

The Allocations (*Ta 'yīnāt*) of Abdurrahman Paşa in 1760

Sümeyye Hoşgör Büke

Author:

PhD, Department of Near Eastern Studies, University of Vienna

suemeyye.hosgoer.bueke@univie.ac.at

ORCID: [0009-0006-6400-6198](https://orcid.org/0009-0006-6400-6198)

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Context

This record is found within the Ankara court records numbered AŞS 831/83.¹ It details the daily allocation of Darendeli Sarı Abdurrahman Paşa, the former governor of Karaman in his arrival to Ankara. In this regard, it represents one of the routine allocation registers documented in the court records. However, the primary significance of this document lies in its date, which provides critical historical context. The document was recorded in *ğurre-i Zilka 'deti'ş-şerîf 1173* / 15 June 1760 which is the day just following his agreement with the Sultan Mustafa III while marching through Istanbul with his men.

To briefly summarize, during his duty as governor of Karaman, Abdurrahman Paşa arrested a group of bandits but later released them in exchange for a sum of money. When this came to the attention of Sultan Mustafa III, the sultan demanded that Abdurrahman Paşa be removed from duty and executed. However, Abdurrahman Paşa defied this order and began marching toward Istanbul, supported by a contingent of approximately 700 to 800 men. It should be noted that during his march toward Istanbul, this number grew significantly, reaching nearly 2,000 men as others joined his ranks.² At this point, the grand vizier intervened and mediated between the parties, successfully stopping Abdurrahman Paşa near Bolu, in the Gerede region. The agreement required Abdurrahman Paşa to return to his hometown, Darende, and to disperse those who had autonomously joined his march but were not part of his original contingent.³ This document is released in *Fî'l-âhîr min Şevvâl/14* June 1760, which is just one day before the daily allocations were designated to him. Within this framework, the allocation record needs further attention to comprehend its significance. From the perspective of food consumption, the document holds dual importance: it offers a valuable perspective

¹ My copy of the document was collected from the Milli Kütüphane (National Library), specifically from the Sharia Court Records Archive, in 2021 under the archival number 831/83. Upon further verification through the online platform devletarsivleri.gov.tr, I discovered that the same document is catalogued within the *Meşihat* Registers under a different number. It is accessible on the digital platform of the Ottoman archives under the number 145/83.

² Mesut Aydın, "Sinek Sözüyle İş Yapan Pâdişahın Hâli' Ya Da Karaman Valisi Darendeli Sarı Abdurrahman Paşa İsyanı," *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*(16), 785-799.

³ BOA, MD 161, 1173, cited in Mesut Aydın, "Sinek Sözüyle İş Yapan Pâdişahın Hâli' Ya Da Karaman Valisi Darendeli Sarı Abdurrahman Paşa İsyanı," *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* (16), 785-799.

on the categorization of staple and luxury foods while also providing insights into the hierarchy of food distribution.

The record reveals that daily 1500 *kıyye* of bread, 750 *kıyye* of mutton, 250 *kıyye* of rice, 150 *kıyye* of clarified butter, 500 *kıyye* of *bulgur*, 10 *kıyye* honey, 5 *kıyye* sugar, 5 *kıyye* quality flour and a sufficient quantity of vegetables allocated to Abdurrahman Paşa along with non-food supplies like beeswax, tallow and wood. Some of the supplies recorded in the document with a higher quantity such as bread, mutton, clarified butter, rice and *bulgur*, indicate that they were provided to enable Abdurrahman Paşa to sustain the men accompanying him on his march toward Istanbul. On the other hand, the limited quantities of items such as sugar, honey, and quality flour suggest that these were allocated specifically for Abdurrahman Paşa and his close circle. This certifies the existence of a hierarchy in food distribution and consumption, reflecting distinctions based on social status. This can also be interpreted as while bread, mutton, clarified butter, rice, and *bulgur* being considered as staple foods, the limited quantities of items such as sugar, honey, and high-quality flour were considered as luxury that were reserved exclusively for higher ranks. It is interesting to note that the category of vegetables in the list of daily allocation does not specify any quantities. The document only says “*Sebzevāt miqdār-ı kifāyet*”, which means “an adequate amount of vegetables”. But the uncertainty or ambiguity of the phrase makes it impossible to include this category within any of the aforementioned ones. Except for wood, all the allocated items are recorded in the imperial kitchen registers, along with nearly 60 other items, making this an important detail to note.⁴

⁴ Tülay Artan, “Aspects of Ottoman Elite’s Food Consumption: Looking for “Staples,” “Luxuries,” and “Delicacies” in a Changing Century”, in *Consumption Studies and the History of the Ottoman Empire, 1550–1922*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000. 119–125. There are studies that focus on the food distribution and redistribution: Hedda Reindl-Kiel, “Breads for the Followers, Silver Vessels for the Lord: The System of Distribution and Redistribution in the Ottoman Empire, (16th–18th c.),” *Osmanlı Araştırmaları/The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 42 (2013): 93–104. Hedda Reindl Kiel, “Simits for the Sultan, Cloves for the Mynah Birds: Records of Food Distribution in the Saray,” Angela Jianu – Violeta Barbu (eds.), *Earthly Delights: Economies and Cultures of Food in Ottoman and Danubian Europe, c. 1500–1900*. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2018, pp. 50–76.

From a different perspective, considering the context of the document issued shortly after his march toward Istanbul, the allocation of non-staple goods, such as sugar, exclusively to Abdurrahman Paşa and his inner circle may suggest that the Ottoman state adopted a deliberately non-vindictive approach toward him. As Karen Barkey notes, the Ottoman response to acts of rebellion was not uniform; while some rebels were ultimately executed, Abdurrahman Paşa was granted supplies, albeit in a controlled and calculated manner. This aligns with the notion that “imperial domination is never complete; it is negotiated.”⁵ However, a comparison of the allocation registers reveals that the provisions given to the former Karaman Governor, Abdurrahman Paşa, were less generous than those allocated to others in similar positions. While other allocations included a variety of food items—such as chicken, eggs, milk, *şeker-i frenk*, lamb, coffee, spices, and almonds—none of these goods were allocated to Darendeli Sarı Abdurrahman Paşa.⁶

The choice of specific words in records also support the situation. Although the text of Abdurrahman Paşa’s allocation record remains simple and unadorned, the other two records employ more elaborate and refulgent expressions, such as “*devletlü*” and “*ināyetlü*” to describe the recipients. Furthermore, while the term “*maṭlūb*” (requested or required) is used in Abdurrahman Paşa’s record to define the allocations given to him, the other two records opt for “*iḳtizā*” (necessary or appropriate). This linguistic distinction reflects a subtle but meaningful differentiation in tone and perhaps in the perceived legitimacy or status of the recipients. In conclusion, this brief allocation document provides scholars with an opportunity to examine the hierarchy of food consumption and gain insight into the categorization of staple and luxury foods through the lens of the Ottoman state in the eighteenth century.

⁵ Karen Barkey, *The Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2008, 154-160.

⁶ AŞS 825/61, AŞS 833/91, AŞS 833/93a.

Transcription

Sābıkā Karaman vālisi vezīr-i muhterem devletlū ‘Abdurrahmān Paşa hāzretleri medīne-i Ankaraya teşrīflerinde rûz-merre tarafından maṭlûb olınan ecnās-ı zehā’ir defteridür. Fī ğurre-i Zilkā ‘deti’ş-şerīf 1173

Harc : 3000

Nān-ı ‘azīz: 1500 kıyye

Laḥm-ı ğanem: 750 kıyye

Revġan-ı sāde: 150 kıyye

Pirinc: 250 kıyye

Bulġur: 500 kıyye

‘Asel: 10 kıyye

Şeker: 5 kıyye

Dakīk-i ḥāşş: 5 kıyye

Şem’-i ‘asel: 5 kıyye

Şem’-i revġan: 15 kıyye

Haṭab: 30 yük

Sebzevāt miqdār-ı kifāyet

‘Alef-i şa’ir: 3000

Translation

With the arrival of the former governor of Karaman, the honorable and illustrious vizier, his highness Abdurrahman Paşa to the city of Ankara these are the daily provisions and supplies recorded. 15 June 1760

Subsistence: 3000

Bread: 1500 kıyye

Mutton: 750 kıyye

Clarified butter: 150 kıyye

Rice: 250 kıyye

Pounded wheat: 500 kıyye

Honey: 10 kıyye

Sugar: 5 kıyye

Quality Flour: 5 kıyye

Beeswax: 5 kıyye

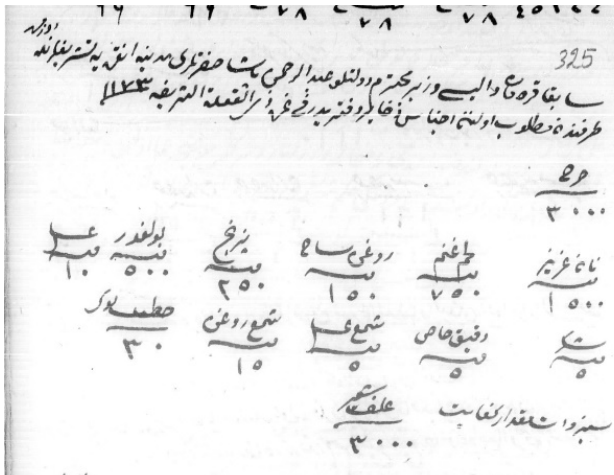
Tallow: 15 kıyye

Wood: 30 kıyye

An adequate amount of vegetables

Barley fodder: 3000 kıyye

Facsimile



The detail of the AŞS 831/83.

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