

TWO FIRMANs OF MUSTAFĀ II ON THE REORGANISATION
OF THE OTTOMAN COURIER SYSTEM (1108/1696)
(DOCUMENTS FROM THE THESSALONIKI CADĪ *SICILLS*)

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The present article publishes text and translation of two firmans of Mustafā II, dated 1108 (1696), taken from copies in the *cadi* registers (*sicill*) of Thessaloniki, regulating the reform of the Ottoman state courier and post-station (*ulak/menzilhāne*) network with regard to the Rumelian *sol kol* (Via Egnatia). The firman texts are designed to be studied in conjunction with the commentary in the author's study of the Rumelian *sol kol* in E. Zachariadou, *The Via Egnatia under Ottoman Rule (1380–1699)* (Rethymnon 1996), pp. 129–144.

Key words: Ottoman Empire, economic and social history, 1453–1699; Rumeli, history and historical geography; the Ottoman *ulak* (courier) system, history; Via Egnatia, history (1380–1699); Ottoman paleography and diplomatics.

In 1977, when I was engaged in collecting material preserved in the Turkish state archives for a study of the rise and development of the Ottoman *ulak*, or state courier and post-station network, it soon became evident that the plethora of archival material on the subject for the eighteenth century, when compared to its scarcity for earlier periods, was due to no random process of fortuitous survival or archival accessibility. In two preliminary contributions to the subject, both of which were written in Istanbul when my research was in its early stages, I was able to establish that this proliferation of the records of the *ulak* system reflected a thoroughgoing reorganisation of the administrative and financial bases of the system, at both central and provincial levels, which had been undertaken by the Ottoman authorities during the first decade of the twelfth/last decade of the seventeenth century, particularly in the years A.H. 1103 (September 1691–1692) and 1108 (July 1696–1697). It became clear also that this reorganisation had transformed the state courier system in a way which would determine its characteristics as an operating system throughout the twelfth and early to mid-thirteenth/eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, down to the intro-

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duction of a reformed postal courier system by Mustafā Reshīd Pasha in 1255/1839 as part of the ongoing reforms of the Tanzimat period.¹

In this preliminary research I was also able to establish the date – Rūz-ı Hızır 1108, i.e., Hidrelles (< Hızır İlyās) or St. George's Day, 23 April 1697 Julian / Old Style² – on which the second (and final) principal reorganisation of the system was due to take effect, and also to point out its chief characteristics.³ In the time – unfortunately curtailed through illness – which remained to me in the Turkish archives, the texts of the one or more firmans which must have been issued to give instructions to the relevant provincial authorities regarding the reorganisation of the system managed to elude me, although their 'ghosts' were evident through fragmentary references in entries in a number of other *defters* relating to the *ulak* system.⁴

By a happy chance, and through the kindness of my old friend Professor Vassilis Demetriades, I was enabled subsequently (in 1978) to obtain copies of the texts of the two 'reorganisation firmans' in question, and to confirm that my suppositions regarding their existence had been correct. The texts of the firmans were located, not in the Turkish central archives, but in the surviving *sicills* or Sharī'a court records of the cadis of Thessaloniki, the lengthy series of which, stretching from the late seventeenth century to the early twentieth, are now preserved in the Provincial Archives of Macedonia at Thessaloniki. The two firmans in question were issued, in the name of the Ottoman sultan Mustafā II (1106/1695–1115/1703), at Edirne on 10 and 15 *Rebī' II*, 1108 (27 October [Old Style, = 6 November, New Style] and 1 [Old Style, = 11, New Style] November 1696). The *sicill* volume in which their arrival was recorded (on 27 *Cumā 7ā II* 1108 (12/22 January 1697) by the cadi of Thessaloniki – the documents having presumably arrived together by the same courier – and in which their texts were entered (on pp. 186–188), forms vol. 2 of the present series of Thessaloniki cadi court records.⁵

In a later contribution on the Ottoman 'Route of the Left Hand' in Rumeli, which was written for Professor Elizabeth Zachariadou's second 'Halcyon Days in

¹ Heywood (1976–1977, and 1980).

² The fiscal administration of the Ottoman *ulak* system, as of much else, was based on a solar year calendar beginning on Rūz-i Hızır and divided into two roughly equal (resp. summer and winter) halves by Rūz-i Kāsım (Kasım günü; St. Demetrius' Day), 26 Oct. O.S. (Cf. Fekete 1955, pp. I, 72). Rūz-i Hızır fell twelve days after Nevruz, the Persian New Year (1 Farvardīn), which fell on 11 March Old Style, and which – as the *mālīyye* year – was used, at least in the sixteenth century, for budgetary purposes (cf. Sahillioğlu 1970, p. 233). For the seventeenth century, however, according to Professor Sahillioğlu, the indications as to whether the *hicrī* or the *mālīyye* year was employed are unclear. In relation to the *hicrī* calendar, in A.H. 1108 (31.7.1696–19.7.1697), for example, Rūz-i Kāsım (26 Oct. 1696) must have *preceded* Rūz-i Hızır (23 April 1697). Inferences regarding the references to the two days in the present documents would appear to indicate that the *hicrī* year was intended.

³ Heywood (1980, pp. 182, ff.).

⁴ E.g. in various annotations *der kenār* in BA KPT 2742, *Defter-i menāzil-i Rūm İli ... der sene 1104* (1692–1693) *ilā sene 1105* (1693–1694) and KPT 3006, *Defter-i menāzil-i bârgirān-i ulak. der vilāyet-i Rūm İli* (dated 1124–1125/1712–1713); cf. Heywood (1980, pp. 180, 185, note 8).

⁵ Information received from Professor (then Dr) Vassilis Demetriades, at the time Director of the Provincial Archives of Macedonia, in June 1978.

Crete' Symposium, held at Rethymnon in 1994 on the subject of the Via Egnatia under Ottoman rule, I was able to quote extensively from the two reform firmans of 1108/1696 and comment further on them; space was lacking, however, to publish the texts (and translations) in their entirety.⁶ Although their significance cannot be fully appreciated without further investigation of the *ulak* system as it existed both before and after the event, the publication of the post-reform *nizām-nāmes* for the Rumelian *kollar*, on which I have been long (if intermittently) engaged, has proved to be a somewhat protracted task.⁷ It would seem worthwhile, therefore, to publish in the interim the Reorganisation Firmans of Mustafā II, independently of the *nizām-nāmes* which derive from them. It is a pleasure and a duty to honour on the present occasion the evergreen memory of Lajos Fekete, whose pioneering work in Ottoman paleography and diplomacy continues to provide both a model and a standard for workers in the field.

The texts and translations of the two firmans are given below.⁸

The documents

I.

Firman [of Mustafā II], addressed to the cadis stationed on the road from Edirne to İstife (Thebes); i.e., on the Rumelian *sol kol*, or Route of the Right [Hand]], reforming the operation of the state courier (*ulak*) and relay-station (*menzilhâne*) system. Cadi's copy. Issued at Edirne, 10 Rebī' II, 1108 (27 October [O.S. = 6 November, N.S.] 1696); received at Thessaloniki, 27 Cum. II, 1108 (= 11/21 January 1697). Thessaloniki, Provincial Archives of Macedonia, Cadi of Thessaloniki, court entry-books, 'İep. 2, pp. 186–188; 53 lines (pp. 186, ll. 17–31; 187 (35 lines), and 188, ll. 1–3).

186₁₇ Mefāhirü'l-kuzāt ve'l-hükkām / ma'denü'l-faẓl ve'l-keḷām / Edrene'den İstifeye varınca yol üzerinde vākı' olan kāzīlar – zide faẓluhum – /
ve mafharu'l-emāşil ve'l-akrān kethüdā yerleri ve yeñiçeri serdārları ve a'yān-i vilāyetiñ iş erleri ve menzilciler – zide kadruhum – / tevkī'-i
refī'-i hümāyūn vāsıl olıcak ma'lūm ola ki / hālā Rūm İli ve Anatolī cānible-
rinde vākı' menāzil kadīmden ancak umūr-i mühimme-i
20 dīn-ü-devlet için vaẓ' olunub / ulu yol üzerinde olan kāzālarda vākı' her menziliñ masārif-i ekşeriniñ
taraf-i Mīrīden mu'ayyen köyleri <olub> ve ba'zısının hazīne<-i> 'āmireden
ve ba'zı emvālden havāleleri ve kāzālardan imdādiyesi

⁶ Heywood (1996).

⁷ BA KPT 2742 and 3006 (see above, note 4).

⁸ For technical reasons the texts are provided in transcription.

- olub / ve ulu yolda olmayan kazâlarda dahi ulak.mütemādî olmağla mu‘ayyen menzil olmayub ancak.
- iktizâ eyledikde ahâli-i kazâ kendü beynlerinde göregelmelerile ol-ma‘küleleriñ hazîne defterlerinde kaydı olmayub
- ve senede ne-mikdâr menzil masrafları olduğu ma‘lûm degildir / hâlâ Devlet-i ‘Aliye tarafından hükm-i hümayûn ile umûr-i mühimme ile
- 25 murûr ve ‘ubûr eden ulaklardan mâ‘adâ etrafda olan ser-‘askerler ve serhadd-i mansûreler muhâfazasında ve taşra mansıblarında olan vüzerâ-yi ‘izâm ve sâir mîrmîrân ve mîr-livâ ve mütesellimleri umûr-i mühimmeden-ğayri cüzvî
- ve kendi maslahatlarıçün dahi menzil bârgîrlere buyuruldu vermelerile bu tarîk ile kesret-i menâzil
- vâkı‘ olmağla ‘an asl umûr-i mühimme içün mevcûd olan menzil bârgîrleri bir vechle tâkat getürmeyüb bârgîrleri
- telef ve menzil kurâsınıñ re‘âyâsı dahi perâkende olmaları ile umûr-i mühimme ile giden ulaklarıñ ta‘tîline bâ‘iş
- 30 olduklarında yine taraf-i Mîrî’den ve civârında vâkı‘ olan kazâlardan başka imdâd verildüğinden ğayri niçesin
- dahi re‘âyâ fukarâsı kendü beynlerinde çeküb bu kesret-i menâzil sebeble cânib-i Mîrî’ye zarar ve re‘âyâ fukarâsına
- 1871 küllî zulm ve ta‘addî olunduğı tevâtür ile nümâyân olmağla bi’l-cümle menâzil ref‘ ve bundan böyle menzîlciler kendüleri
- bârgîr besleyüb ve her bir menzile ücret takdîr ve murûr ve ‘ubûr eden ulaklara ücret ile bârgîr verilüb mukâta‘a olmak.
- şartile vilâyet-i Rûm İli ve Anadolu’da vâkı‘ menziller müceddeden tertîb ve bir sûrete ifrâğ olunmak.üzere fermânım
- olub gene kadîmî menzil tertîbi şimdiden ref‘ olunduğı hâlde sûret-i ahar tertîbine menzîlcileriñ vüs‘at
- 5 ve iktidârları olmayub / tertîb-i cedîd nizâmını bulmak. içün hâlâ menzillerde mevcûd olan menzil bârgîrleri
- ve masârifîçün mu‘ayyen olan akçeleri altı aya deġin sermâye olmak.üzere inşâ‘illâhu ta‘âlâ biñ yüz sekiz
- senesi Rûz-ı Hızırına varınca yerlerinde ibkâ ve işbu biñ yüz sekiz senesi Rûz-i Kâsım’ında bi’l-cümle Rûm İli ve Anadolu
- câniblerinde vâkı‘ <gerek> mu‘ayyen ve gerek ġayrî-mu‘ayyen menâzilden murûr ve ‘ubûr eden ulaklara fîmâba’d ücret ile bârgîr verilüb
- ancak. bu menzilleriñ birbirinden tefâvüti olub ba‘zısı karîb ve ba‘zısı dahi ba‘îd olub müsâvî olmamağla
- 10 her menziliñ bârgîr ücretleri sâ‘at hesâbınca ta‘yîn ve takdîr olunmak. iktizâ etmegin bir bârgîre her bir sâ‘at
- yol içün onar sağ akçe ücret takdîr olunub bundan böyle Devlet-i ‘Âliyem ve gerek Kırım Hânı ve etrâflarda olan
- ser-‘askerler ve serhadd-i mansûreler muhâfazasında olan ve taşra mansıblarda teftîşle olan vüzerâ-yi izâm ve sâyir

- mîrmîrân ve mîr-livâ <ve> mütesellimler tarafından gerek mu‘ayyen ve <gerek> ğayrî-mu‘ayyen olan menzillerde murûr ve ‘ubûr eden ulaklara takdîr olan ücretle bârgîr verilüb / eger sürici ve kulağuz taleb eder olur ise <gerek> a‘lâ ve gerek
- 15 ednâ kendi bineklerinden-ğayrî sürici ve kulağuz ve gerek eşyâları tahmîl için kaç bârgîr alurlar ise ke-zalik yine ta‘yîn olunan ücretle verilüb / ve ulaklar menzîlcilerden müft ve meccanen yemek yemeyüb ta‘âma göre rızâsı ve bahâsı ile alub / bundan soñra gerek hükm-i hümâyûn ve gerek buyuruldu ile murûr ve ‘ubûr eden ulaklara <gerek> mu‘ayyen ve gerek ğayrî-mu‘ayyen olan menâzilde ve gerek kasabât <ve> kûrâda bilâ-ücret bârgîr ve müft<-ü>meccânen yemek verilmeyüb eger hilâf-i şer‘-i şerîf ve muğâyir-i emr-i hümâyûn cebren bilâ-ücret bârgîr ve müft<-ü>meccânen yemek talebile ta‘addî ve tecâvüz
- 20 eder olur ise ol ma‘kuleleri hâkim-i vilâyet olanlar men‘ ve def‘ eyleyüb mem-nû‘ olmayanları ism ve resmlerile ve şöhetlerle Dîvân-i Hümâyûnuma ‘arz-ü-i‘lâm eyleyeler / el-hâsıl bundan böyle cümle menzîl bârgîrleri mekkârî mişilli olub ahîr kimesneler dahi bir mahallden bir mahalle kendi umûrlarıçün menzîl ile gîtmek tâlib olanlara izn-i ‘âmdır / fermân taleb olunmayub ta‘yîn olunan ücret ile menzîl bârgîri verilüb ve menzîlciler dahi iktizâ eylediği mikdârı bârgîr besleyeler / ve biñ yüz sekiz senesi Rûz-ı Kâsım’ından sene-i mezbûre
- 25 Rûz-ı Hızır’ına varınca yevmiye vâkı‘ olan ulaklara verilen menzîl bârgîrleri taraf-i şer‘den zabt ve defter olunub ve ücretden hâsıl olan akçeyi menzîlci olanlar taraf-i Mîr’den emânete zabt ve a‘yân-i vilâyet ma‘rifetleri ile hıfz olunub / Rûz-ı Hızır duhûlünde her menzîlciniñ hesâbı görölüb ve müctemi‘ olan ücret akçesin Der-i-Sa‘âdetime irsâl ve teslîm-i Hazîne-i ‘Âmire etdirile ve İnşâ‘llâhu ta‘âlâ Rûz-ı Hızır’a değin bu vech üzere her menzîl nizâmın buldukda ‘atîk. menzîl tertîbi ref‘ olunub ve andan soñra her menzîlden
- 30 hâsıl olan ücret akçesile menzîl masârifî görölüb / masrafdan ziyâdesi teslîm-i Hazîne’ye eylemeleri üzere mukâta‘a olub / a‘yân-i vilâyet ma‘rifetile iltizâmile menzîlcilere der-‘uhde olunmak. üzere emr-i şerîfîm tahrîr olunmak. bâbında ‘arz-ü-telhîs olundukda / imdi telhîs mucibince mahalline kayd ve fîmâba‘d destûrû’l-‘amel olunmak. bâbında fermân-i ‘âlîşânım sâdır olunmuşdur / buyurdumki hükm-i şerîfimle
- < > vardıkda bu bâbda sâdır olan fermân-i celîlû’l-kadrım mucibince

- 35 ‘amel edüb dahi vech-i meşrûh üzere irsâl olunan sûret-i defterde mukayyed olan her menzil kazâlarında
 188₁ sicillde kayd ve sûretleri imzâlanub / menzîlcileriñ yedlerine verilüb / işbu emr-i şerîfimiñ hilâfına
 bir ferde vaz’ ve hareket etdirmeyesin / şöyle bilesin / ‘alâmet-i şerîfe i‘timâd kılâsın /
 tahrîren fî’l-yevmi’l-‘âşır <min> şehr-i Rebî‘ül-ahîr li-sene şemân ve mi’e ve elf.

Bi-makâmi
 Edrene
 el-mahrûsa

[Annotated:]

Vusila fî 27 min Cumâ7â’l-evvel sene 1108

Translation

Ornaments of the cadis and judges; mines of virtue and eloquence: the cadis [of places lying] along the road from Edirne to İstife – may their virtues be increased! – and ornaments of the most eminent and [their] peers, commandants of the provincial cavalry (*kethüdâ yerleri*) and Janissary commanders (*yeñiçeri serdârları*) and agents (*iş erleri*) of the provincial notables (*a’yân-i vilâyet*) and post-station keepers (*menzîlciler*) – may their power be increased!

When the Noble Imperial Sign shall arrive, let it be known that the post-station[s] (*menzil*) existing at present in Rumeli and Anatolia, were established in the past solely for use in connection with important affairs of state (*umûr-i mühimme-i dîn-ü-devlet*). For the [operating] expenses (*masârifîçün*) of each post-station in *kazâs* [which lie] on main routes (*ulu yollar*), the greater part is [provided by the inhabitants of] villages designated [for the purpose] (*mu’ayyen*) on the part of the State Treasury (*Mâliye tarafından*); some from the Imperial treasury (*Hazîne-i ‘Âmire*), and some from transfers of funds (*emvâlden havâleleri*) and grants-in-aid (*imdâ-diyye*) from [the revenues of neighbouring] *kazâs*. Furthermore, in *kazâs* which are not on the main route, and where there is no designated post-station, yet when need arises because couriers are continually [passing through], the people of the *kazâ* meet [the expenses] among themselves. Hence there is no entry for [post-stations of] this type (*makûle*) in the Treasury Registers (*Hazîne Defterleri*), and [as a consequence] the [total] annual cost of the post-station [network] is not known.

At present, apart from couriers going to and fro on important matters [on journeys sanctioned] by Imperial [courier-]orders (*[ulak] hükmi*) issued by the Porte, military commanders in the various sectors, viziers charged with the defence of the frontiers or holding provincial appointments, and other beylerbeys and sancak-bey[s]

(*mīr-livā*) and their deputies issue orders (*buyuruldı*) for post-horses (*menzil bārgīr-leri*) for [use in] unimportant and trifling matters and even for their own affairs.

As a result, numerous post-stations have been set up, and the post-horses, which exist basically (*‘an asl*) for [use on] important matters, being quite unable to cope with the work, the horses are [worked to] death, and the people of the villages [allocated to servicing] the post-station[s] are ruined. Because [these circumstances] caused interruptions to couriers engaged on important matters, not only was further [financial] assistance given from the State Treasury and from the neighbouring *kazās*, but many [expenses] too were borne by the people collectively, so that it is incontrovertibly clear that through this excessive number of post-stations there occurs loss to the treasury and all [kinds of] tyranny and oppression to the people.

Therefore My firman is that all the post-stations are to be abolished, and that henceforth the post-station keepers shall maintain the horses themselves. A fee (*ücret*) is to be established for each stage; and horses are to be issued to couriers on a journey against the [payment of the stipulated] fee. The post-stations in Rumelia and Anatolia are to be organised anew and shaped into a [new] form with the stipulation that each [station] be [constituted] a [separate] tax-farm (*mukāta ‘a olmak.şartile*).

Nevertheless, if the old post-station organisation is abolished straight away, the post-station keepers lack the means and the power to organise another system. So, in order that the new organisation may be regularised (*tertib-i cedid nizamın bulmak için*), the post-horses at present at the post-stations and the moneys allocated for their expenses are to be retained where they are for six months, if God – He is exalted! – wills, until Rūz-i Hızır of 1108 [= 23 April 1697]. On Rūz-i Kāsim of this year 1108 [= 26 October 1696], at every post-station in Rumelia and Anatolia, both designated (*mu‘ayyen*) and undesignated (*ğayrī-mu‘ayyen*), post-horses are to be issued to couriers *en route* against a fee. However, [since] there is disparity [in the distance] between one and another (*birbirinden tefāvüti*) of these post-stations, some being near and some in fact far [from one another] and not [therefore] equi[distant], it is needful to institute and lay down post-horse fees for each post-station on a calculation by time. The fee is established at ten sound *akçes* for each horse for each hour’s travel (*bir sā‘at yol için*). From then on horses are to be issued at the established fee to couriers *en route*, at both designated and undesignated post-stations, when travelling on behalf of My Porte, the Hān of the Crimea, military commanders in the various sectors, viziers charged with the defence of the frontiers or holding provincial appointments as inspectors, and other beylerbeys, sancak-beys and their deputies. If [an official], whether he be of high or of low rank, requests a postboy (*sürici*) or a guide (*kulağuz*), however many horses he may take besides his own saddle-horses for the postboy or the guide or to transport his luggage, they are to be issued in the same way (*ke-zalik*) at the prescribed fee.

Couriers in future shall not eat free or subsidised meals (*müft ve meccānen yemek yemeyüb*) [at the expense of] the post-station keepers; henceforth they shall take [them] by agreement and at a price [corresponding to the cost of] the food [consumed]. Henceforth [the post-station keepers], either at designated or at undesignated post-stations, or [other officials] in townships and villages [on the road] shall not fur-

nish [post-]horses without a fee, or free or subsidised meals, to couriers coming and going either [on the basis of] Imperial orders or ministerial commands (*buyuruldı*). Should [the couriers] commit extortion and excess through seeking free or subsidised food, or by forcibly [taking post-]horses without [paying] the [stipulated] fee, in contravention of the Noble Sharī'a and in violation of [My] Imperial Command, let those who possess authority in the province prevent and restrain such people and let them bring to the notice of My Imperial Council (*Dīvān-i Hümāyūnum*) the names and descriptions and characters (*ism ve resm ve şöhet*) [of the offenders].

In brief, henceforth all post-horses are to be treated like pack-horses (*mekkārî mişillü*). And there is a general permission to other persons too, who wish to make use of the post[-station] network (*menzil ile*) in travelling on private business from one place to another. No firman need be requested, but horses are to be issued against [payment of] the prescribed fee. Post-station keepers for their part (*dahî*) must maintain the necessary number of horses [for such private users].

The post-horses issued to couriers who present themselves day by day from Rûz-i Kâsım of the year 1108 to Rûz-i Hızır of the same year are to be recorded and listed (*zabt ve defter olunub*) by the [local cadî's] court authorities. The [present] post-station keepers shall exercise trusteeship on behalf of the Treasury, and with the cognizance of the notables of the province the money which accrues from the [hiring-] fees shall be retained, and the accounts of each post-station shall be made up (*hesâbı görölüb*) at the beginning of [each] Rûz-i Hızır, and the [hiring-]fee moneys which have been collected together shall be sent and delivered to the Imperial Treasury.

My Firman has been issued to the effect that: when by Rûz-i Hızır 1108 [= 23 April 1697], if God – He is exalted! – wills, each post-station is to be organised in this way, the old post-station system is to be abolished, and thenceforth the post-station expenses shall be met from the hiring-fees which accrue. The surplus after payment of expenses is to form [the profit margin of?] a tax-farm (*mukâta'a*). When an official notification (*i'lâm*) is submitted with the cognizance of the notables [of a province] for the writing of My command that [a particular post-station] be entrusted to the post-station keepers in the form of a [tax-]farm, it [= My Command?] is to be noted in the appropriate place on it, in accordance with the draft submission (*telhîs*), and to be put into effect.

I command that on the arrival < of N. N. > with My Noble Order, you are to act in conformity with My command replete with authority; furthermore, on the basis of the foregoing, you are to enter [the text of the firman] into the [cadî's] Register (*sicill*) in each kazâ in which a post-station is situated, and to cause copies which you are to authenticate to be put into the hands of the post-station keepers. And you are to prevent and restrain anyone from transgression of this My Noble Command.

Thus you are to know; you are to place reliance on the Noble Sign.

Written on the tenth day of the month of *Rebî'ül-Ahîr* in the year one thousand, one hundred and eight.

In the Residence of
Edirne
the Well-Guarded

[Annotated:]

‘It was received on 27 *Cumā 7ā* ‘l-*Evvel* of the year 1108.’

II.

Firmān [of Mustafā II], addressed to the cadis stationed on the [Rumelian] *sol kol* (‘[Route of the] Right [Hand]’), issuing further instructions concerning the reform of the operation of the state courier (*ulak*) and relay-station (*menzil*) system. Cadi’s copy. Issued at Edirne, 15 Rebī‘ II, 1108 (1 [O.S.; 11, N.S.] November 1696). Received at Thessaloniki as in Document I. Thessaloniki, Provincial Archives of Macedonia, Cadi’s court entry-books (*sicillāt*), ‘İep. 2, p. 188, 24 lines (ll. 4–27).

- 188₄ Mefāhirü’l-kuzāt ve’l-hükkām / ma‘denü’l-faẓl ve’l-keḷām / vilāyet-i Rüm İli’nde sol kolda vākı‘ mu‘ayyen menzil olan
menzilleriñ kâzıları zīde faẓluhum / ve mefāhirü’l-emāşil ve’l-akrān / kethüdā yerleri ve yeñiçeri serdārları ve a‘yān-i vilāyetiñ iş erleri zīde kadruhum / tevki‘-i refi‘-i hümayūn vāsıl olıcak. ma‘lūm ola ki / vilāyet-i Rüm İli ve Anadolu cāniblerinde ulu yollarda
vākı‘ menzil defterinde mukayyed menāzile kadīmde<n> maktū‘ olan menzil bārgīrleri için ekşeriniñ ‘avāriẓ ve nüzülları mukābelesinde mu‘ayyen menzile bağılu köyleri olub / lakin seferler mümtedī olmak. hasebile keşret-i menāzilde kadīmī bārgīrleri kifāyet eylemedikçe ba‘zısına Hazīne’den ve ba‘zı emvālden havāle ve civārında olan kazālardan imdād verildükde
- 10 yine ziyāde masārif için her menziliñ kazā ahālisi <....?> beynlerinde akçe sālyāne olunub ve bunlardan-ğayrī
menzil defterlerinde kaydları olmayub ulu yollarda olmayan ba‘zı kazālara dahi iktizā hasebile ulak. uğramağla kazā ahālisi beynlerinde menzil için bārgīr besleyüb / lāzim gelen menzili masārifde kazā ahālisi
kendüleri çeküb / bu vechle menāzil husūsında cānib- Mīrī’ye zarar olundugundan ğayrī re‘āyā fukarāsına
dahi küllī zulm ve ta‘addī olmağla bi’l-cümle Rüm İli ve Anadolu’da olan menziller yüz sekiz Rüz-ı Hızır’ında
- 15 ref‘ ve mekkārī mişillü yerlerine ücret ile menzil bārgīri vaẓ‘ olunmak. üzere fermān-i ‘ālīşānım
sādır olub / defterde ismi olub mu‘ayyen olan menzillerde ve gerek defterde ismi olmayub mu‘ayyen olmayan
kazālarda hāliyā kaçır menzil bārgīri beslenür senede ne-mikdār akçe masrafları olur ve menzil kurāsı ne-mikdār
akçesin verir ve ne-mukābelede verirler ve cānib-i Mīrī’den Hazīne’de<n> ve ba‘zı emvālide<n> havāle ile verilen

- ve <...?> kazâlarda<n?> imdâdî fermân olunandan <?> mâ'adâ Mîrî olan
menzillerde<n> ziyâde masraf iktizâsile
- 20 verdikleri akçe ve mu'ayyen menzili olmayan kazâlarda besledikleri menzil
bârgîrleri için <ancak!> kazâ
ahâlisi senede verdikleri ne-mikdâr akçedir / ve bir menzilden bir menzile va-
rınca beynlerinde kaçar sâ'atdır / sıhhati ve hakîkatı üzere menzilleriñ ma'ri-
fet-i şer'le sâ'atlerin dahi tefahhus ve ma'lûm-i hümayûnum olmak.
içün rikâb-i hümayûnuma 'arz<-ü->i'lâm eyleyesiz deyü fermânım olmuştur /
buyurdumki hükm-i şerîfimle
< > vardıkda bu bâbda sâdır olan
emrim üzere 'amel edüb dahi husûs-i mezbûrî
- 25 minvâl-i meşrûh üzere sıhhatin ve hakîkatın ma'rifet-i şer'le tefahhus ve
ma'lûm-i hümayûnum olmak.içün
rikâb-i hümayûnuma 'arz<-ü->i'lâm eyleyesiz / şöyle bilesiz / 'alâmet-i şerîfe
i'timâd kılasız / tahrîren fi'l-yevmi'l-hâmis-'aşır <min> şehr Rebî'ül-ahir sene
şemân ve mî'e ve elf

bi-makâmi
Edrene el-mahrûsa

[Annotated:]

27
vusila f _____ ĩ
min Cumâ7â'l-ahir sene 1108

Translation

1 Ornaments of the cadis and judges; mines of virtue and eloquence, the cadis of [places possessing] designated post-stations on the Route of the Left [Hand] in the *vilâyet* of Rumeli – may their virtues be increased! – and ornaments of the most eminent and [their] peers, commandants of the provincial cavalry and Janissary commanders and agents of the provincial notables – may their power be increased!

3 For [the expenses of] the post-horses assigned (*maktû'*) of old to the post-stations enregistered in the register of post-stations situated on the main routes in the *vilâyets* of Rumeli and Anatolia, the greater part was [supplied by] villages attached to the designated post-station in return for [exemption from] '*avârız* and *nüzûl* [taxes]. However, as the post-horses [allocated] of old ceased to be sufficient with the increase in [the use of] post-stations as a result of the prolongation of the war, some [of the expenses] were provided for from the Treasury, and some by transfer of [local] revenues and by grants-in-aid from *kazâs* in the vicinity. All the same, to meet the [excess of expenditure], money was levied annually among the local people of the population of the *kazâ* in which each post-station was situated.

Apart from these [post-stations], since couriers perforce travelled into various *kazās* not [containing post-stations] enregistered in the post-station registers and not situated on the main routes, the people of such *kazās* maintained post-horses for couriers by mutual co-operation, themselves bearing the necessary expenses for the post-station.

This being so, on the matter of post-stations, not only does the Treasury suffer loss but also all [kinds of] oppression and tyranny are [visited on] the wretched peasantry. Therefore My firman has been issued, that on Rūz-i Hızır [1] 108 [= 23 April 1697], each and every post-station in Rumeli and Anatolia is to be closed, and instead post-horses are to be supplied, like pack-horses (*mekkārī mişillü*), against a fee.

My firman has been given to this effect: Both at post-stations which are named and designated in the Register [of Post-Stations], and in *kazās* where they are not named and not designated in the [said] Register, at the present time:

- How many post-horses are maintained in each?
- What are the annual expenses?
- How much cash do the post-station villages provide, and in return for what exemptions?
- In state post-stations, apart from the moneys supplied from the Treasury or by transfer of [local] revenues or that ordered to be paid as grants-in-aid in <from?> the [adjacent?] *kazās*, how much money do [the local people] provide through the exigency of excess expenditure?
- In *kazās* where there is no designated post-station, how much money do the people of the *kazā* provide annually for the post-horses which they maintain?
- What is the distance in hours between each post-station and the next?

You are to investigate [these matters] accurately and also [to furnish], with legal attestation, the hourly distances of the post-stations [in your *kazā*], and report in detail to My Imperial Stirrup for my Imperial Cognizance.

I have commanded that, on the arrival of <N.N.> with My Noble Order, you are to act conformably to My Order issued in this context, [and] moreover you are to enquire into the true and exact state of affairs concerning the aforementioned matter, and for My Imperial Cognizance you are to report in detail to My Imperial Stirrup.

Thus you are to know; you are to place reliance upon the Noble Sign.

Written on the fifteenth day of the month of *Rebī'ül-Ahīr* of the year one thousand, one hundred and eight.

In the Residence of
Edirne the Well-Guarded

[Annotated:]

‘It was received on 27 *Cumā 7ā 'l-Ahīr* of the year 1108.’

References

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