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The rise of the Köprülü family: the reconfiguration of vizierial power in the seventeenth century

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CHAPTER 4: THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE KÖPRÜLÜ POWER: A NEW ANALYSIS OF THE KÖPRÜLÜ HOUSEHOLD

4.1. Introduction

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, vizier/pasha households gained considerable prominence in the Ottoman polity. They came to control vast economic resources and commanded huge retinues, each the size of a small army. This was the result of a profound transformation of the provincial administration, namely, from the district (*sancak*) to the province (*eyalet*) as the main unit of provincial bureaucracy.⁴²⁹ The central government willingly encouraged this development because the traditional central forces were not able to cope with growing disturbances in Anatolia or with the increasing threat of Habsburg forces on the western frontier of the empire. Consequently, the state tried to supplement the viziers' income. As Metin Kunt aptly remarks, "more and more members of the households of pashas were given government positions and fiefs while still in the service of their masters."⁴³⁰ Accordingly, "there was a transition from the more or less single-centered patrimonial administrative structure of the sixteenth century to a set-up dominated by numerous households in the seventeenth century."⁴³¹ Among these households, the Köprülü household emerged as the most important vizier household in that period as the Köprülü family steadily dominated political life. In this chapter, my main purpose will be to show

⁴²⁹ For a classical treatment of the developments of the Ottoman provincial system, see, Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, 77-95.

⁴³⁰ Kunt, 'Derviş Mehmed Paşa', 213.

⁴³¹ Christoph K. Neumann, 'Political and Diplomatic Developments', in Suraiya N. Faruqi (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Turkey, vol.III: The Later Ottoman Empire, 1603-1839*, (Cambridge, 2006), 50.

how Köprülü Mehmed Pasha and Fazıl Ahmed Pasha established one of the most powerful vizier households in the seventeenth century.

The Köprülü household, indeed, is widely seen as the epitome of the vizier/pasha household in Ottoman historiography.⁴³² In a 1974 article, Rifaat Ali Abou El-Haj underlined the year 1656, when Köprülü Mehmed Pasha was appointed grand vizier, because it coincided with the rising political importance of grandee households.⁴³³ El-Haj also argued that with the ascendancy of the Köprülü household, vacancies in the administrative system were increasingly filled not by men “who were raised and identified as bureaucrats, but by men who were raised in or attached to vizier and pasha households.”⁴³⁴ Following El-Haj’s steps, Jane Hathaway points out that the Köprülü household displaced all competing vizier households where critical administrative appointments were concerned.⁴³⁵ By the same token, for Karen Barkey “the Köprülü family provided an alternative route of recruitment into politics, different from the palace and the military that had been until then controlled solely by the sultan’s household.”⁴³⁶ Although these leading scholars concur on the point that the Köprülü household played a central role in the Ottoman political establishment and had a monopoly on appointments, they do not offer any explanation as to how the Köprülü family managed to build such a powerful household. In this chapter, I will attempt to address this difficult question in detail.

The most challenging difficulty in studying vizier households is the paucity of literary and archival sources providing information on the size and function of vizier

⁴³² Rifaat Ali Abou El-Haj, ‘The Ottoman Vezir and Pasha Households 1683 - 1703: A Preliminary Report’, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 94/4, (1974), 438-47, Jane Hathaway, ‘Households in the Administration of the Ottoman Empire’, *Türklük Bilgisi Araştırmaları, Journal of Turkish Studies*, 40, (2013) 127-49.

⁴³³ El-Haj, ‘The Ottoman Vezir’, 438.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, 439.

⁴³⁵ Hathaway, ‘Households in the Administration’, 131.

⁴³⁶ Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference, The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge, 2008), 208.

households in early modern Ottoman history. There are few archival materials relating to the households of the viziers of the sixteenth century. The first is a register book for annual incomes and expenditures of grand vizier Semiz Ali Pasha (r.1561-1565) for the years 1560-1561.⁴³⁷ The register also includes the records of all the gifts given and received, the audiences with foreign ambassadors and the credit relations. However, this register provides us with no details about the household members and their payments. There is a summary account of the expenditures of the household.⁴³⁸ The second piece of archival material is the annual accounting book of Ayas Pasha, governor of Erzurum for the year 1556-1557.⁴³⁹ Like the account of Semiz Ali Pasha, Ayaz Pasha's account is also a summary register. All we learn in this register is that 266,717 *akces* were spent on the servants of the inner and outer palaces.⁴⁴⁰ The only specific information to be found is *Kapi Kethüdasi* (steward of the provincial governor in Istanbul) Kabil Bey's annual payment of 22,200 *akces* for his services in carrying out the pasha's affairs in Istanbul.⁴⁴¹

As for the seventeenth century, there is a more detailed and published register: the governor of Diyarbekir Ömer Pasha's account book for the incomes and expenditures for the year 1670-1671.⁴⁴² We learn from the register that there were 125 guards and 220 lower

⁴³⁷ BOA, KK 717 for the transcription of the register, see, Osman Elanali, 'H.986'e ait Varidat ve Masarifat Muhasebesi Icmal Defteri, Senior Thesis, Istanbul University, (1974), I thank Selim Karahasanoğlu for providing a copy of the thesis.

⁴³⁸ BOA, KK 717, 3, the expenditures is in total amount to 1.402,743 *akces*, but there are no specific details.

⁴³⁹ BOA, KK 1865, This register is published by Dündar Aydın, see, Dündar Aydın, 'Osmanlı Devrinde XVI.yüzyılda Erzurum Beylerbeyi Ayas Paşa'nın Bir yıllık Bütçesi', *OTAM (Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi), Osmanlı Araştırmaları*, 8 (1997), 393- 477.

⁴⁴⁰ Dündar Aydın, 'Osmanlı Devrinde', 409.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., 409 and for the function of the kapi kethudasi see, Michael Nizri, 'Rethinking Center-Periphery Communication in the Ottoman Empire, The Kapi Kethudasi', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 59, (2016), 473-98.

⁴⁴² BOA, MAD 6786, This register is studied by Metin Kunt, see, Metin Kunt, *Bir Osmanlı Valisinin Yıllık Gelir-Gideri Diyarbekir, 1670-71* (Istanbul, 1981).

level *birun* employees and that pages received 3.2 *kurus* per month per person.⁴⁴³ Even from this relatively more detailed register, it is not possible to draw an all-inclusive picture of the household servants. Thus, it is difficult to find in these sources substantial and satisfactory evidence to determine the size of the vizier household.

The most detailed information about a vizier household is, however, to be found in memoirs of Antoine Galland, who was the assistant of Marquis De Nointel, the French ambassador in Istanbul in the years 1670-1679.⁴⁴⁴ The size and functioning of Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha's household are minutely described in Galland's memoirs. Galland's description can be summarized as follows: while members of the inner household (pages) received a low salary, high officials of the permanent household such as the steward, gatekeepers, letter-bearer and the head of the stables received no pay. Others in the outer permanent household and the mercenary troops were paid 3-12 *kurus* per month.⁴⁴⁵

As the archival sources and Galland's description show, the vizier households were divided into two main branches: an inner and outer court, which imitated the sultan's household on a smaller size. As for the Köprülü household, I have been unable to trace information on numbers, wages or function of the inner and outer members of the household because we do not have sources giving detailed figures.⁴⁴⁶ What we could discover about them was related to the steward, *agas*, scribes and the permanent companions of the grand vizier. Therefore, instead of the traditional inner-outer division, I propose to evaluate the Köprülü household in three separate layers.

⁴⁴³ Kunt, *Bir Osmanlı Valisinin*, 23.

⁴⁴⁴ Antoine Galland, *İstanbul'a ait günlük hatıralar (1672 - 1673)*, tr. Nahid Sırrı Özik (Ankara, 1998).

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid., 132-42.

⁴⁴⁶ Galland and Ottoman sources indicate that Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's retinue included around a thousand pages (*iç oğlanları*) in the 1672 military campaign against the Polish. For insightful analysis of the departure procession of 1672, see Tülay Artan, 'Osmanlı Ordusunun Sefere Çıkış Alayı (1672): Osmanlı Kadimciliği mi, Püriten Gösterisi mi', in Ayşen Anadol (ed.), *Uzak Komşu Yakın Anılar, Türkiye Polonya İlişkilerinin 600 Yılı* (İstanbul, 2014), 60-77.

In the first layer of the household, I will examine the function of the family members, *kethüdas*, *agas* and scribes. The main criterion for putting these officers and relatives into the first layer is their proximity to the person of the grand vizier. These officers accompanied the grand vizier on his military campaigns and performed critical roles in the household. For this reason, I will explain the function of each officer and member of the family.

In the second layer, I will place the clients of the Köprülü family in the administrative system. The patron-client (*intisab*) tie is the linchpin of the section. *Intisab* was established between the head of the household and his household members by means of recruitment, training and appointment. “Aided by their patron’s *intisab*, they (the clients) became officeholders and, the more successful, also heads of their own households.”⁴⁴⁷ Therefore, it was the gateway for many dependents to progress in their administrative careers. I will show how the Köprülü grand viziers established *intisab* with their clients. In particular, I will focus on sons-in-law of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha, since they played crucial roles in preserving the power of the Köprülü household.

In the third layer, I will scrutinize a neglected aspect of *intisab*: the relationship between the vizier households and provincial timariots, and will address a fundamental question in this section: how were the provincial timariots connected to the Köprülü household?

The figure below will help visualize the course I will follow in this chapter:

⁴⁴⁷ Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy*, 159.

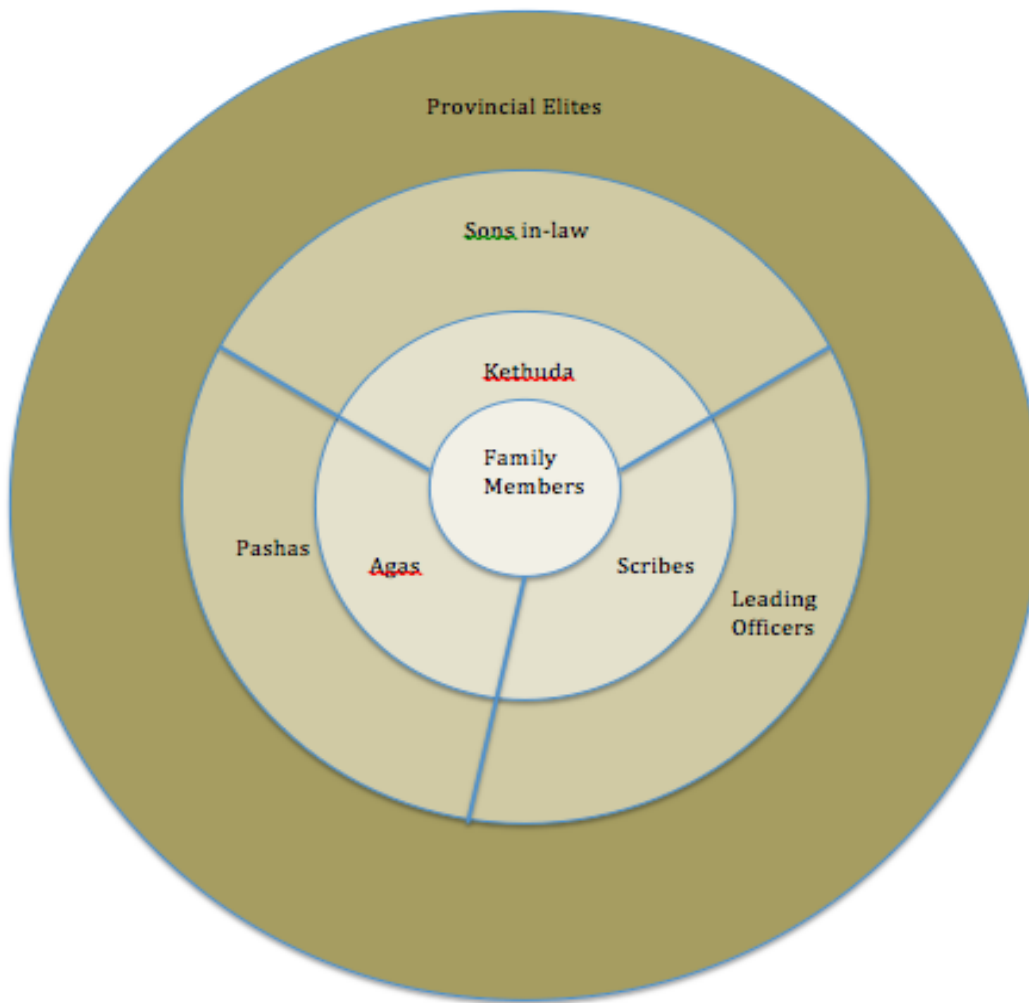


Figure 1: The Layers of the Köprülü Household

Upon his succession following Köprülü Mehmed Pasha in the position of grand vizier, his son Fazıl Ahmed attained enormous power. In each section, I will trace the footprints of this unprecedented succession. The main questions of the chapter include: what sort of positions did Köprülü Mehmed Pasha's clients occupy during his son's grand vizierate? Did the sons-in-law persist in their loyalty to the family? Can we find traces of this continuity among the lower-level servants, such as the steward and scribes?

The sources on the subject are quite limited and taciturn when it comes to details. Given these shortcomings of the available sources from the period, I will combine all the available evidence drawn from distinct types of sources in order to shed light on the functioning of the Köprülü household. Particularly, I will employ the chronicles written by the scribes of the Köprülü household. These are Mühürdar Hasan Aga's *Cevahirü't-Tevarih*, Osman Dede's chronicle *the history of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha* and Mustafa Zühdi's *Ravzatül'l Gaza*.⁴⁴⁸ These works were being written by the household servants of the Köprülü household and they provide precious insights into the other household members such as the family, steward and other officials.

4.2. The First Layer of the Köprülü Household

4.2.1. Family Members

I have already indicated in the introduction that vizierial households functioned similarly to the Ottoman palace but on a smaller scale. Like the sultan, the head of the household delegated his authority to a group of officials who formed a semi-permanent administrative body. The grand vizier and his family stood at the heart of the household. In this section, I will examine Köprülü family members as a part of the household. As Jane Hathaway points out, family members including wives, children and siblings were key players in preserving the household's wealth and fame.⁴⁴⁹ But the following questions need to be asked: did they perform a special task in the household organization? Did they assume an official position in the state or continue to stay with the family?

⁴⁴⁸ Mühürdar Hasan, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârîh*, I examined this important source in detail in the previous chapter, Arslan Poyraz, 'Köprülüade Fazıl Ahmed' and Mustafa Zühdi, *Ravzatül'l Gaza*, Istanbul University Library, TY 2488.

⁴⁴⁹ Jane Hathaway, 'Households in the Administration', 29.

Firstly, I would like to show the family tree of the Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. This figure was prepared in accordance with the information in the *vakf* registers of the family members.⁴⁵⁰ The family tree includes Köprülü Mehmed Pasha's sons, daughters and grandsons. Even though the Köprülü family tree could be extended to the twentieth century, here I confine the figure to the first part of the eighteenth century.

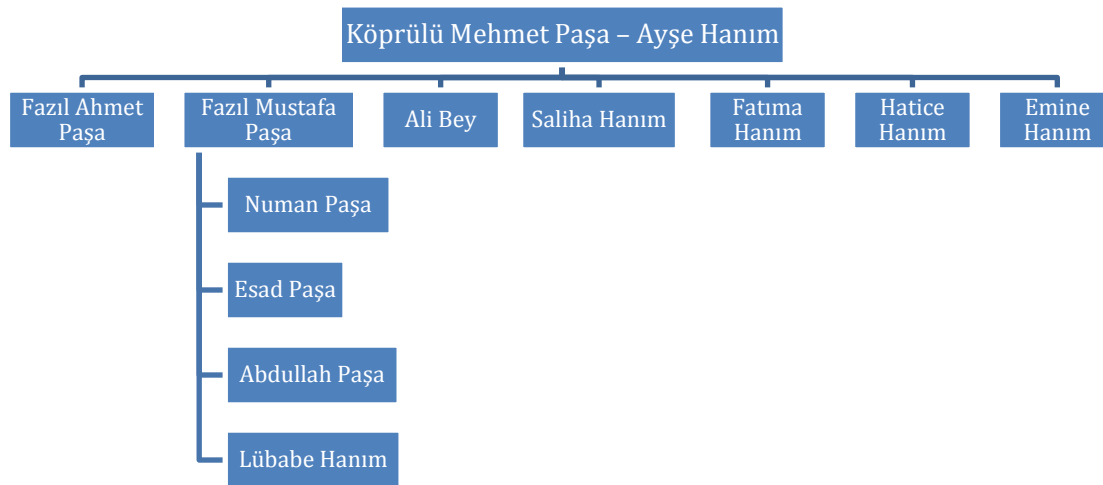


Figure 2: Köprülü Family Tree

Firstly, I will touch upon the life of Ayşe Hanım, the wife of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. The information concerning Ayşe Hanım is very scanty. She was born in Havza as a daughter of an affluent *voyvoda* of the region.⁴⁵¹ When Köprülü Mehmed Pasha came to Köprü as a sub-governor of the region, he married Ayşe Hanım in the 1630s. Köprülü Mehmed Pasha's marriage to Ayşe Hanım must have been very late in his life because when Köprülü Mehmed died in 1661 he was in his seventies. They had three sons and four daughters. After Köprülü Mehmed Pasha's death in 1661, Ayşe Hanım mostly spent her

⁴⁵⁰ for the *vakfs* of the Köprülü family, see, Köprülü Kütüphanesi (Köprülü Library) 2/2445 and 3/2446, 4/2447, and also see, Yusuf Sağır, 'Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerine ve Vakfiyelerine Göre Köprülü Ailesi Vakıfları, PhD Thesis, Dokuz Eylül University, (2012), 242-52.

⁴⁵¹ İbnülemin, Dahiliye, 19/1789 "Köprülüzaade Mustafa Paşa hazretlerinin mükerremelerinin Havza kazasına tabi Kayacık nam karye çiftliği".

time with son Fazıl Ahmed Pasha. In 1665, she came to Belgrade to congratulate her son on his victory over the Habsburg forces and visited the grave of her younger son Ali Bey who had just died on the way back from the Raba River due to illness.⁴⁵² During the siege of Candia, Ayşe Hanım stayed with Fazıl Ahmed along with other members of the family, including the grand vizier's brother Fazıl Mustafa, his sisters, uncle and cousin.⁴⁵³ She gave moral support to her son for two and a half years. We have limited information on her activities in Crete. There is a single example of Ayşe Hanım's influence on Fazıl Ahmed's decision-making. In March 1667, Fazıl Ahmed ordered the execution of Abdülkadir Pasha, Manca Mehmed Pasha and Egribozlu Ali Pasha because of their responsibility for losing the naval battle against the Venetian fleet. Ayşe Hanım asked that he pardon Abdülkadir Pasha, who was the captain of the ship, which had brought Ayşe Hanım from Istanbul to the island. Fazıl Ahmed granted her request and pardoned Abdülkadir Pasha.⁴⁵⁴

The important point is that Ayşe Hanım was always standing by the side of her son Fazıl Ahmed Pasha along with the other members of the family. In all the military campaigns that Fazıl Ahmed led, his mother, brothers, uncle and cousin accompanied him, indicating that the Köprülü family stuck together as a whole all the time. However, it is almost impossible to pinpoint the role of Ayşe Sultan and daughters in the household structure, as there are few references to her in the chronicles.

The most renowned member of the family after Ayşe Hanım was Mustafa Bey, the only brother left to Fazıl Ahmed after their brother Ali Bey's untimely death in 1665. Fazıl Mustafa was the second son of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. He was two years younger than his elder brother Fazıl Ahmed Pasha. He was born in the town of Köprü in 1637, when his

⁴⁵² OeStA (Österreichische Staatsarchiv), HHStA (Haus- Hof-, und Staatsarchiv), Türkei I/138, Konv. 1, vr. 31a-33b I thank Özgür Kolçak for providing this important text. Also, see Mustafa Zühdî, *Ravzatü'l-Gazâ*, 71a.

⁴⁵³ Mühürdar Hasan, '*Cevâhirü't-Tevârih*', 461-62,

⁴⁵⁴ Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*. 440, İsazade, *İsa-zade Tarihi*, 95.

father was the sub-governor of the district.⁴⁵⁵ He spent part of his childhood in Köprü and in various other cities such as Trabzon, Karaman, Damascus and Iznik where his father held various posts. Fazıl Mustafa began madrasa education in the early years of his childhood with his brother Fazıl Ahmed. He entered the ranks of the sultan's guards as a *Müteferrika* in 1659.⁴⁵⁶ *Müteferrika* was a special corps in the palace outside service (*birun*). Only a very small number of sons and brothers of the highest officials joined this service.⁴⁵⁷ Even though Fazıl Mustafa managed to become a *Müteferrika*, he spent most of his time with his elder brother, on campaigns. Although Mustafa Zuhdi and Mühürdar Aga stated that Fazıl Mustafa accompanied his brother in the diplomatic negotiations and meetings, there is no evidence indicating his active participation.⁴⁵⁸ During the time he lived by the side of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha as a *Müteferrika*, Fazıl Mustafa enjoyed revenues of *zeamet*.⁴⁵⁹

It should be emphasized that Fazıl Mustafa did not receive any administrative post during his brother's tenure as grand vizier. He was appointed as the seventh dome vizier in the imperial council only in 1680 while his brother-in-law Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha was grand vizier.⁴⁶⁰ How can we explain the long absence of Fazıl Mustafa from the administrative structure? There is a plausible explanation for this absence. Fazıl Mustafa focused on his intellectual activities, refraining from politics. Köprülü Mehmed Pasha and Fazıl Ahmed Pasha took considerable interest in the education of Fazıl Mustafa. Both his father and his elder brother saw to it that Fazıl Mustafa was educated by the most prominent

⁴⁵⁵ For the life of Fazıl Mustafa Pasha, see, Zeynep Aycibin, 'XVII. Yüzyıl Sadrazamlarından Köprülü-zâde Mustafa Paşa Döneminde Osmanlı Devleti'nin Siyasî ve Sosyal Durumu', MA thesis, Mimar Sinan University, (2001) and Fehmi Yılmaz, 'The Life of Köprülü Fazıl Mustafa Pasha and his grand vizierate', MA Thesis, Bilkent University, (1996).

⁴⁵⁶ Azize Gelir Çelebi, "93 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (1069 - 1071/ 1658 - 1660) (Tahlil-Transkripsiyon ve Özet), M.A Thesis, Marmara University (2008), 155-56.

⁴⁵⁷ For the *müteferrika* corps, see, Metin Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, 33.

⁴⁵⁸ Mühürdar Hasan, '*Cevâhirü't-Tevârih*', 133 and Özgür Kolçak 'XVII. Yüzyıl Askeri', 130, Mustafa Zühdi, *Ravzatü'l-Gazâ*, 70a.

⁴⁵⁹ MAD 3774, 12 and 22.

⁴⁶⁰ Zeynep Aycibin, '*XVII. Yüzyıl Sadrazamlarından*', 17.

scholars of the empire, including Hanlizade Mehmed Efendi.⁴⁶¹ Contemporary Ottoman observers portrayed Fazıl Mustafa as an eminent scholar on Islamic sciences and lexicology and an avid reader.⁴⁶² Fazıl Mustafa was indeed renowned as a protector of prominent intellectuals and luminaries.⁴⁶³

As for the four daughters of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha, there is very little information. Even the chronicles written under the patronage of the Köprülü grand viziers hardly mention them. The few words we can say about them would concern their husbands and the marriage strategies of the Köprülü family. The head of a vizierate household might marry off his daughter to an outstanding member of household, whether a slave or a free man, in order to ensure the future bridegroom's loyalty. Alternatively, "he might marry off his daughter or son to the children of the heads of other important households in order to strengthen the ties between the two households and thus expand their political and economic power."⁴⁶⁴ Köprülü Mehmed Pasha utilized both marriage strategies to strengthen his family's position in the Ottoman elite. Two daughters of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha married clients of the Köprülü household, Merzifonlu Mustafa and Abaza Siyavuş Pashas. Saliha Hanım was married to Merzifonlu Mustafa, who made his way into the household at a very early age and served as sword-bearer of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. We do not know the name of the wife of Abaza Siyavuş Pasha. Abaza Siyavuş Pasha, on the other hand, entered the household as a slave and functioned as a steward for many years. The remaining two grooms were inner-palace graduates: Kaplan Mustafa and Kibleli Mustafa Pashas, who were both governors-general. However, we have no information about the dates of their marriages and names of their wives. Relying on the sources it can be deduced that their

⁴⁶¹ Uşşakızade İbrahim Efendi, *Zeyl-i Şekaiik*, Ed. Hans Joachim Kissling, (Wiesbaden, 1965) 532

⁴⁶² Abdülkadir Özcan (ed.), *Anonim Osmanlı Tarihi (1099 - 1116/ 1688 - 1704)* (Ankara, 2000), 28 and Mustafa Zühdi, *Ravzatü'l-Gazâ*, 70a-71a.

⁴⁶³ Heidrun Wurm, *Der Osmanische Historiker Hüseyin*, 36-64.

⁴⁶⁴ Michael Nizri, *Ottoman High Politics and the Ulema Household*, (London, 2014), 62.

marriages took place before 1663.⁴⁶⁵ I will explore in detail the sons-in-law of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha as influential members of the household in the next section.

About daughters-in-law of the family, we know that Fazıl Mustafa was married with four children, but the name of his wife is unknown to us. We have unfortunately been unable to find out whether Fazıl Ahmed Pasha was ever married. It is important to note here that the Köprülü family did not seek any marriage links with the dynasty.⁴⁶⁶ Since the reign of Süleyman I, Ottoman princesses were married to promising or already powerful state officials. Sons-in-law (*damads*) of the dynasty thus gained proximity to the ruling house and attained power. Was this, then, a conscious policy followed by either the imperial dynasty or by the Köprülü family? Unfortunately, it is again impossible to answer this question in light of the extant sources.

His mother and siblings were not only the family members living by Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's side. Like the other members of the family, Fazıl Ahmed's uncle Hasan Aga and his son Hüseyin Bey, who would be another Köprülü grand vizier in from 1697 to 1702, accompanied Fazıl Ahmed. *Amca* (Uncle) Hasan Aga's life has not been satisfactorily illuminated. Given the fact that Köprülü Mehmed Pasha was recruited for the palace through the *devsirme* system and that the *devsirme* often placed his close relatives in palace or official positions, it can be assumed that Köprülü Mehmed's brother Hasan Aga might have been recruited for the palace or another official post.⁴⁶⁷ The most tangible document available to us indicates that his son Hüseyin Bey was born in 1644 in Köprü where

⁴⁶⁵ See, Mühürdar Hasan, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârih and Mustafa Zühdi, Ravzatü'l-Gazâ*.

⁴⁶⁶ For the marriage politics of the Ottoman dynasty, Juliette Dumas, 'Les Perles de nacre du Saltanat, Les Princesses Ottomanes (mi-XVe-mi-XVIIIe siècle)', Ph.D Thesis, Ecole Des Hautes en sciences Sociales (2013).

⁴⁶⁷ Murat Yıldız, *Balkanlar'daki Osmanlı Vakıf Mirasından Amca Hasan Vakfı*, (İstanbul, 2012) 20 and Selim İlim Özkan, 'Amcazade Hüseyin Paşa Hayatı ve Faaliyetleri (1644 - 1702)', Ph.D Thesis, Süleyman Demirel University (2006),1

Köprülü Mehmed was governing at the time.⁴⁶⁸ Amca Hasan Aga appeared again during his nephew's grand vizierate, this time as the uncle. He participated in Fazıl Ahmed's military campaigns and stayed with him all the time.

The future grand vizier Hüseyin Bey also accompanied his father and his cousin Fazıl Ahmed Pasha during the latter's military campaigns.⁴⁶⁹ Later, Hüseyin Bey also followed the army on the 1683 campaign to Vienna as a part of Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha's retinue.⁴⁷⁰ This fact also suggests that Köprülü family members served in the Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha household, too. Hüseyin Pasha was appointed as grand admiral in 1694 and became the grand vizier in 1697. He kept this position until 1702.⁴⁷¹

4.2.2. Always Loyal, Always Client: *Kethüdas* of the Köprülü Household

By the fifteenth century, the concept of *kethüda* (the steward or chief household officer) was used in the Ottoman administration system to designate the staff member who looked after the affairs of a government official or influential person.⁴⁷² Put differently, *kethüda* was an authorized deputy official. There were many *kethüdas* working in different branches of Ottoman social and political organization such as the Janissary corps, treasury, the dockyards, the imperial pantry and the grand vizierate. The most important of those officials bearing this title was the *kethüda* of the grand vizier. As a senior member of the grand vizier household, the *kethüda* took prime responsibility for administering the household.⁴⁷³ He commanded *Agas* (*officers*) and mercenary units.⁴⁷⁴ Moreover, he actively

⁴⁶⁸ Halime Doğru, *Lehistan'da Bir Osmanlı Sultanı*, (İstanbul, 2006), 24.

⁴⁶⁹ Mustafa Zühdi, *Ravzatü'l-Gazâ*, 71a and 71b.

⁴⁷⁰ Selim İlim Özkan, 'Amcazade Hüseyin', 4.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., 4.

⁴⁷² Cengiz Orhonlu and Gabriel Baer, 'Kethhuda.', in Bearman et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*.

⁴⁷³ For the historical development of the *kethüda* position in the Ottoman administrative system, see, Muzaffer Doğan, 'Sadaret Kethüdalığı, (1730 - 1836)', PhD Thesis, Marmara University (1995).

⁴⁷⁴ Muzaffer Doğan, 'Sadaret Kethüdalığı', 26.

participated in the diplomatic negotiations in the name of his master. Due to these factors, kethüdas occupied a more privileged position in comparison to the other servants of the household. For instance, only kethüdas were granted timar revenues, which could reach up to 35,000-40,000 *akces*.⁴⁷⁵ The most distinctive point here is that while other members of the household, such as *telhisci* (messenger) and *kapıcıbaşı* (head of gatekeepers) received shares of the official revenues assigned to the grand vizier, *kethüdas*' income was independently allocated by the state. Another example underlining the importance of the kethüda was his prominent place in the list of distribution of the sultan's of royal largesse. One of these registers dated 1661 shows that the *kethüda* of the grand vizier received a considerable largesse second only to that of the grand vizier.⁴⁷⁶

Kethüdas of the grand viziers were generally selected from the staff of the grand vizier's household. However, there were some exceptional cases. For instance, by an imperial edict (*hatt-ı hümayün*), Haydar Bey, kethüda of the grand vizier Siyavuş Pasha, was dismissed in 1592 and the governor of Egriboz Mustafa Bey, replaced him.⁴⁷⁷ Almost one hundred years later, in 1711, the sultan dismissed Hasan Aga, kethüda of the grand vizier Amcazade Hüseyin Pasha, due to ongoing complaints about him.⁴⁷⁸ These cases exemplify the rare incidents of involvement of the sultan in the selection of grand viziers' kethüdas.

The position of *kethüda* began to gain prominence in the seventeenth century as it turned into a stepping-stone for the highest positions in the administrative echelon.⁴⁷⁹

Viziers were trying to appoint their kethüdas to significant posts that sometimes culminated

⁴⁷⁵ Anonymous, 'Hırzû'l- müluk', 185

⁴⁷⁶ BOA, D.BSM, D.221, 4-5, This kethüda would have been Gürcü Mehmed Pasha, the steward of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha.

⁴⁷⁷ Selaniki Mustafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Selaniki*, I-II, Ed. Mehmet İpşirli, (Ankara, 1999), I, 280-1.

⁴⁷⁸ Defterdar Sarı Mehmed Pasa, *Zübde-i Vekayiat*, Ed. Abdülkadir Özcan, (Ankara, 1995) 725

⁴⁷⁹ However, we can find a few examples from the sixteenth century, see, Mustafa Ali, *Mustafa Ali's Counsel*, II,12.

in the grand vizierate. In the first part of the seventeenth century, three kethüdas became grand vizier.⁴⁸⁰ These pashas had started their careers in the households of grandees and continued as provincial governors without holding any intermediate state office. For instance, Derviş Mehmed Pasha was a kethüda of Tabaniyassi Mehmed Pasha, grand vizier from 1632 to 1637. It was in 1636, while his patron Tabaniyassi was still in office, that Derviş Mehmed received his first imperial appointment, as governor of Damascus.⁴⁸¹ In the second part of the seventeenth century, the number of kethüda-turned-grand-viziers dramatically increased. Between 1683 and 1703, there were five grand viziers who rose to power from the kethüda position.⁴⁸²

What was the background of each Köprülü household kethüda? What sort of responsibilities did they assume as a kethüda? More importantly, which offices did they occupy after being a Köprülü kethüda and did they continue their relationship with their master?

The first kethüda of the Köprülü household I have detected is Gürcü Mehmed Pasha. Ottoman sources are silent regarding the career and activities of Gürcü Mehmed Pasha as a steward of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. However, Paul Rycaut recorded his connection with Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. He claimed that he was “a Person, who by his own Estate and Friends had raised the House of Kuperlee, having in the time of his Poverty and Meanness lent him that Sum of Money, which gave him the first Rise to his Richness and Authority.” To reward his help and support, Köprülü Mehmed Pasha appointed him as

⁴⁸⁰ They were Tabaniyassi Mehmed Pasha, Derviş Mehmed Pasha and Boynuegri Mehmed Pasha.

⁴⁸¹ Metin Kunt, ‘Derviş Mehmed Paşa’, 200.

⁴⁸² *Osmanlı Sadrazamları, Hadikatü'l-Vüzerâ*, 118-27.

his kethüda.⁴⁸³ Aside from Rycaut's succinct note, there is no information on Gürcü Mehmed's functions during his tenure.⁴⁸⁴

When Köprülü Mehmed Pasha died in October 1661, Gürcü Mehmed Pasha maintained his position as steward of the new grand vizier Fazıl Ahmed Pasha. This appointment followed the recommendation of Mehmed IV.⁴⁸⁵ Afterwards, Gürcü Mehmed Pasha was promoted to be governor of Diyarbakir.⁴⁸⁶ After the governorship of Diyarbakir, he became the governor of Aleppo, one of the most important posts in the Ottoman administrative-military system. He joined the Austrian expedition with a large household including almost two thousand soldiers in 1663.⁴⁸⁷ Mühürdar Hasan Aga stated that the grand vizier highly respected him and sought to receive his advice on the every subject.⁴⁸⁸ Indeed, Gürcü Mehmed Pasha played a critical role in the military organization in the 1663-1664 wars.⁴⁸⁹ In 1665, he was transferred to the governorate of Buda, the most important outpost of the Ottoman Empire on the western border. He died in this position. Gürcü Mehmed Pasha's career is a good example of the transition from Köprülü Mehmed's household to that of his son. He began his career in Köprülü Mehmed's household and transferred to Fazıl Ahmed's household. Although Gürcü Mehmed Pasha retained his position as steward for only a short time, the relationship between Gürcü Mehmed Pasha and his new master Fazıl Ahmed Pasha continued to grow. He was appointed to significant provincial positions and contributed with his large households to the grand vizier's efforts against the Habsburg army.

⁴⁸³ Paul Rycaut, *The History of the Turkish*, 116.

⁴⁸⁴ Evliya Celebi described Gürcü Mehmed as a procrustean, see, Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnâme*, VII,59.

⁴⁸⁵ Mühürdar Hasan, '*Cevâhirü't-Tevârih*', "Lala, baban kethüdası olan Gürcü Kethüdayı kendüye kethüda eyile." 154.

⁴⁸⁶ Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 254.

⁴⁸⁷ Özgür Kolçak, 'XVII. Yüzyıl Askeri Gelişimi', 113-14.

⁴⁸⁸ Mühürdar Hasan, '*Cevâhirü't-Tevârih*', 132.

⁴⁸⁹ Özgür Kolçak "XVII. Yüzyıl Askeri Gelişimi", 114.

While Gürcü Mehmed Pasha maintained his position as *kethüda* of the grand vizier, Salih Bey, Fazıl Ahmed's own *kethüda* during his governorship in Damascus, was appointed as *Çavuşbaşı* (head of the palace ushers) and later as the chief commander of the Janissaries during Fazıl Ahmed's grand vizierate.⁴⁹⁰ This is a very exceptional appointment because Fazıl Ahmed directly appointed his *kethüda* to one of the most critical and prestigious positions in the empire. This appointment is one of the best examples of the growing authority of the grand viziers under the Köprülü because the former grand viziers did not appoint their clients to such critical positions. During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the commanders of the Janissaries were appointed from the graduates of the imperial palace by the sultan. Like Gürcü Mehmed Pasha, Salih Bey performed crucial duties as a commander of the Janissaries and closely worked with the grand vizier.

The second steward of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha after Gürcü Mehmed Pasha was Ibrahim Aga.⁴⁹¹ He was born in Bosnia and came to Istanbul to become the superintendent of the imperial docks.⁴⁹² Silahdar notes that Ibrahim Aga's achievement in the completion of sixty shipyards in three months attracted the attention of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha.⁴⁹³ Only this passage suggests that Ibrahim Aga was a client of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. After the appointment of Gürcü Mehmed Pasha as governor of Diyarbakir, Ibrahim Bey entered the service of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha as steward in 1662. After five years' tenure as steward, Ibrahim Bey was appointed as governor of the Aleppo, and he stood side by side with the grand vizier in the siege of Candia in October 1668.⁴⁹⁴ In 1670, he was sent to Egypt as

⁴⁹⁰ Mühürdar Hasan, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârîh*, 155-56.

⁴⁹¹ For the life of Ibrahim Pasha, see, Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 681-83.

⁴⁹² Evliya Celebi, *Seyahatname*, VI, 310, Evliya brought the letter of Ibrahim's mother and news from Bosnia to Ibrahim Bey.

⁴⁹³ Mehmed Süreyya *Sicill-i Osmani*, Ed. Nuri Akbayar, 6 vols, (İstanbul, 1996), III, 783 and for a similar view, see Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 82.

⁴⁹⁴ Mustafa bin Mustafa, *Tarih-i Sefer ve Feth-i Kandiye (Fazıl Ahmed Paşa'nın Girit Seferi ve Kandiye'nin Fethi)*, ed. Meltem Aydın, (İstanbul, 2016), 112.

governor-general.⁴⁹⁵ Ibrahim Pasha was transferred to the governorship of Damascus in 1673. In 1674 he was again appointed as governor of Aleppo and became the chief commander in the Polish expedition in 1675. He died in 1676, the same year as his master Fazıl Ahmed Pasha.⁴⁹⁶

We can more easily follow the activities of Ibrahim Pasha as steward in the chronicles than that of Gürcü Mehmed Pasha, as particularly Mühürdar Hasan Aga recorded some details with regard to the close circle of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha.⁴⁹⁷ One of the most curious aspects of Kethüda Ibrahim's activities was his involvement in diplomatic negotiations. Habsburg resident Simon Reningen referring to the diplomatic bargaining carried out in Edirne in 1662, names the grand vizier's steward Ibrahim in his account along with the more customary members of the Ottoman diplomatic mission, such as the grand vizier, the chief scribe and the commander of the Janissaries.⁴⁹⁸ By the same token, the Habsburg ambassador Walter Leslie, who came to Istanbul in 1665, described Ibrahim Aga as the most prominent among the viziers.⁴⁹⁹ However, an important detail, which Leslie omitted, was that Ibrahim Aga had not acquired the vizierial title at the time yet. Most probably, the important role played by Ibrahim Aga as kethüda must have misled Leslie into thinking that Ibrahim had to be a vizier.

Even after his promotion to the Aleppo governorship, Ibrahim Pasha maintained his proximity to the grand vizier and continued to carry out vizierial orders. As he did in the Austrian campaign, he actively continued diplomatic negotiations with the Venetian

⁴⁹⁵ İszade, *İsa-zade Tarihi*, 106.

⁴⁹⁶ Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 682 and Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, III, 783.

⁴⁹⁷ Mühürdar Hasan, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârîh*, 140-141.

⁴⁹⁸ Alfons Huber, "Österreichs diplomatische Beziehungen zur Pforte, 1658 – 1664", *Archiv für Österreichische Geschichte*, 85, (1898), 560.

⁴⁹⁹ Alois Veltze (ed), "Die Hauptrelation des kaiserlichen Residenten in Konstantinopel Simon Reningen von Reningen 1649-1666," *Mitteilung des k.u.k Kriegs-Archiv*, N.F., 12.Bd., (1900), 154.

delegation.⁵⁰⁰ During the process leading to the signing of the peace treaty, Ibrahim Pasha seemed to head the Ottoman diplomatic mission and was the most active negotiator.⁵⁰¹

After the signing of the peace treaty with Venice in 1669, Fazıl Ahmed Pasha was still in Crete. At that time, Hungarian Prince Mihaly Apafi, the Ottoman-appointed ruler of Transylvania, secretly dispatched his emissary Daviz Rozsnyai to ask the grand vizier Fazıl Ahmed Pasha for military assistance.⁵⁰² Rozsnyai came to the island in January 1670. He had six face-to-face conversations with Ibrahim Pasha between 8 January and 6 February 1670. In these conversations, Ibrahim Pasha conducted negotiations in the name of grand vizier and continuously informed the grand vizier on the subject.

Along with the diplomatic undertakings, Ibrahim Pasha also tried to fulfill other challenging missions that Fazıl Ahmed assigned to him. In 1670, Fazıl Ahmed Pasha sent Ibrahim Pasha to Egypt with 2,000 imperial troops. The main purpose of this appointment was to reassert central authority in this important province.⁵⁰³ Ibrahim Pasha arrested two leading local figures, Yusuf Bey Sahr al-Nakip and Kenan Bey, who were local supervisors of the *Evkaf-u Humayun*, the largest and the most profitable *vakf* in the empire. They were accused of embezzling revenues. Ibrahim Pasha then appointed the commander and the senior officer of Janissaries as supervisors of the *Evkaf-u Humayun*. In this way, Ibrahim Pasha successfully carried out a challenging task that increased the power of the central government over local figures and controlled supervisory posts.

⁵⁰⁰ Nuri Adıyeke, 'Hikayet-i Azimet-i Sefer-i Kandiye', MA Thesis, Ege University (1989), 52. I thank Nuri Adıyeke for sharing his inaccessible thesis with me. Arslan Poyraz, 'Köprülüzâde Fazıl Ahmed', 120.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid., 54.

⁵⁰² For the details of this diplomatic mission, see, Georg B. Michels, "Myth or Reality? Ottoman Support for Hungarian Rebels in Light of a Secret Transylvanian Mission to the Porte (1669-1670)", *Hungarian Cultural Studies, e-Journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association*, 8, (2015), 34-45.

⁵⁰³ Jane Hathway, *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt, The Rise of the Qazdaglis* (Cambridge, 1997), 148-50 and James E. Baldwin, 'The Deposition of Defterdar Ahmed Pasha and The Rule of Law in Seventeenth-Century Egypt', *Journal of Ottoman Studies*, 46, (2015), 131-63.

It proved impossible to track the kethüdas of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha after Ibrahim Aga from 1668 until 1672. Sources such as Mühürdar Hasan's *Cevâhirü't-Tevârîh* just state that Osman Aga, son of Timurtaş Pasha replaced Ibrahim Aga.⁵⁰⁴ However, there is no additional information in the chronicles either about the identity of Osman Aga or about his activities. We can only say that Osman Aga might have died during the war because at the end of the war, the sources referred to Mahmud Aga as Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's kethüda.⁵⁰⁵ All we know about Mahmud Aga is that he bought thirty stores in Candia after the conquest and established a pious foundation in the city.⁵⁰⁶ There is no further information regarding his activities. In 1672, *Cavusbasi* Süleyman Aga was appointed as kethüda of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha.⁵⁰⁷ Süleyman Aga as a *cavusbasi* had worked under Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha, the third vizier in the imperial council and deputy grand vizier in Edirne at that time.⁵⁰⁸ Only six days after Fazıl Ahmed's death, the late grand vizier's kethüda, Süleyman Aga, was appointed as the head of the imperial stables. He achieved this important post, which enabled him to keep close and continuous contact with the sultan, thanks to his affiliation with the Köprülü family and to the patronage of the new grand vizier, Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha. However, Ottoman chroniclers did not record any details about Süleyman Aga as a kethüda during his tenure.

What does this information tell us about the kethüdas of the Köprülü Household? Firstly, those who were elevated to the position of kethüda were either connected to the grand vizier from the beginning or gained his favor on the road. Secondly, in addition to managing the affairs of the grand vizier's household as a kethüda, they also partook in, and

⁵⁰⁴ Mühürdar Hasan, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârîh*, 416.

⁵⁰⁵ Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 546 and Mühürdar Hasan, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârîh*, 416.

⁵⁰⁶ Ersin Gülsoy, *Girit'in Fethi*, 241-43.

⁵⁰⁷ Abdurrahman Abdi Paşa, *Vekâyi'-nâme*, 407 and for his career, see, Ömer Faruk Akün, 'Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Paşa ve Mirahur Sarı Süleyman Aga Mücadelesi ile İlgili Bir Konuşma Zabtı', *Türkiyat Mecmuası*, 19 (1980), 7-64.

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 12

even sometimes personally conducted, diplomatic negotiations on behalf of the grand vizier. The third and the most important point is that while the *kethüdas* were promoted to important positions, they kept in contact with their former masters. As we can observe in the careers of Ibrahim and Gürcü Mehmed Pashas, they assumed crucial roles in the fulfillment of important duties and military campaigns.

4.2.3. *Agas*

Under the command of the *kethüda*, we find group called the *agas* (officials). *Aga* was a title given to some Ottoman officers or officials in the military and administrative systems, but here I refer to *aga* as a man working in a vizier's household.⁵⁰⁹ Along with the mercenaries, *agas* constituted the largest group in the household. Mühürdar Hasan stated that there were almost eighty *agas* working in Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's household in the wars of 1663-1664.⁵¹⁰ They carried out two main duties. Firstly, they took responsibility for the registering, controlling and leading of the mercenary units.⁵¹¹ Secondly, they were in charge of establishing communication between different vizier households, especially in serving as the go-between for the *kethüda*'s diplomatic undertakings.

Since the late sixteenth century, Ottoman vizier households increasingly employed mercenary units to deal with mounting disturbances in Anatolia.⁵¹² Accordingly, the vizier households hired as many mercenary units as their financial resources allowed. As Özgür Kolçak convincingly shows, in the military campaign against Austria in 1663, the mercenary units under the command of the viziers constituted the major part of the Ottoman

⁵⁰⁹ For the definition, see, Gustave Bayerle, *Pashas, Begs and Efendis, A Historical Dictionary of Titles and Terms in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul, 1997), 8.

⁵¹⁰ Mühürdar Hasan, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârîh*, 221.

⁵¹¹ For a detailed analysis of the mercenaries in the Ottoman history, see, Mustafa Cezar, *Osmanlı Tarihinde Levendler*, (Ankara, 2012).

⁵¹² For the classical review see, Halil Inalcik 'Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire, 1600-1700', *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 6, (1980), 283-337.

firepower.⁵¹³ From their selection for recruitment to registration and provisioning responsibility for the mercenaries was confided to the *agas*. With the number of Fazıl Ahmed's mercenaries at around 4,000, it is easy to understand the importance of the *agas* in the organization of the military campaign.

The ethnic and geographical background of these *agas* reveals the recruitment strategies followed by the Köprülü household. These *agas* mostly came from the Albanian region, the homeland of the Köprülü family.⁵¹⁴ They were sent to this region where they gathered local people as mercenaries.⁵¹⁵ The *agas* of Albanian origin probably used their personal links to the region to find necessary manpower for the grand vizier's household.⁵¹⁶ Indeed, Albanian troops formed a considerable part of the grand vizier's private army.⁵¹⁷ More importantly, both Köprülü Mehmed Pasha and Fazıl Ahmed Pasha chose Albanians as their personal guards.⁵¹⁸ Fazıl Ahmed Pasha maintained a permanent force of 100 to 400 men recruited among the able-bodied young population of those lands. The recruitment of these personal guards and the household mercenaries from the Albanian lands once more suggests, as Metin Kunt has earlier shown, the important role of ethnicity in the Köprülü household.⁵¹⁹

⁵¹³ Özgür Kolçak, 'The Composition, Tactics and Strategy of the Ottoman Field Army at Zrínyi-Újvár and St. Gotthard (1663–1664)', in Ferenc Toth, Zsolt Czigany Balázs (eds.) *La bataille de Saint Gotthard et la paix de Vasvár: Expansion Ottomane-Coopération Européenne* (Budapest, 2017), 73–92.

⁵¹⁴ Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, 380 and Alois Veltze (ed.), 'Die Hauptrelation des kaiserlichen', 154.

⁵¹⁵ 1660–1665 tarihli Ordu Mühimmesi, Sachsische Landesbibliothek- Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden, (Thereafter SLUB) Eb. 387, 119a and 127a I thank Özgür Kolçak for providing a copy of this important register.

⁵¹⁶ Özgür Kolçak 'XVII. Yüzyıl Askeri Gelişimi', 137.

⁵¹⁷ Kolçak 'XVII. Yüzyıl Askeri Gelişimi', 138 and Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, 379.

⁵¹⁸ Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, 380.

⁵¹⁹ Kunt, 'Ethnic-Regional (Cins) Solidarity'

The *agas* also played a significant role in the communication between the grand vizier's household and the palace and other viziers. Particularly, they were assistants of the kethüda in his diplomatic negotiations. For example, Haseki Mehmed Aga carried the letter including the news of the conquest of Uyvar Castle to the sultan.⁵²⁰ The same Mehmed Aga was sent to Transylvanian Prince Apafi Mihaly by kethüda Ibrahim Aga. Moreover, while Mihaly was returning to his home, Mehmed Aga accompanied the prince.⁵²¹ Habib Aga was given a mission to go to Crimea to invite Tatar forces to the campaign against the Habsburgs in 1663.⁵²² In the siege of Candia, Karakulak Ahmed Aga carried grand vizier's *telhis* ⁵²³ to Mehmed IV, who resided in Edirne.⁵²⁴

These examples clearly show the role played by the *agas* while the grand vizier was on campaign. Apart from these military campaigns, the *agas* regularly carried written orders of the grand vizier to other viziers. Some archival sources provide us with some examples of the *agas*'s messenger duty. The register of annual income and expenditures of Diyarbekir Governor Omer Pasha shows that at least four *agas* of the grand vizier's household visited Diyarbekir for various purposes between 1670 and 1671. The governor of Diyarbekir Omer pasha spent a total of 2.209 kurus by way of stipends and gratuities and various purchases on these *agas*. The first of these officials was a Mustafa Aga, who brought the pasha a *muhafaza* emir, a special appointment as "guardian" or military commander of the region in addition to regular duties as governor. In the case of the second official of the grand vizier's household, Osman Aga, it is noted that he came for the "accounts," that is probably to check Omer Pasha's accounting. There is no indication of

⁵²⁰ Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke* and Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatname*, VI, 209 but Evliya Çelebi did not write the name of Aga.

⁵²¹ Kolçak, 'XVII. Yüzyıl Askeri Gelişimi', 135: Mühürdar Hasan, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârîh*, 205-06.

⁵²² Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 280.

⁵²³ Fazıl Ahmed Pasha Tarihi 73a, Nuri Adıyeke, *Hikayet-i Azimet-i*, 49-51 and 54. Arslan Poyraz, 'Köprülüzâde Fazıl Ahmed', 120.

⁵²⁴ Silahdar, *Zeyl-i Fezleke*, 511.

the purpose of the visits of Ahmed Aga and Topal Ahmed Aga. Similarly, we can gather some information in the register of the treasury of Kaplan Mustafa Pasha, son-in-law of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. The register from his treasury covers the time from May 1658 until 1662.⁵²⁵ In this register, grand vizier Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's *aga* and *cavusbasi* received broadcloth and satin for a garment.⁵²⁶ However, the register does not give any explanation as to why Fazıl Ahmed's *aga* and *cavusbasi* visited the pasha. These last documents manifest that the serving the grand vizierial household as an *aga* was highly profitable. Each time they were visited or carried messages to a pasha, they were rewarded. If we possessed more registers, we would be able to glean more about the gift-exchange and communication between the grand vizier and the other viziers of the time.

4.2.4. Scribes

Scribes constituted one of the most important parts of the vizier's household. They worked as the main communicators of state business. As Ekin Tuşalp points out, scribes "translated from the perhaps not so educated words of pashas into the strictly regulated language of Ottoman diplomatics."⁵²⁷ They served in different positions in the household such as seal-keeper (*mühürdar*), registrar (*tezkireci*), copy-checker (*mukabeleci*) and secretary (*katip*) of the grand vizier.

It is very difficult to determine the exact number and the names of the scribes working in the Köprülü household because of the paucity of the primary sources. Nevertheless, in the list of attestors (*şuhud-ı hal*) who were present during the registration

⁵²⁵ BOA, D. BŞM 211 and for analysis of the register, see, Hedda Reindl-Kiel, 'Luxury, Power Strategies, and the Question of Corruption Gifting in the Ottoman Elite (16th-18th Centuries)', in Yavuz Köse, (ed.), *Şehrayin, Die Welt der Osmanen, die Osmanen in der Welt Wahrnehmungen, Begegnungen und Abgrenzungen, Festschrift Hans Georg Majer* (Wiesbaden, 2012), 107-19.

⁵²⁶ BOA, D. BŞM 211, 6 "Ahmed Paşa tarafından gelen ağasına kırmızı cübbe çuka arşın aded 5, Ahmed Paşa çavuşbaşına meneviş saye çuka arşın aded 5".

⁵²⁷ Atiyas, 'Political Literacy', 192.

of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha's endowments in the summer of 1661, certain names are included.⁵²⁸ This list includes only the names of the scribes and does not allow us to analyze their functions. The biographical dictionaries of the poets, however, are useful sources to follow scribe-poets' careers in the households.⁵²⁹ Many of the contemporary scribes active in the household services were also poets registered in the biographical dictionaries. It was actually due to their poetic efforts (such as writing laudatory *kasides*) dedicated to the prominent officeholders of the time that they could find a niche in their household service. In Cornell Fleischer's finely documented biographical study on Mustafa Ali, one of the most important bureaucrats and intellectuals of the late sixteenth century, we can follow Ali's efforts to dedicate poems and *kasides* to many preeminent statesmen of the time in return for an office in their household service.⁵³⁰ The scribes in these households could reasonably expect to be elevated to the post of chief scribe or become other chancellery officials in the imperial chancery if their patron were to be appointed as grand vizier.⁵³¹

As the most powerful vizierial household at the time, the Köprülü household became the main patronage target for "various types of young men, newcomers to the capital city, *medrese* graduates and youngsters fresh out of the inner palace school."⁵³² In particular, as Ekin Tuşalp points out, the *Mevlevi* order turned out to be one of the main

⁵²⁸ KK V, 3.2446, 53a - 54a they are: Mezaki Süleyman Efendi, *Tezkireci-i Sani*, (the second secretary), Sıdkızade Ahmed Efendi, *Mektubi* (the scribe), Ramazan Ağa, *Mühürdar*, (the seal-keeper of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha) Habib Ağa, (the treasurer of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha).

⁵²⁹ Pervin Çapan (ed.), *Tezkire-i Safayi (Nuhbetü'l-Asar min Feva'idü'l-Eş'ar) İnceleme - Metin - İndeks*, (Ankara, 2005), Adnan İnce (ed.), *Tezkiretü'ş-Şuara Salim Efendi, Mirzazade Salim Mehmed Emîn Efendi, 1156/1743*, (Ankara, 2005), İlhan Genç (ed.), *Esrar Dede, Tezkire-i şu'arâ-yı Mevleviyye: inceleme, metin*, (Ankara, 2000).

⁵³⁰ Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 41-69.

⁵³¹ For the *kasides* written for Köprülü grand viziers, see, Özlem Ercan, "Baba-Oğul Sadrazamların Şairlere Farklı Yaklaşımları ve Fazıl Ahmed Paşa'ya yazılan Manzumeler", *Turkish Studies-International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*, 7/2, (2012), 461-80.

⁵³² Atiyas, 'Political Literacy', 204.

channels, which secured the flow of staff into Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's household.⁵³³ Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's connection with the *Mevlevi* order played an important role in this relationship. For instance, two prominent *Mevlevi* poets, Fasih Ahmed Efendi and Fenni Mehmed Efendi served in the Köprülü household.⁵³⁴ Fasih Ahmed Dede, who worked as a scribe of the Imperial Council, was transferred to the household of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha and became his treasury scribe and one of his foremost courtiers. In early 1670's, he relinquished this post to adopt a secluded life in the Galata *Mevlevihane*.⁵³⁵ Another significant *Mevlevi* poet, Fenni Mehmed Efendi, too, became Fazıl Ahmed's scribe by offering him a *kaside*.⁵³⁶

Some scribes had maintained their position since the time of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's Erzurum governorship. For instance, Mühürdar Hasan Aga, the seal-keeper of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha, joined Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's household in Erzurum where he had served as a servant of the treasury in the Erzurum governorship.⁵³⁷ Similarly, Erzurumlu Osman Dede had been serving in the household as a scribe since Fazıl Ahmed's Erzurum governorship.⁵³⁸

The Köprülü monopoly on the vizierial office also secured a sense of continuity for the scribes. Mezaki Süleyman Efendi became the second secretary of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. After Köprülü Mehmed's death, Mezaki Süleyman continued to serve Fazıl Ahmed in the same position.⁵³⁹ Later he was promoted to the position of master of the imperial council (*divan hacesi*) and the copy-checker of the cavalry regiment (*Mukabeleci Suvari*)

⁵³³ Ibid., 204.

⁵³⁴ Mustafa Çıpan, 'Fasih Ahmed Dede, Hayatı, Edebi Kişiliği, Eserleri ve Divanı'nın Tenkidli Metni', PhD Thesis, Selçuk University (1991).

⁵³⁵ Ibid., 12

⁵³⁶ "Köprülü-zâdeye bir kasîde verip ber-vech-i te'bîd menâsıb-ı hâcegân-ı dîvân-ı bülend-erkândan cizye mukâbelesi kitâbeti ihsân olundu", Esrar Dede, *Tezkire-i şu 'arâ-yı Mevleviyye*, 416-17.

⁵³⁷ Mühürdar Hasan, 'Cevâhirü't-Tevârih', 5.

⁵³⁸ Arslan Poyraz, 'Köprülü-zâde Fazıl Ahmed Paşa'. 1.

⁵³⁹ Ahmet Mermer, *Mezaki Hayatı, Edebi Kişiliği ve Divan'ının Tenkitli Metni*, (Ankara, 2001)see, for the document sealed by Süleyman Mezaki Efendi BOA, Ibnulemin, Hariciye, 1/98.

with the support of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha. Mezaki's career is a fine example of how scribes made the transition from the era of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha to that of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha.

Another striking example is the career of a poet-scribe named Ahmed who had entered Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's household. When Fazıl Ahmed Pasha died, Ahmed moved to a madrasa in Bursa to teach. He was soon to be recruited by Fazıl Ahmed's brother Fazıl Mustafa Pasha, who appointed him as the director of finances of the Anatolian provinces.⁵⁴⁰ When Fazıl Mustafa Pasha became grand vizier, he appointed Mustafa Efendi, the scribe of the treasury of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's household as his *kethüda*.⁵⁴¹ Yet another example was a certain Nigari, who had served as scribe in the household of Ibrahim Pasha, the steward of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha. After his patron Ibrahim Pasha passed away in 1676, he served under Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha and Fazıl Mustafa Pasha. That he continued to serve Fazıl Mustafa after Merzifonlu Mustafa particularly indicates the fact that having served in Köprülü service must have been an essential reference for serving in the Merzifonlu household, too.

4.3. The Second Layer of the Köprülü Household: Clients in the Administrative System

The establishment of patron-client (*intisab*) ties was one of the main strategies of building an Ottoman household. A vizier "might patronize individuals, whom he could place strategically in offices for the advancement of household interests, or enter into a relationship of clientage with a more powerful official and link his fortunes to the same."⁵⁴²

Intisab was established on the basis of a variety of other sorts of relationships. Blood

⁵⁴⁰ *Tezkiretü's-Suara Salim Efendi*, 199.

⁵⁴¹ *Anonim Osmanlı Tarihi*, 28.

⁵⁴² Charles L. Wilkins, 'Masters, Servants and Slaves: Household Formation among the Urban Notables of Early Ottoman Aleppo', in Christine Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World*, (London, 2012), 292.

kinship constituted the most immediate basis for patronage, but friendship, marriage ties, ethnic and geographical origins and household service played a crucial part in the establishment of *intisab* networks.⁵⁴³ In this section, I will explore the clients of the Köprülü household in the administrative system. Who were they? How did they make a connection with the Köprülü grand viziers? Which positions did they occupy and how long did they stay in their positions?

4.3.1. Sons-in-law as main force of the Köprülü household

Sons-in-law of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha played a crucial role in preserving the power of the household during Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's grand vizierate. It should be pointed out that sons-in-law were really members of the family, almost as much as real sons. As noted, there were four sons-in-law of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha: Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha (d.1683), Kaplan Mustafa Pasha (d.1681), Kibleli Mustafa Pasha (d.1664) and Abaza Siyavuş Pasha (d. 1687). While Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha and Abaza Siyavuş Pashas were raised in Köprülü Mehmed's own household and rose to the grand vizierate, Kaplan Mustafa Pasha assumed the grand admiralty several times after graduation from the *Enderun*. Another *Enderun* graduate, Kibleli Mustafa Pasha, met an early career termination as he passed away in the 1664 military campaign.

Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha was the most prominent and experienced member of the household.⁵⁴⁴ He was born in Merzifon in Central Anatolia around 1635 as son of a cavalry officer (sipahi), who was said to have served under Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. Merzifonlu Mustafa started his career as *iç oğlanı* (palace page) in the household of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. Merzifonlu Mustafa and Köprülü Mehmed Pasha's elder son, Fazıl Ahmed, were the

⁵⁴³ Cornell Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual*, 19-20.

⁵⁴⁴ Colin J. Heywood, 'Karā Mustafā Pasha, Merzifonlu, Maktūl', Bearman et al. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Islam, Second Edition* and Yasir Yilmaz, 'The Road to Vienna'.

same age; they grew up and received their education together. Merzifonlu Mustafa married Köprülü Mehmed's daughter Saliha Hanim. After having held a number of positions within the household's inner service such as the sword-bearer (*silahdar*), Merzifonlu Mustafa became Köprülü Mehmed's letter-bearer (*telhisci*) when the latter became grand vizier in 1656. After Merzifonlu Mustafa brought the news of the conquest of Yanova to the court in 1658, the sultan employed him as the head of the imperial stables (*mirahur*). This post brought him into close contact with the sultan, who was an avid hunter. Two years later, he became the governor of Silistre, which was followed by the governorship of Diyarbekir.

The rapid rise of Mustafa Pasha started with Fazıl Ahmed's succession to the grand vizierate. Fazıl Ahmed Pasha appointed Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha as the grand admiral of the Ottoman fleet, a post he retained until 1666. While keeping his grand admiral position, he also became the deputy grand vizier in Edirne during Fazıl Ahmed's Uyvar campaign of 1663. This made him both the second and third highest-ranking official of the empire at the same time. His second term as deputy fell during the Cretan campaign (1666-1669). He joined the Polish campaign in 1672 with the grand vizier. He became the grand vizier in 1676 after the death of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha. Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha occupied the grand vizierate for seven years, and in 1683 he was executed as a result of the unsuccessful attempt to take Vienna.

As I examined in detail in the previous chapter, Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha performed a very important role as deputy in Edirne. He represented the interests of the Köprülü household when the grand vizier was on campaigns. It should be pointed out that as deputy Merzifonlu Mustafa built a close relationship with Mehmed IV, which brought him the opportunity to enlarge his influence. For instance, in 1665, Merzifonlu Mustafa presented one horse, six daggers and five moneybags to the sultan; in return, the sultan

appointed Merzifonlu Mustafa's steward as a *Müteferrika* with a fief grant as payment.⁵⁴⁵ While he served as deputy in Edirne, Merzifonlu Mustafa captured and brought the bandit named Sivri Bolukbasi before the sultan, who in turn awarded him a precious cloth to him.⁵⁴⁶ More importantly, Merzifonlu Mustafa managed to get his own clients, namely Bektas Aga and four other men, appointed as imperial cavalry officers with salaries of forty and ten *akces* per diem respectively.⁵⁴⁷ In this way, Merzifonlu successfully integrated his clients into the cavalry regiments. Moreover, the archival sources state that Merzifonlu's *agas* and his letter-bearer were awarded "hi'lat" (robe of honor) by the sultan at different times.⁵⁴⁸

These examples reveal that being in proximity to the sultan and enjoying his grace was essential for a vizier who wanted to enlarge his household. It seems that Merzifonlu Mustafa obtained a fair share of this grace by spending long years near the sultan as the deputy grand vizier. Indeed, Merzifonlu Mustafa's household was one of the greatest households in that period, numbering around several hundred members even when he was a still deputy of the grand vizier. For instance, according to Antoine Galland, who described the household of Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha in detail, there were 125 pages in the inner part of the household. There also were fifty *kapicibasi* in the outer service of pasha.⁵⁴⁹ Consequently, Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha, as Merlijn Olzon aptly points out, was "a scion of an administrative dynasty, a court favorite, and the head of one of the period's largest households" which made him one of the most notable figures at the time.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁵ Abdi Paşa, *Vekâyi 'nâme*, 195.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid., 182.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid., 182.

⁵⁴⁸ BOA, Ibnulemin, Maliye, 51/4876, 16/1474 and 16/1475.

⁵⁴⁹ Galland, *İstanbul'a ait günlük hatıralar*, 132-42.

⁵⁵⁰ Merlijn Olzon, 'A Most Agreeable and Pleasant Creature? Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasa in the Correspondence of Justinus Colyer (1668-1682)', *Oriente Moderno*, 83/3, (2003), 653.

The second important son-in-law in the family was Kaplan Mustafa Pasha. Although Kaplan Mustafa Pasha assumed critical positions during Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's grand vizierate, in comparison to Merzifonlu, he has received less scholarly attention. However, Kaplan Mustafa took an active role in the military campaigns led by Fazıl Ahmed Pasha, and he was often appointed as the chief commander in the raids against the Habsburg forces.

Little can be said with certainty about Kaplan Mustafa Pasha's early career. He seems to have started his career in the *enderun* and was a sword-bearer before taking up a post as governor.⁵⁵¹ Mehmed Süreyya stated that he was appointed as governor of Baghdad and then of Van, but I could not find any reference in the contemporary chroniclers and archival sources to corroborate Süreyya's information.⁵⁵² In contrast to Süreyya's claim, in an archival record from May 1658, we find him mentioned as the governor of Musul in 1658.⁵⁵³ One year later, Kaplan Mustafa Pasha was appointed as the governor of Trablusşam (Tripoli, Lebanon).⁵⁵⁴

It is unclear when Kaplan Mustafa was married to daughter of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. Kaplan Mustafa joined military campaigns as the governor of Karaman. In 1665, he was transferred to the governorship of Damascus.⁵⁵⁵ When the preparations for the Crete campaign began, Kaplan Mustafa Pasha was appointed as the grand admiral in 1666. This was Fazıl Ahmed's conscious choice, for grand admiral Merzifonlu had been appointed the deputy grand vizier in Edirne. The imperial fleet was of the utmost importance during the Cretan war, and this critical office was transferred to Kaplan Mustafa Pasha. Until 1672, Kaplan Mustafa Pasha held this office before joining the Kamaniecz campaign as the

⁵⁵¹ Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, III, 867 and Enderunlu Abdullatif, *Ayine-i Derun*, 65.

⁵⁵² Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicill-i Osmani*, IV, 1189.

⁵⁵³ BOA, Ibnulemin, Maliye 11/997 (29-12-1069).

⁵⁵⁴ BOA, Ibnulemin, Maliye 16/1434 20/1866, 24/2278.

⁵⁵⁵ BOA, D.BSM 209 ,44.

governor of Aleppo. As a frontline fighter, Kaplan Mustafa Pasha assumed important roles in the 1674 campaign. He became the governor of Diyarbekir in 1675, and, after a brief period of removal from the office during Merzifonlu Mustafa's grand vizierate, he once more held the grand admiralty from 1678 until his death in 1680.

Kaplan Mustafa Pasha was the "fighting figure" of the Köprülü family. He was given an important part in planning all military campaigns of the period. For instance, Kaplan Mustafa Pasha commanded roughly 1,000 men during the Ottoman-Habsburg military engagements in 1663-1664.⁵⁵⁶ He always stood at the head of critical tasks. For instance, Fazıl Ahmed Pasha ordered him to join the expedition to Nograd, an important castle of the Habsburg forces.⁵⁵⁷ Again in the siege of Candia, he assumed important responsibilities as the grand admiral as he sought to provide supplies and ammunition from the mainland to the island for the army.⁵⁵⁸ Similarly, Kaplan Mustafa Pasha fulfilled many critical military duties during the 1672 and 1674 Polish campaigns.⁵⁵⁹

As a result, Kaplan Mustafa Pasha must be regarded as a chief-assistant of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha on military issues. He carried the main share of the burden in the military campaigns and led an army in the name of the chief-commander Fazıl Ahmed Pasha. His appointments as the chief admiral and the chief-commander are not haphazard or ad hoc; on the contrary, they are carefully designed and planned.

Another son-in-law of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha was Kibleli Mustafa Pasha. There is no information about his early career. We only know that Kibleli Mustafa Pasha was

⁵⁵⁶ Özgür Kolçak, "The Composition, Tactics", 82.

⁵⁵⁷ SLUB Eb.387,121a, Tâib Ömer, *Fethiyye-i Uyvâr ve Novigrâd*. Istanbul University Library, İbnülemin Mahmud Kemal, 2602, 14a.

⁵⁵⁸ 'Fazıl Ahmed Pasha' 56.

⁵⁵⁹ For the details, see, Mehmet İnbaşı, *Ukrayna'da Osmanlılar, Kamaniçe Seferi ve Organizasyonu (1672)* (İstanbul, 2004), 135-70.

appointed as governor of Sivas, Anatolia in 1658.⁵⁶⁰ One year later, he was transferred to the governorship of Kastamonu, in Anatolia.⁵⁶¹ So, he was not a prominent figure of politics in the capital until Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's rise to power. In the military campaign of 1663, Kibleli Mustafa Pasha joined the army as the governor of Damascus. Like Kaplan Mustafa Pasha, he was among the leading decision-makers in the military campaign of 1663.⁵⁶² As Özgür Kolçak points out, Kibleli Mustafa Pasha was generously supported by the Ottoman treasury: he received at least 1,320,000 *akçes* in loan at different times-the single largest amount of money allocated to an Ottoman notable during the Ottoman-Habsburg war of 1663-1664.⁵⁶³ Indeed, Kibleli Mustafa Pasha commanded a force of 2,500 men at the time of the siege; 500 of these men were taken from the garrison of Damascus and were not a part of his personal household troops. In other words, Kibleli Mustafa's household troops were most likely comprised of 2,000 recruits, which constituted one of the largest household troops in the field.⁵⁶⁴ As indicated above, Kibleli Mustafa Pasha's career came to a premature as he died in 1664. If he had lived, however, without a doubt, he would have proved an important figure of the Ottoman military organization as a representative of the Köprülü family along with Kaplan Mustafa Pasha.

The last son-in-law of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha was Abaza Siyavuş Pasha. Of Abhazian origins, Siyavuş Pasha started his career as a slave of Köprülü Mehmed.⁵⁶⁵ Having been set free, he was married to a daughter of his master. He became the commander of the gatekeepers of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha. He participated in Fazıl Ahmed's

⁵⁶⁰ Naima, *Tarih-i Naima*, IV, 1808,

⁵⁶¹ BOA, İbnülemin, Maliye, 24/2261.

⁵⁶² Özgür Kolçak, 114 and Mühürdar Hasan, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârîh*, 344.

⁵⁶³ Özgür Kolçak, 'The Composition, Tactics', 83 and see, BOA, KK, 1957, 29, 37, 39, 42.

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid., 84

⁵⁶⁵ A.H. de Groot, "Siyawush Pasha", Bearman et al. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Islam, Second Edition*.

campaigns in Uyvar, Crete and Kamaniets. Siyavuş Pasha was charged with sending the news of the taking of Candia to Hadice Turhan Sultan in Istanbul.⁵⁶⁶

Siyavuş Pasha's rise to prominence started with Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha. Even though he was removed from office in the wake of purge of the clients of the Köprülü household after the execution of Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha, he was appointed the *aga* of the cavalry regiments in 1684 before becoming the governor of Diyarbekir. He became the grand vizier in 1687, but he was killed in the great rebellion in the same year, which culminated in the dethronement of Mehmed IV.

In the absence of sons in the household, the sons-in-law of the Köprülü family enjoyed a prominent role in maintaining the power of the family. Each of them performed a special task. For instance, Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha as the foremost and seasoned member of the family occupied a critical position, which enabled him to work closely with the sultan. Through closely working with the sultan and grand vizier, Merzifonlu formed his own vigorous household. As a man of the sultan and the grand vizier, Merzifonlu easily succeeded Fazıl Ahmed Pasha. Kaplan Mustafa Pasha enjoyed military positions, played a leading role in the military campaigns and represented the warrior aspect of the household. Despite his short term of service, Kibleli Mustafa Pasha also assumed important responsibilities in the military organization. Abaza Siyavuş Pasha accompanied the grand vizier and enjoyed key positions in the household.

4.3.2. Other influential Pashas related to the Köprülü Household

The clients of the Köprülü household were not exclusively the sons-in-law, who were linked to the family through marriage. Especially inside the administrative system, there were clients who were appointed to important positions where they served for long years.

⁵⁶⁶ Mustafa bin Mustafa, *Tarih-i Sefer*, 141 BOA, İbnülemin-Askeriye, nr. 6/481, in this document Siyavuş was charged with buying tenants and other things for Vani Efendi, tutor of Mehmed IV.

Even though it is not very well known how their affiliation to the Köprülü household was formed, these clients assumed significant positions for the household.

The chief treasurer (*Defterdar*) Ahmed Pasha turned out to be an influential client of the Köprülü Household. Not without reason called by the Venetian Morosini “a creature of Ahmed Köprülü.” he was appointed the chief treasurer in 1661.⁵⁶⁷ Indeed, Ahmed was a former head armorer, and his swift advancement was clearly based on his master’s generosity. In 1665, he was honored with the rank of vizier. Ahmed Pasha preserved his position for thirteen years before he was appointed as the governor of Egypt with the aim of carrying out Fazıl Ahmed Pasha’s centralization policies in Egypt in 1675.⁵⁶⁸ During the grand vizierate of Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha, Ahmed Pasha became governor of Diyarbekir, Bosnia, Kamaniets and Timisvar. Ahmed Pasha died in 1683 during the siege of Vienna.⁵⁶⁹

Like all family members and other clients, Ahmed Pasha accompanied Fazıl Ahmed Pasha on his military campaigns. He carried out important duties arranging the provisions and fiscal matters of the army as *Defterdar*.⁵⁷⁰ More importantly, he contributed to the army with his own substantial household troops during the Cretan and Polish campaigns. The fact that he occupied for thirteen years the office of the *defterdarlık*, a challenging and important post that underwent frequent changes during the first half of the seventeenth century, suggests what an important client he was to the grand vizier. The grand vizier’s trust in Defterdar Ahmed Pasha is also exemplified by his immediate consultation with the

⁵⁶⁷ *Le Relazioni degli stati Europei lette al senato dagli amasciatori Veneziani nel secolo decimosettimo*, Nicolo Barozzi and Guglielmo Berchet (eds.), Series 5, Turcica, (Venice 1871), 212.

⁵⁶⁸ Baldwin, ‘The Deposition of Defterdar’,

⁵⁶⁹ Dariusz Kolodziejczyk, *The Ottoman Survey Register of Podolia (ca.1681), Defter-i Mufasssal-i Eyalet-i Kamaniçe*, (Cambridge, 2004), 2 vols, I, 15.

⁵⁷⁰ Mühürdar Hasan, *Cevâhirü’l-Tevârih*, 384. Arslan Poyraz, ‘Köprülüâde Fazıl Ahmed’, 107.

Defterdar when an important foreign policy issue was to be decided after the grand vizier returned to Edirne from the 1670 campaign.⁵⁷¹

The chief scribe was another important position in the central bureaucracy. As I discussed above, this position was filled by Şamizade Mehmed Efendi, who had been a close supporter of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. Şamizade Mehmed was executed because of his abortive attempt to depose Fazıl Ahmed Pasha. Acemzade Hüseyin Pasha replaced him. It is not explicit in the sources whether there was any patron-client relationship between Acemzade Hüseyin Efendi and Fazıl Ahmed Pasha. However, like Defterdar Ahmed Pasha, Acemzade maintained his position for fourteen years and joined all the military expeditions in the retinue of the grand vizier.⁵⁷² So, he became a close client of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha.

Another influential governor affiliated with the Köprülü household was Abaza Hüseyin Pasha. The only information about Abaza Hüseyin Pasha's relationship with Köprülü Mehmed Pasha comes from *Cevâhirü't-Tevârîh*. Mühürdar Hasan Aga recalled that Köprülü Mehmed Pasha advised his son on his deathbed: "Never deprive Hüseyin Pasha of your favor; he has served us very well and hence I confide him to you."⁵⁷³ Fazıl Ahmed promoted Abaza Hüseyin Pasha to the governorship of Buda, a significant post in the borderland with Austria. Like other clients of the Köprülü household, Abaza Hüseyin Pasha was to become one of the leading figures in the military campaigns and one of the most trusted men of the grand vizier in the field.⁵⁷⁴ After the capture of Uyvar Castle, he was appointed as commander of the castle.⁵⁷⁵ He commanded the Rumelian forces in the siege

⁵⁷¹ M.Halef Cevrioğlu, 'A Swedish Envoy To Köprülü Fazıl Ahmed Pasha: Aslan Aga's Relazione (1669/71)', *International Balkan Annual Conference 7*, Prishtine, 9-11 November 2017. I thank Halef for providing me with his unpublished paper.

⁵⁷² Ahmed Resmi Efendi, *Sefinetü'r-Rüesa*, Millet Library, Ali Emiri MS 720, 29a.

⁵⁷³ Mühürdar Hasan, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârîh*, 142-43.

⁵⁷⁴ Mühürdar Hasan, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârîh*, 236-237 and Paul Rycaut stated that Hüseyin Pasha had 3,000 household troops. See, Paul Rycaut, *The History of the Present State*, 341.

⁵⁷⁵ SLUB EB.837, 111b and 112b.

of Candia and joined with his large household in the Kamaniets campaign.⁵⁷⁶ When we consider that more than ten years of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's fifteen-year-long grand vizierate were spent on campaigns, his desire to establish a close circle around himself inside the military establishment becomes more understandable.

4.4. The Third Layer of the Köprülü Household: The Relationship between Köprülü Household and Provincial Timariots

The question whether and how viziers forged patron-client relationships with timar holders in the provinces and officers who had *timar* revenues remains unexplored in Ottoman historiography.⁵⁷⁷ This is a key subject for better understanding the functioning of the vizier households because many timar holders were attached to the vizier households during the seventeenth century. If a *timar* holder was registered as a client of a certain vizier in order to receive an exemption from going to war, he was defined as “*defterlü*” in the Ottoman bureaucratic terminology. The system worked in the following manner: when the mobilization of the war began, the officers inspected the timar holders to see whether they had joined the army because timar holders had to join the military campaign.⁵⁷⁸ If the timariot could not offer a plausible explanation for his lack of participation, his fief was revoked by the authorities. However, if the timariot could prove that he served in the household of a vizier or a different bureaucrat in the upper echelons of the government, he would be registered as the “*defterlü*” (that is to say, a pasha's roll) of the high-level officials he claimed to be attached to. In that case, the timariot cavalryman did not lose his

⁵⁷⁶ Mühürdar Hasan, *Cevâhirü't-Tevârîh*, 234.

⁵⁷⁷ An earlier attempt was made by Mustafa Cezar, see, Cezar, *Osmanlı Tarihinde Levendler*, 195-201 and for a groundbreaking approaching to the subject see, Özgür Kolçak “XVII. Yüzyıl Askeri Gelişimi”, 111-16.

⁵⁷⁸ BOA, İbnülemin Askeri, 751,752,753 892,893,894 and 896.

fief.⁵⁷⁹ In this section, I attempt to examine this complex relationship between viziers and timar holders through archival sources. Focusing on this issue will not only enlighten us about the patronage relationship between the provincial timariot cavalries and the vizier households, but also elucidate the fuzzy link between the households and state-related officials.

The fact that the timar holders, in addition to their primary duties, collected around the vizierial households caught the attention of the authors of the *nasihatname* (advice-literature).⁵⁸⁰ Common criticism of the *nasihatname* authors was that the timar holders, who were originally supposed to participate in military campaigns, managed to escape this obligation by serving under vizierial households. In more general terms, the criticism targeted the employment of state-salary- or fief-enjoying officials by the vizierial households. As I pointed out above, among household members only kethüdas received the *zeamet*⁵⁸¹ revenue.⁵⁸² Other servants had to be paid by the viziers themselves. According to ‘Ayn Ali, a prominent *nasihatname* author, one of the principal reasons why the timar system became corrupted over time was that the timariots “who enjoyed the fiefs donated by the sultan” did not follow the army with their men to war, but rather chose to get registered as a *defterlü* in a vizierial household.⁵⁸³

Notwithstanding the complaints of the *nasihatname* writers, the employment of *timar* holders in the vizier households expanded. A 1657 archival register provides

⁵⁷⁹ There was an alternative way to avoid joining military campaigns. Metin Kunt stated “it is known that the state started around 1650 to collect a ‘timar-substitute’ charge (*bedel-i Timar*) from those timar holders who did not take part or who not asked to take part in imperial campaigns.” See, Kunt, *Bir Osmanlı Valisinin*, 23.

⁵⁸⁰ Koçi Bey, *Koçi Bey Risalesi* and Anonymous, ‘Kitab-ı Müstetab’.

⁵⁸¹ In the Ottoman system, it is customary to classify revenues according to their yield: a timar produced revenues up to 20,000 akces, a *zeamet* from 20,000 to 100,000 akces. See, Metin Kunt, *The Sultan’s Servants*, 12.

⁵⁸² Anonymous, ‘Kitab-ı Müstetab’, 39.

⁵⁸³ Ayn Ali Efendi, *Kavânî-i Âl-i Osman der Hülâsa-i Mezâmin-i Defter-i Dîvân ve Risâle-i Vazîfe-horân ve Merâtib-i Bendegân-ı Âl-i Osmân*, Ed. Tayyib Gökbilgin, (İstanbul, 1979) 75.

substantial information on the subject. The register shows that twelve imperial council pursuivants (*Cavus*) who had timar revenues were employed in the retinues of the chief-commander Deli Hüseyin Pasha. These imperial pursuivants served as treasury officials, sword-bearers, seal-bearers and gatekeepers of the vizier Deli Hüseyin Pasha. In this way, they maintained their *timar*-revenues while serving in the vizier household.⁵⁸⁴

In addition to this example, there are numerous documents penned by the central government to the local authorities for the preservation of the fiefs of the *defterlüs*. For instance, in a decree addressing the judge of Malatya in Anatolia in 1681, a certain Süleyman, who enjoyed a fief of 19,173 *akces* per annum in the county of Malatya, was exempted from participating to the campaign since he had been the *defterlü* of Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha.⁵⁸⁵ In another document dated 1677, the *zeamet* fief of a certain person in the Merc village of the Damascus County, was given the same privilege as he was serving Musahib Mustafa Pasha.⁵⁸⁶ These sorts of commands and orders abound in the Ottoman archive.⁵⁸⁷

In addition to these individual applications, a register in the form of a *defter* covering the period between 1659 and 1662 records the *defterlüs* accompanying commanders joining the Transylvanian campaign and constitutes the most detailed extant account of the subject.⁵⁸⁸ According to this register, when the order to launch the campaign was issued in 1659, the governors of Rumelia, Bosnia, Buda, Karaman, Sivas, Aleppo and

⁵⁸⁴ BOA, A.NŞT, Dos, nr. 18/126 These pursuivants took their revenues through timar system and see, Murat Uluskan, ‘Divan-ı Hümayun Çavuşları’, PhD Thesis, Marmara University (2004).

⁵⁸⁵ BOA, Ibnulemin, Askeri, 30/2651.

⁵⁸⁶ BOA, Ibnulemin, Askeri 17/1651.

⁵⁸⁷ BOA, Ibnulemin, Askeri 7/574, Ibnulemin, Timar ve Zeamet, 2/140 and 2/168 and Ibnulemin, Maliye 11/1004.

⁵⁸⁸ BOA, KK 434, “Erdel seferinde defterlüler için ordu-yı hümâyûndan virilen ahkâm kuyûdudur el-vâkı‘ an-6 şehr-i Şabâni’l-mu‘azzam sene 1070 (17 Nisan 1660)” 38.

Adana were invited to join the army with their troops.⁵⁸⁹ In this register, seventy-six *zaims* and 292 timariots were exempted from the timar inspection due to their service to the pashas. The register records the timariots as the *defterlü* to individual pashas from specified regions and the reasons for their exemptions.

We can see *defterlüs* of both Köprülü Mehmed Pasha and Fazıl Ahmed Pasha in this register. According to a registry dated 24 June 1661, twenty timariots and nine *zaims* were registered as *defterlüs* of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. These *defterlüs* were exempted on the condition that they served in the *vakfs* of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha in Yanova and Varad.⁵⁹⁰ These timariots who received their fiefs from the state in exchange for some service, were actually serving a vizier's own pious foundation (*vakf*) without losing their fiefs. After the death of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha, we have the names of the *defterlüs* who now served *vakfs* of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha. This registry starts as "The *defterlüs* of the pious foundation of the late grand vizier Köprülü Mehmed Pasha" dated 11 March 1663, including eleven *zaims* and twelve timariots, who were charged with dealing with the *vakfs*.⁵⁹¹ These records clearly justify the complaints of the nasihatname authors in showing us that state officials worked for the viziers.

After Köprülü Mehmed Pasha, we come across the names of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's *defterlüs*. The number of the *defterlüs* is sixty-four and this figure is the highest any pasha had on his roll.⁵⁹² There are no detailed explanations for any of the entries, save for the

⁵⁸⁹ BOA, KK 434.

⁵⁹⁰ "Sa'adetlü ve mürüvvetlü sadr-ı a'zam hazretlerinin Yanova ve Arad'da olan hayratı binasının hizmetiyle istihdam olunmaları için alıkonulan zü'ama ve erbab-ı tımarlardır. Fi 26 L.sene 71', 44.

⁵⁹¹ "Zıkr olunan yirmi üç nefer zü'ama ve erbab-ı tımar bin yetmiş iki senesinde merhum Mehmed Paşa hazretlerinin evkafına ta'yin olunduklarına hidmet-i asakir-i İslamın zad ve zahireleri tedarikinde ve sa'ir hidemat-ı padişahide meçud olub Erdel Seferine varmadılar deyu dirliklerine zarar gelmemek üzere başka başka hükümleri yazılmışdır. Fi gurre-i Ş.Sene 73", 52.

⁵⁹² For instance, "Niğbolu, Tımar-ı Ebubekir, Karye-i Memlamniçe Tabi-i Rahova Defteri, 1400 Sa'adetlü vezir-i azam hazretlerinin defterlülerinden olmağın suret-i emri mucibince kayd olunmuştur. Fi 19.Z sene 72'" 50.

notes that they were Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's *defterlüs*. When we closely look at these *defterlüs*, it can be detected that they came from different regions of the empire. Some come from Nigde Aksaray, Menteşe and Kastamonu in Anatolia, while other timariots had their fiefs in the Balkan cities of Nigbolu (Nicopolis) and Vidin. Hence, we can see that Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's *defterlüs* were spread over a considerable expanse of territory. We also have information regarding the number of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's *defterlüs* who were registered during the Cretan campaign: These were fifty-four *timars* and *zeamets* whose holders were granted immunity.⁵⁹³

Now we should focus on certain problems with the register. The most important question is whether these *defterlüs* were clients or members of the vizierial household, or just people enjoying exemption due to the military service they provided. In fact, both categories existed, although the number of the people who received exemption in exchange only for military service is quite meager. For instance, a certain Kenan who held a fief of 20,000 *akces* in Timisvar was assigned to the repair of the Castle of Ineu, a commission for which he was recorded as a *defterlü* and received immunity for his fief.⁵⁹⁴ Similarly, the holder of a *zeamet* of 21,000 *akces* in Szeged, Hasan was commissioned to procure the wheat destined for the imperial army and an order was issued to protect his fief against any intervention.⁵⁹⁵

Apart from random figures recorded for these sorts of assignments, the *defterlüs* in the register tended to be either relatives or clients of the viziers. In any case, the wide geographic range of the origins of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's *defterlüs* already shows, as Özgür

⁵⁹³ ONB, Mixt. 1305, vr. 30b-31a, I wholeheartedly thank Özgür Kolçak for sharing this important source. "Zikr olunan elli bir nefer zuema ve erbab-ı timar Hanya muhafazasına ta'yin olunan vezir-i müşarün-ileyh hazretlerinin defterlü ademlerinden olup hizmetede olmağla me'mur oldukları bayrakları altında mevcut bulunmadılar deyü zeamet ve tımarlarına zarar gelmemek üze"

⁵⁹⁴ KK 434, 42.

⁵⁹⁵ KK 434, 40.

Kolçak accurately observed, that “volunteerism of former patronage relationship proved more effective than the appointments undertaken by the central government” with regard to the *defterlüs*.⁵⁹⁶ A document addressing Fazıl Ahmed Pasha in person reveals the functioning of the mechanism. A certain Mehmed, who was a descendant of the conqueror of Esztergom Mehmed Pasha, had penned a letter to Fazıl Ahmed Pasha, expressing his wish to become the pasha’s *defterlü*. The Ottoman government consented to the request and sent an order to the governor of Buda, declaring that petitioner Mehmed’s *zeamet* was to receive exemption as long as he was in the service of the grand vizier. In this way, Mehmed was exempted from participating in military campaigns, as he was a *defterlü* of the grand vizier.⁵⁹⁷

Family members of the vizierial households themselves were among the *defterlüs*, too, and they occupied a considerable place in the lists. The register under study indicates that many of the pashas registered their sons as *defterlüs* and protected their fiefs even though the sons accompanied them in their retinues. Mehmed, son of Kenan Pasha the custodian of Erzurum, for example, was registered as *defterlü* for a *zeamet* of 22,464 akces in Smederevo while he was serving his father in Erzurum.⁵⁹⁸ Even though we detect no mention of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha’s relatives in this register, another record suggests that his brother Fazıl Mustafa was entered twice as *defterlü* in the rolls. As a Müteferrika, Fazıl

⁵⁹⁶ Kolcak, 113.

⁵⁹⁷ IE, Ensab 260 (9 August 1667), see, also Kolcak, 113, For response of the central government see: ‘Mezbur devletlü ve merhametlü Sadrazam hazretlerinin defterlü adamlarından olup memur olduğu sefer ve muhafazalarda mevcut bulunmadı deyü zeametine hazer gelmemek için emr-i şerif mucebinceFi 15 Şevval sene 1076’ for the requirement of Mehmed see, “Saadetlü merhametlü sultanım hazretleri sağolsun, Arzuhal-i bende-i budur ki Serem sancağında Busavye(Yusavye?) nahiyesinde berat-ı mutasarrıf(?) eylediğimiz otuz üç bin sekiz yüz elli akçe zeamet karyeleründen Şumanofçe(?) nam karye ve gayrı yerde zeametimiz olmağla saadetlü ve merhametlü hazretlerinden mercudur ki bu kullarına edüp bu sene-i mübareke defterlü kullarınızdan eylemesi babında Budun beylerbeyisine hitaben emr-i şerif sadaka ihsan buyrulmak rica olunur. Baki ferman sultanımıdır. Bende-i Mehmed ibn-i fatih-i Estergon Mehmed Paşa”

⁵⁹⁸ KK 434, 41.

Mustafa Pasha was supposed to receive his revenue from fiefs; however, since he always accompanied his brother as part of the latter's household, his *zeamet* was protected by getting orders issued to that effect.⁵⁹⁹

As a result, viziers managed to keep attached to their household increasing numbers of officials enjoying the state's timar or *zeamet* revenues. As we saw with regard to Köprülü Mehmed Pasha's *defterlüs*, the Köprülü grand viziers managed to mobilize timariots for their own *vakfs*. They constantly incorporated more and more timar and *zeamet* holders into their households, spreading their networks over a larger geography. This subject, whose surface we have merely scratched, the surface, needs further attention and should be supplemented with more documents.

4.5. Conclusion

As Metin Kunt implies, one of the most important changes in the seventeenth century is the increasing importance of patronage relations and household affiliations in the Ottoman polity.⁶⁰⁰ As the most powerful and sustained vizier household in the seventeenth century, the Köprülü household provided an alternative to the regular channels of palace and political appointments. We can see the efficiency of the Köprülü household in three principal points that helped it gain primacy over all other competing vizier households.

The first is the ability of the Köprülü household to insert its members into the administrative system. The *kethüdas* of the Köprülü household, Gürcü Mehmed Pasha and Ibrahim Pasha, for instance, were appointed to important provincial governorships. In addition, Salih Aga, the former steward of Fazıl Ahmed Pasha, was promoted to the chief commander of the Janissaries after serving briefly as a *cavusbasi*. These appointments differed from those of the sixteenth century. They moved directly from service in the

⁵⁹⁹ BOA, İbnülemin, Dahiliye, 111.

⁶⁰⁰ Kunt, *The Sultan's Servants*, 95.

vizier's household to important positions, having held posts neither in the palace nor in lower-level provincial service. Accordingly, the Köprülü household became a fast track to high offices.

The second is the establishment of minor-level households under Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's leadership. These households were all somehow tied to the Köprülü family through marriage alliances or patron-client links. The most exemplary evidence that these different households came together to form a powerful network is the important position that the Köprülü clients occupied in the Ottoman military organization during Fazıl Ahmed's campaigns. The organization of the 1663 campaign alone offers much information about the large network held together by the Köprülü household. Fazıl Ahmed Pasha brought to this campaign two of his brothers-in-law who commanded their large household troops: Köprülü Mehmed Pasha's former steward and the new governor of Aleppo, Gürcü Mehmed Pasha, *Defterdar* Ahmed Pasha, Salih Aga, the chief commander of the Janissaries and Acemzade Hüseyin Efendi, who would later replace Şamizade Mehmed Efendi. Furthermore the governor of Buda, Abaza Hüseyin Pasha, who had been a close friend of the family, was also present. Apart from bringing their large household troops to the war, these figures also proved to be Fazıl Ahmed Pasha's closest assistants in war planning and diplomatic negotiations thanks to the positions they held. Besides, Merzifonlu Mustafa Pasha, who assumed the office of the grand admiralty and deputy grand vizier in Edirne, must also be included in the picture. As a result, one can say that never before in Ottoman history had so many relatives and clients taken part in a single military organization.

The third is the extension of the patronage networks of the Köprülü household in the provinces through establishing *intisab* ties with provincial timariots. The Köprülü household patronized many timariots who came from different regions of the empire. The

Köprülü grand viziers employed provincial timariots in their own service, for instance in the *vakfs* of the family. The Köprülü household was not alone in using timariots in such a way during the seventeenth century, but it managed to attach highest number of timariots to itself.

Lastly, owing to the long years during which they stood at the helm of the state, the Köprülü household managed to create a large and strong patronage network. The “continuity” from father to son enabled Fazıl Ahmed Pasha not only to place his clients in important posts, but also to make a very important network of his own from among his brothers-in-laws and the clients who had been loyal to his father despite their relative bureaucratic invisibility at this time. The Köprülü household was more influential and longer lasting than the powerful households of the sixteenth century, such as those of Sokollu Mehmed and Rüstem Pashas. The influence of the members of Sokollu Mehmed and Rüstem Pasha’s households did not continue after the death of their masters. However, even after the members of the Köprülü household were expelled from administrative positions following the failure of the siege of Vienna in 1683, they reassumed important positions in a few years and played key roles in dethroning Mehmed IV in 1687. Furthermore, Köprülü Mehmed Pasha’s other son, Fazıl Mustafa Pasha, his nephew *Amcazade* Hüseyin Pasha and grandson Köprülü Numan Pasha also managed to intermittently hold the post of grand vizier until the 1710s. This return to power and their success in preserving political influence were the most consequential lines of distinction between the Köprülü household and other vizierial households of the time.