

POWER POLITICS IN THE OTTOMAN BALKAN PROVINCES: A CASE STUDY
OF PAZVANDOĞLU OSMAN

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ABSTRACT

POWER POLITICS IN THE OTTOMAN BALKAN PROVINCES: A CASE STUDY OF PAZVANDOĞLU OSMAN

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This thesis analyzes the life and power politics of Pazvandođlu Osman, *Ayan* of Vidin, in the 18th century with references to the changes in the Ottoman provincial administration experienced between the 17th and 18th centuries. Osman's relations with the Ottoman central government and the policy that the latter followed towards him will also be given to show the Ottoman methods of coping with the oppositional groups in the provinces in the case of Pazvandođlu Osman in the 18th and 19th centuries. Moreover his relations with the people of Vidin as well as with the neighboring *ayans* will be displayed to examine how an *ayan* ruled and represented people and also how important an *ayan* was in the development of a city. In addition a description of the Ottoman Balkans in general and Vidin in particular will also be analyzed from the point of view of their contributions to the rise of Pazvandođlu Osman within the context of cause and effect relations.

Keywords: *Ayan*, Ottoman Empire, Pazvandođlu Osman, Vidin, 18th Century.

ÖZ

OSMANLI BALKAN VİLAYETLERİNDEKİ GÜÇ POLİTİKALARI: PAZVANDOĞLU OSMAN ÖRNEĞİ

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Bu tez, 18. yüzyılda Vidin ayanı Pazvandoğlu Osman'ın yaşamını ve güç politikalarını, Osmanlı taşra idaresinde 17. ve 18. yüzyıllar arasında yaşanan değişikliklere de atıfta bulunarak incelemektedir. Pazvandoğlu Osman'ın Osmanlı devleti ile olan münasebetleri ve devletin ona karşı izlemiş olduğu politika, Osmanlı devletinin 18. ve 19. yüzyıllarda taşradaki muhalif güçlerle başetme yöntemlerini açıklaması amacıyla incelenecektir. Ayrıca, Pazvandoğlu Osman'ın Vidin halkına yapmış olduğu katkılar, onun Vidin halkı nazarındaki imajı ve Vidin halkı ile olan münasebetleriyle birlikte komşu ayanlarla olan münasebetleri bir ayanın insanları nasıl yönettiğini, temsil ettiğini ve şehrin gelişiminde nasıl bir etkisi olduğunu göstermek amacıyla incelenecektir. Bunlarla birlikte, genel olarak bir Osmanlı Balkanları ve özel olarak Vidin betimlemesi, Pazvandoğlu Osman'ın yükselişine zemin hazırlaması bakımından sebep-sonuç ilişkileri bağlamında, yapılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ayan, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Pazvandoğlu Osman, Vidin, 18. Yüzyıl.

To my Advisor, Assist. Prof. Dr. Birten Çelik

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.Ü.D.T.C.F.	:	Ankara Üniversitesi Dil Tarih ve Coğrafya Fakültesi
B.O.A.	:	Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives)
D.V.İ.A	:	Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi
E.I.	:	Encyclopedia of Islam
IJMES	:	The International Journal of Middle East Studies
M.E.B.	:	Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı
TTK	:	Türk Tarih Kurumu

INTRODUCTION

Pazvandoğlu Osman *ayan* (local notable) of Vidin was one of the most powerful local notables of *Rumelia* (*Rumeli*) region in the 18th century Ottoman Empire. Pazvandoğlu Osman was born in 1758. His father was Ömer Pazvand who was one of the well known *ayans* in Vidin. After his father's death in the midst 1780s Pazvandoğlu Osman succeeded in keeping the property of his father in hand and he became one of the influential *ayans* especially in the Danubian region. His policy to become an influential *ayan* was to wage raids against the inhabitants living along the Danube River to get these areas under his control. Pazvandoğlu Osman even risked confronting the Ottoman government many times when the government tried to stop him. In this respect Osman marked the late 18th and early 19th centuries Ottoman Empire with his struggles. However a rebellious character he had and was declared a traitor many times and even never defeated by the state, interestingly, Pazvandoğlu Osman died as a loyal servant to the Ottoman Sultanate. With his impressive life story, and influential and refractory characteristics, Pazvandoğlu Osman represented an *ayan* of the 18th century that deserves particular interest in the Ottoman history.

To be able to comprehend how Pazvandoğlu Osman rose to power in Vidin, a Danubian city, at the expense of Ottoman authority, it is necessary to have a look at the economic, political and administrative circumstances of the 17th and 18th centuries as contributing factors. Especially the extension of *iltizam* (tax-farming) due to the rising needs for capital for the state expenses changed the way of collecting state income and reshaped the nature/identity of the provincial administrators. Gradually the implementation of *iltizam* opened the ways for the notables to acquire economic wealth, military and political power in advance. Having been

appointed *mültezim* (tax-farmer), the local notables ultimately entered the administrative groups in the provinces and they gained considerable wealth.

Parallel to *iltizam* system, long-lasting wars with Austria and Russia drove the Ottoman Empire into social and political difficulties in the 18th century especially in the Balkans. The wars deprived many people of property and of job and this, in return, caused the increase of banditry and disorder especially in the rural areas. The Ottoman state solved these problems by arming the young, jobless and landless *reaya* who were called as *levends* or *sekban* (Anatolian mercenaries) useful to reestablish the order in the countryside.¹ Moreover the wars throughout *Rumelia* resulted in an authority gap there which paved the way for the local notables to form their own military forces composed of landless and jobless peasants. Besides these peasants, there were also bandits in the army of the local notables. With this power the local notables began to threaten the people and even the authority in the 18th century. Economic and military power of the provincial notables, reached such a level that the Ottoman government had to legalize their status and the status of the *ayans* became institutionalized in the second half of the 18th century.

Scholars approach the subject of *ayanlık* from three different points of view. The first view asserts that the emergence of *ayans* was a result of transformation of the land tenure system in the Balkans under the Ottoman rule throughout the 18th century. The representatives of this approach generally are from the Southern European countries and they explain the national movements with the activities of *feudal lords* (they use this word

¹ This method is called as *levendization* process. For a full account of *levendization* process, see Mustafa Akdağ, *Türkiye'nin İktisadi ve İçtimai Tarihi (1453-1559)*, Volume II, İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1995, pp.318-328; Halil İnalçık, "Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1700" in *Studies in Ottoman Social and Economic History*, (ed.H. İnalçık,) Hampshire: Variorum, 2002, pp.283-337, p.285.

for *ayans*) who stimulated the awakening of national sentiments among the Balkan nations. Ottoman rule caused a general setback at the socio-economic and political developments in the Balkans and delayed the transition of feudalism into its last phase in the Peninsula.² Nonetheless, the local notables became master of the provinces in the 18th century because of the weakness of Ottoman government. Thus, this approach compared the activities of local notables with the European feudal lords, which are called *derebey* in Turkish.³

The representatives of the second point of view claim what happened in the Ottoman provinces in the 18th century was a kind of administrative, economic and military privatization. According to Salzman, the international economic system enforced the state to open the state-monopolized economic activities and then the ways to the administrative posts to the local intermediaries. As a result, once the local intermediaries (the *ayans*) held the state-monopolized economic activities in the provinces, they became the major components of the provincial economy. The state began to rely on these intermediaries in economic affairs rather than the centrally appointed military governors in the provinces. These intermediaries in the course of time became economically so powerful that they acquired administrative positions through *iltizam*. The *ayans* in the long run succeeded in dominating the administrative posts in the provinces. All of these above resulted in the privatization of state-monopolized economy and provincial administrations. After all, the *ayans* became the major determinants in politics and economy.⁴

² See, Wayne S. Vucinich, "The Nature of Balkan Society under the Ottoman Rule", *Slavic Review*, Vol.21, No.4, 1962, pp.597-616, p.601.

³ For examples for this approach see. V.P. Mutafova, "XVIII. Yüzyılın Son On Yılında Ayanlık Müessesesi", *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi*, No.13, İstanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, 1978, pp.163-182.

⁴ See Ariel Salzman, "An Ancien Regime Revisited: Privatization and Political Economy in the Eighteenth-Century ottoman Empire", *Politics and Society*, Volume

Finally, the third view focused on the changing nature of administrative groups. According to this, from the 17th century onwards the Ottoman provincial administration started to be decentralized as a result of a general decay both in the *timar* system and Ottoman provincial administration which was totally based on the *timar* system. The transformation of the *timar* system into *iltizam* brought about a drastic change in the provincial administrative cadres because with the extension of *iltizam* system the local notables began to acquire economic and administrative duties as *mültezim* (tax-farmer) and *mütesellim*. Thus, they gained economic and administrative power. Furthermore, the provincial notables consolidated their economic and administrative power by keeping the *levend* or *sekban* groups as their private army. Thus they acquired military power. When the authority of the Ottoman state began to loosen in the provinces, an authority vacuum naturally took place. The local notables by means of their considerable amount of *sekban* armies benefited from this situation and started to fill this vacuum, and gradually expanded their area of influence at the expense of the state. By the mid 18th century, the local notables became in a way the masters of the provinces. As a result of this process, they became power centers in the provinces. From then on, the centrally appointed administrators were gradually replaced by the local notables because these notables proved to be more efficient than the former in provincial affairs.⁵ Under these circumstances, the Ottoman state administration started to be decentralized in the 18th century which is

XXI, No.4, 1993, pp.393-423; Ariel Salzmann "İmparatorluğu Özelleştirmek: Osmanlı XVIII. Yüzyılında Paşalar ve Ayanlar", *Osmanlı*, Volume III, Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 1999, pp.227-235.

⁵ For detailed information about this approach see, Halil İnalçık, "Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration", in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History*, (eds. T.Naff & R. Owen), Carbondale: University of Southern Illinois Press, 1977, pp.27-52 and Yaşar Yücel, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Desentralizasyona Dair Genel Gözlemler", *Bellekten*, Volume XXVIII, No.152, Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 1974, pp.657-708.

generally accepted by a group of scholars as the “age of *ayans*” and the “period of decentralization” of the Ottoman state.⁶ Because of the Ottoman economic and administrative transformation, the *ayans* became important economic, military and administrative figures in the Ottoman state mechanism throughout the 18th century.

These uncommon characteristics of the *ayans* and their legal status different from that the *timariots* (cavalrymen) attracted many scholars studying the Ottoman History and many works were produced in the last fifty years. While some scholars studied the rise of *ayans* and the legal status of *ayans* or institution of *ayanlık*, the others undertook biographical works on *ayans*.

Valuable research on the emergence and the process of institutionalization of *ayanlık* were carried out in the last fifty years. For example Yücel Özkaya’s well-known study titled as *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Ayanlık*,⁷ Yuzo Nagata’s *Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa ve Ayanlık Müessesesi*⁸ are two of them. While Özkaya in his *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Ayanlık* sought to clarify historical roots of the institution of the *ayanlık* and its negative effects on the Ottoman state mechanism in the 18th century, Nagata presented the efforts of Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa to limit the political and administrative power of the *ayans* in the provinces in the second half of the 18th century.

Biographical works on the history of individual *ayans* and their role in the Ottoman administrative system also presented valuable information on

⁶ See, İnalçık, “Centralization..”, pp.27-52; İnalçık, “Military and Fiscal..”, pp.283-337; and Bruce McGowan, “Ayanlar Çağı, 1699-1812” in *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, (eds. Halil İnalçık & Donald Quataert), Volume II, İstanbul :Eren Yayıncılık, 2004, pp.761-867.

⁷ Yücel Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Âyânlık*, Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 1994.

⁸ Yuzo Nagata, *Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa Ve Ayanlık Müessesesi*, İzmir: Akademi Kitabevi, 1999.

the *ayans* in particular and on the Ottoman Empire and provincial administration in general. Yuzo Nagata's colossal study titled as "*Tarihte Ayanlar: Karaosmanoğulları Üzerine Bir İnceleme*"⁹ and "Karaosmanoğlu Hacı Hüseyin Ağa'ya Ait Tereke Defteri",¹⁰ İ. Hakkı Uzunçarşılı's significant study, *Meşhur Rumeli Ayanlarından Tirsinikli İsmail, Yılıkoğlu Süleyman Ağalar ve Alemdar Mustafa Paşa* are some of them.¹¹

Yuzo Nagata in his book titled "*Tarihte Ayanlar Karaosmanoğulları Üzerine Bir İnceleme*" concentrated on the political and economic activities, properties, and the family history of the Karaosmanoğulları, which was the most influential *ayan* family in Manisa in the 18th century. Nagata in his article "Karaosmanoğlu Hacı Hüseyin Ağa'ya Ait Tereke Defteri" examined the property records of Hacı Hüseyin Ağa, one of the member of Karaosmanoğlu family, who died in 1816 in Manisa. In this article Nagata evaluated the size and value of the Hüseyin Ağa's farms. Nagata asserted that Hüseyin Ağa produced commercial agricultural products in his *çiftlik*s such as cotton and wheat for the markets.

İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı on the other hand tried in a similar way in his above mentioned book to portray the political life of Alemdar Mustafa Paşa and of his predecessor, Tirsinikli İsmail who were the prominent *ayans* in Rusçuk (Ruse) in the second half of the 18th century. In addition to these works, recently, a PhD dissertation by Robert Zens also enriched the research on *ayans*. In his unpublished dissertation titled as *The Ayanlık and Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa of Vidin in the Age of Ottoman Social Change*,

⁹ Yuzo Nagata, *Tarihte Ayanlar Karaosmanoğulları Üzerine Bir inceleme*, Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 1997.

¹⁰ Yuzo Nagata, "Karaosmanoğlu Hacı Hüseyin Ağa'ya Ait Bir Tereke Defteri" in *Studies on Social and Economic History of the Ottoman Empire*, (ed. Yuzo Nagata), İzmir: Akademi Kitabevi, 1995, pp.5-21.

¹¹ İ. Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Meşhur Rumeli Âyânlarından Tirsinikli İsmail, Yılık Oğlu Süleyman Ağalar ve Alemdar Mustafa Paşa*, İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1942.

1791-1815, Zens strove to combine both biography of an *ayan* and *ayanlık* institution within a single framework.¹² The primary concern of Zens in his dissertation was to analyze Pazvandoğlu Osman with his refractory attitudes against the Ottoman state and to examine the institution of *ayanlık* within the framework of Osman. According to Zens, Pazvandoğlu Osman's rebellious actions drew a model for his successors and encouraged them to form their own domains by rebelling against the state and because of this Osman became a prototype *ayan* in the 18th century. Although Zens began his thesis with these statements, he omitted to show what lies behind the Pazvandoğlu Osman's attacks and how Osman acquired his property. More significant was that Zens limited the relationships between Pazvandoğlu and the state to the developments stemming from his attacks on to the lands in the Danubian region.

The present thesis under the light of works given above and also the archival materials aims to display the rise of Pazvandoğlu Osman, *Ayan* of Vidin, from janissary corps to the rank of vizierate with references to the Ottoman provincial administration especially in the Balkan provinces in the 18th century. The economic and administrative transformation of the Ottoman Empire is also examined in this thesis to set a background for the conditions which opened the way to Pazvandoğlu Osman to become a local power. Moreover, Pazvandoğlu Osman's relations with the people of Vidin and with the Ottoman government are examined too to introduce him as well as to show how an *ayan* lived and how he became so affective and preserved his power in the provinces. In addition to these an evaluation of

¹² Robert Zens, *The Ayanlık and Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa of Vidin in the Age of Ottoman Social Change 1791-1815*, (Unpublished PhD. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2004). Actually, the release of this dissertation coincided with the completion of this MA thesis. Although the titles of both Zens' dissertation and of this thesis may seem similar, the problematic of this thesis is different from Zens dissertation.

the methods of Ottoman state to cope with the provincial oppositional groups is also examined in this thesis to give an idea about the Ottoman state's power politics in the 18th century.

During the preparation of this thesis archival materials, which were taken from "Hatt-ı Hümayun" and "Cevdet Dahiliye" catalogues in the Ottoman Archives of the Prime Ministry of Turkey in İstanbul were examined. These documents are mainly related to the correspondences between Pazvandoğlu Osman and the Ottoman government. They reveal the extent of Osman's claims from the government and also the policy that the Ottoman state pursued towards Pazvandoğlu Osman which provides a good example about methods employed by the Ottoman state in dealing with the peripheral powers as well as about the life and politics in the Balkans in general and in Vidin in particular.

In this thesis, in addition to the Ottoman archival documents, some other important sources were also used, though limited, in order to draw a thorough picture of Pazvandoğlu Osman and his life. One of them is *The Chronicles of a Virgin Fortress* by William Herbert.¹³ Although this book provides very limited information about Pazvandoğlu Osman and his family, it is one of the very important sources about the history of Vidin in 19th century. Another work is *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi* by Nicolae Jorga.¹⁴ Nicolae Jorga was a prominent personality who undertook several important duties such as presidency of an academy and of National Assembly and Prime Ministry of Romania. His book is a valuable source in that it gives a general history of the Ottoman Empire and giving information about

¹³ William V Herbert, *The Chronicles of a Virgin Fortress*, London: Osgood, McIlvaine&Co., 1896.

¹⁴ Nicolae Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, (tr. Nilüfer Epeçeli), Volume I and Volume V, İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2005.

Pazvandođlu Osman's activities.¹⁵ Another important work is *Osmanlı'da Bir Papaz Günahkar Sofroni'nin Çileli Hayat Hikayesi 1739-1813* written by Sofroni Vrachanski.¹⁶ His book is of crucial importance because it contains information about the relations between Pazvandođlu and the people of Vidin as well as the social conditions in the region. The last work is an article, 'Le Monde Greco-Slave' written by a French scholar, Cyprian Robert, in 1842.¹⁷ This article gives significant information about the activities of Pazvandođlu Osman in Vidin region.

In addition to these archival and non-archival primary sources, several second hand sources were used during the preparation of this thesis. On the economic, military and administrative transformation of the Ottoman state, the books and articles of Halil İnalçık, such as *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Klasik Çağ (1300-1600)*¹⁸, "Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration"¹⁹, "Çiftlik"²⁰, "The Emergence of Big Farms, *Çiftlik*s: State,

¹⁵ See, Jorga, Volume I, p.23.

¹⁶ VRAÇALI Sofroni, *Osmanlı'da Bir Papaz Günahkar Sofroni'nin Çileli Hayat Hikayesi 1739-1813*, (tr. Aziz Nazmi Şakir-Taş), İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2003. Sofroni Vrachanski, also known as Stoiko Vladislavov, was born in the central Bulgarian village of Kotel in 1739. He was a priest and a teacher giving lectures on Bulgarian language in Kotel. He was sent into exile by the Bulgarian local governors, who were then in alliance with the Ottoman ruler of Vidin, *voyvoda*, Osman Pazvandođlu, and spent the rest of his life in Wallachia.

¹⁷ Cyprien Robert, 'Le Monde Greco-Slave', *Revue Des Deux Mondes*, Volume 30, 1. fasc., 1842, pp.879-938.

¹⁸ Halil Inalçık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Klasik Çağ (1300-1600)*, (tr. Ruşen Sezer), İstanbul: YKY, 2003.

¹⁹ Halil İnalçık, "Centralization..".

²⁰ Halil İnalçık, "Çiftlik", *Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Volume VIII, İstanbul: Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1993, pp.313-314.

Landlords and Tenants"²¹, "Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1700"²², were resorted to explain the evolution of the Ottoman economic and administrative institutions. Moreover İnalçık's book titled *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi*²³ and his article "Sened-i İttifak ve Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayunu"²⁴ provided a general viewpoint to 19th century Ottoman administrative reforms. In addition, Enver Ziya Karal's books, *Osmanlı Tarihi*²⁵ and *Selim III'ün Hatt-ı Hümayunları*²⁶ as well as Stanford Shaw's book, *Between Old and New The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III 1789-1807*²⁷ helped to understand the politic conditions and mentality of 18th century Ottoman governors. Furthermore, the works by Bruce McGowan²⁸, Nicolai Todorov²⁹, Erol Özvar³⁰, Rossitsa Gradeva³¹, Giles

²¹ Halil İnalçık, "The Emergence of Big Farms, *Çiftlik*s: State, Landlords and Tenants" in *Studies in Ottoman Social and Economic History*, (ed. H. İnalçık), Hampshire: Variorum, 2002, pp.53-126.

²² Halil İnalçık, "Military and Fiscal..".

²³ Halil İnalçık, *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi*, Eren Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 1992.

²⁴ Halil İnalçık, "Sened-i İttifak ve Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayunu", in *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Toplum ve Ekonomi*, (ed.Halil İnalçık), 2nd Edition, İstanbul: Eren Yayınları, 1996, pp.343-361.

²⁵ Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, Volume V, 7th Edition, Ankara: TTK Basımevi, 1999.

²⁶ Enver Ziya Karal, *Selim III'ün Hatt-ı Hümayunları*, Ankara: TTK Basımevi, 1999.

²⁷ Stanford J. Shaw, *Between Old and New The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III 1789-1807*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1971.

²⁸ Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe. Taxation, Trade and the Struggle for Land, 1600-1800*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

²⁹ Nikolai Todorov, *The Balkan City, 1400-1900*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Pres, 1983.

³⁰ Erol Özvar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Malikâne Uygulaması*, İstanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 2003.

Veinstein³², Peter Sugar³³ and Traian Stoianovic³⁴ are very helpful for the contemplation of the practices of Ottoman rule in the Balkans and socio-economic and administrative conditions of the Balkan Peninsula in the 18th century.

Under the light of all these, to examine Pazvandoğlu Osman the *ayan* of Vidin thoroughly, the thesis is divided into four main chapters. In the first chapter, the institution of *ayanlık*, the administrative transformation of Ottoman land tenure system from *timar* to *iltizam* and the reorganization of the provincial administration are examined in order to demonstrate the historical development that paved the way to the emergence and the rise of the *ayans* within a wider context.

In the second chapter, socio-economic, administrative and demographic panorama of the Balkans is depicted to be able to analyze the provincial administration in the Balkans and also to analyze the factors which contributed to Pazvandoğlu Osman to acquire military and economic power in Vidin. Vidin as a strategic point between the Ottoman Empire and Europe and its location as a port on the Danube River is introduced as well

³¹ Rossitsa Gradeva, *Rumeli under the Ottomans, 15th-18th Centuries: Institutions and Communities*, İstanbul: Isis Press, 2004.

³² Gilles Veinstein, "Balkan Eyaletleri (1606-1774)." in *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, (ed. Robert Mantran), Volume I, (tr. Server Tanilli), İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1995, pp.352-409.

³³ Peter Sugar, "Unity and Diversity in the Lands of Southeastern Europe in the Eighteenth Century", in *Nationality and Society in Habsburg and Ottoman Europe*, Variorum, 1997, pp.255-270 and "Major Changes in the Life of the Slav Peasantry Under Ottoman Rule", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Volume IX, No.3, 1978, pp.297-305.

³⁴ Traian Stoianovic, "Balkan Peasant and Landlords and the Ottoman State: Familial Economy, Market Economy and Modernization", in *La Révolution Industrielle dans le Sud-est Européen XIXe Siècle*, (ed. Nikolai Todorov), Institut d'Etudes Balkaniques-Musée National Polytechnique, Sofia, 1979, pp.164-201.

to give an idea on how this city became important for and utilized by the Pazvand family to reach to power.

In the third chapter, the Pazvand family and Pazvandoğlu Osman is introduced briefly. The most known members of the Pazvand family, the Grand father Pazvand Ağa, the father Ömer Pazvand and his son Pazvandoğlu Osman and their activities are presented to shed light on how they gained economic wealth and military power. Moreover, since Osman's life after the death of his father Ömer Pazvand, the *ayan* of Vidin, was full of struggle to acquire the title of his father and even to get the ranks of the military commander of Vidin (*Vidin Muhafızı*) and vizierate (*vezaret*) this chapter will give in details all his struggles and the efforts of Pazvandoğlu Osman for official ranks. In addition, this chapter will give also the nature of his relations with the state as well as with the other *ayans* in Danubian region.

The last chapter which is fourth chapter is an evaluation of Pazvandoğlu Osman and of his image in the eyes of the people of Vidin and his relations with the Ottoman government. Furthermore, his death, his heirs and the condition of Vidin after his death are other the subjects discussed in the last chapter. Additionally, a description of the period following Pazvandoğlu Osman's death is provided to show the impacts of the *ayanlık* on the Ottoman administrative transformation as well.

CHAPTER 1

TRANSFORMATION IN OTTOMAN PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION DURING THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES

1.1. From *Celalis* to Local Notables

Ottoman territorial expansion stopped when the Ottoman army was defeated at Vienna in 1683. This was a turning point in the history of the Ottoman Empire. After then the Ottoman Empire went into long lasting wars with Austria, Russia, Venice and Poland throughout the 18th century to keep its borders. Financial and economic burdens caused by continuous wars and defeats resulted in administrative and social problems as well as land loses in European part of the Ottoman Empire and these caused a serious crisis in the empire.³⁵

Historians agree that a general tendency of dissolution of the major Ottoman institutions had already began in the second half of the 16th century and, long wars of the last quarter of the same century resulted in financial crisis, which accompanied with demographic and socio-political factors, and all this led the empire into the brink of breakdown at the turn of 17th century. Scholars provide different explanations for the Ottoman defeat and for these changes. Some of them concentrate on the population increase and its negative effects on the Ottoman economy and social order. For example, Fernand Braudel asserted that a general population increase

³⁵ Stanford Shaw, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Modern Türkiye*, Volume I, (tr. Mehmet Harmancı), İstanbul: e Yayınları, 1994, pp.297-298,300; Metin Kunt, "Siyasal Tarih (1600-1798)", in *Türkiye Tarihi*, (ed. Sina Akşin), Volume III, İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 2000, p.43-44.

throughout the Mediterranean basin seems to be the case also for the Ottoman realm because there was a permanent population movement in Anatolia from the second half of the 16th century onwards.³⁶ Under the conditions of economic hardship, long wars and widespread brigandage, Anatolian peasantry began to leave their lands and migrated to safe areas, which later brought other problems to be explained in the following passages.

Ömer Lütfi Barkan points out that there was a correlation between population increase and economic crises and the increase in population of Anatolia was one of the reasons for the emergence of financial crisis, which started to shake the Ottoman economy drastically from the end of the 16th century onward.³⁷ Michael Cook added to these explanations that while population was permanently increasing, the cultivation in Anatolia could not meet the demands of food and material and this caused increasing pressure on Ottoman economy. "The result was a general economic breakdown and social disorder."³⁸

³⁶ Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, New York, 1972, pp.591-606.

³⁷ Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "The Price Revolution of the Sixteenth Century: A Turning Point in the Economic History of the Near East", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Volume VI, No.1, 1975, pp.3-28 and Karen Barkey, *Eşkiyalar ve Devlet Osmanlı Tarzı Devlet Merkezileşmesi*, (tr. Zeynep Altok), İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1999, p.51.

³⁸ See Michael Cook, *Population Pressure in Rural Anatolia 1450-1600*, London: Oxford University Press, 1972, pp.39-44. Oktay Özel, re-evaluating the literature in the light of new findings, draws attention to the economic and social aspects of apparent population growth which turned into a serious pressure particularly in Anatolia in the second half of the 18th century. To him this growth and pressure was followed, after the start of the Celali rebellions and widespread terror in the countryside, by a drastic depopulation in the early 17th century. See Oktay Özel "Population Changes in Ottoman Anatolia During the 16th and 17th Centuries: The "Demographic Crisis" Reconsidered", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Volume 36, No.2, 2004, p.196.

Mustafa Akdağ asserted that the wars effected agricultural lands since fertile lands became battlefields and people left their lands and migrated to other areas. Moreover, excessive tax burden on peasantry under the conditions of economic hardship, abandonment of agricultural lands due to the plundering of villages by bandits and *Celâli* uprisings affected the production negatively.³⁹ Commercial activities also worsened and all these brought about an ever-growing inflation since the 1580s. It is significant to underline that the rise of inflation in the economy was stirred up by the flow of abundant precious metals (mainly silver) into the Ottoman markets from the European countries.⁴⁰ This naturally brought about devaluation of Ottoman currency by reducing the rate of silver in it. Thus unfavorable balance of trade throughout the 16th century initiated an economic setback and social disorder. All these changes resulted in *levendization* of the peasants, which in return furthered the economic distress and financial crisis.⁴¹

Destructive effects of wars resulted in economic-financial crises which affected the lives of peasants as well as the urban population in the Ottoman Empire. For the side affects of the wars in Anatolia Suraiya Faroqhi point out that the population growth in Anatolia, resulted in decrease of agricultural lands and this paved the way for the emergence of landless people in rural Anatolia. Many of the landless peasants migrated to urban centers with a hope of finding other means of livelihood and some peasants preferred banditry, which eventually escalated peasant flight in the countryside. However there was not enough means to accommodate or employ the

³⁹ Akdağ, *Türkiye'nin İktisadi ve İctimai Tarihi (1453-1559)*, Volume II, İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1995, pp.318-328.

⁴⁰ Akdağ noted that the prices of grain rose up twenty times between 1520 and 1609, see, Akdağ, *Türkiye'nin...*, p.463.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp.318-328.

migrant peasants in the urban centers. Those who could not find a job generally participated into the military forces of the provincial administrators as *levend*, *sekban* or *saruca*. Then, the lands that these peasants left behind were occupied either by member of the military class or by the local notables. This situation in the long run gave rise to the emergence of provincial *ayans*, who had both economic and military power; their military power mostly derived from the rootless peasants and the men that they recruited from the immigrants, who did not attach themselves to the *medreses* or *esnaf* guilds. This caused a serious problem too. Thus local administrators (pashas and begs) on the one hand and notables on the other hand became more and more powerful in the early 17th century when a considerable number of landless peoples joined their military forces. The continuous rise of prices and decrease of the value of the Ottoman currency due to the perpetual inflation also caused the central military corps (*janissaries*) to revolt. In order to prevent the janissary uprisings, the Ottoman state again resorted to devaluation.⁴² This furthered social turmoil, which took years for the government to reestablish the order.⁴³

In fact the situation was not different in the Balkans in the 18th century. For example, everlasting wars and activities of bandits who were the military fugitives, landless and jobless young peasants, it was difficult for the peasants to keep a living in a catastrophic environment especially in the Balkans.⁴⁴ According to İnalçık, *levendization*, which increased after the

⁴² Suraiya Faroqhi, "Krizler ve Değişim 1590-1699" in *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, (eds. Halil İnalçık&Donald Quatert), Volume II, İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 2004, pp.543-743, p.563.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.566.

⁴⁴ Dimitrije Djordjevic, "The Balkan Peasantry, 1740-1914: A Synthesis", in *Essays on War and Society in East Central Europe, 1740-1920*, (eds. S. Fischer-Galati and B.K. Kiraly), East European Monographs No. CCXXXIII, Atlantic Research and Publications, 1987, pp.193-222, pp.196-197; Peter Sugar, "Major Changes in the

wars, stopped for a while because the Ottoman State recruited considerable number of mercenary troops from Bosnia and Albania and this had strong impact on the social conditions in these regions. These landless peasants in Bosnia and Albania as well as Anatolia found an opportunity for a new means of livelihood by means of acquiring handguns owing to the recent developments.⁴⁵

While the order in the empire was lost for a while and many people especially peasants suffered from the side affects of the long lasting wars the Ottoman statesmen began to work on the effective solutions to overcome the crisis. Although these crises were not felt within a short term, it was compulsory for the Ottoman statesmen to overcome the military and financial deficiencies in the long term otherwise they knew very well that the Empire would lose its power soon. In consequence, a long lasting reorganization and transformation process started in the military, economic and administrative institutions of the Ottoman Empire which at the end brought about the decentralization of Ottoman provincial administration.⁴⁶

Because of increasing deficiency in its treasury caused by the chronic and long-lasting wars with Austria, the Ottoman State found the use of *levends* inexpensive and effective solution to its financial and military problems.⁴⁷ The state preferred to use levends as mercenaries in the

Life of the Slav Peasantry Under Ottoman Rule", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Volume IX, No.3, 1978, pp. 297-305, p.304.

⁴⁵ Halil İnalçık, "Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1700" in *Studies in Ottoman Social and Economic History*, (ed.H. İnalçık,) Hampshire: Variorum, 2002, pp.283-337, pp.286-287.

⁴⁶ İnalçık asserts that the main stipulator of the Ottoman transformation from a centrally governed state to a more decentralized one was the increasing needs of Ottoman State for mercenary military men. See, İnalçık, "Military and Fiscal..", p.287.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.286-287; Özvar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Malikâne Uygulaması*, İstanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 2003, p.10; see İnalçık, "Military and Fiscal..", pp.288-289. The

Ottoman army only in times of war to prevent them from becoming a financial burden for the treasury. Hiring landless peasants as *levend* however increased the number of mercenary companies of *re'âyâ* origin in the army against the janissaries, the infantry troops. There were two reasons behind this policy. One was to prevent the crises in the countryside by employing landless peasants as mercenaries. Another was it became easier for the state to make use of same weapons, i.e. firearms. Because the modern firearms were rejected by the janissaries but they were adopted easily and willingly by the lowest segment of society like the landless and jobless peasants in rural areas; most of them in fact had already their own firearms, *tüfenk*, mainly through illegal means such as smuggling. So it was a good alternative for the state to use them against the janissaries.⁴⁸ But there were side effects of using the levends as mercenaries. When the wars stopped the banditry both in Anatolia and the Balkans spread from the early 17th century on since these salaried soldiers (*sekbans* or *levends*) were not paid in times of peace.⁴⁹ These irregulars eventually became bandits (*başibozuks*) who oppressed and exploited the peasants and plundered the entire countryside. Those who did not prefer to remain as bandits gradually found their ways into the services of local notables, who were attaining also

urgent need for increasing number of mercenary companies undermined the importance of *timarli sipahis* within the Ottoman army. This increased the priority of central army at the expense of provincial army. Özvar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde..*, pp.12-13.

⁴⁸ The Ottoman Empire tried to follow military innovations and improvements that were taking place in Europe but this effort necessitated more money that the state could not always afford. Grant asserts that the Ottoman "decline" in military emerged out of economic crisis more than a lack of interest in following the European military technology. For detailed information on this issue see Jonathan Grant, "Rethinking the Ottoman "Decline": Military Technology Diffusion in the Ottoman Empire, Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries", *Journal of World History*, Volume X, No.1, 1999, pp.179-201.

⁴⁹ İnalçık, "Military and Fiscal..", p.289.

military power besides their economic wealth. Another consequence of the increasing demands of the Ottoman State for mercenary *levends*, according to Yaşar Yücel, was the impoverishment of them members of the provincial cavalry army (*timarli sipahis*) as a result of the inflation in the Ottoman economy since their salaries were fixed.⁵⁰

There is no doubt that in addition to the long-lasting wars in various fronts, increase in the numbers of the janissaries and the employment of the mercenaries in the army put an extra and ever-growing financial burden on the Ottoman treasury which in return needed much more capital in cash to finance the wars and pay the salaries of the soldiers. For this, the State took measures such as increasing the tax rates, reducing the state expenses and levying new taxes.

Leaving aside the *timar* system which also functioned as a taxation system, in the Ottoman Empire tax collection was realized either through transferring the taxation right to certain individuals under certain rules or through the centrally appointed officials.⁵¹ The Ottoman State tried to strengthen the authority of the provincial governors (*beylerbeyi, vali, sancakbey*) in order to collect the taxes regularly and more effectively. They were also helped by *mültezims* (tax-farmer) and *ayan* (local notables) in converting the tax revenues in kind into cash.⁵² As a matter of fact, from the beginning of the 17th century, social, military and economic basis of the centralized Ottoman Empire, which was *timar* (prebendal grants), began to

⁵⁰ Yaşar Yücel, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Desentralizasyona Dair Genel Gözlemler", *Bellekten*, Volume XXVIII, No.152, Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 1974, pp.657-708, p.692.

⁵¹ Mehmet Genç, "İltizam." *Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Volume XXII, İstanbul: Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları 2000, pp. 154-158, p.154.

⁵² Talat Mümtaz Yaman, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Teşkilâtında Mütesellimlik Müessesesine Dair", *Türk Hukuk Tarih Dergisi*, Volume I, Ankara, 1944, pp.75-105, p.81.

be evolved into a more decentralized model called *iltizam* (tax farming).⁵³ This evolution was mainly due to the ever-increasing needs of Ottoman State for capital in cash, which was the result of the spread of monetary economy throughout the world.⁵⁴

The principal component of *iltizam* system was *mültezim* (tax farmer) who bought in an auction the right to collect from the *reaya*, the subject people, legal taxes, in return for a lump sum that he pre-paid to the central treasury.⁵⁵ *Mültezim* also paid some more in installments as he collected taxes and converted them into cash. Since the main concern of Ottoman State was the amount of capital in cash provided by *mültezims* to be able to afford the expenses of central army, the Ottoman administrative system from the 17th century on gradually became depended on *iltizam* particularly in Rumelia.⁵⁶

⁵³ For the definition of timar system see, Halil Inalcık, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Klasik Çağ (1300-1600)*, (tr. Ruşen Sezer), İstanbul: YKY, 2003, pp.108-123; Nicoara Beldiceanu, *XIV. Yüzyıldan XVI. Yüzyıla Osmanlı Devletinde Timar*, Ankara: Teori Yayınları, 1985; Ömer Lütfi Barkan, "Timar", *Maarif Vekaleti İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Volume XII/1, İstanbul: M.E.B. Yayınları, 1974, pp.286-333, pp.286-287; Karen Barkey, *Eşkîyalar..*, p.38; Yaşar Yücel, "Osmanlı..", pp.670-671; and Mehmet Genç, "Osmanlı Maliyesinde Malikane Sistemi", *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Devlet Ekonomi*, (ed. Mehmet Genç), İstanbul: Ötüken Yayınları, 2000, p.99; Eftal Şükrü Batmaz, "İltizam Sisteminin XVIII. Yüzyıldaki Boyutları", *Osmanlı*, Volume III, Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 1999, pp.250-257, p.250.

⁵⁴ Faroqhi, "Krizler..", pp. 563 ;Yücel, " Osmanlı..", p.689.

⁵⁵ It is significant to emphasize the point that the post of *mültezimlik* was open to every segments of society; however it was dominated from the beginning by those who held the title of *askeri* (members of ruling strata). Nonetheless there were many who were of *reaya* origin among the *mültezims*; see Genç, "İltizam", p.155.

⁵⁶ Rumelia, the European part of the Ottoman Empire, from the end of the 17th century onwards turned into a highly commercial region which was subjected to a considerable sale to *mültezims*. It had an important proportion in overall tax-farm sale in terms of the percentage and costs of lands on sale. The lands which were sold as *malikâne* in Rumelia were for the most part *hasses*, *ocaklıks* and *arpalıks*, see Özvar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde..*, pp.133-142.

Although it was assessed that the extension of *iltizam* was to be a good short term solution to the financial problems, it brought about various new problems in practice. *Mültezims* generally tried to maximize their own profit since the tax-farms (*mukataas*) were granted them for a short period, i.e. three years. Since the *mültezims* sought to yield maximum profit from the *mukataas* within a short time, the tax resources were naturally eroded and the peasants fell impoverished. This also gave rise to the emergence of administrative traumas, which aggravated the oppression and exploitation of the peasantry. While the taxable resources were eroded by excessive exploitation of the *mültezims*, the State's tax revenues were reduced and the budget deficit increased. In order to overcome these problems, the method of *malikâne* was introduced into the *iltizam* system with an imperial edict issued in January 1695. From then on, the *mukataas* started to be granted to the *mültezims* for lifetime (*bervech-i malikane*). In consequence, the Ottoman State tried to prevent the erosion of tax sources and the exploitation of peasantry by guaranteeing the basic rights of *mültezims* for excessively long period and forbidding the right of levying arbitrary taxes on peasants. *Mültezims* were also granted the right of selling or transferring their *malikânes* to other *mültezims*. As a consequence of this method, many *de facto mültezims* through the sub-contracts emerged as the possessors of the same *malikâne*. This soon resulted in increase in the prices of *malikânes*, which, in return, had a negative effect on peasantry as extra taxes.⁵⁷

Another significant consequence of sub-*mültezim* practice was that the state control over the land was gradually diminished. The provincial army also lost its priority in the Ottoman military system, the incomes or economic standards of centrally appointed provincial governors (*valis, sancakbeyis...etc.*) dropped seriously. Therefore they resorted to levy extra

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.19-20.

taxes on peasantry as well.⁵⁸ More significant was that the Ottoman administrative system in the provinces went through a process of transformation as a result of the spread of *iltizam*. While the amount of lands within the *timar* system, which were reserved for *iltizam*, started to decrease in the course of time; the State began to transfer the *hasses*, *zeamets* and *timars* (fiefs) into *mukataa* (tax-farms). The transfer of the *timars* into *mukataas* caused two major problems. First, the State abandoned the method of selling the *mukataas* to many *mültezims* in retail and started to sell them in wholesale to a few *mültezims*, *muhassıls* or *voyvodas*.⁵⁹ This prepared the grounds for the passing of the wide range areas to the hands of individuals. Second, the provincial governors began to sell their *hasses* illegally.⁶⁰ These practices resulted in a radical change in the profiles of provincial governors.

The expansion of the *iltizam* system was followed by the emergence of *ayan* and local dynasties as new peripheral powers in the 18th century. When the possessors of *hasses* (*muhassıls*) and *arpalıks* started to send the local *ayan* as *mütesellim* (deputy) to their lands with the duty of collecting taxes and conducting other administrative affairs on the spot, these local magnates became more powerful than the official governors (*valis* and *sancakbeyis*). While the centrally appointed governors were often changed, local notables remained in place strengthening their positions through obtaining *çiftlik*.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Yavuz Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalım ve Değişim Dönemi*, İstanbul: Alan Yayıncılık, 1986, pp.34-53.

⁵⁹ Özvar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde...*, p.37.

⁶⁰ Yavuz Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalım...*, p.41.

⁶¹ Mustafa Akdağ, "Osmanlı Tarihinde Âyanlık Düzeni Devri", *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Volume VIII-XII, No. 14-23, 1970-74, pp.51-61, p.51 and Halil İncik, "Centralization and Decentralization in Ottoman Administration", in *Studies in*

1.2. *İltizam* (Tax-Farming) and *Ayans*

Although there is not certainty on when exactly the Ottoman local notables began to be called *ayan*, the 16th century documents clearly mention the *ayans*.⁶² The term *ayan* is the plural form of Arabic word *ayn* which means eye.⁶³ This term, which was previously used to define the Ottoman high officials (sipahi, kadı, commander of the janissaries, kethüdayeri, müderris, mufti...etc.),⁶⁴ was also used for the prominent personalities (*esnaf*, *sarraf*, tradesmen, wealthy families...etc.) and notables in the provinces.⁶⁵ These local notables were usually the ones respected by the *re'aya* (the Ottoman subjects) in their regions.⁶⁶

Parallel to the gradual dissolution of *timar* system during the 18th century, the Ottoman State converted several *sancaks* into the status of *arpalık* (reserve) to increase the provincial incomes through adding the tax revenues of some *sancaks* to central treasury as *hass*. And then these lands were granted to the Ottoman high officials (viziers, *beylerbeyis*, *valis*...etc.) in İstanbul or to the commanders of the fortresses on the border zones.⁶⁷

Eighteenth Century Islamic History, (eds. T.Naff & R. Owen), Carbondale: University of Southern Illinois Press, 1977, pp.27-52, p.31.

⁶² Özcan Mert, "Osmanlı Tarihinde Ayanlık Dönemi", *Osmanlı*, Volume VI, Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 1999, pp.174-180, p.174.

⁶³ Özcan Mert, "Ayan", *Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Volume VI, İstanbul: Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1991, pp.195-198, p.195.

⁶⁴ Yaman, "Osmanlı..", p.80 and Yücel Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Ayanlık*, Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 1994, p.7.

⁶⁵ Yücel Özkaya, "XVIII. Yüzyılda Mütesellimlik Müessesesi", *A.Ü.D.T.C.F. Dergisi*, Volume XXVIII, No.3-4, 1970, pp.369-385, p.381-383 and Mert, "Osmanlı Tarihinde..", p.174.

⁶⁶ Özer Ergenç, "Osmanlı Klasik Dönemindeki 'Eşraf ve A'yan' Üzerine Bazı Bilgiler", *Osmanlı Araştırmaları*, No. 3, 1982, pp.105-118, p.110.

⁶⁷ Metin Kunt, "Siyasal Tarih..", p.68.

The Ottoman high officials and commanders employed individuals as deputies. These deputies who were employed by a *buyruldu* (order of *beylerbeyis*) and were called as *subaşı* and *voyvoda* were to collect the *hass* revenues in remote areas even if the official governors were at their posts. Then the deputies began to be called as *mütesellim* or *müsellim* and were given the duty of administering the region on behalf of the official governors until official governors reached their posts.⁶⁸ In these two cases these deputies were employed because both the officials and commanders were given extensive and scattered *hass* and *arpalık* lands that they could not control and they did not often reside in their possessions. These *mütesellims* could be from among the households (*kapıhalkı*) of the official governors or among the local *ayan*, who knew their regions better than the officials appointed by the government; they were also the ones respected greatly by local people.⁶⁹

These local notables were also important for the state since they played the role of intermediary between the government and the subjects. They helped the governors who were appointed by the government to collect the taxes, implement the laws, determine the commodity prices and also convey the demands of *re'aya* to the state officials.⁷⁰ Their efficiency in administering the social and economic affairs, and their multifunctional characters, made the *ayan-mütesellims* indispensable for the Ottoman

⁶⁸ Yaman, "Osmanlı..", pp.80-81; Nuri Çevikel, "Osmanlı'da Ayanlık ve Kıbrıs Eyaleti (XVIII. Yüzyıl)", *Türkler*, Volume XIII, Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002, pp.710-719, p.713 and İnalçık, "Centralization..", p.31. In the 18th century, the definition and qualification of some status such as *müsellim*, *mütesellim*, *voyvoda* was not clear.

⁶⁹ İnalçık, "Centralization..", pp.30-31.

⁷⁰ Özcan Mert, "Âyân." *Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, İstanbul: Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, Volume IV, 1991, pp.195-198, p.174; Ergenç, "Osmanlı Klasik..", pp.110-111. The term *Çelebi* was used for the *ayans* and *eşraf* in the 16th century.

administration during particularly the 18th century. The economic power of *ayan* was especially important for the Ottoman state in times of war when it was in need for cash that was supplied by the *ayans* immediately from their personal budgets. The State also benefited from the *âyans* in supplying food and sheep for the provisioning the Ottoman palace and İstanbul, in levying soldiers for the Ottoman army, in reparation mosques and churches, in taking certain measures on the roads on which the Ottoman army used. They lent money, seeds, arable lands, ox, and plough etc. to the peasants.⁷¹ As time went on, due to spread of the *iltizam* system, *ayan* became vital element of the Ottoman state mechanism in the periphery as a result of all socio-economic and military factors above.

In fact having many responsibilities simultaneously gave power to these *ayans*. They in the course of time utilized the economic opportunities stemming from the *iltizam* system and attained official titles or extended their area of influence. Some of these *ayan-mütesellims* became so rich that they could maintain a significant number of *sekban* or *levend* forces to prevent destructive activities of bandits. By doing so, they sometimes acquired the respect and confidence of the *re'aya* in their own districts. The *ayan-mütesellims* began to subordinate the lesser *ayan-mütesellims* (*voyvodas*) in the counties and districts (*kaza*) by leasing tax farms.⁷²

It can be said that the most significant point within the process of transformation of the Ottoman Empire since the end of the 16th century was the institutionalization of *ayanlık* as an apparatus of the Ottoman provincial

⁷¹ Özkaya, *Ayanlık..*, p.11.

⁷² İnalçık, "Centralization..", p.31; Yaman, "Osmanlı..", p.79 and Özkaya, *Ayanlık..*, p.11.

administration. Consequently, *ayans* were officially recognized by the Ottoman State at the beginning of the 18th century.⁷³

Following the recognition of the *ayanlık* by the Ottoman State in the 18th century, a period of severe rivalry began among the *ayan* for the post of *mütesellim* which was the principal means of acquiring political power and economic wealth in the provinces. They consolidated their powers by providing munitions, animals and provisions for the State on the one hand and abusing their authorities in the provinces on the other.⁷⁴

Because the political influences of the *ayans* on the government reached such an extent, some of the *ayan* families in different regions of the Empire succeeded in acquiring hereditary rights on their posts. Another indication of the scope of *ayan* power was their assumption of the authority, which was formerly exercised by the officials (*kapıkulus*) who were

⁷³ There are different opinions among the historians about the question of when the *ayanlık* was officially recognized and institutionalized in the Balkans. For instance, Mutafchieva relying on the Ottoman archival documents in Sofia asserted that *ayans* coercively attained its legal status in the Balkans since the 1780s. But she also accepted that the institution of *ayanlık* might have been existed before 1747 referring to the social turmoil took place in Razgrad as a result of the bloody fight between the *ayan* of Rusçuk and the *ayan* of Razgrad in order to be the *ayan* of the Razgrad region. See, Mutafchieva, "XVIII. Yüzyılın..", pp.166-167. Both Yuzo Nagata and Mustafa Cezar acknowledged that the *ayanlık* was institutionalized in the second half of the 17th century. See, Yuzo Nagata, *Muhsinzade Mehmed Paşa Ve Âyânlık Müessesesi*, İzmir: Akademi Kitabevi, 1999, p.40 and Mustafa Cezar, *Osmanlı Tarihinde Levendler*, İstanbul: İstanbul Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi Yayınları, 1965, p.332. According to Avdo Suceška, the institutionalization of *ayanlık* materialized in the second half of the 18th century.⁷³ Deena Sadat accepted the date of recognition of *ayanlık* by the State as the Ottoman-Russian War of 1768. See, Deena Sadat, "Rumeli Âyânları: The Eighteenth Century." *Journal of Modern History*, Volume XLIV, No.3, 1972, pp.346-363, p.351. Finally, Yücel Özkaya claimed that the *ayanlık* was recognized by the state as an economic and political institution in 1726. Although the Ottoman State asked the *ayan* for help in several matters long before that time, it started to address to the *ayan* with their names in 1726. Özkaya, *Ayanlık..*, pp.120-121.

⁷⁴ İnalçık, "Centralization..", p.31; Yaman, "Osmanlı..". p.79 and Özkaya, *Ayanlık..*, p.11.

appointed by the government. This assumption was materialized when their title started to be approved by the sultan after the offer by *kadı*, the district judge.⁷⁵

There are different approaches among the historians to the subject of how the influential personalities or families acquired the title of *ayan-mütesellim*. According to İnalçık, to become an official *ayan*, they resorted to several different methods. First of all, they tried to bribe the state officials, and then by using their retainers which were composed of soldiers from landless and jobless young peasants as indicated in the *levendization* process.⁷⁶ On the other hand, Köker, Suceşka and Uzunçarşılı all agreed that the *ayan* were selected by the *re'aya* of the region.⁷⁷ Mutafchieva, referring to Suceşka, also proposed that the way of electing an *ayan* depended on the conditions. Nonetheless, the decisive factors were their relations with the state, *re'aya* and other local notables.⁷⁸

This was the initial phase for the local notables in acquiring economic and political power on the road to emergence of peripheral powers at the expense of central authority.⁷⁹ By obtaining taxes and administration of state-owned lands, the *ayan* became economically and politically prosperous and emerged as big and powerful local dynasties in the provinces of Rumelia

⁷⁵ İnalçık, "Centralization..", pp.31-32.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.32.

⁷⁷ Sıtkı Köker, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Ayan Teşkilatı", *Ülkü Dergisi*, 4/42, 1950, pp.22-24, p.22; V.P. Mutafchieva, "XVIII. Yüzyılın Son On Yılında Ayanlık Müessesesi", *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi*, No.13, İstanbul: Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, 1978, pp.163-182, p.167 and İ. Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Meşhur Rumeli Âyanlarından Tirsinikli İsmail, Yılık Oğlu Süleyman Ağalar ve Alemdar Mustafa Paşa*, İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1942, p.5.

⁷⁸ Mutafchieva, " XVIII. Yüzyılın..", p.169.

⁷⁹ İnalçık, "Centralization..", pp.30-31.

and Anatolia.⁸⁰ The major local dynasties or *ayan* families of Rumelia in the 18th century can be listed as follows: *Pazvandođlu Osman* in Vidin, *Yılıkođlu Süleyman* in Silistre and Deliorman region on Wallachian border, *Nazır Ahmed Ađa* around İbrail, *Tirsinikli* Family in Rusçuk and Tırnova (Turnovo), *Tokatçıklı Süleyman Ađa* around Gümülcine, *Dađdevirenođlu Mehmed Ađa* in Edirne.⁸¹ The prominent *ayan* families who ruled in Anatolia were as follows: *Karaosmanođulları*⁸² in Manisa and the surrounding areas; *Çapanođulları* in Bozok; *Kalayciođulları*, *Emirađazadeler*, and *Zennecizadeler* in Kayseri; *Caniklizadeler* in Canik, *Müderriszadeler* and *Nakkaşzadeler* in Ankara; *Gaffarzadeler* and *Mühürdarzadeler* in Konya; and Kalyoncu Ali in Bilecik. All of them established strengthened and their powers through the post of *mütesellim* or *mültezim* and these peripheral power centers determined the fate of Ottoman State throughout the 18th and in the first quarter of the 19th centuries.⁸³

⁸⁰ Bruce McGowan, "Ayanlar Çađı, 1699-1812" in *Osmanlı İmparatorluđu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, (ed. Halil İnalçık & Donald Quataert), Volume II, İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 2004, pp.761-867, p.784 and İnalçık, "Centralization..", p.31.

⁸¹ İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Meşhur..*, p.3.

⁸² For detailed information about *Karaosmanođulları*; see Yuzo Nagata, *Tarihte Ayanlar Karaosmanođulları Üzerine Bir inceleme*, Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 1997.

⁸³ Musa Çadırcı, "II. Mahmut Döneminde Mütesellimlik Kurumu", *A.Ü.D.T.C.F. Dergisi*, Volume XXVIII, No.3-4, Ankara, 1970, pp.287-296; İnalçık, "Centralization..", p.33 and McGowan, "Ayanlar Çađı..", pp.794-795. For further information on Anatolian *ayans*; see Özkaya, *Ayanlık..*, Ankara, 1994.

CHAPTER 2

OTTOMAN ADMINISTRATION IN THE BALKANS

2.1. Changes in Population, Economy and Finance

The Ottoman territories in the Balkans since the 14th century until the beginning of the 20th century became battlefield between the Ottoman Empire and Austria, Russia, Prussia and the Balkan countries. The wars carried on the Balkan territories shaped the social, economic and political structures there as mentioned in the first part of this chapter.

After the Ottoman existence became permanent in the Balkans the Ottoman authority was represented there by the local rulers together with the *timariots* and *kadi*. At the beginning of the 17th century the Balkans composed of ten provinces (*eyalets*): Rumeli (*Rumelia*), Temeşvar, Eğri, Budin, Kanije, Silistre (*Silistra*), Bosnia. Eflak (*Wallachia*), Boğdan (*Moldavia*) and Erdel (Transylvania) were vassal states. The Ottoman provinces in the Balkans were subdivided into thirty-two sub-provinces (*sancaks*).⁸⁴

Population structure was one of the important indicators giving an idea about the changes in the Balkans in time. The number of population in the Ottoman provinces and sub-provinces showed differences from 14th century to the 17th century. According to Todorov the general population or the number of "taxpaying" male population of the 44 cities under the Ottoman rule was 13.190 in the 15th century and the number of the

⁸⁴ Among these sub-provinces there was Vidin. See, Edgar D. Pitcher, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Tarihsel Coğrafyası*, (tr. Bahar Tırnakçı), İstanbul: YKY, 2001, pp.182-183,197.

Christians was more than the Muslims. Within this population 9.680 were Christians, 3.577 were Muslims and 133 were the followers of other religions and these numbers were given as households.⁸⁵ While the number of cities increased during the first half of the 16th century to 84 and the population of the cities reached 47.095. During this period the distribution of urban population was that: 24.067 households belonged to Christians, 18.881 households to Muslims and 4.145 households to the followers of the other religions. However the number of the cities decreased to 29 and the total population also decreased to 26.133 due to administrative reasons as well as wars and diseases in the second half of the 16th century. During this period the number of Christians was still higher than the Muslims. In the urban area, out of 26.133 there were 9.426 Christian households, 15.922 Muslim households and 785 the members of other religions.⁸⁶ In the 16th century, the total number of household of the Balkans was 1.005.768, between 1520 and 1535, %80.1 (814.768 households) of which belonged to Christians, % 19.7 (186.952 households) to Muslims.⁸⁷

In contrast to the population structure of the Balkans in the 16th century, it is quite hard to obtain reliable population data in the 17th and the 18th century.⁸⁸ But, Veinstein asserts that after the increasing trend of the 16th century due to the relative welfare of the *reaya*, a general decreasing

⁸⁵ The Jews were excluded from the number of households since they constituted not more than %0.4 of the total population. See Nikolai Todorov, *The Balkan City, 1400-1900*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1983, pp.52-53.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.54.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.52. For the distribution of taxable household in Balkan provinces in accordance with religious affiliation, 1520-1535, see appendix 1.

⁸⁸ In addition to this, the 19th century was a very generous period for the demographic studies because a census took place in this period. According to the census of 1831 the total population of the Ottoman Empire was 3.641.101 of which 2.323.660 in Anatolia and 1.317.441 in Rumelia, see, Kemal H. Karpat, *Osmanlı Nüfusu (1830-1914)*, İstanbul : Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2003, p.154.

trend in population can be observed during the 17th and 18th centuries.⁸⁹ What lay beneath this was the insecure circumstances of the period like the wars and especially the bandit movements of the 18th century which resulted in immigration.⁹⁰ The Empire underwent radical changes and faced important problems like decentralization and separation. With these changes it is said that the fiscal records of the Empire became untrustworthy.⁹¹

Depending on the *cizye defters* (records of head tax) of 1490, 1580, 1700, 1815 and 1831 Bruce McGowan claims that the number of the Christians in the Balkans was 2 millions in 1700, 3 millions in 1815 and 4 millions in 1831. Mc Gowan says that while the Balkan population was almost 8 millions by the end of the 16th century. He also emphasizes that the 17th century witnessed a dramatic decline in population and it was only 3 millions

⁸⁹ It can be said that there are several reasons for population increase in the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century. One of them was the expansion of the Ottoman Empire at that time. Several regions were added to the Empire. Thus the population of the empire naturally increased. Other reason was immigration. At the beginning of 16th century the Ottoman Empire economically was in a good condition that many people preferred to migrate to the Ottoman lands. In addition to this, intense commercial activities in the Ottoman lands attracted many peoples to emigrate to the Ottoman realm. See, İnalçık, *Klasik Çağ..*, pp.52,115,146,153,164. Barkey, *Eşkîyalar..*, p.47.

⁹⁰ Veinstein, "Balkan..", p.390.

⁹¹ That is why; calculations depending on the number of the tax-holders in the Empire are insufficient to analyze the demographic structure of the 18th century Ottoman Empire. Hence, what may be told about the population in the Balkans in the 18th century can be nothing but only general guesses. McGowan, "Ayanlar Çağı..", p.776-780. For the deduction of the demographic situation of the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century *avarız* and *cizye* registers are very important sources. From the last quarter of the 16th century onwards, the *avarız* and the *cizye* registers gained importance in portraying the population structure of the Ottoman Empire. For the importance and usage of *avarız* and *cizye* registers in the Ottoman demographic history see Oktay Özel, "17. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Demografi ve İskan Tarihi İçin Önemli Bir Kaynak: 'Mufassal' Avârız Defterleri" in *XII. Türk Tarih Kongresi Ayırbasım*, Ankara: TTK Basımevi, 2000, pp.1-7.

in the midst of the 18th century.⁹² But Maria Todorova does not accept McGowan's calculation method and proposes that although there was a decline in the population it is impossible to accept this as a catastrophic event.⁹³ On the other hand, according to Charles Issawi the population of the Rumelia was 2.8 millions within the total Ottoman population in 1800s.⁹⁴

The changes in the demographic figure are usually caused by from different reasons in different times. For example, the important element that affected the population in the Balkans in the 18th century was immigration, which increased wartime, where it decreased in the peacetime. It is difficult to determine the flow in the peacetime while it can be observed during wartime when a flow both from and to the Balkans happened. A good example of this is the immigration of the Serbs, which started as a result of the battles by the end of the 17th century and continued in the 18th century.⁹⁵ The immigration happened into the three main directions: Immigration to the cities that were caused by the deterioration of security in

⁹² According to McGowan the general population of the Ottoman Empire in the 1800s was between 25 millions and 32 millions. In his calculations McGowan he accepted one household as 5 people before 1691, as 3 people after 1691 due to the wars and epidemics. See, McGowan, "Ayanlar Çağı..", p.769,776. For the population of the Bulgarian cities in the second half of the 18th century see appendix 2. According to Bruce McGowan, the most important clue that shows the increase in the population of the 18th century Balkans is the increase in the *cizye* tax in that period. For the population of Ottoman Europe on the basis of *cizye* payers see appendix 3. For detail of McGowan's work see. Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe. Taxation, Trade and the Struggle for Land,1600-1800*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, pp.80-104.

⁹³ For the criticisms of Maria Todorova for the method of McGowan see her article titled as "Was There a Demographic Crisis in the Ottoman Empire in the Seventeenth Century?" *Academie bulgare des sciences etudes balkaniques*, Volume II, Sofya, 1998, pp.55-63, pp.61-62.

⁹⁴ Charles Issawi, "The Ottoman Empire in the European Economy 1600-1914" in *The Ottoman State and Its Place in World History*, (Ed.Kemal Karpat), Leiden: Brill, 1974, pp.107-117, p.109.

⁹⁵ McGowan, "Ayanlar Çağı..", pp.770-772.

rural lands, immigration to the mountains that aimed to find appropriate lands for stock-breeding and migration to take shelter in the Habsburg and Russian land.⁹⁶ In addition to migration, epidemics and plague also affected the Balkan population structure. Both caused many people to die. During the 18th century, especially plague was widespread in the Balkan Peninsula.⁹⁷ Another interesting movement in the population is the migration of Jews out of the region in the 17th century. Although the reasons are not very obvious, this movement directly affected the cities. Taking all these movements into consideration, it can be said that in the 18th century, the Greeks, Serbs and Albanians replaced the Jewish and Muslim population in the cities. This situation probably had positive effects on the nationalism process of these peoples.⁹⁸

Beside these factors affecting the population structure of the Balkans there was also another factor which at that time led a general setback in the Balkans. The transformation of *tımar* system to *iltizam* which gave rise to the *ayans* also their policies effected the population in the Balkans. As mentioned earlier, the *ayans* after attaining the post of *mütesellim*, generally made use of it for their own interests and ruled tyrannically over the *re'aya*, and exploited the peasants severely were called as *mütegalibe*.⁹⁹ As the *ayan-mütesellims* succeeded in having the recognition of their

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.769.

⁹⁷ Veinstein, "Balkan..", pp.390-391. In this context, Selanik faced many diseases during the 18th century. The most serious of them was the one in 1781 that killed 25.000 people. Albania and Romania also had similar problems. In Bosnia, a serious disease occurred in 1762 and 1783-84. The same thing happened in Belgrade in 1794. The diseases in the region highly affected the ethnical structure. For instance, to fill the gap in the population that stemmed from the deaths of the Muslims, the Orthodox Christians were settled in the cities of northern Bulgaria between 1716 and 1718. McGowan, "Ayanlar Çağı.." pp.951-952.

⁹⁸ Veinstein, "Balkan..", pp.390-393.

⁹⁹ Özkaya, *Ayanlık..*, p.32.

authority by the government, they attempted to establish their supremacy as the only authority within their regions. To be able to acquire more power and extend their area of influence, they started to fight each other. Moreover the majority of *ayans* made alliances with bandits and usurpers against their rivals. It is necessary to emphasize that the harsh competitions between the local notables naturally had negative effects on the *re'aya*. The *ayans's* struggles with each other and also with the state caused the weakness of the state authority in the region. The bloody fights between the notables and destructive activities of bandits (named *sekbans* and *sarucas*), who were eventually employed by the notables as their military forces, distressed the Balkan peasantry who had to eventually immigrate to safer areas. There were a lot of complaints sent by the *re'aya* to İstanbul as a result of the destructive struggles between the *ayan*.¹⁰⁰ For instance, the continuous attacks of Pasvandođlu Osman on Rusçuk forced the peasants to leave their lands and emigrate to other towns and to cities. This migration resulted in a general economic breakdown since a serious drop took place in agricultural production. As a result of this and increasing population pressure on the cities, major socio-economic problems emerged in Rusçuk.¹⁰¹ Moreover the *ayan* hegemony in the Balkans in the 18th century changed the face of the region in many respects including economy and construction etc. They also took advantage of some conditions of the region in the 18th century in the region to contribute to their own budget and power.

Due to the spread of *iltizam* and *malikane* (long-term tax-farming) some major changes occurred in the administrative structure, land using

¹⁰⁰ Uzunçarşılı, *Meşhur..*, p.7.

¹⁰¹ Teodora Bakardjieva, "Kargaşa ve Yaratıcılık Arasında: XVIII. Yüzyılın Sonu ve XIX. Yüzyılın Başında Bir Taşra Kasabasının Hikayesi", *Osmanlı*, Volume V, Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 1999, pp.631-639, p.633.

methods as well as trade activities in the Balkans.¹⁰² The arable lands were converted into vineyards and orchards or were used for stockbreeding. The existing *mevat* (vacant lands) lands which were given to the high officials as *mülk* (estate) in the past were occupied by the local authorities by the beginning of the 17th century and were either used to produce the raw materials that the European states demanded or used for stockbreeding.¹⁰³ As a result such tendencies in the region, big farms, *çiftlik*s, began to emerge. Although there were farms in the Ottoman land system since the 16th century, these farms both increased in number and size by the 18th century. What lay beneath this was the malfunctioning of the *timar* system as a result of which the wealthy people of the period managed to increase the size of their land and transformed them into big farms. İnalçık emphasizes the fact that there were no plantation-like farms either in the form of *vakif* (endowment) or *mülk* in the *miri* (state-owned land) lands and the state tried to convert the *miri* lands that had been given to the notables back to their original status. As it was the case in the *timar* system, the *çift-hane* system was also used in these lands.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, the

¹⁰² According to Issawi, it was not possible to transfer all of the *malikanes* into *çiftlik*. The transformed *malikanes* that is the *çiftlik*s were not because of the effects of primary *mültezims* but rather that of secondary ones. It is interesting that *ayans* were among the secondary *mültezims*; see Gilles Veinstein, "Çiftlik Tartışması Üzerine", *Osmanlı'da Toprak Mülkiyeti ve Ticari Tarım*, (ed. Ç. Keyder and F. Tabak), (tr. Zeynep Altok), Ankara: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1998, pp. 36-55.

¹⁰³ Fikret Adanır, "Tradition and Rural Change in Southeastern Europe During Ottoman Rule" in *The Origins of Backwardness in Eastern Europe*, (ed. D. Chirot), University of California Press, 1989, pp. 131-146, L. S. Stavrianos, *The Balkans since 1453*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965, p.140.

¹⁰⁴ İnalçık defines the plantation-like farms (*çiftlik*) as a large production unit under a single ownership and management and usually producing for market. In Vidin in the period 1760-1850, Central European markets began to offer higher prices for the agricultural products of this Danubian province with easy transportation possibilities. The vast uncultivated arable land belonging to the treasury became an attractive investment area. The treasury, however, leased the land only to the Muslim *agh*as since the area was a strategically sensitive one. Such landholdings,

plantation-like farms mostly existed in the *mevat* lands outside the *timar* system. Before the 18th century, these kinds of *çiftlik*s were established by the members of the ruling class and *ortakçı* (share cropper) people were used as the labor force.¹⁰⁵ The state was encouraging the improvement of the *mevat* lands. But, by the beginning of the 17th century, these farms that were only seen in the *mevat* lands began to be established on the *miri* lands. In the 18th century, the owners of the plantation-like farms were the local notables. Stoianovich underlines that these farms were located on places like river basins or savannas and usually the production in these farms were in accordance with the demands of the European states.¹⁰⁶ These kinds of farms could be observed in Thessaly, Epirus, Macedonia, Thrace, the valley of Maritsa, Danube Bulgaria, the river basin of Kosovo-Metohija, the coastal plain of Albania, some parts of Bosnia¹⁰⁷, the shores of Black Sea, the internal parts of Dobrudza, the northern parts of Balkan Mountains, the northern shores of Aegean Sea from Gümülcine to Serez, the

each comprising a whole area of a village was called *çiftlik*. According to Christo Gandev, *çiftlik*s in the Vidin region on the Danube varied between 30 and 500 hectares where cotton was one of the principal export items of the region since the fifteenth century; see Halil İnalçık, "The Emergence of Big Farms, *Çiftlik*s: State, Landlords and Tenants" in *Studies in Ottoman Social and Economic History*, (ed. H. İnalçık), Hampshire: Variorum, 2002, pp.53-126, p.108,114,117-119.

¹⁰⁵ İnalçık gives that the physical appearance of the farms were as follows: The farm consisted of a manor for the land-owner, cabins for the laborers, a stone-tower used for defense against the other *ayans*, barns for the animals, warehouse, oven and a blacksmith shop. See, Halil İnalçık, "Çiftliklerin Doğuşu: Devlet, Toprak Sahipleri ve Kiracılar", *Osmanlı'da Toprak Mülkiyeti ve Ticari Tarım*, (ed. Ç. Keyder & F. Tabak), (tr. Zeynep Altok), Ankara: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1998, pp.17-35, pp.25-26.

¹⁰⁶ Traian Stoianovic, "Balkan Peasant and Landlords and the Ottoman State: Familial Economy, Market Economy and Modernization", in *La Révolution Industrielle dans le Sud-est Européen XIXe Siecle*, (ed. Nikolai Todorov), Sofia: Institut d'Etudes Balkaniques-Musée National Polytechnique, 1979, pp. 164-201, p.184.

¹⁰⁷ İnalçık, "Çiftliklerin..", pp. 26. And see McGowan, *Economic..*, pp.73-79.

valleys of the Maritsa, Vardar and Struma rivers, shortly the region of shores of seas and rivers, and valley.¹⁰⁸

Since local notables needed money to protect their status as *mültezims*, they established commercial relations with European countries to meet the needs of these countries for raw materials and produced the materials in the farms. In fact in the first half of the 18th century, the Ottoman Empire had begun to produce glass, sugar, gunpowder, soap and paper. After 1760s, the activities of production began to slow down and even stop. Because the Ottomans were exporting raw material, especially cotton to Europe and importing final goods in return, there were no spectacular developments in the foreign trade until the 1760s.¹⁰⁹

Especially between 1760 and 1808, the demand for the raw materials in the European states increased as a result of the industrial revolution and hence, the price of these kinds of goods also increased. The main goods produced were cotton, corn, tobacco and wheat. Stockbreeding was also developed. Even though the state banned the exportation of goods (especially wheat) to Europe, the goods were dealt in contraband. According to Sadat, the contraband trade became so profitable and important that in the 18th century the concepts of *ayanlık* and *çiftlik* overlapped each other. From this century on, the term *ayan* was used to define the wealthy and

¹⁰⁸ Sadat, "Rumeli..", p.350-351. Also see, Adanır, "Tradition..", pp.131-176; Halil İnalçık, "Çiftlik", *Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Volume VIII, İstanbul: Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1993, pp.313-314 and Bruce McGowan, "The Age of the Ayans, 1699-1812" *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914*, (ed. H. İnalçık and D. Quataert), Cambridge,1995, pp.639-757, pp.658-693, Stavrianos, *The Balkans...*, p.141.

¹⁰⁹ Mehmet Genç separates this process into two: In the first period that went on until the 1760s, an expansion and growth can be observed almost in all the sectors of the economy. In this sense, Rumelia began to produce cotton. After 1760s, a period of crisis and recession started. In this period, a general decline in all of the sectors can be observed. See, Mehmet Genç, "XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı Ekonomisi ve Savaş", in his *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Devlet ve Ekonomi*, İstanbul: Ötügen Neşriyat, 2000, pp.211-225, pp.211- 212,215,217.

prominent people and the term *çiftlik* was used to define the vast lands of these people that were used for cultivation and stockbreeding. Although they were the dominant figures, *ayans* were not the only group that tried to convert the *miri* lands into private property, i.e. *mülks*. *Eşraf* (prominent local personalities) could do the same by using the *vakıfs*.¹¹⁰ Therefore, the number and size of the farms in the Balkan region expanded.¹¹¹

One of the important *çiftlik* regions was Vidin. Having a strategic location and fertile lands, Vidin became an economically developed district in the 18th century. There is no doubt that Pazvandoğlu Osman the *ayan* of Vidin had a crucial role in the development of the region and the city itself. Before explaining his contributions, it would be useful to look at the historical and socio-economic conditions of the city.

2.2. The *Sancak* of Vidin

Vidin¹¹² which was located in the northern part of today's Bulgaria was a port city on the (Isther) Danube River.¹¹³ It was founded by the Romans and named as Bononia.¹¹⁴ Vidin was ruled by different empires like Byzantines

¹¹⁰ Nagata, *Muhsinzade..*, pp.60-61 and Sadat, "Rumeli..", pp.349-350.

¹¹¹ Faroqhi indicates that the *çiftlik*s on the shores of Bulgaria were designed to satisfy the agricultural demands of the internal markets in the 17th and 18th centuries. She also stressed on the point that the *ayans* held the sale of agricultural products and became commercial intermediaries; so they became economically prosperous; see Suraiya Faroqhi, "İktisat Tarihi (17. ve 18. Yüzyıllar)" in *Türkiye Tarihi*, Volume III, (ed. S. Akşin), İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 2000, pp.193-196 and İnalçık, "Çiftliklerin..", pp. 19-25.

¹¹²Some of the old names of Vidin were *Bdin*, *Bidin*, *Varadino*, *Varadin*, *Veçina* and *Veçine*. See, Pars Tuğlacı, *Osmanlı Şehirleri*, İstanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1985, p.404.;See also, Herbert, *The Chronicles..*, p.2.

¹¹³ Svetlana Ivanova , "Widin", *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Volume XI, Leiden: Brill, 2002, pp.205-208, p.205.

¹¹⁴ Herbert, *The Chronicles*, p.2.

and Russian until the Ottoman occupation. After the Kosova Battle, Bulgaria was split into two regions – Tirnova and Vidin- and this facilitated the conquest of the land by the Ottomans. Tirnova fell in 1393 and Vidin in 1398.¹¹⁵ Although Ivan Strasimir, who was then the Ottoman Vassal, surrendered the city to the Crusaders led by Sigismund III in 1396, Bayezid regained the control of the city after defeating of the Crusaders in Niğbolu (Nicopolis).¹¹⁶

After its conquest by the Ottomans, the former Vidin kingdom was transformed into Vidin *sancak*¹¹⁷ within the Rumelia *beylerbeylik*, which was located on the Danube plain and included the Stara Zagora plain, Maritsa valley and the southern parts of the Balkan Mountains as well.¹¹⁸

The Vidin *sancak* consisted of nine *nahiyes* (towns) and six fortresses. "The *sanzak* of Vidin stretched along the Timok valley, as well as including the territories between the Danube and the mountains Enicarski vis, Garvan, Golubinje and Kucaj to the west and Ozren and Svrlig to the south".¹¹⁹ The *sancak*, which was part of the Ottoman frontier line against Transylvania,

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.12-14.

¹¹⁶ Ivanova, *op.cit.*, p.205; Tuğlacı, *op.cit.*, p.404; , Rossitsa Gradeva, *Rumeli under the Ottomans, 15th-18th Centuries: Institutions and Communities*, Istanbul: Isis Press, 2004, p.108.

¹¹⁷ Vidin was seen a *sancak* in the province of *Temeşvar* in between 1568 and 1574 and between 1578 and 1588. But between 1632 and 1641 it was bound to the province of *Özi*. Metin Kunt, *Sancaktan Eyalete 1550-1606 Arasında Osmanlı Ümerası ve İl İdaresi*, İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1978. p.135,154,186.

¹¹⁸ Joseph S. Roucek, "Economic Geography of Bulgaria", *Economic Geography*, Volume 11, No.3, 1935, pp.307-323, p.307.

¹¹⁹ Nikolai Todorov, "Demographic Situation in the Balkan Peninsula", *Society, the City and Industry in the Balkans, 15th-19th Centuries*, (ed. Nikolai Todorov), Brookfield: Variorum, 1998, pp.1-34, p.6.

the Banat, Wallachia and Hungary until the mid-16th century was used with the same purpose against Austria and Serbia from the 17th century onwards.

Vidin was a border city and a military center. During the Ottoman rule both Muslims and the Christians lived in Vidin. The Muslim population was formed in Vidin after the Ottoman conquest of the region. The Muslim population was originated from the Turkish nomads called *Yörüks* and they were settled in Thrace (in an area from Kırklareli in the north to Edirne and Dimetoka in the west). There were also 88 *ocaks* (family) of Tartar origin divided into several groups within the *sancak* of Viza; 21 *ocaks* within the region of Plovdiv, Jambol and Rusokastro; 24 *ocaks* within Dobrudza; nearly 10 *ocaks* within Varna; 21 *ocaks* within Cirmen, Plovdiv and Stara Zagora and 12 *ocaks* in Thessaly.¹²⁰ Among the population there were Wallachians who were nomadic Christians who were used by the Ottoman state as paramilitary groups. As a result of the shift of the *serhad* belt to west after 1541, they lost their paramilitary status. The Vidin area remained Ottoman rear for the conquest of Central Europe and the non-Muslims went on serving in the cities fortress. Likewise, *hasses* and 12 *zeamets* and *timars* of *sipahis*, but mainly of the fortress guards (about 10-15 people in the mid-15th century and 65 in 1560) were established, while a considerable part of the Muslim *reaya* were registered as members of the *akıncı* (raider) troops. As the number of the Janissaries and the local troops increased, the role of the *sipahi* troops was reduced.¹²¹ The number of the Muslim population increased step by step in Vidin with the Muslim emigrees from Hungary and Serbia after the wars the Ottoman Empire did in the 16th century.¹²² Between 1520 and 1535, the total number of the households in the *sancak*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.18.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p.205., Gradeva, *Rumeli..*, p.110-111.

¹²² Ivanova, "Widin", p.206.

reached 20.431. Among these, 19.517 were Christian whereas the number of the Muslim households was 914.¹²³ Again during the same period, number of the Muslim households in the city center was 356 including the 10 religious officials. In addition to that, 225 *sipahis* and 251 fortress officials lived in the center.¹²⁴ The number of the non-Muslim households was 287 and 7 of these were Jews.¹²⁵ Between 1571-1580, number of the Muslim households increased to 1207 and non-Muslims to 897. This culminated in a total number of 2152 which equals to 11000 inhabitants.¹²⁶ Evliya Çelebi claims that Vidin included 4700 households or over 20000 inhabitants in the 17th century.¹²⁷

During the war with the Holy League Vidin was captured by the Austrians on October 13, 1689 and held for 10 months. By the end of the 17th century, although the Muslim population increased, the city still embraced a considerable number of Orthodox Christians, Gypsies and Jews.¹²⁸

However, although it is possible to have useful data on the population for the periods before the 18th century, it is hard to find the exact number of the population in Vidin during the 18th century.¹²⁹ Actually, this is a problem

¹²³ Todorov, "Demographic..", p.52.

¹²⁴ Ivanova, "Widin", p.206 and Todorov, "Demographic..", p.67.

¹²⁵ Todorov, "Demographic..", p.32.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.32.

¹²⁷ Evliya Çelebi, b. Derviş Mehmed Zilli (Haz.Seyit Ali Kahraman, Yücel Dağlı), *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi 1457 Numaralı Yazmanın Transkripsiyonu-Dizin*, VI. Kitap, İstanbul: YKY, 2002, p.99.

¹²⁸ Gradeva, *Rumeli..*, p.109.

¹²⁹ By the end of the 18th century, the population of the Ottoman Empire was between 25 and 32 million people. See, McGowan, "Ayanlar Çağı..", p.769.

that is faced for the entire Rumelia region of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans lost the northwestern parts of the Vidin *sancak* with the treaty of Passarowitz in 1718. Because of the constant migration caused mainly by the wars and epidemics especially after the second half of the 18th century, major changes in the population can be observed. A good example of this is the outbreak of cholera in Vidin in 1768, 1769, 1777, 1797, 1816, 1842 and 1851.¹³⁰ Events of this kind not only change the population structure of the region but also caused some major changes in the sense of economy and administration, most important of which is the latter.

The administrative structure of Vidin changed from time to time during the Ottoman rule. From the 15th century onwards, it was a *kaza* (district) with a *kadı* (judge) and from the 17th century, it also had a *mufti*. Evliya Celebi describes the administrative structure of the 17th century Vidin as follows: Including the Paşa's own soldiers, it has two thousand soldiers. There were a *Şeyhülislam*¹³¹, *Nakib-ül eşraf*¹³² and *naibs*¹³³ in *kazas*. Another prominent figure of the city was the *Kapudan Paşa*.¹³⁴ Other administrators were *gümrük emini* (customs intendant), *harac ağası* (head of the tax collectors), *şehir subaşı* (commanders of the sub-districts), *kale dizdarı* (fortress commander), *sipahi kethüdayeri* (household officer), *yeniçeri serdarı* (commander of the janissaries), *muhtesib* (market inspector) and

¹³⁰ Tuğlacı, *Osmanlı..*, p.405.

¹³¹ *Şeyhülislam* was the head of the *ulema* (Islamic authorities) representing the religious authority of the Sultan. See, İnalçık, *Klasik Çağ..*, p.103.

¹³² *Nakib-ül eşraf* used for the officials who were in charge of the duty of assisting to the successor of Prophet Muhammed in the Ottoman Empire. See, Ferit Devellioğlu, *Osmanlıca –Türkçe Ansiklopedik Lugat*, Ankara: Aydın Kitabevi Yayınları, 1998, p.801.

¹³³ Deputy of the *kadı* (judge). Devellioğlu, *Osmanlıca..*, p.799.

¹³⁴ *Kapudan Paşa* was the commander of the naval forces. Shaw, *Osmanlı...*, p.190.

bacdar (official collector of the transit taxes) .¹³⁵ The *Kapudan* was subordinate to the *kapudan* of Danube and was responsible from the management of the local fleet and the ship-building facilities.¹³⁶

After all changes in the administration Vidin became the homeland of Osman Pazvandođlu by the end of the 18th century and hence it became one of the centers of most important rebellious movements and the *ayan* rule in Rumelia.

2.2.1. Economic Structure of Vidin

The key aspect of Vidin's economy was its geographical location in Rumelia. This important geographical position of the city made it a commercial center besides its military feature.¹³⁷ As it was the case for most of the Rumelia region, the *hass* lands constituted the biggest part of Vidin's total land. The imperial *has* in the Vidin area expended quickly at the expense of the Wallachian villages and the *timar* lands and soon turned into the largest in the Balkans. Between 1526 and 1528, the *hass* lands in the Vidin region and their income were as follows:

¹³⁵ "Cebelüleriyle cümle paşasının askeriyle iki bin adem olur. Bunun alaybeğisi ve çeribaşısı ve yüzbaşısı vardır. Yüz elli akçe payesiyle şerif kazadır. Şeyhülislamı ve nakibü'l- eşrafı ve nevahi na'ibi var, amma Şakşaki Paşa'dan beri bu Vidin sancağı nezaret olub hala hakimü'l- vakti salb u siyaset sahibi nazıru'n-nuzzar ağadır kim üç yüz adem ile hükm-i hükumat eder. Bir hakimi dahi kapudandır. On pare fırkatesi ve üç yüz levendatıyla Tuna deyası üzre cezire cezire gezüp haydutları dutup katl eder, a'la hükümetdir. Vidin kapudanı namıyla iştihar bulmuşdur. Bir hakimi dahi gümrük emindir ve bir hakimi harac ağasıdır ve bir hakimi şehir subaşı ağasıdır ve bir hakimi kal'a dizdarıdır ve bir hakimi sipah kethudayeridir ve bir hakimi yeniçeri serdarıdır ve bir hakimi muhtesib ağasıdır. Ve bir zabiti bacdardır kim Eflak'dan niçe kerre yüz bin kaya tuz gelir ve niçe kerre yüz bin aded morina ve mersin balıkları gelüp anlardan ve cümle gelüp giden meta'dan bac ü bazar alır miriye mal verir bacdar maldar hazinedardır. Ve bir zabiti şehir kethüdasıdır ve bir amili bağ ağasıdır kim bağlarının hadd-i nihayeti yoktur"; see Çelebi, *Seyahatname*, p.98.

¹³⁶ Ivanova, "Widin", p.205.

¹³⁷ Gradeva, *Rumeli..*, p.108.

Vidin: 224.011 akçe Mirliva hassı

Baina: 5.611 akçe Mirliva hassı (173.537 akçe 1509-1510)

Svurlig: 1.833 akçe Mirliva hassı.¹³⁸

Vidin was also an important *çiftlik* region. The main reason that enabled the creation of the *çifliks* was the government's policy of granting the revenue of the state's (*miri*) lands to individuals through tax-farming (*iltizam*). Because Vidin was very close to Central European market, the agricultural product could be sold more expensively and more easily and hence, the tax-farms became very valuable in a short period of time. As a result of its strategic importance, the government preferred to grant the revenue of the land to the Muslims. The *miri* and *mevat* lands that were not cultivated were bought and reorganized as *mülks*. The *çiftliks* were established by people coming from different socio-economical layers of the society and their main goal was producing agricultural products for the Austrian market. The labourer was either people working on a salary basis or the villagers who had no land but became share-cropper (*ortakçı*).¹³⁹ The major agriculture was the cereals.¹⁴⁰ With this economical background and its role as being the largest port on the Danube, Vidin had a flourishing economy. The rise in the city's population by over %25 in the 18th century was directly related to its economic growth.¹⁴¹ Moreover as an economically developed city Vidin helped Pazvandoğlu to earn a respectable wealth. For

¹³⁸ According to Evliya Çelebi, the value of Vidin *hass* was 330.000 *akçes* and the number of *zeamets* was 12 and *timars* was 65 in the 17th century: " Der beyân-ı hakimân-ı Vidin: Rumeli eyaletinde sancakbeği tahtıdır kim beğinin kanun-ı Süleyman Han üzre hassı 330.000 akçedir ve livâsında ze'ameti 12 ve tımarı 65'dir"; see Çelebi, *Seyahatname..*, p.97.

¹³⁹ İnalçık, "Çiftliklerin..", pp.30-33.

¹⁴⁰ Roucek, "Economic..", p.37.

¹⁴¹ Ivanova, "Widin", pp.205-6.

example in the last quarter of the 18th century, most of the *çiftlik*s belonged to Pazvandoğlu Osman.¹⁴²

The destructive events of the 18th century also hit the Vidin economy. The wars resulted in a general decline of the economic life in the region because the wars meant an increase in the taxes and a rise of prices for the dependant population. This caused an increase in violence acts like plunder, the spread of epidemics and many other difficulties.¹⁴³ But, the wars and the acts of bandits however enabled the local notables in the region to strengthen their power and consolidate their dominance in the region. In this sense, Vidin became the homeland of a unique and important person for the whole Ottoman history: Pazvandoğlu Osman. His *ayanlık* period changed the fate of both Vidin and the northern Balkan region. Vidin with its population between 15 and 30000 became one of the most significant towns in Rumelia at the beginning of the 19th century.¹⁴⁴

But the situation of the city began to change after then. Since the 19th century agrarian reforms were not introduced in the region and villagers had no property rights over the land and were accepted as tenants of the *agh*s of Vidin, this regime caused riots and uprisings in the 1830s and 1850s.¹⁴⁵ Because of these movements the Ottoman leadership solved the problem in

¹⁴² McGowan, *Economic..*, p.78.

¹⁴³ Nikolai Todorov, "The City in the Bulgarian Lands from the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century", in *Society, the City and Industry in the Balkans*, (ed. Nikoli Todorov), Brookfield: Variorum, 1998, p.24.

¹⁴⁴ Ivanova, "Widin", p.206; see also, Todorov, "The City..", p.67.

¹⁴⁵ In April 1849 in Boynitzza around Vidin the peasants rebelled against local officials. Following year, on 13 May 1850 another rebellion broke out in Vidin and spread throughout the region. The rebels explained the main reason of this rebellion as the oppressions of *agh*s and *mültezims*. See, Halil İnalçık, *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi*, İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 1992, p.45, 47.

favor of the villagers in 1851 by abolishing the *gospodarlık* regime¹⁴⁶ and redistributing the lands to the *reaya*.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ *Gospodarlık* regime emerged in Vidin region in the first half of the 19th century as a result of acquisition of the state lands by the local notables; *Ibid.*, p.90.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.105. Ivanova, "Widin", p.205. By the 18th century the *miri* lands (*timars* and *zeamets*) were possessed by Muslim and non-Muslim local notables.

CHAPTER 3

PAZVANDOĞLU OSMAN: STRUGGLE FOR POWER IN VIDIN (1792-1807)

3.1. The Pazvandođlu Family

Pazvandođlu Osman was born in 1758 in Vidin and became an important figure not only in Vidin but also in the Ottoman Balkans.¹⁴⁸ Though Pazvandođlu Osman is remembered with Vidin his family was not originally from Vidin. It is necessary to point out here that there are conflicting and confusing information about ancestors of Pazvandođlu Osman. William Herbert asserted that Pazvandođlu Osman originated from a Tatar family who participated in the Ottoman Army that conquered Bulgaria during the reign of Sultan (Yıldırım) Bayezid.¹⁴⁹ However, Pazvandođlu Osman's family records start with the grandfather Pazvan Ađa who was originally from Tuzla, a village in Bosnia and he was the son of a Bosnian bandit and lived in the 18th century. Pazvan Ađa was also mentioned as a

¹⁴⁸ "Pazvand" or "Pasvan" means guard or night guard in Persian, see, Ferit Develliođlu, *Osmanlıca -Türkçe Ansiklopedik Lugat*, Ankara, 1998, p.854; A. Cevat Eren, "Pazvandođlu Osman" *Maarif Vekaleti İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Volume IX, İstanbul: M.E.B. Yayınları, 1964, pp.532-535, p.532; Şemseddin Sami, *Kamus-ı Türki*, İstanbul, 1996, p.344; Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, Volume VI, İstanbul, Matbaa-i Amire, 1275, p.250. In archival documents various names is used for Pazvandođlu Osman like Basbanođlu, Pasvanođlu, Pazvantođlu, Pasban or Pasbant. In this study Pazvandođlu will be used since this name was incised on his seal by Pazvandođlu Osman. For example see, *B.O.A. Cevdet Tasnifi Dahiliye*, 680, *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 2699; *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 1830.

¹⁴⁹ "Pasvanoglu came from a family of grandees of purest Tartar descent, settlers in Vidin since the Turkish conquest. His grandsire in the twelfth generation had helped the Sultan Bayazid to storm the Bulgar stronghold." See, William V. Herbert, *The Chronicles of a Virgin Fortress*, London: Osgood, McIlvaine&Co., 1896, p.23; see also Eren, *op.cit.*, p.532.

well-known and respectable person there.¹⁵⁰ Robert W. Zens, on the other hand depending on Mériage, gives the information that Pazvan Ağa became a well-known person in Vidin when he with "his troops were able to push back the Habsburgs who were holding a large number of villages between Vidin and the Timok river...". The Ottoman government granted him the right of collecting the tax revenues of the villages of Bursa and Kirsa due to his contributions.¹⁵¹ Despite the conflicting and confusing information about how Pazvan Ağa came to Vidin, Grandfather Pazvand spent his remaining life in Vidin and disturbed the inhabitants of the regions around of Vidin with his plunders. Thus he was assassinated.¹⁵² However Cevat Eren points out that Pazvan Ağa was killed in Pristine by his enemies.¹⁵³ Though it is not certain why Pazvan Ağa was killed, one thing is certain that his property left to his son Ömer who also followed his father's power politics and spent his life in Vidin.

Ömer Pazvan became the chief of the 31st corp in the janissary army in the Belgrade Castle. Özkaya says that Ömer was born in Kirsa, a village of Bosnia.¹⁵⁴ Due to his outstanding performance during the Austro-Ottoman wars of 1736-1739, Ömer both gained his respectability in Vidin and was

¹⁵⁰ See Cyprien Robert, 'Le Monde Greco-Slave', *Revue Des Deux Mondes*, 1. fasc., Volume 30 (avril-jun), 1842, pp.879-938, p.915 ; Herbert, *The Chronicles..*, p.23. Osman's grandfather name was also given as Pazvan Ağa by Napoleon's consul to Vidin Adjutant-Commander Mériage. For this information see, Robert W. Zens, *The Ayanlık and Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa of Vidin in the Age of Ottoman Social Change 1791-1815*, (Unpublished PhD. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2004), p.99.

¹⁵¹ See, Zens, *The Ayanlık..*, p.100; see Herbert, *The Chronicles..*, p.23.

¹⁵² Robert, "Le Monde..", p.915.

¹⁵³ Eren, "Pazvandoğlu..", p.532.

¹⁵⁴ Yücel Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Dağlı İsyanları (1791-1808)*, Ankara; D.T.C.F. Yayınları, 1983, p.32.

awarded by the Ottoman administration with the fiefs of two villages of Bursa and Kırca.¹⁵⁵ Having good relations with the Ottoman government, Ömer was permitted to go to Vidin and he was given the rank of *bayraktar*¹⁵⁶ of Vidin by the state. He became the *ayan* of Vidin and increased his wealth. However, after a while, his relation with the Ottoman government deteriorated and Ömer Ağa began to be considered as rebel by the authorities. In 1786, Ömer Ağa was warned by the Ottoman government that if he maintains his abuses of the people he would be ordered to leave Vidin.¹⁵⁷ Inciting people against *Sharia* (and also against the state which was the protector and executer of this authority), acquiring property illegally and confiscating the property of the people, were among the abuses of Ömer Ağa. But he refused this order and then the state ordered his execution.¹⁵⁸ According to Robert, Ömer Pazvand insulted Koran and its commentators and consequently was strongly criticized both by the *Ulemas* of Vidin and by the conservatives in Vidin. Therefore, he was dismissed from Vidin. Ömer's house was demolished and the people handed him over to the state

¹⁵⁵ Eren, "Pazvandoğlu..", p.532; Robert Zens, "Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa and the Paşalık of Belgrade, 1791-1807", *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, Volume VIII, No.1-2, 2002, pp.89-105, p.90; Interestingly Zens in his PhD Dissertation says that Bursa and Kırca were given to Pazvan Ağa due to his success against the Habsburgs. See Zens, *The Ayanlık..*, p.100; Cyprien Robert uses Kırca and Brza as the names for these two fiefs. Robert, "Le Monde..", p.915.

¹⁵⁶ The term "bayraktar" means standard bearer in the janissary corps. M. Orhan Bayrak, *Resimli Osmanlı Tarihi Sözlüğü*, Ankara: İnkılap Basımevi, 1999, p.62.

¹⁵⁷ Eren, "Pazvandoğlu..", p.532. Robert Zens says that Ömer's strong personality and the discomfort among local and central authorities due to his almost independent status were the reasons of the conflict between Ömer Ağa and central government. See, Zens, "Pasvanoğlu..", p. 90.

¹⁵⁸ Eren, "Pazvandoğlu..", p.532. Some precautions like closing the borders of Vidin and prohibiting entrance and exit had been planned. See, Zens, "Pasvanoğlu..", p.90- 91.

agents.¹⁵⁹ But this case was mentioned by Ottoman Chronicler Ahmet Cevdet Paşa in a different way. He said that Ömer Ağa was captured in his residence in 1789 in Vidin and was executed in the house of Yakup Paşa.¹⁶⁰ Then his property was confiscated and then sold in auction.¹⁶¹ So nothing left to his family.

Pazvandoğlu Osman was together with his father prior to the latter's capture but it is not certain what happened to him following his father's execution. Yücel Özkaya stated that he fled to Serbia first and then to Albania where he collaborated with the local bandits in those places.¹⁶² Cyprien Robert said that after Osman escaped from Vidin he took shelter in the Albanian *Guégues* tribe and soon he entered into the service of Nicholas Mavroyenis, the *Gospodar*¹⁶³ of Wallachia.¹⁶⁴ Cevdet Paşa points out that

¹⁵⁹ Robert, "Le Monde..", p.915.

¹⁶⁰ A.Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i..*, Volume VI, İstanbul, p.250. Zens cited that Ömer Ağa was killed in 1788. See Zens, "Pasvanoğlu..", p.91. But, in the work of Ahmet Hezarfen there were documents about arrest of Ömer Pazvand who escaped from Vidin and settled in Köprü. The dates of documents are 22 and 27 August 1780 (*21 and 26 Şaban 1194*); see, Ahmet Hezarfen, *Rumeli ve Anadolu Âyan ve Eşkıyası-2*, Ankara, Kaynak Yayınları, 2004, pp.258-259.

¹⁶¹ Confiscation (*Müsadere*) was one of the ways that the Ottoman Sultans used to punish his dignitaries of higher ranks. The state took their property when they were involved in embezzlement or rebelled to the state. In some cases, confiscation was imposed with some other punishments. For details see, Cavid Baysun, "Müsadere", *Maarif Vekaleti İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Volume VIII, İstanbul: Maarif Vekaleti Basımevi, 1960, pp. 669-673, pp. 669,672-673.

¹⁶² Yücel Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Dağlı İsyancıları (1791-1808)*, Ankara: D.T.C.F Yayınları, 1983, pp.32-33.

¹⁶³ The term *Gospodar* is a title which describes powerful land owners and governors in Rumelia. Midhat Sertoğlu, *Osmanlı Tarih Lûgatı*, İstanbul: Enderun Kitabevi, 1986, p.124. This term was also written as *Hospodar* in the documents and it means governor or prince.

¹⁶⁴ Robert, "Le Monde..", p.915.

Osman became *yamak* after the execution of his father.¹⁶⁵ Zens however asserts that during his exile Osman collaborated with a bandit, where as according to Eren, he was employed in the retinue of *İpek Paşas*.¹⁶⁶

Osman's years away from Vidin ended with the Austro-Ottoman War which gave Osman the opportunity to return back to Vidin. In 1792, respecting his efficacy in the Austro-Ottoman war Sultan Selim III not only let Osman return to Vidin and but also gave back to him some of his family's property which had previously been confiscated.¹⁶⁷ Robert Zens points out that in addition to the return of property, the right of levying *cizye* from gypsies was also granted to Pazvandoğlu Osman.¹⁶⁸ But according to two archival documents Osman was given the right of levying *cizye* from the non-Muslim people of Vidin in two times one in 1211 (1796-97) and the other in 1212 (1797-1798) and it is not mentioned in these documents that he was given the right of levying *cizye* from the Gypsies.¹⁶⁹ These rights in fact encouraged Osman and he continued to demand more ranks and property as it will be seen in the following paragraphs.

¹⁶⁵ "Koca Yusuf Paşa'nın malumu oldukda kendüsini idam etmekle oğlu Osman firar itmiş idi. Ve gâile-i sefer bertaraf olduktan sonra meydana çıkub ve yamak zümresine iltihak idüb zatında ashâb-ı dirâyeyet ve şecâatden bulunmağla vakit zarfında serhad-ı mezkurede şöhret bulmuş ve ol havalide bulunan yamaklara merci olmuş idi." See Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i..*, Volume VI, İstanbul, p.250.

¹⁶⁶ Zens, "Pasvanoğlu..", p.91; Eren, "Pazvandoğlu..", p.532.

¹⁶⁷ Eren, "Pazvandoğlu..", p.532; Yücel Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyancıları..*, p.32-33; Herbert, *The Chronicles..*, p.23.

¹⁶⁸ Zens cited this information from D. Ichiev's book, *Turski D'rzhavni Dokumenti za Osman Pazvanoglu Vidinski* (Sofia: D'rzhavna Pechatnitsa, 1909). See Zens, "Pasvanoğlu..", p.91.

¹⁶⁹ See, *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 12761, B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2702.*

3.2. From the Janissary Battalion to the Post of Ayan of Vidin

As mentioned above, Pazvandoğlu Osman succeeded in regaining his family properties. But having this property and the tax farm of *cizye* were not the only sources of his wealth until his death. He later acquired more property and became one of the powerful *ayans* and a local ruler of the Ottoman Balkans. Gaining these properties, which will be dealt with in the following pages, also determined his life and relations with the people in the region as well as with the Ottoman state. In fact the provincial administration in the 18th century created an essential structure in which local elites in both the Balkans and Anatolia were able to have a considerable strength and they even established their own area of authority in different regions which caused serious headache for Ottoman government.

The principal object of Pazvandoğlu Osman was to consolidate both military and fiscal power after settling in Vidin. Pazvandoğlu Osman became a local power after he was appointed as *mültezim* levying *cizye* of Vidin which had a strategic location in the Balkans and this granted him a higher status. As being conscious of the conditions in his era, he conducted a planned work immediately after his arrival to Vidin in order to be the ruler of his own territory. Having a regular income as a *mültezim* gave him a chance to materialize his dream by adding another important tool which was to keep an army composed of men recruited either from the Ottoman Army or from the local people which was the most common policy that the local notables used to acquire power and to maintain it. Osman formed his army primarily with bandits, who had been with him since his departure from Albania, and with disobedient janissaries. The bandits who spread over Rumelia after the treaty of Zıştovi in 1791 also joined Pazvand's army.

Accordingly, Pazvand's army gave him enough power even to challenge the authority of government by threatening it that he would

release these bandits to the territory and they could plunder the region as a war strategy and destroy the daily life of people and also devastate the production wherever they plundered. In fact this blackmail was often used by other local notables called *ayans* in the Ottoman Empire too. Thus if this blackmail turned to real, the state not only would lose revenue but also the prestige since the state had difficulty in keeping peasants on their lands and could not prevent them from joining in bandit groups. For this reason the government had to rely on these local notables against the bandit groups interestingly sponsored by the same local notables. Therefore, the notables were granted more authority, power and money as in the case of Osman. However, this situation also made the local notables “powerful and dominant” in the eyes of local people. Thus the people in the region preferred to submit their loyalty the local notables rather than the government, which could not help them anyway and also the authority of Pazvandođlu or of other *ayans* became more preferable than that of the government in the eyes of local people.

In addition, local notables as in the case of Osman benefited a lot from every strategic condition of the area that they were affective and established order there for the sake of maintenance of their power. Osman also secured a safe atmosphere for artisans and merchants in Vidin and maintained good relations with them to benefit from the incomes of the city since Vidin was an important port in the Danube and agro-commercial activities in the 18th century had a great significance in terms of developing economic activity in the region.¹⁷⁰ Osman established many farms in the

¹⁷⁰ Bruce McGowan, “Ayanlar Çađı, 1699-1812” in *Osmanlı İmparatorluđu’nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, (ed. Halil İncik & Donald Quataert), Volume II, İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 2004, pp.761-867, p.789.

region because this kind of agricultural activity (agro-commercial) drew considerable amount of income.¹⁷¹

All these were not enough for Pazvandođlu Osman. He was not satisfied with Vidin and he began to campaign over Serbia and Wallachia to extend his area of influence and to increase the amount of his property. These campaigns, as expected, made Osman strikingly wealthy and stimulated bandits and janissaries who were disappointed with their revenue and peasants who did not own land, to participate in his army.¹⁷² The dramatic expansion of his army made him to build up self-confidence. The government could not do anything against him since Osman threatened the government that he would release his men. Interestingly, Osman begged the Sultan Selim III to be forgiven. However, his pardon by Selim III in the early 1790s was not enough to stop the activities of Pazvandođlu in Vidin. On the contrary, this gave him the opportunity to realize the attitude of the government against him. Although he should be punished because of his misdoings, he was tolerated. The tolerance by the state showed better the limit of the power of the government as well as his power. Subsequent to his second pardon, Pazvandođlu maintained his efforts to acquire new farms and recruit men for his service. As a consequence of these efforts, he became the most influential *ayan* in Rumelia and appeared as the leader of many small *ayans*.

Because of his great wealth, which made him able to recruit an army, it is not wrong to infer that Pazvandođlu Osman was an important *mültezim*

¹⁷¹For detailed information about commercial farming see, *Osmanlı'da Toprak Mülkiyeti ve Ticari Tarım*, (Eds. Ç. Keyder & F. Tabak), (tr. Zeynep Altok), Ankara, 1998 and Mc Gowan, "Ayanlar Çađı..", p.789.

¹⁷² For detailed information about dispossession of peasantry in Vidin zone see Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe. Taxation, Trade and the Struggle for Land, 1600-1800*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, pp.58-73.

of Vidin and even of the whole Danube region. Additionally, it can be said that the actions of his father in Vidin set an example for Osman and motivated him. The Ottoman chronicler Cabi portrayed Pazvandođlu Osman as follows: "Pazvand-zade Osman Ađa who had considerable amount of lands in Vidin region is one of the prominent personalities in Vidin. He acquired the tax farms revenues (*iltizams*) of the *timars* and *zeamets* around Vidin through his friends in İstanbul by paying the previous year's prices to the timariots/timar holders".¹⁷³

3.3. From Raids to Rebellion

Pazvandođlu Osman used his family wealth and respectability in Vidin very well and increased both his wealth as well as his power. In 1791, Pazvandođlu Osman began to expand his area of influence by raiding Serbia and Wallachia. These raids enriched Osman economically and militarily. Osman's wealth attracted bandits, janissaries who were disappointed with their salary and also peasants who did not own the land to participate in his army.¹⁷⁴ The rapid expansion of his army made Osman feel more self-confident. The most important cause of the public support for Pazvandođlu was the fact that Rumelia was under insecure and caotic conditions. Therefore the people of Vidin needed a protective power. Moreover, they were subjected to high taxes which were collected to finance the *Nizam-ı Cedid* reforms undertaken by the new Sultan Selim III. In addition to the support of the people of Vidin the Janissaries who were irritated by military

¹⁷³ CÂBÎ Ömer Efendi, *Cabi Tarihi (Târîh-i Sultân Selîm-i Salis ve Mahmûd-ı Sâni)* Volume I, (pr. Mehmet Ali Beyhan), Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 2003, p.55.

¹⁷⁴ Robert Zens, "Pasvanođlu Osman Paşa and the Paşalık of Belgrade, 1791-1807", *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, Volume VIII, No.1-2, 2002, pp.89-105, p.91. For detailed information about dispossession of peasantry in Vidin zone see Bruce McGowan, *Economic Life in Ottoman Europe. Taxation, Trade and the Struggle for Land, 1600-1800*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, pp.58-73.

aspects of the same reforms also supported him. Osman Pazvandoğlu considering the demands of these groups gained their support. Although he did not contravene to reforms directly he reacted to the newly introduced high taxes to gain the the sympathies of people of Vidin.¹⁷⁵

Meanwhile inevitably, his ambition and expansionist policies annoyed the government. Then, the responses to his attacks were not delayed. As a matter of fact, Sultan Selim III issued an imperial edict (in 1792), which ordered the arrest of Osman and the people helped him. When found out about the imperial edict, Pazvandoğlu and his men sent petitions to beg the Sultan to pardon them. Interestingly the Sultan forgave them in 1792.¹⁷⁶ This pardon set an example for other bandits under their control not to obey the government.

This tolerance did not stop Osman in his usual business and he continued to strengthen his military and fiscal power and in Zens' words; "maintained his provocations among the people against the authority and his rebel against the authority that means no change in his activities throughout the region."¹⁷⁷ Sultan Selim sent Alo Paşa, the *muhafız* (military-commander) of Vidin at that time, against Pazvandoğlu Osman but Pazvandoğlu defeated him. Then Selim sent an imperial edict in April and June 1793 to *Serasker* (commander-in-chief) of Vidin in order to arrest and execute him. Pazvandoğlu demanded the mediation of many people in order

¹⁷⁵ Yücel Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Dağlı İsyamları (1791-1808)*, Ankara: D.T.C.F. Yayınları, 1983, p.33; William Miller said that Pazvandoğlu Osman was a direct opponent of Selim's reforms. See, William Miller, *The Ottoman Empire and Its Successors 1801-1927*, London: Frank&Cass and Co. Ltd., 1966, p.19.

¹⁷⁶ Zens, "Pasvanoğlu..", p.92.

¹⁷⁷ At the same time, to gain the support of local people Pazvandoğlu Osman promised the *reaya* to provide job and security and guaranteed the janissaries-especially in Belgrade- that he would remove the privileges of Serbian *Knezes* against their interests and accommodate them in his army. *Ibid.*, p.94.

to convince the Sultan for his pardon. Almost all of the notables of Vidin and even the state officials wrote petitions for Osman's pardon in 1793. They guaranteed his innocence and his respect to the laws and people which was a sign of Osman's reliance on large support by the people.¹⁷⁸

The Sultan forgave him once more in 1793 on the condition that he would never dare any illegal action and challenge the authority of the state.¹⁷⁹ Subsequent to the second pardon, restless Pazvandoğlu continued to acquire new farms and recruit men for his service. As a consequence of these efforts, he became the most influential *ayan* among those in Rumelia and appeared as the leader of many small *ayans*. By acquiring lands, he also established his own rules in Vidin. His acquisition of lands in large amounts, all of which were private property, gave way to the development of his commercial relations with the Austrians.¹⁸⁰ It is a fact that the process of change of the military governor of Vidin contributed Pazvandoğlu Osman's consolidation of power. For example, until Mehmet Paşa was appointed to *Vidin Muhafızlığı* (Guardianship of Vidin) in 1794, there was an authority vacuum in Vidin. During this period, Pazvandoğlu Osman benefited from this situation by increasing his military and economic power. The appointment of Mehmed Paşa to Vidin did not prevent Pazvandoğlu Osman's activities.¹⁸¹

In the meantime, Pazvandoğlu worked to strengthen Vidin and recruited an army of 12.000 soldiers coming from different ethnic and religious origins. The army was composed of the Turks, the Albanians and

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.93.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.92.

¹⁸⁰ According to Zens when Osman died in 1807, he left 7 million gold ducat, a huge amount of jewel and of military munition; see *Ibid.*, p.93.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.93.

the Bulgarians.¹⁸² By 1794 Osman became the most remarkable power keeping northern Balkans under control.¹⁸³ The region under his control was between Belgrade and Edirne. The only two serious threats he encountered were the *ayan* of Rusçuk, Tirsinlikli İsmail and Hacı Mustafa Paşa who was just appointed as the military commander of Belgrade.¹⁸⁴

Pazvandoğlu Osman focused his activities on Belgrade from 1794 onward. The Janissaries and *yamaks*¹⁸⁵ disturbed the reaya especially for arbitrary taxes which they forcefully collected in Belgrade. The Ottoman state had long been trying to prevent the malpractices of the Janissaries and as a part of that policy; the Janissaries in Belgrade were dismissed. Thus the Janissaries and *yamaks* who were disbanded and scattered around Belgrade, went to Vidin where they were welcomed by Pazvandoğlu Osman. He supported them and supplied them money, arms and munitions to their revolt against the state. From that time onwards, Pazvand appeared as a figure that either planned or sponsored most of the attacks to Belgrade and other regions.¹⁸⁶ Hacı Mustafa Paşa, *muhafız* (military commander) of

¹⁸² A. Cevat Eren, "Pazvandoğlu Osman", *Maarif Vekaleti İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Volume IX, İstanbul, 1964, pp.532-535, p.533.

¹⁸³ Özkaya describes the economic and political goal of Pazvandoğlu as follows: Pasvand aimed at taking the vengeance of his father and gaining political predominance and influence the Ottoman State by launching a campaign against the Porte; uniting the Ottoman subjects under his authority; reviving agriculture, commerce and industry, hence prospering economically; constructing an armada thus guaranteeing his security. See, Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyancıları..*, p.34.

¹⁸⁴ Zens, "Pasvanoğlu..", p.94.

¹⁸⁵ 'Yamak' was applied to the janissaries who were charged with the duty of guarding the borderzones. See Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, Volume VI, İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1275, p.250.

¹⁸⁶ According to Zens, the role of Pazvandoğlu Osman in the attacks towards Belgrade is seen in the letter of Osman who was the *tatar* (courier) of Hacı Mustafa Paşa. This *tatar* wrote a letter to the imperial centre in 1795 and complained that the janissaries expelled from Belgrade had devastated Passarowitz (Pozorofça-

Belgrade, delivered some gifts to Pazvandođlu in order to calm him down and stop his hostile attitudes towards Belgrade. Pazvandođlu received a coach and six horses; and in return sent money to Hacı Mustafa Paşa. Yet, this behavior unexpectedly caused a new conflict, while it was expected to give way to peace. After mobilizing his bandits to plunder and capture the region, he demanded the money back he had sent to Mustafa Paşa. Pazvandođlu Osman collaborated with Çelebi Mustafa Ağa, former kul kethüdası (deputy commander of the Janissaries) and four *orta subayıs* (battalion commanders) in Belgrade. After their joint attack to Belgrade, Hacı Mustafa Paşa had to withdraw and took shelter in the castle together with the people of Belgrade and his soldiers.¹⁸⁷

The *kapı kethüdası* of Wallachia informed İstanbul about the attacks of Pazvandođlu which negatively affected transportation, trade and agriculture throughout frontiers and his attack on Belgrade. The government sent supplementary forces to Hacı Mustafa Paşa for the defence of the city.¹⁸⁸ Hacı Mustafa Paşa defeated Pazvand's collaborators (mostly the bandits) however the bandits who were able to survive returned to Vidin. After the suppression of this attack, Çelebi Mustafa Ağa was executed and his soldiers were exiled to Sinop by the state.¹⁸⁹

Although he was defeated by Hacı Mustafa Paşa Pazvandođlu Osman did not stop his attacks for a long time. He recruited an army composed of the bandits again and passed to the Wallachia region in 1795. Pekmezcizade Mehmed Paşa, the *muhafız* of Vidin at that time, did not prevent Pazvand's

Semendre) region under the leadership of Pazvandođlu Osman. Zens, "Pasvanođlu..", p.96.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.94-96.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p.95.

¹⁸⁹ See Ahmet Cevdet Paşa , *Tarih-i Cevdet*, Volume VI, Dersaadet: Matbaa-i Osmaniye, 1309, p. 250.

attacks and thus he was deposed by the state. Gürcü Osman Paşa was appointed the new military commander of Vidin. But the attacks of Gürcü Osman Paşa with Hacı Mustafa Paşa onto Vidin and Pazvandoğlu Osman were unsuccessful.¹⁹⁰

Zens and Özkaya have different opinions about the result of this manoeuvre against Pazvandoğlu. Zens states that with the march of Gürcü Osman Paşa to Vidin, Pazvandoğlu feared and declared his loyalty to the Sultan.¹⁹¹ Özkaya, on the other hand, asserts that Gürcü Osman Paşa marched to Vidin and besieged the city but because the winter was approaching, the siege ended.¹⁹² After all, Pazvandoğlu begged the Sultan to pardon him again. The petition dated as 1795 (1210) depicts Osman's cry for pardon very well. In this petition Pazvandoğlu says that: "My Lord, the Sultan, this army was sent onto me because of the intrigues of my enemies. It is not possible that I violate the security and status quo in the frontiers. I beg you, your majesty, for your mercy..."¹⁹³

Pekmezci-zade Mehmed, the former guardian of Vidin, by a letter, the *Kadı* of Vidin by a declaration, and the people of Vidin by some petitions (*mahzars*) also begged Sultan for Pazvand's pardon in 1796.¹⁹⁴ After he swore that he would obey the orders of the military commander of Vidin and promised not to attack Belgrade and its surroundings Pazvandoğlu Osman

¹⁹⁰ Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyamları..*, p.35.

¹⁹¹ Zens, "Pasvanoğlu..", p.96.

¹⁹² Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyamları..*, p.35.

¹⁹³ "... hasılı serhad nişinân bizden geçmezler ve bizler dahi anlardan geçmeyüz ve ol tarafa azimeti 'adimül mekan olduğu malum-ı saâdetleri buyruldukda tesvit hususunda cenâblarızın berkarar olamayub devletlü veliyyünniâm efendimiz hazretlerinden her halde afv ve inâyet ricasında olduklarımız ve kendi cerağ olacağımız vechile afvü cürmümüz ne vechile irade buyrulur ise taraf-ı bendeganeme... buyurmaları..." *B.O.A. Cevdet Tasnifi Dahiliye, 680.*

¹⁹⁴ Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyamları..*, p.35.

was forgiven once more. Moreover, he was obliged to pay fine because of the crimes that his bandits committed and he was asked to write a letter for apologies.¹⁹⁵ Then, some tax farm revenues deriving from *cizye* taxes of Vidin were assigned to Pazvandoğlu.¹⁹⁶ Furthermore Abdi Ali Paşa was appointed to Vidin as the guardian of the city because Pazvand conflicted with Gürcü Osman Paşa.¹⁹⁷

3.4. From Rebellion to Vizierate

Although his expansionist policy through a series of attacks to the area around Vidin created trouble for the state and for the people living there, Pazvandoğlu Osman continued to claim higher ranks as his father Ömer had done earlier. After all ranks were given to him Osman wanted to become a military governor of Vidin with the rank of vizierate after 1796. Pazvandoğlu asked İstanbul for vizierate as well as continuity of his duty in the janissary corps. In fact, to gain their sympathy Pazvandoğlu Osman introduced himself as a janissary to the janissaries, who were disappointed with the "nizam-ı cedid" (new order) reforms in particular.¹⁹⁸ To prove his relation with the janissary corps, he continued to correspond with Mustafa Ağa who was a janissary commander.¹⁹⁹ Selim III refused his request and sent about 100.000 soldiers to the region. Meanwhile Pazvandoğlu responded to this act by registering himself to the janissary corps (*yeniçeri*

¹⁹⁵ Zens, "Pasvanoğlu..", p.96.

¹⁹⁶ Zens stressed that Pazvandoğlu acquired the right of collecting *cizye* from the gypsies in Vidin, when he came to Vidin for the first time; see Zens, "Pasvanoğlu..", p. 91. Pazvandoğlu resigned from the duty of collecting *cizye* in 1796 (1211) and demanded the appointment of someone, who would be recommended by himself, to this duty, *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2702* and *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 12102*.

¹⁹⁷ Eren, "Pazvandoğlu..", p.533., Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyamları..*, p.35.

¹⁹⁸ Zens, "Pasvanoğlu..", p.97.

¹⁹⁹ *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 11073*.

ocağı). Moreover, Pazvandoğlu made an announcement in which he used the title "King of Vidin" and called all of the people throughout the Danube region to fight together with him against the government. According to Herbert the revolt of Pazvandoğlu, which resulted in the first siege of Vidin, was initiated in this way. Many people from all over the Danube region, especially from Belgrade, participated in his army. Immediately after his call, the number of soldiers in his army reached 50.000. Herbert gave different reasons for this. According to him, the Muslims joined Osman's army to find a place for themselves on the side of a strong administrator. The common people joined him because of his good treatments towards them and his promises about a fair administration. The Jews joined him because he supported the merchants. And the Janissaries took his side because of his charismatic leadership.²⁰⁰ Moreover, according to Nicola Jorga, Pazvandoğlu was the most serious enemy of the reformist inclinations. That is why he was able to attract and to get the support of the groups who were disappointed with the reforms.²⁰¹

With this army, Pazvandoğlu attacked the people living along the Danube River.²⁰² In fact this rebellion was part of famous *Dağlı İsyanları*

²⁰⁰ William V. Herbert, *The Chronicles of a Virgin Fortress*, London: Osgood, McIlvaine&Co., 1896, p.24. Eren also indicates that Osman's demand for vizierate was the essential reason for his activities in this process. Eren, "Pazvandoğlu..", p.533.

²⁰¹ Nicolae Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, (tr. Nilüfer Epçeli), Volume V, İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2005, p.114.

²⁰² According to Nicolae Jorga, when the Sultan refused his demand for the governorship of Vidin, Pazvandoğlu Osman attacked the Danube region in 1796. Pazvandoğlu Osman declared that if he was appointed as the governor of Vidin, he promised to obey the authority of state and to support the reform activities. Instead of accepting his demands, the Ottoman state sent an army against him. Jorga, *Osmanlı..*, Volume V, p.114-115.

(Mountaineer's Revolts in Rumelia)²⁰³ that took place between 1790 and 1800 and these revolts were accepted as the opening of a new era but brought chaos to the region.²⁰⁴ Pazvandođlu sent one of his servants named Macar Ali to Tirnova in order to plunder the district. Later, he directed Ali to Niđbolu and Macar Ali massacred people and undertook an intensive plunder there. Pazvandođlu also appointed another servant, Otuzbirođlu, as *mütesellim* of Niđbolu.²⁰⁵ Moreover, Jorga writes that the *ayans* of Niđbolu, *Selvi*, *Silistre* and *İbrail* and also the Bosnians had already chosen Pazvandođlu as their chief and they supported the Pazvandođlu's attacks.²⁰⁶ In the mean time, many complaints by the governor of Rumelia, *voyvoda* of Wallachia and the people of Rusçuk were sent to İstanbul. Since, Pazvandođlu and his followers attacked the villages and towns in Selvi, Rusçuk, Şumnu and along Danube, two powerful *ayans* of Danubean region Tirsiniçliođlu and Pazvandođlu came into conflict.²⁰⁷ Since Pazvandođlu interfered in Tirsiniçliođlu İsmail's area of influence, a merciless struggle between Pazvandođlu and Tirsiniçliođlu started.²⁰⁸ According to Eren, Pazvandođlu established an "independent administration" in the region by

²⁰³ The bandits who interfered in the rebellion were named as *Dađlı Taifesi*. For example of precautions for the bandits see. *B.O.A., Cevdet Tasnifi Dahiliye, 994 and Hatt-ı Hümayun, 3466.*

²⁰⁴ One of the areas that was exposed to rebellion was Vraça where Sofroni was the well-known bishop. He gave information on the attacks undertaken by the bandits of Pazvandođlu Osman to Vraça in 1796. In the same year the governor of Rumeli, Mustafa Paşa started to attack on the Pazvandođlu but he was not successful. See, VRAÇALI Sofroni, *Osmanlı'da Bir Papaz Günahkar Sofroni'nin Çileli Hayat Hikayesi 1739-1813*, (tr. Aziz Nazmi Şakir-Taş), İstanbul : Kitap Yayınevi, 2003, p.34.

²⁰⁵ Özkaya, *Dađlı İsyamları..*, p.45.

²⁰⁶ Jorga, *Osmanlı..*, Volume V, p.114.

²⁰⁷ Özkaya, *Dađlı İsyamları..*, p.45; Zens, "Pasvanođlu..", pp.97-98.

²⁰⁸ Zens, "Pasvanođlu..", p.94.

extending the attacks to Rusçuk. He appointed many of his servant *mütesellim* and *muhassıl* to different places. The number of soldiers in his army was more than 100.000. If he was not anxious with any possible intervention of Russia and Austria, Osman had the will to occupy Wallachia.²⁰⁹ For this reason, not demanding to loose his sources of income and sphere of sovereignty, Tirsinliklioğlu would be the most essential means of help for the state in each struggle implemented against Pazvandoğlu.²¹⁰

Tirsinikli İsmail was one the most powerful *ayans* in Rumelia. He was the brother of Tirsiniklioğlu Ömer, the *ayan* of Rusçuk. After Ömer died, İsmail acquired the *ayanlık* of Rusçuk in 1796 and then he tried to extend his region. But Pazvandoğlu Osman was a danger for him because both wanted to be the master of Danube shores and its environs. And Pazvand also had an important economic and military power as much as İsmail had.²¹¹ Therefore Tirsiniklioğlu İsmail was not pleased with Pazvandoğlu's expansion up to his regions. In fact Tirsinliklioğlu İsmail was among the most powerful *ayans* who preferred to remain loyal to the state. Like the other *ayans* in the region, İsmail did not hesitate to extend his territory and use bandit groups in accordance with his interests. The state generally did not interfere him despite his attitude, since he was regarded by the state as an important supplementary power in the suppression of unrest within the region and most essentially in the implementation the measures against the danger generated by Pazvandoğlu.²¹²

²⁰⁹ Eren, "Pazvandoğlu..", p.534.

²¹⁰ For the information about the using of Tirsiniklioğlu İsmail against Pazvand see. Jorga, *Osmanlı..*, Volume V, p.126.

²¹¹ For detailed information about the life and activities of Tirsiniklioğlu see İ. Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Meşhur Rumeli Âyânlarından Tirsinikli İsmail, Yılık Oğlu Süleyman Ağalar ve Alemdar Mustafa Paşa*, İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1942, pp.8-39.

²¹² Uzunçarşılı, *Meşhur..*, p.11.

Beside the support of Tirsiniklioğlu İsmail, the government also took other precautions to stop the attacks of Pazvandoğlu and the support of disappointed groups to him. The government demanded the Janissary Commander to declare that Pazvandoğlu was not from the janissary corps.²¹³ This demand and the death penalty of Pazvandoğlu were approved by the *Divan-ı Hümayun* on November 27, 1797.²¹⁴ It was also accepted in the *Divan-ı Hümayun* to give a firman declaring the execution of Pazvandoğlu as legitimate and also to dispatch the *fatwas* (the religious order) to necessary places. In the firman it was declared that Pazvandoğlu's loyalty was not accepted by the Sultan and Osman was expelled from the seven *ocaks* of the army.²¹⁵ The *fatwa* by the *Şeyhülislam* condemned Pazvandoğlu and his followers and the people who did not surrender them or attempt to save them to death penalty.²¹⁶ The decisions taken in the *Divan-ı Hümayun* were very affective on the janissaries since the latter explained their loyalty to the state and they swore to capture Pazvandoğlu Osman and also declared that Osman and his supporters were the enemies of the state and the religion.²¹⁷ The government also announced that Pazvandoğlu Osman had no relations with the Janissaries. For this reason the janissary commander who corresponded with Pazvandoğlu Osman was appointed to a

²¹³ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 12427.

²¹⁴ Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyamları..*, p.46; See, Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, Volume VI, İstanbul, 1275, p.252; "kulluğu hazret-i padişahiye kabul olunmamak üzere yedi ocakdan teberrâ addedülüp vücudunun izalesi" kararı yer almaktadır. B.O.A *Cevdet Tasnifi Dahiliye* 319. Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i..*, Volume VI, İstanbul, p.252.

²¹⁵ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 7820.

²¹⁶ "Kefere ile kıtal esnasında bir bölük ahal-i İslam ve kefere metris önüne turub keferenin idamına hail ve mani olsalar ahal-i İslam üzerine tob ve humbara itmek caiz olur" B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 12581.

²¹⁷ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 12427.

new place in Anatolia in order to prevent other officials from thinking that Pazvandođlu had relation with the janissary corps.²¹⁸

After these cautions on July 14, 1797 Abdi Pařa the guardian of Vidin, informed grandvizier that he had been captive for 18 months in Vidin and asked for permission to return Edirne.²¹⁹ This news showed once more the extent of the terror that Pazvandođlu did in Vidin.

Pazvandođlu was aware of the decision about himself and also the operation initiated against him. Hence, he accelerated his activities and sent his soldiers to Varna and Belgrade. He also continued to occupy Sofia and Niř.²²⁰ In the mean time, some of his soldiers besieged Wallachia²²¹ and Macar Ali, Aliř, Rami Bayrakdar, Poriçeli, Çanak Veli, Muslu and Kara Mustafa besieged Rusçuk.²²² They requested the surrender of Rusçuk on December 18, 1797 and marched into the city. Tirsinikliođlu İsmail began to defend his region. İsmail achieved to repulse the bandit army of Pazvand from Rusçuk. On account of his great success, he was granted the rank of *dergah-ı âli kapıcıbařılıđı*.²²³

Küçük Hüseyin Pařa, *serasker* (commander-in-chief) of Vidin, was charged with the command of the operation for the execution of Pazvandođlu.²²⁴ Moreover, many soldiers from the armies of the governor of

²¹⁸ B.O.A, *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 11073.

²¹⁹ See Ahmet Cevdet Pařa, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, Volume VII, İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1275, p.11.

²²⁰ Özkaya, *Dađlı İsyamları..*, p.46.

²²¹ The *voyvoda* of Wallachia wanted to appointment of another person as *voyvoda* and Hançerlizade Konstantin was appointed as the *voyvoda* of Wallachia on 6 December 1797.

²²² Priest Sofroni witnessed these attacks. See, Vraçalı Sofroni, *Osmanlı'da..*, p.35.

²²³ Özkaya, *Dađlı İsyamları..*, p.47, Uzunçarřılı, *Meřhur...*, p.11.

²²⁴ Ahmet Cevdet Pařa, *Tarih-i ..*, Volume VI, İstanbul, 1275, p.250.

Anatolia, many *ayans* including Çapanzade Süleyman and Karaosmanoğlu were recruited.²²⁵ Nicola Jorga and Papaz Sofroni state that there were 24 Paşas sent over Pazvandoğlu.²²⁶ Pazvandoğlu had requested his pardon when he learned that Küçük Hüseyin Paşa started a substantial campaign over himself. The request was not accepted and Mehmed Efendi²²⁷ was sentenced to death penalty because he wrote a penitentiary letter for Pazvandoğlu.²²⁸

In the spring of 1798, the Ottoman army with its 80.000 soldier came to the frontiers of Vidin. Hüseyin Paşa besieged Vidin from the land and also had sent fleet through Danube River. While this operation was going on the clash with the bandits, who were sent there by Pazvandoğlu, spread over surrounding area. The Ottoman army defeated most of these bandits. Pazvandoğlu was stranded in Vidin. The *voivoda* of Wallachia seized some parts of Pazvandoğlu's army and partially blocked possible attempts to help him. The son of Tepedelenli Ali Paşa also marched over Pazvand with 10.000 soldiers. Pazvandoğlu applied again Küçük Hüseyin Paşa for pardon but his demand was rejected again. A decree ordering certainly to punish Pazvandoğlu and never forgive him was sent to Hüseyin Paşa by the

²²⁵ In the provinces of Bozok, Çankırı, Amasya, Kırşehir, Çorum, Kayseri, Niğde, Ankara and the *kazas* of Tokat, Zile, Artıkabad, Murtazabad the state wanted 2.000 cavalries and infantries. Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyancıları...*, p.47, Eren, "Pazvandoğlu..", p.534, Zens, "Pasvanoğlu..", p.98. Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i...*, Volume VI, İstanbul, 1275, p.253.

²²⁶ Jorga, *op.cit.*, p.115, Vraçalı Sofroni, *op.cit.*, p.35. Robert says that the number of Paşas who fought against Pazvand was 40. See, Cyprien Robert, 'Le Monde Greco-Slave', *Revue Des Deux Mondes*, Volume 30, 1. fasc., 1842, pp.879-938, p.917.

²²⁷ This information is given by Yücel Özkaya but he did not give any information about who was Mehmed Efendi. See Özkaya, "*Dağlı İsyancıları...*", p.50.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.50; Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i...*, Volume VI, İstanbul, 1275, p.307.

government.²²⁹ But no intensive attack had been set out in July since the solidity of castle.²³⁰

The information conveyed by Küçük Hüseyin Paşa to the office of grandvizier is explanatory about the course of this operation: Hüseyin Paşa noted that bandits throughout the region were eliminated on October 1798 and the people who escaped from the castle would hopefully take refuge with him. Hüseyin Paşa also said that his soldiers worked under difficult conditions and he needed new soldiers; and he also stated that the problem concerning Pazvandoğlu would be ended until November. Moreover Hüseyin Paşa stated that it is necessary to hinder the entrance of food in Vidin to be able to end the siege with success. According to the assessment of Küçük Hüseyin Paşa, the cash at the hands of Pazvandoğlu was about to run out. Therefore, he would not be able to pay the salaries of his soldiers and of the bandits and thus they may abandon Pazvandoğlu and change sides in a short time. This might be a significant reason for the success of siege. Additionally, the support by the people of the region for Pazvandoğlu decreased since Pazvand collected money from the people by force. That is why Hüseyin Paşa expected people to take refuge with himself. A document which was sent from Mustafa Paşa, the governor (*vali*) of Vidin, to grand vizier indicates that the people of Vidin hated Pazvandoğlu Osman. In this document, the people of Vidin complained about the deaths in Vidin caused by Pazvandoğlu Osman for his own ambitions. They are afraid of him and for this reason they could not resist him. It is also said that they would participate in the Ottoman army, if the Ottoman government demanded help from the people in Vidin.²³¹

²²⁹ Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyamları..*, p.52.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.53.

²³¹ *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2717/C.*

Meanwhile although the financial conditions of Pazvand weakened partially, this long-term siege did not result in success for the Ottoman army. It is inferred from the reports sent by Hüseyin Paşa to the capital that he suffered from the shortage of cash, grain and military equipment. The expenses of Küçük Hüseyin Paşa doubled with the participation of groups coming from Vidin. Consequently, Hüseyin Paşa frequently asked for money. To be able to afford war expenses, the government frequently gave orders to the *ayans* throughout the region.²³²

During the siege, Pazvandoğlu sent a message with his courier to Hüseyin Paşa for his pardon. Yet, his request was rejected again and the siege of Vidin was maintained.²³³ However, the problems of the Ottoman army were manifold. Firstly, there was a need for bigger cannons and equipments to be able to take the castle. However, to supply bigger cannons and equipment would place great strains in terms of finance and manpower. Secondly, the French invasion on Egypt produced a new problem for the

²³² Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyamları..*, pp.54-55 The names and *ayans* and who fought against Pazvand and the number of their soldiers are below: ayan of Siroz Kapıcı Hasan Paşa- 500 nefer (soldiers), ayan of Demir Hisar İsmail Bey- 200 nefer, ayan of Zihne- 300 nefer, ayan of Nevrokop-150 nefer, ayan of Ustrumca, Aslan Bey- 100 nefer, ayan of İvranya-100 nefer, ayan of Priştine, brothers of Cinzade İbrahim Paşa- 150 nefer, ayan of Kalkandelen, *mirmiran* Recep Paşa- 500 nefer, the *voyvoda* of Narde İsmail Bey- 300 nefer, the ayan of Manastır, Şatırzade Selim Ağa- 200 nefer, ayan of Kesriye, Ömer Ağazade Ahmed Bey- 150 nefer, the ayans of Naslıç Ebubekir ve Ali Bey- 200 nefer, ayan of Tırhala, Kapıcıbaşı Halil Ağa and Mehmed Ağa- 300 nefer, ayan of Köprülü, Ali Ağa,- 100 nefer, ayan of Üsküb, Murtaza Ağa,- 100 nefer, ayan of Tobrak, Mehmed Ağa,- 100 nefer, *voyvoda* of Şehirköy, Bekir Ağa,- 150 nefer, ayan of Leskofça, Latif Ağa,- 100 nefer, ayan of Filibe, Çelebi,- 300 Nefer, ayan of Çırpan, Hacı Mehmed Ağa,- 150 nefer, ayan of Kıratova, Sadık Ağa,- 200 nefer, ayans of Serfice, Emin Ağa and Ali Ağa,- 100 nefer.

²³³ Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i ..*, Volume VII, p.11. The state did not pardon Pazvandoğlu because there was a hope of defeating him. This is seen in the reports of Mustafa Paşa during the siege of Vidin. He says that no one could stand against the power of Ottoman State: "Şu mevsim-i şitada izâle-i dest-i mezâlimden fukarayı riyyet sükkân-ı memleket himâyet ve siyânet olunsun kuvve-i kahire-i saltanat-ı seniyyeye kimler dayanabilmiş ki öyle erbab-ı cerâim dayanabilsin" *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2945.*

state. Thence, the struggle in Rumelia should be finished as soon as possible.²³⁴ Thirdly, the *ayans* participated in the operation against Pazvandoğlu dissatisfied with this struggle in a short time. They were anxious about a possible attack of imperial army, if it would be able to defeat Pazvandoğlu. Therefore, the Rumelia *ayans* did not prefer the success of the Ottoman army.²³⁵ In his report to the grandvizier, Küçük Hüseyin Paşa explained that the soldiers were not able to capture the castle which was controlled by Pazvandoğlu. He also indicated that since winter was coming, he had to withdraw.²³⁶ Actually, the reports were frequently sent by Hüseyin Paşa to the capital during the autumn of 1798 indicated that Pazvandoğlu could not be eliminated anyway since the Ottoman army was not successful in the siege of Vidin. According to Özkaya, there were a few reasons for the failure of the Ottoman army. One of them was some pashas and *beys* who served in the Ottoman army changed their sides due to some gifts sent by Pazvandoğlu. Another was owing to eight-months of siege the *ayans* who did not change their sides went back in order not to be distant from their homelands.²³⁷ The other was the city of Vidin could not be besieged thoroughly and Pazvandoğlu could bring necessary equipments through the west bank of Danube River. Because Pazvandoğlu was able to fortify the castle of Vidin and thus he was able to eliminate the navy that was sent through Danube River in addition to his success in repelling the enemy on land.²³⁸

²³⁴ Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyamları..*, p.56.

²³⁵ Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i ..*, Volume VII, pp.24-25.

²³⁶ Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyamları..*, p.56.

²³⁷ Eren and Sofroni claims that the siege of Vidin continued for 6 months. See, Eren, "Pazvandoğlu..", p.534; See also, Vračalı Sofroni, *Osmanlı'da..*, p.35.

²³⁸ Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyamları..*, p.58.

No matter what the problems were, the failure of the Ottoman army in this great campaign made Pazvandoğlu feel confident.²³⁹ In addition, the failure of the government in coping with Pazvandoğlu made him more popular and also gave rise to revolts by many *ayans* and begs throughout Rumelia. Osman took the control of Vidin thoroughly and became a popular hero among the people in the region.²⁴⁰ Pazvandoğlu who was to gain also the governorship of Vidin had an army with 30.000 soldiers and 12.000 chivalries. It was said that he paid 1.5 million pounds as the salary to the soldiers and there were many janissaries and Bosnians among these soldiers too.²⁴¹

According to the information given by Jorga; following the end of siege Pazvandoğlu demanded the departure of the governor of Vidin from the castle and he gave up some of his demands like surrender of three members of divan or their execution in İstanbul, reduction in taxes levying from the poor, granting janissaries the right for guarding every cities throughout the country.²⁴² As he did before, Pazvandoğlu submitted the Sultan his loyalty and begged for pardon again and again.²⁴³ Even he sent his brother to İstanbul in order to prove his loyalty.²⁴⁴ He also sent a letter with his brother. In the beginning of this letter Pazvandoğlu specified that he sent his brother İbrahim Bey to prove his own loyalty to state and his

²³⁹ Zens, "Pasvanoğlu.." ,p.99.

²⁴⁰ Eren, "Pazvandoğlu.." , p.534, Ahmet Cevdet Paşa,*Tarih-i...*, Volume VII, pp.26-27.

²⁴¹ Jorga, *Osmanlı...*, Volume V, p.116.

²⁴² *Ibid.*, p.115.

²⁴³ Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyancıları.*, p.59.

²⁴⁴ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 2252.

promises.²⁴⁵ And he requested vizierate of Vidin and *mukataas* of Fethülislam and Kranye.²⁴⁶

The state accepted only his request of *mukaatas* while rejecting to grant him with the rank of vizierate²⁴⁷ with the aim of solving the problem immediately because Egypt was occupied by France.²⁴⁸ Kranye was also given to Pazvandođlu later, after he obtained the titles that he claimed.

However, Pazvandođlu did not stop demanding new posts and so he demanded the rank of *Kapıcıbaşılik* and *Kaymakamlık* of Vidin first and then sent another petition after a few months to be given the rank of vizierate of Vidin. He stated that he would struggle with bandits on the mountains and battle where the state orders him. In the reply to Pazvand's letter it was declared that he was to be given *Kapıcıbaşılik* for the time being and his wish for Vizierate was to be considered later.²⁴⁹ As it is understood from this document the state did not have the intention to give vizierate to Pazvandođlu.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁵ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 2699 and B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 2262.

²⁴⁶ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 2699.

²⁴⁷ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 4442.

²⁴⁸ Although he was forgiven by the state, the state officials in the region were cautious about Pazvand. They decided not to rely on him until the document which included his forgiveness is arrived to them. See, B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 3010.

²⁴⁹ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 16147/C. B.O.A. 16147/B and B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 15554.

²⁵⁰ The unwillingness of state can be seen in the document which is dated 1799 (1214). This document was sent by grand vizier (*Sadrızam*) and he said that the negotiations about the vizierate of Pazvand were prolonged purposely to gain time. B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 2631.

After the consideration of his demands in divan, the state granted Pazvandođlu the rank of *Kapıcıbaşılik* first.²⁵¹ But there was also another problem for Osman which was the appointment of Hüseyin Ađa as the nazır of Vidin. Osman sent another petition to the government and requested again to be given the rank of vizireate as vizier to Vidin. Pazvandođlu said that appointing another ruler to Vidin would cause problem since there is not enough post to accommodate another ruler in the area. He also assumed that the existing *kaymakam* who was Pazvandođlu himself could undertake this duty and notified that he is not happy with the *mutasarrif* of Niđbolu and asked the government to let him control such an important frontier with his own men.²⁵² This claim was accepted by the government.²⁵³ In addition to this according to a *Hatt-ı Hümayun* dated 1796-97 (1212), Osman was given the right of collecting *cizye* in Vidin.²⁵⁴ However, in another document it was signified that although Pazvand promised to obey the state authority he was not a reliable person and the *cizye* (head-taxes) of Vidin was given him as deposit.²⁵⁵

Osman also did not accept every offer to him, although he begged the Sultan for his pardon. His demand was to be the only ruler of his region through an official position, and the approval of his status by the state by assigning him as the sole ruler of Vidin. He reached this claim in a few months when he was granted the rank of vizierate and the title of three-

²⁵¹ *Kapıcıbaşılik* was one the most important posts which was desired by *ayans*. By means of this official post *ayans* became a member of military group.

²⁵² B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 2287.

²⁵³ Eren, "Pazvandođlu..", p.534.

²⁵⁴ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 12761.

²⁵⁵ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 12327.

tailed pasha on Muharrem 12, 1214 (June 22, 1799).²⁵⁶ Although the state gave him the rank of vizierate, it is seen that the government did not trust him and stayed cautious about him since it was decided that Vidin and its surrounding area would be observed carefully.²⁵⁷

After the vizierate Pazvandoğlu Osman' attitude against the state and his activities were observed by the state carefully and the reports sent about him confirmed the maintenance of his loyalty to the state. In the report it was also said that when Pazvandoğlu Osman was asked whether he felt antagonism against the state or not, he said that bad events remained in the past, he had not any antagonism against anyone. He also said that he was not planning to take revenge of anything. He also added that he would prove his loyalty, if he was employed with a duty by the state. Then according to the document Pazvandoğlu was advised to appoint a loyal *kethüda* since his men were not trusted anymore by the government.²⁵⁸

3.5. From Higher to Highest: Osman's Last Attempts Before Integration

However, Pazvandoğlu Osman who was a restless rebel began to disobey again after a very short time.²⁵⁹ He led the bandit leaders to assault on Lofça, Plevne, Tırnova and Rusçuk to gain more lands.²⁶⁰ Pazvandoğlu and other bandits had an advantage of absence of a bigger army which

²⁵⁶ According to Özkaya this must be 18 June 1799. Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyamları..*, p.59.

²⁵⁷ *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 15547.*

²⁵⁸ *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2617.* On this recommendation Pazvandoğlu wrote a petition which requested the appointment of a *Kapıkethudası*. *B.O.A Hatt-ı Hümayun 2000.*

²⁵⁹ According to the informations which came from Vidin Pazvandoğlu Osman deviated again. *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2344; B.O.A.,Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2557/B.*

²⁶⁰ *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 14419.*

could surpass them in the Balkans. Even many of the Janissaries who came to Vidin from Belgrade began to retreat to their garrison since they took side with Pazvandoğlu.²⁶¹ The Serbian *knezes* complained about the Janissaries to Hacı Mustafa Paşa, the military governor of Belgrade. Thus Mustafa Paşa was forced to launch a campaign against Pazvandoğlu. Hacı Mustafa Paşa increased the number of soldiers and provided their expenditure through raising the taxes. But the *reaya* did not manage to pay for. The *knezes* suggested the armament of *reaya*. Mustafa Paşa accepted this and announced to arm everybody.²⁶²

Pazvandoğlu Osman knew the fact that the Sultan would not be able to send an army to prevent his attacks thus he sent the *yamaks* under his command back to Belgrade in 1800. The *yamaks* captured Pozorofça, Cupria and Semendire without any serious opposition.²⁶³ In addition, Pazvandoğlu desiring to capture the territories until the Black Sea collaborated with the Crimean Khan Mehmed Giray who had already rebelled in Şumnu. According to the tradition, if he had managed to take over the throne, Pazvandoğlu had the intention to make Mehmed Giray the sultan, while he would have been his grand vizier.²⁶⁴ Nicolae Jorga also confirms the relationship between the two and their contract of becoming one is sultan the other is grand vizier. He even claims that the assault against Pazvandoğlu in 1802 was due to his backing of Mehmet Giray Khan.²⁶⁵ The priest Sofroni in his

²⁶¹ Zens, "Pasvanoğlu..", p. 100; Miller, *The Ottoman..*, p.46.

²⁶² Zens, "Pasvanoğlu..", p.100. So, armed Serbians paved the way for uprising in 1804.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, p.100.

²⁶⁴ Eren, "Pazvandoğlu..", p.534; Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyanları..*, p.68.

²⁶⁵ Jorga, *Osmanlı...*, Volume V, p.133.

memoirs also mentions of this event and says that Pazvandođlu was punished because of this act.²⁶⁶

As a result of these attacks of Pazvandođlu, the central administration sent an order that the Albanians and Bosnians were to be prevented from migrating to the Pazvandođlu's territory. Pazvandođlu's troops and his *yamaks* faced the first serious resistance when they came closer to Belgrade; yet, Hacı Mustafa Paşa's small army was not so successful in stopping them. After that, Mustafa Paşa requested help from his Serbian supporters. Upon this, while Knez Bircanine repelled them till the border of Vidin, Knez Alexa Nenadovic stayed in Belgrade to guard Mustafa Paşa. Against a possible retaliation by Pazvandođlu, the troops made up of the *reaya* were not released for several weeks.²⁶⁷ Moreover, the central administration sent a *hüküm* (decree) to Pazvandođlu in the middle of September, 1800, reminding him of his crimes against the state and told him that he was removed from his position as the "Guardian of Vidin".²⁶⁸ Upon this Pazvandođlu, organized another revolt collaborating with the janissaries in Belgrade to attempt a plot against the *Paşalık* of Belgrade,²⁶⁹ and the *yamaks* murdered the captain of the garrison after they entered into the castle.²⁷⁰

Upon his support of the rebellious groups in Belgrade and his own rebellious acts, the centre had removed Pazvandođlu from the vizierate and

²⁶⁶ Vračalı Sofroni, *Osmanlı'da...*, p.44.

²⁶⁷ Zens, "Pasvanođlu..", p.101.

²⁶⁸ Özkaya, *Dađlı İsyamları...*, p.69.

²⁶⁹ The bandits who worked for Pazvandođlu caused terror in many regions. One of them was Niđbolu and these bandits cut the noses and ears of people living there. *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2166.*

²⁷⁰ Zens, "Pasvanođlu..", p.99; see *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 5490.*

informed the *serhad ağas* (commander of the janissaries on the border) and the *ocak* of the janissaries.²⁷¹ The court had also ordered him to stay in his mansion in Vidin²⁷² and the control was given to the hands of the *zabit* (the officer) of the Janissaries as the Guardian of Vidin, until the arrival of the new guardian there.²⁷³

Being informed about the imperial decree which ordered the execution of him, Pazvandoğlu started an embarkment to Wallachia and some of his men started to threaten Bucarest; thus worrying the foreign consuls about the situation.²⁷⁴ Similar to his previous acts Pazvandoğlu Osman sent his apologies to the Sultan and promised his loyalty to the state once more. Besides the intervention of the higher officials, Osman asked the foreign consuls also to help him for the sultan's pardon. The following letter includes Pazvandoğlu's help request from a higher official, Hasan Paşa who was a military commander in Wallachia at that time. In this letter, Pazvandoğlu mentions that both he and Cengiz Giray (Mehmet Giray) were so resentful of their acts of treason against their lords. He also indicates their fear from the power and greatness of the Sublime Porte and seeks forgiveness, requesting this certain official's help. This certain official mentions his doubts regarding Pazvandoğlu's words, yet, leaving the last word to the sultan as usual.²⁷⁵

²⁷¹ The Voyvoda of Wallachia recommended the State to postpone the abrogation of Pazvandoğlu's vizierate; otherwise Pazvandoğlu Osman might continue his uprising. See, *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2928*.

²⁷² *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 15314 and Hatt-ı Hümayun, 15290*.

²⁷³ Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyamları..*, p.68.

²⁷⁴ The fellows of Pazvandoğlu Osman, Manav İbrahim, Koşancalı Halil and Celiloğlu İsmail attacked constantly to Niğbolu, Ziştoy and Wallachia. These attacks encouraged the intervention of Russia. See, *Uzunçarşılı, Meşhur..*, pp.18-20.

²⁷⁵ *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 3017*.

Another person Pazvandođlu requested help as an intermediary was the Russian envoy. The *voyvoda* of Wallachia, in the document dated 1215 (1800-1801) indicates Pazvandođlu's request from the ambassador to help him.²⁷⁶ Yet another document sent by the same *voyvoda* in 1217 (1802-1803), asked the final decision of the Sublime Porte about the Pasvand's meeting with the Russian envoy.²⁷⁷

Upon the interventions of the foreign consuls and due to Pazvandođlu's apology, the state declared that his vizierate was to be given back to Pazvandođlu, on the condition that he was to remove his troops from Wallachia.²⁷⁸ In the August of 1802, Pazvandođlu's vizierate was reassigned.²⁷⁹ According to a document from 1217 (1802-1803), the sancak of Niđbolu was also granted to Pazvand.²⁸⁰ Upon his request of a new position in 1220 (1805-1806), by increasing its amount the state also granted the revenues of province of Adana to Pazvandođlu.²⁸¹

After becoming a vizier for the second time, Pazvandođlu Osman, changed his attitude remarkably and began to struggle with the rebels in different regions of the Balkans.²⁸² He also guarded the Ottoman borders

²⁷⁶ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 2382. In addition to B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 5084; and B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 5102.

²⁷⁷ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 2070.

²⁷⁸ Pazvandođlu especially emphasized that he wanted vizierate to serve well to state. Moreover he wanted the rule of Vidin on the conditions that no one is to be appointed as the governor of Vidin until he died. See, B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 2519/A.

²⁷⁹ Eren, "Pazvandođlu..", p.535.; Özkaya, *Dađlı İsyamları...*, p.83; Ahmet Cevdet Pařa, *Tarih-i ..*, Volume VII, p.251.

²⁸⁰ B.O.A. *Cevdet Tasnifi Dahiliye* 229. Eren states that the province of Niđbolu was given to Pazvand during his first vizierate. Eren, *op.cit.*, p.534.

²⁸¹ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 4226.

²⁸² B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 2412.

against the Russians when the Russo-Ottoman War broke out in 1806. After the war, cutting the direct link between the Russians and the Serbs, Osman contributed to the suppression of the Serbian rebellion.²⁸³

²⁸³ Zens, "Pasvanožlu..", p.103.

CHAPTER 4

AN EVALUATION OF THE CASE OF PAZVANDOĞLU

4.1. Osman's Death and Aftermath

After he was given back the rank of vizierate by the Ottoman Sultan, Pazvandoğlu Osman defended successfully Vidin against Russia; thus he proved his loyalty to Sultan. In 1807 he died in his residence.²⁸⁴ His treasurer (*hazinedar*) Molla İdris Ağa sent a letter to the *voyvoda* of Wallachia to inform the death of Pazvandoğlu Osman. According to the letter of Molla, Pazvandoğlu Osman died in 28 January 1807 (*19 Zilkade 1221*).²⁸⁵ The *voyvoda* of Wallachia sent this information to the Ottoman Sultan. He also specified that Vidin fell in to chaos because of the death of Pazvandoğlu.²⁸⁶

One of the *boyars* (Romanian local administrator), who was in Vidin at that time, informed the *voyvoda* of Wallachia about the events which occurred after the death of Pazvandoğlu Osman. The commander in chief of the janissaries with the help of local notables of Vidin registered the property of Osman and decided to deliver it to his son and to Molla İdris. The notables wanted to take over the administration of Vidin until the Sultan sent an order about this issue. But Molla İdris rejected their claim and took

²⁸⁴ Zens and Bajraktarevic gives the date as 27 January 1807, Eren, "Pazvandoğlu.", p.103; F. Bajraktarevic, "Paswan-oglu" *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Volume VIII, Brill, 1995, pp.284-285, p.285. But Eren and Jorga give the date 5 February, Eren, "Pazvandoğlu.", p.535; Nicolae Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, (tr. Nilüfer Epeçeli), Volume V, İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2005, p.151. Özkaya says that he died at the end of January, Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyamları*, p.101.

²⁸⁵ "İş bu mâh-ı mübârek zilkâdenin on tokuzuncu yevmi Salı badelasr saat on bire çaryek kalarak devletlü efendimiz dar-ı fenadan dar-ı bekâyâ rihlet itmiş olmağla.." *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 5432*. According to document, it was specified that the day of the Pazvand was Tuesday, but when the date which is given in the document controlled in the internet site of TTK (Turkish Historical Society) it was Wednesday.

²⁸⁶ *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2010/A*.

the administration of the city.²⁸⁷ Jorga also noted that Molla İdris acted the real heir of Pazvandoğlu Osman and helped the Ottoman government during the Russian war.²⁸⁸ Moreover, he was paid for his services and it was said that his army, which consisted of 120 janissary regiments and there were 12.000 soldier and 1.500 Albanians under his command. Boppe depending on the reports of Meriage gave almost the same information in his work. In addition, he noted that before his death, Pazvandoğlu Osman entrusted the administration of Vidin, his son, his soldiers, and his treasury to Molla İdris. Interestingly it is said that his wife who was not mentioned a lot in the documents married after the Osman's death.²⁸⁹

Finally, after some discussions important amounts of Osman's lands were given to Molla İdris. These lands covered the lands up to Niş and the Danube region from Orzova to Niğbolu.²⁹⁰ According to Meriage, Osman's property consisted of 14.800 *okr* silver money; 7 million *ducats* gold; 8 *okr* jewels; many horses; guns and other military equipments.²⁹¹

Molla İdris did not only get the heritage of Pazvandoğlu Osman but also continued the traditions and relations that Osman established. For example, according to Meriage, Molla İdris continued the relations with France. The French government began to involve in politics in the Balkans

²⁸⁷ The boyar gives a different date for the death of Pazvandoğlu Osman: "Mah-ı kanun-ı saninin on dördünde" This date corresponds to 26 January. *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 6362.*

²⁸⁸ Jorga, *Osmanlı..*, Volume V, p. 191; Özkaya also says that the *muhafızlık* of Vidin and the province of Niğbolu was given to Molla İdris. See, Özkaya, *Dağlı İsyancıları...*, p.101, *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 6362.*

²⁸⁹ Jorga, *Osmanlı..*, Volume V, p.134, 151.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.268.

²⁹¹ One *okr* was equal to 3 French Liras; see Auguste Boppe, "La Mission De L'adjudant-commandant Mériage a Widin", *Annales Ecole libre des sciences politiques*, Tome Premier, Paris, 1886, pp.259-293, p.268.

after Napoleon came to throne in France. In fact, Meriage was on his way to Vidin in 1807 to meet Pazvandoğlu Osman when he learned about Pazvandoğlu's death. Therefore he gave the letter, which was written by Andreossy ,who was one of the inspector-generals of Napoleon at that time, to Molla İdris. The latter promised that he was ready to fulfill any services that were done before by Pazvandoğlu Osman for France. İdris wanted to be approved by the Ottoman State as the administrator of Vidin and needed France on this matter. Molla said that he would be ready for the commands of Napoleon if he was given the help. In his interview with Meriage he said that "I'm the only administrator in Vidin. I had managed the province for 14 years under the command of Pazvand. I trusted him. I deserved his friendship and also of the country and the soldiers. While Pazvand was dying he entrusted me his son and the administration of the region. He treated me as his son and I liked him as a father. My loyalty to İstanbul was endless and I'm ready to prove it. But I'm afraid of injustices of İstanbul. I hope the Sultan takes my services into consideration. Napoleon will find me ready to apply his commands. I do not think the Sultan will attack me. But if he does I will defend myself. If the ambassador of France wants to open his office nearby my palace this would prevent my enemies' intrigues in İstanbul."²⁹² In return Meriage promised to fulfill Molla's desires and thus he gained Molla's trust. Then Meriage went to İstanbul to represent Molla for his affairs there. Molla İdris wanted Meriage to tell his loyalty to the Sultan and make him sure that he will pay taxes, which amounted one million *akça*.²⁹³ After the reports of Meriage reached Sebastiani, the representative of France in İstanbul, things turned in favor of Molla, and Sebastiani tried to persuade the opponents of Molla in the courts (*divan*) in İstanbul and he achieved this

²⁹² *Ibid.*, p.269.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.270.

by preventing the appointment of Hurşid Paşa to Vidin. Then Molla was given the rule of Vidin and financial administration of Vidin as well as he was appointed as vizier to Vidin and Molla was informed about these appointments on 9 March 1807.²⁹⁴

Thus Molla İdris Ağa by following Pazvandoğlu's policy of keeping relations with the European states benefited from these relations for his own business and gained a legal status in Vidin. Afterward, there happened a problem between Molla and the Ottoman state. Because of this Hafız Ali Paşa was sent upon him in 1813 and Molla accepted to obey to the Sultan. Later than he went to *İşkodra* and died there from plaque.²⁹⁵ Molla İdris retained his post until 1828 when he was replaced with a governor Hüseyin Paşa appointed by the government.²⁹⁶

In fact the Ottoman state appointed Hüseyin Paşa to Vidin instead of an *ayan* in order not to meet another *ayan* problem in the region. This policy was a part of the Ottoman reforms, which aimed to strengthen the central authority, started during the reign of Selim III. But, these reforms, which Selim III began to work on them in the 1790s, also brought the end of this sultan since these reforms led to a general unrest among the Janissaries, the *ayans* and the *ulema*. They unified their power, so Sultan Selim III abdicated in 1807.²⁹⁷ The reason for the *ayans's* reaction especially from Rumelia was the existence of *Nizam-ı Cedid* garrisons and also the idea of

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.271. Cevdet Paşa says that Hurşid Ahmed Paşa who was appointed in place of Pazvandoğlu Osman was ruling the province of Rumelia, for this reason Vidin and Niğbolu were given to Molla İdris. See, Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, Volume VIII, İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1275, p.146.

²⁹⁵Jorga, *Osmanlı..*, Volume V, p.191.

²⁹⁶ William V. Herbert, *The Chronicles of a Virgin Fortress*, London: Osgood, McIlvaine&Co., 1896, p.29.

²⁹⁷ Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Volume II, Cambridge, 1977, p.366.

foundation of *Nizam-ı Cedid* garrisons in Rumelia. Since the *Nizam-ı Cedid* troops proved their efficiency in Akka during the removal of Napoleon from Egypt in the beginning of 19th century, Selim III decided to expand this new military organization in Anatolia and Rumelia. This meant the restriction of the *ayans*' political authority in their area of influence. And Selim III ordered to establish *Nizam-i Cedid* military units in Edirne in 1805, and then the discontent of *ayans* became apparent. Tirsiniklioğlu İsmail, the *ayan* of Rusçuk provoked the Rumelian *ayans* against Sultan Selim III and against his reforms.²⁹⁸ In 1805, after the announcement of foundation of *Nizam-ı Cedid* garrisons in Tekirdağ, an uprising triggered by the *ayans* of Rumelia broke out and spread among the janissaries in Tekirdağ. While the Ottoman military troops led by Kadı Abdurrahman Paşa departed from İstanbul to suppress the uprising of Tekirdağ, another incident caused by the people of Silivri and Çorlu took place in Edirne. The aim of the people of Silivri and Çorlu, who were probably manipulated by the agents of *Şehzade* Mustafa, was to prevent the Sultan's army's entrance to Tekirdağ. Upon this development, Selim III ordered Abdurrahman Paşa to retreat because he did not want to cause turmoil in the region. However, the retreat of Abdurrahman Paşa encouraged the opponents of reforms who composed of conservative *ulema*, the janissaries and the *ayans*.²⁹⁹

The janissaries's reaction to the reforms reached its peak in 1807 when Grand Vizier Köse Musa Paşa ordered the dressing of the janissaries

²⁹⁸ Enver Ziya Karal, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, Volume V, 7th Edition, Ankara : TTK Basımevi,1999, p.80.; Sina Akşin, "Siyasal Tarih (1789-1908)", *Türkiye Tarihi*, Volume III, (ed. Sina Akşin), İstanbul: Cem Yayınları, 2000, pp.88-89.; Sipahi Çataltepe, *19. Yüzyıl Başlarında Avrupa Dengesi ve Nizam-ı Cedid Ordusu*, İstanbul: Göçebe Yayınları, 1997, pp.221-223; According to Shaw, Grand Vizier Hafız İsmail Paşa sent a message to Tirsinikli in which he offered a conspiracy to kill Selim's statesman. After that they would rearrange the state mechanism in accordance with their own profits. See, Shaw, *History..*, p.367.

²⁹⁹ Karal, *Osmanlı..*, pp.80-81; Çataltepe, *19. Yüzyıl...*, pp.227-228, 238-240.

that were serving on the shores of the strait (*boğaz yamakları*) with *Nizam-ı Cedid* uniforms. The janissaries refused to wear the *Nizam-ı Cedid* uniforms because of the instigations of *ulema* and the conservative statesmen. Within a short time, the janissaries were organized under the leadership of Kabakçı Mustafa Paşa and revolted against the Ottoman Sultan in order to abolish the *Nizam-ı Cedid*. The major opponents of the *Nizam-ı Cedid* reforms Şehzade Mustafa and *Seyhülislam* Ataullah Efendi supported Kabakçı and even collaborated with him. At the end, Selim III had to accept the demands of the rebels and issued an imperial edict abolishing the *Nizam-ı Cedid*.³⁰⁰ And finally, Sultan Selim was dethroned on 29 May 1807 and *Nizam-ı Cedid* army was disbanded. It is important to remember that Tirsinikli İsmail Ağa, the *ayan* of Rusçuk, was among the reactionaries who deposed the reforming Sultan. Then reaction again continued among the Ottoman ruling class during the reign of Mustafa IV (1807-1808) as well.

Meanwhile the supporters of Selim III came together under the leadership of Alemdar Mustafa Paşa who replaced Tirsinikli as the *ayan* of Rusçuk. Alemdar came to İstanbul to rescue Selim III from imprisonment but he did not succeed in rescuing Selim III.³⁰¹

Interestingly it was Alemdar Mustafa Paşa the *ayan* of Rusçuk who was appointed as the Grand Vizier established authority in the empire during the first three months of the reign of Mahmud II. Alemdar succeeded in eliminating the opponents of *Nizam-ı Cedid* reforms from the army and institutions of the ruling class. The rise of a provincial *ayan* to the post of Grand Vizierate clearly demonstrated that the provincial notables became so powerful that they could depose or dethrone the Ottoman sultans. Furthermore by preparing the Document of Agreement (*Sened-i İttifak*),

³⁰⁰ Karal, *Osmanlı..*, pp.80-83.

³⁰¹ Shaw, *History..*, p.1.

most of the important *ayans* of Rumelia and Anatolia assumed the protective role of the Ottoman State in the personality of Alemdar Mustafa Paşa.³⁰² According to İnalçık, *Sened-i İttifak* expresses the attempts of local notables to control the authority of state and it was the sign of the power of the *ayans*.³⁰³ With this event the *ayans* joined the determinant groups such as *ulema* and the Janissaries who once so powerful and could decide who must be the sultan.

After a short time, Mahmud II achieved to consolidate his authority back when the janissary corps was abolished in 1826. These events opened a new era in the Ottoman history. Then Mahmud II step by step reestablished central authority and eliminated the *ayans* and the opponents of reforms. In fact the policies that the Ottoman State followed against the *ayans* as in the case of Pazvandoğlu Osman before the reign of Mahmud II was different from the ones followed in Europe. As indicated above, in contrast to the European states, the Ottoman state preferred to incorporate the disobedient peripheral powers, which were really powerful enough to challenge the central authority, into the state mechanism by granting official titles, posts and gifts. That is why acquisition of the official titles or posts by the *ayans* in general and Pasvandoğlu Osman in particular immediately after a rebellion, cannot always be explained just by the 'weakness of the Ottoman state', but a policy strengthening the state authority and keeping the state away from dissolution. But this method of toleration nevertheless,

³⁰² "They promised to respect each other's territory and autonomy, to act separately and collectively as guarantors for each other's fulfillment of the promises, and to support the central government against any opposition to its reforms, marching to İstanbul whenever they heard of any uprising, without even wasting time to secure the sultan's permission (article 6)" in Shaw, *History...* p.2.

³⁰³ Halil İnalçık, "Sened-i İttifak ve Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayunu" in *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Toplum ve Ekonomi*, (ed. Halil İnalçık), 2nd Edition, İstanbul: Eren Yayınları, 1996, pp.343-361, p.343.

almost thoroughly came to an end during the rule of Mahmud II who rather preferred to fight against the *ayans*.

In consequence, the *ayans* who once threatened the central authority and experienced their heyday in the second half of 18th century took their place in the history and some of them left as the well-known and rich families (*eşraf*) of the regions where they dominated once as *ayans* but without power and rights once they had.

4.2. Tyrant or Hero? :Osman's Public Image

Pazvandoğlu Osman spent his life rebelling against the state, begging pardon of the sultans and struggling against the other local notables living around Vidin. Certainly it was a rebel for the State and troublesome *ayan* for the other *ayans*³⁰⁴ and this was one side of his life.

But there was also another side of his life which was his relations with the common people living in Vidin. In fact, the image of Pazvandoğlu Osman, who was a typical example of the powerful *ayan* in the 18th century, is controversial. Osman sometimes behaved like a protector and an employer for people who suffered from the wars, drought and poverty, but in times of war Osman was not merciful towards his disobedient men. This kind of relation between the *ayans* and the people whom he ruled in fact was the result of the physical conditions that the people in the Balkans. Dimitrije Djordjevic, who analyzed the general characteristics of the 18th century Balkan peasantry, said that this dependency in a way shaped the relation between the peasants and the *ayans*. What a peasant wanted was to secure his and his family's life. The primary means for his survival was land, which was also a determinant of his lifestyle, social and daily life

³⁰⁴ For example Tirsinikli İsmail, the *ayan* of *Rusçuk*, was one of the enemies of Pazvandoğlu Osman because Osman's policy to extend his property and lands caused troubles in the Danube region and disturbed Tirsinikli İsmail who had economic and politic interests in the same region. Thus they became rival and enemy of each other.

practices. The amount of grain per year constituted his major concern. He was very suspicious of the concept of change that came with famine, drought, epidemics and war which were the realities of the 18th century and caused migrations in the Balkans.³⁰⁵ In fact the situation was not different in the 17th century too. For example Atanasije, a Serbian teacher, gives a snapshot picture of the bad days that the Serbians experienced after the wars in his memoirs. Atanasije demonstrated the destructive effects of the war in the 1680's on Serbia as follows:

And so for ten years all Serbian lands, abundant and fertile and with a large population became deserted after the terrible war. All cities and all villages were swept away, monasteries also...At this time the Almighty unleashed on the Serbian land: first diseases and then again the sword and diseases together, looting and starvation, so (that) Serbian men ate dogs and meat from (human) corpses (who) died from starvation. It all happened in these days and my eyes witnessed it. All over Belgrad and its streets lay corpses of dead people, and all over the country and roads. There was no one to bury them...Faces were tanned from hunger and (they) looked like Ethiopians. And so they died, only one-tenth of the people survived. Those who did escape from the country and left a desert behind.³⁰⁶

Travelers who visited the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century also mention the conditions in the Balkans. For example Lady Montagu who was well known with her descriptive letters about the Ottoman Empire, passed through the Balkans and witnessed the conditions of peasants during her journey from London to İstanbul at the beginning of the 18th century. Lady Montagu in her letters noted that the Serbian peasants were very poor and

³⁰⁵ Dimitrije Djordjevic, "The Balkan Peasantry, 1740-1914: A Synthesis", *Essays on War and Society in East Central Europe, 1740-1920*, (eds. S. Fischer-Galati and B.K. Kiraly), East European Monographs No. CCXXXIII, Atlantic Research and Publications, 1987, pp.193-222, pp.193-194.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.197.

living under bad conditions. The janissaries treated cruelly towards the Serbian peasants and plundered their properties. Though this was a crime no one even the *kadı* could not prevent their illegal activities since the janissaries had such power.³⁰⁷

Especially the wars among Austria, Russia and Ottoman Empire in the 18th century made the Balkan peasants victims of wars and suffered from the international power struggle as mentioned before.³⁰⁸ The mostly influenced region during the wars with Austria and Russia in the 18th century was the region which located in the borders of today's Bulgaria. These wars brought about various hazardous effects on social life. Some of these effects were the decrease of population in some regions and migration from one region to another as a general tendency; migration from rural to urban areas was often seen in Rumelia as well.³⁰⁹ In addition, an important number of Bulgarian peasants migrated towards north and south during the rebellion of Pazvandoğlu Osman and Ottoman-Russia war of 1768.³¹⁰ Because the people did not have anything to make their ends meet. For example, Priest Sofroni the Bishop of Vraça told in his memoirs that when he went to his region to collect the ecclesiastical incomes granted to him, the amount of income was very few because there was a great famine in these areas at this time (1794-95). More than this there was a problem of plague which spread out in the region and almost all villages became ruined.³¹¹

³⁰⁷ Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *Doğu Mektupları*, İstanbul: Can Yayınları, 1996, p.34, 44.

³⁰⁸ Djordjevic, "The Balkan..", pp.195-196.

³⁰⁹ Peter Sugar, "Unity and Diversity in the Lands of Southeastern Europe in the Eighteenth Century", in *Nationality and Society in Habsburg and Ottoman Europe*, Variorum, 1997, pp.255-270, pp.263-268.

³¹⁰ Djordjevic, "The Balkan..", p.195.

³¹¹ "Piskoposluğuma (Vraça) nihayet ulaştım. Köyleri geziyor, miri parası topluyordum; fakat geleneğe göre (piskoposa) verilen yardım çok azdı, çünkü bütün

Although this was the case in the whole Balkans, the Ottoman state could not help the peasants to recover their bad conditions so these people hopelessly had to depend on the powerful personalities like *ayans* since the latter were economically and politically powerful and were accepted as those who brought political security and stability to the peasants and cultivated lands and became their hero.

Pazvandođlu Osman the *ayan* of Vidin was also a hero in the eyes of the people as much as he helped the people of Vidin. According to Herbert, Pazvandođlu was a very helpful character. He was the protector of poor people. In addition he was very generous for his visitors. Although he was bloodthirsty in war, he was very friendly and generous during the peacetime. The most important feature of him was his sensitivity for the public needs.³¹² It can be said that because of his positive attitudes towards the people and his efforts in developing the city, the people of Vidin showed a great respect to him.³¹³ It is significant to note here that after all of Osman's rebellion, the people of Vidin sent petitions (*mahzar*) to İstanbul in which they begged the sultan to pardon Pazvandođlu Osman.³¹⁴ Although

Bulgaristan'da o yıl büyük açlık vardı: Bir okka un yirmi paraydı....Ben piskoposluk bölgesinden çıktıktan sonra o yıl takdiri ilahiyle veba salgını başladı ve bölgedeki bütün kasabaları, köyleri sardı...hastalığın uğramadığı köy kalmadı". Vračalı Sofroni, *Osmanlı'da Bir Papaz Günahkar Sofroni'nin Çileli Hayat Hikayesi 1739-1813*, (tr. Aziz Nazmi Şakir-Taş), İstanbul : Kitap Yayınevi, 2003, pp.32-33. For literary narration of Sofroni's life see *Ibid.*, pp.50-70.

³¹² William V. Herbert, *The Chronicles of a Virgin Fortress*, London: Osgood, McIlvaine&Co., 1896, pp.26-27.

³¹³ According to Cevat Eren, Pazvandođlu Osman was famous even in the Aegean Islands. See, A. Cevat Eren, "Pazvandođlu Osman" *Maarif Vekaleti İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Volume IX, İstanbul: M.E.B. Yayınları, 1964, pp.532-535, p.534.

³¹⁴ Robert Zens, "Pasvanođlu Osman Paşa and the Paşalık of Belgrade, 1791-1807", *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, Volume VIII, No1-2, 2002, pp. 89-105, p.92; Yücel Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Dađlı İsyamları (1791-1808)*, Ankara: D.T.C.F Yayınları, 1983, p.58. In 1798-1799 (1213) a petition which was

one can think that Pazvandođlu Osman might have enforced or organized the local people to send these petitions, such attitude of the people of Vidin can be evaluated as the sign of reliance of the peasantry upon him. The imperial edict, which was sent to the people of Vidin in 1797 (1211) ordering the people of Vidin is a good evidence for this reliance. In this edict, it was ordered that the people of Vidin must help the Ottoman officials to capture Pazvandođlu. If they arrested him and sent to the Porte they would be forgiven; otherwise they would be punished.³¹⁵ In fact, though that type of warnings was sent many times to the people of Vidin, nothing happened and ended up with no result. Their support to Pazvandođlu continued and the latter also continued to disturb the government. For example, an imperial decree, which was sent from the Ottoman Palace to the people of Vidin, depicts that the people of Vidin supported Pazvandođlu Osman because they were afraid of him. In this decree, it was ordered that if they help the Ottoman officials to arrest Pazvandođlu Osman, who had escaped from Vidin during the war, they would be forgiven. It was reminded that if they did not take the order into consideration many people would be executed even if they were innocent.³¹⁶

Although the decrees show that the people of Vidin were the supporters of Pazvandođlu Osman, some reports however showed the other side of the coin. For instance, a report that was sent from Vidin to İstanbul in 1795-96 (1210) informed that the people of Vidin accepted the sovereignty of Pazvandođlu Osman because they were afraid of him.³¹⁷ This

signed by 160 persons of Vidin can be an example for the petitions which was sent by people of Vidin to İstanbul. *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2941/C.*

³¹⁵ *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 11152.* About sending the *ferman* to Vidin see. *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2784.*

³¹⁶ Özkaya, *Dađlı İsyamları..*, p.52.

³¹⁷ *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2309/G.*

might have been true since Pazvandođlu was known with his rebellious nature as a document shows that he captured one of the decrees sent by the government to the people and he sent it back to government without informing the public to not get their opposition.³¹⁸

Because of these acts, the Ottoman government always kept an eye on him. Even during the siege of Vidin in 1798 the government sent an agent Ali of Hotin to learn what was happening in Vidin. The letter, which was sent by agent to İstanbul, is an important source for understanding what the people of Vidin thought about Pazvandođlu Osman. The agent said that Pazvandođlu did not give permission to anyone to enter Vidin and took strict precautions. In spite of this, the agent said that he was able to enter the city, talking to the people in the bazaars (*çarşı*) and coffeehouses (*kahvehane*). According to the agent, the people were afraid of him, they were in fact hating Pazvandođlu. They told to the agent that Pazvandođlu Osman tortured and killed some people. The agent gathered some information about the military power of Osman too. According to the agent, Pazvandođlu Osman had approximately 2.000-3.000 soldiers and he recruited 3.000 or 5.000 more soldiers from abroad and armed them. The soldiers who talked to the agent said that they were loyal to the Sultan and would prove their loyalty whenever they were given chance. The agent also mentioned of drought in the city that was originated from the siege and the people of Vidin were living in terrible conditions. The shops in Vidin except one or two of them were closed. Moreover Ali of Hotin the agent noted that Pazvandođlu Osman repaired his house and employed 200 workers in it.³¹⁹

³¹⁸ *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2480.*

³¹⁹ *B.O.A.,Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2464.*

However, while this was the case in Vidin, the government sent orders to prohibit sending of food to the city.³²⁰

Interestingly, besides the bad image of Pazvandođlu in the eyes of the people of Vidin, there happened different developments too. After having the rank of vizierate, Pazvandođlu Osman tried to develop Vidin by establishing industry there. He made this city a trading center and tried to improve the life standards in Vidin by promoting commercial activities. As a result of his efforts, Vidin became a very developed commercial port. Because of the positive attitude of Osman towards to native and foreign merchants, the city progressed in trade and became an important market, which supplied various goods for the European countries.³²¹ The developing commercial activities made Vidin a place where the different cultures met. It can be said that the economic interaction with different regions and cultures (especially with the West) provided the means for the modernization of Vidin and its people.

More significant was that Pazvandođlu Osman introduced the Western culture to the people of Vidin. Many buildings, galore and streets were constructed upon his orders as mentioned in Chapter 2. The important works undertaken by his orders were the construction of mosques, *medrese* and the library, which are known with the name of Pazvandođlu Osman.³²²

³²⁰ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 2584.

³²¹ Teodora Bakardjieva, "Kargaşa ve Yaratıcılık Arasında: XVIII. Yüzyılın Sonu ve XIX. Yüzyılın Başında Bir Taşra Kasabasının Hikayesi", *Osmanlı*, V, Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 1999, pp.631-639, pp.633-637.

³²² Herbert, *The Chronicles..*, pp.26-27; Eren, "Pazvandođlu..", p.535.

4.3. Osman and Foreign Powers

Pazvandoğlu Osman was remembered as one of the most important figures of the 18th century Balkans. He and his life are summarized by Nicolae Jorga as follows:

Never being defeated by the tuberculosis and scaring everyone with his appearance, this weak and pale faced tyrant ruled over his subjects with a strict justice regardless of the religion and thus, everyone admired and loved him. He did not live a lavish courtly life and differed from the others around him with his modest dressing style. He definitely did not share Tepedelenli Ali Paşa's fondness for the flamboyant palaces in Albania. Probably with the help of the French and Polish engineers, he turned Vidin into a first class modern fortress. He lived only with his mother - who prepared his food herself as a precaution, Gregorios, the Greek Orthodox bishop of Morea, and a certain person from the French subjects.³²³

According to Jorga Pazvandoğlu Osman was a figure, who recognized the sultan's authority and lived having neither with special titles nor privileges. Nevertheless, Pazvandoğlu was also a figure who, with the help of his personal capabilities, had deep relations and being a man of times, captured and controlled the ultimate power; a formidable person no one dared to talk against, unless he was defeated or destroyed totally.³²⁴

It is significant to point out that Pazvandoğlu Osman expanded his area of influence to such an extent that he attracted the attention of major European powers, France, Austria and Russia. Thus the power of Pazvandoğlu Osman resulted not only from his wealth and prestige but also from his relations with Europe and the European newspapers closely followed Osman's activities in Vidin. There were important connections

³²³ Nicolae Jorga, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Tarihi*, (tr. Nilüfer Epeçeli), Volume V, İstanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2005, p.116.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.194.

between Pazvandoğlu and the European states. For example, he established close relations with France.³²⁵ Pazvandoğlu Osman who acted as "semi-independent sovereign" in Vidin sent an envoy to France to develop the political relations with Napoleon Bonaparte. At the same time, an English consul visited him at his palace to establish political and economic relations with Pazvandoğlu Osman.³²⁶ It is no doubt that there was an intensive relation between Pazvand and Europe. Jorga in his study gives the name and the aim of Pazvand's envoy that was sent to Napoleon. The name of this envoy was Nedelya Popovic and he was a Serbian. He carried a message from Pazvand to Napoleon, which was read that Pazvandoğlu Osman would support any kind of actions of France within borders of the Ottoman Empire.³²⁷

Depending on the relations with the European states Pazvandoğlu Osman acquired much more power. In fact, the reason for the interest of the European states (especially France) in Vidin was the economic and military power of Pazvandoğlu Osman in Vidin region, which located in a strategic position in between the Ottoman Empire, Russia and Austria-Hungary. Both Russia and France planned to use Pazvandoğlu both against each other and against the Ottoman Empire due to their own interests. Beside France and Russia, Austria also supported Pazvand too because of its future plan about the Balkans, but Austria was not successful as much as Russia and France. Nicolae Jorga said that Pazvandoğlu proved his power by

³²⁵ According to Zens, there were French officers and soldiers in Pazvand's army. See, Robert Zens, "Pasvanoğlu Osman Paşa and the Paşalık of Belgrade, 1791-1807", *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, Volume VIII, No.1-2, 2002, pp. 89-105, p.103.

³²⁶ William Miller, *The Ottoman Empire and Its Successors 1801-1927*, London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd, 1966, pp.19-20.

³²⁷ Jorga, *Osmanlı..*, Volume V, p.130.

resisting to the Ottoman army during the siege of Vidin and thus French sought to collaborate with him to annex Vidin to its territories.³²⁸

France also sent a mediator to Vidin. The intention of France was the continuation of the good relationships between France and Pazvandoğlu Osmanoğlu during the Russian occupation of some of the Ottoman provinces in the Balkans in 1806. Pazvandoğlu Osman promised to keep the good relations with France and to protect the French missionaries and officials in Vidin and to help them to set a connection with France.³²⁹ In fact there was no limit in the plans of France especially of Napoleon Bonaparte who even before the occupation of Egypt, planned to bring Ali Paşa of Janina (*Tepedelenli*) to the Ottoman throne. But because of the close relations between Ali Paşa and England, Bonaparte changed his plan and intended to bring Pazvandoğlu Osman to the Ottoman throne.³³⁰ Nevertheless, none of these plans could be materialized. Because, Pazvandoğlu Osman died in Vidin in 1807 and his property was given to Molla İdris; however, Osman's death did not put an end the problems in Vidin. The successor of Pazvandoğlu Osman, Molla İdris, did not cease the relations with European powers; he even got the support of France in assuming the post of Pazvandoğlu Osman. At the end, the Ottoman state had to recognize Molla İdris as the new *ayan* of Vidin.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.104.

³²⁹ Auguste Boppe, "La Mission De L'adjutant-commandant Mériage a Widin", *Annales Ecole libre des sciences politiques*, Tome Premier, Paris, 1886, pp.259-293, p.267.

³³⁰ Stanford J. Shaw, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Modern Türkiye*, Volume I, İstanbul: e Yayınları, 1994, p.362

4.4. Challenge to Integration: How to Deal with a Rebellious Ayan

During the 18th century, one of the most important problems that the Ottoman administration faced was the problem created by the *ayans* in provinces. The emergence of powerful *ayans* in Anatolia and Rumelia and their struggles for power created a severe authority problem for the state as in the case of Pazvandođlu Osman.³³¹ However, although the Ottoman government strove to remove Pazvandođlu Osman from provincial administration many times, nothing could be done. Therefore, each time, Osman was pardoned and was granted various ranks. In fact the toleration by the state of Pazvandođlu Osman was not an exceptional case since besides Pazvandođlu Osman, Tirsinikliođlu İsmail³³² and Yılıkođlu Süleyman who were also powerful *ayans*, sought to preserve their spheres of control and they were granted various ranks as a result of some of their services for the state as well.³³³

Although one can think that this shows desperate situation of the state, the scholars provided reasonable explanations for this situation. First of all it is said that in fact the responsibilities and duties expected from the *ayans* were of special importance in the context of *ayan*-state relations. As a result of these responsibilities and duties, the *ayans* and state became intermingled. These responsibilities and duties undertaken by the *ayans* were fundamentally important for the state in terms of military and fiscal administration of the provinces. Particularly during the movements of banditry and rebellions known as *Dađlı İsyamları* in Rumelia in the second half of the 18th century, the state had to demand help from the *ayans* of Rumelia and Anatolia to be able to cope with the bandits. In many cases,

³³¹ Uzunçarşılı, *Meşhur...*, p.7.

³³² *Ibid.*, p.8.

³³³ *Ibid.*, p.33-39. Özkaya, *Dađlı İsyamları...*, p.102.

the *ayans* successfully fought against the bandits and also gave support to the state in the wars. However, there were also cases where some *ayans* supported the bandits as Pazvandođlu Osman did and this made the situation more complicated. Under these circumstances, the Ottoman state followed a different policy and used the *ayans* whom they were thought loyal to the state and were not officially recognized *ayans*, against the *ayans* who supported the bandits and rebels.³³⁴ Although the government was not happy to share its authority in the provinces, it could not remove the *ayans* altogether because of their economic, military and administrative functions. There is no doubt that this deterred the state from removing the *ayans* from the provinces.

All these reveal that the state needed them. However, there is another explanation which emphasizes that granting official titles to those who might challenge the central authority was one of the policies of the Ottoman state in coping with the oppositional groups in order to integrate them into state mechanism.³³⁵ For example, Karen Barkey says that forgiveness or toleration of opposition groups was one of the methods of Ottoman state for centralization even during the early 17th century.³³⁶ This flexible attitude towards the oppositional groups and rebels became one of the most important methods for the survival of state. This assumption can be true in the case of Pazvandođlu Osman because he tried not to oppose directly to the state after the title vizierate was granted to him, despite his continuous attempts to expand his authority in the Danubian region by usual

³³⁴ Yücel Özkaya, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Dađlı İsyamları (1791-1808)*, Ankara: D.T.C.F Yayınları, 1983, pp.141-159. For the duties of ayans see, Mustafa Akdađ, "Osmanlı Tarihinde Âyânlık Düzeni Devri 1730-1839", *Tarih Arařtırmaları Dergisi*, Volume VIII-XII, No.14-23, 1970-1974, pp.51-61.

³³⁵ B.O.A., *Hatt-ı Hümayun*, 2617.

³³⁶ Karen Barkey, *Eřkiyalar ve Devlet Osmanlı Tarzı Devlet Merkezileřmesi*, (tr. Zeynep Altok), İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1999, pp.1-24.

illegal means. On the contrary, he turned into a figure who helped the Ottoman state resist against the Russian invasion of the Danubian territory and suppress the activities of local bandits in his area of influence. This policy of integrating the rebellious *ayans* into the state mechanism through granting those official titles and gifts was common in Anatolia too as in the case of two families *Küçükhalioğulları* and *Kozanoğulları* who were most influential *ayan* families in Cilicia region. (especially from the end of the 18th century to the end of the 19th century). For instance, the state attempted to overthrow Halil, who was the leading member of *Küçükhalioğulları* because of his misdoings in the region however it could not achieve to overthrow him due to the French invasion of Egypt and the uprisings in Rumelia. After the promulgation of *Tanzimat*, another member of the *Küçükhalioğulları*, *Mustuk*, not only accomplished expanding his area of influence in Cilicia but also he established good relationships with the high ranking officials in İstanbul. By doing so, he became so powerful that he was even able to determine the appointment of state officials to Cilicia region. In the same way, the *Kozanoğulları* family could manage to establish similar relationships with the state and demanded official posts such as *kapıcıbaşılık* from the state.³³⁷

Yet in another explanation, it is pointed out that in addition to the method of concession, the government used some other means to cope with the peripheral oppositional groups. The government never acted as mediator between the clashing *ayans*. Instead, it pursued more pragmatic policy. For instance, it supported economically and militarily weak *ayans* against the stronger ones. As a matter of fact, any kind of rivalry between the peripheral powers was more preferable for the state than an alliance or

³³⁷ These examples are evidences to assume that struggle of the state with the *ayans* and *ayan* families continued even after the promulgation of the *Tanzimat*. See Andrew G. Gould, "Lords or Bandits? The Derebeys of Cilicia", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Volume VII, No.4, 1976, pp. 485-506.

agreement. While the state overcame the problems with the powerful *ayans* through concession, it planned to get rid of the appropriate conditions.³³⁸

All these were the methods that the Ottoman state, which was a good example of typical dynastic states of early modern period, used to cope with the *ayans* prior to the 19th century though the problems continued with them in the early 19th century as in the case of Küçükaliöğulları and Kozanoğulları mentioned before. Nonetheless, the state would start to follow another policy and try to break or diminish the authority of local notables through the Sultan Mahmud II's policy of centralization from the 1810s onwards. Mahmud II initially fought against the less powerful *ayans* while he did nothing against the powerful *ayans* until their deaths. When they died, Mahmut II appointed his officials to their posts. For instance, the state could not restore the central authority in Rumelia until the deaths of most powerful three *ayans*-Tirsiniklioğlu İsmail (d. 1806), Pazvandoğlu Osman (d. 1807) and Yılıkoğlu Süleyman (d. 1813)-at the beginning of the 19th century. In addition, the Ottoman government changed the locations of some *ayans*, thus their influence were broken in the course of time. Moreover, the *ayans* were often appointed to various posts in İstanbul which was the other method to integrate the *ayans*. In consequence, the authority of *ayans* came to an end by the time a new era of reforms generally known as *Tanzimat*, started in 1839.³³⁹

³³⁸ Uzunçarşılı, *Meşhur..*, p.7.

³³⁹ Özcan Mert, "II. Mahmut Döneminde Taşradaki Merkeziyetçilik Politikası", *Türkler*, Volume XIII, Ankara, 2002, pp.720-723.

CONCLUSION

The Ottoman Empire went through an economic and administrative transformation process after the 16th century due to the conditions that the empire experienced. When the Ottoman Empire lost the wars and had to retreat from the territories that it extended until the gates of Vienna, the Ottoman statesmen tried to solve the various problems of the Empire like locating the people in safe areas, rearranging the provincial administration and establishing order in the state and solving the financial problems. Among these problems especially fiscal crisis in the Ottoman economy, which was resulted from the changes in the global economy in the 16th century, and the necessity of keeping up with the military developments in Europe, forced the Ottoman statesmen to develop new economic sources. The solution that they provided was the method of spreading the *iltizam* (tax-farming) within the *timar* system and this brought both the transformation of the Ottoman land-tenure system and the provincial administrative system. In the course of time the number of tax-farmers (*mültezims*) increased and tax-farm (*iltizam*) was granted to the local notables called *ayan* as well. These local notables with the right of tax-farming gradually prospered and began to acquire administrative duties and they entered into the Ottoman provincial administration system in all over the Ottoman Empire. Economic, military and political power of the local notables reached to such an extent that they became threatening power centers for the Ottoman state in the 18th and the early 19th centuries.

These *ayans* probably crystallized and became serious problem for the Ottoman government not only in Anatolia but also in the Balkans in the 18th century. However it was also in the same period that the Ottoman state paradoxically became dependent on the economic and military power of the local notables as a result of the wars with Russia and Austria which affected

and shook the Ottoman economic drastically. These in turn consolidated the local notables economically and politically.

One of the most outstanding local notables in the Balkans in the 18th century was Pazvandoğlu Osman. He was the son of Ömer Pazvan, previous *ayan* of Vidin, and inherited his father's legacy and became the *ayan* of Vidin in the 1790s. He consolidated his economic and military power through raiding the Danube region, the neighboring territories and succeeded in attracting the disobedient janissaries and bandits. Of course strategic location of Vidin, which was a commercial port on the Danube River, was an important contributing factor in the rise of Pazvandoğlu Osman too. His attitudes towards the people Vidin sometimes like a tyrant sometimes a father figure also enabled his stay for a long time in Vidin. He also contributed to the development of Vidin as a commercial center. Thus he became a dominant figure in the Danube region and but at the same time a serious problem for the Ottoman state.

Pazvandoğlu Osman several times fought against the Ottoman state in order to expand his area of influence. It is interesting that although he managed to defeat the Ottoman army, Pazvandoğlu Osman begged the Ottoman sultan, Selim III, for his pardon and demanded official ranks. The Ottoman sultan always forgave him and granted him the important ranks like *kapıcıbaşılık* and vizierate. Although the way that the Ottoman government treated Pazvandoğlu Osman seems very contradictory, this was one of the methods the Ottoman state used to cope with the provincial powers during this period. It can be thought that when the Ottoman state could not deal with the provincial power centers by force, it tried to integrate them into the state mechanism through granting official ranks and duties since the Ottoman government was busy with other threats in the borders as well as in the whole empire. Therefore, it can be assumed that the case of Pazvandoğlu Osman is a good example to demonstrate the

Ottoman methods of overcoming problems not only in the provinces in Anatolia but also in the provinces in the Balkans.

In his struggle for power Pazvandoğlu Osman benefitted from the European powers as well. For instance, he sent letters to the Ottoman government for his pardon via the Russian and French consuls. Mediation of the French and Russian consuls was very important from two aspects. First, it shows that these European states supported the potential power centers in the Balkans as a tool to carry out their politics in this area either against each other or against the Ottoman Empire. Second, this policy of pardon clearly shows that Pazvandoğlu Osman had a considerable military and economic power that these states discovered and could use against the Ottoman Empire. For this reason, Pazvandoğlu Osman's life and his struggles presented valuable evidences which displayed how the *ayans* rose to power and how they used their power against other *ayans* and against the Ottoman state in the 18th century in the Balkans on one hand and presented valuable evidences about the politics that the Ottoman government carried out in the provincial administration.

As pointed out above, the power of *ayans* or the age of *ayans* as said by McGowan reached its peak with the Document of Agreement named *Sened-i İttifak* in 1808 when the Ottoman government accepted the rights of the *ayans* and the *ayans* accepted the authority of the Sultan and to help him in every problem. But, though he did not sign this document was used wisely by the Sultan Mahmud II to overcome every obstacle including the *ayans* on his way to strengthen the central authority as well as modernize the empire. And the age of *ayans* came to an end as a result of Mahmud II's policy of centralization and the *ayans* gradually lost their power and importance in the Ottoman provincial administration and took their place in the Ottoman history.

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APPENDICES

A. Tables Showing the Population of the Ottoman Balkan Provinces

1. The Distribution of Taxable Households in the Balkan Provinces in Accordance with Religious Affiliation, 1520-1535.³⁴⁰

Provinces %	Total	Christian Households	%	Muslim Households	
Paşa	183,512	72.5	66,648	26.3	253,158
Smederevo	106,861	97.8	2,367	2.2	109,228
Trikkala	57,671	82.0	12,347	17.5	70,405
Köstendil	56,988	89.4	6,640	10.5	63,677
Morea	49,412	97.0	1,065	2.1	50,841
Nikopolis	31,891	77.4	9,122	22.1	41,249
Bosnia	19,619	54.0	16,935	46.0	36,554
Euboea	33,056	98.0	663	2.0	33,719
Ohri	32,748	98.0	641	2.0	33,389
Ioannina	32,097	98.0	613	2.0	32,710
Krusevac	25,759	96.7	881	3.3	26,640
Sofia	24,341	94.0	1,569	6.0	25,910
Shkoder (İşkodra)	23,859	95.5	1,116	4.5	24,975
Silistra	6,615	28.0	17,295	72.0	23,910
Vize	9,467	44.0	12,193	56.0	21,660
Vidin	19,517	95.5	914	4.5	20,431
Vucitrn	18,914	96.5	700	3.5	19,614
Prizren	18,382	98.0	359	2.0	18,741
Herzegovina	9,588	58.0	7,077	42.0	16,665
Zvornik	13,112	83.5	2,654	16.5	15,766
Chirmen	1,578	11.0	12,686	89.0	14,264
Karliili	11,395	100	7	-	11,402
Elbasan	8,916	94.5	526	5.5	9,442
Gelibolu	3,901	43.7	5,001	56.0	8,902
Montenegro	3,446	100	-	-	3,446
Dukakin	1,829	100	-	-	1,829
Gypsies	10,294	59.9	6,897	40.1	17,191
Grand Total	814,768	80.1	186,916	19.7	1,005,718

³⁴⁰ The table displays the population of major sub provinces on the bases of taxable households by religious affiliation in the Ottoman Balkans in the first half of the 16th century. Data were extracted from Nicolai Todorov, *The Balkan City, 1400-1900*, Seattle and London, 1983, p.52.

2. Population of Ottoman Bulgarian Provinces in the Second Half of the 18th Century.³⁴¹

Provinces	Number	Provinces	Number
Sofia (Sofya)	70,000	Nicopolis (Niğbolu)	20,000
Plovdiv (Filibe)	50,000	Svistov (Ziştovi)	20,000
Ruşçuk (Ruse)	30,000	Varna	15,000
Vidin	20,000		

3. The Population Of Ottoman Europe on the basis of *Cizye* Payers, 1700-1815³⁴²

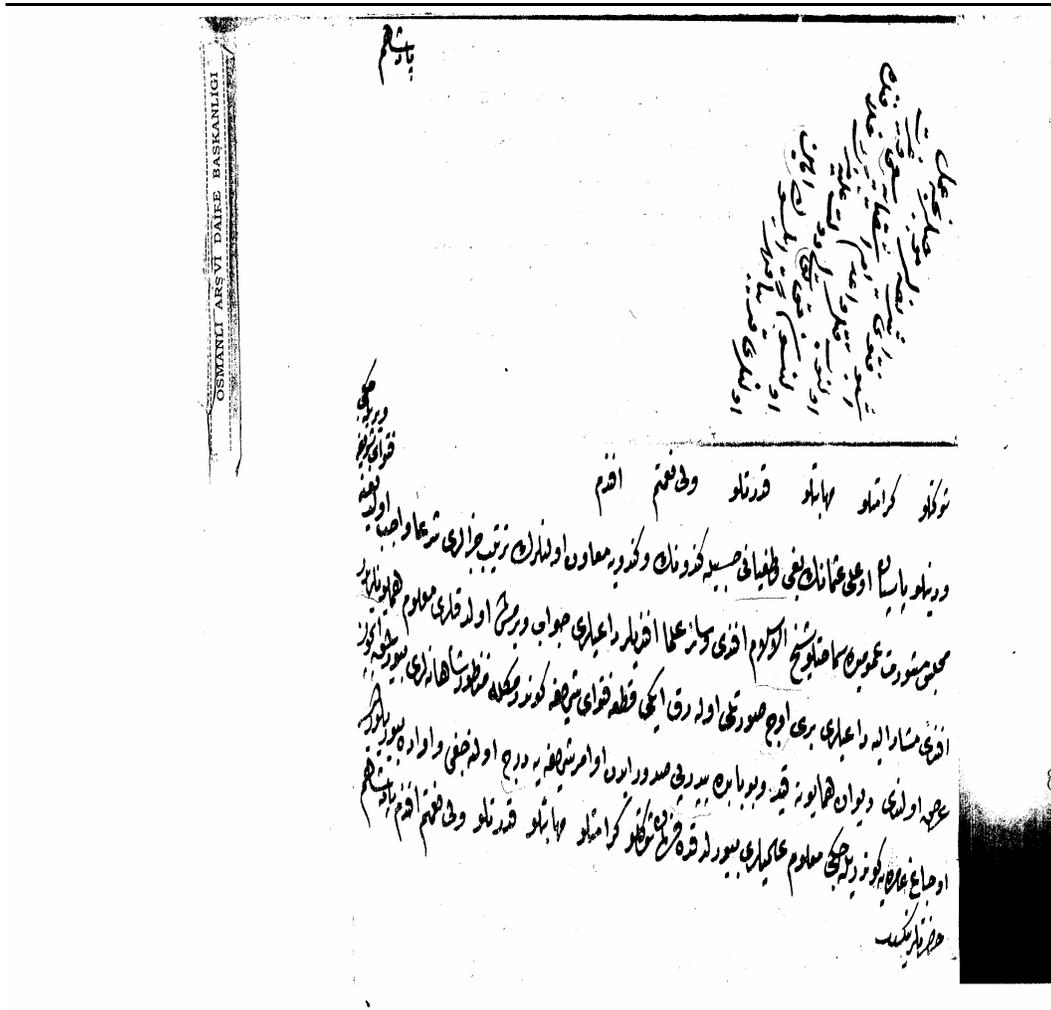
Tablo 1

Years	<i>Cizye</i> Payers	Total Population Guess
1700	635,835	3,755,000
1718	683,316	4,035,000
1740	756,949	4,470,000
1788	868,648	5,130,000
1815	932,322	5,506,000

³⁴¹ Data were extracted from McGowan, "Ayanlar Çağı, 1699-1812" in *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, (eds. Halil İnalcık & Donald Quatert), Volume II, İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 2004, pp. 776-777.

³⁴² Data were extracted from Michael Palaret, *Balkan Ekonomileri 1800-1914*, (tr. Ayşe Edirne), İstanbul, 2000, p. 7.

B. Copies of Miscellaneous Ottoman Archival Documents



*Imperial Decree ordering the execution of Pazvandoğlu Osman and his followers. *B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 7820, 1797-1798 (1212)*.

دودلو عنایلو عطفانو مردلو دافلو کریم اقم سلطنت حضرت
 اشبودی فی الزینتک اوشی صالی کونی و دیلو باسب و خلونک دیوید کندی عینی اخلو مطرفی انا کس
 فرایوه و وود و جانب فرورک و صول اولدی کاغذک صدور مقدمه امانی هتبر کرایه جرمی سفا
 سه ده اعای فرم سنارک اولی نقوی کده هضت مرط ابرکی استخالی تقریریه عداله ابرک
 استنطاق اولدق اقم تمردیه قدر طرف سفت سینه مناهد اولدور فرم فردان درم فی بابانی علی کور
 تحریک و کچر کوزد و در مکرهه مواظب فضیله اهل ذریک اکی کفران همه اولوب عمدا و مهوا انواع محرکات
 نامرضیه ابتداء و انواع فتنه و فساد اجتناب ابرک ای فرجه به نام وسعی مطابقه عارم اولد و
 ایوم و قیامت عالم اولدی دون عینک عفت و بدینتی بزرگ دونک بوجه تحصیل رضای عدینه صر
 ناب و توان و عقوبت فرای مال جهان ابره مکر و کار اولدی جرم و قیام عقوبت و زهر طرف سفت
 قون عفو و صحنه بزرگ کی برورده و کلاب همکین بر و صودک همینی دیکچیل اتخاذ ابرک و سول
 بو ذسوره حکم امان اقم شو نداشتنه و سادک اطفا و سکا ته سب اول و کون عینه بر و کون ابره
 کمال شیع و اسکا تن ابره دجا و شیب داس ستم و النجا و مجرجه الحاح و ابرم ایدجه عداله بمع
 ابره و صوفی انفا کور سرب سلطان فرم انواع فضا یحه مشور کوشوم کسه اکی نظر عفو
 جمعا مدرک اقامت ابره کجه شراب و حوا
 ...

* Petition sent by Hasan Pasha to Sultan Selim III. B.O.A., Hatt-ı Hümayun, 3017, 1800-1801 (1215).

دردی حضرتن سیدوزن شاهن علیک: داور اولی

دردلو خانیو محبتاو وندم اقدم
ویدین طر فندان عوادین کولج ایدر کتیز ویدین وادیسی عثمان باشا
سزده او مورس حوم اولدی و افلاق طر فندان دروکی سکر کرو چلدری
و ویدین شمدیلو باک قوشو معلوم اولدی ایچی ایشارت قلندکی تم اند
اقدم طوقلوی اغراج ایلدی کرم ایدو ایمنه ویدین بند کتری مسور
ایدر سی یاغی اسما وندلو محبتاو وندم اقدم سلام حضرتن سیدوزن
نولله
قوالدری

* Letter sent by the voyvoda of Wallachia to the Sultan Selim III. B.O.A. Hatt-ı Hümayun, 2010 A, 1806-1807 (1221).

C. Maps Illustrated the Ottoman Balkans and Vidin



*East Central Europe, 1648.

The Balkan peninsula, 1817-1877



The Balkan peninsula, 1878-1912



The Balkan Peninsula, 1817- 1912.



* Vidin in the 18th century.