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JEWES IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THEIR ROLE IN LIGHT  
OF NEW DOCUMENTS: Addenda and Revisions to Gibb and Bowen<sup>1</sup>.

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This article is concerned chiefly with the rebellion in Istanbul in 1740 and its after effects. It contains, as far as I know, entirely new material about the possible connection between Jews and Janissaries in the Ottoman Empire. The evidence, if substantiated by further research, could be of remarkable importance for the history of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire and for the history of the Ottoman Empire. To put the document in its proper setting a brief recapitulation of the status of Jews in the Ottoman is perhaps in order.

The position of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire was influenced by the traditional and historical development of Islam and to Muhammad's own

1. This article is based on dispatches dated 17 June, 1740; 10 January, 1742 and 23 January, 1742 from Everard Fawkener to Holles Newcastle. The dispatches are found in *State Papers* (henceforth referred to as *SP*), Series 97, volume 31 which deals with the correspondence of the British Resident to the Foreign Secretary. The State Papers are located in the Public Record Office (henceforth referred to as PRO) in London, England. For a published version of these dispatches, see Robert W. Olson, *The Siege of Mosul and Ottoman-Persian Relations 1718-1743* (Indiana, 1975), Appendix A, pp. 203-207.

Everard Fawkener was British Resident in Istanbul December, 1735-42. Holles Newcastle was Secretary of the Southern Department and Colonies. His dates of service were 6 April, 1724-10 February, 1746; 12 February, 1746-13 February, 1748; and 13 February, 1748-23 March, 1754. During the first period Newcastle served as Secretary of the Southern Department and was responsible for Turkey. The British kept the division of Northern Department and Southern Department until the Offices of Foreign and Home Secretary were created in 1782. See Basil Williams, *The Whig Supremacy, 1714-1760*, volume II, *Oxford History of England*, pp. 443-444. I thank Professor Carl Cone for this information.

acceptance of Jews as one of the 'peoples of the book' (ahl al-kitab)<sup>2</sup>. Relations with the Jews were not set, however, by any sacred or Quranic injunction but evolved over a long period of time.

The position of the *millets*, or non-Muslim 'people of the book', while relying on Islamic tradition, was significantly affected by the slow Turkish conquest of Anatolia and by the capture of Constantinople<sup>3</sup>. Islamic law regarded non-Muslims as (dhimmis), that is as members of a community, not as individuals. Furthermore, each community was represented to the Ottoman Sultan by its religious head-patriarchs or rabbis-who were part of the Ottoman ruling establishment<sup>4</sup>.

The conquest of Constantinople in 1453 necessitated a clarification of the *millet* system. The period prior to Mehmet II's (1444-1446; 1451-1481) accession to the Sultanate had been rife with rebellion between the Muslims and Christians who had been incorporated recently into the Ottoman state. Mehmet II sought to break the power of the landed lords in the Balkans and Anatolia by granting new powers to the *millets*. He also intended to grant fiefs (timars)<sup>5</sup> to his loyal lieutenants. The land for the *timar* was to be taken from the landed aristocracy, reducing their potential for rebellion.

The *millets* as organized after 1453 were also affected by the system prevailing in Constantinople at the time of the conquest. Long before the Ottoman conquest the weakened Byzantine state had granted extensive economic and extraterritorial rights to the Genoese and Venetians. The Ot-

2. The literature on non-Muslims in Islam is vast; here I will give a few of the most important sources. For a brief account see Claude Cahen, «Dhimma», *Encyclopædia of Islām*, 2nd edition, pp. 227-231 and Chafik Chehata, pp. 231. For the Jews see S.D. Goitein, *Jews and Arabs* (New York, 1955), 62 ff. and H.A. (J.W.) Hirschberg, «The Oriental Jewish Communities», in A.J. Arberry, ed. *Religion in the Middle East*, vol. I (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 119-225.

3. The best history of the *millets* in English is H.A.R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, Part II, chapter XXIV, pp. 207-261; also see the article, «Millet», in *Islām Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 8, p. 317. For the political aspects of the *millets* and the role they played in Ottoman economic and social life see Kemal Karpat, *An Inquiry into the Social Foundation of Nationalism in the Ottoman State: From Social Estates to Classes, From Millets to Nations* (Princeton, 1973); especially pages, 31-48.

4. Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society*, p. 212.

5. For one of the most lucid accounts of the *timar* system see Halil İnalcık, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1973); *Islām Ansiklopedisi*, «timar», Vol. 12, part I, pp. 286-333 written by Ömer Lütfi Barkan.

tomans did not rescind these privileges. Another reason for the reorganization of the *millet*s was that by recognizing the Anti-Unionist (with the Latin West) Patriarch, George Scholarius (Gennadius) Mehmet II hoped to undermine the potential of a united Christian crusade against the Ottomans<sup>6</sup>.

The Armenians and Jews along with the Greeks were almost simultaneously recognized as *millet*s. The Jews were organized as a *millet*, under a *Hahambashi* (chief Rabbi) who, like his Christian colleagues, exercised jurisdiction for his community in the areas of marriage, divorce, engagement and inheritance; in return the *Hahambashi* was expected to deliver his community's share of taxes and to keep order.

According to H.A.R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, the *Hahambashi* or Chief Rabbi had precedence over the two Christian Patriarchs, the chief reason probably being that the Christians were suspected of harboring sentiments for the Christian enemies of the Porte. The Jews, without a territorial base, seemed less a threat than the Christians. The tolerance of the Ottomans, whether for political reasons or not, greatly increased the well being of the Jewish community in the Ottoman Empire during the latter fifteenth century. In fact tolerance for Jews actually preceded the conquest of Constantinople, for like their non-Turk Muslim predecessors, many Sultans had Jewish doctors. The early Sultans had also annulled the sumptuary laws regarding the Jews, which had been proclaimed by the Byzantines. Even before the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, the Ottoman Empire was a welcome haven for the Jews of Europe experiencing persecution and intermittent oppression in European lands. The Ottomans were eager to express their hospitality as opposed to the 'perfidious' Christians. The Sultan also realized that the more advanced and cultured Jews would enhance his efforts to increase the trading potential of the Empire. Moreover, it is often claimed that there seems to have been something sympathetic to Jewish nature in the culture of Islam<sup>7</sup>. Despite their *dhimmi* status in the Muslim

6 Steven Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity* (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 169-174.

7 For a recent article dealing with the concept of tolerance in Islam see Rudi Paret, «Toleranz und Intoleranz in Islam», *Speculum*, XXI (1970), pp. 344-65. The well known British Orientalist, Bernard Lewis, who is Jewish, feels that Jews, especially Jewish orientalists of the nineteenth century, have been very tolerant of Islam, if not sympathetic. Lewis attributes this pro-Muslim sentiment to «an affinity of religious culture which made it possible for Jews, even emancipated, liberal west European Jews, to achieve an immediate and



world, and especially during the early Ottoman period, the Jewish community flourished.

The Jewish *millet* was divided into four major divisions, each of which was divided on the basis of whether they had lived in the Ottoman Empire before or after the Spanish immigrations of the fifteenth century. The pre-immigration Jews were divided into two communities—the Rabanites and Karaites<sup>8</sup>. The third group were the Ashkenazim or Jews from Germany; the fourth was that of the Jews from Spain, the Sephardim. It is the latter group, on account of their skills and language abilities, that soon became the dominant group within the Jewish *millet*. The Sephardim settled largely in Istanbul, Salonika (Thessalonika), Adrianople (Edirne) and Nikopolis in the Balkans; Bursa, Amasya and Tokat in Anatolia. Istanbul had the largest Jewish community in the world and Salonika became a predominantly Jewish city<sup>9</sup>. The role of the Sephardim and Marranos Jews in the expansion and growth of capitalism and trade (especially textiles) in Salonika, contributed

intuitive understanding of Islam. It is fashionable nowadays to speak of the Judaeo-Christian tradition. One could as justly speak of a Judaeo-Islamic tradition, for the Muslim religion, like Christianity, is closely related to its Jewish forerunner... The Judaeo-Islamic affinities include such things as inflexible monotheism, austerity of worship, the rejection of images and incarnation and, most important of all, submission to an all-embracing divine law, enshrined in scripture, tradition, and commentary, which regulates and sanctifies the most intimate details of daily life»; in Bernard Lewis «The Pro-Islamic Jews», *Islam in History: Ideas, Men and Events in the Middle East* (London, 1973), p. 137.

8 For a bibliography see Mordecai Roshwald, «Marginal Jewish Sects in Israel», *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2 (1973), pp. 219-237; no. 3, pp. 328-354. It is interesting to note that Karaitism is said to have been affected by the teaching of Abu Hanifa, the Muslim theologian and jurist, whose 'school' of Islamic law was followed officially in the Ottoman Empire. For divisions among the Jewish *Millet* in the seventeenth century see Uriel Heyd, «The Jewish Communities of Istanbul in the Seventeenth Century», *Oriens*, vol. 6, 1953, pp. 299-314. Heyd indicates how the *Sephardim* became the dominant community in Istanbul. He also states that fires in the Jewish Quarters resulted in many Jews moving to new areas, with the result that the traditional communities based on independent synagogues began to break down. This contributed especially to the decline of the Romaniote community.

9 For this period of Jewish history see the works of Avram Galanté, *Histoire des Juifs d'Anatolie, Les Juifs d'Izmir* (Smyrne), (Istanbul, 1937); *Histoire des Juifs d'Istanbul* (1941-42); *Turcs and Juifs* (Istanbul, 1932) and M. Franco, *Essai sur l'histoire des Israélites de l'Empire Ottoman* (Paris, 1891).

greatly to that city becoming one of the chief market towns of the Ottoman Empire<sup>10</sup>.

The settlement of the Sephardim in Ottoman lands increased the Jewish role in banking and especially as tax farmers (*mültezim*). One of the Marrano families, the Mendes (ancestors of Pierre Mendes-France, the former premier of France during the nineteen-fifties), who controlled the spice trade in Europe, were encouraged, in fact, enticed, by Ottoman authorities to settle (ca. 1553) in their lands<sup>11</sup>. Two members of the Mendes family, Doña Gracia and her nephew, played very significant roles in the financial affairs of the Empire. Doña Gracia was head of a consortium of both Jews and Muslims which traded wheat, pepper and raw wool for European woolen goods. Her nephew, Don Joseph, became an intimate for Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent and secured a monopoly of the Aegean Sea wine trade with Europe. Süleyman granted him the Governorship of the Island of Naxos from which he administered his wine empire. Subsequently Joseph gained a monopoly of beeswax and became involved in the loan which some rich Turks and Jews made to Henry II of France in 1555. Another Jew, this time, interestingly, a woman, Esther Kyra, obtained influence in the harem of the Sultan, and by 1600 she had accumulated a great fortune through her position as collector of customs<sup>12</sup>.

Professor Halil İnalçık has concluded that «from the middle of the sixteenth century, with the coming of the Marranos, Jewish influence and control of the money market seemed to have increased. But there is no clear evidence that they introduced a mercantilist tendency in the Ottoman Empire, it seems that they brought rather their own activities into conformity with the already existing pattern.»<sup>13</sup> There is not doubt, however, that the Jews, especially Spanish Jews, contributed significantly to the development of capital in the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century.

It is indicative of how dependent *millets*, and in this case the Jewish

10 For the role of the Jews in Salonika see J. Nechama, *Histoire des Israélites de Salonique*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1934-39).

11 Halil İnalçık, «Capital Formation in the Ottoman Empire», *Journal of Economic History*, XXIX (March, 1969), p. 121 ff.

12 *Ibid.*, 123. Also see Cecil Roth, *The House of Nasi: Dona Gracia*, vol. I (Philadelphia, 1947); *The House of Nasi: The Duke of Naxos* (Philadelphia, 1949) for the complete coverage of the Mendes family. Jewish ladies were great favorites of the women in the harem for their reputed knowledge of medicine.

13 *Ibid.*, 124.

*millet*, were on the Sultan's favor that the death of Joseph of Naxos, while by no means ending, brought or coincided with the decline of Jewish influence in Ottoman affairs. In 1579 when Joseph of Naxos died, Sultan Murad II (1574-1795)<sup>14</sup> confiscated all of his property; he was regarded as no more than an ordinary slave of the Porte. The murder of Esther Kyra in 1600 by the mounted cavalry (*sipahis*) of the Porte who claimed the underweight coin (*akçe*) with which they were paid had been introduced into the treasury by her, seems to symbolize the decline of Jewish influence, which lasted for 200 years<sup>15</sup>.

The approach of the Muslim millenium also did not augur well for the Jews, and with the accession to power of Murad II (1574-1595), there was a notable decline in the influence of the Jewish *millet*. Not only were families such as the Mendes not able to gain influence, but the Sultan re-imposed sumptuary laws specifying what kinds and color of clothes and headgear *dhimmis* should wear. The decree supposedly resulted from Murad's «resentment at the inordinate luxury of the Jews, whom he had first wished to massacre.»<sup>16</sup> The sumptuary laws also were an indication to the Muslim masses that the Jews had fallen out of favor; which in turn meant that the Jews could be targets of ridicule and abuse.

The reasons for the decline of the Jewish *millet* are inseparable from the parallel decline of the Ottoman Empire<sup>17</sup>. The effects of the sixteenth

14 «Confiscation» or *musâdere* of rich people's property, Muslim or non-Muslim, was a common Ottoman practice. This policy prevented the inheritance of large fortunes which inhibited the accumulation of capital by private sources. For an account of *musâdere* see *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 8, pp. 669-673.

15 While the basis for the sumptuary laws was stated in the *Sheriyat* (Arabic. *Shar'a*) the enforcement of them depended on the disposition of the Sultan as well as historical circumstances.

16 Gibb and Bowen, vol. I, Part II, *Islamic Society*, p. 240.

17 The books dealing with the decline of the Ottoman Empire are numerous. Only a few of the best will be listed here. Mustafa Akdağ, *Türkiye'nin İktisadî ve İctimai Tarihi* (1243-1559), (Istanbul, 1974); this is a reprint of the 1959 edition; also see the same author's *Celâli İsyanları* (1550-1603), (Ankara, 1963). Stefanos Yerasimos, *Az gelişmelik Sürecinde Türkiye* (Istanbul, 1974); Ömer Barkan, «XVI. Asrın İkinci Yarısında Türkiye'de Fiyat Hareketleri»/ The Fluctuation of Prices in Turkey During the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century, *Bellekten*, vol. XXXIV (1970), pp. 557-607. Justin McCarthy has translated an article similar to the above Turkish article in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 6 (1975), pp. 3-28 entitled «The Price Revolution of the Sixteenth Century: A Turning Point in the Economic History of the Near East.» For



century 'price revolution' on the economy and commerce of the Empire were deep and enduring. The traditional agricultural economy and land-based society of the Empire were further disrupted. The decline of the Empire greatly affected the non-Muslim *millets*, especially the Jews, and their dominant positions in the Ottoman economy. This, however, by no means ended the influence of the non-Muslim *millets*.

A more difficult problem to assess is the internal development or evolution of the Jewish *millet* itself. Gibb and Bowen state that the beginning of the seventeenth century saw «a change of spirit among the Jews themselves.»<sup>18</sup> For Gibb and Bowen, «The unaccustomed liberty and favour they (the Jews) had enjoyed under the Sultan's rule for over a century induced a revival of national sentiment, or perhaps we should say an intensification of the solidarity characteristic of Jewry.»<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, «This was variously exemplified during the sixteenth century: in a movement set on foot for the regular ordination of Rabbis by a central body as had not existed for centuries; in the reduction to some order by a Palestinian doctor of Rabbinic and Talmudic tradition; and above all a revival of Messianic hopes, greatly fostered by the spread of Kabbalistic teaching.»<sup>20</sup> It was during this period that the messianic movements of Isaac Lurga Askenazi (Sevi) and of Sabbatai Sevi shook the Jewish World. This is an involved subject and has been the subject of a massive study by Gershom Scholem<sup>21</sup>. Unfortunately for Ottoman historians this excellent work by Professor Scholem is concerned largely with the religious and messianic evolution of Sevi within the context of Kabbalism. It shed little light on the reaction of Ottoman authorities to Sabbatai Sevi's movement.

The reasons and causes of Sabbatai's apostasy to Islam (September,

the effect of the 'price revolution' on Ottoman-Persian relations see Robert W. Olson, «The Price Revolution of the Sixteenth Century and Its Effects on the Ottoman Empire and on Ottoman-Safavid Relations», *Acta Orientalia* (forthcoming); Bernard Lewis: «Ottoman Observers of Ottoman Decline», *Islamic Studies*, vol. I (Karachi, 1962), pp. 71-87.

18 Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society*, vol. I, Part II, p. 241.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 241.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 241.

21 Gershom Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah 1626-1676* (Princeton University Press, 1973). It was published in Hebrew in 1957. It was unfortunate that Scholem did not have access to Turkish archives; see p. 668 in this regard. Cf. Yonina Talmon, «Millenarism» in *International Journal of Social Sciences*, vol. 10, pp. 349-362, especially pp. 357-358.



1666) are inconclusive and the Ottoman reasons for coercing his conversion are also unclear<sup>22</sup>. In fact just the 'conversion' of Sabbatai Sevi could be the subject of a full length study. Apparently the Head Rabbi as well as other Ottoman authorities were concerned about the potential consequences of Sabbatai's movement. The innovations he promulgated and advocated in Jewish beliefs and worship were anathema to the Rabbis of Istanbul. They attempted to excommunicate Sevi and according to one source, they even tried to kill him<sup>23</sup>. The threat of Sabbatai's movement to Ottoman authorities was even greater, for it challenged directly, secular, Ottoman authorities as well as religious, Rabbinic authorities: for if the Messiah had come, why pay taxes?<sup>24</sup> It was reported that the Jewish community in Istanbul stopped mentioning the name of the Sultan<sup>25</sup>, which was customary practice among the millets as 'people of the book', and instead proclaimed Sabbatai Sevi as «Sultan of Sultans» (Padishahlar Padishahı) and further announced the Sultan was «Süleyman, the son of David» (Davud'un oğlu Sulayman)<sup>26</sup>. These activities alerted the Porte to the potential threat of Sabbatai's movement. It is unclear what prompted the Ottoman government to take action against Sabbatai for Nehemiah Kohen, a Rabbi from Poland, had already denounced Sabbatai to Ottoman authorities<sup>27</sup>. Whatever the initial motivations of the Ottomans, by the fall of 1666 the Ottomans, in the midst a campaign with the Venetians over Crete, 'encouraged' Sabbatai Sevi to apostatize or face the alternative offered by the Porte: death<sup>28</sup>. Summing up the causes and effects of Sabbatai's movement Professor Scholem concludes that, «Turkish Jewry was in real danger at a certain moment. It seems more

22 Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, pp. 668.

23 *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, p. 646.

24 *Ibid.*, According to the *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Sabbatai's fame had spread as far as Iran where the Jewish community welcomed the coming of the Messiah with the words, «Our Messiah has come, and we will not have to till the soil; we will not have to pay taxes», p. 646.

25 The Sultan at this time was Mehmed IV (1648-1687).

26 *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, p. 646.

27 This whole episode regarding Kohen who also claimed to be the Messiah is involved and has several interpretations (see Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, pp. 671). Ironically, Kohen, preceded Sevi in his apostasy to Islam-or to the Ottomans!

28 For details of the 'conversion' see Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, pp. 674-678 and Geoffrey Lewis and Cecil Roth, «New Light on the Apostasy of Sabbatai Sevi,» *Jewish Quarterly Review*, LIII (1963), pp. 219-225.

probably that if Sabbatai had chosen martyrdom at the fateful meeting of the Privy Council (*Divan*)<sup>29</sup>, his heroism would have had disastrous consequences for the Jewish community or, at any rate, for its leaders.»<sup>30</sup> From this statement we can conclude that Sabbatai was forced to convert, martyrdom was not to be obtained by him, but he, too, seems not to have sought it.

Jews in the Ottoman Empire continued to adhere to Sabbatai's doctrines even after his death and many joined his brother-in-law, Jacob (*Yakub*), who was proclaimed to be the son of Sabbatai. Jacob, like Sabbatai, and apparently under similar pressures from Ottoman authorities converted to Islam in the city of Salonika (Thessalonika) and persuaded many of his followers to join him. It is noteworthy that his conversion, like Sabbatai's, took place at an auspicious time; during the Ottoman Vienna campaign in 1683<sup>31</sup>. The Ottomans were unwilling apparently to tolerate disruption in a city that was on the supply route to Vienna. It is a result of the 'conversion of 1683' that the term *Dönme* (literally meaning turning, but referring to Jews who converted to Islam) is derived. Small remnants of the *Dönme* community still exist in Istanbul.

Sabbatai Sevi's messianic movement and the establishment of the *Dönme* sect did not have a lasting effect on the Ottoman government; its consequences for the Jewish *millet* were much greater. Gibb and Bowen were of the opinion that the messianic period including Sabbatai's movement to the conversion of the *Dönme* (1648-1683) threw the Jewish *millet* at large off its balance<sup>32</sup>. The two authors acknowledge that the «growing bigotry of the Moslems and the corruption of their institutions» contributed to the loss

29 *Divan* was the name given to the meeting of Sultan and his advisers.

30 Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, p. 702. In an interesting footnote Scholem states that Sabbatai might have had relations with Turkish 'dervish' orders. Of. p. 852. The study of this relationship, if it has any basis of fact, would be an interesting comment of Jewish-Turkish and Muslim relations.

31 See the article, «Dönme», *Encyclopedia of Islam*, p. 614-616. In 1700 they were «a few hundred» *Dönme* in Salonika. For the different names used to refer to the *Dönme* see *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, p. 646; *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 615. In 1900 the populations of the *Dönme* in Salonika was approximately 10,000 most of whom were engaged in trade, crafts and the civil service. The *Dönme* in Salonika were largely uprooted during the population exchange between Greece and Turkey after the Greek-Turkish War of 1920-22. There are no figures for the *Dönme* community of Izmir which must have numbered several thousand at this time.

32 Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society*, p. 243.

by the Jews of the influence and the concomitant prosperity that they had enjoyed in the sixteenth century<sup>33</sup>. The decline of the Ottoman Empire and the growing prosperity of the Habsburg Empire and other European countries made emigration attractive. The Empire no longer seemed the asylum that it had nearly two centuries earlier<sup>34-38</sup>. The attractiveness of Europe, enhanced by the revolution of commerce in the Atlantic, was accompanied by the intellectual and social awakening which increased tolerance of Jews. The immigration in which they carried a mannequin of a wretched Jew, chanting «une kyrielle d'invectives les plus grossières contre le peuple d'Israël» and burning the Jews in effigy in the night to avenge Christendom «du péché original de la nation hébraïque.»<sup>39</sup> Another historian, Traian Stoianovich has concluded that Greek intolerance of the Jews «did not» initially provoke but rather sprang from the decline of the role of the Jews in the Empire<sup>40</sup>. Indeed, the rise of the Balkan Orthodox merchant was facilitated by the plight and the flight of the Jews.

Gibb and Bowen assert that the 'other worldliness' of Sabbatai Sevi's

33 *Ibid.*, p. 243.

34 M. Franco (*Essai sur l'histoire des Israélites de l'Empire Ottoman*, Paris, 1923, p. 119), states that emigration increased especially after the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1715. For the growth of Ottoman trade, especially Balkan trade, with the Habsburg Empire, see Virginia Paskaleva, «Avrupalı Devletlere Ticaretleri Tarihine Katkı 1700-1850»/A Survey of the History of Trade Between the Balkan States of the Ottoman Empire and European States, *İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, vol. 27, no. 1-2 (November, 1967-March, 1968), pp. 37-74.

35 Salo Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, vol. II (Columbia University Press, 1937), p. 166.

36 F.W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929), II, pp. 723-724.

37 See Isaac Broydé, «Constantinople,» *Jewish Encyclopedia*, IV, p. 238. For other information regarding the uses of arson for political purposes see Robert W. Olson, *The Siege of Mosul and Ottoman-Persian Relations 1718-1748: A Study of Rebellion in the Capital and War in the Provinces of the Ottoman Empire* (Indiana University, 1975), pp. 163-4, n. 112.

38 Triian Stoianovich, «Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant,» *Journal of Economic History*, vol. 20 no. 2 (June, 1960), pp. 234-313 which quotes Prince Nikolaous Soutsos, *Mémoires du Prince Nicolas Soutzo Grand-Logothete de Moldavie 1798-1871*, ed. Panaioti Rizos (Vienne, 1899), p. 10.

39 See Stoianovich, «Conquering Balkan Orthodox Merchant,» for quotes and bibliography, p. 245.

40 *Ibid.*, p. 245.



messianic movement and the parallel economic decline of the empire led to a decrease of Jews in business and commercial affairs. The unending wars with Persia, Austria and Venice contributed to this decline; economic opportunities were becoming increasingly scarce. In fact Stoianovich concludes that by 1750 the Ottoman Jews had «truly fallen.»<sup>41</sup> Gibb and Bowen are not nearly so pessimistic regarding the fate of the Jewish *millet* as a consequence of the Messianic movement. They conclude that the Jewish *millet* as a whole «seems to have retained in its hands a proportionate share in industry and commerce and to have suffered little more than humiliation, punctuated by the intermittent enforcement of the sumptuary laws.»<sup>42</sup> The document on which this article is based seems to bear out the thesis of Gibb and Bowen that while the Jewish population was greatly reduced through emigration in the latter seventeenth and eighteenth century there seems to be little reason to suppose that the remaining Jewish *millet's* influence was reduced vis à vis the other *millets*.

As stated above the economic and financial order of the Ottoman Empire, despite the reforms of the Köprülü Vezirs<sup>43</sup>, was in continual decline during the latter half of the seventeenth century. The first quarter of the eighteenth century saw no improvement. The plan to attack Vienna in 1683, initiated soon after the Polish expedition of 1672-1676 and the Russian campaigns of 1678-81, was undertaken largely to alleviate the financial plight of the Empire; the treasuries were empty. The failure of the above mentioned campaigns exacerbated the economic crisis; they became more sharp, enduring and frequent. The seriousness of the financial crisis were compounded by the losses of territory incurred by the treaty of Karlowitz (1699) and Passarowitz (1718), losses which did not reduce the military expenditure of the Ottoman army, which was relying more and more on a paid soldiery<sup>44</sup>. The lack of funds for the army resulted in frequent rebellions by the soldiers. One such rebellion in 1687 ended in the deposition of Mehmed IV (1618-1687). The last quarter of the seventeenth century also marked the inability of the Empire to implement industrialization because of internal and

41 *Ibid.*, p. 249.

42 Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society*, p. 243.

43 The rule of the Köprülüs was from 1656-76: Mehmed (1656-1661); Ahmed (661-676).

44 Robert W. Olson, *The Siege of Mosul*, p. 65.



foreign opposition<sup>45</sup>.

The 'Edirne Vakası' of 1703, which resulted in the death of the *Sheyhülislam* (Head Muslim religious dignitary), Feyzullah, and ushered in the period of Ahmed III (1703-1730), was triggered by disgruntled, unpaid soldiers. The army was to rebel again in 1717, 1718 and 1719.

The higher taxes, the retreat of the frontier in south-eastern Europe, and the state of ruin of many villages in eastern as well as western provinces climaxed in the early part of the eighteenth century in unprecedented immigration to Istanbul which further increased the volatility of the people, ending frequently in anarchy and arson<sup>46</sup>.

Unable to meet domestic economic needs, the Empire was forced to enact new revenue generating measures and taxes to meet the necessities of war in 1721-27. The invasion of Eshref Shah, the Afghan, in 1726-27 made the need for more revenue crucial<sup>47</sup>. But no sooner had a treaty been signed with Eshref Shah in 1727 than the Empire had to face the renewed threats of Persia, under the new, capable leadership of Nadir Kuli Khan, soon to be proclaimed Shah.

To meet these threats on the eastern frontier the Sultan proclaimed new taxes which were resisted by elements of the Janissaries, provincial soldiers (*tımar sipahis*) and the peasants, insofar as the latter were able to voice their dissent. It was the *esnaf* (artisans and skilled craftsman of Istanbul) who resisted the most. It is important to note that at this period a large percentage of the *esnaf* were Jews and Christians. The *esnaf* had three main grievances: (1) the continued debasement of the currency and the problems which accompanied it; (2) the changes resulting in the guild system of the *esnaf* as a consequence of the influx of emigrants from Anatolia and Ru-

45 *Ibid.*, p. 65; and Halil Sahillioğlu, «XVIII Yüzyıl Ortalarında Sanayi Bölgelerimiz ve Ticarî İmkânları,»/The Commercial Possibilities in Our Industrial Regions in the Middle of the Eighteenth Century, *Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi* (BTDD), No. 11 (August, 1968), pp. 61-67 and the same author's, «XVIII Yüzyılda Edirne'nin Ticar İmkânları»/Edirne's Commercial Possibilities in the Eighteenth Century, *BTDD*, no. 13 (October, 1968), pp. 60-68.

46 For the immense destruction caused by fires and arson see Mustafa Cezar, «Osmanlı Devri'nde İstanbul Yapılarında Tahribat Yapan Yangınlar ve Tabii Afetler»/The Destruction Caused by Fires and Natural Disasters to the Buildings of Istanbul during the Ottoman Period, «*Türk Sanat Tarih Araştırma ve İncelemeleri*,» vol. I (1963), pp. 327-414.

47 For the significance of the Afghan invasion see my *The Siege of Mosul*, pp. 41-53.

meli (European provinces of the Ottoman Empire); (3) the army tax exacted from the *esnaf* in time of mobilization for war<sup>48</sup>. It was these social and economic grievances which triggered the bloody Patrona Halil Rebellion which was to influence greatly subsequent eighteenth century Ottoman history<sup>49</sup>.

The rebellion of 1730 caused a realignment of those groups; the ulema (Religious body), the military elite, the Sultan's officials, provincial notables, which supported the Sultan and those groups; peasants, provincial notables, *millet*s (except for the *millet* leadership), the *esnaf*, and the lower classes of the city, who opposed the Sultan and his Grand Vezir, Ibrahim Pasha, and their policy of increased cultural and economic contact with Europe. The quasi-divine status which the Sultan represented to many of the opposing elements meant that most feelings of rebellion were directed at the Grand Vezir. The post 1730-31 alignment of Ottoman power bases was much more volatile than the pre-1731 one, because elements of the Janissaries who were opposed to the introduction of Western military methods, and the Ulema who were opposed to the subversion of the 'Ottoman way' by Europe, i.e. French influence, began to collaborate with the anti-Sultan forces whenever they felt it was in their interest to do so<sup>50</sup>. The fluidity of the new alignment was demonstrated by the actions of the *esnaf* or 'petite bourgeoisie' of artisans and merchants who in 1730 were one of the most vocal opponents of Sultan Ahmed III and Grand Vezir, Ibrahim Pasha. The upheaval caused by Patrona Halil's rebellion continued into spring 1731 and the *esnaf*, confronted with threats to their businesses by the continued disorder in the city, threw their support to the newly enthroned Sultan, Mahmud I (1730-54). The *esnaf* support enabled Mahmud to execute the remaining rebelling supporters of Patrona, quell the intermittent rebellions and to curtail the power of Patrona's supporters. The Sultan accomplished this by promising to rescind the extraordinary campaign taxes imposed by his predecessor. The *esnaf*, including those who were Jews and Christians, were to be one of Mah-

48 Robert W. Olson, «The Patrona Halil Rebellion of 1730 in Istanbul: Political Realignment in the Ottoman Empire,» *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, vol. XVII (1973), Part 3, pp. 329-344.

49 For the important aspects of the Patrona rebellion see my *The Siege of Mosul*, pp. 65-88 and the above article.

50 See footnotes 48-49.

mud's main bases of support during his reign<sup>51</sup>; and perhaps this was one of the reasons why he was able to rule for twenty-four years without being overthrown. Mahmud's long rule in wake of such a tumultuous period speaks eloquently to this. One of the few people to observe this historic switch was Lord Kinnoull, the British ambassador to the Porte, who stated that the rebels, «have made the Grand Signor stronger by showing the Janissaries that the merchants and tradesman of the city will always be ready to join his favor unless he should make himself hated by some new impression.»<sup>52</sup>

During the next decade the new allegiance of the *esnaf* was not an easy one for Mahmud I to nurture. The ten years following the Patrona rebellion were among the most trying of the new Sultan's reign. Not only the territorial integrity of the empire but the very underpinnings of the Caliphate and the sovereignty of the Sultan were threatened by the military successes and the religious propaganda of Nadir Shah of Persia. Peace on the eastern frontier was still in the negotiating stage when war with Russia and Austria commenced in full force in 1736. It seemed to the populace of the Ottoman Empire, especially of Istanbul, that peace was as chimerical as contented Janissaries. The treaty of Belgrade (1739), despite its advantageous articles for the Porte, did not quell the disquiet of the people of Istanbul or the war party at the Porte. The Russo-Austro-Ottoman war of 1736-39 was much more successful for the Ottomans than the wars of the previous half century but the treaty of Belgrade (1739) did not satisfy those at the Porte who wished to pursue a more aggressive policy<sup>53</sup>. Throughout the war with Russia and Austria the differences among the *ulema*, Sultan, Grand Vezir,

51 It is impossible with the available to ascertain what percentage of the *esnaf* were Christians or Jews, Cf. Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society*, Part I, p. 281 states that most trades and handicrafts were carried on by both Muslims and non-Muslims, although certain crafts were traditionally Muslim or Christian.

52 For this extremely significant remark see the dispatch of Lord Kinnoull, British Resident in Istanbul, dated 4/15 April, 1731 in *PRO State Papers* (SP), Series 97, volume 26.

53 The treaty of Belgrad is covered in Karl A. Roider, Jr., *The Reluctant Ally: Austria's policy in the Austro-Turkish War, 1737-1738* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1972): also Theodor Tupetz, «Der Türkenfeldzug von 1739 und der Friede zu Belgrad,» *Historische Zeitschrift*, XV (1878), pp. 1-51; I.H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, IV, Part I (Ankara, 1950), pp. 251-297.



Kızlar Ağası<sup>54</sup>, Janissaries, and *esnaf* continued. Throughout the war period (1736-39) differences were exacerbated among different groups in Istanbul by the scarcity of provisions. The winter of 1739 was extremely severe and the mood of the people became more rebellious as the winter progressed. The tension in the city mounted as the desperate plight of the people began to find expression in arson. In April, 1740 the lack of provisions in Istanbul caused a clamor for bread, and two months later rebellion.

The rebellion of June, 1740 raised the specter of a rebellion on the scale of 1730 and the Sultan took no chances. He issued a *ferman* (decree) which stated that any shopowner who closed his shop during a rebellion would be considered a rebel and punished as such. Shopkeepers who did not heed the *ferman* were arrested and some of them were killed<sup>55</sup>. The Janissary Ağa and Grand Vezir patrolled the streets of Istanbul the entire night of 6 June and raided numerous *hamams* (baths) where the suspected instigators of the rebellion, «the perfidious and hypocritical» Albanians usually gathered. As in 1730, the main suspects were again Albanians. The Grand Vezir and Janissary Ağa showed no mercy to those they caught; all were killed<sup>56</sup>. The estimated death toll for the 6 June rebellion and subsequent suppressions in some cases was as high as three thousand<sup>57</sup>. Boatfuls of rebels' bodies, many of whom had been strangled, plied up and down the Bosphorus dumping their cargo in the Black Sea. The openness of this action, often undertaken in broad daylight, was surprising to residents of the city inasmuch as such actions had formerly been carried out at night in a more discreet manner and in secluded places. Everard Fawkenner was convinced this was proof that the Janissaries and other elements of the army were not involved in the rebellion<sup>58</sup>. The Janissaries disclaimed any involvement and reiterated promises of allegiance to the Sultan which allowed the Porte to crush the uprising without fear from that sector. The Porte took more precautions to assure law and order in the city. *Fermans* were issued

<sup>54</sup> The *Kızlar Ağası* was also referred to as the *Darüssaade Ağası* or 'Ağa of the Abode of Felicity,' he was the Chief Black Eunuch of the Palace. During this period it was occupied by Beshir Ağa who was perhaps the most powerful man at the Porte.

<sup>55</sup> Mehmed Subhi Efendi, *Tarih-i Subhi* (History of Subhi), Istanbul, 1198 A.H./1783-1784 A.D. folio 178).

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 177.

<sup>57</sup> Fawkenner, June 17, 1740, *SP* 97, vol. 31.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*



to return anyone who had not resided in Istanbul for at least ten years to his former place of residence<sup>59</sup>. For days boats filled with people were sent to the Asian side of the Bosphorus. All *hans* (warehouses and sleeping quarters), *hamams* (Turkish baths) and shops were checked for suspects; those apprehended were exiled to Anatolia<sup>60</sup>.

Everard Fawkenner thought that the *hatt-i humayûn* (imperial rescript) which ordered all shopkeepers to keep their shops open during a rebellion was a remarkable proclamation in that the shopkeepers, many of whom were Jews and Christians, were also commanded to take up arms and to attack the insurgents on threat of being hanged from their own shopdoors<sup>61</sup>. On 9 June, three days after the rebellion broke out there was another flare-up, but before it could gather momentum it was suppressed by the people in the neighborhood (*mahalle*) where it occurred. The people of the neighborhood fell upon the rebels and «knocked on the Head of the Mutineers as they were directed» by the *hatt-i humayûn* which had called for the retaliation on the part of the *esnaf*, who had been armed for this purpose. There were those in Istanbul who were of the opinion that the 9 June outbreak was not for the purpose of a general uprising of the people, but rather only a quarrel among Janissaries. But the suppression of it by the *esnaf* and the people of the neighborhood had given offense to the Janissaries. According to Fawkenner the retaliation on the part of the *esnaf* was detested by the Janissaries and it made the *hatt-i humayûn* seem ill advised for now the *esnaf* were called upon to take arms against the Janissaries. Fawkenner stated that, in his opinion, an interference of this type could lead to a «general Massacre of those people (which) may one day very easily be the effect of it, as well as what further Mischief may be apprehended from the Militia's being got together in arms, and fearing in punishment of it.»<sup>62</sup>

The outbreaks of 6 June and 9 June resulted once again in a reshuffling of the government. On Tuesday, 22 June the Grand Vezir, Ivaz Mehmed Pasha, was replaced by Ahmed Pasha who held the office of *Nisançî* (Chief of the Sultan's Seal) and had been instrumental in suppressing the outbreak of 6 June. A host of lesser officials were either dismissed or assumed other posts. The purges and dismissal of officials deemed necessary to quell the

59 Subhi, *Tarih*, vol. 178.

60 *Ibid.*

61 Fawkenner, June 17, 1740, *SP*, vol. 31; Subhi, *Tarih*, fol. 178.

62 *Ibid.*

disgruntled populace of the capital again paralleled that of 1730. The scarcity of provisions increased the potential of rebellion and exacerbated the strained relations between the Muslim and non-Muslim population. Regarding the scarcity of provisions, in his report of January 10, 1742, Fawkener stated,

«There is shewn a great attention to the price of provisions, & some executions have been made for disobedience to the orders publisht (these orders stated that hoarding and greatly raised prices of food was forbidden); the Vizir & his emissaries are continually running about the streets in disguise, and it is said the Grand Signor does this sometimes. The Vizir hoping to make himself well thought of by the people; & by his vigilance in pursuing all suspicious or disorderly people, who might endanger the government, he courts the favour of his Master. These reports of the discovery of assembly's of ill disposed Persons, the executions which are said to be made, & the orders which are given as well that strangers who are unknown & without avowed business, especially Asiaticks & Albanese shall not stay here, or be allowed to come hither & that nobody shall be abroad after such a time of Night..»<sup>63</sup>

Less than two weeks later disturbances resulting from the shortage of food stuffs, the supply and distribution of which were largely in the hands of the *esnaf*, had deteriorated to the point that the Grand Vezir thought it wise to issue new sumptuary laws regarding the dress of Jews and Christians forbidding them to wear certain colors and furs. The new sumptuary proclamations caused great consternation, especially in some of the foreign embassies for as Fawkener states, the protection which the embassies gave to certain groups of Jews and Christians,

«extended so far as to become equivocal, there now & then falls a victim to it. When the Druggomans of several of the foreign Ministers were the other day with the Chiaux (Çavuş) Boshi to get some particular explanation of the Vizir's intentions, he told them the order was not meant to extend to them or anybody belonging to any foreign Minister, but as to Persons protected by them, he would advise them to be cautious, for

63 *Ibid.*, dispatch of January 10, 1742.

where the groups of that protection might be liable to discussion, the blows might be in the meantime given. [Fawkener then goes on to relate a very peculiar incident.] But the mistakes dont all happen on one side, for the other to observe how these regulations are observed took up a Servant or dependent of a Jew, who is Agent or as they call it here Bazargan (Bezirgan) Boshi, of the Agau ε body of the Janisaires, on account of some part of his dress, in the way to the Vizir's Palace they passt by the Station of one of the bodys of the ordinary Guard of the city, who are Janisaries, ε the commanding Officer in each of those bodys of Guard is a Colonel or Chiorbagee (Çorbaci). The Servant as he passt told the Guard to whom he belonged, ε they immediately took him from the Vizir's People ε sent him to some of their own Chambers; Servants ε authority, sent immediately to require this Person of the Janiary Agau; but he was told that the Body claimed him as one belonging, to them, ε would be offended if he was taken out of their hands, ε so the matter dropt. It is not easy to imagine the credit this Jew, Agent of the Janisaries has in that body. He disposes of all Offices, ε applications are made by the pretenders to them to Him, in the first instances of this I have seen several proofs, for as he is an Honorary British Druggoman, ε in vertue of his Baratz (Berat) or Commission from the Sultan in that quality, is under my protection, I have had applicatons from Officers of rank, even as high as Colonel, for recommendations to him; there is a jumble here of power ε dependence not easily to be accounted for or explained.»<sup>64</sup>

The «jumble of power and dependence» existing between the non-Muslim *millets*, the Janissaries, and the Porte is well illustrated by Fawkener's relation of the episode regarding the servant, either a Christian or Jew, of the Bezirgan Bashi, the Jewish agent of the Janissaries, in their relations with the *esnaf*. This episode is important for several reasons. It is the first evidence I have ever seen indicating a close relationship or, for that matter, any kind of a relationship between the Janissaries and the Jews. Secondly it indicates that the servant of the Bezirgan Bashi realized, through

64 Fawkener, January 23, 1742, *SP* 97, vol. 31.

habit or cognizance, that the position of his master was such that he felt that he did not have to comply with the newly reimposed sumptuary laws—a realization which was justified by the subsequent action of the Janissary Aga. Thirdly, if we accept Fawkener's statement, the Jewish agent controlled all applications to the Janissary corps—certainly a novel, highly significant, if not astounding statement, in itself. Finally, it appears that the Grand Vezir was not aware of the extent of the relationship between the Janissaries and the Bezirgan Bashi. But when informed of it, in this particular instance, he did acquiesce to the Janissary Ağa's request that he drop charges against the servant of the Bezirgan Bashi which seems to indicate some knowledge on his part of the relations between the Janissaries, Jews and *esnaf*.

It is impossible to untangle the 'jumble' of power implied in Fawkener's statement on the basis of the available data but I hope that this article suggests the need for more research on what, I think, is a provocative topic and one which could necessitate some revisions of the study of Ottoman history and of the history of the Jews<sup>65</sup>.

65 Further research could provide the kind of revision of Jewish history as that suggested by Bernard S. Bachrach, «A Reassessment of Visigothic Jewish Policy, 489-711,» in *American Historical Review*, vol. 78, no. 1 (1973), pp. 11-34 whose conclusion is worth restating :

In the period from 589 to 711 at most seven of the Visigothic kings embraced anti-Jewish policies or encouraged anti-Jewish legislation. During this same period, however, no less than nine monarchs pursued policies that varied from benign neglect of the Jews to support of the Jews. Throughout the entire period those kings who pursued anti-Jewish policies faced strong opposition from both lay and ecclesiastical magnates as well as from the population at large. Furthermore, it was difficult and often impossible to enforce anti-Jewish laws because of their general unpopularity. In short, scholars have overestimated the power of the monarch, put too much faith in the effectiveness of the Church, councils, and grossly underestimated the importance and strength of the Jewish community. The Jews were a formidable force in a kingdom riddled by factionalism, fragmented by local claims and devoid of strong monarchical institutions. Visigothic monarchs who promulgated anti-Jewish laws and demanded the Church councils to do the same were seeking to weaken the Crown's political enemies. These monarchs were neither religious fanatics nor the pussillanimous instruments of pious bishops.



## APPENDIX

*Dispatch Dated 17 June 1740 from Everard Fawkener, the  
British Resident in Istanbul to the Duke of Newcastle  
the British Foreign Secretary, Concerning the Rebellion  
of June 6-9 in Istanbul*

Constantinople the 17th June 1740

My Lord

(fol. 61) The last letter I had the honour of writing to Your Grace was dated the 29. th past.

We have since had great alarms here, which however have had no other Effect than the change of the Vizir & a few subordinate Officers.

The situation in the Visigothic kingdom bears striking similarities to eighteenth century Ottoman Empire.

Also see the highly interesting and revisionist importance of Jewish-Byzantine relations in George Hanfman, *Letters from Sardis* (Harvard University Press, 1972), especially pp. 323-324 and the same author's paper, «The Ancient Synagogue of Sardis», Fourth World Congress of Jewish Studies, vol. 1 (Jerusalem, 1967), pp. 37-42 and his article in *Encyclopedia of Judaica* (forthcoming), «Sardis».

The best work on the Judaism during the Hellenistic period in Asia Minor is that of A.T. Kraabel, *Judaism in Western Asia Minor under the Roman Empire* (Studia Post-Biblia, Leiden, ed. J.C.H. Lebram) which puts the Synagogue of Sardis into historical perspective and demonstrates that Jewish-Byzantine relations up to the destruction of Sardis in 547 B.C. by the Persians were better than previously anticipated. This book was not available for my consultation. The interested reader should consult Kraabel's dissertation, *Judaism in Western Asia Minor under the Roman Empire*, with a preliminary study of the Jewish community at Sardis, Lydia (Harvard University, 1968), especially pp. 198-249.

The first tumult hapned the third Jvs. [June] in the afternoon, in the quarter of the Town where old Cloths are sold, there did not appear above seventeen or eighteen People, who at first seemed to have some quarrel amongst themselves, but one of them, when the rest drew their Swords, pulled out of his Bosom a green Flag which he fixed to a Staff, & they then cried out that the Shops should be shut, & invited all good Mussulmans to follow them.

A great uproar immediately ensued & it was soon spread all over the City that there was a rebellion, which occasioned a general Confusion, the Shops were shut & all people were intent upon providing for their own safety.

The Sultan was at one of his Houses upon the canal, & the Vizir was out of Town upon an airing, & this small beginning either neglected or attended by any unlucky event, might very easily have proceeded to a like fatal Catastrophe with the rising ten years since, which at first was not so considerable as this; for matters were very well disposed, & if the flame had got ever so little head, it would not easily have been extinguished.

But the Janisar Aga, the Vizir Kayhuah [Kâhya]<sup>1</sup> & the Nisangee [Nişancı]<sup>2</sup> Pashau, late Camicam [Kaymakam]<sup>3</sup> & now Vizir got immediately on horseback; it was also a fortunate Circumstance that a Guard of Janisaries which was near at hand was commanded by a Man of bravery. It is said, one Guard which was thereabouts withdrew upon the first noise, but this officer made towards it, & had something of a Parley with the Mutineers: who seemed disposed to defend themselves. His people did not express any great forwardness to venture their Lives, but he reproaching (fol. 62) them with exposing their Commander to the String, told them he would at least avoid that ignominy, and made at the Ensign Bearer with his sword, whom

1 The Vezir Kâhya was the Grand Vezir's deputy responsible for domestic and military as well as ceremonial affairs. See Hamilton Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, vol. 1, pt. 1 (Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 121-22.

2 The Nişancı Paşa was the official who traced the royal cipher (Tuğra) on imperial documents. He had the authority to examine, correct, and alter laws and the responsibility to harmonize new laws with previous laws. By the eighteenth century, however, the office of Nişancı was largely a sinecure. Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society*, pp. 124-26.

3 The Kaymakam was an official with the rank of Vezir appointed to replace the Grand Vezir when the latter was on a campaign. Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society*, pp. 114-15.

he had the good luck to lay dead at his feet; his followers encouraged by this fell upon the rest, & tho' they made some resistance, they were soon dispersed, one or two were killed upon the Spot & the rest taken.

The Grand Signor tho' he had this good news almost as soon as he heard of the rising, came directly to his Palace in town. Strong Guards were placed every where & the Vizir himself was upon the Patrol all night. Great Numbers of People were seized, and many put to death, & these executions continued with violence for a good while, & are not yet quite ceased. The number is made to amount high, I have heard as far as three thousand People but I dont see which way it is possible to come at any certainty in this point, since it is very doubtful whether any account is kept at all who or how many are taken off in such a Massacre.

The Mischief is fallen chiefly upon the Albanese & other Strangers about the City, & it has been remarked that large boats have gone out publickly, filled with the Carkasses of those Strangled Wretches, to be thrown into the Sea, which is a work which always used to done privately. This is said to be proof that the Janissaries & other Bodies of Militia were not concerned in this Business, & which they have disowned any part in & made fresh promises of allegiance & fidelity.

Such of those people who have upon this occasion fall'en into the hands of the Government, as have escaped the String have been sent away & no Person of low Rank is allowed to continue here, who is not established, or cannot find somebody to answer for him : and it has been said an account has been taken of the labouring people who are Turks, which has been reduced to such a Number as is thought equal to the work, & the rest are sent away.

But what is most remarkable is a Proclamation which was made all over the City by the Publick Cryers, by which the Shopkeepers of what Religion soever are forbid to shut up their Shops upon all (fol. 63) people who shall raise any uproar in the Streets, & to endeavour to seize or kill them, & all this under penalty of being hanged at their Shopdoors.

To shew an appearance of security the Grand Signor returned the day following to his palace upon the Canal, & it was hoped under the great attention of the Government the publick quiet was quite restored. Yet on the 9.th there was another appearance of a tumult & which was suppressed by the People of the Neighbourhood, who fell upon & knocked on the Head the Mutineers as they were directed by the Proclamation. There are those who say that this last affair was not an attempt to create a rising of the



People, but relay a quarrel between a few Janissaries, & that this way of putting an End to it has given great offence to that Body. However this particular Case may be, that Proclamation seems ill judged for quarrels will Jews should interpose in them in the manner prescribed a general Massacre of those people may one day very easily be the effect of it, as well as what further Mischief may be apprehended from the Militia's being got together in arms, & fearing the Punishment of it.

Upon this second Ruffle it was thought proper to change the Vizir which was done the 12.th & he is succeeded by Achmet Pashaw, Camaican [Kaymakam] during the two last Campaigns & lately Nisangee [Nişancı].

I have for a good while thought him a very likely Person to ascend one day to that great Dignity, & he seems to have been kept here on purpose for an Occasion, yet if things had been quiet it is probable Bekeer [Bekir] Pashaw who is just arrived from Guidda [Jidda], might have preceded him, but he was preferred for the present Conjuncture & the other succeeds him as Nisangee [Nişancı].

The Chiaux [Çavuş]<sup>4</sup> Pashaw is also deposed, & is sent to Baghdad to wait there another ambassador from Persia, & the Officer who killed the Ensign Bearer in the first tumult, has as a Reward of his courage beside a sum of Money, the office of Muzur [Muhzir]<sup>5</sup> Agau or Commander of the Body of Janisaries which keeps guard at the Vizir's Palace.

Other Changes are talked of particularly (fol. 64) that of the Reis Efendi<sup>6</sup>; the Vizir Kayhauh [Kâhya] is confirmed in his office, & I have been told with an express declaration from the Sultan to the Vizir, that He must consider him as a Person placed in that office by him directly & therefore as Kayhauh [Kâhya] of the Empire.

He bears the Character of Fidelity & Integrity but it is somewhat out

4 The Çavuş Başı was one of the lieutenants of Grand Vezir in charge of judicial affairs and of carrying out the orders of the courts of justice. Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society*, pp. 118-20.

5 The Muhzir Ağa was head of the Janissary Ağa's guard and controller of the prison located in the Janissary Ağa's head-quarters. He also represented the Janissaries in dealings with the government as a member of the staff of the Grand Vezir whose residence was guarded, in part, by Janissaries under the command of the Muhzir Ağa. Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society*, p. 325.

6 The Reis Efendi was the principal secretary of the Chancery in charge of all affairs except financial matters, but this included foreign affairs. He also was in charge of preparing the Telhis or the communications from the Grand Vezir to the Sultan. Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society*, pp. 122-23.

of the way to put in a place of so much Business a Person who can neither write or read. The late Vizir is made Bashau of Guidda [Jidda].

It is apprehended that great disorders must have ensued, if the Rebellion had taken place for as the Memory of the Executions after the Establishment of the present Sultan Mahmud I is so fresh, those who had brought about this, & had got the power in their hands, would have been desperate, & have tried all means for their own safety. In that case it is very probable the pretence of dissatisfaction would have been the accepting Belgrade demolished & consenting to such a Peace, whilst the arms of the Empire were in a condition to procure much greater Advantages: This would have been imputed to the arts of the Christian ministers & the ignorance & corruption of those of the Porte; and the heats this must have raised in a Mad Multitude might have put all Strangers in danger, especially those who would have been looked upon as more immediately concerned.

The Government has had a great deal of Reason for sometime past to be up on its guard, & no doubt these strong marks of an unquiet Spirit abroad will redouble all their vigilance & attention, yet if at last the Mischief should overturn them, these Executions will have exasperated Matters, & it will fall the heavier. I am afraid things would not pass as they have done heretofore upon the like occasions, but that we should have a long scene of Confusion & Tumult to go through. I have however great Confidence in the ability, Vigilance & Resolution of the present Vizir, who will not easily be surprised. [Seven months later the tumultuous situation was worsened by the lack of provisions. In a report dated 10 January 1742, Fawkenner stated],

There is shewn a great attention to the price of provisions, & some executions have been made for disobedience to the orders publisht (these orders stated that hoarding and greatly raised prices of food were forbidden): the Vizir & his emissaries are continually running about the streets in disguise, and it is said the Grand Signor does this sometimes. The Vizir hoping to make himself well thought of by the people; & by his vigilance in pursuing all suspicious or disorderly people, who might endanger the government, he courts the favour of his Master. These reports of the discovery of assembly's of ill disposed Persons, the executions which are said to be made, & the orders which are given as well that strangers who are unknown & without avowed business, especially Asiaticks & Albanese shall not stay here, or be allowed to come hither & that nobody shall be abroad after such a time of night....

[On 23 January 1742 Fawkener reported to the Duke of Newcastle that the disturbances had reached the point at which the Grand Vezir thought it wise to issue new proclamations regarding the dress of Christians and Jews. Both groups were forbidden to wear certain colors and furs. Regarding the issuance of this proclamation, Fawkener wrote that it caused disconcertion in some of the foreign embassies as the protection which they gave to certain groups of Christians and Jews],

extended so far as to becom equivocal, there now & then falls a victim to it. When the Druggomans of several of the foreign Ministers were the other day with the Chiaux [Çavuş] Boshi to get some particular explanation of the Vizir's intentions, he told them the order was not menat to extend to them or anybody belonging to any foreign Minister, but as to Persons protected by them, he would advise them to be cautious, for where the groundsof that protection might be liable to discussion, the blows might be in the meantime given. But the mistakes dont all happen on one side, for the other day the Servants of the Vizir who walk about the city to observe how these regulations are observed, took up a Servant or dependent of a Jew, who is Agent or as they call it here Bazargan Boshi [Bezirgan Başı]<sup>7</sup>, of the Agau & body of the Janissaries, on account of some part of his dress, in the way to the Vizir's Palace they passt by the Station of one of the bodys of the ordinary Guard of the City, who are Janissaries, & the commanding Officer in each of those bodys of Guard is a Colonel or Chiorbagee [Çorbacı]<sup>8</sup>. The Servant as he passt told the Guard to whom he belonged, & they immediately took him from the Vizir's People & sent him to some of their own Chambers; the Vizir displeas'd at this insult offered to his Servants & authority, sent immediately to inquire this Person of the Janisar Agau; but he was told that the Body claimed him as one belonging, to them, & would be offended if he was taken out of their hands, & so the matter dropt. It is not easy to imagine the credit this Jew, Agent of the Janisaries has in that body. He disposes of all Offices, & applications are made by the pretenders to them to him, in the first instances of this I have seen several proofs, for as he is an Honorary British Druggoman, & in virtue of his Baratz [Berat]

7 According to Redhouse's *Lexicon of Turkish and English* (London, 1890), p. 322, a Bezirgan Başı was a «warden of the merchants guild.» It also defines bezirgan as «a merchant,» «a pedlar» and vulg. «a Jew.»

8 A Çorbacı Başı was a commander of an orta or one of the 196 companies of variable sizes which comprised the Janissary Corps, Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society*, pp. 319-22.



or Commission from the Sultan in that quality, is under my protection, I have had applications from Officers of rank, even as high as Colonel, for recommendations to him; there is a jumble here of power & dependence not easily to be accounted for or explained.