

being the state of affairs, the local aghas, who had grown in importance through their wealth, their dignity, and protection at the capital, set to work and obtained from the *Qapudan Pasha* the administration of these revenues: and whether under orders from Constantinople they farmed them, or collected them as agents, it was they who appeared then to be the masters and rulers of the island. It is easy to understand this from a narrative of the revolt of the famous Mehmed Agha Boyaji-Oghlu, which appears to have happened about 1680. This narrative I get directly from that worthy gentleman Monsieur Benoit Astier, Consul of France, who has, up to this present year 1788, presided in a highly becoming manner over the honourable guild of French merchants in Cyprus, and has always in his dealings both with governors and governed shown kindly feeling and given useful help: in whose honour I set down his statement in his own words.

A NARRATIVE OF AN OLD REBELLION IN CYPRUS, WHICH MONSIEUR ASTIER, CONSUL OF FRANCE, SET DOWN ON DECEMBER 20, 1764.

I learnt something from popular tradition, and I also obtained excellent information from the lips of an aged Turk of 97, and from a Greek almost as old, who had both been eyewitnesses of a rebellion which occurred in this island about eighty years ago, and lasted seven whole years. Cyprus was then, like Rhodes and the islands of the Archipelago, under the rule of the *Qapudan Pasha*. The yearly *kharaj* due to the Porte was collected by a *kharaji*; the *ma'ishet* was collected on behalf of the *Qapudan Pasha*; and the *nuzul* was assigned for the maintenance of the governor sent by that officer. It was fixed at 12,000 pieces of Seville (Spanish dollars) then worth fifty paras each.

The aghas of Levkosia who farmed these imposts, sometimes one sometimes another of them, fell to rivalry and quarrelling; then they took up arms and attacked one another, until Mehmed Boyaji-Oghlu got the mastery over them all, was proclaimed leader, and stood out as a rebel for seven years. He paid every year to the *kharaji* sent by the Porte the appointed *kharaj*, which these collectors had hitherto to beg for, and used to keep for their own ends. He appointed in all the *qaziliks* men devoted to himself, who were the administrators. The Porte learning that this Boyaji-Oghlu had thrown off all pretence of subjection, sent to Cyprus Cholaq Mehmed Pasha with a force to restore order. They received him at Levkosia, but after a few months' space, when he tried to assert his authority over the said Boyaji-Oghlu, the rebel compelled him to leave Levkosia, and to retire to the *chiftlik* of Qubat-Oghlu, where he lived as a neat-herd, every care being taken to prevent news of his present condition reaching the ministry. Yet not long after news did reach them, and forthwith Chifut-Oghlu Ahmed Pasha was ordered to cross from Caramania to Cyprus, with an armed force to release Cholaq Mehmed Pasha, and to wipe out the rebel chief.

Ahmed Pasha crossed accordingly, landed at Acanthou, and marched straight to Kythraia, to seize at once on the mills, so that no corn might be ground, and he could stop the supplies of Levkosia, the rebel's stronghold. There he stayed for two months, and Cholaq Mehmed came to meet him. During this time he sent troops up to the gate of the capital, where they engaged and skirmished with those of the enemy; not with any idea of disabling thereby the rebel host, but to prevent the ingress and egress of any kind of supplies or merchandise.

The city then found itself without bread, and the Pasha, knowing that he had help at hand, though no one dared to declare himself on account of the rebel, proposed to Boyaji-Oghlu to allow him to withdraw, sending him a passport as a safe-conduct. The rebel, seeing that the Pasha had the stronger party within the city, left it by night with one