH, 7701.
a few months before the insurrection of 1770 came into being. By looking at just a few
documents above, we come to a total of at least 15,000 weapons collected from the Christian
subjects of the empire on the eve of the Morea Rebellion. What is striking in this statistic is the
fact that most of the weapons registered here were firearms, which were much more efficacious
on the battlefield. In addition to this huge number of registered weapons, we can safely assume
that there were many more which were not discovered by the members of the imperial council or
the state officers who were in charge of keeping order in the Peloponnese. Although the empire
was well aware of this fact and tried to find a way to take possession of these arms, the state
officers of the time were not actually able to keep all weapons under state control. This is why
people were able to rebel against the state in spite of the collection of weapons that were in the
hands of zimmis in the Morea. Nevertheless, this can also be interpreted as an important success
for the Ottoman Empire, since even though the state was not able to prevent the uprising from
happening, it effectively suppressed it immediately after it had started, and the Ottomans soon
succeeded in taking full control of the peninsula once again. Most important of all, we can
explicitly argue now that the Ottomans were neither indifferent to what had been going on in the
region nor unprepared for the Morea Rebellion, this in contrast to the arguments made by most
of the contemporary chroniclers, as mentioned in the previous chapter.

The list of weapons registered is clear proof that there were a substantial number of
people who took advantage of carrying weapons in the Morea. Although it is often argued that
that the Ottomans were never able to enforce a no-arms rule in certain regions, such as Mani, we
do not see any official permission allowing them to carry weapons. That is, this district of the
Morea possibly did not have de jure but definitely enjoyed de facto right of carrying weapons
and using them, should the occasion arise. It is reasonable to argue that before the Ottoman-
Russian Wars of 1768–1774 the Ottomans condoned the fact that the Christian subjects of the empire had somehow enjoyed possessing weapons, against the general rule. When the empire decided to make a campaign against Russia, however, it was now simply unacceptable to the Ottomans that the Christians had the means to take part in this struggle. Possible connection between Russia and the reaya of the Morea should not have been ignored by Ottoman administrators, and they took precautions to prevent anything from happening that would be against the interests of the Ottoman Empire. It should be also kept in mind that some Christian reaya had already taken up arms against their masters, such as in Moldavia, Wallachia and Montenegro, as we have already mentioned. The empire expected the same thing to happen in the Morea and took the required precautions. Foremost among these precautions we see the collection of weapons from the Christian subjects of the empire for the sake of the Ottoman state.

On balance, blaming the entire bureaucracy for a total ignorance of Russian intrigues or denying any possibility that the Russians might appear in the Mediterranean Sea is simply without foundation in the light of the elaborate documents mentioned above. These archival documents contradict any allegation claiming that all Ottoman statesmen who were in charge of ruling the empire at the time were ignorant. Instead, these sources indicate that some of the Ottoman statesmen took necessary precautionary measures (both in the Morea and many other regions under Ottoman domination) long before the coming of the Russians, which can only be seen as a proof of their consciousness rather than ignorance. Furthermore, the empire also took the possibility of Russian intrigue in the Ottoman territories seriously, and that actually explains the rapid success of the Ottoman forces in the Morea as we will see in the example of Ottoman officers’ quick and successful response to the rebels in the following chapter. Nonetheless, we cannot not completely disregard the fact that a certain number of the Ottoman officers (often

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70 See example of Muhafiz of Kandiye Hüseyin Pasha.
intentionally) either disclaimed or vigorously disavowed any possibility that the Russians had influence upon the Orthodox reaya or were present in the Morea before or during the uprising. Once again, of course, this cannot be interpreted as ignorance resulting from incompetence, nor can it be attributed to all Ottoman officials who were in power at that time. The details of this diversity as well as the insurrection of 1770 in the light of the documents specifically written throughout the uprising will constitute the subject of the following chapter.
Chapter 5: The Rebellion Begins: A Boiling Cauldron of Conflicts and Cooperation

Ottoman Understanding of the Causes of the Rebellion and of the Russian Appearance in the Eastern Mediterranean

Before the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768–1774 began, Russia appealed again to the Orthodox subjects of the empire, the Greeks in particular, exhorting them to rise against the Ottomans in the name of freedom and the Orthodox Christian religion, just as had been the case sixty years earlier during the reign of Peter the Great in 1711. This second attempt was only partly successful in the Morea and in some other cities, such as Montenegro, immediately before the insurrection of 1770 took place, as it has been discussed previously. The main purpose of attracting all Balkan Christians to the Russian side proved unfulfilled. Nevertheless, it was not a complete failure from the Russians’ point of view since their departure point in this intrigue was to keep at least some Ottoman forces away from the battlefield, either in the Balkans or the Crimea, and hopefully to create a diversion serious enough to force the Ottomans to withdraw troops from the Russian front. This mission was accomplished, one way or another, with the help of by now traditional Russian policy. On balance, the Morea Rebellion is the epitome of many Russian attacks against the Ottoman Empire in the eighteenth century. After all, from this moment onward the Russian intrigue to allure the Orthodox subjects to rise against their Turkish lords was a constant issue in the discussion of the Eastern Question, with which European politics would become so obsessed in the nineteenth century.

There may have been substantial reasons for the insurrection of 1770. Maladministration of the state, pressure of the ayān and koca başı, who had already seized control of the revenue-generating institution and clashes between de jure and de facto powers of the peninsula are just a
few of them. Previously we introduced both international players, such as Russia, and domestic leading figures, such as Muslim and non-Muslim notables, as two indispensable legs of a right triangle. So far, the archival documents written before the uprising followed two different patterns with no particular difference in emphasis. On the one hand, they blame leading elites, including Muslim and non-Muslim, for any harm that befell the Ottoman Empire in the Morea. Accordingly, Muslim and non-Muslim notables as well as government officials were accused of putting financial and physical pressure on the reaya; torturing them or abusing their authority in order to profit from the misery of the Ottoman subjects. On the other hand, Ottoman preoccupation with the Russian intrigues going on in its territories is proffered for the Ottoman readiness to react against those uprisings that took place prior to 1770.

These instances of maladministration in the Morea as well as the Ottoman preoccupation with Russia can also be introduced as possible catalyst for the rebels’ action in the light of the documents written throughout the uprising.¹ The Ottoman archival material written during the insurrection of 1770, however, clearly places Russia in the focus of all the empire’s malice towards events in the Morea from the beginning of the 1770s.² To give but one example, four surviving identical imperial orders [sent to ayan and military officers (zabitan) of Yenişehir, Tırhala, Sefrice, Ohri and Sarigöl on April 6, 1770] take Russian incitement of the insurrection for granted. Accordingly, after Russian ships came to the coast of Morea, the Russians

¹ Such expression of maladministration is so often given as an answer for the question why certain reaya or askeris rebelled against the state. See for example, Abdi Efendi; Abdülkadir Özcan, Anonim Osmanlı Tarihi, 1099-1116 (1688-1704) (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2000); Yücel Özkaya, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Dağlı İsyanları (1791-1808) (Ankara: Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Basmevi, 1983); Ahmed Refik, Kabakçı Mustafa (İstanbul: Kitaphane-yi Askerî - İbrahim Hilmi, 1915).

² E 4667 is a document written by Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha to kapukethüda Istanbul on March 3, 1770. There is a strong connection between the Morea Rebellion and Russian influence there. Accordingly, Mehmed Pasha posits that the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768–1774 encouraged the reaya of Morea to take the side of Russians. They were expecting direct Russian military help, and the expectation of Russian success in the Morea was too enticing for the reaya to ignore.
galvanized the Maniots, who later induced some of the Morean reaya to attack local Muslims.\(^3\)

Again, another document written just one day before the aforementioned document merely blames the Russians for everything that had recently taken place in the Morea.\(^4\) Other factors resulting from Ottoman maladministration lose their importance as contributing causes once the Morea Rebellion commenced.

With only a slight difference in their emphasis, one way or another every source argues that the policy of General Münnich\(^5\) was re-implemented with a Greek captain of an artillery regiment, named Papazoğlu Mavromihali (Yorgi) (also known as Hacı Murad in Ottoman sources.)\(^6\) Papazoğlu, who could speak Arabic, Persian as well as Turkish, travelled all the way from Rumelia to the islands of Mediterranean Sea and ended up in Mani in 1765. Having persuaded the Orthodox subjects of the empire to take up arms against their Turkish masters, he disappeared, and nothing was heard of him again.\(^7\) Actually, there were many other spies, such as Stephan Maroçi (or Maruzzi),\(^8\) Hristo Griva, Angeli, Adamopulo and Jean Palatino, who were also sent to the Balkans for exactly the same purpose.\(^9\) On balance, our secondary sources overtly emphasize the fact that the Russian spies not only used the Orthodox religion to convince the Ottoman subjects, but also represented Catherine as the only legitimate sovereign of the Orthodox people living under Ottoman domination. Contemporary accounts of the time also seem to support that idea of a sole legitimate sovereign. To give but one example, Richard

\(^3\) CAS, 1601.
\(^4\) CDH, 411. This document and CAS, 1601 are just two examples among the hundreds of documents that one way or another exclusively blame the Russians for the events. See also, CAS, 10382; CDH, 4628 and CDH, 8707.
\(^6\) Anna discusses that Papazoğlu not only served as a Russian officer in the navy but also was a comrade of Alexis and Theodor Orlovs, who were later assigned as the leaders of the upcoming insurrection by the tsarina. Vlachopoulou, 133, n. 44.
\(^7\) Penah Efendi, 66-67.
\(^8\) As one of Papazoğlu’s agents, Stephen stirred up the Greeks to rebel in Montenegro, and soon, in 1767, they took up arms against the Ottomans. But this uprising was soon quelled with the help of neighbouring forces of pashas. Sorel, 303.
\(^9\) Köse, 40-41.
Chandler, who was travelling Greece in 1767, conveys information that it was rumoured among the Greeks that the coming Russian assistance would emancipate them from Ottoman hegemony.10

A close connection was found among Orthodox priests, kocabaşıs, Maniots and reaya of the Morea, who promised to join in the uprising once it started. A kocabaşı of high importance at Kalamata, known as Benaki, whose advice was often sought by the state officers and who was also mainly revered by the Muslims, took the Russian side on account of Papazoğlu’s conspiracy in the Morea. Being the wealthiest Greek of Morea and having a great influence upon the Mani region due to his trade activity, Benaki easily convinced many people and several important bishops to get involved in this conspiracy. Their support of the Russian cause reached such a level that Papazoğlu promised the tsarina that “no sooner the Russian fleet appears in the peninsula, one hundred thousand Greeks will join to the uprising for the purpose of breaking the chains of slavery.”11 In order to finance the expenses of the Russian fleet, another Greek, named Maroçi, (a Greek banker of Venice according to Finlay),12 who had earlier been appointed as Russian consulate of Venice, borrowed a substantial amount of money (35,000 purse piasters) from banks in Italy, such as Livorno and Genova, by putting up the customs revenues of the port of Riga as collateral.13

In the meantime, the first Russian fleet was constructed to sail to the Mediterranean Sea. Soon, the first Russian fleet, commanded by a British officer, Admiral Grigory Spiridov, left the port at Kronstadt, which is about eighteen miles from St. Petersburg, and started to sail to the Mediterranean Sea in June 1769. On his way, Spiridov picked up Alexis and Theodor Orlovs,

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11 Sorel, 303-304.
12 Ibid., 304.
13 Kurtoğlu, 6.
who had been both appointed as the leaders of the campaign by Catherine II and therefore came to Venice under the pretext of visiting Italy at the end of 1768. At the outset, this first Russian fleet was composed of seven galleys, four frigates and a few troopships with ammunitions. All ships carried 1,200 soldiers on board. However, the Orlov brothers’ ship, as well as the fleet under the command of Admiral Samuel Greig (another British officer) constituted an additional six galleys, four frigates, two troopships, another small ship (kumbara in the Ottoman sources) and a few transport ships. A second Russian fleet, under the command of the English Admiral Elphinstone, also started to undertake action a few months later, at the beginning of 1770. This second navy consisted of three galleys, three frigates, and three troopships with ammunitions as well as one with stocks of grain that carried 600 troops. This flotilla followed the first fleet on April 13, 1770. Generous British help with the construction and maintenance of the Russian fleet was essential to the success of the first Russian enterprise in the Mediterranean Sea.

Penah Efendi argues that by November/December 1769 (Şaban 1183) one Russian ship already anchored in a port in the gulf of Gastun where Russians obtained provisions and ammunition from local people living there. Although two Ottoman military officers, Mustafa Agha and Ahmed Agha, had been informed about the Russian appearance there, none dared to inform the guardian of the Morea i.e., Hasan Efendi about the Russian fleet and their landing at this port. After all, Hasan Efendi was against the idea that the reaya of Morea were about to rebel and even threatened those who accepted that idea and expressed the coming of the Russians

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15 Mufassal Osmanlı Tarihi gives us a rather different number for the navy of Spiritoff. Namely, there were 17 galley, four frigates and a few transport ships. Iskit, 2576.
16 For a contemporary European source giving a list of the Russian ships, the people on board and the weapons available to them, see also *An Authentic Narrative of the Russian Expedition against the Turks*, 16.
17 Anderson argues that “the successful transference of two Russian squadrons from the Baltic to the Mediterranean in the autumn and winter of 1769 and the spring of 1770 could scarcely have been achieved without the active help of the British Government, and of many individual British subjects...” M.S. Anderson, "Great Britain and the Russo-Turkish War of 1768-74," *The English Historical Review* 69, (Jan. 1954): 44. See also, Kurtoğlu, 6-7.
openly. According to Penah, the reason why Hasan Efendi rejected the possibility of an uprising in the Morea is that some reaya did not want to send hard biscuits (peksimed) asked by the central state previously. In response, Hasan said that he would punish those who insisted in their claim that the reaya were about to take up arms against the state. As a result, the Russian ship sailed to the island of Zanta safe and sound without engaging in any early combat with Ottoman forces. After all, in addition to Hasan Efendi there were also many other Ottoman officers such as Hacı Hüseyin and Ömer Efendi who were determined not to inform the state that the reaya were about to rebel and that there were some Russian ships sailing off the coast of the Morea.18

We have a story told by Penah Efendi, where he explains that he and his followers did their best to inform the state officers in the Morea and the imperial council in Istanbul. Nonetheless, in each case they were seriously threatened with death or were openly discouraged from making any further claim to the imperial council by their colleagues in the peninsula. For instance, Penah Efendi could not help talking about Hacı Murad and informed Defterdar İbrahim Sarım Efendi19 about Murad’s malicious doings. In response, İbrahim wrote a letter to the governor of Tripoliçe. Nonetheless, the governor called İbrahim Efendi and confirmed that his claim that the governor should inform the imperial council about the activities of Hacı Murad was well thought out and quite appropriate. However, the governor said, if we insist in sending a letter to inform Istanbul about what has been happening in the Morea then both Yusuf Bey and koçabaşı would deny our claims and find a way to eliminate both of us.20 In the end, İbrahim and the governor of Tripoliçe agreed not to inform the imperial council, and Penah Efendi concludes by saying that he was not

18 Penah Efendi, 68-69.
19 See Ibid., fn, 1.
20 Our anonymous author also states that the imperial dragoman of Morea informed the governor of the region, Gördoslu Yusuf Bey, about the forthcoming rebellion of the Christian reaya. However, the governor brought an accusation against him and warned him not to tell anything about the coming of Russian fleet nor, for that matter, about the revolt of the reaya. He even accused Yusuf Bey of taking unfair advantage of property and money that had been given to his custody. Yusuf was even blamed for embezzling a sum that was even larger than what the ayans and kocabaşı had misappropriated. KK, 60-1, 9-11.
informed of what the governor actually wrote to Istanbul later.\textsuperscript{21} As a last resort, Penah Efendi and people around him intended to send messengers to Istanbul in order to notify the imperial council about the upcoming rebellion. Nevertheless, they changed their mind since they were quite afraid of the Ottoman officers, who might be likely to make false claims against Penah Efendi and his companions.\textsuperscript{22}

We do not know for sure what may have caused some Ottoman officers to be so obstinate as to not accept the idea of the forthcoming rebellion and to not to allow those spreading such news in the peninsula. The Ottoman intervention in the Peloponnese may have simply been against the interests of the local officials since the central government would have kept a tight rein in the Morea if the Ottoman state had been informed about such things. We simply cannot say exactly why certain state officers, such as Yusuf Bey, could not even tolerate the idea that the \textit{reaya} of the Morea were about to rebel in favour of Russia or with the help of Russia. But what we know for sure is that this was not an isolated case. Nor was Yusuf Bey an exception, if we take all of our sources into consideration. By contrast with the Ottoman officials, we have a significant number of the Christian \textit{reaya} who endeavoured to stop or at least inform the imperial council so that it could suppress the forthcoming revolt by means of the Ottoman state officers, who were in charge in the Morea at that time.

As for the rebellion itself, Penah Efendi states that after stopping off in Corfu the first Russian fleet led by the Orlov brothers reached Zanta around December 1769 and then without being detected by any authorities, they started to incite the people living there. However, towards the end of February 1770 five or six Russian ships under the command of Spiridov were caught in a storm in the Mediterranean and were forced to anchor their ships at the port of

\textsuperscript{21} Penah Efendi, 67.  
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 69.
Mavromihalioğlu. The Greek rebels who in the meantime had become restless took this as a sign for the rebellion and prematurely initiated the uprising against the will of Alexis Orlov. Until that moment, Alexis was planning to block the Gallipoli straits against the imperial navy so that he could invade the islands in the Aegean Sea. Only after that he was planning to stir up all Greeks to rebel against Sultan Mustafa. Now, there was no turning back to his plan, and Alexis was left no choice but to go along with the unfolding events. It is also claimed that five hundred Russians reputedly disembarked to incite fifty thousand Maniots to take up arms against their Turkish masters. As a matter of the fact, we do not have a reliable source for the actual number of the rebels. For example, Kurtoğlu posits that the number of rebels may have been as much as 50,000 to 60,000 men, 30,000 of whom were directly involved in the armed conflicts. On the other side, 15,000 Ottoman and Albanian soldiers of the empire were enough to repel the insurgents, 20,000 of whom later took shelter in the islands of Aegean until an amnesty was declared by Muhsinzade. Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi goes even further and argues that for the siege of Mezistre alone there were 80,000 infidels. Although it is not plausible to take these numbers for granted they give us at least some clues about the Ottoman image of Greeks’ power during the rebellion.

23 The Russian fleet appeared off the coast of Morea quite a bit earlier than the point at which they were really forced to anchor at the ports of Morea in April 1770s. In a similar vein, Penah Efendi argues that in November/December 1769 (Şaban 1183) one Russian ship anchored in a port in the gulf of Gastun, where, we understand from Penah’s writing, the Russians got provisions and ammunition from local people. Ibid., 68.

24 As a matter of the fact, it is quite questionable whether the rebels were really so willing to take up arms against their Turkish masters as soon as the Russian navy appeared off the coast of Morea. For example, the anonymous author posits that the people of Morea were not eager to fight against the Ottomans and said that the representative of the revolt in Morea endeavoured to make them believe that Russia was on their side. KK, 60-1, 3.

25 Kurtoğlu, 8. See also, Penah Efendi, 70-71.

26 Danişmend, 48.

27 Danişmend, 10.

28 Fındıklılı Süleyman, Şem'dâni-Zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mür'î't-Tevârih 2/B, 28. This number did not necessarily consist of the Ottoman subjects of the empire. For instance, Mufassal Tarihi mentions that there came at least two thousand Greeks from Zanta and three thousand from Cephalonia in order to join the revolt by attacking both their Ottoman garrisons and the local Muslims living there. Iskit, 2577.
From the beginning of March 1770, the rebels of Morea started to attack the Muslim subjects of the empire. In response, on the one hand, the Muslims were sent to the islands of the Aegean or left their hometowns, including Kalamata and Enduruse, for well-protected fortresses such as Koron, Moron, Gastun and Tripoliçe in the Morea. In some towns, such as Arkadya and Mezistre, the reaya reached an agreement with the rebels on the grounds that they would leave their weapons and belongings in return for safe passage (vire yoluya) given to them by the rebels. To give but one specific example, one of the documents written by Küçük Ali argues that in response to an offer made by the rebels to hand over all the weapons in the hands of the Muslims in return for letting them to go away, Hüseyin Bey persuaded the Muslims to give up their weapons. Nevertheless, more than two hundred Albanians in Mezistre overtly refused the offer and fought the rebels at all cost. In the end, Küçük Ali posits that as many as ninety of them were killed and the rest succeeded in reaching the fortress of Tripoliçe safely. Ali also states that another Albanian was saved with the help of some Albanians, five of whom were killed during the struggle.

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29 Some sources say even before March. For example, according to Alexander, the uprising started in late February of 1770. Alexander, 51.
30 Köse, 44.
31 The Albanians in the city of Mezistre were adamant not to come to heel and to fight back at the rebels who had besieged Mezistre. They were not an exception at all. When we look at the Albanians in general during and after the Morea Rebellion, we see them doing their best not only to resist against the insurgents but also to suppress the revolt the rebels had launched. In none of our sources are the Albanians mentioned as having acted in conjunction with the rebels—or the Russians, for the matter. There were even an important number of state officers who were one way or another claimed either to have cooperated with the rebels or to have helped them indirectly to be more trouble for the state. However, from the very beginning to the end, Albanians are simply given as fighting stubbornly against the insurgents even long after the rebellion was crushed in the 1770s. All this information provided above might lead us to the conclusion that the interests of the Albanians were diametrically opposed to those of the rebels. One could argue that the interests of the Albanians and those of the Greeks were just the opposite and that destruction of the one should be seen as the emergence of the other. This is exactly what happened after the suppression of the revolt in the Morea. Needless to say, the term Albanian or Greek had nothing to do with nationality in the sense that we understand these terms today.
32 E 2930. We are also informed about the same incident in the History of Morea Rebellion written by Süleyman Penah Efendi. According to Penah’s story, Muslims laid down their arms and then capitulated Mezistre to the rebels despite the fact that there were about 1,500 soldiers in the city. However, fifty Albanians of Mezistre refused to lay down their arms and reached Tripoliçe in safety. Penah Efendi, 73 and 75.
The city of Mezistre is of special importance. Here we come across Benaki presented as the leader of the uprising (the term *kefere başlar* is used to describe his rank here). However, when we look at the details of the document and take other Ottoman sources into consideration, we come to the conclusion that his position could not have been more than that of the head of certain number of the rebels who later attacked the city of Mezistre. It is also quite likely that he became renowned only because of his noteworthy success in having put approximately one hundred spies into Mezistre who were later used against the Muslims to take control of the whole city. This tactic not only forced the Muslims to surrender but also possibly popularized Benaki as a legendary hero of Mezistre. In the end, the Muslims agreed to put down their weapons and accepted the offer made by the rebels on the condition that the Muslims would leave Mezistre unharmed. Other than that the name Benaki simply disappeared in the struggles of other towns of Morea going on between the imperial soldiers and insurgents.

The disappearance of his name from other Ottoman documents and his possible appointment by Russia only for the siege of Mezistre point to the possibility that Benaki was no more than one of many *koçabaşı* of the time who were fighting for their own self-interest. After all, we do not observe his name in any other siege or attack against the Ottoman Empire as the so-called leader of all insurgents. It is not easy to evaluate Benaki’s importance in the capture of Mezistre, but what we do know is that none of his successes made him special among other *koçabaşı*, nor was his name presented again as the leader of all rebels fighting against the Ottoman Empire. Besides, as we will shortly see in greater detail, the Ottoman Empire did not accord him any particular importance that might make us believe that he was the only leader of the Morea Rebellion in the eyes of the rebels, let alone those of the Russians. Suffice it to say

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33 E 2930.
that the Morea Rebellion was not a collective act of a homogenous society under the order of a single figure, but rather an enterprise that certain kocabaşis or reaya found worth undertaking.

The archival sources do not view the events occurring in the Morea as a single episode. There was also another rebellion that took place simultaneously with the Morea Rebellion in Wallachia (Eflak). In March 17/26, 1770, the imperial council sent an order to the new ruler of Wallachia, named Malonika in the Ottoman sources. The story goes that, on account of Russian provocation and intrigue, some reaya of Wallachia were convinced to rebel against the authorities (...bazi hain niğmet mufsidler Moskolumun adati kademesi olan desâis ve hilelerine aldanub dairey-i itaaten huruc ve niğmet-i ihnsiye perverde oldukları...). As we have already seen in the case of the Morea Rebellion in detail, here we also observe the Ottoman dignitaries blaming only the Russians for the uprising of certain members of the reaya. In a similar vein to the Morea Rebellion, punishment of the reaya of Wallachia was not of foremost importance. Instead, the Ottomans agreed to exempt those who promised to be loyal to the Ottoman Empire and become faithful again from certain taxes, such as tekalif-i şakka and cizye (for at least three years). Such exemptions were given both to those who had rebelled and then took the side of the Ottoman Empire and to those who did not participate in the revolt against their masters. The privileges given to the rebels of Wallachia may have exceeded those given in the Morea, possibly due to the high importance of Wallachia in the ongoing war with Russia.

35 The Ottomans left open the door for amnesty provided that the rebels gave up supporting the Russian cause. Only those who insisted on taking side of the Russians and support them against the Ottoman Empire were to be killed or enslaved, and all their belongings were to be confiscated for the benefit of the Ottoman treasury. The document concludes that the reaya of Wallachia had been prosperous and protected and had also been living in ease for such a long time on account of the Ottoman Empire (...devlet-i alyyemin sayesinde bu kadar müddedden berü müreffeh ol hali mehemmi oldğunuzu mülahaza ...). E 9288-27.
A petition submitted to the imperial council by scholars (ulema) and public speakers (huteba), aghas, ayan and reaya in Hanya (Chania) and Resmo (Rethymno) in Crete in March/April 1770 extends our scope of understanding concerning rebellions of the time even further. That is, two koçabaşıs, both named Benaki (one of them was son of Karavati and the second one was from Enderus) and captains of Morea, with the help of Russian ships, incited the people of the Morea to the rebellion (iğfal ve tahrik). In order to do so, they came to the port of Maniots and started to kill Muslims. It was also claimed that the reaya of İsfakiye (Sfakia) were about to participate in the rebellion and stirred up other reaya of Morea against the Ottomans. The poll-tax collector (cizyedar) for these regions, the document under discussion says, provided intelligence concerning the key figures of Hanya and Resmo and their planned malicious acts. In response to this intelligence report, loyal subjects of the empire argued that “it is of high significance to eliminate them before they would rebel against the empire and cause offense to the state like some other reaya of Maniots.” The most important thing here is that the İsfakiye district was situated in Crete and that this area took a substantial number of Christian refugees, who were seen as eager to rebel against the Ottomans. They were accused of planning to participate in the rebellion and working for this cause by all means possible. They not only came together in İsfakiye from other districts of Crete, but also prepared themselves for the upcoming war through collecting either weapons, grain or other required materials, or by closing the public roads. The Ottomans were apprehensive about this incident, which might have encouraged other reaya of the region to fight against the Ottoman Empire.36

The state response to the demands of the Ottoman reaya given above is as interesting as the petition itself. The empire sent an order to Hüseyin Pasha (vizier of Karlıeli); custodians (muhafızları) and naibs (assistants of a kadi) of Hanya, Resmo and Kandiye; and inspectors

36 CAS, 1597 (Zilhicce, 1183).
(müfettişler) and soldiers of Crete, who had submitted the aforementioned petitions to the imperial council. Despite the fact that they had already accused the reaya of İsfakiye in Crete, the imperial council in Istanbul asked them again whether the reaya were really planning to rebel against the state and to make sure that they would truly help to the Russians and plot against Muslim lives. Only after double-checking the reliability of the hearsay evidence did the empire give permission to punish the rebels on account of their malicious acts.\(^{37}\) Last but not least, in another example Penah argues that his friends on the Venetian island of Zanta confirmed not only that the Christian reaya of the empire were about to rebel against the Ottoman Empire, but also that those in Zanta were intending first to rebel against Venice and then to join their coreligionists living in the peninsula.\(^{38}\) Our argument here, therefore, is that the Morea Rebellion had an impact on the Christians all over the empire. Our examples come from Crete, Zanta and many other islands in the Aegean Sea. Naturally, not all would have participated. After all, the Ottomans were informed about the rebels’ actions by loyal Christian subjects of the empire (tradesmen, in our case)\(^{39}\) and took necessary precautions as we have already stated in the previous chapter. This suggests that some Christians were unwilling to be part of this rebellion and did not support their fellow Christians, which considerably helped the Ottomans to suppress the uprising without delay.

More importantly, however, imperial support for Muslim resistance groups arrived in a timely fashion under the command of Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha, former Ottoman Grand Vizier.\(^{40}\) Muhsinzade was attuned to the possibility that the reaya of Morea would also join and

\(^{37}\) CAS, 1597.
\(^{38}\) Penah Efendi, 67-68. In the following page Penah Efendi affirms that an important number of Greeks of Venetian subjects joined to attack at Gastun. ("...fitne-i mezbura zuhûrunda kasaba-i mezküreyi kâffâr muhasara idîb reâyâdan ve Venedik reâyâsından nufus-i kesire olub...") Penah Efendi, 71.
\(^{39}\) CAS, 1597.
\(^{40}\) Muhsinzade was first appointed as guardian (muhafız) of a small town in Morea, i.e., Nauplion, in July 1769. Afterwards, he was assigned as commander of the imperial army (serasker) in Morea, in March 1770.
fight for the cause of Russia. In this connection, we should make it clear that our archival sources
classified the rebels into two distinct groups. On the one hand, we see the Manio ts, who had
often rebelled against the state or engaged in highway robbery long before the Morea Rebellion.
As a matter of the fact, the Ottomans were never able to keep a tight rein on the Maniots even
after the rebellion totally collapsed.\(^{41}\) On the other hand, we have ordinary *reaya* of the Morea,
and which side they might take during the rebellion was not known or clear to Ottoman officials
at all. Thus, in the sources, we often see statements to the effect that if we do not take
precautions in advance, the *reaya* of Morea will rebel like the Manio ts (*mesfur tuğyan itmezden
mukaddem tedariki görülmez ise Manya reayaları müsüllü hesaretleri zahir olacağı*).\(^{42}\) The
Ottomans were accustomed to seeing the Maniots rebelling even before the insurrection of 1770,
so their behaviour was not unexpected.\(^{43}\) What they were more afraid of was the possibility that
other *reaya* of Morea might join to them in their mischievous acts.\(^{44}\)

Muhsinzade took the insurrection seriously and desired to mobilize all of the state’s
resources for this cause. He asked for more and more soldiers (more than ten thousand) and
plenty of provisions on the assumption that a substantial number of the non-Muslims would both
support the Russian cause and be eager to rebel against Ottoman sovereignty in the Morea. This
is why Mehmed Pasha also requested help from the imperial navy.\(^{45}\) By that time the rebels had
already attacked the towns, including Karitayna, Londar, Fener as well as Mezistre, and besieged
some fortresses, such as Tripoliçe, at the beginning of April and already scored some successes.

\(^{41}\) For instance, Penah Efendi posits that the Ottoman army attacked the Mani after saving important fortresses in
Morea, and that the soldiers were not able to get deep into the Mani and gave up going forward after a while. Penah
Efendi, 154-155.

\(^{42}\) See for example, AE Mustafa III, 23593.

\(^{43}\) One of the sources argues that no one was surprised when the Maniots sided with the Russians because they had a
long history of insubordination to Ottoman hegemony (*öteden beri isyan ve tuğyan üzere olan Manya’dad*). HH 293.

\(^{44}\) A decree sent to Koçi Bey of Kolonya, written the day the Ottomans troops were engaged in suppressing the
rebellion, where, in opposition to the Maniots, reference is made to *reaya* as having deceived (*iğfâl ve idlâl edilmiş*)
in order to participate in the uprising. CAS, 47520.

\(^{45}\) HH, 293.
In the end, however, the rebels were not that successful against the strong fortresses, such as Tripoliçe, where a small number of the Ottoman soldiers as well as the reaya of the city and the refugees who had came from other less dependable towns were quite resolved to resist with the help of the subsidiary force of the Albanians.

As a matter of the fact, long before the arrival of the imperial assistance, Ottoman officers such as the muhafiz of Kandiye Hüseyin Pasha successfully started to resist the attacks of the rebels. More importantly, however, there is no reason to believe that Hüseyin Pasha was an exception in getting intelligence reports concerning Russian assaults and taking necessary precautions. Penah Efendi’s writing affirms that the relationship between the Russians and certain reaya was no secret to anyone living in the Morea on the eve of the revolt. He easily obtained information about reaya being in alliance with Russia from some of his trusted subjects. We know that at least some of the reaya who informed him were Christians as it was overtly stated in his writing. Again, just like Penah, the anonymous writer also supports the fact that such information was no secret for most of the people living in the Morea. He posits that malicious activities of some infidel reaya in Gastun became known to him through thirty inhabitants of this town (...keyfiyet-i mezbure otuz kadar Gastunlu tarafından ifade ve tevatiren...zahir olmağın). Accordingly, to provoke the reaya two Russian spies were sent to the region (...reyayının tahrik için ibdida-i emirde gözümüze vürud iden bir kata Mosko sefinesine mahsusan iki defa casus götürdüm ve talakkum eyledğimiz üzere casusu mezbur reaya taraflarına gönderilmiş ...). Being well aware of what had been going on in the town, some leading figures, including first Mustafa and Ahmed Aghas and then Ali Agha, Mahmud Bey,  

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40 Köse, 44 n. 229.
41 “...Tripoliçe’de olduğumda biddefeat uslub-i hakîmâne (hakîmane) tecessüs ve birer tarikle destresimiz olan bazı mekâtib-i rûmiye mefhumlarandan ve bazı itimad ittiğim reâyânın lakırdılaridan reâyânın Moskolu ile ittifakları olduğu maliüm olduguından...” Penah Efendi, 67.
Molla Mehmed, Yusuf Bey and others, informed the governor (mütesellim) of Morea. As a result, they were ordered to prepare for the protection of the city long before the Russians showed up in the Morea. More importantly, however, the Ottomans had enjoyed the chance given them to take necessary precautions before the Russians actually appeared in the peninsula. But, they were still quite small in number to challenge the insurgents for a long time, let alone to repel all insurgents who were also supported by Russian officials.

Vâsıf claims Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha had no choice but to ask for help from ayan of surrounding regions, since the main Ottoman army was struggling with the Russians in the Balkans and Crimea. As a matter of the fact, it does appear that while he was not actually so eager to use the ayan there was no alternative that Muhsinzade could use at that time. Besides, the pasha threatened that he would depose the ayan from their positions in the peninsula and expel them from the empire if they do not obey the order (buyruldu) sent to them. So, at the outset there is no particular reason to believe that these ayan would have been particularly willing to participate in the pasha’s adventure. The state had requested the help of the ayan in order to reach the target long before 1770. The soldiers of the ayan had long proved their competence on the battlefield as compared to the imperial soldiers. This is why someone like Muhsinzade might have actually preferred to use the ayan’ households rather than members of the imperial army, who, as many of the contemporary sources clearly state, were simply good for nothing. The actual number of Ottoman soldiers who fought to suppress the uprising is difficult to ascertain. Finlay gives the number as 6,000 Albanians, who were also supported with local

48 KK, 60-1, 3.
49 According to Vâsıf, the reason why Muhsinzade called the ayan of the region to duty was not just that they were close to the region, but also that it was impossible to summon soldiers to the battle field from any other regions in the empire. Ahmed Vâsıf, 43.
50 HH, 293.
cavalry of the Morea.\textsuperscript{51} Sadullah Enveri gives a more reasonable number of imperial soldiers mainly summoned from \textit{ayan}. That is, two thousand soldiers from Nimeti Bey, one thousand five hundred from Yenişehirli İsmail Agha and one thousand from Çatalcalı Ali Agha, as well as two thousand troops from İzdinli Beyzade Yusuf Agha. Last but not least, there were four thousand more coming from Livadiye, İstefe and Sarıgöl. In total, 11,500 were put onto the battle field.\textsuperscript{52} Alexander’s assumption on the number of the Ottoman soldiers used for quelling the uprising is a more flexible one, namely, that 10,000–15,000 Albanian soldiers who had been called by Muhsinzade to suppress the rebellion.\textsuperscript{53} Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha did not want to have fewer than 10,000 soldiers for his campaign against insurgents.\textsuperscript{54} Therefore, we can safely assume that Muhsinzade more or less got what he had asked for.

Soon, on April 9, 1770, Muhsinzade supported by local leaders, such as Çatalcalı Ali Agha, Mütesellim Hasan and irregular Albanian forces was able to rescue Tripoliçe from the hands of its besiegers.\textsuperscript{55} This was not an end to the Russian assault. The rebels who were supported by the Russian officers continued to attack Gastun,\textsuperscript{56} Kalavita and Vestice and took the possession of these towns in a short period of time. It turned out to be an opportunity for

\textsuperscript{51} Finlay, 312-313. However, Nagata quotes this number without reading the line. Nagata, \textit{Muhsin-Zâde Mehmed Paşa ve Ayânık Müessesesi}, 79. That is, Finlay argues that “The vanguard of Albanians, six thousand strong, entered Tripolitza about the time Psaros concentrated the Russo-Greek army to attack the place.” How he arrived at this number and how much we can trust it are beyond the scope of this discussion. But if we accept his number, the vanguard of Albanians of six thousand men does not necessarily mean that the Ottoman army consisted of only six thousand soldiers. It was presumably much more than that, since he talks about one clash between the Russo-Greek army and Ottoman forces. At the same time, there were other struggles going on among them in other parts of Morea. In the light of this number it is more reasonable to accept a number which is more than six thousand and maybe over ten thousand. After all, Finlay clearly states that “The Albanians, supported by the native cavalry of the province…” Therefore, even the number in Finlay’s head is more than 6 000.

\textsuperscript{52} Sadullah Enveri, 114.; Fındıklılı Süleyman, \textit{Şem'dâni-Zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Târihi Mür'I't-Tevârih 2/B}, 28.

\textsuperscript{53} Alexander, 51.

\textsuperscript{54} HH, 293.

\textsuperscript{55} According to Uzunçarşılı, there were about twenty thousand rebels attacking this city, which was protected by ten thousand imperial soldiers. Uzunçarşılı, \textit{Osmanlı Tarihi} 395-396.

\textsuperscript{56} Süleyman Penah Efendi was present at the battle of Gastun and provides first-hand information about this incident. See Penah Efendi, 71-72.
many people who plundered houses and usurped *reaya*’ belongings, money, weapons, and so forth. For instance, when Penah Efendi and some other reaya wanted to run away from Gastun out of fear for the rebels who had been attacking the town, Ömer Efendi (who had denied the rebellion and been ordered not to mention such things before) now asked two thousand *gurus* from them in return for allowing them to leave the town. He threatened that if they do not give that money he would make a false claim against each of them to the imperial council in Istanbul. Having heard of his request both Muslim and Christian reaya were shocked and confounded.\(^5^7\)

It was not only Muslims but also Christians who had felt their belongings and lives were in danger on account of attacks by the rebels and intended to leave Gastun for a better and more secure fortress in the Morea. In the eyes of the Ottoman subjects living in the Morea there was not a strict line between the Muslims and Christians that separated one group from another totally due to the insurrection. This is why the Muslims did not prevent those Christians who wanted to run away with the Muslims from joining their group and did not regard them as a threat to their escape. Nor did non-Muslims think of themselves as safe with the forthcoming Greek invasion in Gastun.

Lastly, the rebels also besieged the fortress of Balyabadora, but soon Ottoman and Albanian forces scored another victory and repelled the insurgents from that town as well.\(^5^8\) In response, the rebels not only captured Navarin under the commandment of Dolgorucki (Dolgoliç) and sent the people living there to Crete and Lepanto, but also started to lay a siege to the stronghold at Modon. Those holding the fortress did their best to resist all assaults until imperial help reached them though.\(^5^9\) Having re-captured Tripoliçe a short while previously, Muhsinzade was now free to send some of his soldiers to protect Modon, under the command of a famous *ayan* named

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\(^{5^7}\) Ibid., 72.

\(^{5^8}\) For details see Ibid., 77-79.

\(^{5^9}\) Iskit, 2578.
Çatalcalı Ali Pasha. Besides, the imperial navy led by Admiral Hüsameddin Pasha was on its way to help both Modon and Koron. Soon, the assembled Ottoman forces consisted of seven thousand soldiers under Çatalcalı Ali Agha as well as three hundred more who came out of the fortress to score another remarkable victory against the Russians and rebels. In this way, the Ottomans succeeded in repelling them from Modon too.\footnote{Uzunçarşılı, Osmanlı Tarihi 396-397.}

The first battle between the imperial navy and the Russian fleet under the command of Elphinstone took place in the Aegean Sea. In sequence, the Battle of Menekşe (on May 27, 1770), Anabolu (on May 28, 1770) and Suluca (on June 4, 1770) occurred with no substantial gain for either side. In the meantime, Navarin remained as the only place where the struggle still continued between the two foes. Alexi Orlov did not let some rebels enter to this last stronghold that remained in the hands of the Russians at that time. In response, they cried out, “you promised us salvation from the Turkish yoke. Right now, all we want from you is to protect us from death at the hands of the Ottomans.”\footnote{Kurtoğlu, 18.} The Ottoman army proved much more successful on land, and finally Aleksi Orlov was left no choice but to raise the siege of Navarin and then set sail to join the fleet of Elphinstone with the most trusted Greek followers, including Benaki and Papazoğlu (on June 7, 1770).\footnote{Ibid., 10} No Russian soldier remained in the Morea thereafter. From that moment onwards the wars between the Ottomans and the forces of Alexi Orlov continued in the Mediterranean Sea which is beyond the scope of this dissertation. To sum up, the imperial army once again took possession of all Ottoman towns in the Peloponnese (including Gastun, Navarin, Kalavrita, Kalamata, Modon, Vestice, Arkadya, Enduruse, Mezistre, Çiftlik-i Nişli Londar, Karintene, island of Sülüce, Gördös, Fener and so forth) which had been captured by the
Russians previously. As a consequence of his great successes in the Morea, Muhsinzade was
given the title of *Mora Fatihi* (Conqueror of Morea) and soon thereafter was appointed as
Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire. From that moment onwards the rebellion on land was at an
end, but the naval confrontation continued in the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas. Therefore, the
Ottoman Empire did not really feel relieved or at ease after the suppression of the Morea
Rebellion in mid-1770s.

The Morea Rebellion as an International Issue

When we scrutinize the Ottoman archives we encounter many documents that clearly put
forth for consideration the international aspects of the Morea Rebellion. For instance, we see that
the Duke of Tuscany (Toskana) in Italy claims that he did not allow the Orlov brothers and their
soldiers to take advantage of the port of Ali Kurna to secretly procure ships in order to attack
Ottoman lands. The story goes that the duke not only forced the Orlovs to weigh anchor from the
port within twenty-four hours but also confiscated one of the Orlovs’ ships. Even other ports
(possibly under the jurisdiction of the same duke) are claimed to have acted the same way and
prevented the Orlovs from undertaking any piracy.

The reason for the duke’s action in favour of the Ottoman Empire is given as the peace
treaty he had signed with the Ottomans previously. Why it may have been so important for even
a relatively insignificant figure like the Duke of Tuscany to help out the Ottomans is a question
we must ask in relation to the Morea Rebellion. But we are not able to explain the main motives
behind the duke’s inclination to take the Ottoman side, or at least pretend to support the Ottoman

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63 For details concerning each town, see Penah Efendi, 79-80 and 153-154.
64 Fındıklılı Süleyman, Şem'dâni-Zâde Fındıklılı Süleyman Efendi Tarih Mür‘î’t-Tevârih 2/B, 29.
65 As a matter of the fact, it was a translated document written by the chief translator of Austria, which is claimed to
have been written in the second half of the eighteenth century. However, the contents of this document make clear
that it was written either just before the Morea Rebellion came into existence or, more likely, not long after it was
crushed by Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha in 1770s. E 7164.
cause in the middle of its struggle with Russia. More importantly, our sources does not explain why the duke was so concerned about sending a letter in order to explain everything to the imperial council and making it clear to all that he was against Russian interests in the Mediterranean Sea. As we will notice in many other examples as well, however, he was not an exceptional personality who was struggling to persuade the imperial council to believe that he was not with Russians and claiming to work for the interest of the Ottoman Empire.

Ottoman cognizance of Russian intrigues in Eastern Europe, as discussed in the chapter 4, open up a new perspective on this discussion. Namely, Ottoman state officers were aware of what the Russians had been doing in the territories of its neighbouring state, that is, Austria. Accordingly, the Austrian embassy was informed about Russian intrigues over the Hungarian subjects of the Austrians. This indicates not only that the Ottoman Empire was assiduous in its effort to know about Russia, both within and beyond its boundaries, but also that it endeavoured to establish an alliance in order to protect its interests against Russia. At any rate, the empire was not even indifferent to the Russian intrigues outside the Ottoman territories, let alone in Morea region at that time in particular. This also gives us a clue about the fact that, from the very beginning, the empire thought of the rebellion as an international issue and acted accordingly.

The network created between the two warring parties during the insurrection of 1770 is of significance here. It is argued that Russia attacked not only the Ottoman forces but also the French naval power in the Mediterranean Sea. Needless to say, in the mind of the Russians, France and the Ottoman Empire were in alliance against Russia. This was so clear to Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha that, in opposition to his usual reaction to intelligence reports he did not even

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66 The date that was written on this document is May 1769 / April 1770 (1183), which does not exactly allow us to decide when it was written. However, the fact that it described Muhsinzade as the governor of Morea (Mora valisi) it implies that it was written either just before the Morea Rebellion or after it began.

67 E 2380/186.
question the reliability of intelligence provided by some French captains. On the other side, as we have seen in some of the documents Malta supported the Russian cause and helped them either by sending naval power or by detaining some French ships at Maltese ports for a while. Freller clearly shows that the close relationship between the Russians and the Maltese substantially developed for the purpose of being able to engage in a joint assault against the Ottomans during the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768–1774. Until the end of Ancien régime, however, France not only supported the Ottoman cause against Russia but also prevented the Knights Hospitaller of Malta from having an open alliance with Russia against the Ottomans.

Last but not least, as one can easily observe in the example of Bulutkapan Ali Bey in Egypt and Zahir Ömer in Acre (Akka), some insubordinate figures who had taken control of the Ottoman lands in the periphery created local military corps in order to make themselves either autonomous or totally independent long before the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The former, for example, not only declared his independence from the Ottoman Empire but also had his name read during Friday prayer and had coins minted in his name. Furthermore, Bulutkapan also allied with both Russia and Zahir Ömer even if their alliance brought nothing

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68 This document is one of the many examples of the Ottoman–French relationship and cooperation against the Russian influence in the Mediterranean Sea written in the second half of the eighteenth century. As it is often the case in many of the documents in the TSA, we do not know when E 2380/275 was written. All we know from the classification is that it was written in the reign of Mustafa III (1757–1774). But the text reveals the fact that it was written after Muhsinzade was appointed to suppress the Morea Rebellion in the 1770s. It supplies information about how France found it more appropriate to its interests to take joint action with the Ottomans against the Russians and tried to provide intelligence for the sake of the Ottoman Empire through one of the captains in the French navy.

69 See for instance, CDH, 17181 and AE Mustafa III, 23593.

70 E 2380/275.


72 Uzunçarşılı, Osmanlı Tarihi 430-434. Neumann argues that “even if their interests were often at variance with those of the Porte, these men came to represent the state towards the local communities. Their power-bases were outside the imminent reach of the central administration but they used state institutions and state income to enhance their position.” Christoph K. Neumann, "Ottoman Provincial Towns from the Eighteenth to the Nineteenth Century," in The Empire in the City: Arab Provincial Capitals in the Late Ottoman Empire ed. Jens Hanssen, Thomas Philipp, and Stefan Weber (Würzburg: Ergon, 2002), 135.

73 Hathaway, The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdaglis, 47.
more than unfulfilled promises. The latter both rebelled against the Ottoman authority in Acre and cooperated with the Russian navy in the 1770s just like the Christian reayā of Morea.

Clear proof that the Ottomans took the issue as an international one and acted not much differently from Russia comes from a Swedish embassy report. The story goes that there were a certain number of Polish people who were not only intending to kill Count Orlov but also to dethrone Catherine II in favour of a brother of the former ruler of Russia, Czar Ivan. What is important for our discussion is that just like Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha argued about the rebels of Morea, those who were planning to rebel against Catherine II were also encouraged by the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768–1774. The rebels’ first attempt did not bring about anything. However, they were determined to give it another try. What was important to the success of this second attempt, it was covertly argued, was that the Ottoman Empire may have taken some responsibility, such as paying for the expenditures of the next uprising that was about to be initiated against the tsarina. After all, the Swedish embassy dared to give such information to the imperial court not only because the embassy thought it was worth doing so but also because the empire might be interested in supporting it. In the end, this Swedish document claims that such cooperation might put the Russians in a very difficult position and that Russia would have no more strength left to provide the necessities of a war already launched against the Ottoman Empire.


Uzunçarşı, Osmanlı Tarihi 433-434. It was a time of Ottoman-Russian Wars stretched from 1768 to 1774 which not only cover the period of Bulutkapan Ali Bey’s rebellion (1769-1773) and Zahir’s revolt to the state but also campaigns of the Mamluk in Arabia, Syria and Palestine (1770, 1771 and 1775). That is to say, it was a period when the Ottomans were simply unable to launch campaign against those who were fighting for the total independence of Egypt from the Ottoman domination. See Crecelius.

E 4667, (December 1, 1769).

E 6006.
With the support of other sources this example could be interpreted as Ottoman eagerness to respond to Russian provocations going on all over the Ottoman territories. In other words, after all, the embassy thought that it was something from which the empire might want to benefit. We do not know for sure whether the empire took this opportunity by means of giving required aid to the Polish rebels. But what we do know from another contemporary source is that the Ottoman Empire made an effort to simulate what Russia had already done in the Morea and many other Ottoman territories. For example, in his travel account Necati Efendi mentions that followers of the Pugachev Rebellion attempted to help the Ottoman Empire in 1773. There is no doubt that this was not just one-sided help of Pugachev and his men who attempted to overthrow the tsarina at the same time.78 Another contemporary travel account of this time, written by Abdülkerim Pasha, also indicates that Russia took it for granted that the Ottomans had a hand in the Pugachev Rebellion. That is, as an Ottoman ambassador of the time Abdülkerim was officially invited to the celebration given on account of the capture of Pugachev who had been killed by the Russians.79 This act can be easily interpreted as a Russian attempt to demonstrate the failure of the Ottoman support for Pugachev and his insurrection.

Last but not least, an imperial rescript (hatt-ı humayun) not only informs us that some rebels of the Morea were killed but also in the same sentence mentions the defeat of the infidel Soluman in Georgia.80 What we have learned from the writings of Ottoman embassies in Russia about Georgia supports the connection between the Morea Rebellion and the incidents that took place in Georgia at the time of Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768–1774. That is, with the provocation by Russia, Georgia attacked the Ottoman Empire and enslaved some of the Ottoman

79 Ibid., 132-133.
80 E 2935, (June 13, 1770).
subjects (and sent some to Catherine the Great as a gift).\textsuperscript{81} Therefore, suppression of the rebels in the Morea and the defeat of Georgia were seen as one and the same complex of events and explained to the imperial council accordingly. Taking all into consideration, one can safely argue that in the middle of the struggles between the Ottoman Empire and Russia the Mediterranean world had already been divided into two poles, as was the rest of Europe. Hence, there is no doubt that the Morea Rebellion had no sooner begun than it became an international issue, both for the European states and for the Ottoman Empire itself.\textsuperscript{82}

The Question of Two Distinct Societies within the Morea Rebellion

One of the biggest mistakes in the explanation of the Morea Rebellion is to assume that there were two distinct societies totally separate from one another. According to this understanding, on the one side we see the Greeks or Orthodox subjects of the Ottoman Empire who are often claimed to have united at the expense of the Ottoman state. On the other side, we have the Ottomans or Muslims who were chosen as victims by both the Greeks and the Russians and were also were reported to have fought back the insurgents as one single entity. Such assumptions, which are in one way or another are taken for granted by the contemporary historians, are in fact fictions that are altogether dispelled by the documents largely written throughout the insurrection of 1770. In other words, these documents do not accept the existence of any united/homogenous group of people which can be delineated according to their religion or nation, nor do they argue that being a member of a certain group prevented \textit{reaya} from cooperating with members of other groups or institutions that are frequently depicted as the arch

\textsuperscript{81} Unat, 126.
\textsuperscript{82} It should also be kept in mind that members of these two poles did not support their own members unconditionally. For example, even if Britain supported the Russian expedition in the Mediterranean, it did not endorse the alliance between Ali Bey and Russia. Instead, just like France it did not want to see Ali Bey as a threat to the Ottoman central state. Crecelius, 69-70.
enemy of the group they themselves belonged to. In this connection, former writings on the uprising simply fall short of providing a good explanation for the Morea Rebellion.

To start with, Penah Efendi gives us an interesting story about the siege of Balyabadra that makes the condition in the Morea much clearer. According to his story, when the fortress of Balyabadra was besieged by the rebels the reaya within the fortress decided to send a messenger to ask for help from the Ottoman military forces situated in Rumelia. However, there was no volunteer for this precarious adventure which involved leaving the fortress for the purpose of getting imperial assistance. Finally, someone’s Greek servant accepted this dangerous duty in return for fifty gurus. With great difficulties he succeeded in going through the rebels’ camp and reaching Kestel and then İnebahtı. For a while, nothing was heard of him so the besieged Muslim reaya in Balyabadra started to conjecture that he had forsaken them because he was of Greek origin (meaning Orthodox in religion). However, they later understood that he not only did his job properly but that he also, when he was in Kestel, changed his religion to Islam. Strikingly enough, as an individual he later also joined to the Muslim army which aimed to rescue the fortress of Balyabadra from the siege. Yet, he got killed at the battlefield and that explains why the Muslims in Balyabadra had not been informed about him until Balyabadra was saved by the imperial army.83

Here we see a Greek taking on the dangerous duty of informing the Ottoman army about the siege of Balyabadra and asking for imperial help for the Muslim (and also possibly non-Muslim) reaya in the fortress. What is interesting here is the fact that this Greek, who had a pretty modest status under the Ottoman rule, did not regard the invasion of the rebels as an opportunity for him to be “liberated” from the yoke of the Ottoman Empire, so to speak. Even if we do not know the details of the story the quotation suggests that he went through the rebel

83 Penah Efendi, 77.
camp to reach Rumelia and that it was not noticed by the besiegers that he was a Turkish spy who intended to ask help from the Ottoman army. When the Muslims in Balyabadora started to think that their Greek messenger would not return they decided to send another man for the same purpose. Nevertheless, this second man was killed immediately after he left the fortress. Therefore, it would not have been that easy for the first messenger to go through the rebel camp unnoticed and to inform the imperial army. The Greek messenger’s “ethnic” background helped him to reach Kestel without being recognized by the rebels. Although he had a unique chance to join the rebels (and possibly even to be rewarded for the information he would have provided to the insurgents about the situation of the Muslims in the besieged fortress) he did not take the chance and honourably completed the task given to him by his Turkish masters in Balyabadora.

A recent study about the Morea during the insurrection of 1770 proves the fact that the conversion of Christian subjects of the empire to the Islam was also not limited to Greeks of modest origin. That is, a leading figure of Mani named Yorgi Mavromihali not only chose Islam in the middle of the uprising but also enrolled in the Ottoman imperial navy under his new name, Mehmed Şükrü Bey. In the year 1814, he visited his relatives in Mani with the help of Ottoman ships and later he was even appointed as Bey of Rhodes in the years between 1819 and 1820. Being a significant member of the Mani did not prevent someone like Mavromihali from taking the Ottoman side against his coreligionist/Maniots.

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84 Ibid. As we see in another page, to be disguised in Greek clothes was a good way of walking through the rebel camp. This tactic was later implemented in the fortress of Mermeriye, which had been besieged by the rebels, and one of them disguised himself in Greek clothes to reach Anabolu safe and sound. Penah Efendi, 153.
85 Alexander gives another leading figure having the same name with Yorgi Mavromihali, i.e., Acı Yorgi (Georgios Mauromichales). He was one of two most successful Maniots who scored noteworthy victories against the Ottomans in Leontari (Londar) and Nesi (Beşi). However, he was later caught and executed during the siege of Nesi. Alexander, 51, n. 3.
Taking everything into consideration, there is no doubt that to be part of the Greek rebellion was not attractive for all (even for those Greeks who had quite inferior positions in the Ottoman Empire or for those who apparently enjoyed an important place among the rebels). More importantly, their religion (which is frequently offered as the very catalyst for the uprising) was not good enough to bring all Greeks together for a single cause. After all, in the middle of the revolt, some of them somehow converted to Islam, and even later one of these two converts lost his life during the struggle against his former coreligionists. Even Şükrü Bey was later rewarded with one of the most prestigious ranks in the island of Rhodes in 1819–1820. It is more plausible to argue now that the Greek enterprise of the rebellion did not represent the common interests of all Greeks living in the Morea. Instead, it presumably remained limited and was far from a total resistance against the so-called Turkish yoke.

The conversion of Ottoman subjects was not a one-sided phenomenon though. We are also informed that one of the former Ottoman sipahis, named Ahmed bin Yunus, also converted to Christianity and possibly turned out to be a rebel (even if it is not clearly stated in the document). In response, the Ottomans sent an imperial order where it was reported that Ahmed’s land (timar) with a value of 4,000 akçes was given to someone else, named Ibrahim bin Ismail.⁸⁷ Either Russian religious intrigue in the Morea seems to have been so successful that even government officials like a sipahi Ahmed bin Yunus wanted to be a Christian convert, or more likely Ahmed found it more appropriate to his interest to be an Orthodox in the middle of the uprising going on in the Peloponnese.

One of the most striking examples recorded by Penah Efendi is the story of the dragoman of Morea who had informed the governor of Tripoliçe about the rebellion six months before it took place in 1770. Not surprisingly, the governor not only rejected this claim but also threatened the

⁸⁷ CDH, 8707.
him with punishment in case he kept giving such information. When the rebellion started and the
Ottoman army came to Tripoliçe soldiers not only plundered the dragoman’s belongings but also
raped his daughter. In response, the dragoman cried out to members of the Ottoman council by
asking, “have I been punished as other religious enemies of yours (who participated in the
rebellion) because of the fact that I have informed the governors (who were also attending the
council at that time) about the forthcoming rebellion six months in advance as a reflection of my
loyalty to the state?”\textsuperscript{88} There is no doubt that this dragoman, who was not Muslim in origin,
seemingly had acted for the benefit of the empire against the rebellion. In brief, a substantial
number of Greeks really fought against the rebels either through informing the Ottomans or by
protecting Muslims from rebel attack.

On the other side, however, there were also some Ottoman officers who somehow helped
the rebellion or at least did not try to prevent it from happening. For instance, having heard about
the massacre going on in the Morea some \textit{ayan} and their men living in other towns of Morea,
such as Gastun, evacuated their houses for strong fortresses, leaving their belongings behind.
Because these people did not protect their towns, just a few rebels were able to capture many
towns in the Morea (\textit{... ahalisinin dahi fikr üzikri ancak firar itmekdedir ayan-ı Moranın birisi
reayalarından kasabalarını muhafaza şöyle dursun kuvveti maliyeleri kemalde iken çerbzeban
makulesi umur-u vilayetlerine ianet itmeler}).\textsuperscript{89} Many other sources also support that some \textit{ayan}
of the peninsula were neither eager nor efficacious in their suppression of the rebellion. They
showed no noteworthy resistance nor did they hold their ground against the rebels at any cost. It
was only through the help of the other \textit{ayan} coming from the north, especially Albanians, and
through that of soldiers of the Ottoman imperial army that the empire once again was able to take

\textsuperscript{88} Penah Efendi, 70.
\textsuperscript{89} E 12251/1. (1183 AH)
the control of the peninsula. There may be various reasons for that most of which we are not in a position to discover here. However, one can also posit that at least some Muslim ayan were in cooperation with the rebels as is also stated in many other sources, such as Penah, mentioned above. Hence, the possibility of Muslim participation in the rebellion needs to be seriously taken into consideration. In sum, the documents indicated that some kocabaşı cooperated with government officers against the state’s interests while certain Christian reaya collaborated with Muslims.90 We cannot simply talk about a constant line between the Christian and Muslim reaya of the Ottoman Empire in the Morea in an environment where personal interest triumphed over everything.

Last but not least, there is no consensus among surviving primary documents concerning the participants in the Morea Rebellion—which further proves the entangled characteristics of the uprising under consideration. For example, when we consider a famous Greek kocabaşı named Zaimoğlu, we can easily understand the diversity in the writing of the Ottoman primary documents. As previously discussed, Penah argues that Zaimoğlu did his best not to be part of the insurrection in favour of the Ottomans. Furthermore, he personally helped the Muslims and saved them from being exterminated at the hands of the rebels. To be exact, negotiations took place between the rebels and the Muslims through Zaimoğlu’s mediator. According to the treaty the Muslims left their weapons and evacuated Kalavrita for Rumelia with the full help of

90 The number of this kind of example can be easily increased. See for example, the anonymous author of KK, 60-1 who had worked as an intelligence officers as it is understood from his writing was sometimes informed about what had been going on in Morea either through two kocabaşıs. As we often see in the writings of Penah Efendi this anonymous author also claims that he had been well informed about the revolt which was about to take place in Morea (Tripoliçe in this case). According to him, when he was in Tripoliçe somehow (bir tariikiyle) he learnt that some infidel reaya had allied with Russians. In addition to his unknown source, he also gives the name Benaki who accused a priest of bringing a certain number of Christian reaya under the pretext of founding a Bazaar. At the end the priest succeeded in summoning three thousand people and they started to attack the Ottoman subjects in Tripoliçe and later moved to Gastun with the same purpose. There is no doubt that some of the aforementioned information became available to the author through the Christian reaya who had been against the rebels from one reason or another. KK, 60-1, 2.
Zaimoğlu. They first went to a monastery and stayed there until small boats were prepared by this *kocabaşı*. In the meantime, the priests of that monastery treated the Muslims with great respect and offered them whatever was needed. Penah Efendi emphasizes that these priests neither participated in the rebellion nor behaved improperly. When the boats did not show up the Muslims went to another town, named Vestice, to reach Rumelia. However, the bandits of Vestice plundered their belongings and even intended to kill them all. But, the *reaya* did not let them kill the Muslims and started to fight against them. In this way, the Muslims were saved and were sent to Saloneya on the way to Rumelia.\(^{91}\)

It is claimed here that someone like Zaimoğlu, who had been compelled to take part in the rebellion, saved the Muslims from the hands of his coreligionists. Moreover, the *reaya* of certain regions, who were presumably Christians, did not let the bandits kill the Muslims and found a way to provide the Muslims with a safe conduct to continue on their way to Rumelia. Furthermore, Penah argues that Zaimoğlu pretended to be part of the rebellion, fearing the Russian general Orlov and the (Christian) *reaya*, but in the end he refused to join the rebellion.

Other primary sources of the rebellion, however, posit just the opposite. For example, Çukadar El-Hac Ahmed, who was in the middle of the Ottoman struggle with the rebels in May and April 1770 in the Morea, also talks about Zaimoğlu soon after he left the Peloponnese.\(^{92}\) Ahmed particularly talks about Mezistre and what kind of mischievous behaviours the rebels had engaged in there. What is particularly important in this summary (*icmal*) for the sake of our discussion is that in opposition to Penah Efendi he overtly blames Zaimoğlu (Yanobota) for joining the Russian navy with his four ships and plotting with the bandits living on the islands to

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\(^{91}\) Penah Efendi, 74.
\(^{92}\) E 2380/162 (17 Zilhicce, 1183)
rebel against Ottoman authority. According to his account, therefore, Zaimoğlu not only participated in the rebellion but also deliberately acted against the Ottoman interests.\(^93\)

Zaimoğlu was not innocent in the eyes of some Ottomans who later expelled him from his native land by an authoritative decree. Nine Russian ships in Mediterranean Sea intended to attack the Ottoman coast. It is claimed that Zaimoğlu with his four ships joined the Russian navy. They both intended to plot with the bandits living on the islands of Kefelonya and Zaklisa (?) so that they would make trouble in the Morea including the towns of Kefelonya, Kistel and İnebahtı. The main intention of this petition was to get more soldiers and provisions for the purpose of protecting these towns against the Russians and Zaimoğlu.\(^94\) In this document we learn for certain that there were certain important figures in the empire who had particularly accused Zaimoğlu of being the head of the rebels. In addition to this indictment it is also claimed that he attacked Mezistre with one hundred thousand soldiers. It is more reasonable to think that Penah’s Zaimoğlu and the one mentioned in Ahmed’s account and above were the same person. After all, in both documents Zaimoğlu is represented as a leading figure and even the leader of the *kocabaşı* and that of a substantial number of the rebels in Kalavrita. If they are one and the same, we are now better able to find the answer to the question why was Zaimoğlu “exiled by the Ottoman government from the Morea peninsula after the rebellion collapsed?”\(^95\)

Both El-Hac Ahmed Pasha and Penah Efendi were members of the Ottoman military class. Therefore, they should have had many things in common in opposition to those subjects of the empire who did not share “Ottoman mentality.” The former made a claim against a *kocabaşı*, i.e., Zaimoğlu, and the latter denied the guilt of the *kocabaşı*. Thus, if their intention was to write

\(^{93}\) AE Mustafa III, 18238.
\(^{94}\) AE Mustafa III, 18238.
\(^{95}\) Nagata, “Greek Rebellion of 1770 in the Morea Peninsula: Some Remarks through the Turkish Historical Sources,” 92.
in favour of certain interest groups and to disgrace others, it is plausible that Ahmed Pasha and Penah Efendi represented different interest groups within the same group of Ottoman dignitaries. This rather proves the fact that even the Ottoman high officers were far from being a homogenous group. Personal and self-interest appears to have been the main catalyst behind their proclivity, rather than anything else.

We are not likely to come to a conclusion about who was right about Zaimoğlu, but this distinction among the sources is of great importance. These sources either blaming or extolling Zaimoğlu and what he did in the Morea suggest that it was not actually clear to Ottoman officials who the culprits were. Another report (arz), written by Küçük Ali in the entourage of Muhsinzade, explicitly indicates the dilemma the empire had experienced where Zaimoğlu was concerned. Ali states that the famous kocabaşı of Kalamata Zaimoğlu sent a letter to Muhsinzade Mehmed and argued that there was no need to worry about the reaya of Kalamata since if they attempt to rebel against the Ottomans he himself promised to kill them all (bizim taraf reâyâsından bir dürlû hayf itmeyesiz emin olasız eğer içlerinden isyân iden olur ise ben bu tarafda katl iderim deyû inhâ eylemişdir deyû beyân ider).96 This report does not tell us what Küçük Ali might have really thought about Zaimoğlu and how he described him. However, we realize from Ali’s words that Zaimoğlu intended to persuade the Ottoman Empire that he was a loyal supporter of the empire and was going to do his best to stop and even punish those who one way or another took the side of the rebels against the Ottomans. This document tells us that the position and role of Zaimoğlu during the Morea Rebellion was under discussion in Ottoman circles from the very beginning.

All this demonstrates the difficulty the empire faced in deciding who supported the revolt and who sabotaged it. Accusations against certain people in favour of others often occur in

96 E 2930.
Ottoman documents written for the attention of the imperial council. Records of clashes of interest are so common in the Ottoman archival materials that we sometimes find it more reasonable to accept other arguments not necessarily mentioned in the Ottoman documents. For example, the interests of a small entity, such as a group of people (or even a family or political household) can be seen as the key word in the explanation of the Morea Rebellion. Further proof of this diversity is also going to be observed in our last chapter where we will specifically look at the documents written after the suppression of the Morea Rebellion in order to discover general Ottoman policies implemented in the Morea subsequent to the recapture.

97 We think Gallant’s article *Greek Bandits* should always be taken into consideration in the understanding of the Morea Rebellion and the important figures who one way or another took part in this rebellion. See Gallant.
Ottoman Preoccupation with Further Russian Attacks Immediately After the End of the Rebellion

The empire continued to be concerned with the Russians even after these series of victories. In the middle of a devastating war with the Russians, the Ottomans had to divert their power because they entirely believed that it was a matter of strategic importance for the continuing Ottoman domination in the Peloponnese. Despite the fact that the Ottoman state had seven thousand soldiers in charge of protecting the peninsula from further Russian attacks (Mora ceziresinde hıfz ve heratı üçün tarafı devleti aliyyeden tayin buyurulan yedi bin nefer...), a summary report argues, Ottoman intelligence officers asked for supplementary forces. According to the intelligence, in addition to what Russia had brought the previous year (more than forty Russian ships) in order to invade the Morea the Russians were to double that number with new coming fleets in the near future. Consequently, seven thousand imperial soldiers (possibly remained in the Morea after the uprising was suppressed) would not be enough to defend the Morea. So, this document asked for more soldiers to confront the forthcoming danger—coming from the Russians and likely also from the reaya of Morea—as the Ottomans may have taken that possibility into account. It was also repeatedly argued in the intelligence that more Russian troops and ships would come sooner than they did the previous year (meaning 1183 AH) and that they would attack the Morea.¹

¹ AE Mustafa III, 18238. This document consists of the summaries sent by the governor of Morea Osman Pasha to the imperial council and the response of the later to the petitions of Osman Pasha. Each paragraph talks about different topic and needs to be evaluated separately, however. First of all, these summaries were written towards the end of the Morea Rebellion on June 3, 1770 (Muharrem 8, 1184 AH).
In the eyes of government officials, however, the Russians were not the only threat to state sovereignty in the peninsula. Their request to the imperial council for additional soldiers also resulted from an increase in banditry in the Morea after the uprising. For example, in a small city of Morea called Galos (?) we see unending conflicts between brigands and the state even after the Ottoman victories mentioned above. Accordingly, despite the fact that Halil Agha, who had been put in charge of driving the bandits back, was successful at stopping the mischievous acts of the izbanduts, Osman Pasha asked for more soldiers to protect the coasts of Galos against further bandit attacks. More importantly, the Ottomans considered this request valid and ordered Halil Agha and the ayan and reaya of Galos to put things in order there, no matter what it might cost. Banditry was not a new phenomenon in the peninsula, but unlike in previous decades the Ottomans now put a great emphasis upon keeping the Morea under their direct sovereignty. Here, the emphasis is on the banditry instead of on the Russians. There is no doubt that there was certain connection between the bandits and the Russians, who had urged anyone they thought of as useful to act for the cause of Russia. Consequently, although one way or another the empire used to tolerate banditry before the coming of the Russians in the Morea, from now on the empire had no choice but to offer peace in the peninsula, so that none would incline to take the Russian side in the future. On balance, it is now safe to conclude that the Ottomans interpreted the bandits/rebels and Russians as one and the same problem and further militarized the region in order to get rid of them all.

Some important statistical data more clearly allow us to figure out the Ottoman approach to the peninsula towards the end of the revolt. At the outset, according to the previous summaries the Ottomans appointed seven thousand troops for the purpose of bringing order to the chaos

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2 AE Mustafa III, 18238.
3 AE Mustafa III, 18238.
spread in the Peloponnese. However, since the Ottomans expected further Russian attacks on the fortress of Kestel and neighbouring regions the number of the Ottoman troops that had been sent to the region was no longer sufficient. As a result, we see that seven thousand more soldiers were sent out from Kathan (?), at the order of the imperial council. Even this did not seem to be enough since the main intention of this summary was to ask for seven thousand more troops. The imperial council promised to send more soldiers as a response to the request expressed in the petition.4 Besides, it is also stated that the empire put great effort into repairing and restoring the fortresses of Kestel in the Morea, with war equipment inside such as gun-wagons (top arabaları). To sum up, the empire not only pledged more soldiers at its expense, but also did not hesitate to spend more and more money in order to strengthen the fortress concerned.

The Russian tactic to keep the Ottomans away from the Balkans was not a new one, nor did it come to an end following the collapse of the Morea Rebellion. For instance, even before Osman Pasha we see other summaries showing that the empire was afraid of new Russian attacks on the Morea. Mehmed Pasha, commander of the Ottoman army in the Morea, shared similar fears with Osman Pasha. According to Mehmed it is a well-known fact that the Russians were in the islands of the Mediterranean Sea, and the reason they were still there was that they were contemplating attacking the Morea. Once again, this particular summary informs us that Mehmed Pasha had already been informed about this but still decided to send more spies to the region.5 In the end, more and more soldiers and provisions were sent to the Morea from everywhere, including Yenişehir. On balance, the empire seems to have accepted that the

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4 AE Mustafa III, 18238.
5 AE Mustafa III, 18238.
Russians would once more attack the Morea and did its best to prevent this from happening again.⁶

Last but not least, it seems that the Russians kept attacking Ottoman port cities and their inhabitants, including Balyabadora, Kesteller and İnebahti. As a direct result of these ongoing assaults as well as the previous rebellion in the Morea these cities were in ruins and the inhabitants were not able to do anything to either protect themselves or maintain their normal way of life and to acquire means of survival. Repairing the fortresses, provisioning the inhabitants with grain or a livelihood, putting weapons back into good condition, and sending more and more soldiers were just a few of the precautions that the empire zealously put into effect.⁷ To some extent, these continued assaults and harassments by the Russians explain why the empire was so eager to keep supplying either soldiers or ammunition and materials for the reconstruction of Morea long after the insurrection of 1770 came to an end.

The examples mentioned above make it clear that the Ottomans endeavoured to protect and restore order in the Morea at all cost. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the empire had enough money to distribute all of its expenditures. The financial difficulties that the empire encountered in meeting the expenses in the Morea are obvious. For instance, the expenditures for the construction of the Anabolu fortress reached about fifty-six thousand gurus and the overseer for the expenditure and organization mentioned that he was in desperate need of money. That is

⁶ We do not know how the Ottomans were informed about further Russian attack on the Morea, but it seems that the empire was misinformed or even that the Ottoman intelligence was intentionally manipulated to make readers believe that the Russians danger in Mediterranean was so great and close. However, Finlay states, the Russians simply did not do anything “worthy of notice” in the Morea and in the Aegean Islands after the Çeşme catastrophe. Even the naval station of Naussa was in ruins, despite the fact that the Russians tried to make the Greeks believe that Catherine II was so determined to take possession of the Morea. Immediately after the treaty was signed in 1774, however, the Russians left everything behind to celebrate their victory over the Ottoman Empire in St. Petersburg. Finlay. 320-321. However, the Russian mission of diverting Ottoman power had succeeded at the expense of the Ottomans. Simply, the Russians got what they had intended to get from the Mediterranean. They did not think of getting anything more than that, nor did they really intend to do so.

⁷ AE Mustafa III, 18238.
to say, he was not even able to pay the workers’ wages for the last five to six months. Eventually, he decided to write this petition to the imperial council, asking for five thousand guruş so that he could continue to repair and renovate the fortress of Anabolu.\(^8\) The authorities made great efforts to reconstruct the fortresses that were in ruins in the Morea but also spent an exorbitant amount of money. To give but one example, on May 1, 1770, the empire assigned five thousand guruş to the commander of the Ottoman army in the Morea (i.e., Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha) for the reconstruction of the Modon fortress, on the coast.\(^9\) Again, this kind of activity was not actually limited to the Morea itself; we also see the empire sending provision such as gun powder to the islands of the Aegean Sea, such as Bozcaada, on May 7, 1770.\(^10\)

Flexible Approaches to the Reaya as a Basis for Ottoman Victory

The ultimate purpose of the insurrection is frequently given as freedom of the Orthodox/Greeks from the Ottoman Empire. For example, when Alexi Orlov did not even let some rebels enter the fortress of Navarin, the last stronghold remaining in the hands of the Russians at that time, the rebels cried out, “you promised us salvation from the Turkish yoke. Right now, all we want from you is to protect us from death at the hands of the Ottomans.”\(^11\) A contemporary source also argues that when the Russian fleet appeared in Archipelago, the Russians “invited their miserable tributaries the Greeks, to arms and liberty.”\(^12\) Many later scholars also give liberty as the main impulse that incited the Greeks to rebel against the

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\(^8\) AE Mustafa III, 18238. The empire sent hundreds of documents written about the reconstruction or protection of the peninsula towards the end of the Morea Rebellion. For examples of the Ottoman reconstruction or provision for the protection of Morea, see AE Mustafa III, 1001, AE Mustafa III, 442; KK, 2359, 101-102; KK, 2358, 21 and 50. In addition, the document classified under AE Mustafa III, 250 targets provisioning the fortress of Anabolu without talking about Morea and the uprising in particular.

\(^9\) KK, 2359, 20 [Muharrem 5, 1184].

\(^10\) KK, 2359, 14 [Muharrem 11, 1184].

\(^11\) Kurtoğlu, 18.

\(^12\) An Authentic Narrative of the Russian Expedition against the Turks, 8-9.
Ottoman Empire. In the end, however, the Russians failed to provide substantial help to the Greeks in the form of men and weapons, exactly as had previously been the case for the other Orthodox rebellious subjects of the empire, such as those living in Serbia and Moldavia.

The Russian side, however, accused the Greeks of being incapable of fighting for their liberty. After describing the characteristic of Alexis and Theodor, Sorel concludes that the Orlov brothers were “admirably qualified to rouse Greece, and to liberate her if she was capable of liberation.” Consequently, it was not the Russians but the Greeks who were found responsible for the debacle in the Morea by supporters of the Russian thesis. Soon, Alexi Orlov described the Greeks as being “flatterers, deceitful, unstable, bold and cowardly, eager for money and booty … they profess their faith only with their lips and have no trace in their hearts of Christian virtue.” Catherine the Great mused that her very purpose was to liberate the Greeks from the hands of the Ottomans. In describing her fiasco in the Morea she wrote to Voltaire that the Greeks were not ready to fight for their freedom, since “the Greeks, the Spartans have much degenerated; they love rapine more than liberty. They are forever lost unless they profit by the dispositions and the counsels of the hero whom I have sent to them.” On balance, each side blamed the other for the failure of the Morea expedition.

The success of the Ottomans in the Morea (or the failure of the Russians and the rebels) can be better explained as a result of Ottoman ability to understand its subjects well. The empire

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13 Some European sources written in the nineteenth century so exaggerated the ultimate goal of liberty that they imagined that every single Greek under the “Ottoman yoke” was on tenterhooks about the appearance of the Russians in Morea. To give but one example, Lamartine argues that the Greeks of the Peloponnese as a whole were shaken to the cry of freedom, nationality, and religion under the feet of Russians. The four hundred thousand Greeks living in Constantinople were not able to disguise their joy. Last but not least, all Greeks among the twelve million people who were living on islands on the coast of the Black, Marmara, and Mediterranean seas, as well as in Smyrna, Trabzon and Lebanon, turned their gaze toward the sea in order to call their vows on the relief of their coreligionists in Morea. Lamartine, 381. See also, Le Dossier Russe Dans La Question D’orient. La Politique De La Russie Envers La Pologne et La Turquie, Par Un Ancien Diplomate En Orient, (Paris: 1869), 34.
14 Sorel, 29.
16 Sorel, 88.
17 See Uzunçarşılı, Osmanlı Tarihi 398.
did not stick to one single policy towards the non-Muslims, but rather pursued a policy that may not only have alleviated the pressure on the state, but also have helped to obtain the support of its subjects against the enemy. For instance, having discovered that the non-Muslim subjects of the empire were hiding stocks of grain/foodstuffs (zahire) from the state and instead sending it to the Maniots the Ottomans did not actually force them to transmit their zahire to the government. Neither did the Ottomans confiscate all their belongings and grain for the benefit of the state in retaliation for the help they had given to the rebels of Mani. Again when we look at this intelligence report we do not see any single injurious language of the kind that might have been expectedly to be used towards the disloyal Christian reaya of Morea who had hidden grains for the rebels. Moreover, the state did not even ask for punishment for what they had been doing. Instead, it asked Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha, ayan and military officers (zabitan) to purchase the required substances in Eğriboz or its surroundings at the expense of loyal subjects of the empire (mostly Muslims) through the mәбаяаа system. What is striking here is that, unlike Christian reaya of the empire, who were claimed to have concealed their grain for the purpose of feeding the rebels fighting against the Ottomans, the state expected a strict obedience from those obedient reaya of Eğriboz who were possibly either reluctant about or opposed to having their grain purchased through the mәбаяаа. In this imperial order, it is clearly stated that if these submissive reaya were not willing to accept this forced purchase based on the mәбаяаа they would have needed to be punished severely (haklarından geline...).

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18 Mәбаяаа was one of the most used economic policies of the Ottoman Empire. Under this policy, the state imposed a tax-levy to be able to meet the exorbitant expense of war. This helped the state to reduce the cost of provision of goods, since the Ottomans offered a price that was lower than the market price and, even, less than the production costs. See Mehmet Genç, "Economy and Economic Policy," in Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire, ed. Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Masters (New York: Facts On File, 2009)., 194.

19 It is just stated that “reayay-ı cezire-i Mora isyan eylediklerine binaen cezire-i mezburede olan zahairi reayay-ı mezbur ketm ve Manyaya nakl eyledikleri hasebiyle...” CAS, 33942.
This “positive discrimination” in favour of the Christian *reaya* of Morea, who had presumably preferred to support the insurgents, may have resulted from two possible reasons. First of all, as is implied in the above-mentioned documents the Ottoman administration had not given up on its Christian subjects in the Morea. As it was often the case, especially in times of trouble, the Ottomans needed to incorporate the *reaya* of Morea into their system. For a while, for the sake of this reintegration of the Ottoman subjects the rulers of the empire had to make certain concessions, including tax-exemption, recruitment of disloyal subjects within the state and so forth. Otherwise, any attempt to punish them at this juncture would provide grist for the rebels’ mill. Having been heavily oppressed during the struggle with the Maniots the *reaya* of Morea may have had an important reason to believe that the Maniots and Russians were their possible saviours, who could rescue them from the oppression of the Ottoman administration. The last thing the Ottomans needed at the time of rebellion was determined supporters of the Morea Rebellion, who would sacrifice anything for the cause of so-called liberation from the yoke of the Ottoman Empire. It does not mean that the Ottoman Empire let them get away with it. As we will see in the following part severe punishment of the insurgents took place only immediately after the total suppression of the Morea Rebellion in 1770.

A comparison between two imperial orders, both of which were written to ask the state to catch the bandits who had attacked the *reaya*, is of significance here. The first one, which we have already mentioned, was written long before the uprising. In response to this petition the imperial council decided to launch a campaign in order to punish the brigands, provided that the *reaya* would pay for this campaign.\(^{20}\) The second order was written immediately after the suppression of the rebellion for the same reason (on April 19, 1770). That is to say, there were *koçabası* and *reaya* in Karlíeli (a small town in the Morea) who entered into alliance with the

\(^{20}\) AE Mustafa III, 23593.
bandits. Thus, they started to kill people and commit highway robbery. In response, the empire ordered the guardian of İnebahtı, Mustafa Pasha, to wipe them out (kahr-u tedmir) after summoning the required soldiers from surrounding regions. This imperial order ends by stating that the expenditures of this campaign will be paid by the imperial treasury.21

The Ottoman state never had any intention to annihilate all of the reaya who one way or another might have had a connection with either Russia or banditry. After all, it is clear in the aforementioned order that the empire made an exception for the merchants, who were most likely Christians rather than Muslims. Accordingly, such merchants retained the right to possess weapons due to the threat of banditry, which had been going on in the peninsula for a long time.22 Again, as we will shortly argue in greater detail, even after the suppression of the Morea Rebellion the empire followed a policy of integration, finding some scapegoats to punish rather than totally destroying all troublemakers.

Sorting the Loyal From the Traitorous

The Ottoman primary sources never describe the Greeks as a single group that fought against the Ottoman interest, either during or after the rebellion. Instead, it was always problematic for the empire to decide who was with whom, especially as far as the Christian subjects of the empire were concerned. Because of this vagueness, the empire could not help taking different action for different reaya of the empire. Two collections of documents that we have extracted from the Ottoman archives are of special importance in revealing this very fact.

21 CDH, 4904.
22 … cezire-i mezburde ikâmet eden reaya hakların olup tıccar ve ebna asıldan olan bazı reayadan kutta-ül-tarik eskiyalarından kendiilerini muhafaza zimmının istishab eyledikleri eslihanın yedlerinden nez’i ve ahzi için olmamağa … tıccar için geçtüğizär ifa olan reayının fukara kendiilerine lazımı olan eslihalarına olmamaktan tahrir zimminda … AE Mustafa III, 5836.
The first collection of files consists of ten different but related documents. Each of the dated documents has a different date, starting on May 29, 1770, to September 3, 1770. Some are undated; their contents together with the dates on the other documents in the collection, however, suggest that they were written more or less immediately after the repression of the rebellion and that they reflect Ottoman reactions shortly after the uprising collapsed.

We should look, first of all, at the main inducement that led the government to send an order to the Ottoman commander in the peninsula. Basically, seven people (of high importance) in the Mani asked for forgiveness from the Ottoman government by sending a petition, which had been originally written in Greek and later translated into Ottoman Turkish for the consideration of Ottoman high dignitaries in Istanbul. While they accepted that they had committed a misdemeanour against their Turkish lords the Greeks essentially blamed some treacherous (hain) people, who were good for nothing, for having misled them. The expression used suggests either the Russians or some kocabaşıs since it is claimed that “they came to our villages to lead us into error of conduct.” However, later with the help of other documents we learn for sure that they were Russians rather than anyone else. In response to their misconduct Ottoman commander El-Hac Osman Bey not only burned their villages but also enslaved many of them. As a result, they desperately asked forgiveness (with tears: göz yaşısı ile) and mercy from Osman Bey, Ismail Agha and Beyzade Yusuf Agha. As we will see, depending on certain conditions the imperial council gave the forgiveness they had asked from Istanbul in the end.

To be exact, the Maniots pledged solemnly that they would pay more taxes (3,000 gurüş instead of 2,000), and that if the Russians or other Europeans (Frenk) were to come to the

23 The summary of these documents given in this classification does not actually reveal their significance in the discussion of the Morea Rebellion. It is simply stated that “it is a commandment/edict sent to commander of the Morea, i.e., Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha [not Memişzade Mehmed Pasha]. Accordingly, the Ottoman administration condoned what the rebels in the Mani villages had done during the Morea Rebellion, provided that they observe the covenant and all of its requirements.” CDH, 17181.
Ottoman lands (the Morea, in this case) again they would not allow them to enter within their borders or cities and they would inform their master (Mustafa III) about his attempt to get into the Ottoman territories. They would also notify the Ottomans if they have male or female Muslims in their territories (it means possibly they had already enslaved some Muslims during the revolt). And if they did not undertake what they had promised above they accepted that they would deserve to be punished like unfaithful and villainous men (*sadakatsiz fena adamlar gibi*).

In addition, they also promised that those Mani *koçabaşısı* who brought the Russians to the Morea, including Panayotti Benaki, Mavro Mihail, Kosunturaki and Captain Tatasi, would not be accepted again if they wanted to come back to the Mani region. From now on, they said, “we utterly promise that we are going to be loyal subjects of our Sultan.” They even guaranteed to send two Greek figures of high importance to the Sultan (or any other figure who might be asked by him to receive them in his place) as hostages. 24 Last but not least, they even promised that they would submit their weapons (*rüfenklerimizi dahi*) to the state.

The surprising aspect of the petition is that leading figures of the Maniots were looking for amnesty from the Ottoman administration. The Ottoman Empire had never succeeded in taking full possession of this region and was often eager to give special privileges to the inhabitants of Mani, including tax exceptions, the right to have weapons, the right to be excluded from military enrolment and so forth. However, this time the Maniots not only accepted almost every duty that the state might have postulated, but also undertook to give up some of the privileges that they had got used to possessing for many centuries. This can only be seen as proof of their wish to re-enter the Ottoman system. The petition also implies that there were two main

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24 From the text it is not clear why they engaged themselves to send two of their people. But it had been a common practice in the Ottoman Empire to ask for sons/heiirs of an enemy or any important figures from hostile lands to be sent as hostages to the imperial court lest they would break the agreement in the future. After all, at the beginning of the sentence is written “*tahkik zımmında,*” which can be translated as “an evidence in support of what we have claimed above.” CDH, 17181.
reasons for that. First, having lost the battle the Russians abandoned them all to their fate at the hands of the Ottoman Empire. More importantly, the Ottoman administration had taken these reaya’s action against the state so seriously that the commander made them pay dearly for what they had done before (Osman Bey adamlarımızı esir ve bizi külliyen harap eylemekle). On balance, the Maniots endeavoured to be granted a pardon by the imperial council whatever the costs.

For example, they made a promise of increasing the tax by 50%, or more than 2,000 piasters despite the fact that they had often rejected to give the tax previous amount, which had been therefore never paid regularly. They knew the empire was in desperate need of money on account of the long-lasting war with the Russians and that is why, among other pledges more money was the first. Afterwards, promising loyalty to the Sultan in the future was nothing but causa sine quo non in order to be saved from the anger of the Ottoman administration—and so they promised. Not surprisingly, they put great emphasis upon their faithfulness and reiterated their promise of loyalty twice in the same document: they would not let deceivers enter the Mani region anymore and they would lodge information against them in the future. Besides, because they perceived very well the oversensitivity of the Ottoman Empire about the Muslim captives they suggested (without explicitly stating it) that they would set free the male or female Muslims who had been captured by them during the insurrection of 1770. More importantly, they even renounced their traditional and customary right to carry weapons if need be. Lastly, they conceded to provide the Ottoman administration with hostages and to be punished if they did not carry out what they had promised.

Other reaya, living in Enderovişte village, sent another petition with slightly different pledges to Istanbul. They offered to give 2,500 piasters instead of 2,000. The number of such
documents, with almost similar content, can be increased by further research in the Ottoman
achieves. However, what is more significant here is the response of the Ottoman dignitary to this
second petition. The first thing that attracts our attention is that the Ottoman dignitaries accepted
the reaya’s argument that the later were deceived by the Russians; they did not blame them
directly, but regarded their behaviour as a temporary lack of self-control (*hevay-i nefs ve
şeytaniyyeye tabiyyet ile*). Interestingly enough, the Ottoman petition did not give much attention
to the so-called leaders of the rebellion. In addition to providing the names of those responsible
for leading the reaya to rebel against the state, such as Mavro Mihail, they added many other
names of kocabaşıs of important villages (*karye*) without stressing any one of them in particular
(e.g., Malur Yanu; Pestro, son of Birula; Akamr Kesr Hutr, son of Kirbaku and Dimetri; son of
Leka, Besro son of Naula). This petition does not even mention Benaki, who is often claimed to
be the Greek leader of the uprising in the Morea.

No Ottoman document is explicit about anyone who might have played the central role in
the development of the rebellion. In other words, the Ottoman punishment of its disobedient
subjects did not match the crime that had been committed against the authorities. Instead, the
Ottomans targeted a few figures of high importance and inflicted a penalty on them rather than
on all rebels who had one way or another taken part in rebellions. Nonetheless, we come across
some leading Greek names such as Benaki, Mavro Mihail, Kosunturaki (or Kumansurki) and
Captain Tatasi, who can be seen as figures of high importance in the rebellion. After all, among
other things the Maniots pledged to keep Russian traitors out of Mani. (*Moskolu’yu vilayetimize
getürüp sebep olanlar Benaki, Mavro Mihal ve Komansurki ve kapudan Tatasi namun? Hainler
vilayetimize gelir ise kabul itmeyelim*),25 which ironically proves that the insurgents also
regarded them as significant figures of the Morea Rebellion. The Ottoman response to this

25 CDH, 17181.
petition does not even mention their names in particular, but rather emphasizes the Russians and Maltese by saying, “do not let them to anchor at the ports of Morea again.” Manyalu Yorgaki Mavro Mihail also asked for forgiveness from the Sultan. And the Sultan condemned him for having participated in the rebellion in return for seemingly modest stipulations. Namely, he was required to release Muslim prisoners and bring them with their weapons to the island of Çoka and to separate out the Maniots from among his men and then to settle them on their previous lands in the Morea.

Last but not least, we have an important list of the leading figures of the Mani region, who accepted the Ottoman authority once again and promised to pay the poll-taxes as before. Interestingly enough, the term Manya kralları (kings of Mani) is used for them. On this list, we see fifty-four kocabaşı and each name was written separately. What is interesting here is that, despite the fact that the Ottomans had not really paid attention to any single figure in particular, as we have mentioned above, they could not help keeping a record of all those kocabaşı with their names on a separate document. This suggests that the Ottoman administration actually did care about who those leading rebels were, but that there was not still a single person of indispensable importance to the state whom it required to be caught at all costs. Instead, although there were many koçabaşı who one way or another took part in the Morea Rebellion none of them was actually the leader of this mutiny in the eyes of Ottoman administrators. In one report, the names of 54 kocabaşı are mentioned. They were slightly different from each other in terms of their significance and the role that they had played in the Morea.

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26 “... Limanlarına Mosko ve Maltız sefnelerin uğratmamak ve ola getirilürlerse taraf-i İslamiyyeye teslim itmek ve manya reyasına Mosko ve Maltız sefnelerin levend yazulmamak...” CDH, 17181.
27 CDH, 17181.
28 CDH, 17181.
29 This document was also classified under the same file of CDH, 17181.
In the end, the Ottoman administration granted them a pardon provided that they would release and submit Muslim prisoners to the state so they could be re-settled in their former lands. Also, they were not allowed to let ships belonging to Malta or Russia anchor off the coast of Morea or to work on Maltese or Russian ships as levends.\textsuperscript{30} Once again, it is only the Russians or the other potential power in the Mediterranean Sea, who were thought as the actual catalysts of the Morea Rebellion. However, this preoccupation did not cause the Sultan to refrain from punishing the leading reaya of Mani by other means. Just like other reaya of Morea the people in Mani were no longer allowed to carry weapons. Moreover, instead of paying 3,000 piasters as poll-tax (cizye), they were now required to pay 4,500 piasters. Last but not least, they now also needed to pay tithe (aşar) and customary taxes (tekalîf-i örfiyeye).

The Sultan accepted the pledge made by the Maniots, i.e. their promise to give a large amount of money if they did not keep their word. This is an indication not only that the state was in urgent need of money,\textsuperscript{31} but also that it lacked the eagerness to eliminate the heads of the Mani society on account of their former disloyalty even though this treachery was explicitly acknowledged by them in the petitions under discussion. The petitions also show that the innocence of these leading figures in Mani was taken for granted by the Ottomans. In response, the Maniots pledged solemnly to pay every tax that the Ottomans had one way or another imposed on the Mani region and to place themselves under direct order of the Ottoman officers sent by Istanbul. Lastly, they even conceded that they would no longer build ships (known as

\textsuperscript{30} As a matter of fact, the source makes a conspicuous difference between Russian and Maltese. That is, the Maniots claim that they will drive away the latter (tard idelim) if they dare to come to Morea, but that they will inform the Ottomans (haber virelim) if the Russians show up again. One can speculate that the Maltese who had engaged in the rebellion were not only trivial in number and importance, but also not as strong as the Russians. That is why the Maniots preferred to inform the imperial council rather than drive the Russians away. CDH, 17181.

\textsuperscript{31} In one document, the rebels actually offered 15,000 piasters, but the Sultan asked for 25,000 piasters and the deal was made according to the final wish of the Sultan. CDH, 17181.
galiveta), and for the purpose of proving their loyalty to the Sultan, they even decided to destroy those ships that had been already been built.

In a similar vein, another petition from October 31, 1770 states that the people of Mani, including captains and kocabaşis, asked for amnesty from the empire, promising that they would pay more taxes (poll-tax: cizye), release Muslim prisoners and hand over all weapons to the Ottomans. At first glance, when we go into details in this petition we do not see many differences from the previous ones. To give but one example, the Maniots promised to give one thousand guruş poll-tax in addition to the two thousand which had been paid before. Now, we do have different rebels, such as someone with the name of Habataki (?), asking for forgiveness from the imperial council. Again they were supposed to pay more taxes, give up their weapons, and so forth. Unlike in the previous orders here we also see that they were not allowed to register themselves on either Russian or Maltese ships as seamen, and of course they needed to be loyal subjects (sadakat eyleyecelerini) of the Ottomans. Lastly, the Maniots promised to pay twenty thousand guruş in case they did not keep their promise.

In the second collection of documents, written on December 10, 1773, however, we see the empire rejecting certain kocabaşis from coming to the Ottoman lands once more. That is to say, it starts with a list of fugitive kocabaşis who were strictly forbidden to re-enter not only the Morea region but any part of the empire (Elyevm firarda olub kazaları vuruduna duhulleri caiz olmayan kocabaşılarıdır ki zikr olunur). First the names of their hometowns were given and then their names were written under their hometowns. We do not know their exact number since

32 Gali (or galiveta) is a kind of ship with flat bottom and low hull formerly used in the Mediterranean Sea. Mehmet Zeki Pakalın, Osmanlı Tarih Deyimleri ve Terimler Sözlüğü, 3 vols., vol. 1 (İstanbul: Milli Egitim Basımevi, 1972), 643.
33 This particular document was written on September 23, 1770, in the Mani. CDH, 17181.
34 KK, 2359, 101-102. [Receb 11, 1184 AH]
35 KK, 2359.
36 CDH, 7808.
sometimes the report just says sons or brothers of certain *kocabaşis* and we do not have any clue about how many son(s) or brother(s) they might have had. However, when we count them at least as two then we have no fewer than sixty people whose entry into the peninsula was not allowed under any circumstance by the Ottoman authority. Nonetheless, we cannot really decide who they were. After all, all we have is their names (sometimes even just their relation to certain *kocabaşis*, i.e., sons of Yorgonda) and where they had been living before they rebelled against the Ottoman administration. Comparing these names with the ones known to us from the previous collection of documents, does not really help much either. Not only do we have many similar names (like Benaki) but we also have the identical name of a person (like Dimitraki) used several times in the same document. Even the knowledge that some of them had either sons or brothers does not make it clear who they might have been since we do not know if the men whose names were listed on the previous documents had son(s) or brother(s). We have more reasons to reject than to accept the idea that the same names in these two distinct documents referred to the same people. In other words, at the top of the previous documents were written the names of kings (*kocabaşis*) who had made petitions for pardon in Mani region.\(^{37}\) Nonetheless, in our second collection we have the names of towns that, apart from Mezistre, were not situated in the Mani region; Balyabdra, Gördos, Kalamata, Kalavrita and Karytaena are not located in the Mani district, but in the rest of Morea.

Do we not have anything that might help us to find a connection between these two collections of documents? From both documents, it is understood that *kocabaşis* of Morea asked for amnesty from the Ottomans through a petition written in Greek and Turkish. In the second group, the Ottoman state denied the request to return to their former lands (and not even to the Morea, for that matter) on the grounds that once they got there they would turn to being

\(^{37}\) CDH, 17181.
troublemakers again (isimleri tahrir olunan koçabaşılardan vürunu kazaya değil cezirey-i Mora'ya duhulleri ber vechle caiz olmuyub ber tarikiyle emniyet hasıl olmayacağı cümlenin malumu olmağla). So we can argue that the Ottoman Empire made a distinction among the koçabası despite the fact that all of them mentioned in these two selections of documents had participated in the Morea Rebellion. In the previous documents they were forgiven, but in the second collection the Ottomans did not even let them re-enter the Ottoman lands. Consequently, the empire created a set of criteria according to which the Ottomans decided who could be reintegrated into the Ottoman system.

But this second collection was written more than three years later after the suppression of the rebellion (on December 10, 1773). Only then did the empire decide to confiscate the koçabası’ lands and all their belongings. One might argue that the ongoing Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774 did not leave the Ottomans a completely free hand and that the empire was not able to take the next steps, where the state might have decided who was to blame for all of this trouble. Earlier, as early as May 29, 1770, in fact, the Ottomans came to a quick decision to forgive fifty-four kocabaşis who had themselves accepted that they had committed crimes against the state, however.

Two assumptions can be made here. One is that the Ottoman Empire had a good intelligence network, which made it easy to decide who was responsible for the insurrection of 1770. Accordingly, the empire had already made a decision about the fugitive rebels and when they intended to return back three years later after the rebellion the state put this decision into

38 CDH, 7808.
39 "... mesfurların enlak ve arazileri ve eşçar-ı meşreleri enlak-ı hümayuna kayd ve ilhak olunmak üzere bir kuta emr-ı şerif-ı alısan vüruduına arazileri ziraat ve eşçar-ı meşreleri ve hasilatı zayı olmuyub canibi miriye medar külli hasıl olur ve enlak-ı usat dahi bundan sonra defter ve keyfiyetini tahrir olundukta emr-ı şerif-ı alısan ile mahsus bir bendeleri gönderilir yoksa bu tarafa bir kullan ámbı ihale buyurulur tevcihle emr ve irade buyurulur ise efendilerimiz alındır." CDH, 7808.
implementation. However, if this was the case why did the Ottomans not confiscate their lands immediately after they left the Morea to become bandits? The second assumption might simply be that the Ottomans were not overly concerned about making a decision about who the real culprits were and that they made their mind up only after the insurgents’ case came to the imperial court. In that case, it would have been less likely to find the “felon” köçabaşı after three years had passed. Possibly, the clash of interest in the newly restored Morea highly affected Ottoman decision making and therefore the state was not able to punish justly those who really committed crimes during the rebellion. More importantly, the Ottomans did not even think of those who had definitely participated in the insurrection as one and the same; they followed a different policy for each of them, as we have clearly seen in the two collections of documents scrutinized above.

In the Morea there were always interest groups that had not only power and means, but also influential friends in Istanbul to support their false claims against their opponents, which could account for the fact that the empire punished some despite the fact that they had not participated in the rebellion and rewarded others despite the fact that they had either personally taken part in the rebellion or supported it covertly from outside. Ottoman attempts to find scapegoats and punish them for what had happened in the Morea by looking at the petitions sent to Istanbul were always problematic. And, there is a high probability (at least in some cases) that

40 Another document in the same file of CDH, 7808 makes it clear that the Ottomans ordered the guardian (muhafız) of Morea Ali Pasha not to let those köçabaşı enter the Morea and to confiscate their possessions to the benefit of the Ottoman imperial treasury.

41 Pouqueville argues that by the time Cezayirli Hasan Pasha restored order in Morea in 1777, after having driven away the trouble maker Albanians, there were still Maniots asking amnesty from Hasan Pasha for having taken part in the cause of Russia in 1770s. Quoted from Finlay., 324.

42 A perfect example is that when the rebellion started and the Ottoman army came to Tripolice, soldiers not only plundered the dragoman’s belongings but also raped his daughter. In response, the dragoman, who had informed the governor of Tripoliçe about the rebellion six months before it took place in 1770, cried out to members of the Ottoman council, saying, “have I been punished as other religious enemies of yours [who participated in the rebellion] because of the fact that I have informed the governor [who were also attending in the council at that time] about the forthcoming rebellion six months in advance as a reflection of my loyalty to the state.” Penah Efendi, 70.
the empire was not able to come to the right decision about the subjects of the Ottoman Empire. This likely accounts for the punishment of some and the forgiveness of others.

Again from the Ottoman point of view there was not any strict line between the Muslims and Christians. And the insurrection of 1770 did not lead the Ottomans to redefine their subjects in the peninsula altogether (nor was there a total discrimination in favour of one single entity). To give but one example, having scrutinized the *History of Morea Rebellion* in greater detail we have not noticed any bigotry or discrimination towards the Greek subjects of the empire after the collapse of the uprising. Of course, Penah sometimes blames those who rebelled against the authority for their unfaithfulness or disloyalty and so on. But this does not lead him to conclude that the Greeks should be kept under tight control or under pressure. And there is no mention about a total elimination of those, who participated in the Morea Rebellion. Interestingly enough, we even find such expressions for another entity, i.e., the Albanians, who were all Muslims and who even helped the state to suppress the rebellion in 1770s. The Greeks’ unfaithfulness did not make them into scapegoats, who needed to be punished in every case. Nor did the help of Albanian soldiers during the revolt make them into heroes, who needed to be praised at all costs. In other words, out of his experiences in the Morea and Rumelia Penah posits that among the villages where Greek was used as the main spoken language there were people, who were not only malleable and educated but also modest and obedient to the state. Nonetheless, in those villages, where villagers spoke Albanian, he described them as being rude and stupid as well as factious and despoiler. Penah’s suggestion is interesting for the distinction he makes between the Greeks and Albanians in general just by looking at their language. That is to say, there is no doubt that if the Albanians did not speak their own language (and instead spoke another
language, such as Greek or possibly Turkish as we might assume from his subsequent writings), they would lose their vulgarity and become good/faithful subjects of the empire.\textsuperscript{43}

One ought to take this comparison between the Greeks and the Albanians with a grain of salt. After all, his main motivation is to show how the Albanians were troublemakers for the state and to find a way to domesticate them, this time by teaching them another language. However, even if it was the real intention of Penah Efendi to compare the Albanians with Greeks rather than any other subjects of the empire immediately after the revolt collapsed and to define the latter as being more obedient and educated in spite of their recent rebellion, there are clear indications that those who shared the Ottoman mentality did not have any problem with the reintegration of the Greeks into the Ottoman system. As far as Penah Efendi and many other Ottomans were concerned Ottoman society was not strictly divided according to religion, language or nation. At least those criteria were not enough to pinpoint who was to be seen as good or evil from the Ottomans’ point of view at that time.

There were of course some Greeks whom Penah highly extolled as well as some whom he severely criticized.\textsuperscript{44} He rigorously condemns those who were Muslim and also possessed a high position in the Ottoman administration for their behaviour during and after the rebellion. And even those who had helped a lot in the suppression of the recent revolt could not escape from the vitriol of Penah Efendi. Penah did not divide good and bad subjects of the empire according to the religion/nation to which they belonged. Accordingly, there were certain people who were particularly extolled, such as Zaimoğlu and the messenger and there were others who were

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 309.

\textsuperscript{44} Towards the end of the History of Morea Rebellion, for example, Penah Efendi cannot help recommending the appointment of a Greek governor (Rûm cinsinden) for the town Beeterin in Rumeli, just like in Eflak. See Ibid., 395. Penah Efendi even does not give up on those Greek priests who were often chosen as scapegoats for the rebellion. He describes one of the priest friends as an educated and faithful personality. “rahîb-i mezbûr Devlet-i Aliyye’nin sadık ve gayretkeşi olmakla bükâ iderdi.” Penah Efendi, 480.
openly criticized as we have seen in the case of Ömer Lütfi Efendi and Yusuf Bey. In a similar vein, the Albanian Papoli was also highly praised and depicted as a hero in spite of all of his voluminous criticism concerning the Albanians throughout his pamphlet.\textsuperscript{45} If Penah Efendi's writings are indicative of an Ottoman mentality of the period his categories of bad and good subjects cannot be explained through either religion, nation or language.

But others, such as our anonymous author argued that those lands and properties left by the rebels who had taken part in the rebellion and who were not to return to the Morea, should not be given to those who already had land and property in the peninsula but turned over to those without land or properties there, notably to the Albanian soldiers, provided that they would settle down in the Morea. Even though they were troublesome, he continues, they did a great job in the Morea and should be kept under military service for the sake of the Ottoman authority in the peninsula.\textsuperscript{46} For instance, he argues that to protect Mani one needs to have lots of soldiers and naval personnel and so on. He recommended sending the Maniots away and replacing them with Albanians. The Maniots are also supposed to be dispossessed and their belongings are to be confiscated and given to other people in the Peloponnese, i.e., the Albanians.\textsuperscript{47}

As for Penah Efendi, however, he regards the Albanians as real troublemakers and does not trust them about anything unless they do not change themselves for good. He devotes many pages to suggesting and recommending ways to keep them under direct strict state control. Without that, from Penah Efendi’s point of view, they were totally useless and even harmful to the empire.\textsuperscript{48} Once again, we do not exactly know where these differences between these authors come from. They may have been supporting different interest groups in their writings or they

\textsuperscript{45} Penah Efendi, 79-80.
\textsuperscript{46} KK, 60-1, 14.
\textsuperscript{47} KK, 60-1, 9-10.
\textsuperscript{48} See Penah Efendi, 309.
may have simply had a different world view. Besides, we do not know precisely when these two booklets were written. If the anonymous work was written immediately after the rebellion collapsed, for example, it would be more understandable that its author favoured the Albanians rather than anyone else. After all, it was through their military help that the Ottomans were able to crush the rebellion. We can then assume that Penah Efendi, on the other hand, finished his work at least a few years after the insurrection of 1770, which may have given him enough time to decide how troublesome the Albanians were. In either case, we see great diversities existed in the mentality of the Ottoman statesmen in their approach to the *reaya* which further supports great dilemma that the Ottoman officers may have faced in deciding who should be trusted after the insurrection of 1770.

**Ottoman Reconstruction of the Morea After the Collapse of the Rebellion**

The situation in the Morea did not seem to change for the better even long after the revolt came to an end. There were still some *reaya* who chose to be bandits in the peninsula and continued to be troublemakers for the Ottoman Empire. And as we have already mentioned the Ottomans kept a significant number of soldiers garrisoned in the Morea, who were used to keep a tight rein on the *reaya*. Immediately after the rebellion the Albanian soldiers, who had once greatly helped suppress the rebellion, became real troublemakers. On the pretext of catching and punishing former rebels they not only plundered the belongings and valuables of the *reaya* (Muslims and non-Muslims), but also massacred some of them. At the outset, the empire remained indifferent to what the Albanians did in the peninsula. After all, the early toleration and indulgence of the Ottoman Empire towards potential adherents of the Maniots that we have mentioned before was replaced with a strong backlash and reaction against the insurgents and their supporters as soon as the empire started to gain ground in the Peloponnese. The evidence
points to the Ottomans having resolved to punish the rebels severely and speedily. For example, the deputy (kethüda) of İnebahtı Mustafa Pasha, who had been put in charge of punishing kocabaşıs and reaya of Karlıeli, was ordered to “go to Karlıeli and kill and annihilate all of the reaya who had rebelled against the state” (Karlıeli’ye varup isyan iden reyayı külliyeñ katl-u idam ve tedmir ve ıstisal). The reaya here were accused of having revolted against the state with some bandits and causing lots of the trouble in surrounding areas. Unlike documents written at the beginning of the uprising, where we see positive discrimination of the Christian reaya, here we see the Ottomans being quite determined to punish them all.

Nevertheless, this severe punishment of the reaya, either through the Albanians or by government officials, reached such a dramatic level that the Ottomans started to pardon the insurgents of the Morea Rebellion not long after the rebellion. They also sent decrees in order to stop the Albanians, who had tortured Christians as well as Muslims during—and even more after—the Morea Rebellion. Muhsinzade proclaimed a general amnesty to impede the Albanians from terrorizing the people but the amnesty did not really eliminate the problems associated with the Albanians. Muhsinzade’s new policy of supporting ayan in return for the help that they had given to the state might have been an important reason for this failure because the ayan were not only promoted to the rank of governor of the province, but also supported financially by the state. We see many signs of this implementation in the sources as well. For example, El-Hac Osman Pasha was appointed as vizier in return for paying for soldiers and other expenditures required for a standing army, such as providing them with necessary provisions and

49 “...Karlıeli’ye varup isyan iden reyayı külliyeñ katl-u idam ve tedmir ve ıstisal ...” CAS, 1598.
50 CAS, 33942.
51 See for example, KK, 781 and CDH, 17181.
livelihood. These troops were later used in order to keep things in order in the Morea at the behest of the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{52}

As a result, even Albanian bandits outside the Peloponnese came into the Morea in order to get their share from the chaos that dominated the peninsula during and after the suppression of the uprising. Consequently, even before the uprising was completely put down the Ottomans endeavoured to prevent Albanians from coming to the Peloponnese. For instance, Osman Pasha had sent orders to the \textit{kadı}s and military officers of Yanya so that they might stop Albanians from moving into the Morea.\textsuperscript{53} This shows that after rebellion the Morea, being a place of turmoil, attracted the attention of those outlaws who wanted to take the advantage of the situation there. Not surprisingly, it made everything worse for the \textit{reaya}, who still struggled to live there in pretty dire conditions.

Stability was not re-established until the arrival of Cezayirli Gazi Hasan Pasha, who not only expelled the Albanians from the Morea but also brought new order to the region in 1779. Until that moment Albanians one way or another controlled the peninsula for their own benefit and caused a major social and fiscal collapse of the region. Specifically they not only oppressed the \textit{reaya} and forced them to meet their excessive demands, but they also seized their property and even enslaved some of them to sell on the slave market.\textsuperscript{54} Consequently, the Christian subjects of the empire living in the Peloponnese either took flight to mountainous regions or migrated to other territories of the Ottoman Empire or other neighbouring states, including Venice, Austria and Russia.\textsuperscript{55} The Ottoman intervention may have stopped the Russian influence

\textsuperscript{52} AE Mustafa III, 434. See also Nagata, \textit{Muhsin-Zade Mehmed Paşa ve Âyânlık Müessesesi}, 126-144.
\textsuperscript{53} AE Mustafa III, 18238.
\textsuperscript{54} Alexander, 52.
\textsuperscript{55} Nagata, \textit{Muhsin-Zade Mehmed Paşa ve Âyânlık Müessesesi}, 91-93.; Finlay, 314.
in the Morea, at least for a while, but the conditions of the people, especially the Christian subjects of the empire, worsened after the suppression of the revolt.

Before the rebellion was launched the koçabaşis of Morea were entrusted with many administrative and financial duties. However, the Ottomans’ attitude towards the Christian reaya in general and kocabaşis in particular changed in favour of Muslims immediately after the rebellion collapsed. As time went on, things went from bad to worse for non-Muslims and by 1821 the Ottomans had made up their minds that the leading Greek figures could no longer be trusted within the administration of the Ottoman Empire. To give but one example, a task as important as bringing the weapons to Tripoliçe was assigned to leading figures of the Morea on May 15, 1770.56 However, the Ottomans did not order anything of the kocabaşis of Morea after the uprising collapsed, but instead preferred Muslim subjects of the empire, especially ayan, who were now mainly responsible for restoring order in the Peloponnese.57 Lots of documents specifically talking about Ottoman reconstruction of the Morea is to be found in the archives—and there appear to have been no non-Muslims, koçabası or Christian reaya, enlisted for this reconstruction.58

This change in the Ottoman attitude can also be observed in the writings of the Ottoman writers of the time. For example, the anonymous author of the Morea Rebellion does not recommend confiscating all the lands or properties in the hands of the Christian reaya, who had one way or another participated in the rebellion. Instead, he clearly states only those lands and property left by the rebellious people, who had no intention to return, should be confiscated and

56 MM, 8577, 125 (Muharrem 19, 1184 AH).
57 AE Mustafa III, 18238.
58 MM, 8577, 125.
dispersed among the Albanians. The anonymous author also recommends that poll-tax should not be collected by local leading figures but rather by state tax collectors, who are to be directly appointed by the state (Mora kazalarının cizyelerini yerlülere virilmeyip). Penah Efendi also followed the same pattern. Under no circumstance should state offices, such as mütesellim, mubahaca and muhassillar, be given to the local people, he argued, who had collaborated with one another. Such locals were good at protecting themselves against any threat coming from either reaya (through şikayetnames) or the central government. Penah Efendi’s suggestion makes much more sense here. If the ties between these local powers would be cut off by means of the state-appointed officers the local people would not be as powerful or destructive as they had been before. As a matter of fact, this is exactly what the empire intended to implement immediately after the rebellion collapsed. In contrast to the previous decades the local powers were not assigned any administrative duties and the central government endeavoured to take responsibility for putting things in order with the help of the Muslim ayan or state-appointed officers.

A distinction should be made between Ottoman attempts to reintegrate the Christian reaya into the system and attempts to relieve local leaders of their administrative duties. In order to revive the economy the empire was in a desperate need of the Christian reaya in the peninsula. Yet, this does not necessarily mean that the empire continued to trust them, especially their leading figures, the way it had done before the rebellion. In conjunction with this change in state policy we also see a change in the relationship between Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the

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59 In this connection, Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha and his wise policies are greatly appreciated. It was only through his skill and cautious decisions that the empire was able to suppress the rebellion. The term used here for Muhsinzade Mehmed Pasha is Eflatun tedbir. Penah Efendi uses a similar term to describe his ability to handle the burning issue in Morea, i.e., Aristo tedbir. Penah Efendi, 156. Such expressions seem to be commonly used in the writings of the Ottoman intellectuals living at that time.

60 KK, 60-1, 15-16.

61 Penah Efendi, 318. For the over-taxation of the reaya by the local powers, see also Penah Efendi, 315.
empire. That is, Muslims in the Morea also accused non-Muslims of everything and did their best to take full advantage of the change in Ottoman attitude against the non-Muslim subjects of the empire. For instance, on November 12, 1771, timariot soldiers (sipahis) and the rest of the Muslim reaya came back to their town of Mezistre and wrote to the imperial council in order to explain the present conditions there. Because of the Morea Rebellion many timariots had died. The rest, it argues, lived in destitute poverty owing to the fact that infidels had plundered all their belongings. They were now in desperate need of everything and this was why Muhsinzade had mercy on them and gave the lands of tımar to the Muslims on condition that they became inhabitants of Mezistre and started to live there. However, they informed the state that some of their members were still fighting in the imperial army and were not able to be in Mezistre to fulfil the condition that Mehmed Pasha had made to get their share. Finally, they asked to get their share of tımar lands for their relatives who were not able to be in Mezistre.\(^\text{62}\) Thus, the state desired that what was left after the commotion of the uprising was to be shared only among the Muslims and their relatives.

The changing attitude of the Ottomans towards the non-Muslims immediately after the revolt collapsed was not limited to the Morea. For example, the Şeyhülislam sent a petition to the Mustafa III calling the Sultan’s attention to the further protection of foodstuffs (zahire) in Istanbul and Galata against possible attacks by non-Muslims. The term non-Muslims here is admittedly a vague one. It can refer to various groups, including all foreign ambassadors, traders, artisans, travelers and so forth. However, this petition was written in 1771/1772, when the empire was in the middle of a debilitating war against Russia. Up till then the Ottoman Empire had already faced the revolts of its Orthodox subjects as a result of Russian provocations. Hence,

\(^{62}\text{AE Mustafa III, 16249.}\)
the term düşman-ı din used to define non-Muslims fits no groups better than the Russian and Orthodox subjects of the empire at that time.  

Moreover, the Ottomans were much more concerned about the religion of their subjects after the suppression of the uprising. After all, the Christians had rebelled against the state and immediately after the rebellion the Ottomans intended to do something about it. For instance, a summary of court decisions (ilam) of Yenişehir, Fener, Tırhala, Çatalca and Serfice (later sent to the tax-collector (mutasarrif) of Tırhala Ahmed Pasha), was issued on December 14, 1771. Apparently, the kadis of these towns had informed the tax-collector that some (Christian) reaya had converted to Catholicism and started to support Venetians. Afterwards, these reaya either allowed bandits to cross the border and kill Ottoman subjects (mainly Muslims) and enslaved some of them or they were themselves involved in the banditry. They also plundered the belongings of the Muslim reaya. Then, these new supporters of the Venetians, who had been in charge of protecting the fortresses along the border lands, were replaced with Muslim subjects of the empire. And then, this ilam argues that order was restored in the areas where this replacement had occurred but that there were still some regions that were protected/governed by non-Muslims (kocabaşıs) where the trouble was still alive.

The kadis’ request for the replacement of Christian governors in the border with Muslim ones does not necessarily mean that the former had committed the crime discussed above. This request may have resulted from the clash of interests among the members of certain interest groups living in the Morea, further evidence that the rebellion changed the policy of the central government towards its non-Muslim subjects: important figures among the Christians had already been dismissed by the state in some parts of the peninsula.

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63 E 7019/166.
64 CDH, 16647.
We also need to take the religious conversion mentioned above into account. Again, we cannot be sure if the Orthodox subjects of the empire changed their faith by joining the Catholic Church. Yet, we still need to be careful before dismissing that possibility all together. After all, just one year earlier, as we have tried to show based on the aforementioned documents, the Ottomans successfully suppressed the Morea Rebellion. Besides, by the time it was written in 1771, the Ottoman–Russian war continued in its violence and intensity. Therefore, the Ottoman Empire must have been much more dedicated and willing to accept and respond quickly if these Orthodox subjects had been blamed for taking the Russian side. But, this court decision accused them of being Catholic and supporters of Venetians. In that case, it is more reasonable to believe that the empire was attacked by the Catholics as well. Besides, after the Russian betrayal in the Morea Christian subjects of the empire were more likely to look for a new patron and it would not be surprising if some Christians found that protector in their former rulers of the Morea, about fifty years earlier. Looking for the Venetians’ support may have been a good alternative to play after the insurrection of 1770 collapsed as far as some kocabaşıs were concerned. They did not refrain from changing their religion for this cause as they had during the Morea Rebellion, which has already been mentioned before.

The kadıs not only asked for the new governors of the towns to be Muslims they also made an attempt to prevent koçabaşıs from being appointed or even removed them from their recent office. In other words, the influence of the Christian reaya in the administration of the regions was finished. This also highlights the fact that after the rebellion, to some extent the conflict between Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of the empire reached its apogee. The empire started to think of Muslims as their more faithful subjects, as opposed to the zimmis, who might take the side of the Russians especially in the time of disorder. Further evidence of this is the

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65 CDH, 16647.
many official documents encouraging conversion to Islam in these regions after the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca. To give but one example, it is claimed that if the prisoners accepted to be converted to Islam in the Morea, Karlıeli and Mediterranean/Aegean Sea, the state agent (tayin olunan mübaşir) was to pay one hundred piasters for each prisoner to their owner(s) and liberate them (on November 3, 1775).  

A report written nearly ten years after the suppression of the Morea Rebellion on May 24, 1779 legitimizes Ottoman concern about the religion of its subjects. The author, Reisülküttab Halil Hamid Efendi Pasha (1736-1785), mentions that a citizen of Venice named Cevan Platin convinced two people in the Morea to set up a network organized for finding people who might leave for the lands in Austria. Later, they spread false news that two thousand Ottoman subjects would like to move to the lands of Austria. Nonetheless, soon it was realized that not many people were eager to join in this adventure, and in the end, Cevan Platin had to run away from the Morea to Izmir and obtain diplomatic protection from the Dutch consulate and Austrian deputy. After a while, however, for the same very purpose yet with the help of another person we see Platin trying to convince the reaya of Wallachia to no avail. In spite of Platin’s lack of success to provoke Ottoman subjects against the empire his story explicitly demonstrates that there were always some people who were likely to be used for the benefit of certain big powers in the Balkans and that the great role that the religion played here is indisputable. Again this explains why the empire was so meticulous about the religion of its subjects.

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66 CDH, 13797.
67 Halil Hamid Pasha later served as a Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire from 31 December 1782 to 30 April 1785 and was known with his attempts to modernize and train Ottoman artillery units through French experts. See Kahraman Şakul, "Abdülhamid I," in Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire, ed. Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Alan Masters (New York: Facts On File, 2009); Kahraman Şakul, "Selim III," in Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire, ed. Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Alan Masters (New York: Facts On File, 2009); Nazım Tektaş, Sadrâzamlar (İstanbul: Çatı Kitapları, 2002), 444-445.
68 E 8740/1.
One should not, however, exaggerate the changing environment toward non-Muslim subjects of the empire. As we have already expressed above, this change in attitude mainly targeted leading non-Muslims rather than ordinary Christian subjects of the empire. About one year after the suppression of the Morea Rebellion, i.e., on April 14, 1771, the Ottomans sent an imperial order basically aimed at once again putting things in order in the Morea. It is an elaborate document addressed to the tax collector of Morea, Osman Pasha, the judges (kadi) and judges’ assistants in the Morea and ayan and military officers (zabitan) of small towns in the Morea. The main motivation for writing this order was to stop the financial and physical torture that had been imposed upon the reaya of Morea following the suppression of the revolt. It seems that at least for a while the Ottomans were indifferent to what had been done to them or maybe unofficially asked for them to be punished because of their “unfaithfulness” during the Ottoman–Russian War of 1768–1774. Interestingly enough, the Ottoman officers or lawless Albanians attacked not only the Christian reaya of the Peloponnese but also Muslim reaya of the empire. Thus, the Ottoman indifference to the punishment of Christian reaya was reversed and the state endeavoured to restore normal life. By then it was clearly understood that the Morea could no longer be controlled by the ambition of certain soldiers who had helped suppress the rebellion.^[69]^ 

As time went on, the reintegration of the non-Muslims into the Ottoman system following the suppression of the Morea Rebellion became more and more significant. For example, on March 15, 1773, Grand Vizier Muhsinzade overtly argued that Ottoman policy after the rebellion ought to reintegrate the reaya and to make them once again loyal subjects of the empire. However, both Osman Pasha and Ali Pasha (governors of Morea at the time) were far from wanting to make that happen. Instead, being in it only for their own interest they not only tortured the reaya of Morea but also illegally extracted a large amount of money from them. As a

[^69^]: CDH, 15002.
result, the *reaya* started to leave their lands for some islands that had been invaded by the Russians, such as Suluca and Çamlıca. What is particularly important here is that in the writings of the Ottoman dignitaries, due to the uprising it became quite common to use Russians to persuade the imperial council to take action either against or for any government official, in this case, Osman and Ali Pashas. Here again, the empire did not hesitate in taking action against a governor or helping others if it was a matter related to Russia. The Grand Vizier used Russia to disgrace Osman and Ali Pashas, but this time we do not know whether it worked out or not. The most important thing here as far as our argument is concerned is that the empire approached non-Muslims differently after the revolt but also that not long after the uprising this was followed by a policy of reintegrating the non-Muslims (especially Christian *zimmis*) into the empire once again at all costs.

**Conclusion**

As we have partly indicated earlier, the Russian activities in the Ottoman territories were not limited to the Morea. Nor were they limited to the period when the Morea Rebellion took place, approximately in the first half of 1770. In this connection, the Russian plan to drive off some Ottoman forces from the Danube seems to have worked well. That is, Alexi Orlov and his fleet did nothing notable after the collapse of the revolt other than calling the attention of the Ottomans to the Morea so that they could not concentrate on the Russian wars simultaneously going on in the Balkans and the Crimea. Although no further Russian ships were sent to the

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70 E 7019/178.

71 The Ottoman preoccupation with the Russians is most obvious in the writings of Penah Efendi. To give but one example, Penah Efendi mentions one of his dreams, in which a Russian embassy came to Istanbul to negotiate a peace treaty between two states. In the dream he saw the embassy in the shape of a huge red lion, whom Ottoman dignitaries had been serving with great fear and respect. However, later in his dream someone came closer to him and said that the embassy in the shape of lion does not refer to the formidable power of Russia. In reality, the lion is nothing but cardboard. When you throw a glass of water on him you shall see that the lion will be obliterated once and for all. Only then Penah felt relieved and soon wakened from his dream. Penah Efendi, 156-157.
Mediterranean after the suppression of the rebellion Russia somehow persuaded the Ottoman intelligence service to take more precautions in the peninsula. The Ottomans’ positive response to the intelligence report can only be explained through their oversensitivity about the Morea. In the middle of a devastating war with the Russians the Ottomans diverted some of their power because they believed that it was a matter of life or death for the continuing Ottoman domination in the Peloponnese.

There is no doubt that the Ottomans spent a large amount of money on bringing soldiers to protect the Morea, on keeping them there, and on providing them with the necessary livelihood and salaries. Yet, this was just one part of the whole story. The empire also endeavoured to restore the fortresses that had become ruins during the rebellion (although some were already in poor condition before the revolt). Many documents demonstrate that the Ottomans had to find an exorbitant amount of money even after kicking the Russians out of the Morea in order to repair the fortresses of the Peloponnese. Each time a state officer informed the imperial court about the necessity of provisions, powder, reconstruction, soldiers, foods and so on the empire was simply determined to fill these needs at all costs. Specifically, in April 1774 a summary (icmal) document was compiled of the expenses that were incurred to restore the Morea after the rebellion had collapsed. It records the events and the amount of money required to restore the ruined cities in the peninsula after the collapse of the rebellion. Four years after the suppression of the Morea Rebellion the authorities still described the revolt as resulting from Russian influence upon the reaya of Morea. More importantly, the Ottomans still desired to re-establish power and institutions in the peninsula. The story here is that the Russians and rebellious reaya of the Ottoman Empire had not only killed and enslaved the Muslims living in the Morea, but also destroyed many mosques in the towns, which they had captured during the
insurrection of 1770. In response, the Ottomans spent large amount of money on the reconstruction in the Morea.\textsuperscript{72}

We do not know precisely when this reconstruction process began but the date on the summary says that it was written in approximately April 1774. In this case, we can safely assume that the Ottoman attempt to restore the Morea had been started earlier than that and if that was the case again we should accept that the Ottomans attached great importance to the reestablishment of the Morea. The Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca was signed on July 21, 1774, which means that the empire found a way to spare a substantial amount of money for this cause at the most difficult turn of the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768–1774. This can only be explained by the Ottoman eagerness to at all costs keep the Morea, which had been thought in great danger on account of the Russian navy sailing through the Mediterranean Sea.

The important question that should be raised here is, where did this money for the restoration of the empire come from? There were apparently two sources for this reestablishment campaign. The first is the money sent by the central government and the second is emergency and poll-taxes of the year 1770–1771 and tax collection in some tax farms of the same year(s).\textsuperscript{73}

It is not difficult to describe the Ottoman Empire at that time as being in desperate need of money. However, the empire found this reestablishment indispensable and found a treasury for the purpose.\textsuperscript{74} That is, prescribed expenditures for the restoration were 1,035,311 \textit{guruş}, yet this treasury had only 981,412 \textit{guruş}. This means the empire was in need of 53,899 \textit{guruş}, which was later provided with the help of the imperial treasury. It indicates how important the Morea was for the empire because the empire was able to spare a substantial amount of money at a time

\textsuperscript{72} KK, 781.
\textsuperscript{73} “... rikab-ı hümâyun tarafından varid olan mebâlq ve cezâr-i Mora'nnın seksan dört senesi cizye ve avarz ve bazı mukataat mallarını tahsil ile iرادârî olan mebâlq'un reviyyet olunan hesâbı icmalîdir...” KK, 781.
\textsuperscript{74} See AE Mustafa III, 18238.
when the empire had to pay a huge war indemnity to Russia in order to fulfill one of the requirements of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca.\textsuperscript{75} In this connection, one can easily understand why the empire was eager to extend forgiveness to at least some important Christian figures of Morea, who had asked amnesty in return for paying more taxes, especially poll-taxes, as we have discussed previously. Suffice it to say, Ottoman determination to protect the Morea against further Russian attacks should have been a good reason for issuing an amnesty in spite of the crime of unfaithfulness committed by the rebels.\textsuperscript{76}

Earlier stories of the Morea Rebellion, which have been widely accepted in the secondary literature of the uprising, far from reflect the history of the time at issue in this dissertation. With the help of the contemporary documents of this rebellion, written after the 1770s, we have written a new story for the insurrection of 1770. Our new history of the Morea Rebellion is contaminated with neither the ideology or general theories of the nineteenth century nor the myths of the late eighteenth century. These earlier explanations hide the complexity and diversity of the uprising, which has been totally ignored before. As usual, the truth is much more complex than any previous account of the Morea Rebellion. We strongly believe that here we have brought a new dimension to Ottoman historiography.

\textsuperscript{75} KK, 781.
\textsuperscript{76} See for example, CDH, 17181.
Conclusion

The topic of this dissertation is one of the earliest Greek uprisings against the Ottoman state, which took place in the context of the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768–1774. We have focused on the Morea Rebellion, which is often claimed to be the first crucial step on the way of creating an independent Greek state and also occasionally as one of the most significant turning points both for the history of the Ottoman Empire and for the struggle for Greek independence. The meaning of the Morea Rebellion has long been under discussion among Greek historians. What we have intended to do in this thesis is to examine Ottoman constructions of this uprising, which do not appear to be adequately addressed by contemporary Ottoman historians. Even though we have particularly dealt with Ottoman side of the issue, to some extent the study has also shed light on matters of Greek historiography, which has been created almost without taking the Ottoman half of the story into account.

Previous research concerning Ottoman account of this uprising are either applicable for the whole of the eighteenth century or conducted for a different purpose, which may or may not be directly connected with the rebellion itself—or with its place in the Ottoman world, for that matter. At the outset, we have looked at (near-) contemporary Ottoman and European sources on the Morea Rebellion, which have more or less defined what was known until now about the uprising under discussion. In other words, we have analyzed the contemporary and near-contemporary chroniclers or historians, whose arguments have been more or less taken for granted in today’s secondary literature on the Morea Rebellion. The way they have interpreted the rebellion is of great importance to understanding the significance of our findings, based on the Ottoman archival sources extracted from the BOA and the TSA in Istanbul.
Ottoman contemporary sources on the uprising either intended to narrate the story from a religious point of view, or especially if they were written at the end of the eighteenth or beginning of the nineteenth centuries, had a preference for explaining the rebellion within the framework of the Greek nationalist narrative. We argue, however, that ideological explanations of the Morea Rebellion, which were often created without access to some more authoritative knowledge of events, including those written either just before or simultaneously with the Morea Rebellion, fall far short of revealing the historical truth about what the empire really experienced throughout this insurrection. All in all, these sources are all so preoccupied with Russia and the great role it played during the insurrection that almost all the misfortune that befell the Ottomans is explained within the context of wicked Russian policy. Under this policy the Russians aimed to weaken the Ottomans from all quarters in the middle of the Ottoman-Russian Wars of 1768-1774.

In order to reflect the changes that occurred in the attitude of both the Ottoman and European sources—and in the way they approached the insurgence over the course of time—we have studied first the contemporaneous sources of the Morea Rebellion and then the more current ones. The Ottoman sources, which are more or less based on the writings of Sadullah Enveri, remind us of the significant role that the Russians played throughout the Ottoman–Russian War of 1768–1774. From the Ottoman statesmen’s point of view the Russian activities were not restricted to the Morea Rebellion. In this connection, the repression of this insurrection was seen as a matter of life or death, and the empire was encouraged to take all necessary precautions. This explains, on the one hand, why the number of the Greeks who took part in this revolt is usually exaggerated and, on the other hand, why the Ottoman sources prefer to describe the Greek (Orthodox) subjects of the empire as being extremely eager supporters of the Russian
cause. The way the Ottomans was described to handle the Morea Rebellion—especially before it came into existence—is strictly criticized, however. Accordingly, these sources frequently blame the Ottomans for ignoring the possibility that the Russians might take an initiative in the Mediterranean Sea despite the fact that they had been informed about the approach of the Russians in advance through both domestic and foreign intelligence. Although our reading of the Ottoman sources contradicts this assumption there are still important similarities among these sources and the Ottoman primary documents available to us.

As for the European sources on the rebellion we have argued that their explanations are not only very different from what we have argued in the light of the Ottoman archives, but also less likely to overlap with Ottoman side of the story at that time. After all, they either had no access to the authentic Ottoman documents or never really intended to make use of them in their explanation of the uprising. More importantly, we hope to have shown that their general efforts to explain the insurgency rely on the ideology of the post-rebellion period, which is why they frequently fall into anachronistic explanations. That is, in contrast to our findings based on the Ottoman archival sources the European sources look at the insurrection from either a nationalistic or a philhellenistic point of view, both of which were quite widespread in Europe at the time these European sources were created. The European sources also greatly emphasize the religious reasons behind the rebellion but they do not limit their argument to religion. Instead, they occasionally spotlight other factors in the creation of the Morea Rebellion as well, including personal and economic reasons. Again, unlike the Ottoman sources, at least some European sources deny that all Greek subjects of the Ottoman Empire responded positively to the Russian intrigue. Thus, they are better able to answer the question why the insurrection failed within a very short period of time after it was first launched, in the beginning of 1770. What we know
today about the insurrection of 1770 almost totally relies upon the writings of these early sources. An analysis of these sources has familiarized us with present-day arguments concerning the insurrection of 1770 and at the same time revealed crucial shortcomings of earlier explanations of the uprising.

Our study indicates that there are three important periods in the events surrounding the 1770s outbreak of rebellion. For the first period, 1750s until the insurrection started to emerge in the 1770s, our findings are in substantial agreement with most of the scholars, who argue that things went from good to bad and to worse compared with the period between 1715 and 1750. After 1750, we see the peninsula in a state of struggle, trouble, intrigue and increased disorder. Our study further proves that largely as a result of the redistribution of wealth there emerged many leading figures in the Morea struggling for power on the eve of the Morea Rebellion. More importantly, however, having scrutinized the primary documents in greater detail, we have come to the conclusion that prior to the insurrection of 1770 Ottoman society is mistakenly described as being divided into homogenous groups, strictly defined according to their religion, nation or other kind of group identity. In this regard, terms that we had so often come across in the archives such as kocabaşis, ayan, bandits, rebels, Maniots, Muslims vs. Christians, Albanians, Greeks, reaya, klepht, armotoloi, askeri, state officers, governors etc. need to be used with utmost care. Such terms were neither a strict classification used to categorize certain Ottoman subjects and to differentiate them totally from others nor their members restricted themselves to specific meaning of these terms that we have given to them today. Instead, intimate relations and crossing between members of such seemingly distinct groups was quite common. Hence, our dissertation highlights personal interests, the promotion of the family, preservation of new sources of wealth, such as malikane and beratlı for the explanation of the Morea Rebellion.
Prior to the uprising, the Ottoman subjects of Morea (both Muslims and non-Muslims) were suffering because of the struggles for power going on among various leading figures—to the detriment of ordinary reaya. More importantly, however, ordinary people were not able to make complaints to the imperial council and even if they did so they were somehow punished by those about whom they had complained. Therefore, on the eve of the Morea Rebellion the Ottoman reaya were already left out of power and were no longer in a position to demand justice before the imperial council as both Vlachopoulou’s studies and our findings from the Ottoman archives clearly argue. Ottoman inability to stand for justice just prior to 1770s, therefore, is not only given as one of the most significant reasons for the unrest and conflict of Ottoman reaya in the Morea but also almost contemporaneously in many other parts of the empire including Silistre, Montenegro, Wallachia, Moldavia, Rhodes and even Cyprus. Since idealized chain of justice binding the reaya and the central government together had been broken long before the revolt, Ottoman subjects of the time were on the horns of a dilemma to raise their claims at the imperial court or not.

This not only increased the significance of numerous local leaders who were now largely able to keep a tight rein on the reaya but also of their personal ambition and struggle for power which became an important determinant of the insurrection of 1770. As a result, more and more Ottoman subjects either joined to the banditry or military armies of the local powers in order to protect themselves against now constant attacks of bandits and bureaucrats on the reaya or left their hometowns for safer places within or outside the Ottoman Empire. In either case, therefore, we have argued that the turmoil prior to the uprising provided basis and power for the rebellion and made it possible and formidable in the end. This state of confusion and chaos were likely much more widespread than a single study of this kind can ever reveal. This all explains why we
see a substantial number of uprisings simultaneously taking place in many parts of the Ottoman Empire such as Acre, Egypt, Georgia and so on. In this respect, domestic policies had at least as much to do with the rebellion as Russian interference.

As for Russia, the Ottomans were already aware of Russian intrigues, which had been targeted at getting the Ottomans into constant trouble in various imperial lands long before the rebellion. The archival record clearly shows the Ottomans not only were quite cognizant of the Greek potential to get involved in an activity against the state interest, but also took measures to prevent them from engaging in any such activity at all costs, such as the example of the elaborate collections of weapons (mainly firearms). Consequently, we have argued that the impending activity of the Russians in the Morea should have been neither unexpected nor new from the Ottoman statesmen’s point of view. Our findings on Russian tumult initiated in Moldavia, Wallachia, Montenegro and Silistre explicitly support the argument that there were many uprisings prior to the Morea Rebellion where the Russians had been a unique catalyst in leading the empire into trouble both before and during the 1770s. Thus, once again, Russia merely took advantage of the turmoil created by domestic realities rather than being the only raison d’être of the Morea Rebellion.

Documents written during the insurrection clearly delineate Russia as the only scapegoat. That is, the documents written after the 1770s start to blame Russia for every malice that befell the Ottoman Empire of the time. Clearly, post 1770s, the Ottoman Empire interpreted the Morea Rebellion as an international issue rather than anything else. International correspondences sent either to the imperial council or to the capitals of European states argue that on the eve of the Morea Rebellion the Mediterranean world had already been divided into two poles as had the rest of Europe. Every document supports the argument that neither the rebels’ action nor the
Ottoman response to it can be explained within the single framework of nationalism, religion, group identity or centre–periphery relationship. Instead, personal interest often took precedence over anything else, including religion and other ideological aspects that have been used as an explanation of the revolt. Our examples indicate that the Ottomans endeavoured both to protect the region and to restore order in the Morea at all costs not only because the Peloponnese was an important frontier zone for the Ottoman Empire against its formidable enemies but also because it had always a great importance for Ottoman domination of the Mediterranean Sea.

On the matter of the Muslim vs. non-Muslim the primary documents do not reveal the existence of any united or homogenous group of people that can be delineated according to their religion or nation. Nor do they argue that being a member of a certain group prevented the reaya from cooperating with members of so-called other groups or institutions that are frequently depicted as being the arch enemy of the group they themselves belonged to. The terms like reaya, askeri, Muslim, non-Muslim, kocabaşı, ayan and so forth are clearly markers, but not of ethnicity or religion during the rebellion – there is a clear blurring of lines between these terms, but no clear indication that they have come to mean a strictly defined entity in the empire. Ottoman official may simply have been using such terms as a stain for “subjects.” Therefore, we come to the conclusion that the people of Morea were much less united and much more fragmented than any other previous account explicitly revealed. In the example of Zaimoğlu, we have explicitly shown how our distinct sources can easily interpret him either acting for the rebellion or against it without taking his Greek/Orthodox origin or high status among Greek kocabaşi for granted as proof to describe his treachery in the insurrection of 1770.

The Ottoman reconstruction of the Morea after the collapse of the rebellion shows another a shift in emphasis. In this part, the policies that the Ottomans followed after the collapse
of the uprising are taken into account. Ottoman officials followed a policy of incorporating the insurgents rather than alienating them from the state all together after the suppression of the insurrection. This does not deny the fact that with the rebellion the Ottomans’ attitude towards the Christian reaya in general and the kocabaşis in particular changed in favour of the Muslim inhabitants of the peninsula. Before the rebellion broke out, the kocabaşis of Morea were entrusted with many administrative and financial duties. Nevertheless, the Ottomans did not order anything of the kocabaşis of Morea after the uprising collapsed. Instead, they preferred the Muslim subjects of the empire, especially ayan, who were now mainly responsible for restoring order in the Peloponnese. On the one hand, the Ottomans attempted to reintegrate the Christian reaya into the system in order to reduce the devastating impacts of the uprising on the Morean economy. On the other hand, they intended to relieve the Christian leading figures of their administration duties probably because they were no longer thought of as trustworthy. In conjunction with this new understanding, it is safe to argue that the Ottomans became much more concerned about the religion of their subjects after the suppression of the uprising.

To be exact, for the time being, kocabaşis were simply not thought of as trustworthy and their participation in the Ottoman decision making, which had been widely accepted before, was suspended. A change in attitude toward non-Muslim leading figures became apparent especially after the Morea Rebellion.¹ Perhaps they were too weak. Or possibly, for the time being it was too risky for the empire to let them take part in any state affairs. One can argue, therefore, that the Morea Rebellion brought about something new in the administrative structure of the region, that is, a replacement of non-Muslim leading figures with the Muslim ayan who had considerably helped the empire to crush the rebellion. In fact, the ayan had always had a role in the administration of the Morea but previously needed to share it with the kocabaşis. From mid-

¹ For example, see KK, 2359 (on October 31, 1770: Receb 11, 1184 AH).
1770s onward, however, the kocabaşis are excluded from re-establishing order in the Morea. This being the case, one can easily argue that at least some Ottoman dignitaries had already put the loyalty of all Orthodox subjects of the empire into question, clearly as a result of the Ottoman obsession with Russia at that time. It is prudent to argue that the Ottoman Empire withdrew its confidence from the Christian kocabaşis and put Muslim ayan in their place, at least in the immediate aftermath of the rebellion.

Our analysis of the Ottoman primary sources written after the uprising was suppressed once again shows that the Ottomans never described the Greeks as a single group that fought against Ottoman interests. Thus, it was always problematic for the empire to decide who sided with whom, which forced the Ottomans to implement different policies for the non-Muslim subjects of the empire. The Ottoman attempts to either forgive or punish the rebels prove that the empire created a set of criteria according to which the Ottomans decided who could (or could not) be reintegrated into the Ottoman system. Even if our primary sources do not tell us exactly what all of these criteria might have been our examples are sufficient to prove that the empire punished some despite the fact that they did not participate in the rebellion and rewarded others despite the fact that they had either personally taken part in the rebellion or supported it covertly from outside.

The Ottoman preoccupation with Russia continued long after the suppression of the Morea. After taking full control of the peninsula the Ottomans continued to spend a large amount of money on bringing soldiers to protect the Morea; on keeping them there; and on providing them with the necessary livelihood, salaries and so on. Accordingly, the empire endeavoured to restore the fortresses that had become ruins during the rebellion and even some were already in bad condition before the revolt. This determination can only be explained by the Ottoman
eagerness to keep the Morea at all costs and to safeguard it from the Russian navy sailing through the Mediterranean Sea as a clear threat to Ottoman domination in the Mediterranean Sea which had been once a virtual Ottoman lake for most of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Though our dissertation has greatly contributed to the study of the Morea Rebellion, there still remain many questions to be answered and areas where further studies are necessary to determine its place in Ottoman historiography. For instance, what was the connection between the insurrection of 1770 and other uprisings that took place either before or during the Morea Rebellion such as in Silistre, Montenegro, Wallachia, Moldavia, Rhodes and Cyprus; did the Morea Rebellion have any impact on later rebellions by fellow Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Balkans in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century; what were possible impacts of our uprising either to the Ottomans or Russians in the long run i.e., did Russia and Ottoman Empire take any lesson from this uprising and so forth. The Ottoman archives are full of documents of contemporary rebellions which might lead us to find answers of such questions. Further studies on the nature of ottoman rebellions of the period will help us to understand Ottoman history of the time as well as to define the particular role that the Morea Rebellion would play as part of an Ottoman taxonomy of rebellion.
Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century
Glossary

*ağa, ağa:* chief; master; head servant of a household
*ahidnâme:* contract, capitulation
*akçe:* silver coin; *asper*
*arz:* a report with a single author
*aşar:* one tenth of the produce given to the state as tax, tithes
*askeri sınıfı:* members of military class who did not have to pay taxes in the Ottoman Empire
*askeri:* tax-exempt military class; military
*avarız:* extraordinary tax
*avarız-i divaniye:* extraordinary taxes
*ayan:* Muslim provincial magnate, notable, warlord; Ottoman provincial officials
*büşbuğ:* leader, chief
*berat:* licence of privilege
*berathi:* owner of license of privilege
*bey:* governor of a district
*beylerbeyi:* “Bey of the Beys”, governor of a beylerbeyilik. The highest rank in the provincial government of Ottoman Empire
*beylerbeyilik:* a province, the largest administrative unit in the Ottoman Empire
*bölük:* company
*bostancı:* palace guard (Janissaries)
*buyrudu:* order
*çift resmi:* farm tax paid in cash by the Muslims possessing one çift of land
*çiftlik:* Ottoman system of land management
*cizye:* non-Muslim poll-tax
*cizyedar:* collector of cizye
*çukadar:* servant in charge of the outer garments of the ruler
*cülus:* accession money
*dar ul-harb:* abode of war
*dar ul-Islam:* abode of Islam
defterdar: chief accountant
devşirme: Janissary levy of Balkan Christians
divan: council of state, or ruler
efendi: a title of respect or courtesy
esame: Janissary pay and ration tickets
esham: shares, a form of long-term domestic borrowing in return for estimated income of particular state revenue source(s)
esnaf: merchants; artisans; guilds
ferman: ruling; edict of the sultan
fetva: religious ruling
Frenk: Europeans
harç: levy
hass or hassa: land belonging to a member of the elite or to the sultan
hatt-i humayun: imperial rescript
hinta: wheat
hizmetkâr: servant, the status of servant
hüteba: plural of preacher
hüküm: an order or degree issued by the imperial council
icmal: a summary register
ihitiyar: chief of a guild
ilam: court decision
iltizam: tax-farming, awarded by auction
imdad-i hazariye: emergency taxes for peacetime
imdad-i seferiye, [also imdadiye] extraordinary tax granted to provincial governors for campaign expenses
irade: will; (imperial) command/decree
ispence: The name of the çift resmi as paid by the non-Muslims
izbandut: Greek corsair
kadi: judge [also kazi, kadı or qadi]
kadim: old/classical, traditional
kapicibaşı: chief gatekeeper of the palace
kapıkulu: Janissary [also kapukulu]
kapılı: household entourage, provincial governor’s forces
kapudan paşa: also kapudan-i derya; grand admiral; kapudan also used as commander, captain, or local notable in Balkans
kasabiye: butchery tax
kaza: administrative district under kadi
kefere: infidel
kethüda: kahya, deputy, substitute, second-in-command to grand vizier, steward
kocabaşı: Non-Muslim administrative leader of the Ottoman Empire essentially worked as bureaucrats and taxCollectors; non-Muslim village head
kumbara: a Byzantium term used to refer to the ships of foreign countries
kuruş: unit of money, silver coin equal to 120 akçe; piaster
levend: mercenary militia, sarıca, sekban, irregular
mahlāl: the land reverted back to state ownership to be put for auction
mal: regular annual payment
malikane: lifetime tax farms bid on at annual auction
Maniot the Greek inhabitants of the Mani Peninsula
mansib: executive rank
masdariye: source tax on local consumption
memnuat: legally forbidden things
millet: religious community
minaret: tall tower with a balcony that is attached to a Muslim mosque from which the people are called to prayer
miri land: state owned; when applied to land referred to that owned by the government (originally the Ottoman crown) and suitable for agricultural use.
miri: belonging to the state; also used for fixed price (state regulated)
mirimiran: literally “mir” of the “mirs,” equivalent to the rank of a pasha
muaccele: lump sum payment for a malikane
mübaşir: officials assigned for the supervision of grain
mübayaa: state regulated prices
müderris: an authority of Muslim religion, chief teacher of a medrese
mufettiş: inspector
müfti: a Muslim scholar who interprets the Shari’a, jurist counselor of Islamic law
muhafız: guardian
muhassil: chief tax collector
mukataa: revenue source assigned as a renting contract, tax farm
mülk: full property ownership, frequently in the context of private individual land
mültezim: tax-farmer, Ottoman tax-collector allowed by the government to keep a share of what he collected
mutasarrif: an administrative authority of an Ottoman sancak
mütesellim: tax collector; deputy governor; local official
mütevelli: trustee of a foundation/vakıf
naib: assistant to a kadi
nakib: leader, chief
paşa (pasha): governor, ministers of state, honorific
pâye: rank, position
pir: patron saint, founder of an order
reaya: member of the tax-paying class of Ottoman society, peasants, tax category
resm: tax
Rum taifesi: Orthodox Christians, Greeks
Rumelia: Turkish name used for the southern Balkan regions of the Ottoman Empire
sancak: district – below vilayet
sarica: A provincial militia equipped with firearms
sekban: A provincial militia equipped with firearms
serseri: vagrant
Şeyhülislam: superior authority in the issues of Islam
şikayetname: indictment
sipahi: fief-based cavalry
sureti: copy, duplicate
tahrir defteri:  Ottoman tax register

taife:  certain members of a group

tekalif-i örfiye:  customary taxes

tekalif-i örfiyye:  customary tax

tekalif-i şakka:  legalized form of illegal extractions from the peasants

timar:  land grant, fief

timariot:  Ottoman soldiers who served in military in return for timar land

tuğ:  horse-tails, a sign of his high state position

ulema:  learned religious class

vak’a-nüvis:  Ottoman historian/chronicler

vakif:  charitable endowment

vali:  governor of province (vilayet)

vilayet:  province (eyalet)

voyvoda:  local official

zabitan:  officers

zahire:  store of grain, cereals; store of provisions

zimmi:  protected non-Muslim; “people of the book”
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