

TANZIMAT REFORMS RECONSIDERED: THE CASE STUDY OF  
TUNA PROVINCE  
(1856-1868)

A PhD Dissertation

By  
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Ankara  
December 2016

*To My Family*

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TUNA PROVINCE  
(1856-1868)

The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences  
of  
İhsan Dođramacı Bilkent University

By


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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HISTORY

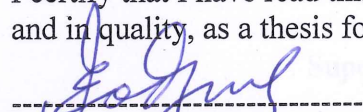
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December 2016

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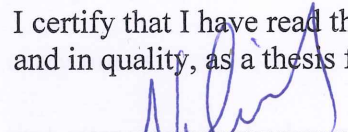
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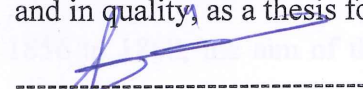
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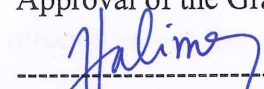
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## ABSTRACT

TANZIMAT REFORMS RECONSIDERED: THE CASE STUDY OF

TUNA PROVINCE

(1856-1868)

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Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Oktay Özel

December 2016

After signing of the Treaty of Paris (1856), Westernization and other reforms were adopted by the Ottoman government as a strategy to protect the state in existence. The Christian Question in the Empire as well as the pressures of the Great Powers emerged to become the most important reasons to impel the Ottoman Government to carry out reforms. The Ottoman Empire and the Habsburg Empire were the countries that attempted to find a way out of the political difficulties and challenges arising from the legacy of an ancient regime, emerging nationalist movements and imperialist aspirations of Western powers and Russia. Focusing on the period from 1856 to 1868, the aim of this study is to re-visit the reform question by devoting a special place to the Tuna (Danube) Province (*Tuna Vilâyeti*), which was governed by Midhat Pasha between the years 1864 and 1868. This is simply because during that time period, the Tuna Province was designed as a governmental project to spread the reforms across the country, in other words, it served as a model for other provinces. This thesis is divided into two parts: 1) The World Encircling the Ottoman Empire

(1856-1870) and The Reform Question (1856-1865), and 2) The *Vilâyet* of Tuna (1864-1868).

**Key Words:** Balkan Crisis, Midhat Pasha, Provincial Reform, Tanzimat, Tuna Vilâyeti

## ÖZET

TANZİMAT REFORMLARI ÜZERİNE BİR YENİDEN DEĞERLENDİRME:

TUNA VİLÂYETİ MESELESİ

(1856-1868)

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December 2016

Paris Barış Anlaşması (1856)'nın imzalanmasından sonra Osmanlı yönetimi reformu ve bir anlamda Batılılaşmayı varolan devleti korumak için bir strateji olarak benimsemişti. Hristiyan meselesi ve Büyük Güçlerin baskısı Osmanlı Hükümeti'ni reforma zorlayan en ciddi sebepler olarak ortaya çıkacaktı. Osmanlı Devleti ve Habsburg İmparatorluğu içinde buldukları dönemde ancien regime mirası, ortaya çıkan milliyetçi hareketler ve Batı ile Rusya'nın emperyal hırslarından kaynaklanan siyasal sorunların karşısında çıkışı arayan ülkelerdi. 1856-1868 dönemine odaklanan bu çalışmanın amacı reformlar meselesini Midhat Paşa'nın 1864-1868 döneminde valiliğini yaptığı Tuna Vilâyeti'ne çok özel bir bölüm açarak yeniden ele almaktır. Bunun sebebi söz konusu dönemde Tuna Vilâyeti'nin Osmanlılar tarafından

reformların ÷lke apına yayılmasını saęlayacak bir h÷k÷met projesi, bir model Vilâyet olarak tasarlanmış olmasındır. Tez iki ana bölüme ayrılmıştır. Bunlar 1) “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nu çevreleyen Dünya(1856-1870)” ve “Reform Meselesi(1856-1865)” ve 2) “Tuna Vilâyeti(1864-1868)” dir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Balkan Krizi, Midhat Paşa, Tanzimat, Tuna Vilâyeti, Vilâyet Reformu



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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Gathering in Istanbul at the end of December, 1876, representatives of the European Powers were discussing the fate and the future of the Ottoman Empire; while Ottoman statesmen declared, as a “last resort”, The Ottoman Constitution of 1876 (*Kanun-i Esasi*), the first Ottoman Constitution, with artillery fire and ostentation which would not escape the notice of the representatives. *Hatt-i Humayun* and the Ottoman Constitution of 1876 were read to a huge crowd in Babiali Square, on the seventh day of Zilhicce 1293 (December 24, 1876). It was a step dreamt up by small pro-reform groups in the Empire and a move more radical than the expectations of the Westerners. Yet, the Ottoman Constitution would not be able to change the course of history easily, since the implementations of an action in history are not only determined by its aims but also by its timing. The Ottoman Constitution of 1876 was declared in a period when an intense anti-Turk propaganda was being carried out and Western powers placed themselves in line with Russia's desires, namely, at the eleventh hour. The eventual declaration of the *Kanun-i Esasi* (The Constitution) came too late to restore the international prestige of the Ottoman Empire.

The reason why the Great Powers approved Russia's intention of war with the Ottoman Empire in 1877 was that the Ottoman Empire was not sincere in its reform

attempts.<sup>1</sup> Though it had once been believed by the Ottomans that the declaration of the Constitution would turn the scale in favor of the Ottoman Empire, not much importance was given to this as Russia became successful in influencing European politics and the European press against the Ottomans. In the wake of the negotiations carried out in the Conference, which is also referred to as the *Tersane* (Shipyard) Conference, the Ottoman government, rejecting the demands of the West and Russia, was now faced with the threat of war with Russia - a truly great military power. The Ottoman Empire had now set sail on a journey which would result in the acceleration of its disintegration; and the defeat of Ottoman constitutionalism. But, how had the empire come to this point?

First of all, the guarantee given by the West in the Treaty of Paris of 1856 regarding the unity of the Ottoman Empire had gradually faded away over 20 years, like a bank loan. As Ali Pasha had once stated: whenever Russia lost control in the East, she found England and French standing against her.<sup>2</sup> However, time had swept away the barriers in front of Russia one by one. When Helmuth von Moltke heavily defeated the Austrian army led by Marshal Benedek in Königgrätz on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1866, the resistance of Habsburg Empire which had been one of the conservative obstacles that had prevented the Danubian (Tuna) Principalities from uniting under the name of Romania, disappeared. This was one more step taken towards creating the necessary international atmosphere for the strengthening of Russian expansionism. Moreover France, who was defeated in the Franco-Prussian War and weakened by the crushing burden of the war indemnity, and had to stand by with folded arms against the Eastern policy of Russia.

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<sup>1</sup> Ahmet Mithat, *Üss-i İnkılâp* (İstanbul: Selis kitaplar , 2004), 168.

<sup>2</sup> *Belgelerle Tanzimat: Osmanlı Sadrazamlarından Âli ve Fuad Paşaların Siyasi Vasiyyetnameleri*, ed. Engin Deniz Akarlı (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 1978), 9.

Russia, on the grounds of being a member of *Dreikaiserbund* (League of the Three Empires) consisting of Russia, Austro-Hungary, and Germany in 1873, guaranteed not to adopt a policy against Austria and not to support liberal movements in the Balkans.<sup>3</sup> Thus, Austro-Hungary, led by Hungarian statesman Andrassy, with great optimism relied upon the guarantee given by Russia as the Ottoman Empire became increasingly isolated regarding the Christian Question against Russia, as a result of Russia's skillful diplomacy. All these are a rough summary of the international developments which caused the isolation of the Ottoman Empire, independent from the domestic affairs that took place in the Empire between 1864 and 1875.

Carried out by agitators and agents, Slavic propaganda was at its peak in the Balkans in 1875; yet the Ottoman Government was indifferent to the situation and did not respond these developments promptly. As a result, in Bosnia, revolutionary movements bore fruit and a rebellion arose in 1875.<sup>4</sup> Despite the fact that the issue of Bosnia and Herzegovina seemed relatively unimportant to the Ottoman government, later on it turned out to be "a match in a gunpowder barrel", as a direct consequence of the reluctant attitude of Ottoman administrators.<sup>5</sup> There had long been social problems, and ethnic conflicts triggered by those social problems in Bosnia; and it was not the first time a rebellion had arisen. Whenever the Ottoman Government failed to solve the problems in Bosnia, Serbia always became involved in the issue, as an actor provoking the local Christians. Bosnia in Serbian politics, as stated by

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<sup>3</sup> Arthur May Hyde, *A Diplomatic History of Bulgaria (1870-1886)*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1974), 35.

<sup>4</sup> *Turkey. No. 1 (1877), Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Turkey* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1877), 143(Walter Baring's report dated September 1, 1867, on the Bulgarian Insurrection of 1876).

<sup>5</sup> Selahattin Tansel, *93 Seferi: 1877 Harbinin Sebepleri* (Ankara: Doğuş, 1943), 9.

Beni Kallay, was a critical area,<sup>6</sup> a sort of Golden Apple around which desires and hopes revolved.

The incompetence of the Ottoman administration was as important in causing the rebellion to grow as Serbian involvement in the problem was. İbrahim Pasha, the Governor of Bosnia, was so incompetent that British Consul Holmes at Mostar warned the Ottoman government and stated that this governor had to be changed immediately.<sup>7</sup> The fact that the commanders sent by Grand Vizier Mahmud Nedim Pasha to Herzegovina were always inadequate and inexperienced, causing the suppression of rebellion to be delayed, could only be explained, according to Gazi Ahmed Muhtar Pasha, by the close relationship of Mahmud Nedim Pasha with Ignatiev - the Russian ambassador in Istanbul. This attitude could be considered as an extension of the Ottoman statesmen's strategy to be a grand vizier by means of being supported by foreign powers.<sup>8</sup> With the decisions he made on various issues, Mahmud Nedim Pasha almost sabotaged the Ottoman actions taken to suppress the rebellion.<sup>9</sup>

Whenever the Ottomans had no answer to a problem, it was the West that came up with suggestions. Despite resembling a manifesto of *Dreikaiserbund*, it was the Andrassy Note of December 30<sup>th</sup>, 1875, which reflected Europe's general point of view on the issue. According to Count Andrassy, the Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Government had disappointed European Powers by not instituting necessary reforms and by being unsuccessful in suppressing the rebellion.

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<sup>6</sup> R. W. Seton-Watson, *Disraeli, Gladstone, and the Eastern Question* (New York: Frank Cass, 1971), 18.

<sup>7</sup> Richard Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question, 1875-1878* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 75-76.

<sup>8</sup> Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Paşa, *Anılar: Sergüzeşt-i Hayatımın Cild-i Evveli* (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1996), 114.

<sup>9</sup> Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Paşa, *Anılar*, 110-114. Ahmed Cevdet Pasha describes Mahmud Nedim Pasha as an indecisive and fickle man with a limited talent; see Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Ma'rûzât* (İstanbul, Çağrı Yayınları, 1980), 5.

Christians of Bosnia and Herzegovina believed they lacked religious freedom and considered themselves slaves (emphasizing this point, the benevolent Austria would not hesitate to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina when it found the chance). Construction of religious and educational buildings and the use of church bells were restricted despite the provisions of The Ottoman Reform Edict of 1856 (*Islahat Fermani*); the Sublime Porte had failed to assure complete religious freedom. Also, there were serious injustices in collecting and utilizing taxes. According to Andrassy, the Sublime Porte had to declare that indirect taxes should be used for the general needs of the country, while direct taxes collected from provinces should be used for their respective welfare. In the provinces, almost all of the landed property belonged to the Muslims. Therefore, the land question was another dimension of the religious conflict in the region. Andrassy had five proposals to improve the situation. The first of these was the implementation of complete religious freedom; the second, the abolishment of tax farming; the third, legal reassurance of the proper (i.e. in line with the interests of the province) use of taxes collected from Bosnia-Herzegovina; the fourth, the establishment of a commission with equal number of Muslim and Christian members to inspect the implementation of the reforms; and the fifth, the improvement in the conditions of the rural and agrarian population.<sup>10</sup>

When the Andrassy Note was declared, the Bulgarians presented a petition to the Sublime Porte, as well, demanding to be subject to military services, and that half of the government officials were to be Bulgarians.<sup>11</sup> But as a result of the indifference of the Ottoman Government, a larger problem than the Bosnian

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<sup>10</sup> For the full text of Andrassy Note (December 30, 1875) see *Les Réformes et la Protection des Chrétiens en Turquie, 1673-1904 : firmans, bérats, protocoles, traités, capitulations, conventions, arrangements, notes, circulaires, reglements, lois, mémorandums, etc.*, ed. A. Schopoff (Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1904), 76-86.

<sup>11</sup> *Turkey. No. 1 (1877)*, 144 (Walter Baring's report dated September 1, 1867, on the Bulgarian Insurrection of 1876).



Question broke out in Bulgaria. In consequence of the long-term efforts of the Bulgarian committee at Bucharest, a Bulgarian rebellion broke out in April 1876, later turning into an ethnic war once the Ottoman administrators lost control. In particular, violent events intensified in the Tatar Pazarcık and Filibe districts. The most dramatic violent crime was the one committed in May against the Bulgarians by the *Başıbozüks*, local militias most of whom were Circassians. This event tremendously impacted European public opinion.<sup>12</sup> The rebellion spread to the province of Danube (*Tuna Vilâyeti*), but the violence remained limited. Those events created such an impact that raped Bulgarian women were amongst the most depicted figures in the European press in 1876.

An article, published in the *Daily News* on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1876, made an overwhelming impression on the English political sphere, reporting that between 18,000 – 30,000 Bulgarians had been murdered and asked Britain to take action.<sup>13</sup> With the Eastern Question, the press reached a level of influence on British politics, which had rarely been seen before. The *Spectator* and the *Daily News* were leading the agitation. On June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1876, the *Daily News* published a story about the Bashi-bazouks carrying the heads of the women and children they murdered.<sup>14</sup> Depictions of Bulgarian women being raped and sold became a part of the Victorian art. More than a thousand articles about the Bulgarian question were published in 16 leading newspapers of Russia between April 1876 and September 1876.<sup>15</sup> In addition, famous writers such as Dostoyevsky and Turgenev, Victor Hugo and Oscar Wilde

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<sup>12</sup> *Turkey. No. 1(1877)*, 143-167(Walter Baring's report dated September 1, 1867, on the Bulgarian Insurrection of 1876).

<sup>13</sup> David Harris, *Britain and the Bulgarian Horrors of 1876* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939), 44-45.

<sup>14</sup> Harris, *Britain*, 35.

<sup>15</sup> David Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform: 1801-1881* (London: Longman, 1993), 280.

all declared their support for the Bulgarian cause.<sup>16</sup> Speeches of Ivan Aksakov, who was one of the leading figures of the Pan Slavists in Russia, were published in the Western press as though he was a spokesman for the Russian government.<sup>17</sup>

In fact, the British authorities had warned the Ottoman Government many times about the Bashi-Bozouks,<sup>18</sup> but the Ottoman administration was not strong enough to control the events. In addition, this was a period when Disraeli had serious health problems and sleepwalked, yet the Conservatives could not find anyone else to keep the party strong.<sup>19</sup> It was William Ewart Gladstone, the 67-year-old leader of the Liberal Party, who would attempt to take advantage of the situation. He had fallen from power in 1874 due to his ineffective governing.<sup>20</sup> For Gladstone, who was disappointed with his loss of power, the moral mission that had emerged with the Bulgarian question was a chance for political revival. It would not be easy for Disraeli to cope with Gladstone, who had been manipulating politics for many years and was an experienced liberal agitator.

Disraeli claimed that he had not been informed about the details of the reports of the press about events in Bulgaria despite being in touch with ambassadors and consuls.<sup>21</sup> On the basis of the information given by Walter Baring and Henry Elliot, Disraeli made a statement in response to accusations on August 11<sup>th</sup>, 1876, and stated that the burning of 40 Bulgarian virgins in a stable and the sale of 1,000 young women as slaves were fabricated stories; and that rape and other cruelties were the

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<sup>16</sup> Anna Garlicka, "Polish Society and the Eastern Crisis of 1875-1878" in *Insurrections, Wars and the Eastern Crisis*, editors: Bela K. Kiraly, Gale Stokes, vol. 17 of *War and Society in East Central Europe* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 116.

<sup>17</sup> Sergej Utechin, *Russian Political Thought: A Concise History* (London: Praeger, 1964), 85.

<sup>18</sup> Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 41.

<sup>19</sup> Marvin Swartz, *The Politics of British Foreign Policy in the Era of Disraeli and Gladstone* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1985), 36-37.

<sup>20</sup> David Harris, *A Diplomatic History of the Balkan Crisis of 1875-1878; the first year* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1936), 19.

<sup>21</sup> Harris, *Britain*, 54-55.

results of individual actions.<sup>22</sup> However, the Bulgarian agitation was so influential that this statement would have little impact.

During the same period, two Bulgarian revolutionaries published a pamphlet to manipulate the Western governments. According to the pamphlet: the reforms that Bulgarians wanted to institute was being prevented by the Ottoman rule; that the Bulgarians were not able to utilize the advantages of their own taxes; that their goods and honor were always under threat; that for 500 years, they had been exposed to assaults like the ones committed every day by the Bashi-Bazouks; and that the development of Eastern European Civilization depended on the independence of the Bulgarians.<sup>23</sup> In a final analysis, the Bulgarians attempted, quite wisely, to exploit the European obsession of "civilization".

The story told, on the other hand, was the same everywhere. First, a rumor was spread saying that Russian soldiers were drawing near and the Turks, therefore, would kill the Bulgarians. Then, in panic, the Bulgarians killed the Muslims. After that, the Muslims massacred the Bulgarians to take revenge. The man behind these terrible events was Naiden Gerov, the Russian vice-consul in Filibe, who spread the rumor. In many incidents, Bulgarian revolutionaries set fire to villages to force the native Bulgarians to rebel. The atrocity was performed by both the Bulgarians and the Muslims. Nevertheless, British official Walter Baring, inspecting the events, reported that the massacre committed in Batak by the Bashi-Bazouks led by Ahmed Agha was the most heinous crime of the century.<sup>24</sup> The number of deaths was tallied at 15,000. On the other hand, a railway engineer named Stoney reported, as a result of the inquiry he conducted home by home, that only 3,694 Bulgarians had been

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<sup>22</sup> Michael Willis, *Gladstone and Disraeli: Principles and Policies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 87.

<sup>23</sup> D. Zancof and Marco D. Balabanow, *Bulgaria* (London: Goubaud and Son, 1876).

<sup>24</sup> Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 153-155.

murdered. Previous researchers had built their estimations of the number of deaths upon the assumption that in each house burnt, there had lived 10 Bulgarians.<sup>25</sup>

Leaving Edirne and arriving in Filibe upon the order of Lord Derby, an official named Dupuis reported in his telegram, which was sent to London on July 21<sup>st</sup>, 1876, that though there was an atrocity against the Bulgarians, he found out in consequence of his inquiry that the number of victims had been exaggerated. He learned that the number of deaths was less than fifteen thousand; that women and children had not been sold as slaves, and that almost 60 Bulgarian villages had been burnt down.<sup>26</sup> The number of the Bulgarians murdered was most definitely exaggerated. But of course, this exaggeration did not free the Ottoman Government from its responsibility for the situation. According to Ahmed Midhat Efendi, one of the most important witnesses of the period, many attendants were mobilized to rebuild the burnt houses of the Bulgarians, and more than 900 houses were rebuilt.<sup>27</sup> In spite of the fact that Ahmed Midhat Efendi, in his work "Üss-i İnkılab", denies most of the things the Bulgarian people experienced, the numbers given by him are important to show the extent of the atrocities.

The British press supported the Bulgarian agitation in a utilitarian manner; but when they began to change their highlights on the agitation as of October 1876,<sup>28</sup> Britain had already begun to lose the initiative in the East. While some British politicians were busy with political barking, Russians had already completed their military preparations. Despite the accusations made by the new Prime Minister Lord Beaconsfield against Gladstone and the agitation,<sup>29</sup> Gladstone and agitators achieved their goals in the sense that the British Empire remained passive against the Russian

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<sup>25</sup> Millman, 162.

<sup>26</sup> Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 144.

<sup>27</sup> Ahmet Mithat, *Üss-i İnkılab*, 56.

<sup>28</sup> Swartz, *The Politics of British Foreign Policy*, 40-41.

<sup>29</sup> Swartz, 43-44.

aggression. The aggression of Russia, which acted according to the rules of "Blood and Iron", found its excuses in the liberal-humanitarian discourse of Gladstone.

Tanzimat was also the name of an era in which Europe started to directly orient both the domestic and foreign affairs of the Ottoman Empire. Since the Ottoman governors did not have the adequate local economic and social resources, they had to obey the preferences of the Europeans.<sup>30</sup> Though the West stated, in the Treaty of Paris of 1856 that they would not interfere with the sovereignty rights of the Ottoman Empire, yet it was observed that the European Powers interfered with all incidents ranging from the Montenegrin question of 1858 to the Cretan Revolt of 1867. In the beginning, rapprochement with the West was a part of the ideas related to the Ottoman Empire's progress and security; however especially after the Europeans took over financial control, it turned out to be a "trump card" that Ottoman statesmen would attempt to take advantage of, in the conflicts amongst themselves. It became a de facto rule to gain and rely on foreign support, which would later extend to the degree of Panslavist Russian ambassador Ignatiev taking the covert control of Mahmud Nedim Pasha.

The Ottoman Empire had well-educated and able statesmen as well. But the general quality of the human resources in governmental, educational, and economic domains was far below the quality of a group of well-trained statesmen. Additionally, it is quite apparent that none of the statesmen of the Tanzimat Era acted on shared intentions. Reaching a very powerful position after 1871, Mahmud Nedim Pasha, who was prompted by Ignatiev, abandoned the *Vilâyet* (province) project of Midhat Pasha and carried out a strategically disastrous financial policy, which antagonized the Europe and caused the Russian propaganda in the Balkans to gain

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<sup>30</sup> Meropi Anastassiadou, *Selanik 1830-1912* (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1998), 87.

further traction. At that point, it was inevitable that foreigners become more influential actors in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire as a result of the unstable political structure inside the Empire and the lack of unity amongst the Ottoman high officials.

Negative developments, which ended up affecting the fate of the Empire more than any of the positive achievements of the 1862-1870 period, came to the forefront after the death of Mehmed Emin Âli Pasha in 1871, who had been one of the most important figures of the post-1856 period. After the death of Âli Pasha, a process which would culminate in the coup of 1876, started. After 1871, during the reign of Sultan Abdulaziz, some issues presented by the Sublime Porte to the Imperial Court would remain unanswered even for weeks.<sup>31</sup> Most of the payments for the rifles and ammunition ordered from the United States had not been made.<sup>32</sup> The workers of the shipyard, where Abdulaziz's magnificent battleships were built, went unpaid for months. Implementation of the reforms was not possible under the existing conditions.<sup>33</sup> The conflict between statesmen was one of the biggest obstacles standing in front of the implementation of the reforms. Moreover, local councils were structured without considering the public interests and demands. The financial situation was so miserable that even state officials weren't paid.<sup>34</sup>

Of the three men identified by Sir Henry Elliot as the most important men in the Empire, Midhat was the one to be praised most; Huseyin Avni the most venal; and Mahmud Nedim was pro-Russian, as is known.<sup>35</sup> Midhat Pasha, the only one amongst the three to play the role of a savior, explicitly stated the current conditions of the country in his letter to Abdulaziz on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 1875. The Treasury was

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<sup>31</sup> Ahmet Mithat, *Üss-i İnkılâp*, 41.

<sup>32</sup> Ahmet Mithat, 48.

<sup>33</sup> Harris, *A Diplomatic History of the Balkan Crisis*, 10.

<sup>34</sup> Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 75.

<sup>35</sup> Harris, *A Diplomatic History of the Balkan Crisis*, 66.

incurably ill, the civil administration was in a chaotic situation, and disorder was apparent in military administration as well. Even friendly countries had lost trust in the Empire. Midhat Pasha, who had spent his career in provincial administration, asked the Sultan to discharge him from the position of Minister of Justice, and declared that he had never seen before nor had been in such kind of disordered affairs.<sup>36</sup>

In these circumstances, a high-ranking commander and one of the leading actors of the coup of 1876, Süleyman Hüsnü Pasha, identified the following points as the final straws: the country was being ruled by uneducated governors; knowledge and competence were not taken into consideration in the deployment of government posts; the international prestige of the Empire was less than that of relatively small countries; increasing influence of consuls, especially Ignatiev, on the country; rebellions in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and foreign powers, especially Austria and Russia, interfered with the domestic affairs of the Empire to the extent of endangering the sovereignty of the country.<sup>37</sup> According to Süleyman Pasha, thousands of Muslims were suffering because of three ignorant men (Sultan Abdulaziz, Mahmud Nedim Pasha, and Hasan Fehmi Efendi the Sheikh ul-Islam); and the Europeans cared only about the problems of their co-religionists. The April Uprising (the Bulgarian Uprising of 1876) and the Incidents of Salonika (of May

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<sup>36</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları; Hayatım İbret Olsun (Tavsıra-i İbret)*, ed. Osman Selim Kocahanoğlu (İstanbul: Temel Yayınları, 1997), 179.

<sup>37</sup> Süleyman Paşa, *Hiss-i İnkılab* (İstanbul, 1326(1908/1909)), 3-4.

1876)<sup>38</sup> were added on top of all of these problems, further threatening the future of the Empire.<sup>39</sup>

In that period, people in Istanbul were furious at Grand Vizier Mahmud Nedim Pasha, who was well-known for his close relationship with Russian ambassador Ignatiev.<sup>40</sup> The prestige of Abdulaziz was severely damaged since he wasted state revenue and loan money on arbitrary matters, and rumors spread saying that he would call for the Russian army to protect himself.<sup>41</sup>

As a result of the loans taken during the Abdulaziz era, the independence of the Ottoman Empire was hypothecated. Despite the fact that a great amount of money was borrowed from Europe, only very small amounts were spent on public works and other investments that would increase the income of the State.<sup>42</sup> Mahmud Nedim Pasha, stating that the interest rates would be kept low in repayment of the loan, caused a shock in the European market and this decision antagonized European public opinion. With the depreciation of the Ottoman bonds, there remained no chance of finding any financial resources against the crisis that had begun with the rebellions in 1875. The coincidence of the bankruptcy of 1875 with the rebellion in Bosnia-Herzegovina was the reason behind the escalation of the crisis. On May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1876, a huge march of the *softas*(medrese students) took place; their demands were accepted: Mahmud Nedim Pasha and the Sheikh-ul-Islam were forced to resign; yet the unrest continued since Mahmud Nedim Pasha was replaced by Mehmed Rüşdü

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<sup>38</sup> At the beginning of May 1876, a conflict arose when a Christian girl converts to Islam in Salonica, ending up with the murder of French and German consuls by Muslims. For detailed information about the events see 1876 [C.1547] *Turkey. No. 4 (1876). Correspondence Respecting the Murder of the French and German Consuls at Salonica* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1876) ; Berke Torunoğlu, *Murder in Salonika 1876: A Tale of Apostasy and International Crisis* (İstanbul: Libra Kitapçılık, 2012).

<sup>39</sup> Süleyman Paşa, 5.

<sup>40</sup> Basiretçi Ali Efendi, *İstanbul'da Yarım Asırlık Vekayi-i Mühimme* (Dersaadet: Matbaa-i Hüseyin Enver, 1325), 43-44.

<sup>41</sup> Basiretçi Ali Efendi, 48.

<sup>42</sup> Mehmet Memduh Paşa, *Tanzimattan Meşrutiyete (Mir'ât-i Şuunât)* (İstanbul: Nehir, 1990), 102.



Pasha, instead of Midhat Pasha, one of the most popular and respected figures of the time.<sup>43</sup>

Towards the end of May 1876, Süleyman Pasha summoned military officers and the students of the Military Academy before him; and explained to them the necessity of why the Sultan had to be overthrown. For the siege of Dolmabahçe Palace battleships, ships and boats, and soldiers from the Beyoğlu Military Barracks came in front of the palace, as planned. On the night of May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1876, Huseyin Avni Pasha went into the Palace and took Sultan Abdulaziz from Dolmabahçe Palace to the Topkapı Palace.<sup>44</sup>

In 1876, soldiers experienced a short period of politicization. The coup of 1876 was the reflection of the wish for a system based on competence and a constitutionalist order. As indicated by Midhat Pasha, the aim was not to replace a despot by another despot.<sup>45</sup> The Ottoman Constitution of 1876 was declared as a manifestation of such mentality. The 1876 Revolution was a fatal blow to the impact of Ignatiev upon Istanbul. From 1876 on, Ignatiev was in a desperate situation and thought that there was no way out other than the Sultan's return to power. However, this was futile; as the Sultan was a captive at the hands of the oligarchy of the Pashas.<sup>46</sup>

Sultan Abdülaziz and Mahmud Nedim Pasha had now fallen from power, but it was too late to restore the situation. The West had its precise decision about the Ottoman Empire. According to Gaillard de Ferry, the French Vice-Consul in Filibe, the Bulgarians had all the right to revolt since the reforms instituted so far by the Sublime Porte had not produced notable outcomes. Moreover, the people were tired

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<sup>43</sup> Henry G. Elliot, *Some Revolutions and Other Diplomatic Experiences* (London: John Murray, 1922), 231.

<sup>44</sup> Basiretçi Ali Efendi, *İstanbul'da Yarım Asırlık Vekayi Mühimme*, 50-52.

<sup>45</sup> Süleyman Paşa, *Hiss-i İnkılab*, 23.

<sup>46</sup> B. H. Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans 1870-1880* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1937), 169.

out by the cruelty of the Bashi-Bazouks and Circassians.<sup>47</sup> According to the German Emperor, Turkey was worse than a “sick man” and was moving towards disintegration.<sup>48</sup> For Lord Carnarvon of England, by what they did to the Bulgarians, the Turks proved that they had not advanced at all in 400 years; and that no European countries could be held responsible for the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>49</sup> Also, Bismarck believed Turkey had minor importance for them.<sup>50</sup>

In these political circumstances, under the pressure of the nationalists and Prince Nikola of Montenegro, Serbia could not miss the "chance" of declaring war, despite the cautious attitude of Prince Milan. On June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1876, Serbia managed to mobilize 120.000 men and declared war on the Ottoman Empire. Two days later, on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1876, Montenegro declared war as well. Hundreds of Bulgarians voluntarily joined the Serbian Army.<sup>51</sup> During that period, Slavic Committees belonging to Panslavists ran a big campaign for the grand aims of Serbia; showing up in streets and getting engaged in eliciting voluntary military officers for Serbia. The Russian government and Prince Dolgorukov, the Governor of Moscow, provided all sorts of advantages for them.<sup>52</sup> According to Henry Elliot, none of these advantages were hidden or secret deeds. Russia permitted Ignatiev to work with the Slavic committees;<sup>53</sup> to them, feigning ignorance was easier than having direct responsibility. This was a part of Russian's foreign policy strategy. With the beginning of the Ottomans' war with Serbia and Montenegro; Austria and Russia

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<sup>47</sup> Simeon Damianov, “European Diplomacy and the Eastern Crisis Up to the Beginning of the Russo-Turkish War” in *Insurrections, Wars and the Eastern Crisis*, ed. Bela K. Kiraly and Gale Stokes, vol. 17 of *War and Society in East Central Europe* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 46.

<sup>48</sup> Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 76.

<sup>49</sup> Millman, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 170.

<sup>50</sup> *German Diplomatic Documents, 1871-1914, vol. 1*, ed. Edgar Trevelyan Stratford Dugdale (London: Harper, 1928), 25 (Bismarck's memorandum dated August 30, 1876).

<sup>51</sup> Vesselin Traikov, “Bulgarian Volunteers in the Serbo-Turkish War of 1876” in *Insurrections, Wars and the Eastern Crisis*, ed. Bela K. Kiraly and Gale Stokes, vol. 17 of *War and Society in East Central Europe* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 60-61.

<sup>52</sup> Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 188-189.

<sup>53</sup> Millman, 83.

acted with optimism, taking into consideration the potential defeat of the Ottoman Empire, and made an agreement. According to the secret Reichstadt agreement, dated July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1876, signed between Andrassy and Russian Foreign Minister Alexander Gorchakov: if Serbia had won, Austria would have invaded Bosnia and Herzegovina, while Russia would have compensated its loss in Bessarabia. Even the possibility of Bulgaria's, Rumelia's and Albania's independence was discussed and it was decided that Greece should get Thessaly and Crete as compensation and that Istanbul should be a free city if the Ottoman Empire had collapsed.<sup>54</sup> However, the predictions of the Serbians and Montenegrins did not come true, and within a couple of months, there occurred the possibility of Ottoman forces' marching into Belgrade. As is stated by Ahmed Midhat Efendi, in Ottoman public opinion there occurred such a union against Serbia that the leading statesmen and the people would only be able to rest when the principality was removed from the World map. Stuck in a very difficult situation, Serbia, towards the end of August, asked European powers to become negotiators. As European powers got involved, the Ottoman government came to the table to negotiate with Serbia. In the session held for the terms of peace, the Ottoman Empire presented many heavy terms, which would be rejected by the Great Powers. These included terms such as war indemnity and discharging Prince Milan.<sup>55</sup> European states, on the other hand, demanded autonomy for Bosnia-Herzegovina and Bulgaria as if Serbia had won the war. On another dimension, Montenegrins were always considered innocent due to their financial poverty. The Ottoman Empire was in an era in which whenever Christians rose up in arms, they were claimed to be right and victorious.

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<sup>54</sup> Rene Albrecht-Carrie, *A Diplomatic History of Europe since the Congress of Vienna* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 170.

<sup>55</sup> Ahmet Mithat, *Üss-i İnkılâp*, 80-81.

Meanwhile, the Ottoman Empire was busy trying to moderate the attitude of the West by setting reforms forth as a trump. Before rising to power, Abdulhamid II had promised Lord Elliot to build a strong economy, to charge new and competent ministers to start a new period and to regain the favor of the West.<sup>56</sup> When Sultan Abdulhamid II rose to power, he declared the Edict of 23 Şaban, 1293 A.H. (September 13, 1876) in which it was stated that one of the most important reasons for the disorder was the common arbitrary rule. Financial and civil disorder had become apparent, and people had lost their trust in the treasury. Courts were far from assuring justice; and the country had failed to make progress in such fields as industry, trade, and agriculture. Therefore, a General Assembly, according to the values and abilities of the people, had to be constituted in order to take on the responsibility of implementing laws and to maintain the balance between state income and expenditures. It was necessary to set up special regulations for all sorts of government posts; to each post, competent people had to be assigned; a law had to be set in order to hold officials responsible for their duties. In this edict (Hatt-i Humayun), it was acknowledged that Europe was more advanced in spiritual and material senses; that all the opportunities would have to be utilized to improve education which had been the source of Europe's advancement. It was also acknowledged that a new set of reforms (in line with the rules decided by the central government) were necessary to institute order in the administration and to provide security.<sup>57</sup>

In November 1876, Nikolai Pavlovich Ignatiev came up with a proposal consisting of 11 points regarding the administration of Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Bulgaria. The most critical points were as follows: the Ottoman soldiers would be

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<sup>56</sup> R. W. Seton-Watson, *Disraeli*, 50.

<sup>57</sup> *Les Réformes et la Protection des Chrétiens en Turquie*, 186-188.

concentrated in forts; native languages would be used in the governmental affairs and courts; a Christian candidate appointed by the Sublime Porte for a 5 year term as governor and approved by the warrantor powers would be in rule as was the case in Lebanon. Furthermore, non-Ottoman authorities, who had lived there for a long time, were to be consulted in the organization of local autonomies and Europe had the right to directly control the implementations in those three regions.<sup>58</sup> Meanwhile, the ceasefire between the Ottoman Empire and Serbia came to an end and the war started again, upon which Russia gave an ultimatum and asked the Ottoman Empire to declare a ceasefire. After the Ottoman Government gave a positive response to the demand, it was agreed that a conference be held in Istanbul in December, 1876 with the participation of the Western powers and Russia.

The demands of the Western powers during the series of gatherings known as the Tersane (shipyard) Conference, held from the end of 1876 on, would be more or less in line with the proposal of Ignatiev, as stated above. The odds were that Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina were to be autonomous with the right to make the last decision in governmental issues in these provinces was to be passed on to the West. So, as a result of the war, Serbia and Montenegro had the upper hand in the end.<sup>59</sup>

The proposals of Russia and the West and the counterproposals of the Ottomans succeeded one another. The proposals of the Ottomans were based on the renewal of the provincial system. By the reformation of the provincial system, the structure of the administration would be renewed; tax farming would be abolished; the authority of local and provincial governors would be increased; religious buildings would be permitted to be built easily as once emphasized; and the

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<sup>58</sup> *Turkey. No. 1 (1877)*, 743.

<sup>59</sup> *Turkey. No. 2 (1877). Correspondence Respecting the Conference at Constantinople and the Affairs of Turkey: 1876-77* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1877), 140-170.

provincial assemblies would be more active in dissemination of public education.<sup>60</sup> Additionally, the Grand Vizier declared that the improvement in the conditions of farmers and farmlands in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the distribution of state lands according to the needs of the people were amongst the goals of the Ottoman government.<sup>61</sup> However, as it will be laid out in this study, none of those goals were new. Similar processes had been experienced in previous crises. Although the last government seemed more sincere, the promises made by the Ottoman Empire were like a stripped screw in the eyes of the West.

In the words of Midhat Pasha, the ultimate result was the realization of the Russian dream, which was the establishment of small autonomous states in the Ottoman lands in Europe.<sup>62</sup> Midhat Pasha, also, was aware of the fact that the situation was desperate in terms of support being provided by the West. In consequence of the negotiations, the Ottoman Empire came to stand alone against Russia; so the Tanzimat era, in a sense, came to an end with the beginning of the Russo-Turkish War of 1878.

After 1815, new states began to emerge and the era of nation-states started. Both the winners and the losers were still on the map. The Ottoman Empire was no doubt the most prominent loser of all. There had long been a process of change in the balance between the West and the East. When the Western powers reached a certain economic, organizational, and technological level, they put in claims for rights over the East. It was the time to identify the question in the East. But such relative material superiority was inadequate in creating the main rhetoric. At this point, the main rhetoric would mostly be based on political and judicial values. Enforcement of

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<sup>60</sup> *Turkey. No. 2 (1877)*, 193-196.

<sup>61</sup> *Turkey. No. 2 (1877)*, 306.

<sup>62</sup> *Turkey. No. 2 (1877)*, 243 (Sir Henry Elliot's telegraph, sent from Istanbul to Earl of Derby on December 30, 1876).

Universalist approaches to any area was rendered compulsory by the political consensus and an evolution took shape in the aftermath of the French Revolution. The Ottoman Empire was directly affected by that situation; in consequence of international pressure, the Ottomans were left obligated to institute reforms. Despite all the effort put into the reforms, the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire accelerated rather than slowing down. Yet, this was not a new development; all reform attempts made between 1856 and 1876 were in fact the accumulation of a process of disintegration that had been gaining steam since 1839. The period between 1856 and 1876 was the time that the question of nation-states reared itself in its sharpest form. In this context, *Ancien Regimes* would try to stop the wave of nationalism they faced by means of reform attempts.

The most important aim of the present study is to reconsider the reform question emerging in the period addressed therein.

There are many works that can be said to have described the reform efforts of Tanzimat period. Ahmed Cevdet Pasha offers substantial and quite important pieces of information for scientific studies in his work entitled *Ma'rûzât*, even though he does not comply with an exactly chronological discipline in the context of the post-Crimean War period.<sup>63</sup> The second chapter of Engelhardt's still topical *La Turquie et le Tanzimat* is observed to be an effort to summarise the questions of the 1854-1867 period and to provide certain information of interest in this context.<sup>64</sup> This study was an effort for recontextualisation put forth by Engelhardt acting within the possibilities conferred by his own era. Berkes's famous *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* mentions the post-1856 environment along rather generic

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<sup>63</sup> Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Ma'rûzât*. İstanbul, Çağrı Yayınları, 1980.

<sup>64</sup> Édouard Engelhardt, *La Turquie et le Tanzimat, ou Histoire des réformes dans l'Empire Ottoman, depuis 1826 jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris: A. Cotillon, 1882), 115-256.

lines.<sup>65</sup> On the other hand, Stefanos Yerasimos attempted contextualisation in his work entitled *Az gelişmişlik Sürecinde Türkiye* (Turkey in the Process of Underdevelopment), but managed only to reach an economy-based evaluation of the period.<sup>66</sup> Stanford J. Shaw is observed to have addressed reforms in quite a large chapter in his monumental work entitled *History of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic*.<sup>67</sup> However, it should be noted here that Shaw mentions the reform process surrounding the Edict of Tanzimat, i.e. the 1839-1876 Period, as if it were a standalone structure. Furthermore, Shaw puts forth a picture of linear progression here. Improving the clear visibility of the problematic period surrounding the empire, on the other hand, requires the demonstration of clearer examples. Roderic H. Davison opened a chapter on the 1856 Edict of Reform and the climate surrounding its reception.<sup>68</sup> However, this chapter should be detailed further and the environment surrounding the reformist effort should be addressed from a wider perspective. As an example, Davison did not provide sufficient room to the question of provinces. Here lies a necessity to augment the featured body of information.

The period of this study is limited to the years between 1856 and 1868. Although in his very important book *Reform in the Ottoman Empire* Roderic Davison considered the period between 1856 and 1876 as the second phase of the Tanzimat, it should be indicated that this period can be subdivided further into various phases. The first name that comes to the mind when the Tanzimat is mentioned is Mustafa Resid Pasha. But in fact, the most energetic figures of the Tanzimat were the three following statesmen: Ali Pasha, Fuad Pasha, and Midhat

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<sup>65</sup> Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*. London : Hurst & Company, 1998.

<sup>66</sup> Stefanos Yerasimos, *Az gelişmişlik Sürecinde Türkiye 2: Tanzimattan Birinci Dünya Savaşına*. İstanbul: Gözlem Yayınları: 1975.

<sup>67</sup> Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, volume 2: Reform, Revolution and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.

<sup>68</sup> Roderic H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire: 1856-1876* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 52-80.



Pasha. The one who was the closest to the West, regarding his lifestyle and thoughts, was Fuad Pasha. With his death in 1869 the reform attempts suffered a severe slowdown, and with the death of Ali Pasha in 1871, an inexorable process of decline haunted the Ottoman administration until 1876. We can again see a correspondence between the appointment of Midhat Pasha to the Governorship of Baghdad (from the presidency of the Council of the State) and the decrease in the impact of reforms. Besides, some arguments like parliamentarism and constitutionalism, which had not found adequate coverage in the press until 1868, were being debated more in the presence of the increasing administrative inertia of the post-1868 period. This is why I believe that the period of 1856-1868 should be considered separately when the reforms are in question.

Rather a strong opposition movement, known today as Young Ottomans, came to assume a determining role in the fate of the Ottoman State starting from 1868. One of the matters addressed by these opposing intellectuals concerned their argument that the Ottoman Government had failed to put forth the necessary innovations or to restore justice and order after the proclamation of the 1856 Imperial Edict of Reform. In this context, rediscussing the reform in the 1856-1868 period will provide a clearer picture of the grounds leading to the emergence of the political opposition in the Ottoman Empire.

In the post-Crimean War period, westernization and reforms were adopted by the Ottoman government as a strategy to protect the existing state. But the Ottoman Empire was not alone in the new era: Russia emerged to the north as the greatest threat to the existence of the Empire. At this point, it is critical to identify Russia's goals, before proceeding to analyze the developments that determined the course of the Tanzimat era. On the other hand, autonomous principalities, Serbia, Montenegro

and Moldo-Wallachia still had problems with the Ottoman Empire. As it will be seen in this study, these autonomous principalities were able to reach beyond their borders and interfere with the internal problems of the Ottoman Empire to the furthest extent possible. In this regard, they had decisive roles in the process leading to the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78. Later, they were also right in the middle of the problem with their policies, disrupting the reform attempts of the Ottomans (whether these were successful or unsuccessful, sincere or superficial) in the Balkans. At this point, an examination of the crisis in the Balkans as well as the points of view of Russia and West towards the Ottoman Empire seems crucial for the analysis of the conditions in which the Ottoman reform attempts were made. Based on these factors, the conditions in the West, Russia, Serbia, Montenegro, and Moldo-Wallachia will constitute the scope of the second chapter.

"Entwined with authority, this transformation, which was no more than formal in quality, has never been joined to the main cultural vessels feeding the Ottomans."<sup>69</sup>

This comment has some accuracy regarding the issue of reform in the Ottoman Empire. But it should be asked whether there had really been any attempts for a cultural break during the Tanzimat period. The Ottoman Empire, after all, was not an entity in which only the administrative center in Istanbul had a voice in the critical issues regarding the fate of the Empire. Thus, it cannot be analyzed by only taking Istanbul into consideration. Although there were indeed groups resisting the change in the center (Istanbul), there were also such reactionary groups of influence, led by Muslim notables, in the provinces — as will be seen in this study. They were in collaboration with the appointed governors in the provinces as well as with

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<sup>69</sup> Mehmet Aydın, "Tanzimatla Aranan Hüviyet" in *Tanzimat'ın 150. Yıldönümü Uluslararası Sempozyumu* (bildiriler) (Ankara: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı Milli Kütüphane Başkanlığı, 1991), 18.

influential groups or people from Istanbul. Did the reforms only mean –to quote Meropi Anastasiadou– “to adopt the culture, technology and lifestyles of the Europeans” for the Ottoman elite?<sup>70</sup> Did not a cultural change need to appear to get rid of the old national and social malaises? How fair is it to ignore the fact that the non-Muslims constituted one of the vital elements of the empire and that the Christian Question was also an issue concerning the corruption of the regime, directly relevant for each and every part of the country? I try to give answers to these questions in third and fourth chapters of the dissertation. I examine the reforms instituted after the Treaty of Paris in Chapter III and Chapter IV, but also touch briefly upon the Christian Question in the Ottoman Empire, the crisis in Syria, the reform attempts in the provinces, the reform suggestions to the Ottoman Empire, the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the financial crisis of the Ottoman Empire, and the migration of the Circassians to the Ottoman Empire. A general evaluation of the reasons for the 1876 Crisis and the end of the Tanzimat era is provided once all of these have been revealed to be different but integral parts of the same problem.

The detailed examination of Tuna Province (*Tuna Vilâyeti*), which was governed by Midhat Pasha between the years 1864 and 1868, occupies the pivotal place in this study. The reason is that during the time period examined in the study, the Tuna Province was designed as a governmental project to spread the reforms across the country, in short as a model for other provinces. Thus, considering the reform ideas in the Ottoman Empire, the Tuna Province was the apple of the eye for the Ottomans in the period between 1864 and 1868.

Halil İnalcık has identified a critical link between the fate of the Tanzimat and the Bulgarian question in his work *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi* (The Tanzimat and

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<sup>70</sup> Anastasiadou, *Selanik 1830-1912*, 85.

The Bulgarian Question), which handled the pre-1856 era.<sup>71</sup> Considering the geographical position they occupied as well as their demographical power, the Bulgarians were in a key role considering the remaining Ottoman lands in the European territories. In a sense, the solution of the Bulgarian question would have been the resolution of the Christian question, and once the modernization attempt had succeeded in the province of Tuna (Danube), the experience gained there could have been utilized to set up the bureaucratic apparatus needed to overcome the administrative crisis. In order to identify the problem, it is important to know the degree of severity of the administrative problem even during the time when the Tuna province was governed by Midhat Pasha — a legendary figure, so much so that his name was mentioned in the last stanza of the anthem of the Chamber of Deputies: "wake up, Midhat, it's your time"

For the present study, I have tried to use as wide a range of sources as possible. Most of these were printed documents and memoirs published in various languages, especially in English. The most important limitation of the present study is the inability to use French archival documents to a sufficient extent. In the light of the influence of the French ambassador and consuls on Ottoman statesmen, it is an absolute fact that the reports prepared by members of the French diplomatic mission include quite significant information on the state of the Ottoman Empire. In fact, the present dissertation employed documents belonging to the Consulate of France in Ruse, which are observed to feature certain pieces of information not present in other documents. However, financial limitations precluded access to French diplomatic documents maintained by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archives in France. Blue Books allow access to a high number of diplomatic archival documents in the

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<sup>71</sup> Halil İnalçık, *Tanzimat ve Bulgar Meselesi*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1943.

possession of Britain. Nevertheless, France cannot be stated to boast a rich oeuvre of printed documents including those on the Ottomans. This, in turn, is another reason behind the inability to use most French archival documents.

Documents authored by members of the British diplomacy occupy a significant place in the present study. Even though British consuls experienced problems with Ottoman authorities from time to time, British documents encompass numerous comprehensive reports addressing both the general and the local state in the Ottoman Empire. The objectivity of the deliberations offered by British officers is open to argument at certain instances. However, it can be said that a major part of the criticisms of the ambassadors and consul's reports aimed at reforming the Ottoman system, given that Britain was the only great power to survive and strengthen the Ottoman Empire until the Cretan Crisis of 1866. What is more, information provided by a number of Ottoman documents is observed to be supportive of the expressions used by members of the British diplomacy.

It is rather difficult to find comprehensive papers concerning the general state of and local situation in the country among Ottoman documents. Continuity among documents is mostly non-existent when it comes to incidences and reforms. At numerous occasions, it has not been possible to find a document specifying how, after a decision for renewal, the process was concluded. Therefore, the Ottoman documents featured in Part One include data that are mostly of a complementary nature and inclusive of examples for general arguments. At this point, the lack of an independent Ottoman-Turkish press that could shed light on the period constitutes perhaps the most important deficiency in terms of historical research. Yet independent Ottoman-Turkish newspapers and magazines in active circulation after 1867 also employ parallel expressions to those used by British observers. Part Two

benefitted from Ottoman documents in a more efficient manner by reason of the fact that relative continuity is observed in official correspondence when it comes to the announcement of incidents and operations in Tuna Province and that the Vilâyet had a newspaper that expressed the goings-on in the locality (*Tuna Newspaper*).

In this study, it can be argued that rather a pessimistic description is offered for the situation surrounding the Ottoman Empire with the use of doomsday narrative in a fashion similar to that of Charles Macfarlane.<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, the situation the country found itself in was not very different from what British observers were portraying in their papers. This was the reason why Mustafa Fazıl Pasha would write in 1868 that Muslims had suffered from as much persecution and injustice as have non-Muslims and were reduced to a defenseless state in the face of the corrupt conduct of low-ranking officials. As stated by Mustafa Fazıl Pasha, it was impossible to hold these public servants accountable for their corrupt conduct, and under these circumstances, there was no power in sight to put an end to their inappropriate behaviours.<sup>73</sup> Thus, Ziya Pasha would write that Muslims had no authority to have recourse before even if they remained imprisoned for years despite their innocence.<sup>74</sup> This is the reason why Namık Kemal could see no difference between being sentenced to imprisonment at the Citadels of Akka (Acre) and Magosa(Famagusta) (intern) and torture. Once a person had been charged with murder and their interrogation had started, the detained person would be subject to multifarious atrocities.<sup>75</sup> Therefore, there were complaints of acts of banditry in İzmid and Selanik, geographical areas quite close to the imperial centre, expressed in *Hülasat-*

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<sup>72</sup> Charles Macfarlane, *Kismet: or, The Doom of Turkey*(London: Thomas Bosworth, 1853).

<sup>73</sup> Mustafa Fazıl Paşa, *Paris'ten Bir Mektub* (Dersaadet: Artin Asadoryan Matbaası, 1326 (Hijri) ), 7-8.

<sup>74</sup> Ziya Paşa, “Mesele-i Müsavat”, *Hürriyet*, no: 15, date: October 5, 1868 ( Hijri 18 Cemaziyelahir 1285).

<sup>75</sup> Namık Kemal, *Hürriyet*, no: 45, date: May 2, 1869 ( Hijri 21 Muharrem 1286).

*ül Efkâr* newspaper in 1873.<sup>76</sup> Even 50 years after the proclamation of the 1856 Edict of Reform, the situation portrayed by the examples put forth by Ahmet Şerif with respect to his observations of his Anatolian trip in 1909-1910 and the poor and miserable state of the people in his letters published on *Tanin* Newspaper were almost an exact confirmation of the picture drawn in the British documents: “Misery in life, misery on the journey, on the ferry, on the train; misery everywhere... Misery always. It is almost natural for the people of our land”.<sup>77</sup> The Ottoman Empire was in a constantly pulsating crisis of administration, justice, and security.

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<sup>76</sup> *Hülâsatü'l-Efkâr* , no: 7, date: June 30, 1873 (Rumi 18 Haziran 1289).

<sup>77</sup> Ahmet Şerif, *Anadolu'da Tanin* (İstanbul: Kavram Yayınları, 1977), 152.

## CHAPTER II

### THE WORLD ENCIRCLING THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE (1856-1870)

#### 2.1. The Reign of Speed and Quantity in the West

Political liberalism moved into a central position in European politics after the European revolutions of 1848. Liberal theory generally claims to be over history, culture and races;<sup>1</sup> thus, it is dominated by the claim of genuine universality, and this situation was also a reflection of the political, economic and social phases the 19th century Europe had witnessed. The universality claim of political liberalism in the 19th century would cause, quite naturally, the political liberals to snub the differences, changes, transformations and reform efforts of “underdeveloped” societies. The universality claim enabled the European Powers to adopt a much more interventionist role in international politics; thus, liberal thought became an ideological component of Western imperialism.

At the point where liberal values became an ideological component of global competition, the capacity of an underdeveloped society was a negligible detail; reforms had to be realized without hesitancy and as fast as possible. The third quarter

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<sup>1</sup> Uday S. Mehta, “Liberal Strategies of Exclusion” in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, eds. Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 63.



of the 19<sup>th</sup> century turned into a catalyst where the rapid political, economic and social transformations justified this impatience. Hobsbawm named this period, from 1848 to 1875, as “The Age of Capital”.

The aforementioned period was one where sharp acceleration in many fields occurred; it was a step taken by humanity into the era of speed and quantity. As a result of the infrastructure revolution, transportation got cheaper; and as the masses gained mobility, nation-building processes gained momentum. Parallel to this, industrial bases were expanded, and a steady pace of commercialization was experienced in the West.

Between 1853 and 1868 the length of the railroads was seriously increased; telegraph cables connected Britain and America through the Atlantic.<sup>2</sup> Now, the wooden line of battleships was about to become obsolete.<sup>3</sup> The improvement of technology enabled the extension of markets through the overcoming of geographical obstacles. As the example of England illustrates, great improvements both in land transportation and overseas transportation ended regional monopolies and decreased the costs for industrial and local consumers.<sup>4</sup> Exhibitions were organized more frequently, and peddling was on the decline.<sup>5</sup> Trading volume in the World increased by 160 percent between 1850 and 1870.<sup>6</sup>

Those who benefited from this great growth in industrial and agricultural production were mainly the land-owning aristocracy and industrial, commercial and

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<sup>2</sup> Benedetto Croce, *History of Europe in the Nineteenth Century* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1953), 242-243.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Cobden, *The Political Writings of Richard Cobden, vol. II* (London: William Ridgway, 1868), 347.

<sup>4</sup> Raphael Samuel, “Mechanization and Hand Labour in Industrializing Britain” in *The Industrial Revolution and Work in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Lenard R. Berlanstein (London: Routledge, 1992), 35.

<sup>5</sup> Alain Plessis, *The Rise and Fall of the Second Empire, 1852-1871* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 87.

<sup>6</sup> E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital, 1848-1875* (London: Abacus, 1977), 49.

financial entrepreneurs.<sup>7</sup> There was a growing rivalry between the traditional rich and the new rich, but the voice of lower classes had begun to be heard too.

Despite the improvements and increasing efficiency in agriculture, the rapid progress of industry started to dominate the era,<sup>8</sup> and industrialization's role in economic development was increasingly valued. The reflection of this in politics would be that those who did not subsist upon agricultural wealth began to look for stronger positions in the government, and urban groups gradually conquered the center of politics. At this point, it was not possible for a country without mass education and higher-education institutions to be an active part of international competition. While in 1842, 10% of high school professors in France came from known, wealthy families, this ratio was 0 in 1877.<sup>9</sup> Integration of science into production and industry made education vital for industrial development.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, inventions made by the inventors who came from crafts had produced good results for the industrial sector. This process naturally promoted these inventors in social life. Thus, practical tendencies rather than theoretical sciences were still dominant in both society and politics.

While iron and coal became the important natural resources of the century, textile lost its former significance.<sup>11</sup> In both industry and energy, dirty resources (coal-iron) gradually replaced the clean resources (wood-wind-water). Economies relying on industrial production dethroned the economies dependent on natural resources.

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<sup>7</sup> Robert J. Goldstein, *Political Repression in 19th Century Europe* (New Jersey: Barnes and Noble Books, 1983), 193.

<sup>8</sup> Goldstein, *Political Repression in 19th Century Europe*, 198.

<sup>9</sup> Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, 35.

<sup>10</sup> Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, 58.

<sup>11</sup> Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, 57.

In contrast to the growing prosperity of the bourgeoisie, the living standards and social conditions of the masses did not improve between 1850 and 1870; however, urbanization, modernization, liberalization, development of mass media and dissemination of public education brought forth the demand for improved living conditions. As a result of this, a new type of politician, one who had developed his career around these demands, emerged in the West.

In the 1860s, governments tried to incorporate the middle classes into the political regimes without changing the characteristics of the regimes themselves. The intent of the reforms made in the West and in Europe was to redistribute political power among the traditional landed nobility, the rising middle class and the commercial bourgeoisie.<sup>12</sup> It was an era where new-style aristocrats merged their economic visions with the upper-middle class, becoming capital investors.<sup>13</sup>

High firepower weapons would now be produced at a much higher quality and speed, and this abundance of war materials led to the creation of gigantic armies. It was a time when young men went to the barracks. National armies based on mass conscription systems replaced the small professional armies. The armies were created with a great percentage being made up of people whose real profession was not related to military skills. However, the problem of quality in these new gigantic armies was solved by the help of science, technology and industry; the wars of total mobilization were about to start. In the Italian War of 1859, the French forces moved rapidly through the use of the railroads; this increased the importance of railroads, and the war lost its chivalric aspects. Armament of soldiers with weapons of the latest technology (which eliminated the problem of quality); improvement of health services; provision of clothes and an abundance of equipment all through the help of

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<sup>12</sup> Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, 57.

<sup>13</sup> Swartz, *The Politics of British Foreign Policy*, 7-11.

new industries; and the transportation revolution with the construction of railroads made it possible for mass troops to be concentrated in fronts brought a new kind of militarization that had not been seen in previous ages. Thus in the new era, imperialists were more self-confident. Long range weapons were now threatening the sovereignty of monarchs, thereby the legitimacy of old empires.

Europe entered into a new age where it could expand its power rapidly. New railroads were constructed; new docks and channels were opened, and cities were restructured. The Suez Canal, built between 1856 and 1869, was the most glorious example of this constructive energy.<sup>14</sup> Railroads, telegraph lines and steam-driven ships spread throughout the world as the symbols of modern government. In accordance with the increasing social and economic mobility, visual arts became a part of popular culture; they were not only an issue of interest for aristocracy anymore; now they were on their way to becoming one of the main pillars of manipulation of the masses. The magical power of visuality over society had been discovered.

When all combined, the substantial growth of economies and armies after 1850, the emergence of a new social equilibrium, and the increasing effort of the West to understand the non-Western world would come together to carry the Western understanding of the World into a new dimension.

China had to open her doors to the external world as a result of the war with Britain and France. On the other hand, Japan, who had closed its cultural boundaries to outsiders for centuries, had already broken its cage with the Meiji restoration and had developed closer relations with the West. Britain had consolidated its domination over India; politically, Asia became largely dependent on Europe.

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<sup>14</sup> Robert Cedric Binkley, *Realism and Nationalism, 1852-1871* (New York: Harper and Brothers Pub., 1935), 16.

In reality, the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a century of expansionism rather than revolutions.<sup>15</sup> In fact, the living standards had not been improved very much in Europe. Apparently, from 1850 to 1874 real wages were constantly increasing.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, the Russians still lived on average less than 30 years. The average life span of Scandinavians was only 45 years. The only two countries where more than 25% of the population worked within the industry were Germany and Switzerland. 15 to 20 percent of babies born in Europe died before they reached age one in 1878, just like it had been in 1850; this percentage was more than 25% in Austria, Germany and Russia. The cholera epidemic between 1865 and 1867 took the lives of more than 750,000 Europeans. Between 1850 and 1870, a great number of Europeans left the continent to find new opportunities for their lives; most of these immigrants were from the UK, Germany, Sweden and Norway.<sup>17</sup> In 1871, half of all land was owned by only 7,400 land-owners in England.<sup>18</sup> Between 1860 and 1869, 10 different governments had led Austria.<sup>19</sup> So in reality, concepts that had been rhetorically universalized by the West such as social prosperity, public health, and political consistency were a part of the international law that the West was trying to create in an era where obstacles related to transportation and communication began to be eliminated, and markets and mobility were expanding.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the emergence of great thinkers such as Darwin and Marx, who radically affected the sciences of biology and economy, was a result of national, economic and revolutionary tendencies in Europe. Philosophers like Hegel had a clear impact on the processes of national revival. But these thinkers, beyond

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<sup>15</sup> Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, 47.

<sup>16</sup> Bertrand Russell, *Freedom and Organization, 1814-1914* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1952), 160.

<sup>17</sup> Goldstein, *Political Repression in 19th Century Europe*, 196-197.

<sup>18</sup> Goldstein, *Political Repression in 19th Century Europe*, 198.

<sup>19</sup> Goldstein, *Political Repression in 19th Century Europe*, 218.

being figures that led to the questioning of the imperial expansion processes, also provided ideological rationales for Western expansionism. Thus, any element inside the Western system was also a part of the Western expansionism of this era.

The rights of nationalities had come onto the scene of history when most of the problems regarding human rights were unsolved and humanistic principles had not even fully penetrated into the “civilized” countries. Therefore, nationalism was at the service of the Great Powers, which tried to consolidate their power by monopolizing the national military and economic sources that were necessary to achieve their political goals, rather than being a part of the cultural revival. At that time the new nationalist powers that had emerged in the periphery were backward in educational-organizational-technological terms and had been born as militaristic forces without humanitarian values, with their structures open to fanaticism. Many nationalist revolutionaries were activists, who had no humanitarian tendencies in contrast to nihilist and anarchist intellectuals. They could adopt destructive methods for the sake of victory; therefore, they followed a kind of “vanguard war” strategy. However, by taking support from their commercial bourgeoisie, by transforming educational institutions into a means of cultural revival, and by trying to create their own illegal military forces, these revolutionaries launched the process of establishing their own nation-states in the long run.

The need for raw materials brought by the improvements in industrial production was not only a source of imperialism; it was also a reflection of the confidence towards the material improvement being experienced and the ability to control nature. Overwhelming superiority achieved by the increase in time-saving capabilities brought on by the transportation revolution, unlimited belief towards progress, and the emergence of homo economicus, had strengthened the Europeans’

thought that they could shape the non-European world. Eastern societies, that remained more naturalistic and more patient, and did not have the disciplined and planned institutions of Europe, faced the problem of having to have an immediate transformation against the Great Powers that grew extremely fast.

The 1860s, as Hobsbawm explained, were the period of reforms.<sup>20</sup> At the end of this period, by the 1870s, there remained only two powers that appointed their leaders through their own distinctive methods; those were Russia and the Ottoman Empire.<sup>21</sup>

There was nearly no government that could resist the speed of the European changes in the new era, among the empires and governments that could be identified with the old East, except for Japan. Japan's geographical advantage was surely one of the most important aspects of her that permitted this peculiarity.

For the Ottomans, a modernization attempt completed with the help of European guidance was much more preferable than a Westernization attempt done under the control of Europe. Yet, it was inescapable that Europeans would interfere with the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire more and more as time went on.

The Treaty of Paris (1856) was a milestone where European powers accepted the Ottoman Empire as a part of their system and officially started to protect it. However, the European system, which had been created as a result of the Crimean War, resembled a castle made from sand. The post-1856 system led to the formation of inconsistent alliances. These inconsistent alliances weakened the Ottoman Empire instead of strengthening it. In every crisis, Russia and the anti-Ottoman revolutionary groups would benefit from the loopholes existing in the international system. The question of nationalities and the question of modernization started to affect the

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<sup>20</sup> Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, 90.

<sup>21</sup> Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, 127.

Ottoman Empire as the increasing tendency of Western statesmen to universalize their values became more normative.

The simplest way for the Ottoman Empire to protect its integrity and keep its legitimacy in the eyes of the West was for it to imitate Western models. Imitation was not unique to the Ottoman Empire. As part of international competition, institutions, economies and mentalities were unavoidably imitated. As a matter of fact, Japan had embarked on the adventure of modernization by imitation too. In both Japan and Prussia, changes had been launched from the top. Nevertheless, the real problem was how would the Ottoman Empire imitate, and how would the envisaged reforms be injected into the country from the top. Yet, as we will see here, there was not a foreign power that the Ottoman Empire could completely trust and imitate; and the international environment did not have the stability that could enable the Ottomans to maintain certain equilibria in their reform efforts.

## **2.2. Europe**

### Britain

In the period that began after 1856, the most important ally of the Ottoman Empire was Britain. This close relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Britain took ground on a strong strategical basis.

In England, Russophobic tendencies had started to grow in the 1830s.<sup>22</sup> These seemed to have their roots in some humanitarian and civilizational issues; but in reality, the main reason behind this was the struggle for the East. Russophobia in England reached its peak point during the signing of the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi between the Ottoman Empire and Russia in July 1833 and the Crimean War. The

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<sup>22</sup> For detailed information, see John Howes Gleason, *The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1950.



Ottoman Empire, from the British point of view, was a wooden bridge that must not be demolished by its rivals. For the protection of the international power of Britain and the sovereignty over its colonies, the Ottoman Empire had to survive as long as possible. The greatest threat to the entity of the Ottoman Empire was Russia.

The harmony between Britain and France, based upon hampering Russian aggression during and after the Crimean War, ended early. No heavy blow was dealt to Russia at the end of the Crimean War because of France's "early" withdrawal from the War; and this was regarded in some circles in Britain as a kind of treachery.

As a result of the Crimean War, the military power of Britain unavoidably grew. The number of military ships, which were 212 at the beginning of the War, had risen to 590 by the end of it.<sup>23</sup> But after the war, it wasn't easy for Britain to get with the militarization trend that continued in the other major powers. According to Richard Cobden, the militarization of France, which took place between 1859 and 1861, created an air of panic in Britain and led to many debates about armament and strengthening of the navy.<sup>24</sup> However, the Indian Revolt and the Opium War limited Britain's maneuverability regarding the militarization of France.

Although Russia's attitude during the 1863 Polish Revolt brought forth liberal reactions in Europe, the British Government did not generate a harsh political rhetoric against Russia.<sup>25</sup> In a similar way, Britain hindered the European intervention in the continent of America during the American Civil War, and thus paved the way for the growth of another Great Power that would get stronger day by day, like Russia.<sup>26</sup> Britain's consideration of France and Russia as belligerent led it to

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<sup>23</sup> Cobden, *The Political Writings of Richard Cobden*, 275.

<sup>24</sup> Cobden, 209-426.

<sup>25</sup> *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England, 1830-1902*, ed. Kenneth Bourne (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), 364-366 (Lord Russell's message to Ambassador of St. Petersburg, Lord Napier, dated March 2, 1865).

<sup>26</sup> *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, 89-94.

believe that a strong Prussia would stabilize Europe; which is why Britain chose not to intervene in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866.<sup>27</sup>

During 1869, the number of British soldiers in the colonial garrisons was tallied at 35 thousand; it was downsized to 25 thousand in 1872. There was such a large trend in de-militarization in the 1870s that this trend could not be reversed.<sup>28</sup> With the peaceful stance Britain adopted, during a period in which there were shifts in the balance of world power, the Ottoman Empire's international position was shattered. Britain was no more than a kind of marginalized island state after 1860.

What led Britain to become more passive day by day was not only the British political elite's stance on foreign policy. It was a period where new economic and social issues emerged in Europe; thus even the Conservatives mixed social reform into their political agenda starting in the 1860s. In England, through the period of 1860-1880, social issues began to be discussed more frequently in politics. At the end of the 1860s, issues of educational and parliamentary reform would summon the attention of the public opinion.<sup>29</sup> As a result of the long-term political evolution, the influence of social issues in British politics increased.

One of the reasons why the question of reforms was emphasized so much by British politicians regarding the Eastern Question is that the issue of reform became a component of British political perception. Even though social reform did not have a central position in British political debates before 1900<sup>30</sup> and there was not a very strong social reform attempt in practice, the issue of reform began to occupy a major place in England; rhetoric that based on race-prosperity correlation began to weaken.

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<sup>27</sup> Albrecht-Carrie, *A Diplomatic History of Europe*, 132.

<sup>28</sup> Swartz, *The Politics of British Foreign Policy*, 11.

<sup>29</sup> P. R. Ghosh, "Politics, Style and Substance in Disraelian Social Reform c. 1860-1880" in *Politics and Social Change in Modern Britain*, ed. P. J. Waller (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), 59-90.

<sup>30</sup> P. R. Ghosh, 81.

In parallel to this, the extension of the franchise in 1867 by the Disraeli government was one of the milestones in the popular transformation in British politics.

Urbanization and industrialization of Britain paved the way for unionization in labor, public health, democratization, dissemination of public education; and recognition of the slogan “the career open to people of talent” which was the product of the Napoleonic era.<sup>31</sup> While the cabinet was mostly composed of aristocrats in this era; businessmen, manufacturers and shopkeepers also became decisive actors in politics; power was in new hands and in a gradual way, British politics was transforming.<sup>32</sup>

In conjunction with the improvements in education and the rise of meritocracy, the media became a more important source of power in England. The liberals occupied stronger positions in the media; thus it was easier for them to affect and energize the masses and the educated part of the nation. In the 1860s there were 285 liberal, 126 conservative, 85 independent and 313 non-political journals in England. While *The Times* had 60 thousand readers in 1855, one of its rivals, the *Morning Post* had no more than 3,000 subscribers.<sup>33</sup> *The Times* maintained its leading position in press in the 1860s as well.

The Liberal Party, the address of reformists, grew stronger after the Crimean War. The period that began after Palmerston’s death in 1865 started a struggle between two leaders: Benjamin Disraeli from the Conservatives and William Ewart Gladstone from the Liberal Party. The social reform issue, particularly regarding the Irish Question became a part of the rivalry between Disraeli and Gladstone.<sup>34</sup> In foreign policy, Gladstone’s slogan, “justice for Ireland” also took reflection in the

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<sup>31</sup> Richard Salter, *Peel, Gladstone and Disraeli* (London: Macmillan, 1991), 58.

<sup>32</sup> Bertrand Russell, *Freedom and Organization*, 145.

<sup>33</sup> K. S. Pasiaka, “The British Press and the Polish Insurrection of 1863”, *Slavonic and East European Review*, 42:98 (1963:Dec.), 15.

<sup>34</sup> P. R. Ghosh, “Politics, Style and Substance in Disraelian Social Reform c. 1860-1880”, 64.

Bulgarian Question. While Gladstone's vision of national rights was concerned about the Irish question and the Bulgarian question, it did not involve Central Asian Muslims, Indians or exiled Circassians. At this point, Gladstone's liberal internationalism had an imperial character.

Social reform that had emerged as an issue of internal politics in England would gain an imperial character as time passed. As the Irish Question was a part of the conflict between Gladstone and Disraeli based on rhetoric over the concepts of "reform" and "civilization", the Eastern Question also became a part of rhetoric concerning British domestic politics in the 1860s and the 1870s.

Gladstone was quite reasonable in his approach towards the Irish Question. But regarding the increasing power of Russia in the East and the sui generis nature of the Balkans, his imperial vision was quite limited. So, as long as the liberal rhetoric strengthened in Britain, one of the fulcrums that the Ottoman Empire relied on in foreign affairs would weaken rapidly.

### France

After the Napoleonic Wars, the age of Napoleon Bonaparte was always an ideal that had to be revived for France.

Napoleon III, nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, was the first country leader to be democratically elected. He was the first modern leader who combined demagogy, popular politics and military power. However, as Prince Consort said, Napoleon was always a conspirator.<sup>35</sup> Napoleon III, whose aim was to restore the Napoleonic Empire that had been destroyed in Waterloo, resorted to every method to achieve this ideal and did not hesitate to make France a coalition country in the Crimean War; a war in which France would end up having the highest number of casualties.

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<sup>35</sup> W. F. Monypenny and George Earle Buckle, *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli, vol. IV* (New York: The Macmillan company, 1916), 226.

The Triple Treaty of April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1856 which was signed by the Ottoman Empire, Britain and France, was only a reflection of a temporary situation; nevertheless, it was not the result of a long-term strategy.<sup>36</sup> The alliance of France and England depended on the principles of action against unjust belligerence, for the protection of the weak against the strong and for maintaining the balance of power.<sup>37</sup> Even so, these were principles open to question in that period. In a context where the Ottoman Empire always had political stability, it was hard for France to change the balance of world power.

On January 14<sup>th</sup>, 1858, a group of Carbonari members tried to kill the French Emperor and Empress with bombs in Paris. Many French people were killed on this occasion, and the French people became angered when the government discovered that the weapons had been made in England. The threatening statements of French colonels were published in the official *Moniteur* afterwards.<sup>38</sup> Britain was equally suspicious against France as well. According to Palmerston, France wanted to detach Egypt from the Ottoman Empire and have control over it; which meant a serious blow to British interests.<sup>39</sup>

Although Napoleon III destroyed the Republic, he also tried to put an economic-industrial growth program in effect to achieve his dreams. Napoleon III became involved in the war between the Italian states and the Habsburg Empire; and received support from his society and elite in his cause. However, Napoleon's army which he had trusted in so much suffered thousands of casualties in the battle of Solferino (1859) for the sake of victory over the Austrian army.

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<sup>36</sup> Werner Eugen Mosse, *The Rise and Fall of the Crimean System, 1855-71* (London: Macmillan, 1963), 201.

<sup>37</sup> *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, 333 (Lord Palmerston's confidential letter to Lord Clarendon, dated March 1, 1857).

<sup>38</sup> Monypenny and Buckle, *Benjamin Disraeli*, 111.

<sup>39</sup> *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, 345 (Lord Palmerston's letter to John Thadeus Delane, dated December 16, 1859).

From the restoration period to the early 1860s, France made significant progress in industrialization.<sup>40</sup> It can be argued that this consistent industrialization had an important role in the background of Napoleon's imperial self-confidence after the Crimean War.

France experienced an accelerated growth in agricultural production, industrial production, construction industry and exports between 1853 and 1869.<sup>41</sup> But this was a growth without clear results or profits.<sup>42</sup> France adopted internal borrowing and foreign indebtedness as parts of its developmental strategy.<sup>43</sup> Availability of monetary sources grew from 3.9 billion to 826 billion Francs in the period of 1848-1870.<sup>44</sup> Bad currency showed itself as a result of the excessive increase in the volume of gold. The impact and the power of banks and credit institutions reached enormous dimensions in the Second Empire.<sup>45</sup>

In France, the government gave railway companies the chance to eliminate old internal water transport companies.<sup>46</sup> The length of railways had grown to 16,465 kilometers in 1869, compared to the limited length of only 3,248 kilometers in 1851.<sup>47</sup> The hands of the Parisian government now touched most of the country.

Despite these positive changes, at the beginning of 1859, an extreme panic started in Bourse de Paris; increasing dissent against Napoleon III.<sup>48</sup> As a result of the economic and political crisis experienced in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a considerable increase in the country's population could not be achieved between

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<sup>40</sup> Richard Eugene Sylla and Gianni Toniolo, "Introduction" in *Patterns of European Industrialization: The Nineteenth Century*, eds. Richard Eugene Sylla and Gianni Toniolo (London: Routledge, 1991), 10.

<sup>41</sup> Plessis, *The Rise and Fall of the Second Empire*, 69.

<sup>42</sup> Plessis, *The Rise and Fall of the Second Empire*, 71.

<sup>43</sup> Plessis, *The Rise and Fall of the Second Empire*, 63-64.

<sup>44</sup> Plessis, *The Rise and Fall of the Second Empire*, 66.

<sup>45</sup> Plessis, *The Rise and Fall of the Second Empire*, 75-78.

<sup>46</sup> Plessis, *The Rise and Fall of the Second Empire*, 65.

<sup>47</sup> Plessis, *The Rise and Fall of the Second Empire*, 85.

<sup>48</sup> Monypenny and Buckle, *Benjamin Disraeli*, 225.

1850 and 1871.<sup>49</sup> In the year 1854 alone, 145,000 people died in France due to problems related to food provisioning. There was a great increase in infant mortality rate in this period as well.<sup>50</sup>

The decision of Napoleon III, taken in 1859, for the transition to a liberal empire, and the legalization of public assembly in 1868 were events that also accelerated the end of the Second Empire. Republicans and Socialists had the chance to gather against the Napoleon III regime, particularly in big cities, and the idea of decentralization gained support among lots of dissidents.<sup>51</sup>

As Halford Mackinder stated, the French were artistic and thus idealistic people.<sup>52</sup> This problematic aspect of the French society was reflected in the dreams of Napoleon III. Napoleon aimed to establish a European Monarchy in Mexico in the early 1860s.<sup>53</sup> During the same period (December 1861), Britain, Spain and France launched a military operation in Mexico to enforce it to pay off its foreign debts. Napoleon III, who was seeking adventure in Mexico, however, could not hinder the emergence of a strong neighbor, the North German Confederation. Napoleon III who wanted to eliminate the European system established in 1814-1815, by supporting the unification of Italy on the basis of the “self-determination” principle,<sup>54</sup> had also given consent to the unification of Germany, assuming that a civil war would break out in Germany.

France wanted to exploit the Italian Question to realize her Grand Design. Already prepared for the possibility of an outbreak of an Austro-Sardinian War,

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<sup>49</sup> Plessis, *The Rise and Fall of the Second Empire*, 58-59.

<sup>50</sup> Plessis, *The Rise and Fall of the Second Empire*, 60.

<sup>51</sup> John M. Merriman, “Contested Freedoms in the French Revolutions” in *Revolution and the Meanings of Freedom in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Isser Woloch (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 201-202.

<sup>52</sup> H. J. Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality* (London: Constable and Company Ltd., 1919), 24.

<sup>53</sup> *The Foreign Policy of Victorian England*, 89.

<sup>54</sup> Otto Pflanze, “Characteristics of Nationalism in Europe: 1848-1871”, *Review of Politics*, 28:2 (1966:Apr.), 133.

France was able to quickly get involved in the Austro-Sardinian War (1859) when it broke out and demolished the immobile Austrian forces. To improve the position of France in Europe, Napoleon resorted to the strategy of using every opportunity that could throw Europe into chaos. During the process of the Italian Unification, one of the largest gains obtained by France was the annexation of Nice and Savoy with the exploitation of the question of nationalities and the method of the plebiscite. Considering the situation of the Ottoman Empire, the use of plebiscite and the increasing attention on the question of nationalities in international politics would have a decisive role in the escalation of the Balkan Crisis.

Napoleon's major surprise was seen in the policy towards Russia. Napoleon III identified Russia as a strategic ally against Britain after the Crimean War. Russia and France were in collaboration on international issues from 1856 to 1863. Russia used this collaboration in order to drive a wedge between France and Britain and to guarantee the humiliation of Austria in the aforementioned period.<sup>55</sup> After British Ambassador Lord Stratford de Redcliffe left Istanbul, the French's influence could be felt more distinctly in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>56</sup> Despite this, Napoleon III's cooperation with Russia pointed out that he consented to the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire for the success of his expansionist designs.

France also had good relations with Romanian nationalists. French support would be very compelling in the unification of the Moldavian and Wallachian administrations in 1861.<sup>57</sup> France collaborated with Russia in 1858 in the dispute

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<sup>55</sup> Barbara Jelavich, *A Century of Russian Foreign Policy* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1964), 136.

<sup>56</sup> M. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774-1923: A Study in International Relations* (London: Macmillan; St. Martin's Press, 1966), 153.

<sup>57</sup> Jelavich, *A Century of Russian Foreign Policy*, 137-138.



between the Ottoman Empire and Montenegro as well. France supported the Serbian policy in this dispute; as a result of this, the boundaries of Montenegro expanded.<sup>58</sup>

But the French-Russian cooperation did not last long. When the Greek King Otho, of Bavarian origin, was overthrown and William I, of Denmark, supported by Britain, rose to the throne instead of him in 1862, France did not do what her silent alliance with Russia necessitated.<sup>59</sup> During the Polish Revolt of 1863, both Britain and France gave moral support to Polish rebels. The nationalist movements supported by France in Italy and Romania now spread to Poland, and affected Russia in a negative way. In addition to this, the Catholic clergy had an important role in the Polish revolt; which meant that the existence of France as a Catholic power was dangerous for Russian interests.<sup>60</sup> For Russia, it was time to separate from France. In the end, the beneficiary of this alliance was Russia, as it had succeeded in decreasing the international pressure that had been upon it.

Turning the Mediterranean into a French lake was a part of Napoleon III's vision; however, France was far away from the power it had had in the time of Napoleon Bonaparte. For this reason, France's grand designs only exacerbated the chaos in European politics.

### The Italian Question

The foundation of the Italian Kingdom as a result of the spectacular victory against Austria with the support of France in 1859-1860 and the adoption of a parliamentary regime led by King Victor Emmanuel, had an important role in the rising effect of nationalism in Europe.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Jelavich, *A Century of Russian Foreign Policy*, 140.

<sup>59</sup> Barbara Jelavich, "Russia, Bavaria and the Greek Revolution of 1862/1863," *Balkan Studies*, II (July, 1961), 133.

<sup>60</sup> Jelavich, *A Century of Russian Foreign Policy*, 141.

<sup>61</sup> Bertrand Russell, *Freedom and Organization*, 417.

The establishment of the Italian Kingdom was also a great blow against the status quo, known as the Crimean System, which had formed after the Crimean War. Revolutionary movements strengthened in South Italy, agitation against Bourbon sovereignty in Sicily exploded. Italy was united through the military and political pressure of the Italian patriots, particularly those led by Garibaldi; so the fragility of the Crimean System was proven. Count Cavour, Italy's first prime minister, played the Britain card to limit France's influence over Italy.<sup>62</sup> Cavour, exploiting the rivalry between Britain and France, succeeded in making the declaration of the Kingdom of Italy on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March, 1861. The Crimean System was far away from restraining the nationalist and revolutionary movements; these movements would exploit the rivalries between the European Governments to achieve their goals as can be seen in the example of Italy. Prussia's unification of the Germanic states was not a weird situation; because the Prussian state was strong. Nevertheless, Piedmont was not a strong state like Prussia; consequently, the Unification of Italy could be explained by the weakness of the Crimean System.

The Italian Question was an issue where the struggles for unification and liberal constitution intersected.<sup>63</sup> However, the Italian Kingdom was also recognized by conservative forces such as Prussia and Russia. The unification of Italy deeply affected the national movements in the Balkans and Italian revolutionaries became a model to the nationalist revolutionaries in the Ottoman Empire.

The Italian Question directly threatened the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire for a period. The emergence of the Italian Question in particular forced the Great Powers into a stalemate as the supporters of Rumanian unification

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<sup>62</sup> Albrecht-Carrie, *A Diplomatic History of Europe*, 104-106.

<sup>63</sup> Albrecht-Carrie, *A Diplomatic History of Europe*, 95.

intended. In November 1863, during the Apponyi-Lord Russel meeting, it was even discussed that Austria would get Moldovia and Wallachia in exchange for Venice.<sup>64</sup>

There was even a possibility of an outbreak of a European War due to the Italian Question. This situation concerned the German Confederation as well as Austria. Since Russia secured the German principalities against France by a circular, these principalities avoided giving military support to Austria.<sup>65</sup>

The Italian Kingdom had been established, but the Italian revolutionaries did not intend to limit themselves with Italy. The Italians and the Garibaldians even got involved in Polish Revolt of 1863.<sup>66</sup> Garibaldi was welcomed as a hero in an England tour in 1864 and thousands of people joined his parade. Meetings containing thousands of people were arranged in Hyde Park to support Garibaldi who was heroized by the mass media in England.<sup>67</sup> Garibaldi had untied the knot which the politicians could not, and had led Sicily to its freedom in a few months under the campaign named "Expedition of the Thousand".<sup>68</sup> The action's success in the rapid achievement of its goals became instructive to other revolutionary movements; therefore banditry and guerrilla warfare turned into major methods for other long-term political struggles.

Mass hysteria and popular passion had now found its voice in international politics as well.<sup>69</sup> Victories became more delightful by the effect of this passion. Passionate politicians, who were more effective in mobilizing the masses, began to replace cautious monarchs. More were needed, and quickly.

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<sup>64</sup> H. W. V. Temperley, "Palmerston, Garibaldi, and Italy", *Contemporary Review*, 144 (1933:July/Dec.), 174.

<sup>65</sup> *Russian Colonial Expansion to 1917*, ed. Michael Rywkin (London, New York: Mansell, 1988), 176.

<sup>66</sup> Croce, *History of Europe*, 236.

<sup>67</sup> Jonathan Sperber, *Europe 1850-1914: Progress, Participation and Apprehension* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2009), 90-91.

<sup>68</sup> Croce, *History of Europe*, 224.

<sup>69</sup> William Leonard Langer, *European Alliances and Alignments, 1871-1890* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), 5.

As Croce stated, the sympathy and admiration of the whole “civilized” world accompanied the Italian Risorgimento.<sup>70</sup> The success of Emmanuel, Cavour and Garibaldi appealed to both the hearts and the imagination of the European people. Steady politicians and a romantic hero overcoming all obstacles and achieving national unity would be inspirational to other revolutionaries in Europe and the Balkans. As Bakunin also said, nations would be able to create new civilizations based on the concept of freedom.<sup>71</sup> The declining reputation of the old regimes brought the overvaluing of the revolutionary-libertarian movements among political and intellectual circles and in the eyes of masses. This trend became partially decisive in the formation of popular political perceptions.

The 1859 events in Italy also prompted Prussia. Enforcement of German unity as a result of Prussia’s quick victories against Austria in 1866 and against France in 1870-1871, brought the rise of militarism in Europe. Bismarck, who was the representative of land power tradition and deprived of deep historical knowledge,<sup>72</sup> took “blood and iron” above the rules of international politics and destroyed the Crimean System. Bismarck also did his best to keep Germany away from the battlefields after staggering wars. After it lost in Italy first and then in the Austro-Prussian War, Austria had to both complete internal reorganization and adopt a new stance in foreign affairs. These developments made it easier for Russia to take the initiative on the Eastern Question after 1875.

### **2.3. Russia**

Russia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was a realm where peasants were oppressed under serfdom, and an autocratic Tsar was on top, basing his authority on military might,

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<sup>70</sup> Croce, *History of Europe*, 227.

<sup>71</sup> Croce, *History of Europe*, 228.

<sup>72</sup> Albrecht-Carrie, *A Diplomatic History of Europe*, 124-125.

religious beliefs of people and a strong bureaucracy.<sup>73</sup> Russians were neither completely European nor Asiatic.<sup>74</sup> Deprived of a strong bourgeoisie, Russia had a government and a nation in which the eschatological approach was so strong that the belief on messianic elements had notable effects on society. With its unique autocratic history and tendency to extremities, unlike the formulatable moderation of Western Europe, Russia was dominated by a sense of strong government and despotism which also deeply affected the Russian intelligentsia.<sup>75</sup>

The defeat in the Crimean War undermined the legitimacy of the Nicholas I regime in Russia. It was nearly a general view among the Russian intellectuals and statesmen that Russia had been humiliated in the Crimean War. The Treaty of Paris, which included the articles stipulating the removal of Russian patronage on the Danubian principalities, the protection over Orthodox Christians, and the demilitarization of the Black Sea coasts, was a devastating blow to Russia's prestige. During the Crimean War, the Russians found out that they were behind the West in terms of military, technology and industry; they even experienced difficulties in clothing their soldiers. Moreover, Russia could not feed its own troops in a war that took place within its own borders. It was understood that even a great number of serf soldiers could not cope with the modern armies of the West. Thus both in internal affairs and in foreign affairs, Alexander II apparently inherited a heavy burden. Although Alexander did not have the remarkable features of his father, he prepared for the throne better than his predecessors<sup>76</sup> and played an important role in Russia's internal renewal, using his image of "reconcilable". Thus W.E. Mosse considers

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<sup>73</sup> Nikolai Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea* (New York: Lindisfarne Press, 1992), 47.

<sup>74</sup> Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, 20.

<sup>75</sup> Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, 19-50.

<sup>76</sup> Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, 204-205.

Alexander II's period as a Glasnost under the control of Tsar.<sup>77</sup> In parallel to this, these words of Alexander exposed the great dreams of the new Tsar:<sup>78</sup> "With the aid of the Divine Providence; forever gracious to Russia, may her internal welfare be established and perfected; may truth and kindness reign in her courts; may the aspiration for enlightenment and for all useful activities develop all over with new force, may everyone peacefully enjoy the results of honest labor under the shelter of laws equally just for all, equally protecting for all".

The heavy burden left on Russia by the war stirred the state elite; thus the removal of serfdom which was an important component of domestic unrest emerged as an important topic of debate as soon as Alexander II took the throne.<sup>79</sup> The unrest among the soldiers of serf origin returning from Crimea was remarkable.<sup>80</sup> As long as serfdom and the deficiencies regarding inflexible labor force continued, the modernization of the army and the industry was not possible.<sup>81</sup> In total, 22,588,748 villagers were still in serf status in Russia just after the war.<sup>82</sup>

Russia entered into a new era with the publication of the Emancipation Proclamation on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1861. From that moment on, Russian peasants would be able to marry, buy property, and enter the business without the permission of their masters. Nevertheless, these peasants continued to live under heavy conditions for many years. Replacement of the Middle Ages' agricultural methods had still not been achieved.<sup>83</sup> Emancipation of serfs also brought social disturbances. During the chaos

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<sup>77</sup> Werner Eugen Mosse, *An Economic History of Russia 1856-1914* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 1996), 43.

<sup>78</sup> Alexander Kornilov, *Modern Russian History* (s.l., n.d.), 10.

<sup>79</sup> Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, 208-221.

<sup>80</sup> Mosse, *An Economic History of Russia*, 26.

<sup>81</sup> W. Bruce Lincoln, *The Great Reforms : Autocracy, Bureaucracy, and The Politics of Change in Imperial Russia* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1990), 38.

<sup>82</sup> Lincoln, *The Great Reforms*, 62.

<sup>83</sup> Lincoln, *The Great Reforms*, 88-89.

created by the removal of serfdom between April 1861 and July 1861, 647 violent events occurred in Russia.<sup>84</sup>

The abolition of serfdom strengthened the hand of Russia in the military; but a sudden change within the existing social and economic structure could not be expected. But even this decision itself was the clearest expression of Russia's desire to rejuvenate.

### Military Reform

After the Crimean War, Russia's greatest priority was the reformation of the army. A great demobilization was done in the army after 1856, military colonies were abolished in 1858 and the length of military service was shortened to 15 years, down from 25 years.<sup>85</sup> But this was not enough. A strong leadership and new ideas were required for the Russian army to renew. The man that came to the forefront at this moment was General Dmitri Miliutin.

The war against the Muslim clans under the leadership of Sheikh Shamil in Northern Caucasia came to an end when Şamil was captured in 1859. His role in the success against Sheikh Şamil in Caucasia brought about Miliutin's rise in governmental circles, and this prominent analyst of military reform began to hold important positions in the political center.<sup>86</sup>

In the 1860s, Miliutin struggled to provide meritocratic justice in the military, to improve the quality of clothing and equipment of recruits, and to ameliorate the health services. Thus, he was sufficiently successful in reform attempts despite the low military budget.<sup>87</sup> In the program he presented to the Emperor on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1862, Miliutin stated that European armies had small standing armies in time of

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<sup>84</sup> Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, 239.

<sup>85</sup> Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, 245-246.

<sup>86</sup> Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, 246.

<sup>87</sup> Lincoln, *The Great Reforms*, 154.

peace, but multiplied their size in wartime; thus Russia had no choice other than to adopt the same method.<sup>88</sup>

The actual reserve in the Russian army included 210,000 men despite the fact that the regular army consisted of 800,000 in the year 1862. While rival armies in Europe could multiply their size in times of war, Russia could only raise its size by 25 percent. Miliutin achieved a great success by increasing the reserve numbers to 553,000 in 1870. Again, the military schools which were re-organized under his administration produced 600 graduates each year.<sup>89</sup>

Miliutin wanted to erase the administrative problems related to the army by creating new military districts with rational decentralization. Beginning in 1862, armies started to be subdivided, and through this, military districts were created in Russia. By the creation of a network of military districts, the backbone of the military organization in Imperial Russia was formed.<sup>90</sup> Also, the Ministry of War and the Main Staff were restructured, and considerable improvements in various areas from infantry tactics to artillery were made. Russia fought in the 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian war with this reformed army.<sup>91</sup>

After the Crimean War, increasing population was also a source of military power for Russia. The population had reached 74 million by 1858.<sup>92</sup> The population of Russian peasants rapidly increased throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century; this expanded the Tsarist Army's sacrificing options and provided a better implementation of the "bayonet before bullet" philosophy.

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<sup>88</sup> Bruce Menning, *Bayonets Before Bullets: The Imperial Russian Army, 1861-1914* (Bloomington,: Indiana University Press, 1992), 11.

<sup>89</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire, 1801-1917* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1967), 386.

<sup>90</sup> Menning, 14.

<sup>91</sup> For detailed information about military reforms, see Bruce Menning, *Bayonets Before Bullets: The Imperial Russian Army, 1861-1914*. Bloomington, 1992.

<sup>92</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 126.



In short, thanks to the extensive reforms of Miliutin, improvements in the quality of equipments and services, increase in the manpower reserve pool, the Tsarist army was still the major threat to the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

### The Rise of Enlightened Bureaucrats

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a kind of “enlightened despotism” had penetrated into Russia; but this development had not reflected on the whole of society. When the Western impact entered Russia, it resulted in the alienation of nobility from the common people entirely.<sup>93</sup> Just like it was in the Ottoman Empire, a group that could be referred to as “enlightened bureaucrats” would be the locomotives of the reform in Russia.

The fates of the reforms of Alexander II were closely related to the personal qualities of ministers and administrators.<sup>94</sup> While only 28 of the 52 ministers that weren’t nobles had good educational degrees during the Nicholas I period, 50 out of the 56 ministers in the Alexander II period had education levels above primary education.<sup>95</sup> The ministers of Alexander II era were both better educated and more professional administrators than those of the Nicholas I period.<sup>96</sup>

The role of the government in Russia had expanded as the demands of society became increasingly complex. The government occupied a vital position, especially in industry and transportation where it had a crucial place in the modernization of the country.<sup>97</sup> The Russian government significantly transformed its administration during the reign of Alexander II as the civil servants, who had expertise in the

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<sup>93</sup> Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, 33.

<sup>94</sup> William Bruce Lincoln, “The Ministers of Alexander II : A Survey of Their Backgrounds and Service Careers”, *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, Année 1976, Volume 17, Numéro 4, 467.

<sup>95</sup> Lincoln, “The Ministers of Alexander II”, 469.

<sup>96</sup> Lincoln, “The Ministers of Alexander II”, 478.

<sup>97</sup> Marc Raeff, *Political Ideas and Institutions in Imperial Russia* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 109.

administration itself, rose in ministries.<sup>98</sup> It could also be seen that the dependence on the Palace regarding administrative issues diminished as the prominence of meritocratic appointments increased.

#### Reform in Administration, Infrastructure and Education

The abolition of serfdom, the construction of railroads, the attraction of foreign investment, and low tariffs were the four pillars that stimulated the rebirth of the Russian economy.<sup>99</sup>

As Russia suffered from financial problems and as it could not continuously take up loans from the Western market, the new Tsar had to listen to the recommendations of his financial experts.<sup>100</sup> At the end of the Crimean War, the Imperial Treasury had a debt of approximately 1 billion Rubles, which increased 75 million rubles annually with interest.<sup>101</sup> The Russian government monetized a high amount of banknotes, especially after the Crimean War. In the beginning of the Alexander II period, there was a serious currency deficit, Russian money was flowing out of the country.<sup>102</sup>

With the new tariff imposed in 1857, the high protective barriers of the Nicholas I period were lifted.<sup>103</sup> This decision was taken because the country could not be renewed with high tariffs; the necessary capital for railroads could not be attracted into the country by high tariff impediments. Mikhail Reiter was the statesman who provided the technical expertise Russia needed in this hard time.

The vodka reform carried out during Reiter's ministry of finance was Russia's most successful reform in the 1860s. As excise taxes took the place of

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<sup>98</sup> Lincoln, "The Ministers of Alexander II", 469.

<sup>99</sup> Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 11.

<sup>100</sup> Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, 247.

<sup>101</sup> Lincoln, *The Great Reforms*, 147.

<sup>102</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 136-137.

<sup>103</sup> Dietrich Geyer, *Russian Imperialism: the interaction of domestic and foreign policy, 1860-1914* (New York: Berg, 1987), 36.

vodka tax farming in 1863, vodka got cheaper and the old monopolists started investing in railroads, banks and mines with their accumulated capital.<sup>104</sup> Credit was necessary to finance the reforms and railroad projects; for this purpose, the credit monopoly of the Russian government was lifted; which led to the creation of private banks.<sup>105</sup> Also in the period of 1862-1866, the state economy was centralized in the hands of the Ministry of Finance under the administration of V. A. Tatarinov who acted as the state comptroller under Reiter.<sup>106</sup>

Since the end of the 1850s, the representatives of a commercial-industrial class had started to emerge in Russia.<sup>107</sup> The significance and assistance of Western technical specialists and entrepreneurs started to be more evident in Russia, as it was in the Ottoman Empire, and there was a glamorous increase in the number of manufactured goods.<sup>108</sup>

Infrastructural reform was another foothold of the overall reform in Russia. There had been military-economic problems during the Crimean War due to the lack of railroads. The only operating railroad was the Moscow-St Petersburg railroad at the beginning of the 1860s.<sup>109</sup> Despite having low currency value and low capital reserves, Russia gave great importance to the railway projects in its development schemes.<sup>110</sup> Since the real target of the reforms was to render the government more powerful and to increase central authority, railroads were a means of getting people under control, suppressing revolts and intervening in times of crisis; the swift deployment of units to the front line would be ensured by the railroads. Unlike in the West, the initiative in the railway projects was totally at the hands of the state, such

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<sup>104</sup> Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, 248.

<sup>105</sup> Geyer, *Russian Imperialism*, 36.

<sup>106</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 88.

<sup>107</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 78.

<sup>108</sup> Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 12-13.

<sup>109</sup> Daniel R. Brower, *The Russian City between Tradition and Modernity, 1850-1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 34.

<sup>110</sup> Geyer, *Russian Imperialism*, 20.

that this had a great impact on the fiscal policy of the government.<sup>111</sup> While the length of Russian railroads was 1,589 kilometers in 1860, this length was up to 11,243 by 1870;<sup>112</sup> but even though Russia had enormously large territories, the length of the railroads in Russia was still low in comparison to France and Germany.

The question of local reform was at the very heart of the modernization and the centralization of the Russian administrative system. Only 6 million people lived in cities in Russia as of 1858.<sup>113</sup> Before 1861, the government had left many of its duties to the nobles; but after 1861 it was not possible for the nobles who had lost their serfs to fulfill these extensive duties. Therefore *zemstvos* were established in 1864 to eliminate this administrative incompetence. *Zemstvos* were local assemblies instituted in *uezds* and provinces. Aristocrats, townsmen and villagers constituted the main categories in these new assemblies.<sup>114</sup> The basic function of the *zemstvos* was to deal with issues regarding public education and public health to the extent that laws permitted. By this reform, Russia made the local energy more robust and organized;<sup>115</sup> Russia channelized the attention of the people into their own local problems. The *zemstvos* and the intellectuals made distinctive contributions to the dissemination of primary education. By the creation of *Zemstvo*, again an institution that could lead the medical care was founded in a country where a public health policy nearly did not exist. However, it could not be expected from Russia, which had a primitive economic structure in comparison to the West, to swiftly strengthen *zemstvos*. *Zemstvos* mostly struggled from the lack of money.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Geyer, *Russian Imperialism*, 38.

<sup>112</sup> Geyer, *Russian Imperialism*, 37.

<sup>113</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 129.

<sup>114</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire*, 351.

<sup>115</sup> P. Gronskey, "The Period of the "Great Reforms" in *History of Russia*, v. 3, ed. Paul Miliukov (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1969), 25.

<sup>116</sup> Gronskey, 26.

The delegates of the zemstvo were elected private landowners, village community members and the townspeople.<sup>117</sup> The zemstvos were controlled by the bureaucracy. But as a result of the foundation of zemstvos and the reformation of justice, the government was faced with new responsibilities and new problems.<sup>118</sup> In relation to the creation of the zemstvos, aristocrats of Moscow and the Zemstvo of St. Petersburg mentioned the dream of a central assembly that would represent the whole of Russia in 1865, but the Muscovites were faced with the harsh reaction of Tsar Alexander.<sup>119</sup>

Russia had the lowest general educational level among the Great Powers; Russians were almost as literate as the Ottomans. As Nikolai Chernyshevsky, who left his mark on Russian intellectual life, formulated in 1856, the basic reforms that were demanded by Russian intellectuals were the expansion of education, the increase in the numbers of teachers and students, the construction of railroads and the utilization of the country's resources in a scientific way.<sup>120</sup> In parallel to Chernyshevsky's ideas, a moderate improvement was achieved in the field of education; the number of primary schools in Russia was increased from 8,000 to 25,000 between 1856 and 1878, and the number of students in these schools increased from 450 thousand to over one million.<sup>121</sup>

Universities had been influential in Russian intellectual life since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>122</sup> In the new period, Russia's university students wanted to show they were not indifferent to the political and social problems of the country.<sup>123</sup> The clashes between the students and security forces in Kazan in 1856, and in Kiev and

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<sup>117</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 97.

<sup>118</sup> Raeff, *Political Ideas*, 109.

<sup>119</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire*, 351-352.

<sup>120</sup> Mirkin Guetzevich, "The End of the Crimean War and the Expectation of Reforms" in *History of Russia*, v. 3, ed. Paul Miliukov (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1969), 5.

<sup>121</sup> Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, 276.

<sup>122</sup> The first Russian university was established with the name of "Moscow State University" in 1755.

<sup>123</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 90-93.

Moscow in 1857 were the signs of the rising radicalism and new demands concerning political rights.<sup>124</sup> Chernyshevsky's monumental book named "What is to be done?" was published in 1863 and became the bible of a well-educated generation.<sup>125</sup> Even after the start of the Alexander II period, it was Chernyshevsky who said that expecting anything from the Tsars was wrong.<sup>126</sup>

Together with the emancipation problem, the women became an important issue related to reform; so, education programs towards women were launched.<sup>127</sup> In places such as St. Petersburg, Kharkov and Kiev, women could attend classes in colleges.<sup>128</sup> Again during the reign of Alexander II, the council of professors, which was the administrative unit in colleges, had increased its authority.<sup>129</sup>

Secondary schools, that provided modern training, called *Gimnazii* opened for the education of all students regardless of their families' jobs or their religious views.<sup>130</sup> Again, Dmitri Tolstoy, even though he was a man who Russian radicals hated, defended an education system based on classics, and made a great effort to improve public education in Russia.<sup>131</sup>

### Russian Imperialism in Asia

The only thing that had been left unchanged in Russia since the period of Peter the Great was the expansion of borders. Maybe the most important point that would show the effectiveness of the Crimean System was to end this trend; but Russia's territorial expansion continued towards the east and the south after the Crimean War.

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<sup>124</sup> Lincoln, *The Great Reforms*, 165.

<sup>125</sup> Lincoln, *The Great Reforms*, 167.

<sup>126</sup> Thornton Anderson, *Russian Political Thought: An Introduction* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1967), 203.

<sup>127</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 93-94.

<sup>128</sup> Christine Johanson, "Autocratic Politics, Public Opinion and Women's Medical Education During the Reign of Alexander II, 1855-1881", *Slavic Review*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (Sep. 1979), 428.

<sup>129</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire*, 358.

<sup>130</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire*, 359.

<sup>131</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire*, 380-383.

The attempts of expansion in Asia were a part of the Russian strategy in regaining the prestige she lost in Crimea.<sup>132</sup> Russia, through taking the Amur Area and the Far Eastern Coastal Province by the Aigun (March 28<sup>th</sup>, 1858) and Peking (November 14<sup>th</sup>, 1860) Treaties, responded to the rising power of Britain and France in Pacific;<sup>133</sup> and just a few years after the signing of the Treaty of Paris (1856), Russia appeased its hunger for territory and prestige.

Undoubtedly, one of the most important events of the Alexander II period was the pacification of the Caucasian tribes. Sheikh Şamil, who had been a large source of trouble for the Russian army for years in the Caucasus, was captured; and Eastern Caucasia was brought to its knees within a short time (1857-1859) as a result of Prince Bariantinskii's appointment to the Viceroyalty of Caucasia and by Colonel Miliutin's masterful command.<sup>134</sup> Sheikh Şamil surrendered to Bariatinskii and thus Russia got rid of a long-lasting headache in the Caucasus which was an extremely important natural border for Russia. By 1865, the whole Caucasus, except for Ajaria with Batumi as its center, was part of Russia.

In the Russian government, issues related to the Near East were under the responsibility of Gorchakov and his circle; but the knowledge and expertise required to carry out policies were provided by a special department called the Asiatic Department. Thus, the Asiatic Department had a prominent position regarding Balkan policy and supplied the manpower necessary for the diplomatic missions in the Near East and the Middle East.<sup>135</sup> The Asiatic Department was a department with most of its staff consisting of pure Russians, including experts who became

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<sup>132</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 226.

<sup>133</sup> Geyer, *Russian Imperialism*, 80.

<sup>134</sup> David MacKenzie, *The Lion of Tashkent; The Career of General M. G. Cherniaev* (Athens, University of Georgia Press, 1974), 27. For a detailed part about the campaigns from 1857 to 1859, see John F. Baddeley, *The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1908), 458-482.

<sup>135</sup> Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 24-25.

specialized in Eastern languages and focused on European Turkey and Asia. The Asiatic Department was not actually controlled by officials tied to Gorchakov.<sup>136</sup>

The director of the Asiatic Department, Count Ignatiev, was a person who had key importance in the expansion process in Asia. Nikolai Pavlaovich Ignatiev (1832-1908) had been a staff officer in the Baltic provinces during the Crimean War. He was a military attaché to London between 1856 and 1857, and had accompanied Count Kiselev as an expert regarding the question of the Bessarabian borders in Paris (1856-1857). Then, Ignatiev went to the Balkans and the Levant in 1857; gained great experience in the 1858 Khiva and Bukhara missions, the 1859-60 Peking mission and the special Istanbul mission of 1861; and at last performed the very important task of the Directorship of the Asiatic Department between 1861 and 1864.<sup>137</sup> After China gave a large part of Amur to Russia at the Convention of Peking (1860), everybody believed that Ignatiev was a genius.<sup>138</sup> This man, who had a formidable place in the expansion process in Asia, would get the chance to affect the Ottomans' fate after his appointment as Ambassador to Istanbul in 1864. Thus, Russia's expansion in Asia would be an important experience for a group of Panslavist officials who would engage in military and political activities in the Balkans later. Years before the war with the Ottoman Empire in 1877-1878, Russia adopted tactics in the Central Asian Khanates similar to the tactics used in the Balkans. By sending Ignatiev to Khiva and Bukhara between 1858 and 1859, and sending Captain Velikhanov to the Kashgar mission, Russia would have the chance to be familiarized with the regions that she wanted to dominate.<sup>139</sup> Ignatiev, by his

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<sup>136</sup> Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 24.

<sup>137</sup> Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 30-31.

<sup>138</sup> *Distinguished Persons in Russian Society* (London: Smith, Elder and Co. 1873), 171.

<sup>139</sup> Mary Holdsworth, *Turkestan in the Nineteenth Century: a Brief History of the Khanates of Bukhara, Kokand, and Khiva* (London: Central Asian Research Centre in association with St. Antony's College (Oxford) Soviet Affairs Study Group, 1959), 51.



general appearance, was the main pawn used in the Russian gambit against the Ottoman Empire after the Crimean War.

In the 1860s, Russia mainly focused its power on expansion in Central Asia. The Kazakhs who could not be held under authority always generated trouble by plundering villages and selling the people whom they captured as slaves in Khiva and Bukhara. They hindered the commercial growth in Central Asia and prevented the Russian merchants from expanding their influence<sup>140</sup> Because of this; Russia could legitimize her intervention in the region. But it was also clear that Central Asia was rich in natural resources and this area was held by undisciplined and inadequate local elements. In the age of imperialism, Central Asia was an ideal place where Russia could carry out its own colonization projects. Also, the shortage of cotton caused by the American Civil War made a large amount of cotton in Turkistan and Bukhara appealing to Russian producers.<sup>141</sup> Syr-Daria and Amr-Daria's rich oases were held by Bukharan, Kokand and Khivan Khanates, who were always in conflict with each other, and local peoples were far from a unity that could withstand a Russian attack.<sup>142</sup> As Miliutin stated, Russia's advance against the Asian tribes was inescapable.<sup>143</sup>

During his travels in 1859, Ignatiev found the chance to see the technical backwardness and the lack of military spirit in Bukhara.<sup>144</sup> Ignatiev's travels enabled Russians to understand the weakness of the Khanates; this encouraged the supporters of Russian expansion.<sup>145</sup> Ignatiev, in his book about the mission, wrote that the

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<sup>140</sup> Richard A. Pierce, *Russian Central Asia, 1867-1917* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), 17.

<sup>141</sup> MacKenzie, *The Lion of Tashkent*, 30.

<sup>142</sup> MacKenzie, *The Lion of Tashkent*, 20.

<sup>143</sup> MacKenzie, *The Lion of Tashkent*, 34.

<sup>144</sup> Holdsworth, *Turkestan in the Nineteenth Century*, 11.

<sup>145</sup> MacKenzie, *The Lion of Tashkent*, 21.

relations with these treacherous and crafty neighbors must be sharply changed and suggested the invasion of Central Asia.<sup>146</sup>

There was an ongoing struggle between the central authority, *beys* and clans in the Khanates. Labeling them as “uncivilized” was an inadequate reason for Russia to occupy these Khanates. For example, Nasrullah, the Emir of Bukhara, despite all his cruelty, tried to complete centralization by dissuading the separatist aims of the Uzbek clans, achieved progress in professionalizing the army, introduced new irrigation plans and carried out administrative reforms.<sup>147</sup> Kokand, by the 1860s, was a city where 80 thousand people lived with 600 mosques and 15 madrasas; it had bridges, bazaars and buildings; and it exported silk and clothes.<sup>148</sup> Thw Khanates had their own currency.<sup>149</sup>

The duo behind the Russian Campaigns in Central Asia was made up of Ignatiev and General Cherniaev. Ignatiev was a man who handled all issues with great courage. In 1863, during the Poland crisis, he even confided that in the case of a war with Britain during Russia’s Asia expansion, a platoon led by Cherniaev could move towards Kabul from Amu and could be supported by another force from the Caucasia. The campaign to Suzak commanded by Cherniaev with a small force in 1863 was a model for the new campaigns to be instigated in Central Asia. Cherniaev was one of Ignatiev’s fierce supporters. Ignatiev saw Cherniaev as a perfect agent for expansion.<sup>150</sup> Cherniaev and Ignatiev would not hold back from employing brave methods for the expansion of Russia.

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<sup>146</sup> Holdsworth, *Turkestan in the Nineteenth Century*, 58.

<sup>147</sup> Holdsworth, 4-5.

<sup>148</sup> Holdsworth, 8.

<sup>149</sup> Holdsworth, 10.

<sup>150</sup> MacKenzie, *The Lion of Tashkent*, 31-33.

General Miliutin was the official who gave the order for the preparation of the 1864 expedition to Kokand on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 1864.<sup>151</sup> Cherniaev's platoon which had moved from Vernyi at the end of April with 2,500 men, 447 horses and 4,000 camels reached Auliya-Ata in June; and destroyed the city of Kokand with cannon fire. The Russians captured the city within 2 hours; while more than 300 people from Kokand died, only 3 Russians were injured.<sup>152</sup> After this victory, Ignatiev's and Cherniaev's self-confidence would rise. Cherniaev, who was in close contact with Ignatiev, would at some periods go to Serbia and lead the Serbian army in the Ottoman-Serb-Montenegrin War which started in 1876. Central Asia was in some respects an area of an experiment for this duo.

Britain remained passive throughout this process. When Russian forces moved towards Bukhara in May 1866, Gorchakov stated that the idea which claimed this movement of Russia threatened India's security was ridiculous. Again, after Samarkand's capture by the Russian army, he persuaded Sir Andrew Buchanan by saying that the Russian forces would not stay permanently in the city.<sup>153</sup>

On the other hand, Ottomans acted with caution during this process of expansion. In that period, the Kokand envoy in Istanbul asked the Ottoman Empire's support and protection against Russia on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1861 by pointing out Russia's desire to capture Kokand.<sup>154</sup>

The territories gained in Caucasus, Central Asia and the Far East after 1815, transformed Russia from a European power to a World power.<sup>155</sup> After 1847, Russia had swallowed so large an amount of territories that their total size could be

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<sup>151</sup> MacKenzie, *The Lion of Tashkent*, 34-35.

<sup>152</sup> MacKenzie, *The Lion of Tashkent*, 37.

<sup>153</sup> Firuz Kazemzadeh, "Russia and the Middle East" in *Russian Foreign Policy*, ed. Ivo J. Lederer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), 498.

<sup>154</sup> *Belgelerle Osmanlı-Türkistan İlişkileri (XVI-XX. yüzyıllar)*, ed. Yusuf Sarmay (Ankara: T.C. Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2004), 51-52.

<sup>155</sup> G. H. Bolsover, "Aspects of Russian Foreign Policy, 1815-1914" in *Essays Presented to Sir Lewis Namier*, ed. Richard Pares (New York, 1971), 320-321.

compared to the size of Western Europe.<sup>156</sup> Bolsover explains the territorial gains of Russia in Central Asia and the Far East with the high energy of the soldiers and administrators such as Muraviev, Kaufmann, Cherniaev and Skobelev who would take important roles in the Ottoman-Russian War later, rather than the deliberate planning of the Russian government.<sup>157</sup> However, foreign policy issues in a country that had a strong autocratic tradition like Russia were too critical to be left to the initiative of individuals. At this point, it can be said that there was a correspondence between the intentions of the supporters of expansionism and the ultimate aims of the Russian government.

Expanding borders was not the only way to consolidate Russian power; crushing the separatists inside gave strength to this ambition too. Right after the 1863 revolt, Russia completely absorbed the Polish Kingdom and launched a fierce Russification policy in Poland.<sup>158</sup> The Tsar's first target was to deal a decisive blow to the aristocracy and the Catholic clergy which were the two main components of the Polish revolt's spirit.<sup>159</sup> Furthermore, Gorchakov's "national" attitude towards the 1863 Polish revolt and his efforts to keep Western intervention out of this issue gave great prestige to him among nationalists and in Moscow press.<sup>160</sup>

The Crimean War proved that Russia would be better off not embarking on adventures. The foreign policy pursued by the "Russian" Gorchakov was at a point that did not satisfy the hard-liners; but still, Russia was Russia, territorial and political expansion would proceed.

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<sup>156</sup> Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, 42.

<sup>157</sup> G. H. Bolsover, "Aspects of Russian Foreign Policy, 1815-1914", 322.

<sup>158</sup> Jelavich, *A Century of Russian Foreign Policy*, 145.

<sup>159</sup> Croce, *History of Europe*, 236.

<sup>160</sup> *Distinguished Persons in Russian Society*, 106-107.

### The Limits of Reform

Despite the presence of all the positive indicators in the reforms carried out after 1856, Russia achieved only partial success; some reforms had prices to pay as well as benefits.

Despite the improvements in education, as of 1875, the illiteracy rate among men in Russia was 79 percent while it was 17 percent in England.<sup>161</sup>

Russians succeeded in expanding their territories after the Crimean War. But Russian imperialism did not resemble European-style economic imperialism. While her contemporaries expanded their markets and made technological and industrial inventions, Russia gave priority to territorial expansion. For a continental empire, the priority was territory, not commerce. Thus, regarding land warfare, this type of state would be more reckless. Landpowers found their expression with the acquisition of land, while sea forces prioritized the commercial hegemony. Since it was a landpower, Russia's navy had never achieved remarkable successes. In short, Russian territorial expansion did not provide immediate economic or social benefits to the Russian state.

At first glance, economic reforms in Russia seemed aimed to improve the industrial economy, yet between 1861 and 1870 there was not a steady increase in industrial production.<sup>162</sup> While the productions of items like cast iron and cloth lowered, Russian cotton mills were still depending on English yarns. The Nizhni-Novgorod fair couldn't exceed its turnover of 1860 in 1864.

Russia was an agricultural country and its economic fate depended on the weather and harvest. After the Crimean War, peasants and farmers continued to be

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<sup>161</sup> Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, 58.

<sup>162</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 132-134.

the poorest and most exploited group of the country.<sup>163</sup> The Zemstvos, which were institutions of local reform, operated only in European Russia, they were never introduced to the border regions that were not of Russian origin.<sup>164</sup> In addition, the authority of Zemstvos was limited by a law on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 1866 which had the aim of protecting the interests of the landowning class against the rising business class. This also showed the central authority's lack of trust towards local initiatives.<sup>165</sup>

In this period, Russia did not raise a strong group of native capitalists. The financing of Russian railroads was linked to foreigners and the future of autocracy depended, in a sense, on stock quotations.<sup>166</sup> Russia, like the Ottoman Empire, was a raw material exporter. To export more grains, the government had to build new railroads. These railroads brought upon a heavy burden to the Treasury; corruption was rife in the construction processes, and some members of the imperial family were involved in these corrupt activities.<sup>167</sup>

Russia had a chronic capital problem and the entry of capital into the country was dependent on the foreign financial circles. The opportunities for developing a foreign policy that rested on a strong economy were very limited.

Important financial reforms had come to pass under Mikhail Reiter's administration;<sup>168</sup> but an important portion of the reserve fund had been spent to suppress the Poland revolt.<sup>169</sup> Also, while Reiter, was trying to stabilize the currency, he had consumed the metal reserves of the government in a very fast

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<sup>163</sup> Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, 264.

<sup>164</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Decline of the Imperial Russia 1855-1917* (London: Methuen, 1958), 50.

<sup>165</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Russian Empire*, 383.

<sup>166</sup> Geyer, *Russian Imperialism*, 39.

<sup>167</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 144.

<sup>168</sup> Mikhail Reiter (1820-1890) served as Russia's minister of finance from 1862 to 1878.

<sup>169</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 138.

manner.<sup>170</sup> Between 1861 and 1866, 170 million rubles left Russia while 37 million rubles worth of funds were able to be imported. The government arranged a 38 million ruble Anglo-Dutch loan in 1864 to provide some balance.<sup>171</sup> When it is considered that Russia sold Alaska for only 11 million rubles, and that the national debt increased by 360 million rubles between 1862 and 1865,<sup>172</sup> it can be understood how great a calamity the Russian economy was in.

The reforms made after Alexander II's accession to the throne and the Proclamation of the Emancipation Manifesto in 1861 brought the hopes for political change. As a result, some illegal brochures were printed in Russia in 1861.<sup>173</sup> These brochures were enough to disturb the Russian authorities even though they were read by a very small number of people.<sup>174</sup> The revolutionary movement that emerged during the reign of Alexander II never turned into a force that could change the course of Russian politics in this period.

In February 1862, Tver nobles published a resolution demanding financial and judiciary reforms, transparency in administration and an elected assembly; but in the end, three nobles were arrested and sentenced to prison as a result of this act. By the efforts of the most reactionary segment of the aristocracy, the moves towards the democratization of Russia were hindered.<sup>175</sup> The suppression of the Polish Revolt repaired the prestige of the Alexander government, while the liberal and radical opposition lost most of their influence.<sup>176</sup> The victory gained by the reaction to the Poland revolt had brought the rise of democratic principles to an end. Freedom of media would remain a great dream in Russia.

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<sup>170</sup> Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, 264.

<sup>171</sup> Geyer, *Russian Imperialism*, 41.

<sup>172</sup> Geyer, *Russian Imperialism*, 40.

<sup>173</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Decline of the Imperial Russia*, 59.

<sup>174</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Decline of the Imperial Russia*, 60.

<sup>175</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Decline of the Imperial Russia*, 48-49.

<sup>176</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 87.

The unsuccessful attempt on Alexander's life by a left radical activist in 1866 ended the process of rapid reformation and the opponents of democratic reform began to rise in governmental positions. The 1866 reaction blocked the peaceful reform process, and forced the opposition to go underground; so this situation led to the increase of terrorist tendencies among opposition groups.<sup>177</sup> The youth was regarded as potential threat after the assassination attempt of 1866. Palace circles, in particular, did not miss the opportunity to increase their influence on Tsar after the assassination attempt towards Alexander II.<sup>178</sup> Moderate and humanistic characters such as Prince Suvorov, the governor-general of St. Petersburg, were deposed.<sup>179</sup> None of the reformist statesmen could keep their positions in the second half of the 1860s except Mikhail Reiter and Dimitri Miliutin.<sup>180</sup> But even Miliutin supported the idea that reforms must be done with authoritarian methods,<sup>181</sup> and this reflected the general attitude of the Russian statesmen towards the reform question.

While, in the Ottoman Empire, a group of intellectuals was marching towards the center of politics; intelligentsia was being marginalized in Russia during the 1870s.

### The Russian Idea

While the Russian Idea mostly did not influence the Russian government directly, it provides insight about its tendencies. The Russian thought included the elements of Russian imperial ideology and at many points provided the intellectual foundation for Russian imperialism.

Russia met the West during the time of Peter the Great, and by this way, the new Russian thought started to replace the conservative Russian thought that was

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<sup>177</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 107.

<sup>178</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 111.

<sup>179</sup> Kornilov, *Modern Russian History*, 113.

<sup>180</sup> Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, 264.

<sup>181</sup> Saunders, *Russia in the Age of Reaction and Reform*, 246.



linked to the Byzantine tradition.<sup>182</sup> Hegelian thought in the 19<sup>th</sup> century created the ideological foundations for the “historical mission” notion that the Russians and the Slavophiles needed.<sup>183</sup> The Messianic approach, that attributes Russia a distinctive historical position in the world, had a special place in Russian intellectual life. A Russian intelligentsia unique to Russia that lived in the past and the future<sup>184</sup> instead of the present would be one of the elements that the new imperial understanding would rely on. The conservative thinkers were the most influential thinkers in Russian intellectual life during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>185</sup>

Russian official ideology was based on the principles of orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality that were synthesized by S. S. Uvarov (1786-1855). Autocracy meant abandoning liberal policies and a return to old Muscovite autocracy. The principle of nationality could be explained by loyalty to Russian national heritage, mistrust in Western Europe with regard to being a model for Russia and the belief in the evils West-originating theories.<sup>186</sup> In parallel with these principles, the sincerity of Catherine II’s and Alexander I’s desire for the legal reforms and the pavement towards Westernization were questioned.<sup>187</sup> Uvarov’s Three Principles became official ideology of Russia in some ways. In line with Uvarov’s doctrine, Education Minister Shirinsky-Shikhmatov banned philosophy lectures in universities in 1850.<sup>188</sup>

Yet, especially after Nicholas I’s death, the dynamism of Russian intellectual life increased, and the influence of Russian intellectuals on political life became more noticeable, and the belief in the improvement of living conditions in the

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<sup>182</sup> Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, 22, 25.

<sup>183</sup> Andrzej Walicki, *The Slavophile Controversy* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 288.

<sup>184</sup> Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, 43.

<sup>185</sup> Dmitry Shlapentokh, *The French Revolution in Russian Intellectual Life, 1865-1905* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1996), 13.

<sup>186</sup> Utechin, *Russian Political Thought*, 72.

<sup>187</sup> Utechin, *Russian Political Thought*, 73.

<sup>188</sup> Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, 48.

country received wide acceptance. Ideas having western origins became more influential, but the influence of Russian nationalism and the belief in the uniqueness and greatness of Russia became dominant in intellectual life. Therefore, Russian intelligentsia's role gave a new form to the expansionist policies of Russia rather than restrain Russian aggression. Russian philosophers of the time were literally great talents. Although they had no direct influence on the rejuvenation of the system, it is a fact that their ideas had reflections on Russian statesmen.

One of the most important groups to emerge after 1856 was the Slavophiles. The Slavophiles were mostly of rural origin; but they were educated in Moscow. They hated St. Petersburg and were against the Westernizers.<sup>189</sup> According to classical Slavophiles, St. Petersburg was the symbol of corruption and alienation of Russia by the West.<sup>190</sup> Slavophiles argued that the origins of the existing maladies of Russia dated back to the time of Peter I. Slavophiles considered the significance of the will of the majority and the parliamentary regime as Western-type coercion, and they denied constitutional limitations on the Tsar's authority. They argued that autocracy must be legitimate and unrestricted by public consensus.<sup>191</sup>

Despite all their Anti-Western sentiments, Slavophiles showed a close interest in Alexander II's reforms, and fervently supported the abolishment of serfdom, and they took part in the new local governments, following 1860.<sup>192</sup> Slavophiles, like Iurii Samarin and Aksakov; materialists; and those intellectuals under Western influence, like Chernyshevsky, focused on Russia's national and social problems, and pondered upon problems such as ignorance and poverty.<sup>193</sup> Samarin favored unlimited power of the Tsar; nevertheless, he had to accept that the freedoms of the

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<sup>189</sup> Thornton Anderson, *Russian Political Thought*, 213.

<sup>190</sup> Utechin, *Russian Political Thought*, 80.

<sup>191</sup> Thornton Anderson, 214-215.

<sup>192</sup> Utechin, *Russian Political Thought*, 81.

<sup>193</sup> Isaiah Berlin, *Russian Thinkers* (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), 19.

Tsar's subjects should be expanded.<sup>194</sup> Samarin was one of the most notable architects of peasant reform.<sup>195</sup> Slavophiles, while advocating the abolishment of serfdom, were against the constitutionalist and liberal ideas that had come to life in the West. Therefore, in spite of their emphasis on brotherhood, it is unclear what they understood from the liberation of Slavs and what they intended to present as new rights to Slavs different from what Ottomans already provided.

Liberal intellectuals had limited influence on Russian universities and intellectual life.<sup>196</sup> Even liberal Westernists like Chicherin and Kavelin adopted Alexander's autocracy.<sup>197</sup> It was extremely difficult to expect the rise of a strong liberal circle in Russia between 1856 and 1876 in such an atmosphere. Even exiled Alexander Herzen, the symbolic name of the Russian left had Slavophile tendencies.<sup>198</sup>

The most important heir of Slavophilism in foreign policy was Pan-Slavism.<sup>199</sup> Pan-Slavism was based on a mystical understanding which suggested that Slavs had a historical mission. There had already been a tendency towards Slavdom and Orthodoxy in the characteristics of the Russian state. It was not in vain that Russians put into the official text the matter of advocating Orthodox people with the Küçük Kaynarca Treaty. Also, Peter the Great and Catherine II published manifestos for Balkan Slavs during the military campaigns they launched against the Ottomans.<sup>200</sup>

Following the Crimean War, Pan-Slavism enjoyed a rise in Russian intellectual life. The Balkan Crisis marked the peak period of Pan-Slavism in regards to its effect on Russian foreign policy. The most popular figure among Pan-Slavists

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<sup>194</sup> Utechin, *Russian Political Thought*, 82.

<sup>195</sup> Thornton Anderson, *Russian Political Thought*, 183.

<sup>196</sup> Shlapentokh, *The French Revolution in Russian Intellectual Life*, 13.

<sup>197</sup> Thornton Anderson, 204.

<sup>198</sup> Utechin, *Russian Political Thought*, 118.

<sup>199</sup> Walicki, *The Slavophile Controversy*, 495.

<sup>200</sup> Utechin, *Russian Political Thought*, 85.

between 1860 and 1880 was Ivan Aksakov. He was the brother of Konstantin Aksakov who was among renowned Slavists, and he had presided over the Slavonic Welfare Society in Moscow since 1875.<sup>201</sup>

The most prominent name of extreme and hawkish Pan-Slavism was N. Danilevsky. He left his mark on intellectual history with his “historical-cultural types” theory. Danilevsky argued that Slavs must save themselves from their German and Turkish patrons and join together in a great Slavic Empire led by the Russian Tsar; and he claimed this was the only way for Slavs to bring forth their own great civilization.<sup>202</sup> Danilevsky claimed that Russia’s military attempts were humanitarian, unlike those of the West; and that the goal was not to obtain land or material resources, but to protect Slavs and Orthodox people in the Balkans.<sup>203</sup>

Another very important figure of the Pan-Slavic idea was Konstantin Leontiev, who performed diplomatic duties in the Balkans in the 1860s and the 1870s and who got the chance to closely observe the Ottoman Empire. He was neither a progressive nor a supporter of capitalist development. He was an integral reactionary.<sup>204</sup> Leontiev was probably among the first critics of mass culture. It did not go unnoticed that he praised Turkish feudalism in his writings. Aleksei S. Khomiakov who was also a Slavophile believed that Islam represented more sublime values compared to Catholicism.<sup>205</sup> Leontiev thought that when it was under Turkish rule, Greece had been a distinctive country, but that it lost its distinct aspects when it gained its independence, and disappointed Hellenists.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Walicki, *The Slavophile Controversy*, 499.

<sup>202</sup> Utechin, *Russian Political Thought*, 86.

<sup>203</sup> Shlapentokh, *The French Revolution in Russian Intellectual Life*, 22.

<sup>204</sup> Walicki, *The Slavophile Controversy*, 517.

<sup>205</sup> E. Sarkisyanz, “Russian Attitudes Towards Asia,” *Russian Review*, Vol. 13, No: 4 (October, 1954), 248.

<sup>206</sup> Walicki, *The Slavophile Controversy*, 521.

Russian Pan-Slavists were, in fact, Pan-Russianists. The goal was to increase Russian's power. It was not quite possible for Pan-Slavism to show the impact that Russia required in the Balkans. A remarkable population of Slavs was living within the borders of the Austrian Empire, but they were Catholic and had met the influence of Westernization. Moreover, Poles, who composed the second largest section of Slavs were not on good terms with Russians, and the big problems they had had were too recent to be forgotten.<sup>207</sup> The fact that Khomiakov declared Russia as a "big brother" in his works named "Epistle to Serbs from Moscow (1860)" caused the Slav Benevolent Committee to alienate Serbs from Russia.<sup>208</sup> These factors made it difficult to use Pan-Slavism as a propaganda tool in the whole Slavic world. Pan-Slavs could use the power of Russia in the Balkans and the Ottoman geography, which were their only area of movement, as an attraction factor for revolutionist movements.

It must be noted that what made Pan-Slavism influential was not the repulsive impact of the Pan-Slavs but rather their actionist approach which was in line with Russia's expansionist strategy. Thus, Pan-Slavism was not a current which transformed the period, but rather a current which seemed effective when the conditions of the period matched with the traditional ideals of Russian politics.

The first Pan-Slavic organization which helped Balkan Slavs was founded in 1856 by three women from St. Petersburg High Society these were, namely, Princess J.V. Vasilchikova, Countess N.D. Protosova and Countess Antonina Bludova. These women's organization donated remarkable amounts of money to the religious institutions in Edirne, Prizren, Sarajevo, Mount Athos, Dalmatia and Herzegovina. In January 1858, the Moscow Slavic Benevolent Committee led by A. N. Bakhmetev,

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<sup>207</sup> Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans*, 68.

<sup>208</sup> David MacKenzie, *Serbs and Russians* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 9.

filed a petition to Gorchakov for the aid of the Slavs and Orthodox people within Russia and abroad, and the petition was accepted on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 1858.<sup>209</sup> Between 1856 and 1870, there were 4 Pan-Slavic committees operating in Russia, and they were based in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Odessa and Kiev.<sup>210</sup>

Russian philosophy was prone to have a totalitarian outlook on life.<sup>211</sup> Intellectual movements in Russia did not develop with too many humanistic ideals. There was always some distance put between the West and Western civilization, and the Slavonic spirit was the source of inspiration for almost all of it. Many Russians thought that Islamic rule over Greeks exposed them to pagan influence. They thought that Christian faiths like Catholicism were pagan. Therefore, they believed, Russia was the only Christian nation which contained Christian characteristics like “charity” and “meekness”.<sup>212</sup> This showed how Russians drew a self-image of themselves when religion was the case. As Berdyaev states, Russians are a conglomeration of opposites. The tendency towards the unexpected, and openness for inspiration, profound love and hatred full of violence were the most distinct aspects of Russians’ historical character.<sup>213</sup>

As of 1860, Russia found itself in a slowly-developing struggle between the monarchy and a constitutional system. The Tsar obtained power from a type of slavery system which was supported by ignorance. There were very few intellectuals who could oppose this system as they could be easily nipped in the bud.<sup>214</sup> At this point, it must be noted that Ottoman intellectuals were in a much better situation than Russian intellectuals. Ottoman intellectuals could make their voice closely heard by

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<sup>209</sup> Michael Boro Petrovich, *The Emergence of Russian Pan Slavism, 1856–1870* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1985), 131-132.

<sup>210</sup> Petrovich, 145.

<sup>211</sup> Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, 48-49.

<sup>212</sup> Shlapentokh, *The French Revolution in Russian Intellectual Life*, 16.

<sup>213</sup> Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, 19-20.

<sup>214</sup> Berdyaev, *The Russian Idea*, 47.

the administration in Istanbul. Hence, they played an important role in the declaration of the Constitutional Monarchy in 1876. Dealing with the matter through this comparative perspective, it is clear that while considering the Ottoman Empire, which was more liberal in many aspects compared to Russia, the West regarded the Eastern Question as an economic and strategical matter rather than as a matter of liberalization and removal of autocracy.

Both the Russians and the Ottomans felt the need to effectuate rapid self-reforms after the Crimean War. They both set out with a promise to their subjects: that they will grant more rights. Thus, they both took huge loans from the West for reforms and they found themselves in new financial crisis while carrying out financial reforms. Both initiated railway projects and strengthened central administration and as a result, the market economy was strengthened as well. But, they both still had a mountain of debt. Both intended to make a move in public education, but both could only obtain limited success. Both undertook reforms to their local administration system in 1864, and while Russia introduced the Zemstvo system, the Ottoman Empire introduced the Provincial System (*Vilâyet Sistemi*). In both countries, reforms decelerated in respectively close dates, and the idea of constitutionalism and political reform gained strength in both countries following 1860. An increase in press activities was marked, both countries faced new responsibilities due to the reforms, and new problems appeared in both of them. There was a big parallelism between the lines of the fate of these two countries. The matter which would determine the destiny of Ottomans in the process leading to the War of 1877-1878 was whether it would respond to Russia, which was getting more powerful, through its new modernization attempts.

Eventually, the reforms were not enough. The reform process decelerated after 1866, and Russia carried on towards Westernization, and she enlarged and rejuvenated her economy.

#### **2.4. Danubian Principalities**

Following the Crimean War, Danubian Principalities appeared near Istanbul as an element of instability. With the Paris Treaty of 1856, Moldavia and Wallachia were seemingly caused to be removed from Russia's protection, but in actuality, they were accepted under Western protection as was understood from the events that took place shortly after, and they were united under the protection of a prince from Sigmaringen.

As stated under Article 23 of the Paris Treaty, the Ottoman Government assured it would make efforts to protect the independence and national sovereignty of these principalities, their freedom of worship, life, trade and navigation.<sup>215</sup>

As stated in Article 24, the Sultan promised that a temporary council would be established in each of these principalities. These councils would be organized to represent the interests of all classes and could convey public demands on the final organization of the principalities.<sup>216</sup>

Most Rumanians lived within the Wallachian borders.<sup>217</sup> Nevertheless, the nationalist movement in Moldavia was more rooted and stronger than the one in Wallachia. Austria and Ottomans concentrated their forces there.<sup>218</sup> While notables in Moldavia generally received their education in Germany, the elites of Wallachia

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<sup>215</sup> *A Monograph on Plebiscites*, ed. Sarah Wambaugh (New York; Oxford University, 1920), 743-744.

<sup>216</sup> *A Monograph on Plebiscites*, 744.

<sup>217</sup> *A Monograph on Plebiscites*, 107.

<sup>218</sup> *A Monograph on Plebiscites*, 110.



had their education in France.<sup>219</sup> Orthodox clerics in Moldavia also sympathized with Russia. Political power was largely held by Boyars and clergy.<sup>220</sup> The Wallachian Council was to be composed of 112 members while the Moldavian Council of 84 members.<sup>221</sup> Yet, the Ottomans' district governor Nicolas Vogorides, who served from 1857 to 1858, ordered the arrest of leading figures who favored unification and put them into prison. Furthermore, under Vogorides' rule, newspapers were censored, and all public discussions were banned along with bans on publications.<sup>222</sup> Under these conditions, elections were held in the Danubian Principalities and brought a result that strengthened the position of the Ottomans and conservative circles in Moldavia.

Jassy electoral committee published a manifesto on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1857 referring to the concerned articles of the Paris Treaty. The manifesto called for the unification of the two principalities on the condition to respect the rights of Ottoman State and to maintain old capitulations, such that the borders of the principalities should be neutralized; that rights, and especially the autonomy of the principalities, should be respected; that the head of state should be appointed according to principle of inheritance; that the legislative powers should be held by a general assembly representing Romanian people; that all foreigners living within the principalities should be subject to the laws of the principalities; that principalities should be granted rights to develop trade relations suitable to their own interests; and that all these should be guaranteed by the signatories of the Paris Treaty.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Frederick Kellogg, *The Road to Romanian Independence* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1995), 21.

<sup>220</sup> *A Monograph on Plebiscites*, 107.

<sup>221</sup> *A Monograph on Plebiscites*, 108.

<sup>222</sup> *A Monograph on Plebiscites*, 111-112. 67 boyars and local notables from Moldavia signed and submitted a wordy petition dated 11 May 1858 to Ottoman government that reported the unlawful practices of Vogorides (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), HR.TO.. 429/82).

<sup>223</sup> *A Monograph on Plebiscites*, 758.

The Unionist Party, which produced this manifesto, also introduced itself as a progressive party. The objective of this party was to civilize and advance the people through reforms. Reforms would be predicated on principles of justice and equality before the law, and respect for property rights. The realization of these reforms depended on Romanians' drafting their own laws.<sup>224</sup>

Representatives of Prussia and Sardinia, along with Thouvenel, and the Ambassador of France in Istanbul, sent an ultimatum to the Ottomans on July 28, 1857, for the cancellation of the election. On August 12<sup>th</sup>, Vogorides made the decision to reiterate the election. During the elections for council in the second half of September, unionists achieved a great victory in both Moldavia and Wallachia.<sup>225</sup>

A foreign prince could impartially rule the country being free from traditional conflicts and could represent the Romanian cause in Europe better.<sup>226</sup> This matter was brought forward in 1857 by Mihail Kogalniceanu in temporary councils in Moldavia and by Ion C. Bratianu in Wallachia. During the meeting of the Moldavian council on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1857, liberal-nationalist Kogalniceanu made a motion for the unification of the principalities under a foreign prince and along with him, an assembly of representatives, and for providing autonomy. Kogalniceanu's motion passed through the Council with an overwhelming majority of 81 to 2. Yet, the council of Wallachia acted more cautiously during that time.<sup>227</sup>

In January 1858, the temporary councils had already been abolished, and European diplomats began to handle the future of the principalities.<sup>228</sup> During his speech on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1858 in the House of Commons, Gladstone stated that unification

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<sup>224</sup> *A Monograph on Plebiscites*, 758-759.

<sup>225</sup> Gerald J. Bobango, *The Emergence of the Romanian National State* (Boulder, Colorado: European Quarterly ; distributed by Columbia University Press, 1979), 13.

<sup>226</sup> Kellogg, *The Road to Romanian Independence*, 11.

<sup>227</sup> Bobango, *The Emergence of the Romanian National State*, 14-15.

<sup>228</sup> Bobango, *The Emergence of the Romanian National State*, 16.

was what all of the people of Moldavia and Wallachia wanted, and if a barrier needed to be built against Russia, that would come to pass by means of the freedom that would bring prosperity and vigor.<sup>229</sup> Palmerston thought that such an independence and unification under a foreign prince was dangerous because such a country would eventually become a vassal for a powerful neighbor.<sup>230</sup> The integrity of the Ottoman Empire could not be impaired.

In the Paris Conference of 1858, Western powers were directly involved in the question of the Danubian Principalities. During the Paris Conference, Lord Cowley voiced the plots that Boyars had participated in Istanbul by paying large sums of money as a bribe, and stated that temporarily appointed princes would not be interested in improving the financial and economic conditions of the Danubian Principalities. Ottoman Foreign Minister Ali Pasha, on the other hand, feared that a prince appointed for a lifetime could be taken under the influence of Russia and Austria.<sup>231</sup> Count Cavour observed a similarity between Sardinia-Piedmont and the Principalities with regard to their position with Austria, and therefore he completely followed those who sided with unification.<sup>232</sup>

On the other hand, Stratford de Redcliffe argued that the unification of the Danubian Principalities could produce fatal results for the Ottoman Empire.<sup>233</sup> Viscount Stratford's leaving of Istanbul in 1858 was a disadvantage for the Ottomans due to his political attitude in this respect.

The person who provided the most detailed account of the view of the Ottoman Government on the matter was Fuad Pasha, who was the foreign minister at

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<sup>229</sup> R. W. Seton-Watson, *A History of the Roumanians, from Roman Times to the Completion of Unity* (N.p.: Archon Books, 1963), 257.

<sup>230</sup> R. W. Seton-Watson, *A History of the Roumanians*, 258.

<sup>231</sup> Beatrice Marinescu, *Romanian-British Political Relations 1848-1877* (București: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1983), 105.

<sup>232</sup> Bobango, *The Emergence of the Romanian National State*, 80.

<sup>233</sup> Marinescu, *Romanian-British Political Relations*, 90.

the time, in his essay on Moldavia and Wallachia. Fuad Pasha argued that by following the Treaty of Adrianople (1829), Russia aimed to establish a Slavic block under its protection, extending from Pruth to the bay of Venice, by merging the people of Moldavia and Wallachia with those of Serbia and Montenegro; despite the fact that they were different nations. According to him, the *beys* (lords) in Moldavia and Wallachia had served under Russia for a long time, and they sympathized with Russia.<sup>234</sup>

It was one of the recommendations of Fuad Pasha to eliminate the competition between Nobles and Boyars. The administration of the country could be left to the Nobles, and two assemblies could be established; one being composed of merchants and the other of artisans and craftsmen. In that way, the movements of the principalities could be supervised.<sup>235</sup>

Two possibilities could come to pass if the administration of Moldo-Wallachia, which had recently been saved from Russia, was not reorganized; either Moldavia or Wallachia would be united under a foreign prince (which happened a short while after) or they would be united under a native prince. A unification to take place under the rule of a foreign prince would remove Moldo-Wallachia from its secure position, and would expose it to the malicious goals of their neighbors which posed a threat for the Ottoman Empire. Such a country would incline towards whomever it feared, and that meant Moldo-Wallachia would be drawn under Russia's influence within a short time. This fact was evident in how Greece had drawn closer to Russia after its independence, despite having received more favors from Britain and France. Fuad Pasha thought that appointment of a foreign prince was a long-held aim of Russia. Yet, a native prince and his family could also end up

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<sup>234</sup> Ali Fuat Türkgeldi, *Mesail-i Mühimme-i Siyasiyye*, v. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1957), 420-421 (Fuad Pasha's memorandum on Moldavia and Wallachia).

<sup>235</sup> Türkgeldi, *Mesail-i Mühimme-i Siyasiyye*, 422.

needing Russia's support in any case.<sup>236</sup> The sole way for wholly liberating Moldavia and Wallachia from Russia and totally eliminating the influence of Russia was to govern these two principalities with two separate *Voyvodas* (princes).<sup>237</sup> If it was still necessary to set a barrier against Russia, it was to be done by the force of the Ottoman Empire.

These projections of Fuad Pasha would mostly come true in phases. However, the basic fault of the Ottoman Government at this point was its failure to see that the unification of these two principalities was inevitable. As it could not see that nationalism was not a current to be stopped by maneuvers of classical imperial governments, the Ottoman government also failed to produce realistic strategies concerning Moldo-Wallachia.

As a matter of fact, with the Paris Convention of 1858, the demands of those who favored unification, were fulfilled in some ways. According to the Convention of August 19<sup>th</sup>, 1858, Moldavia was obliged to pay an annual fixed tax of one million *guruş* while Walachia was obliged to pay an annual fixed tax of 2,5 million *guruş*. Princes were going to be appointed by the Ottoman State. According to Article 10, princes were to be selected to serve for life.<sup>238</sup> With the Convention of August 19<sup>th</sup>, 1858, the Great Powers had, in a sense, paved the way for the unification of the Danubian Principalities in near the future. During the elections held in 1859, Alexandru Ioan Cuza was elected as the prince of both Moldavia and Wallachia.

Austria and the Ottoman Empire wanted the postponement of the election of the prince. However, Henry Bulwer, the British Ambassador in Istanbul insisted on the recognition of Alexandru Ioan Cuza's double election as the prince.<sup>239</sup> The

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<sup>236</sup> Türkgeldi, *Mesail-i Mühimme-i Siyasiyye*, 423-425.

<sup>237</sup> Türkgeldi, *Mesail-i Mühimme-i Siyasiyye*, 426.

<sup>238</sup> Türkgeldi, *Mesail-i Mühimme-i Siyasiyye*, 448-449.

<sup>239</sup> Marinescu, *Romanian-British Political Relations*, 111.

Ottomans and Austria called Cuza's election illegal, while Lord Malmesbury, who favored cooperation with France, wanted Porte to approve Cuza.<sup>240</sup> Hence, Britain was in conflict with the strategic priorities of the Ottoman State.

Cuza's election on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 1859 as the prince of both Moldavia and Wallachia was a serious blow to the Ottomans who had conducted diplomacy against the unification of Danubian Principalities. The Ottoman State could not obtain the required support from Britain; because for Britain, Cuza's election was preferable than the election of "separatist demagogues".<sup>241</sup> According to Henry Churchill, Romania entered into a process of unification which could not be prevented by the Great Powers. Like Churchill, British administrators also hoped that Cuza would collaborate with Britain.<sup>242</sup>

Cuza, who was a colonel and had received his education in France, did not have a bond with royal ancestry. He was only a member of a famous Moldavian family whose roots dated back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Alexandru Cuza was not a leader and was assigned to almost all of his duties for life by the will of others.<sup>243</sup> He was a respected figure who had duly discharged many duties in Moldavia since the 1840s.<sup>244</sup> The fact that he had received his education in the West and his tendency towards modernization made his election as a prince plausible.

During the Paris Conference on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1859, France, Britain, Russia, Prussia and Sardinia published a declaration requiring the Ottoman Government to recognize the election of Cuza to the two principalities though this was in contravention of the Convention of August 19<sup>th</sup>, 1858. The defeat of Austria, who had the closest opinion to the Ottomans on the matter of the Danubian Principalities,

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<sup>240</sup> Marinescu, *Romanian-British Political Relations*, 114.

<sup>241</sup> Marinescu, *Romanian-British Political Relations*, 116.

<sup>242</sup> Marinescu, *Romanian-British Political Relations*, 118-119.

<sup>243</sup> Bobango, *The Emergence of the Romanian National State*, 41.

<sup>244</sup> Bobango, *The Emergence of the Romanian National State*, 73.

in the Second War of Italian Independence in 1859, decreased both the Ottomans' and Austria's influence at the Paris Conference.<sup>245</sup>

The concern that the war in Italy would raise the hopes of the Romanians caused Britain to consider Cuza's election to both principalities as the most reasonable option. The Ottoman Empire, deprived of Austria's support, had to approve Cuza's election due to the pressure by Britain, as Fuad Pasha explained to the Austrian Ambassador.<sup>246</sup> The European states that had forgotten about the Paris Treaty soon forgot about the Convention of 1858 as well.

In the memorandum he sent to the Ottoman Government one year following his election, Cuza stated that the presence of two governments and dual administrations were barriers to reforms and therefore, it was necessary to establish a single government.<sup>247</sup> Reforms became the key word of national goals aimed in the region, or the picklock to put it more appropriately. Miscellaneous reform projects ranging from the establishment of a new army to building railways were submitted to Britain as the trumps of the single government idea. Britain hastened in the matter of the principalities' administrative unification in order to prevent an alliance between France and Russia and the outbreak of a possible crisis in the East. With the Ottoman imperial edict of December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1861, the road to the political unification of the Danubian Principalities was opened.<sup>248</sup>

However, as a result of Cuza's initiatives, Britain would also take action to decrease the effects of capitulations.<sup>249</sup> On March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1862, the law enacted on building new roads imposed tax obligations onto the foreigners living in the country as well. Again, with the law on petroleum enacted on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 1863, it was decided

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<sup>245</sup> Marinescu, *Romanian-British Political Relations*, 124.

<sup>246</sup> Marinescu, *Romanian-British Political Relations*, 125-126.

<sup>247</sup> Marinescu, *Romanian-British Political Relations*, 128-129.

<sup>248</sup> Marinescu, *Romanian-British Political Relations*, 137.

<sup>249</sup> Marinescu, *Romanian-British Political Relations*, 142-143.

to apply customs duties to traders, regardless of their nationality. Cuza's restriction of the Consuls' power in the Principalities and his attempts to abolish the capitulations regime received reactions from the ambassadors in Istanbul. These ambassadors sent a joint memorandum to the Consuls in the Principalities where they stated that the right to self-government that they had granted to the government of Cuza did not mean that this government had the right to not recognize capitulations.<sup>250</sup> Moreover, the Romanian government secularized lands of the Dedicated Monasteries and thereby dealt a heavy blow to the foundations of the Eastern Patriarchate.<sup>251</sup>

During his term of office (1859-1866), Cuza introduced modern measurement units; and had universities established in Jassy in 1860 and in Bucharest in 1864. He adopted the Napoleonic Code, took measures to provide justice in taxation, and made reforms to improve trade and to disseminate public education throughout the country. Yet, he also carried out efforts to establish, expand and modernize a national army, which closely concerned the Ottomans.<sup>252</sup> Although it lacked any official recognition, the Cuza administration was working just like an independent government and was taking over all of the functions of the old regime.<sup>253</sup>

While the Principalities had had only 4-5 thousand Russian rifles and a small number of old cannons from Empress Catherine's period before Cuza's election, they had 70,000 rifles, 25,000 smooth-bore muskets and 72 rifle guns by October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1865.<sup>254</sup> Moreover, in order to support the establishment of the new army, Napoleon

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<sup>250</sup> Marinescu, *Romanian-British Political Relations*, 144.

<sup>251</sup> Barbara Jelavich, *Russia's Balkan Entanglements, 1806-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 150.

<sup>252</sup> Mircea Muşati, "Romanian Society and Its Military Potential, 1856-1879" in *Insurrections, Wars and the Eastern Crisis*, ed. Bela K. Kiraly and Gale Stokes), vol. 17 of *War and Society in East Central Europe* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 206-214.

<sup>253</sup> Bobango, *The Emergence of the Romanian National State*, 78.

<sup>254</sup> Muşati, "Romanian Society and Its Military Potential, 1856-1879", 210.



ordered 10 thousand rifles be sent to the Romanian army.<sup>255</sup> The Wallachian Government borrowed a loan amounting to 8 million in the middle of May 1859 and recruited 20,000 men living along the Danube.<sup>256</sup> Cuza also intended to use Hungarians in military affairs and sought an alliance with Louis Kossuth.<sup>257</sup>

But these new national states lacked technical expertise and financial resources to execute reforms. For instance, in 1861-1862 Moldavia and Wallachia attempted to establish a railway network but they could not execute the plan due to these insufficiencies. Romania continued to be dependent on Austrian, British and German bankers on the issue of railways, also in the period of Prince Carol I(1866-1881).<sup>258</sup> Making matters worse, it could be said that the Boyars in Romania were extremely corrupt and behaved as they wished by the 1860s.<sup>259</sup> It was obvious that these new enthusiastically founded states were quite incapable of solving existing social and economic problems, and that this would not change for a long time.

Six years after Cuza's election, Stratford Canning wrote that it was not a surprise for him that the Principalities continued to create problems; that Cuza's government was a complete anomaly; and that Austria as a neighbor to the Ottomans Empire, rather than the Principalities was felicitously more secure for the Ottoman Empire.<sup>260</sup>

According to A. Joy Morris, the resident U. S. Minister in Istanbul, after the achievement of unification, no significant improvement was effectuated in the situation of the country. Taxes were increased, but in return, progress was lacking

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<sup>255</sup> Bobango, *The Emergence of the Romanian National State*, 80.

<sup>256</sup> Louis Kossuth, *Memories of My Exile* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1880), 313.

<sup>257</sup> Kossuth, 300-303, 313-314.

<sup>258</sup> Kellogg, *The Road to Romanian Independence*, 72-74.

<sup>259</sup> M. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question*, 155.

<sup>260</sup> Lord Newton, *Lord Lyons*, v. 1 (London: Edward Arnold, 1913), 150 (Stratford Canning's letter to Lord Lyons, dated December 13, 1865).

and insignificant. From time to time, Cuza's arbitrary administration instigated riots in the country.<sup>261</sup>

Reforms lost their importance, and Romania became part of wholly new strategic designs. After Cuza's fall in 1866 and prior to the Austro-Prussian War, Napoleon III produced a scheme according to which Italy would take Venetia; France would take Genoa, Austria would take Wallachia, Russia would take Moldavia, and Prussia would take Schleswig-Holstein. The point here was to reshape Europe as France liked by taking advantage of Italy's designs on Venice. However, if Austria had gained Wallachia, Russia's gaining of Moldavia would not have had any meaning and Russia's route to the Straits would have been blocked, which Russia did not want.<sup>262</sup>

By 1864, the total population of Moldavia and Wallachia was around 4 million.<sup>263</sup> After Cuza abandoned his office in 1866, Prince Karl of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen ascended to the throne of United Principalities of Romania with the name Carol I. A state big enough to give trouble to the Ottoman Empire had appeared, and nearby Istanbul too. Romania, whose militarization processes went on without any slow-down, recognized the position of being a shelter for revolutionaries and bandits. It was also one of the points on the passageways of arms going to Serbia. In this respect, Romania was one of the actors who disrupted the Ottoman reforms in the Balkans. Romania's participation in the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878 was a result of the process which had begun when Cuza had been elected as a prince in 1859.

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<sup>261</sup> *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, accompanying the annual message of the President to the second session thirty-eight congress, part IV* (Washington, 1865), 368 (E. Joy Morris' message from Constantinople to William H. Seward, dated May 21, 1863).

<sup>262</sup> Kellogg, *The Road to Romanian Independence*, 17.

<sup>263</sup> The National Archives-London (TNA), FO 78/1881(Consul-General Green's report upon the condition, agriculture and trade of Moldo-Wallachia, dated May 5, 1865).

## 2.5. Serbia and Montenegro

There was a widespread belief in Europe that Serbia was ruled by the Ottomans; but in fact, Serbia had free self-governance (since 1829), just like Belgium.<sup>264</sup> Thanks to its relatively free position, Serbia was the supporter of all of the insurrections that took place in the Balkans between 1856 and 1876. Ilija Garasanin, who was the most prominent statesman of Serbia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, noted that Serbia's goal could not be anything else but that of destroying Turkey and expanding its territory.<sup>265</sup> In compliance with this political attitude, the first action that Prince Mihailo Obrenovic took when he came to the throne in 1860 was to start activities to strengthen Serbia in terms of the military.

The 1860s marked a period of militarization in the Balkans. It is natural for a country's military power to increase as a result of its increase in economic prosperity and wealth. Yet, the militarization happening in Serbia between the 1850s and 1860s was contrary to this fact. During this period, the average life expectancy in Serbia was very short. According to one view, the most important reason for that was excessive *raki* (Turkish anisette) consumption.<sup>266</sup> Yet, whatever it was, it was a fact that the basic reason behind this was economics; there were many economic problems and poverty in the country was widespread. Serbia's economic condition in the 1860s was worse than it had been in the 1840s. Both financial difficulties and the orphan rate in the country went up remarkably.<sup>267</sup> While Serbia's population grew by

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<sup>264</sup> *A Selection from The Correspondence of Abraham Hayward, Q. C., from 1834 to 1884*, vol. 2, ed. Henry E. Carlisle (London; J. Murray, 1886), 96 (Henry Bulwer's letter sent from Istanbul to Abraham Hayward, on July 12, 1863).

<sup>265</sup> Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russians*, 100.

<sup>266</sup> TNA, FO 78/1198 (British Consul-General Fonblanque's message sent from Belgrad to Lord Clarendon on May 8, 1856).

<sup>267</sup> M. R. Palairet, *The Balkan Economies c. 1800-1914: Evolution Without Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 95.

21% between 1847 and 1867, the cultivated area increased by only 6%.<sup>268</sup> The number of pigs in the country was 1.77 million in 1859, but only 1.29 million in 1866.<sup>269</sup> When heroism was the case, Serbs wanted to come to the forefront, but they left their agricultural lands uncultivated.

In this atmosphere of poverty, Prince Mihailo decided to establish a militia of 17 regiments in 1861. Each regiment had one cavalry and an engineer company. The citizens of Kragujevac and Belgrade constituted 6 artillery battalions. It was estimated that the militia force would consist of 50,000 soldiers. Moreover, Mihailo established a Ministry of War in 1862.<sup>270</sup> The standing army of the country would also continue to be present. As per the March 1863-March 1864 budget, the ratio of the taxes that the Danubian Principalities and Serbia paid, to the general revenue of the Ottoman State was not even 0.4 percent.<sup>271</sup> Why such a country, which was not really under threat of Ottoman invasion and was not under severe economic pressure from the Ottoman Empire would establish such a force in existing economic conditions could only be explained by the Serbian princes' mid-term goals such as becoming the prince of the whole of Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Hence, the battle fought with the Ottoman Empire in 1876 was also a reflection of that plan.

Russia was a political supporter of Serbia during this process of aggression. Russian and Austrian consulates were collaborating with Belgrade, and Gorchakov complained about France's consul in Belgrade to the Duke of Montebello, the French ambassador to Russia, in St. Petersburg, asserting that he was too pro-Turkish.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>268</sup> Palairret, *The Balkan Economies*, 96.

<sup>269</sup> Palairret, *The Balkan Economies*, 97.

<sup>270</sup> Gale Stokes, "Serbian Military Doctrine and the Crisis of 1875-1878" in *Insurrections, Wars and the Eastern Crisis*, eds. Bela K. Kiraly and Gale Stokes, vol. 17 of *War and Society in East Central Europe* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 263.

<sup>271</sup> M. B. C. Collas, *La Turquie en 1864* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1864), 99.

<sup>272</sup> TNA, PRO 30/22/40 (Robert Bulwer Lytton's telegram sent from Belgrade to Lord Augustus Loftus on February 16, 1860).

In 1860-1861, the “Central Committee” was to be established in Belgrade under the leadership of writer Matija Ban who was from Dubrovnik. The goal of said organization was to achieve the ideal of a “Greater Serbia”. Ivan Aksakov who was one of the most prominent names of Pan-Slavs made a small monetary aid to Ban during his trip to the South Slav lands in 1860.<sup>273</sup> This was a small organization which failed in a short time, but it was striking that both the Serbian administration and Russian Pan-Slavs were always connected with such organizations, which made such grandiose plans.

Lytton, who was Britain’s Consul-General in Belgrade, received news in the first months of 1860 that a great Christian insurgence was being planned, and that initiators of the insurgence were waiting until the roads were usable, which they expected would be within two months Lytton thought that Russia was behind this idea of rebellion, and was propagating in Serbia that the Ottoman Edict of Reform (1856) was merely a trick.<sup>274</sup> Serbia’s initial attempts to create a Balkan alliance against the Ottomans coincided with this phase when Russia’s support increased. As of 1861-1862, Garasanin started negotiations with the Balkan states for a Balkan alliance against the Ottomans.<sup>275</sup>

In 1861, Otho, the King of Greece, sought an alliance in the Balkans against the Ottomans but failed to do so. Greece did not have consulates in Ottoman vassals, therefore Serbian and Greek representatives held a secret conference in Istanbul in 1861 to negotiate a Serbian-Greek alliance. Ilija Garasanin and Jovan Ristic participated in this conference for the Serbian side. Serbians were both struggling against domestic problems and did not have the necessary war materials. It was not

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<sup>273</sup> David MacKenzie, “Serbian Nationalist and Military Organizations and the Piedmont Idea, 1844-1914”, *East European Quarterly*, 16:3 (1982:Fall), 330.

<sup>274</sup> TNA, PRO 30/22/40 (Robert Bulwer Lytton’s telegram sent from Belgrade to Lord Augustus Loftus on February 16, 1860).

<sup>275</sup> Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russians*, 101.

possible to create a desirable alliance under these conditions.<sup>276</sup> While Serbia spared 12 thousand soldiers for this alliance, Greece was going to bear the burden with 30 thousand men.<sup>277</sup> After the negotiations, Greece asked for Thessaly, Epirus, Macedonia and the Archipelago Islands while Serbia asked for Bosnia, Herzegovina, Upper Albania and Montenegro (if it did not want independence). Negotiations halted as sides could not come to an agreement. As an independent state, Greece did not want to be considered on the same status with a vassal principality; and this was one of the major reasons behind this disagreement.<sup>278</sup> Besides, in a short time afterwards, in 1862, King Otho of Greece was toppled. After King Otho was toppled, soldiers in Athens rebelled and plundered the city.<sup>279</sup> Athens would not only be a city where soldiers crowded in, but also where political leaders who had their gangs with them as well.<sup>280</sup> Colonel Coloneos who was one of the leaders of one such military group appeared in the Cretan Revolt of 1866.<sup>281</sup> A Serbian-Greek alliance could not be established, but there was still a rogue state just nearby the Ottomans, which was very dangerous.

During the time when the Balkan Alliance project was on the agenda, Serbia accelerated its search for foreign support. Serbian official Marinovich went to Paris in 1861 to ask for support for Serbia's activities. Yet, Serbia's activities in Herzegovina and its cooperation with Montenegro were not welcomed by France,

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<sup>276</sup> Roussos, N. "Charilaos Tricoupes and the Greco-Serbian Alliance of 1867", *Balkan Studies*, Vol. 12, 1971, 1, 86.

<sup>277</sup> Roussos, 92-93.

<sup>278</sup> N. P. Ignatiev, *Diplomaticheskii Zapiski (1864-1874)*, vol. 1 (Sofia: Glavno upravlenie na arkhivite, 2008), 236.

<sup>279</sup> Horace Rumbold, *Recollections of a Diplomatist*, vol. II (London: Edward Arnold, 1902), 104.

<sup>280</sup> Rumbold, 109-110.

<sup>281</sup> Rumbold, 111.

and France only advised Serbia to be on good terms with Austria. Serbia's request for material support was rejected by Napoleon III.<sup>282</sup>

Russia provided Serbia with the monetary support it needed. On May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1862, Russia and Serbia signed an agreement according to which Serbia would get a loan of 300 million Austria ducats, and would buy 25 thousand rifles. The rifles were sent to Serbia secretly at the end of the same year.<sup>283</sup> Furthermore, in early 1862 Garashanin aimed to start agitation activities in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Serbian lands controlled by the Ottomans, and prepare an insurgency by establishing a Serbian committee under the leadership of Lazar Arsenilevic-Batalaka. This committee also had a Bulgarian legion established to start an insurgency in Bulgaria.<sup>284</sup> The Bulgarian legion consisted of 700 men, and its objective was to launch a rebellion in the Vidin and Niš regions.<sup>285</sup>

The increasing tension between Serbia and Ottomans reached a climax with the Belgrade Incidents of 1862. The Ottomans were in control of the fortress and 4 bridges in Belgrade. Between the fortress and bridges, Muslims and Serbs were living together. On June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1862, when a Serb was killed near a fountain due to fighting with a Muslim, the public became agitated and Serbs seized two bridges as a result. After consuls intervened in the matters, assurance was received for the security of the lives and properties of the Muslims who were to stay in the city, but properties of the Muslims who retreated into the fortress were plundered by the Serbs. The next day, the commander of the fortress bombarded Belgrade in 4 hours with intervals, but the city did not sustain significant damage. In all these incidents,

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<sup>282</sup> "Evropei'skaia Diplomatiiia i Serbiia v Nachale 60-kh Godov XIX Veka", *Voprosy Istorii*, No. 9, September 1962, 77.

<sup>283</sup> "Evropei'skaia Diplomatiiia i Serbiia v Nachale 60-kh Godov XIX Veka", 77.

<sup>284</sup> Mackenzie, *Serbs and Russians*, 102.

<sup>285</sup> *Correspondence Relating to the Bombardment of Belgrade in June 1862* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1863), 46 (British Consul-General Longworth's message sent from Belgrade to Sir Henry Bulwer on July 21, 1862).

the fact that Muslims' rights were infringed went unpunished.<sup>286</sup> The uproar started by this incident was quite large. The Serbs somehow signaled a war by struggling over these weakly-protected Ottoman positions in the city.

Gorchakov recommended that the Ottomans should leave bridges and military positions in the city.<sup>287</sup> He also denied Serbian responsibility for these incidents.<sup>288</sup> Given the support of Russians to Serbs in this matter, Britain sided with the idea that the Ottomans should keep the fortress.

After the bombardment ceased, Serbs kept on firing against the fortress which caused the death of three Muslims.<sup>289</sup> At the time, 3,270 Muslims were living in Belgrade.<sup>290</sup> As a result of this incident, the entire Muslim population was removed from the city.<sup>291</sup>

The British Consul-General Longworth thought that gendarmes substituted by Prince Milos for the Pandurs had a considerable effect on the occurrence of these incidents. This force of hundreds of men who were composed of Montenegrins were considered as the most fanatic elements against the Ottomans; and immigrants from Bosnia terrorized and intimidated Turks in the city many times. The real event that started the incident was Garaschanin's letter which ordered the trials of Muslims in the city by Serbian Courts, and Serbian gendarmes' attempt to take Turkish soldiers to the Serbian Police on June 15<sup>th</sup>. During his secret trip into the city, Longworth saw

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<sup>286</sup> *Correspondence Relating to the Bombardment of Belgrade*, 9, 10 (Lord Russell's telegram to Sir Henry Bulwer, dated July 3, 1862).

<sup>287</sup> *Correspondence Relating to the Bombardment of Belgrade*, 15 (Lord Napier's message sent from St. Petersburg to Lord Russell on June 29, 1862).

<sup>288</sup> *Correspondence Relating to the Bombardment of Belgrade*, 19 (Mr. Lumley's message sent from St. Petersburg to Lord Russell on July 16, 1862).

<sup>289</sup> *Correspondence Relating to the Bombardment of Belgrade*, 16 (Lord Russell's telegram to Sir Henry Bulwer, dated July 9, 1862).

<sup>290</sup> *Correspondence Relating to the Bombardment of Belgrade*, 36 (British Consul-General Longworth's message sent from Belgrade to Sir Henry Bulwer on July 12, 1862).

<sup>291</sup> *Correspondence Relating to the Bombardment of Belgrade*, 17 (Sir Henry Bulwer's message sent from Istanbul to Lord Russell on July 9, 1862).



Turks who were brutally murdered. Turkish and Jewish neighborhoods were completely plundered and 50 people were killed in total on both sides.<sup>292</sup>

Prince Mihailo sent a message to Lord John Russell where he wrote that the Ottomans had bombarded Belgrade against divine laws with a practice which had not been witnessed in any period of history, turning this trade center into an abandoned place. According to Mihailo's report, the wealth of thousands of families was destroyed, and the prosperous Belgrade retrogressed 20 years. This message suggested that Serbs were the victims of oppression and tyranny.<sup>293</sup> Despite the emphasis on prosperity and economy in this message, Mihailo's primary goal in Serbia was never economic development as I have explained earlier. According to Palmerston, it was Russia which misled the Montenegrins and pushed Serbs into a disagreement. In the morning of November 25<sup>th</sup>, 1862, Palmerston learned that Russia sent 450 carts full of rifles and ammunition, such a great military aid could only mean an intended declaration of war by the Serbian Prince against the Sultan.<sup>294</sup>

Serbs did not dig up their tomahawks since they were aware that they could do nothing without Russia's support. The Polish revolt also hampered Russia.<sup>295</sup> However, Serbs' chance of influencing the European public opinion was higher than the Ottomans'.<sup>296</sup> Whenever Serbs were defeated as a result of their plots, they would call foreign powers to help. What happened in 1862 was not an exception.

Serbia's closest ally, Montenegro, carried out a gang war on the borders against the Ottomans and thus created great trouble in the Balkans.

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<sup>292</sup> *Correspondence Relating to the Bombardment of Belgrade*, 20-22 (British Consul-General Longworth's message sent from Belgrade to Sir Henry Bulwer on July 3, 1862).

<sup>293</sup> *Correspondence Relating to the Bombardment of Belgrade*, 37.

<sup>294</sup> Herbert Clifford Francis Bell, *Lord Palmerston*, vol. 2 (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1966), 331.

<sup>295</sup> *Īz Arkhivata na Naiden Gerov*, ed. T. Panchev, vol. 2 (Sofia: Blgarskata Akademia Na Naukite, 1914), 388-389 (Nikolai Pavlovich Shiskin's letter sent from Belgrade to Naiden Gerov on June 26, 1863).

<sup>296</sup> *The Debate on Turkey in the House of Commons on Friday, May the 29th, 1863* (London: C. W. Reynell, 1863), 49 (Henry Layard's speech).

Montenegro, as put by Horace Rumbold, was even more independent than the vassals of the Holy Roman Empire. No Vladika was ever dethroned by a Sultan's decree. Montenegrins had full control over Montenegrin lands.<sup>297</sup>

As stated by Bernard Collas, Cettigne, the capital city of Montenegrins was merely a miserable village; it had no qualities of a city, and residents of Cettigne lived disjointedly. Montenegrin lands were fertile, and the people could grow oranges, olives, tobacco and grains. Pastures were rich enough for the public to breed cattle.<sup>298</sup> But Montenegrins lacked a manufacturing sector. It was a source of pride for Montenegrins to have arms. Nevertheless, Montenegrins depended entirely on Turkish and Austrian arm manufacturers for the supply of arms. Most Montenegrins did not have a primary education.<sup>299</sup> Plundering became an important source of subsistence for Montenegrins. A basic source of living for various tribes was plundering and banditry.<sup>300</sup>

In 1858, a border dispute that occurred between Montenegro and the Ottomans demonstrated in detail both the administrative incapability and weakness of the Ottomans. This dispute also revealed the West's and Russia's attitude toward the Balkans along with what kind of a political motivation Montenegrins had.

In early 1858, Ottoman forces led by Salih Pasha clashed with Montenegrin insurgents in Herzegovina; the Ottoman forces suffered a total of 7 casualties with 25 wounded only in a clash. Facing an unexpected resistance by insurgents, The Ottoman forces could only kill 15 of them. Salih Pasha demanded that two Anatolian battalions from Manastır (Bitola) and six companies of the battalion of Chasseurs go to Gatsko; he also expected an infantry regiment from Istanbul would make a base in

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<sup>297</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Horace Rumbold's report to Lord Augustus Loftus drafted on June 14, 1858).

<sup>298</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 264-265.

<sup>299</sup> *Reports by Her Majesty's Secretaries of Embassy and Legation, on the Manufactures, Commerce, &c., of the Countries in which they reside, No. 4* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1861), 137-138.

<sup>300</sup> Palairet, *The Balkan Economies*, 148.

Sutorina. It was almost like a state of war. In Grahovo, Zhupa and Birchina a fervent course of action was carried out to demolish the authority of Porte and to get the protection of Prince Danilo; and Porte needed to prevent this.<sup>301</sup>

As Austrian Foreign Minister Count Buol stated, 4,000 Montenegrins were armed, and they violated Austria's border many times. Buol thought that it was Prince Danilo who both violated the agreement and attacked his suzerain's possessions.<sup>302</sup> The Crimean War changed nothing, and the Slav threat still stood like a tomahawk over Austria's head.

The Ottoman military force in the region was insufficient all along. Even in 1858, irregulars (*başıbozüks*) rather than regular forces protected some villages against the attacks of Montenegrin gangs.<sup>303</sup> Of the force numbering 2,600 led by Salih Pasha, only 400 were regular soldiers. The rest were irregulars and they were the cause of many problems.<sup>304</sup>

During that period, Montenegrins attacked Ottoman forces and reiterated the attacks although they were repelled each time. On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, Montenegrins attacked fortified Lessandra Island and killed 16 people in the gunboat; despite the fact that they were repelled. Following that, all consuls in Scutari, except the Russian consul, protested this incident by writing to Prince Danilo.<sup>305</sup>

Porte sent Kemal Efendi to Montenegro to find some grounds of agreement with Prince Danilo on the basis of a solution offered by representatives of the Great Powers in February 1857. During these events, France was an open political supporter of Montenegro. French Foreign Minister Count Walewski believed that

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<sup>301</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Henry A. Churchill's message sent from Bosna-Serai to Lord Calrendon on February 18, 1858).

<sup>302</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Sir H. Seymour's confidential message sent from Vienna to Lord Clarendon on February 24, 1858).

<sup>303</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Henry A. Churchill's message to Mr. Alison, dated March 2, 1858).

<sup>304</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Mr. Gyurcovich's message to British Consul in Bosna-Serai, Henry A. Churchill, dated February 21, 1858).

<sup>305</sup> TNA, FO 424/11.

Montenegro had some kind of rightful claims over the lands which were disputed between Ottomans and Montenegrins, although he could not provide evidence for that.<sup>306</sup> Moreover, Count Walewski told Lord Cowley during their conversation that Montenegrins had the right to invade Grahovo.<sup>307</sup> But Britain was of the opinion that Grahovo was a Turkish district. As Cowley said, the French Government knew nothing about Grahovo.<sup>308</sup> France, which had made an alliance agreement with the Ottoman Empire in 1856, now followed an expansionist strategy against the Ottomans. In the Montenegrin problem, it was again the Ottoman Government who was considered to be the culprit.

Fuad Pasha argued that the idea to establish a commission to solve the problem between Montenegro and the Ottoman State was unacceptable. This implied that the Ottoman Empire would be taken to a European Court along with Prince Danilo, which meant a violation of the integrity of the Ottoman State.<sup>309</sup>

Meanwhile, the Russian Ambassador in Paris uttered the threat that France and Russian would recognize the independence of Montenegro if the Ottomans invaded Grahovo.<sup>310</sup> During his negotiations about the Montenegro Question with Ottoman Minister Rıza Bey in St. Petersburg, Gorchakov stated that it was never acceptable in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that a Christian community could be under the dominion of Muslims. Rıza Bey responded that the case in the Ottoman Empire with Montenegro was the same as in Russia with Circassia.<sup>311</sup> While Russia claimed legal rights over Circassia, she denied the Porte's right over Montenegro.

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<sup>306</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Lord Cowley's message sent from Paris to Lord Malmesbury on April 29, 1858).

<sup>307</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Lord Cowley's message sent from Paris to Lord Malmesbury on May 16, 1858).

<sup>308</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Lord Cowley's telegram sent from Paris to Lord Malmesbury on May 9, 1858).

<sup>309</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Lord Augustus Loftus' telegram sent from Vienna to Lord Malmesbury on May 8, 1858).

<sup>310</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Lord Cowley's telegram sent from Paris to Lord Malmesbury on May 9, 1858).

<sup>311</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Lord Wodehouse's message sent from St. Petersburg to Lord Malmesbury on May 1, 1858).

Russians showed charitableness to Montenegrins, though they denied the same for their own peasants. Argyropulo, Russian dragoman in Istanbul, noted during his negotiation with Mahmud Pasha that Russia had no intention of interfering with the Ottoman State's domestic affairs, but that it was not possible for poor Montenegrins to live on the very limited amount of lands that they had, and that their concern about the matter only arose out of that humanitarian reason.<sup>312</sup>

Fuad Pasha said in his conversation with Count Walewski that if Montenegro was allowed to encroach, Serbia and Montenegro could unite on the basis of Slavism; and then they could declare their independence which could cause the Ottomans to lose Bosnia in the end. Fuad Pasha was not against the idea that there would be French, Austrian and British commissioners in the solution to the crisis, but rather he frowned upon the idea of a Russian commissioner.<sup>313</sup>

The French Government complained that Turks had massacred Montenegrins on May 11<sup>th</sup>, 1858; but according to the intelligence held by Austria and Britain, the aggressor party was the Montenegrins.<sup>314</sup> Following these developments, France sent a squadron to the Adriatic; if the Porte accepted the proposal of the commission, France would withdraw the navy.<sup>315</sup> France reiterated this threat during the crisis.

During his talk with Lord Augustus Loftus, Fuad Pasha stated that if Prince Danilo would accept the suzerainty of the Porte, the Sultan was ready to accept all of Danilo's conditions. Accordingly, the Sultan would award the title of the marshal to Danilo in return for 50 thousand *guruş* of tax and would endow Montenegrins the

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<sup>312</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Et. Pisani's message sent from Istanbul to Mr. Alison on May 3, 1858).

<sup>313</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Lord Cowley's message sent from Paris to Lord Malmesbury on May 15, 1858).

<sup>314</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Lord Malmesbury telegram sent from Foreign Office to Lord Cowley on May 14, 1858).

<sup>315</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Lord Cowley's telegram sent from Paris to Mr. Alison on May 15, 1858).

land they needed.<sup>316</sup> In appearance, Fuad Pasha was an able statesman. But during this period when the crisis escalated, Britain's Paris Ambassador Lord Cowley's following remarks about Fuad Pasha are noteworthy:<sup>317</sup> "The apathy evinced by Fuad Pasha in this matter is most disheartening and it is lucky for the Porte that in this crisis her friends serve better than her own servants...Fuad Pasha with the usual procrastination of a Turk, has done nothing towards the settlement of Montenegro Question."

Fuad Pasha who was known to be among the few competent statesmen the Ottomans had, lacked the required sensitivity and qualifications. This indicated that the Ottoman governments were constituted by statesmen of poorer quality than they seemed, and therefore the country was in a state of despair, arising from the shortage of leadership as in the case of the Balkan Crisis.

Actually, the news about the defeat of the Ottoman forces, which went to Grahovo in the middle of May, at the hands of Montenegrins devastated the prestige of the Ottomans. The Ottoman forces were routed, and the Pashas had a falling out with each other. As Count Buol put it, the Ottoman State was humiliated with the events that had taken place during those recent months.<sup>318</sup>

The defeated force under Huseyin Daim Pasha was composed of four battalions and four infantry companies. Montenegrins gathered a huge force with the support of the Krushavins (subjects of Austria) and peasants, and attacked the Ottoman force during the first battle on May 11<sup>th</sup>, but retreated with 100 casualties due to Ottoman resistance. On May 12<sup>th</sup>, Prince Danilo's counselor, M. Delarue, who

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<sup>316</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Lord Augustus Loftus' message sent from Vienna to Lord Malmesbury on May 9, 1858).

<sup>317</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Lord Cowley's telegram sent from Paris to Lord Malmesbury on May 18, 1858). According to Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, since Fuad Pasha suffered from a hereditary heart problem, he tried to be indifferent to many issues to protect his health (Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, *Ma'rûzât*, 2)

<sup>318</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Lord Augustus Loftus' message sent from Vienna to Earl of Malmesbury on May 26, 1858).

went there to negotiate on behalf of the prince assured the Ottomans, who had a very limited amount of ammunition and food, that if they retreated to Klobuk, they would not attack them. The same day, a convoy sent by Kani Pasha carrying ammunition protected by 300 irregulars was attacked by Montenegrins; the convoy was seized, and the auxiliary force retreated with severe casualties. The force led by Hüseyin Daim Pasha was also attacked in spite of the assurance given, and as a result, the Ottoman force dispersed. Ottoman soldiers ran away from the battlefield. The Montenegrins cut off noses, tongues and ears of the soldiers they caught. Only 2,100 Ottoman soldiers out of the 2,900 were able to reach Trebigne.<sup>319</sup> At a time marked by the death of a large number of Ottoman troops in Grahovo, festivities ornamented also with contemporary styles were rampantly on-going in Istanbul with a wide coverage over almost all clusters of the society. Sultan Abdülmeceid was busy with organizing the nuptials of his two daughters. Both of her daughters would have the appanage of 50.000 *guruş* a month.<sup>320</sup>

The most important cause of this disaster was probably the problem in food provision, and thus the overall organization problem of the Ottoman Empire. Without properly organized transportation and food corps, the Ottoman forces had attacked the Montenegrins. They had launched an attack as if they did not know the situation in Bosnia, where there were no roads and to which they could only take ammunition on horseback by huge costs. The Ottoman officials charged carriers with very low wages to carry the ammunition, and they would fire those carriers without any payment when their animals were injured or stolen. Therefore, these poor people

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<sup>319</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Henry A. Churchill's message sent from Trebigne to Lord Malmesbury on May 17, 1858).

<sup>320</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, June 12, June 22, 1858.

would run away at the earliest opportunity.<sup>321</sup> This problem of the carriage was never solved by the Ottoman State. The Montenegrin and Serbian affairs also brought new expenditures for the Ottomans.<sup>322</sup> Even the minor transfer of soldiers imposed economic difficulties on the government.

With the courage they gained from their victory in Grahovo, the Montenegrins attacked Kolashin at the end of July and plundered the town. It was later agreed that 300 horses, 1,060 sheep, and 37 boxes of clothes would be given back to the people of Kolashin.<sup>323</sup> These numbers provide an indication of the extent of the attack that the Montenegrins had launched. The Kolashin events put Montenegrins into a troubled position. Eventually, a protocol was signed in November 1858 by the intervention of the Great Powers, and in reality, the solution of the problem was postponed. The activities of Montenegrin bands did not end. As a result, in 1861, Ottoman Army commenced an operation to invade Montenegro, and this operation ended with the defeat of Montenegrin forces in 1862.

After 1856, the Porte faced problems much bigger than what was actually visible.<sup>324</sup> This basic assessment was made by Horace Rumbold in 1858 and was a true statement for the following 20 years of the Ottoman Empire.

The Balkan Question was essentially perceived as a matter of national rights. Yet, the only matter with Balkan nationalism was not just separation from the Ottoman Empire and establishing an independent state. Almost all of the leaders of those nations who wanted to establish their own independent states in the Balkans

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<sup>321</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Henry A. Churchill's message sent from Trebigne to Lord Malmesbury on May 17, 1858).

<sup>322</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 1291/101554.

<sup>323</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Henry A. Churchill's telegram sent from Ragusa to Earl of Malmesbury on August 30, 1858).

<sup>324</sup> TNA, FO 424/11 (Horace Rumbold's report to Lord Augustus Loftus drafted on June 14, 1858).



had expansionist ambitions <sup>325</sup> and this resulted in the violent fighting of the Balkan States with each other in the Balkan Wars and in World War I; and after the Great War, fascist and ultra-nationalist movements would come to power with strong popular support and remarkable military power.

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<sup>325</sup> Sandra Halperin, *War and Social Change in Modern Europe : The great transformation revisited* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 63-64.

## CHAPTER III

### THE REFORM QUESTION (1856-1865): MAJOR ISSUES

#### 3.1. The Paris Treaty (1856) and the Reform Question

As Stanford J. Shaw argues, the basic objective of the Tanzimat was to extend the control of the central government to all aspects of Ottoman life in the provinces.<sup>326</sup> The driving force between these changes and the reforms that had been planned since 1839 would be pressure from the outside rather than demands from the inside. The document of the warranty given by the Ottomans to this pressure from the outside would be the Treaty of Paris, signed May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1856 by the Austrian Emperor, French Emperor, Prussian King, Russian Emperor, King of Sardinia, and the Ottoman Sultan following talks on the European System in the aftermath of the Crimean War.

Articles 7, 8, 9 of the Treaty of Paris were of primary importance in regards to the protection of the integrity and the freedom of the Ottoman domains. According to Article 7 of the Treaty, the Ottoman State would acknowledge itself bound by European Public law.<sup>327</sup> Thus, the Ottoman Empire was officially accepted as a part of Europe. In fact, before the Treaty of Paris, the Ottoman State was not seen in

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<sup>326</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, "Local Administrations in the Tanzimat" in *150.yılında Tanzimat*, ed. Hakkı Dursun Yıldız (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1992), 33.

<sup>327</sup> *The European Concert in the Eastern Question: a collection of treaties and other public acts*, ed. Thomas Erskine Holland (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885), 245.

Europe as a lawless or rogue state.<sup>328</sup> With this article, the Ottoman State was not in fact considered a true part of Civilized Europe, but was only included in the system of power balance, which had been in existence since 1814-15. The fate of the Empire was officially made a problem that directly concerned the general interests of Europe.<sup>329</sup> In a way that would complete this picture, according to Article 8, in case a situation developed between the Ottoman State and one or more of the signatories of the Treaty, the Empire and the signatories in question would apply to the other signatories and ask for mediation before proceeding to use actual force.<sup>330</sup>

The most important of these articles, was Article 9, as it guaranteed the security of the Ottomans. This article appreciated the fact that the Sultan had issued a *ferman* (imperial edict) that promised to improve the state of all his subjects, without religious or ethnical discrimination, and that he had declared his good intentions toward the Christian population of the Empire; basing itself on this, it stated that nobody could interfere in the internal affairs of the Ottoman state.<sup>331</sup> This article was, in a way, an expression of the conditional freedom of the Ottoman Empire. At first, it was planned to state in the draft of the Treaty that Hattı-ı Humayun of 1856 (Reform Rescript) would be taken as an official warrant (*senet*); but this expression was then discarded on the objection of Ali Pasha and the rest of the Ottoman delegation.<sup>332</sup> The *Islahat Fermanı* (Imperial Rescript of 1856) was now a part of the warrant given to the West in the Peace Treaty of Paris.

With the Treaty of Paris, in a way, the Russian protectorate established over the Christian subjects of the empire through the treaties of 1774 Küçük Kaynarca,

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<sup>328</sup> George Douglas Campbell Argyll, *The Eastern Question from The Treaty of Paris 1856 to the Treaty of Berlin 1878, and to The Second Afghan War*, vol. 1 (London: Strahan & company, 1879), 7.

<sup>329</sup> Argyll, 11-12.

<sup>330</sup> *The European Concert in the Eastern Question*, 245.

<sup>331</sup> *The European Concert in the Eastern Question*, 246.

<sup>332</sup> Engelhardt, *La Turquie et le Tanzimat*, 144.

1792 Jassy, 1812 Bucharest, 1825 Akkerman and 1829 Edirne was replaced by European tutelage.<sup>333</sup>

It was given to understand that the Christian allies of the Ottoman Empire had saved the Empire from a great danger, overlooking the difference of religion. In response, the Ottoman State had to fulfill its responsibilities as well.<sup>334</sup> Mission Civilisatrice was now a responsibility of the Ottoman State itself.

However, *Hatt-ı Hümayun of 1856* was not simply a part of the warrant thus given to the West; it was also a blueprint for the reforms to be carried out after 1856, if there was such a blueprint.

In this document, known as *Islahat Fermanı*, the Sultan guaranteed that the privileges and spiritual immunities recently granted by the Sultan and his predecessors to Christians and other non-Muslims would be protected. Accordingly, the properties and propriety rights of Christian ecclesiastics would remain under protection.<sup>335</sup> All religious communities would have equal rights in regards to the repair and restoration of places of worship, hospitals, schools and graveyards. The construction of new ones would depend on the permission of the Sublime Porte, through the mediation of the patriarch and other community leaders. The Sublime Porte was responsible for taking energetic measures to ensure that all religious communities, whatever their number, would be able to carry out their religious obligations in full freedom. It was also promised to remove all kinds of discrimination that could be made in the administrative protocol on the basis of religion, language or ethnicity. The related laws would be put into practice against all

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<sup>333</sup> Argyll, *The Eastern Question*, 21.

<sup>334</sup> TNA, FO 881/620 (Lord Stratford de Redcliffe's memorandum respecting the Privileges of the Sultan's Rayah Subjects).

<sup>335</sup> *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, ed. Edward Hertslet, vol. II (London: Harrison and Sons, 1875), 1244.

kinds of aggressive attitudes. Likewise, nobody would be forced to change his or her religion.<sup>336</sup>

A distinctive characteristic of the ferman was that the document did not only foresee a passive role of protectorship for the Sublime Porte, but rather an active role of designership and that its content reflected the expectations that meritocracy would be established in the country without discrimination against any identity. Based on this, it stated that all subjects of the empire would be granted the right of working in the public sector, without discrimination and solely according to their individual ability and capacity. All subjects of the Empire would have the right to enter civilian and military schools of the state, without being discriminated against. Again, all religious communities were allowed to open schools giving education in science, art and industry. The methods of instruction in these schools as well as the teachers would be under the inspection of a council of mixed public instruction appointed by the Sultan.<sup>337</sup>

Equality before the law was one of the most important promises included in the *ferman*. According to this, all commercial, correctional and criminal cases between Muslims and non-Muslims would be brought before mixed courts. The court proceedings would be open to the public, and all witnesses would be held equal. In civilian cases, parties of the same religion, if they wished so, could be judged by the council of their patriarch. Penal, correctional and commercial laws, as well as rules regulating the procedures to be followed by the mixed courts, would be turned into codes in the shortest time possible. These codes would be translated into all the languages used in the Empire.<sup>338</sup>

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<sup>336</sup> *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, 1245.

<sup>337</sup> *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, 1245-1246.

<sup>338</sup> *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, 1246.

It was one of the cornerstones of the reform that the Christians would be given an important place in the Ottoman administrative system. In accordance with this goal, non-Muslims would have the right to become members of the *Meclis-i Vâlâ* (High Council).<sup>339</sup> Local and communal assemblies would be reformed, and it would be ensured that Muslim, Christian and other non-Muslim members would be elected fairly. Henceforth, it was also necessary for non-Muslims to share the burden of military service, and be subject to the law of conscription. Thus, the *ferman* stated that a new law would be issued regulating the responsibility of military service of Christians and other non-Muslims.<sup>340</sup>

The privileges intended for the West were not neglected either. The *ferman* declared that foreigners would be granted the right to buy and sell immovables as well.<sup>341</sup>

Although the *Islahat Fermanı* seemed to focus on the issue of the Christians in the Ottoman Empire, it was, in fact, a veritable project draft that contained the reforms necessary in a multitude of fields. According to the *ferman*, the penal system would be reformed considering human rights and justice, the corporal punishment would no longer be applied in prisons, and all kinds of torture would be abolished.<sup>342</sup> The police forces in the capital, provinces and rural districts would be reformed and the lives and properties of the subjects of the empire would be placed under a stronger guarantee.

Justice would be observed in the collection of taxes, and efforts would be made to develop effective solutions against the abuses committed in the levying of taxes and tithes (*aşars*). The direct collection would gradually replace the method of

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<sup>339</sup> *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, 1248.

<sup>340</sup> *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, 1247.

<sup>341</sup> *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, 1247.

<sup>342</sup> *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, 1246.

tax-farming, and state officials, as well as members of local councils, would be prohibited from becoming tax farmers. The procedures would follow the principle that local taxes should not have an adverse impact on local production and commerce. New special and local taxes could be levied for the completion of public works, to the benefit of the *eyalets* and the *sanjaks* making use of terrestrial and maritime routes.<sup>343</sup>

Economic and scientific development of the country was also taken as one of the main goals of the Ottoman Empire in the new period. In this context, a special law was issued about the yearly preparation and inspection of a record showing the balance between incomes and expenses. Efforts would also be made to observe the procedures relating to the financial balance. Acts like corruption, bribery and embezzlement were to be duly punished without distinction between the culprits. Steps would be taken to establish institutions, like banks, that would add to the prestige of the state's financial system and therefore; the necessary funds would be mobilized to increase the revenue sources of the country. Importance would be given to the construction of roads and channels to improve transportation, efforts would be made to remove the obstacles to commerce and agriculture, and European education, science and capital would be used to achieve these aims.<sup>344</sup>

In fact, the *Islahat Fermanı* was not a text reflecting the views of Ottoman statesmen; it was rather the reflection of a memorandum that had been written under the leadership of Stratford de Redcliffe with the contribution of the opinions from the ambassadors of Austria and France.<sup>345</sup> It was for this reason that most Ottoman

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<sup>343</sup> *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, 1247-1248.

<sup>344</sup> *The Map of Europe by Treaty*, 1248-1249.

<sup>345</sup> TNA, FO 881/626 (Stratford de Redcliffe's message sent from Istanbul to Earl of Clarendon on January 9, 1856).

statesmen objected to the draft of the *ferman*, and in spite of this opposition, the Sultan issued this imperial rescript.<sup>346</sup>

The Ottoman Empire was geographically very close to the European Powers; in this respect, it lay at a geopolitically disadvantageous position when compared with old empires like Iran and China whose lands were extensive and distanced from Europe. While the struggle to upstage other powers by increasing one's material resources was paramount in Europe, the Ottomans' agenda was completely different. Their only goal was to preserve the integrity of the country and ensure the survival of "the sick man of Europe." They believed that the most effective way to convince the Europeans of the necessity of the survival of the Empire was to show that steps were being taken in the question of the Christian subjects and to "civilize" the country. They felt it was necessary to follow a policy that would accord equal treatment to all the peoples of the Empire and satisfy them accordingly.<sup>347</sup> Discussing this new period, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe stated that he was aware of the impossibility of completing all the reforms within a week, but pointed out in warning that the human race was progressing very fast in the modern age.<sup>348</sup>

The human resources of the Ottoman Empire were partly ready for this demand for speedy reform. The advent of the Tanzimat had brought along a new type of individual: while the *kul* system continued in theory, and this "new man" was still attached to the sultan, he asserted himself in the political arena. Of course, many reformist statesmen had emerged before the 19th century. As Stanford Shaw has pointed out, the Tanzimat reforms were quite aware of the mistakes committed by

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<sup>346</sup> Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Life of the Right Honourable Stratford Canning*, vol. II (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1888), 441.

<sup>347</sup> Mehmed Memduh Paşa, *Tanzimattan Meşrutiyete*, 140.

<sup>348</sup> TNA, FO 881/626 (Stratford de Redcliffe's message sent from Istanbul to Earl of Clarendon on January 9, 1856).



the traditional reformers before them and supported the idea of replacing the antiquated institutions of the Empire with those imported from the West.<sup>349</sup>

This was a period in which the reaction of the traditional circles against the Tanzimat had moderated as much as possible, allowing the emergence of a political milieu more conducive to reforms. The party of the reaction was not as strong now in the center of Istanbul. For example, even the Kuleli Affair of 1859, directly targeting the sultan's life, was not enough to cause a serious questioning of the idea of reform in the Ottoman Empire. The leader of the Kuleli team was Şeyh Ahmed of Süleymaniye, and the reason for the conspiracy was the reaction against the legal equality granted to Christian subjects by the Gülhane Rescript of 1839 and the *Islahat Fermanı*. According to a claim, Şeyh Ahmed had tried to establish a community like that of Şeyh Şamil, through rallying people around himself by means of ulema, *medreses* and the religious authority.<sup>350</sup> According to E. A. Pisani, the real architect of the conspiracy was Circassian Hüseyin Paşa, a general in the Ottoman army.<sup>351</sup> Interestingly, Hüseyin Daim Pasha, who was sentenced to imprisonment for life in the Fortress of Acre, was pardoned after the accession of Abdülaziz to the throne and appointed to a command in Anatolia.<sup>352</sup>

The discontent of dissident parties stemmed from different reasons. It was even rumored that the pashas who were discarded had set out to raise Prince Murad to the throne.<sup>353</sup> One of these was the Minister of War, Rıza Paşa, who was notorious

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<sup>349</sup> Stanford J. Shaw, "The Ottoman View of the Balkans" in *The Balkans in Transition: Essays on the Development of Balkan Life and Politics Since the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Charles Jelavich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), 72.

<sup>350</sup> Uluğ İğdemir, *Kuleli Vak'ası Hakkında Bir Araştırma* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1937), 34.

<sup>351</sup> TNA, FO 78/1345 (E. A. Pisani's letter from Yeniköy to Sir Henry Bulwer, dated September 19, 1859).

<sup>352</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, March 4, 1862.

<sup>353</sup> Melek Hanum, *Thirty Years in the Harem* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1872), 265. Since Sultan Abdülmecid's health deteriorated considerably by 1860, many people expected the death of Abdülmecid. In line to this, Ahmed Cevdet Pasha mentions the gossips about some statesmen's desire

for corruption.<sup>354</sup> Engelhardt claimed that he had strong evidence at hand suggesting that the idea of a coup d'état had been born in the army, among the ulema and administrative officials of high rank; against a certain circle that took advantage of the Sultan's protection to maintain their corrupt activities, and that most of the high-ranking local officials supported a rise that would be hatched in the capital.<sup>355</sup> So quest and uncertainty went on at the top of the Ottoman State; this was a result of the fact that the country lacked strong leadership that could deal with the crises it faced, and that it was unable to determine a clear route to follow. A strong hierarchical organization, the kind necessary for a strong state, was still not in existence. Of course, financial straits, the low number of experienced bureaucrats, and a lack of adequate information about how the new system would be operated constituted important factors as to why the reforms could not be efficiently put into practice throughout the imperial lands.<sup>356</sup>

While the West was already undergoing a process of mechanization, the Ottoman Empire was still far from sufficiently providing even the most basic needs. While rationalism was developing among Christians, it had not penetrated the Muslim geography yet. In this period, modern education was needed to found a modern bureaucracy and a modern economy. In Europe, the press and publishing houses activities were rapidly expanding in volume; new books were rapidly following one after another, and intellectual movements were taking root, adding to the social dynamism. The Ottoman lands, on the other hand, remained seriously deprived of these intellectual resources that it needed so much. However, all these

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to see Şehzade Murad as a Sultan after the death of Sultan Abdülmecid; see Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Ma'rûzât*, 27-28.

<sup>354</sup> Melek Hanum, 270.

<sup>355</sup> Engelhardt, *La Turquie et le Tanzimat*, 158.

<sup>356</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, "Local Administrations in the Tanzimat", 44-45.

disadvantages had not engendered a belief that all the reform efforts were doomed to failure.

It was now a period that necessitated the state to assume a more active role and directly intervene in affairs such as education, public works, or social aids. The land forces of Russia had reached a size that the Ottomans would not be able to halt. Before a possible Russian attack, the Ottoman Empire had to be reformed as much as possible. In transportation, more extensive use of steam power and construction of railways constituted the most practical means of modernization. The infrastructure of the country had to be renewed and an extensive reform had to be carried out in the transportation system. However, the Ottoman Empire was crushed under large debts; in this situation, foreign entrepreneurs had emerged as a practical solution for the foundation of new economic establishments and the construction of infrastructure.

In order to procure the resources necessary for the reforms, the Sublime Porte would continuously invite the capital of its Western allies after the Treaty of Paris.<sup>357</sup> From this treaty onwards, foreign capital would flow into the Empire. The issue was not only the reform of the Ottoman Empire; it was also the addition of the Balkans and the rest of Ottoman lands into the World System. Despite all these invitations, the Ottoman State was unable to receive from the West the amount of assistance it had expected after the Treaty of Paris.

Just after the Crimean War, projects of banks, railways, canals, telegraphs, mining operations, agriculture, that symbolized the advanced civilization of the time, were proposed by fortune seekers came from West.<sup>358</sup> Initially, Ottomans welcomed

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<sup>357</sup> Albert Baster, "The Origins of British Banking Expansion in the Near East", *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 5, No. 1, (Oct., 1934), 76-86.

<sup>358</sup> An occasional correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, May 8, 1857. Several companies and individuals submitted their ambitious projects to Grand Vizierate in the first years of post-Crimean War period. For example Duc De Valmy (Probably the president of Saint-Rambert Company)

schemes of European entrepreneurs with enthusiasm. Their confidence towards European economic and technical expertise was so great that they expected from European investors to discover “treasures” in their country of which they themselves knew nothing. However, in these schemes, European investors asked Ottoman government for guarantees.<sup>359</sup>

In a letter, dated November 25<sup>th</sup>, 1858, which he had sent to Thouvenel, Âli Paşa indicated that the government had to be feared and dissuasive if it were to carry out the necessary reforms. But according to Âli Paşa, the other countries did their best to ensure people turned away from the Ottoman government in hatred, and to reduce their attachment to the state; they carried out a continuous propaganda against the Ottomans. The deficiencies that had to be removed did not only pertain to the situation of the Christian subjects.<sup>360</sup> With this last remark, Âli Paşa was indirectly criticizing the West that considered the matter of reform only in the context of improving the well-being of Christians. The Western-Ottoman alliance that had developed on the basis of carrying out the necessary reforms in the Ottoman Empire was built on a quite weak foundation of realpolitik.

The promises included in the *Islahat Fermanı* were quite clear; however, the rivalry between the pashas that began right after the Treaty of Paris showed that the stability needed for speedy reforms was not easy to secure at the top of the state. In the private correspondence he carried on with the parties, Stratford de Redcliffe saw that Âli Paşa wished to be appointed as the foreign Minister, while Mustafa Reşid Paşa wanted to be given the responsibility of the reforms under the grand vizierate of Şefik Paşa. Western ambassadors were in rivalry among themselves about having

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intended to build a railway line and port between Küçükçekmece Lake and İstanbul in 1858 ( BOA, A.}MKT.NZD. 262/16, Fuad Pasha’s letter dated August 19, 1858 (Hijri 10 Muharrem 1275) ).

<sup>359</sup> *The Times*’ correspondent’s report from Istanbul, *The Times*, January 5, 1857.

<sup>360</sup> Hayreddin Nedim Göçen, *Vesâik-i Tarihiye ve Siyasiye Tettebbuâtı* (İstanbul: Selis Kitaplar, 2008), 93-94.

their favorites among the Ottoman statesmen appointed to the required positions. In this period, there were rumors about a secret alliance between Fuad Pasha and the French Embassy.<sup>361</sup> As a result of the rivalry between the two groups, Mustafa Reşid Paşa was again appointed Grand Vizier.

According to Stratford de Redcliffe, Mustafa Reşid Paşa was determined to administer the government in accordance with the principles of British politics and to carry out the reforms promised in the Imperial Charter.<sup>362</sup> However, the appointment of Reşid as grand vizier was not received with pleasure by the other members of the Ottoman Government, and Reşid Paşa was isolated in a way. According to Stratford de Redcliffe, there was a secret agreement between Fuad, Ali and Serasker on the one hand and the French Ambassador Thouvenel on the other, to the effect that they would prevent the existing government from working.<sup>363</sup> Henry Bulwer, the British Ambassador took the office in 1858, inexplicitly blamed Stratford de Redcliffe for this situation. Bulwer thought that there was a steady alliance between Stratford de Redcliffe and Mustafa Reşid Pasha based on personal purposes and therefore rival group led by Ali Pasha and Fuad Pasha sought the support of France and Thouvenel.<sup>364</sup>

Although this rivalry was somewhat relieved after the death of Mustafa Reşid Paşa in 1858, it would not prove possible to establish the stability and level of determination necessary for the reforms up until the end of Abdülmecid's reign. Events followed one another at a speed that was impossible for the Ottoman reformists to catch, and it was difficult to speak of a consensus about the method to

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<sup>361</sup> TNA, FO 78/1191 (Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe's second telegram sent from Therapia to Earl of Clarendon on November 3, 1856).

<sup>362</sup> TNA, FO 78/1191 (Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe's second telegram sent from Therapia to Earl of Clarendon on November 3, 1856).

<sup>363</sup> TNA, FO 78/1192 (Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe's telegram sent from Therapia to Earl of Clarendon on November 17, 1856).

<sup>364</sup> TNA, FO 78/1428 (Henry Bulwer's message from Istanbul to the Earl of Malmesbury dated February 2, 1859).

be followed in implementing the reforms between the top echelons of the Ottoman state. The spark necessary for the reforms came in 1861 with the accession of Abdülaziz.

Besides Ottoman statesmen, the growing role of Ottoman intellectuals in this second phase of the Tanzimat should also be emphasized. The 19th century in Europe had witnessed a great success in increasing the literacy rate, with the consequent rise of a public that had acquired firm reading habits. Newspapers and news reporters were now able to influence the public opinion easily on foreign affairs. It was the golden age of public opinion and construction of collective thought. The Ottomans would not remain outside this new development.

It was a period in which the Ottoman intellectual asserted himself. Figures like Şinasi and Namık Kemal, outside the state hierarchy, embodied the rise of intellectuals on the stage of history at a time when the Ottoman State was being transformed based on the Western model. In fact, characters like Ziya Paşa and Namık Kemal reflected the reaction of both the traditionalist and reformist natives against the Westernized ruling circles.

The scientific conferences and lectures that were initiated in Darülfünun on January 13<sup>th</sup>, 1863, with the speech of Kimyager Derviş Paşa attracted great interest from the populace of the capital, a development that both astonished and excited statesmen and educators.<sup>365</sup> As a result, even Fuad Paşa attended a lecture on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 1863.<sup>366</sup> Although there was still no group of intellectuals that would impact the course of the reforms, such a group was in the process of development in parallel with the spread of the idea of reform.

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<sup>365</sup> Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, “Tanzimat Döneminde İstanbul’da Darülfünun Kurma Teşebbüsleri” in *150.yılında Tanzimat*, ed. Hakkı Dursun Yıldız (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1992), 404.

<sup>366</sup> However, the lectures were discontinued when the building of the Darülfünun was turned over to the Ministry of Finances in March 1865 (İhsanoğlu, “Tanzimat Döneminde İstanbul’da Darülfünun Kurma Teşebbüsleri”, 406).

The *Islahat Fermanı* was a quite ambitious blueprint of reform. However, it turned out that none of the reform attempts between 1856 and 1864 comprised large scale projects, being restricted to limited efforts of the amendment. The administrators of the Tanzimat were not able to foresee that the technical and institutional reforms they planned would eventually give rise to demands for social and political reforms and bring the end of autocratic rule.<sup>367</sup> A renewed education, press and cultural production meant a renewed state control.

Ottoman intellectuals still lacked the profundity that would have enabled them to widen the horizons of Ottoman statesman. They regarded reform as a solution for ensuring the survival of the state rather than a matter of civil rights, of constituting a new society; the intellectual milieu was dominated by an overarching state philosophy that overshadowed both economic and social development and the individual.

Ottoman statesmen apparently had the infrastructure required to launch a development campaign in the country. Ahmed Fethi Paşa, the chief of the ordinance department responsible for the military arsenal, and his successor Halim Paşa had studied in England.<sup>368</sup> As for Kıbrıslı Mehmed Paşa, he had studied in France and spoke fluent French. Moreover, he had served as a minister in Berlin and London.<sup>369</sup> However, despite the foreign education they had received, Kıbrıslı Mehmed Paşa and most other statesmen were still unable to develop a real liking for science and learning, to grasp the importance of education, and go beyond formalities to steep themselves in the relevant subjects.<sup>370</sup> Even the capacity of the ablest Ottoman statesmen to carry out the reforms was in question. In that respect, Henry Bulwer

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<sup>367</sup> Shaw, "The Ottoman View of the Balkans", 73.

<sup>368</sup> Nassau William Senior, *A Journal Kept in Turkey and Greece* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1859), 146.

<sup>369</sup> Senior, *Turkey and Greece*, 39.

<sup>370</sup> Melek Hanum, *Thirty Years in the Harem*, 277.

thought that Âli Pasha whose intellectual capacity and honesty would make him a prominent member of any cabinet in Europe lacked the required energy and determination. Also according to him, Fuad Pasha who was a clever and active statesmen, was not a man of ingenuity; Fuad could not create new ideas, and he could not prepare plans and projects.<sup>371</sup>

When the officer Halil Paşa was touring German lands in 1867 and saw the huge factories there, he rhetorically asked whether Ottoman ambassadors and pashas had ever bothered to visit them<sup>372</sup>, and hinted thereby at the superficiality and the isolation from the Western world evident in Ottoman ruling circles.

### **3.2. General Problems in the Country**

After the declaration of the Islahat Fermanı and the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1856, the West's expectations from the Ottoman State and the amount of the pressure they put on it for reforms increased. However, as we shall see in this chapter, the Empire was entangled in a web of problems. All the problems about the administration of the country had to be reconsidered; disintegration of the Empire was inevitable as long as the existing structure remained in place. This was clearly visible in the light of the general situation of the country.

#### Taxation

Income tax, tithe (*aşar*) and indirect taxes constituted the basic three sources of revenue for the Ottoman state.<sup>373</sup> The taxes in the Ottoman Empire were lower in comparison to other countries; while the amount of tax per capita was 11.18 Francs

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<sup>371</sup> TNA, FO 78/1428(Henry Bulwer's message from Istanbul to the Earl of Malmesbury dated February 2, 1859).

<sup>372</sup> Ömer Faiz Efendi, *Sultan Abdülaziz'in Avrupa Seyahati*, ed. Cemal Kutay (İstanbul: Boğaziçi, 1991), 60.

<sup>373</sup> J. Lewis Farley, *The Resources of Turkey* (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1862), 17.



in the Ottoman Empire, it was 44.55 Francs in France. Although the taxes were apparently lower, most of the burden remained on the shoulders of agricultural producers as a result of the unequal distribution of this load.<sup>374</sup> The amount of stamp fee was also quite low when compared with England or France.<sup>375</sup> However, the irregularities in the collection of taxes, the practices of tax farmers and the high rates of interest imposed upon farmers by moneylenders detracted from the resources possessed by the Ottoman Empire.<sup>376</sup>

In the Empire, the income tax was levied not on an individual basis but on the basis of the area of settlement; for this reason, a previously fixed amount of tax burden was imposed upon each settlement (village, kaza, Vilâyet), and the amount to be paid by each individual was determined on a yearly basis by the administrators of that settlement.<sup>377</sup> However, the distribution of taxes among different regions was also unfair in this system. Mostly because changes regarding the well-being of various settlements were not taken into account in time and the amounts of taxes were not updated, whole communities crushed under a heavy tax burden abandoned areas they had been cultivating.<sup>378</sup>

Wealthy classes of the Empire were subject to a kind of improper exemption from taxation. For example, Zarif Mustafa Pasha paid for his large khans in Istanbul only a nominal sum; on the other hand, similar amounts were paid in the poorer

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<sup>374</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 100.

<sup>375</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey by Mr. Forster and Lord Hobart dated December 7, 1861* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1862), 12.

<sup>376</sup> Farley, *The Resources of Turkey*, 18. In 1857, usurers bought the products of peasants with cheap prices by exploiting the debt contracts (BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 268/41). The local people of Bandırma and Kapudağı, most of whom were agriculturist, wrote a petition to Ottoman government and demanded extra time to pay interest of their debts to the moneylenders in 1861(BOA, A.}MKT.DV.. 213/42). This cycle of exploitation that can be seen in these examples emasculated the Ottoman economy.

<sup>377</sup> According to Özbek, the main reason behind this was Ministry of Finance's lack of an administrative technology that enable the government to differentiate the person from the community and identify him as an individual-citizen during the classification according to wealth status (Nadir Özbek, *İmparatorluğun Bedeli: Osmanlı'da Vergi, Siyaset ve Toplumsal Adalet (1839-1908)* (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yaymevi, 2015), 126).

<sup>378</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 2.

quarters of Istanbul.<sup>379</sup> In Bosnia, an ordinary peasant and a rich agha paid nearly the same amount of tax in 1864.<sup>380</sup> In proportion, poor classes' contribution to taxes were greater than wealthy classes in many provinces of the Empire.

In most regions, taxpayers did not know the amount of tax they were supposed to pay, and since they were not given any receipt of payment, the same tax was sometimes required two or three times from them. Local authorities were not overly concerned about the inspection of the tax levying methods either.<sup>381</sup> The levying of *iane-i askeriyye* (poll-tax) was also ridden with difficulties.<sup>382</sup>

The revenues of the Empire were quite low when considered in the light of its lands, population and commercial potential.<sup>383</sup> One of the most important problems of the Ottoman State was that it preferred to make do with traditional methods that would produce little change in the existing system rather than improve its economic situation through creative renewal.

### General Trade

Between 1851 and 1860, and especially under the influence of the rapprochement that developed with the Crimean War, the economic relations of the Ottoman Empire with Britain and France increased enormously in volume. The trade volume between the Empire and Britain rose from 7,000,398 to 10,963,329 pounds in this period, while the volume of the trade with France rose from 2,899,254 to

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<sup>379</sup> *The Levant Herald*, January 8, 1862.

<sup>380</sup> BOA, HR.SYS. 122/1.

<sup>381</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 25. The irregularities in tax collection was common throughout the empire. Tax-farmers demanded more than one-tenth of the products many times as it was seen in Sivas province in 1860 (BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 418/34). Also for some examples of irregularities during the collection of taxes which occurred in the villages of Gerece, see BOA, A.}MKT.MHM. 178/10.

<sup>382</sup> *Iane-i askeriyye* was the tax that replaced *cizye* (poll-tax) during the Crimean War. But after the Crimean War both *cizye* and *iane-i askeriyye* were collected from non-Muslims in some places as İškodra and Yanya (BOA, HR.MKT. 161/59).

<sup>383</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 100.

8,385,156 pounds.<sup>384</sup> While some of the French ports were closed to Britain, all of the Ottoman ports were open in all respects.<sup>385</sup> This free trade policy of the Ottomans was in a way a guarantee of securing Western support. With these privileges accorded to Westerners and by opening up their lands to world trade and production, the Ottomans received the vote of confidence of the Great Powers.

Likewise, the trade volume of Trabzon almost doubled between the years of 1853-59.<sup>386</sup> However, one of the conspicuous characteristics of this growth was that the balance of imports and exports increasingly deteriorated to the detriment of the Ottomans. In 1858, Britain's exports to the Ottoman Empire were more than those it made to France.<sup>387</sup> While the tax ratio for exports was 12% in the Empire, it was only %5 for imports.<sup>388</sup> Moreover, there was a tax of 9% applied to the trade between cities and regions.<sup>389</sup> While the Ottoman government allowed French merchants to do commerce in the Ottoman lands at very convenient conditions, France levied high amounts of taxes on Ottoman goods and even denied entry to some of them.<sup>390</sup> Foreign subjects were exempt from taxation and this led to the flow of Ottoman wealth to abroad. According to Article 13 of the capitulations treaty with Britain, "of the Englishman and those subject to him, residing in the Imperial dominions, whether married or single, who may work as labourers or engage in commerce, *Haraç* shall not be demanded".<sup>391</sup> Parallel to this imbalance, the Ottoman economy became increasingly vulnerable to the adverse impact of foreigners. Foreign, and especially French, coins could freely circulate within the Ottoman borders.<sup>392</sup>

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<sup>384</sup> Farley, *The Resources of Turkey*, 67.

<sup>385</sup> Farley, *The Resources of Turkey*, 63.

<sup>386</sup> Farley, *The Resources of Turkey*, 116.

<sup>387</sup> Farley, *The Resources of Turkey*, 67-68.

<sup>388</sup> Farley, *The Resources of Turkey*, 19.

<sup>389</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 8.

<sup>390</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 159-160.

<sup>391</sup> TNA, FO 78/1505 (Translation by Redhouse dated March 26, 1860).

<sup>392</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 167.

Because of a lack of official documents in this field, it was not possible in the Empire to arrive at precise and accurate figures for trade in general;<sup>393</sup> consequently, the existing bureaucratic structure made it impossible to restore the deteriorating balance in foreign trade.

The structural and institutional deficiencies also brought about the result that an important part of the revenues from foreign trade could not be taken advantage of. The absence of entrepôts in Ottoman ports deprived the state of an important source of revenues.<sup>394</sup> The fact that customs dues were subject to tax-farming also caused difficulties as well as the treasury.<sup>395</sup>

The Ottoman Empire lacked an “economic society” in the modern sense; there was no tradition of incorporation as yet, and it was almost impossible to find national firms. The higher classes, in their indolence, were reluctant to invest their resources in sectors of production.<sup>396</sup> Handicraftmanship in the Empire had gone into a sharp decline in the nineteenth century.<sup>397</sup> Although tradesmen were perhaps the most dependable element in the country, the ratio of Turks and Muslims among them was far from being adequate. According to Hobart and Forster, the guilds, with the monopolies they had established; prevented competition, hindered the rise of intelligent and productive individuals, and disrupted the effective operation of the supply-demand mechanism through their frequent interventions on prices.<sup>398</sup> Moreover, in many parts of the empire, trade and commerce routes were in an insecure position, and local authorities could not provide the security of merchants

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<sup>393</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 173.

<sup>394</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 10.

<sup>395</sup> In many places, tax-farmers of customs demanded extra duties from tradesmen (BOA, HR.MKT. 257/46; BOA, HR.MKT. 316/13; BOA, HR.MKT. 327/76 ).

<sup>396</sup> Farley, *The Resources of Turkey*, 33.

<sup>397</sup> BOA, Y..EE.. 79/5; *Reports by Her Majesty's Secretaries of Embassy and Legation on the Manufactures, Commerce, etc. of the Countries in which they reside* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1870), 236 (H. Barron's report on Taxation of Turkey, dated December 1, 1869).

<sup>398</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 33.

against bandits and tribes and did not introduce any effective improvements in the protection of commercial activities.<sup>399</sup> In these conditions, it was impossible in the traditional socio-economic structure to expect the society to take the initiative and embark by itself on incorporation and industrialization.

### Agriculture and Natural Resources

One of the most important achievements of the Ottoman state system was perhaps its creation of a Muslim populace who were so loyal to the ruler. But ignorance in agricultural matters and insistence on primitive methods still dominated the economic life in rural areas. In parallel to this, there was no state control on the measures of weight and length.<sup>400</sup> The actual weight of “kile” could vary greatly from one region to another.<sup>401</sup>

Since the banking system had not developed in the country, farmers solved their financial problems by borrowing high-interest credit from moneylenders, usurers and tradesmen.<sup>402</sup> However, this heavy burden of debts broke the back of many peasants, who found themselves compelled to sell their lands or turn them over to the creditors.<sup>403</sup> In his inspection tour in the province of İzmid, Ahmed Vefik Efendi found that the members and clerk of the local council and Armenian moneylenders in conspiracy had oppressed the local people regardless of their religion in conspiracy and Christians had been working for the *Kocabaşıs* (Christian

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<sup>399</sup> TNA, FO 78/1272 (Stratford de Redcliffe’s message to Lord Clarendon, dated October 21, 1857). Since the gendarme force was insufficient, the travelers were in an insecure position in the Ottoman Empire. There are several examples prove this point. A caravan came from Persia was plundered by bandits in Gümüşhane in 1858 (BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 331/2); another group from Persia was robbed by Karapapak bandits in Eleşkirt in 1860 (BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 413/89). Again in 1858, some merchants who went from Kayseri to Niğde were robbed and killed by bandits (BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 383/68). Also for a letter from Grand Vizierate to the Ministry of Finance and the governor of Varna concerning the total insecurity in the road between Varna and Şumnu see BOA A.}MKT.MHM. 163/80.

<sup>400</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 161.

<sup>401</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 163-164. In Adana it was preferred to use the old “kile” instead of the official kile called “İstanbul kilesi” (BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 279/52).

<sup>402</sup> Tefik Güran, *19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Tarımı Üzerine Araştırmalar* (İstanbul: Eren, 1998), 135-138.

<sup>403</sup> Güran, *19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Tarımı*, 141.

administrative leaders) day and night around the towns of Akhisar (Pamukova of today) and Taraklı.<sup>404</sup>

*Aşar* was levied in kind. Because of the problems of transportation, the state could secure only a small part of the revenues from the land, through tax-farming. Since it was necessary to wait for the tax farmer before selling the products, the farmers suffered great losses.<sup>405</sup> The amounts that state obtained from the tax-farming auctions were much below the value of the revenues levied from the districts. But Ottoman government had no choice in front of the steady need of ready cash.<sup>406</sup>

The tax farming license received from the state could be sold over and over to third parties, so that, for example, the *öşür* of some places could be sold 3, 4, 5 or even 6 times. This caused great difficulties for the agricultural producers. More often than not, tax farmers colluded with village authorities to show the regional production greater than it really was, profiting therefrom.<sup>407</sup> The losses incurred as a result of bad harvests were also placed on the shoulders of producers. Frequently, producers who were unable to meet their needs through the sale of their products found themselves captives of usurers.<sup>408</sup>

To prevent these abuses, the Sublime Porte published a series of regulations considering *aşar* and resolved to introduce the method of levying a 5-year lump-sum tax to every village in 1861. For this purpose, local councils named *ta'şir meclisi* which were formed by imams and mukhtars (village headmen) in Muslim villages,

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<sup>404</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 510/34735 (Ahmed Vefik Efendi's letter to Grand Vizierate dated June 30, 1863 (Hijri 14 Muharrem 1280)).

<sup>405</sup> M. P. De Tchihatcheff, *Lettres Sur La Turquie* (Paris: A. Schnée, 1859), 47-48.

<sup>406</sup> *The Levant Herald*, date: December 31, 1862.

<sup>407</sup> There are many cases illustrate this situation. For example in the village of Çanakça in Çatalca region, *aşar* tax-farmers demanded considerably high amounts from the peasants during the collection of taxes in 1856 (BOA. A. }MKT.NZD. 202/95). Similar problems were seen in Lazistan Province on the same days (BOA. A. }MKT.NZD. 203/9).

<sup>408</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 5.

and bishops and mukhtars in Christian villages took responsibilities.<sup>409</sup> This new system brought along certain improvements. According to a report by Suter, the British consul of Varna, the annual debt of the local population to usurers dropped from 10 to 4 million *guruş* after the new method was put into practice. However, the new practice also gave rise to complaints in some places. The reason was that in determining the amount of the 5-year lump-sum tax, the wartime tax ratios had been used. Producers still found themselves compelled to sell their products at low prices, without being able to wait for the most favorable time for the market, but the amount of *öşür* was nonetheless calculated on the basis of average prices.<sup>410</sup>

The lack of proper roads was another factor that caused difficulties for the agricultural sector. Even in the province of Gelibolu (Gallipoli) which was located near the capital, there were no roads deserving of the name.<sup>411</sup> Producers were unable to convey their products to other markets and thus get speedily integrated into the market in general.

Since the means of exportation from the interior regions was limited, production was generally kept at a level merely adequate to meet the needs of the area where it was carried out. Similarly, the state prohibited peasants to abandon their lands without the permission of the owners of those lands, and sometimes even forced peasants to return to lands that had lain fallow for ten years. As rightly pointed out by Hobart and Forster, trying to regulate the labor force in such artificial ways would only harm the state and the society.<sup>412</sup>

Security problems, as well as the lack of inspection, caused sharp drops in agricultural production in some regions. As a result of the razzias of bedouins after

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<sup>409</sup> Özbek, *İmparatorluğun Bedeli*, 55-58.

<sup>410</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 5-7.

<sup>411</sup> TNA, FO 78/1430 (Vice-Consul Richard Jr. Abbott's report on the province of Gelibolu, dated March 25, 1859).

<sup>412</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 33.

1840, the productive villages on the fertile lands around Aleppo were largely emptied of their population, and the pressures and problems caused by the tax-farming system, which was dominated by the members of the local council, resulted in a sharp drop in the agricultural economy and product prices.<sup>413</sup>

Animal husbandry in the country also faced a similar crisis. Two of the factors that hindered the development of husbandry were taxing on the one hand and the inadequacy of the number of meadows, grasslands and pastures on the other.<sup>414</sup>

The Ottoman Empire was a new center of interest for Western investors with her undiscovered and unexploited natural resources. From the beginning of the 1860s, Western diplomats and entrepreneurs embarked on a search for fields suitable for cotton wool production all over the lands of the Empire.<sup>415</sup> The fact that the Ottoman Empire had so many exploitable resources was considered by Western authorities as a factor that increased the economic credibility of the country. However, the abundance of unexploited resources was, in fact, a proof of the shortcomings of the Empire rather than a sign in its favor.<sup>416</sup>

Mines and forests were among the least exploited natural resources of the Ottoman Empire. For example, only three out of the eight silver mines in Gümüşhane were in operation. Moreover, even if the mines had been in full operation, they would have lacked the roads necessary to carry the mines to ports.<sup>417</sup>

While the annual income of the Ottoman Empire from its forests was no more than five thousand pounds, the income of Greece, with much less woodland than the

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<sup>413</sup> *Reports Received from Her Majesty's Consuls Relating to the Condition of Christians in Turkey 1860* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1861), 48-49 (Consul J.H. Skene's message sent from Halep (Aleppo) to Sir Henry Bulwer on, August 4, 1860).

<sup>414</sup> Güran, *19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Tarımı*, 109.

<sup>415</sup> For detailed information see *Cotton Supply from the Ottoman Empire* (London: J. E. Taylor, 1862).

<sup>416</sup> *The Empire: A Series of Letters Published in "The Daily News" 1862, 1863, by Goldwin Smith* (Oxford and London: J. Henry & J. Parker, 1863), 226.

<sup>417</sup> Farley, *The Resources of Turkey*, 125.



Empire, amounted to 10,800 pounds.<sup>418</sup> The main factors behind this situation were the inefficient administration and the lack of the legal and material infrastructure necessary for the market economy.

#### Financial Situation of the Ministries

The Ottoman army was traditionally the institution that was given the greatest importance in state expenses; in accordance with this, the War Ministry received the lion's share. In 1275 (A.H.), the annual expenses of the War Ministry exceeded 3.5 million pounds. This sum amounted to almost a third of the total amount of state expenses. However, there were significant problems in the army as well, the most important of which was the great gap between the excessively high salaries of the high ranking officers and the far too low salaries of the low ranking ones.<sup>419</sup> Moreover, armies could not meet many of their needs; therefore they took high interest rate loans from creditors.<sup>420</sup>

The chief of staff controlled six million Pounds; but while he got increasingly rich, his soldiers remained miserable as far as rations and clothing were concerned. In many places, on the other hand, army members had to go unpaid for as long as a year; there was a great unrest among the soldiers, and the eruption of mutinies was far from being a distant possibility.<sup>421</sup> While the generals received their salaries regularly, there were soldiers, in Erzincan for example, who had not been paid for 26

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<sup>418</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 15.

<sup>419</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 18-19. In the fleet, the salary of a lieutenant was 30 pounds a-year, while that of a Kapudan Pasha was 10,000 pounds a-year (*Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 20).

<sup>420</sup> As Army of Arabia did not take the required financial support from the government in the hijri years of 1273-1275 (roughly 1856 to 1859), it contracted debts with creditors (BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 401/64).

<sup>421</sup> *Turkey. No. 17 (1877). Instructions addressed to Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople Respecting Financial and Administrative Reforms and the Protection of Christians in Turkey: 1856-75* (London, 1877), 17 ( Lord John Russell's message sent from Foreign Office to Henry Bulwer on September 11, 1860).

months.<sup>422</sup> Again, the troops in Ottoman Tripolitania had not received their salaries for the past 6 months as of September 1856.<sup>423</sup> In Vidin, the troops had not received their monthly pay from September 1859 and March 1860. A number of spontaneous solutions were brought forth for the payment of such accrued pay and recourse was had to provincial revenues and provincial treasuries.<sup>424</sup> The government could not pay the salaries of troops even in such regions in constant insurrection as Herzegovina and was forced to incur debts before non-Muslim tradesmen as a matter of urgency to pay accrued salaries.<sup>425</sup> In September 1860, the receivables accrued before the army's food suppliers in Istanbul had reached 50 thousand *kises*.<sup>426</sup>

The subaltern officers in the Ottoman Army were in a miserable situation. In the army, advancement is not based on merit, but through favor. Therefore young officers generally seek a protector to promote. The great imbalance between the salaries of Ottoman officers was one of the important causes of the inefficiency in the Ottoman army.<sup>427</sup>

The size of the Anatolian army dropped from 25-30 thousand men to 10 thousand after the Crimean War.<sup>428</sup> Even in peacetime, mortality rates among Ottoman troops were very high.<sup>429</sup> Therefore Turks themselves evaded military service through such methods as taking to the mountains.<sup>430</sup> The long series of wars and the introduction of the system of conscription caused a relative decline in the

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<sup>422</sup> Tchihatcheff, *Lettres Sur La Turquie*, 57.

<sup>423</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 355/23423.

<sup>424</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.MHM. 178/92.

<sup>425</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 412/27283.

<sup>426</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.NZD. 325/86.

<sup>427</sup> *The Times'* correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, December 7, 1857.

<sup>428</sup> Tchihatcheff, *Lettres Sur La Turquie*, 55. Total strength of Ottoman Regular Army was only 96.600 in 1857 (TNA, FO 78/1275).

<sup>429</sup> For instance, Ottoman forces suffered heavy losses during the expeditions against the bandit Arabic tribes of Baghdad province took place in the Summer of 1858 ( TNA, FO 78/1367, Consul General A. B. Kemball's message from Baghdad to Mr. Alison, dated August 4, 1858).

<sup>430</sup> TNA, FO 78/1209 (Consul Sandison's report for the District of Bursa on internal reforms dated March 5, 1856). The activities of these deserters became a serious security issue in places as the Sanjak of Aydin ( see BOA A.}MKT.UM.. 376/34), Selanik(see BOA, MVL 896/75) and *Eyalet*(Province) of Rumeli (see BOA, A.}MKT.NZD. 218/72).

Turkish population. This meant that the most important element for the preservation of the Ottoman Empire was weakened.

The expenses of the Ministry of Commerce and Public Works, which was one of the ministries in greatest need for an increase in budget, amounted to only 78 thousand pounds in the year 1275 (A.H.). The yearly expenses of the Ministry of Education amounted to the ridiculous figure of 20 thousand pounds, four of which was the yearly salary of the Minister himself. It is true that in this field the state relied partly on waqfs and mosques.<sup>431</sup> However, it was self-contradictory for a country with the aim of rebirth to rely in the field of education on old institutions with limited means.

Within the Ottoman borders, the waqfs possessed no less than three-fourths of the immovables, and the state was unable to make use of the revenues of these properties which were mostly under the control of men of religion.<sup>432</sup> The trustees sometimes used these revenues from the waqfs for their self-interests.<sup>433</sup> The waqfs under the *Evkaf* (General Directorate of Pious Foundations) were administered very poorly, and there were serious abuses. Indeed Abdülatif Subhi Bey, the Evkaf Minister appointed in 1861 introduced a better system of records and accounting, and improved the financial situation of the Evkaf noticeably.<sup>434</sup> He dismissed corrupt and incapable officials from the ministry and promoted the able employees. However, the term of office of this successful administrator lasted very short. His successor returned the corrupt employees to their former offices.<sup>435</sup> This was at the same time an illustration of another significant problem of the Ottoman state administration,

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<sup>431</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 21.

<sup>432</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 125.

<sup>433</sup> In Konya, it was reported that the revenues of Nakiboğlu Endowment was used by some of its trustees for personal benefits in 1857 (BOA, A.}MKT.DV.. 116/66).

<sup>434</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 30.

<sup>435</sup> *The Levant Herald*, November 13, 1861.

instability in the state cadres. Sultans were weak, but the statesmen were also weak. They could not hold their offices for a long time. Six months was a long tenure of office for an Ottoman statesman;<sup>436</sup> since the position of government members was insecure, it was hard to expect consistent reform efforts from the pashas.

The expenses of ministries were also frequently outside their fields of duty. For example, 100 thousand pounds among the expenses of the Ministry of the Interior at the beginning of the 1860s were, in fact, the private expenses of the sultan and the palace. Again, 50 thousand pounds among the expenses that apparently belonged to the Ministry of Finance were, in fact, the cost of the meat purchased for the palace. While the sum spent only for meat for the palace was thus 50 thousand pounds, the sum spent in 1275 (A.H.) for the migrants from the Caucasus was only 60 thousand pounds.<sup>437</sup>

Ottoman government could not pay the fees and salaries of unskilled laborers. The indifference of the government and the palace towards those working in jobs requiring a low level of qualifications resulted in occasional protests that were humiliating for the state. In March 1859, 300 to 400 people, who were mostly the workers employed in the construction of palaces, staged a demonstration before the Imperial Palace of Dolmabahçe and claimed their payments. As a result of the demonstration, Ministry of Finance paid 35.000 *liras* to workers and silenced them.<sup>438</sup> Laborers of the military textile mill organized a pseudo-insurrectional protest at the Headquarters of the Chief Commander (*Bab-ı Seraskeri*) for their accrued salaries and 10-15 individuals that had incited this protest were made subject

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<sup>436</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, October 6, 1857.

<sup>437</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 21.

<sup>438</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, April 5, 1859.

to legal proceedings in 1862.<sup>439</sup> The garbage collectors of Babiali had not received their salaries for 3 months as of the end of 1861.<sup>440</sup>

### Administrative Crisis

In the Ottoman Empire, ministries were surrounded by Court intrigues, ambassadorial intrigues and the intrigues of high officials.<sup>441</sup>

A chaotic environment gloomed over public administrations due to the lack of regulations stipulating their specific duties. Relations between public administrations and their officials had not been streamlined at the center or in the field organization. Everything from the most serious matter to the most ordinary question was attempted to be resolved in a state of great disorder and contradictions were observed among administrations in terms of their duties. On the other hand, a number of offices which had been organized in line with the needs of the past age had come to be obsolete. The result of such tumult was represented by both the disruption of public services and a loss of time and effort.<sup>442</sup>

Among the ranks of the Ottoman State, it was not exactly possible to find the qualified human resources that would be able to write the blueprints for the requested institutional innovations. In 1856, the Grand Council of Tanzimat (*Meclis-i Tanzimat*) held meetings to establish a Council on Accounting (*Meclis-i Muhasebe*), but once due qualification could not be demonstrated for the job at hand during these meetings, a decision was formulated for the enforcement of the Regulations issued by the Council on Accounting in France.<sup>443</sup> In addition, dismissals from duty were observed occasionally even among members of such commissions of revolutionary

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<sup>439</sup> BOA, İ. DH.. 496/33745.

<sup>440</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.NZD. 382/100.

<sup>441</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, October 13, 1857.

<sup>442</sup> BOA, İ. DH.. 390/25768.

<sup>443</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 8/319.

importance as the Council on Education (*Meclis-i Maarif*) by reason of immoral attitudes.<sup>444</sup>

Especially the state officials at the lower ranks were unjust and corrupt.<sup>445</sup> Unqualified civil servants were causing the governmental authority to remain symbolic in many provinces.<sup>446</sup> British Consul in Erzurum, Jas. Brant reported that most of the pashas in the provinces could not even write; and those who could, wrote only with many errors and misspellings. Most of the finance ministers had only an elementary knowledge of arithmetic. The clerks who held the public accounts lacked the level of expertise needed for their job, and the accounts they held were full of mistakes. There was a multitude of clerks and scribes; however, the total amount of work they carried out was little in comparison with their numbers.<sup>447</sup>

There were constant conflicts among high-level Ottoman officials serving in the provinces. Arif Pasha, Governor of Erzurum, had lodged a complaint to Babıali in August 1859 concerning Provincial Treasurer Şevket Bey before the Ministry of Finance of the time alleging that he had been neglecting his duties for the past 2 years. In response, Şevket Bey argued that Arif Pasha had been putting the governorate to excessive expenses for such works as repairs.<sup>448</sup>

According to Stratford de Redcliffe mainly local authorities disobeyed Sultan's commands and made their best to put the Ottoman Government in an awkward position in front of European Powers just a year after the proclamation of Gülhane Reform Edict(1856).<sup>449</sup> Laws that were correct in theory mostly produced bad results in some regions of the Empire. For this reason, in order to grasp the

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<sup>444</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 8/312.

<sup>445</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, January 31, 1857.

<sup>446</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 13/533.

<sup>447</sup> TNA, FO 881/591 (Erzurum Consul Jas. Brant's memorandum on reform in Turkey, dated June 30, 1856).

<sup>448</sup> BOA, C. DH. 162/8070.

<sup>449</sup> TNA, FO 78/1275 (Stratford de Redcliffe's message to Lionel Moore dated December 7, 1857).

actual state of the empire, the quality of the information about local conditions was very important.

The Sublime Porte, which found it difficult to assert its authority on the local level, preferred to govern these regions through local councils and the prominent members of the local society. However, the identity of these members made the continuation of the old system compulsory for the preservation of their power. In Edirne, most of the members of the provincial council were in blood or friendly relations with the notables and tax-farmers in 1859. Therefore, it was not exactly possible for the local council to prevent the cruelty inflicted by the notables and tax-farmers on the people. The procedures through which these members were selected and appointed were a mystery even for the Governor of Edirne, Mustafa Pasha.<sup>450</sup>

When pashas wanted to introduce changes in good faith, they clashed with the local councils and were mostly dismissed from their post as a result of the assembly members who mobilized their acquaintances in the central government in İstanbul. Especially when the pasha was a weak person, the local council found it easy to assert its will, ready as it was to do everything possible to intimidate him.<sup>451</sup>

The weakness of the executive and the conflicts of mixed authority were seen in most parts of the Empire.<sup>452</sup> For example, in 1856, The Grand Local Council (*Meclis-i Kebir*) prepared a report on the former governor upon the respective request of the new Governor Vecihi Pasha in Erzurum; however, the report submitted to Istanbul included unfavorable comments on the former governor, whereas the former governor received a positive report.<sup>453</sup>

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<sup>450</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 383/80.

<sup>451</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 12 (Consul Charles J. Calvert's telegram sent from Salonica to Henry Bulwer on July 20, 1860).

<sup>452</sup> TNA, FO 78/1270 (Stratford Canning's message from Therapia to Earl of Clarendon dated September 7, 1857).

<sup>453</sup> BOA, İ..MMS. 8/319.

The members of the local councils were the chief factors behind the problems encountered in their region. The local council members did not receive any salaries for their efforts; but they used the ample opportunities for bribes and various misconducts. Even between 1856 and 1864, the local council members became the subject of numerous complaints and official reports concerning bribery, embezzlement, disseise. For example, some members of the local council in Filibe (Plovdiv) were reported in March 1858 to have embezzled money in conspiracy with clerks. The sum subject to such embezzlement was as high as 11 *yük* 36103 *guruş* according to the relevant inquiries.<sup>454</sup> Abdüllatif Subhi Efendi conducted an inspection at the Provincial Treasury of Debre in the summer of 1863 and identified that 150 actually non-existent *zaptiyes* had been receiving salaries from the treasury under pseudonyms and some *zaptiyes* had been benefiting from the salaries, because they were relatives or servants of the members of the local council or of local notables.<sup>455</sup> Corruption was a part of the daily life in the Ottoman Empire and the methods employed by the local notables and local authorities to derive improper benefits through the state were at times stretching the limits of imagination.

As can be seen from all this evidence, the local councils did not support the establishment of a good system of administration or the improvement of the conditions prevailing in the country. The members of local councils frequently inform against their fellows,<sup>456</sup> and the dismissal of the members of local councils was a normalcy in the Ottoman Empire.

One of the most detailed and succinct reports about how local government was run in the Ottoman Empire was composed by the British consul in Diyarbekir, W. R. Holmes, in 1856. According to Holmes, what would follow the arrival of a

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<sup>454</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 309/89.

<sup>455</sup> BOA, İ. .DH. 512/34817.

<sup>456</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 388/29.



pasha in a Vilâyet as its new governor was almost a matter of course. The pasha would first be visited by a consul, which amounted to an initial inspection and warning. After this, representatives of the Christian communities would pay visits to the pasha, who would give them certain promises. At the beginning of the term of duty an agreement would be established between the pasha, the defterdar and the local council, and thus a certain improvement would be observed in the administration of local affairs. However, a short while afterwards, the pasha would begin to receive large amounts of bribes in return for appointing a certain individual to a post or to exempt him from legal inspection. As this development progressed, the former agreement between the pasha, the defterdar and the local council would be replaced by a new one about corruption and bribery. The sides who found themselves in a disadvantageous position in a court case would bribe some local members or the head of the local council to turn the course of the case in their own favor. And the pashas, despite being aware of the injustice of the resolutions of the assembly, would condone them. When the affairs came to a head in this way, injustices would come to be openly perpetrated, and poor government turned into a style of its own that no administrator was ashamed of exercising. The Christian and Muslim populace had great difficulty applying to the Sublime Porte about these abuses. Since social organization, as well as the mutual trust of people in each other, was poor, individuals mostly found themselves compelled to deal with problems on their own.<sup>457</sup>

Many times, conflict of interests could develop between the directors and provincial treasurers. As the two sides kept struggling with each other, great disturbances would develop in the administration. At the beginning of the 1860s,

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<sup>457</sup> TNA, FO 78/1212 (Consul W. R. Holmes' message sent from Diyarbekir to Lord Clarendon on April 7, 1856).

Governor of Tulça(Tulcea) Zeki Efendi and finance scribe(*mal katibi*) Münib Efendi accused each other of corruption. But as the official investigation ended, it was found that both Zeki Efendi and Münib Efendi had acquired large amounts of money by dishonest means.<sup>458</sup>

The governors could sometimes overlook crimes and delicts in return for bribes, or seek to gain personal profit by collecting double the sum fixed for that region. Since there was no life or property security in such regions, foreign travelers passing through could be subjected to all kinds of attacks and violence. The complaints sent by foreign legations mostly remained without result, as the administrators under blame, with their cunning, always managed to belie these claims.<sup>459</sup>

However, foreign consuls deepened the administrative crisis in some regions. In *The Times*' correspondent's words, every consul in the Ottoman Empire assumed that he was sent to rule the province. In many cases, the Ambassadors could not control the consuls.<sup>460</sup> Sometimes consuls made charges against pashas because of trivial and personal causes.<sup>461</sup> Foreign Powers meddling of the local issues many times made the provinces more ungovernable. In 1859, unpleased from the dictatorial attitudes of foreign consuls in the provinces, Henry Bulwer, the British Ambassador in Istanbul, warned the British consuls not to use violent language and display overbearing manners in their relations with the governors of the Ottoman provinces.<sup>462</sup>

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<sup>458</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.MVL. 124/69.

<sup>459</sup> *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, accompanying the annual message of the President to the first session thirty-eight congress, part II* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864), 1083 (E. Joy Morris' message from Constantinople to William H. Seward, dated November 11, 1862).

<sup>460</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, March 19, 1858.

<sup>461</sup> TNA, FO 78/1438 (Henry Bulwer's message from Istanbul to Lord John Russell dated December 5, 1859).

<sup>462</sup> TNA, FO 78/1427 (Henry Bulwer's circular sent from Istanbul to the British consuls in the Ottoman Empire on January 1, 1859).

The fact that the necessary criteria were not seriously considered in appointing pashas to administrative units, and their resulting abuse of authority in their places of duty, caused the prestige of the Ottoman government to be eroded as well.<sup>463</sup> In a country that housed a multitude of diverse ethnic groups, the presence of such administrators constituted a persisting risk factor.

As for the low-ranking state officials, the reason why they got involved in bribery was the lowness of their salaries, which were by no means sufficient to sustain a living. There were many civil employees who did not receive their salaries even for 10 months.<sup>464</sup> During this period, occasional official letters were being submitted to the Ministry of Finance to request a part of the accrued salaries of certain public servants to satisfy their vital needs.<sup>465</sup> The salaries of the *müdir*s in provincial districts were very low, and they had all kinds of reasons for seeking to increase their income through illegal means.<sup>466</sup> Corruption and bribery had long ceased to be sources of shame even when exposed. The payment of public servants' salaries was occasionally delayed for extended periods of time; recourse was had to the issue of *esham* (securities) to pay these delayed salaries a number of times.<sup>467</sup> However, even loans taken out of foreign financing companies such as Oppenheim were not enough to allow the Ottoman government, then stuck between interests due for new securities (*esham-ı cedide*)<sup>468</sup> and salary payments for provincial public servants and troops, to overcome its problems.<sup>469</sup>

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<sup>463</sup> TNA, FO 78/1209(Consul Sandison's report for the District of Bursa on internal reforms dated March 5, 1856).

<sup>464</sup> *The Times'* correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, June 4, 1863.

<sup>465</sup> For an example of these letters see A.}MKT.NZD. 336/36.

<sup>466</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 9 (Consul Charles J. Calvert's telegram sent from Salonica to Henry Bulwer on July 20, 1860).

<sup>467</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 24/1053.

<sup>468</sup> In 1858, a special administrative commission called *Esham Sandığı* (later *Esham İdare Meclisi*), which included some tradesmen, shopkeepers and few foreign merchants, was set up to regulate the issues related with *esham-ı cedides* (Akyıldız, *Para Pul Oldu*, 76).

<sup>469</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 26/1122.

An official found guilty of such acts and dismissed from his post was generally appointed only a short while after at a new position. Crimes committed through cunning were almost immune from the law. For example, the mushir of Erzurum, Vecihi Pasha was such a corrupt man that when was appointed to Salonica as governor in 1856, this was hailed with delight by everybody in Erzurum; Stratford de Recliffe who was surprised as a result of this appointment, warned the Porte about Vecihi Pasha's misdeeds and bad character.<sup>470</sup> As John Russell indicated, a higher public morality could not be expected to develop under these conditions.<sup>471</sup> Corruption, intolerance and unfair gain had become a veritable lifestyle for local authorities.

It was remarkable that Sultan Abdülmecid warned pashas in provinces to limit the expenditures and avoid luxury and wastage in a *Hatt* (imperial edict) enacted by the influence of Âli and Fuad Pashas on August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1858.<sup>472</sup> However, this corrupt system of local government in the Ottoman Empire could only be abolished through the construction of a new administrative system – something that would be attempted for the first time in 1864.

#### Justice and Security

The decay in the systems of justice and security had gotten out of hand in the Ottoman Empire. The qadis, especially when their time of compulsory retirement was near, sought to gather all the money they could, lowering their “bribery tariffs” and using *ilams*, in particular, to increase their income through law cases pertaining to land ownership. These *ilams* issued by the qadis were mostly put into practice

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<sup>470</sup> TNA, FO 78/1272.

<sup>471</sup> *Turkey. No. 17 (1877)*, 30 ( Lord John Russell's message sent from Foreign Office to Henry Bulwer on January 27, 1862).

<sup>472</sup> A. du Velay, *Essai sur l'Histoire Financiere de la Turquie* (Paris: Arthur Rousseau, 1903), 113-114.

without facing any problems from state authorities.<sup>473</sup> In some places, *naibs* (judges) could demand exorbitant fees from the people.<sup>474</sup> In Tanzimat period, new criminal courts were instituted in various places, but they became functionless within a short period of time.

The police received low salaries as well, and the force was faced with serious discipline issues, so much so that the populace in some places expressed their preference for bandits over the police.<sup>475</sup> While high-ranking administrators received their high salaries regularly, the situation was different when it came down to *zaptiyes* (policemen). In many places, *zaptiyes* were involved in various kinds of illegal activities including the extortion of money from poor people to sustain a living, and sometimes used their official authority to cover up crimes.<sup>476</sup>

Most high-level Ottoman administrators were completely indifferent to this situation. According to Ahmed Vefik Efendi, an intellectual with fluent French and a good reading knowledge of English, there was no sizeable population in İstanbul who had adopted crime as their means of making a living; the greatest threat to security was posed instead by stray dogs.<sup>477</sup> However, what was low in fact was not the amount of crime, but rather the amount of detected crime.<sup>478</sup> Even in places like Pera and Galata, where numerous foreigners lived,<sup>479</sup> police forces and safety

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<sup>473</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 15.

<sup>474</sup> For an official Ottoman document dated 1860, concerning judges' demand of high fees from the people in İškodra, see BOA, A.}MKT. MHM. 168/49.

<sup>475</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 21. In 1857, it was even seen that *zaptiyes* collaborated with bandits in Serez (BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 269/41). Similar cases were observed in Siirt during 1857 (BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 296/68). In the same year, two *zaptiyes* cut the telegraph wires in Harmanlı, Hasköy (BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 283/94). In many cases, *zaptiyes* acted like bandits.

<sup>476</sup> There are many cases related to the illegal activities of *zaptiyes* in the given period. *Zaptiyes* collected food and fodder from people in Avrethisar in 1857 ( BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 301/1), and in Florina and Çarşamba in 1858 (BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 319/53). Also for the illegal activities of *zaptiyes* in Küstendil, Samakov and Tekfurdağı in the year of 1857 see BOA, İ. MVL. 377/16545.

<sup>477</sup> Senior, *Turkey and Greece*, 18.

<sup>478</sup> Senior, *Turkey and Greece*, 67.

<sup>479</sup> About the distinctive place of Pera in the Westernization of Istanbul and Ottoman society, see Kemal H. Karpat, "The Social and Economic Transformation of Istanbul in the Nineteenth Century",

measures were insufficient;<sup>480</sup> therefore Stratford de Redcliffe warned Ottoman authorities several times to reform the police organization in Istanbul.<sup>481</sup> But in some cases, Westerners also became a source of insecurity in the country. Since the Ottoman police did not have the permission to enter houses belonging to the subjects of Foreign Powers, it could not suppress the gambling houses in foreign residences.<sup>482</sup>

In Manastır and other Balkan regions, crime and banditry were on the rise by 1856.<sup>483</sup> The chief role in this development belonged to the release of irregulars, the increase of desertions from the regular forces, and the rebellions in Epirus and Thessaly.<sup>484</sup> In Thessaly, authorities resorted to the employment of Albanian irregulars. However, the inhabitants suffered from the actions of those irregulars.<sup>485</sup>

In Selanik, local authorities mostly employ the lawless men in the government service to keep them in order. But being in the service of government did not change these men's minds, and local authorities did not have the power to punish them. In August 1858, 11 Albanians employed in the police service of Salonica took their arms and deserted. This kind of irregulars who have not been paid for several months, mostly compensate their losses by robbery.<sup>486</sup>

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in Kemal H. Karpat, *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History: Selected Articles and Essays*, (Leiden: Brill, 2002) 272-280.

<sup>480</sup> At the end of May 1857, 20 armed men broke into the house of Georges Timoni, Dragoman to the Swedish Legation, killed his watch-dog and plundered his house (TNA, FO 78/1263 (Stratford Canning's message from Istanbul to Earl of Clarendon, dated June 1, 1857)).

<sup>481</sup> TNA, FO 78/1259. In 1858, Grand Council of Tanzimat (Meclis-i Âli-i Tanzimat) launched a joint project with the embassies in İstanbul on the reformation of police (zaptiye) force (BOA, A.}MKT.NZD. 260/40).

<sup>482</sup> *The Times'* correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, March 8, 1858.

<sup>483</sup> For a letter dated 10 December 1856 (13 Rebiülahir 1273) related to local people's complaints about the banditry in Manastır see BOA, A.}DVN. 119/4.

<sup>484</sup> TNA, FO 78/1202 (Consul Longworth's message sent from Manastır to Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe on July 8, 1856).

<sup>485</sup> TNA, FO 78/1302 (Charles Calvert's message from Larissa to Stratford de Redcliffe, dated February 14, 1857).

<sup>486</sup> TNA, FO 78/1393 (Charles J. Calvert's message from Salonica to the Earl of Malmesbury, dated August 17, 1858).

In other parts of the empire, the crisis of security was also clearly seen. In 1857, even the villages near Antioch were under the continuous attacks of armed bands, and the local authorities were unable to preserve the order in the region.<sup>487</sup> Abdülkerim Agha, who did hijacking in the province of Sivas for fifteen years, could evade all attempts to capture him.<sup>488</sup> The brigandage was no longer a matter of local security, it was a major threat to the fate of reform efforts.

According to Major Gordon, who had been commissioned by the Ottoman government to reform the prisons,<sup>489</sup> the conditions that prevailed in these prisons could normally kill an Englishman within a single week.<sup>490</sup> In criminal cases, which were tried by the local council (Meclis) in Mostar, the religious identity of the offender or victim was decisive in many judicial processes. In the ongoing judicial processes, prisoners were often detained in the district prisons for indefinite periods.<sup>491</sup>

On the other hand, local notables stayed in prison for a very short period of time for the crimes they committed. For example, an Agha, who was condemned to perpetual imprisonment, was released after two years of confinement and became a tax-farmer in the district of Serez. He continued to exploit the inhabitants by using his armed men.<sup>492</sup> In another case, Hasan Efendi, who was an influential mullah in

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<sup>487</sup> TNA, FO 78/1297 (J. H. Skenes' message from Aleppo to Stratford de Redcliffe dated June 16, 1857).

<sup>488</sup> *The Levant Herald*, June 18, 1862.

<sup>489</sup> BOA, A.}DVN.MKL. 3/1.

<sup>490</sup> Senior, *Turkey and Greece*, 70. Many Ottoman documents confirm the observations of Major Gordon. In a letter dated 2 May 1861(hijri 22 Şevval 1277), sent from Grand Vizierate(Sadaret) to Ramiz Pasha who was the governor of Kastamonu, the miserable condition of prisoners resided in the Ottoman jailhouses was stressed(BOA, A.}MKT. MHM. 217/30). Similarly another letter from Grand Vizierate to the governor of Selanik, dated 31 August 1859 ( hijri 3 Safer 1276) mentions the terrible situation in the Selanik jailhouse (BOA, A.}MKT.UM. 363/60).

<sup>491</sup> TNA, FO 78/1382(Jas. Zohrab's report on the working of the Criminal Tribunal established at Mostar in the Herzegovina in 1857(drafted in Mostar on October 27, 1858)).

<sup>492</sup> TNA, FO 78/1393 (Charles J. Calvert's message from Salonica to the Earl of Malmesbury, dated September 28, 1858).

Bayburt and Gümüşhane, badly wounded a Muslim with an iron bar by striking him, released after a short period of confinement.<sup>493</sup>

Nor was there a system of insurance in the country. The damages inflicted by a fire in Manastir were so extensive that the prevailing opinion in the period was that it would take the town years to recover. The Empire lacked a serious policy of repair and restoration against such disasters that occasionally broke out.<sup>494</sup>

The expenses incurred by the state for pensions and charity purposes amounted in all to 215 thousand pounds.<sup>495</sup> Although this sum was quite low, retired military men were at times subject to difficulties created by public servants when they requested their salaries in certain regions including Trablusşam.<sup>496</sup> The public welfare was not fully kept in mind.

As Tchihatcheff remarked, the Ottoman Empire after the Crimean War was still a country with extensive, sparsely populated, fallow lands that lacked proper roads and could only be traversed on horseback – much the same as it was at the time of the declaration of the Tanzimat. Methods of agriculture were still primitive, and those who took the initiative in the matter of railway construction were foreign companies rather than the government itself.<sup>497</sup> In the adverse circumstances that prevailed, the events to accelerate the reform process broke out in 1860 in Mount Lebanon and Syria.

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<sup>493</sup> TNA, FO 78/1396 (British Acting Consul George Stevens' message from Trabzon to the Earl of Clarendon, dated February 23, 1858); BOA, HR.TO.. 229/42.

<sup>494</sup> TNA, FO 78/1764 (Consul Charles Calvert's message sent from Manastir to Lord John Russell on August 20, 1863). About dimensions of the great damage inflicted upon Manastir by the fire, see BOA, İ.MVL. 498/22510.

<sup>495</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 18.

<sup>496</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 275/1.

<sup>497</sup> Tchihatcheff, *Lettres Sur La Turquie*, 45.



### 3.3. Crisis in Mount Lebanon and Syria

The Mount Lebanon and Syria events constituted a turning point in the context of the Christian Question as far as the Empire's relations with the West were concerned. After these events, the West no longer waited for the Ottoman rulers to implement the foreseen reforms, but preferred instead to directly intervene in their internal affairs. The shield that the Ottomans had been using since 1856 against Russia, thanks to their promises of reform and of solving the Christian question was also shattered. The result was that Russia resumed its occasional attempts to play the role of the protector of the Christians in the Ottoman lands, and played that role much more openly.

In fact, there were already signs before 1860 that these things would happen. In April 1856, Muslims in Nabulus attacked the Christians, pillaged their Church, the schoolroom of the Protestant mission and the dwelling of the British Consular Agent.<sup>498</sup> Similarly, reports came in the same year about fanatic attacks made by Muslims against Christians in Gaza and Jerusalem.<sup>499</sup> Even in 1858, Damascus province was in a chaotic situation, the inter-tribal and ethnic clashes frequently occurred; and Ottoman forces were too small to maintain the order.<sup>500</sup> Before 1860, large quantities of weapons were sold throughout the province of Syria, and Ottoman government remained ineffective to control the situation.<sup>501</sup>

The Muslims in Jerusalem, Nazareth, Aleppo and Damascus reacted sharply against the decree of reform (*Islahat Fermani*). Sheikh Emin, who was Kadi of

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<sup>498</sup> "J. L. Porter's letter from Damascus to the Editor", *The Times*, March 25, 1858.

<sup>499</sup> J. Lewis Farley, *The Massacres in Syria* (London: Bradbury and Evans, 1861), 66.

<sup>500</sup> TNA, FO 78/1371 (Henry Bulwer's message from İstanbul to Lord Malmesbury, dated December 8, 1858).

<sup>501</sup> TNA, FO 78/1383 (James Finn's message from Jerusalem to the Earl of Malmesbury dated October 9, 1858).

Nazareth, declared his disregard for Gülhane Rescript of 1856 in his conversation with a British consular agent.<sup>502</sup>

The Druze-Christian conflict that broke out in 1859 in Beit Meri caused erosion in the prestige of men of religion, who had been seen as leaders of the Christian populace up to that time, while Tanyus Şahin, a Maronite peasant leader, came to be regarded as a hero by the young.<sup>503</sup> Şahin's prestige had grown so much by the time of the events of 1860 that he came under great pressure to preserve his reputation. The Christians of Lebanon flooded him with letters requesting help.<sup>504</sup> It was no longer possible to establish control in the region through religious community leaders.

The outbreaks of violence that began in 1859 flared up with the massacres in 1860.

At the end of May 1860, a fight that broke out between a Maronite and a Druze child in Deir-el-Qamar turned into an ethnic conflict spread over all of Lebanon, resulting in the death of many Christians and Druzes and the burning of many villages. What was notable in these events was the inadequacy and occasional bias displayed by the Ottoman administration in the region. There was even news that the Ottoman soldiers in Sidon had joined forces with the Muslim inhabitants against Christians.<sup>505</sup> Although Mustafa Paşa had promised that the small garrison in Baalbek would be reinforced, this promise did not materialize and resulted in the town being plundered by the Druzes.<sup>506</sup> Osman Bey, commander of the Ottoman

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<sup>502</sup> TNA, FO 78/1383 (Vice-Consul E.T. Rogers' report from Caiffa to the British Consul of Jerusalem, dated June 18, 1858).

<sup>503</sup> Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 113.

<sup>504</sup> Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism*, 123-124.

<sup>505</sup> *Papers Relating to the Disturbances in Syria: June 1860* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1860), 16 (Sir Henry Bulwer's message sent from Istanbul to Lord John Russell on June 8, 1860).

<sup>506</sup> *Papers Relating to the Disturbances in Syria*, 24 (Consul Brant's message sent from Damascus(Şam) to Lord John Russell on June 18, 1860).

forces in Hasbeya, managed to collect the guns of the Druzes and Christians and had them loaded onto mules, but while they were being taken unguarded to Damascus, the Druzes looted them.<sup>507</sup> During the clashes in Sidon, in 1860, the authorities of Governor Hurşid Paşa and the Ottoman state, in general, were paralyzed.<sup>508</sup> The few Ottoman soldiers left in Hasbayya and Deir al-Qamar were only able to protect their own lives.<sup>509</sup> As French explorer Antonie d'Abbadie stated, The Turk was nothing but a nominal sovereign in a few spots of Arabia.<sup>510</sup>

The events that had started in May 1860, in Lebanon, spread to Damascus by July. At the time when these events broke out, the majority of the population of Damascus was Muslim.<sup>511</sup> The Christian minority lacked the manpower that would have enabled them to resist the attacks of the Muslims. As a result of the rebellion that erupted on July 9<sup>th</sup>, in Damascus, 800 Christians were killed, and their churches, as well as the consulates of France, Austria and Greece, were pillaged.<sup>512</sup> Fifteen thousand Christians in Damascus were saved thanks to the shelter offered by Abdülkadir-i Cezayiri.<sup>513</sup> His house also served as a refuge for the French, Russian and Greek consuls in Damascus. There were 3-4 thousand Christian refugees in the Castle.<sup>514</sup>

Most of the Christian churches in Damascus were burnt down. One of the first targets of attack was the vice-consulate of Russia.<sup>515</sup> The Druzes as well plunderers from other groups were busy pillaging the city. The Ottoman local

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<sup>507</sup> *Papers Relating to the Disturbances in Syria*, 23(Consul Brant's message sent from Damascus(Şam) to Lord John Russell on June 18, 1860).

<sup>508</sup> Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism*, 141.

<sup>509</sup> Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism*, 142.

<sup>510</sup> "Antonien d'Abbadie's letter to the Editor", *The Times*, July 19, 1858.

<sup>511</sup> Farley, *The Massacres in Syria*, 82.

<sup>512</sup> Farley, *The Massacres in Syria*, 21.

<sup>513</sup> Farley, *The Massacres in Syria*, 80.

<sup>514</sup> *Further Papers Relating to the Disturbances in Syria: June 1860*, 36 (Consul Brant's message sent from Damascus to Consul-General Moore on July 10, 1860).

<sup>515</sup> *Further Papers Relating to the Disturbances in Syria*, 36 (Consul Brant's message sent from Damascus to Consul-General Moore on July 10, 1860).

government, finding its own self helpless, requested a reinforcement of 10,000 soldiers from the Khedive of Egypt.<sup>516</sup> Some of a group of Christian women who had escaped from the massacre in Damascus to the settlements nearby were forcibly converted to Islam, while others were sold to the Bedouin and other Arabs in the desert.<sup>517</sup> The total amount of losses in Damascus was over 2 million pounds.<sup>518</sup>

The Sultan, as well as the reformist pashas, had been unable to foresee that the reforms would result in the change of the traditional social structure.<sup>519</sup> In cities like İstanbul and İzmir, Western-style life did not disturb the sensibilities of the populace; but the population in the eastern parts of the Empire was unable to adapt to the increasing influence of the West and the Christians.<sup>520</sup> In these parts, the influence of traditional authorities declined, while popular figures tried to establish a monopoly by betting their stakes on sectarianism. They were also successful in this through the chaos they brought about.

A factor that contributed to the increase of violence was the traditional indifference of Ottoman administrators. For example, they underestimated the importance of Tanyus Şahin's rebellion in Kisrawan, approaching it with a traditional mentality, bent on camouflaging their shortcomings.<sup>521</sup> Hurşid Paşa in Beirut did not even take into consideration that the Christians and Muslims there had been arming themselves against each other for the last four months.<sup>522</sup> In the view of Hurşid Paşa, Governor of Sidon, the populace was ignorant in any case; what caused the events was not some fundamental problem as such, but only conspirators.<sup>523</sup>

Events were only considered in the context of the loyalty of the populace toward the

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<sup>516</sup> Farley, *The Massacres in Syria*, 22.

<sup>517</sup> Farley, *The Massacres in Syria*, 92.

<sup>518</sup> Farley, *The Massacres in Syria*, 91.

<sup>519</sup> Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism*, 105.

<sup>520</sup> Farley, *The Massacres in Syria*, 70.

<sup>521</sup> Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism*, 105.

<sup>522</sup> Farley, *The Massacres in Syria*, 88.

<sup>523</sup> Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism*, 106.

Ottoman Sultan. In his message dated July 15<sup>th</sup>, 1860 and sent to İstanbul, Hurşid Paşa emphasized the ignorance of the people and the intrigues of foreign agents in his explanation of the causes of the problem,<sup>524</sup> leaving out the inadequacy of the Ottoman administration.

The event was not only a Muslim-Christian conflict. There were also bloody conflicts among the Maronites themselves in Kisrawan. The Druzes killed not only the Christians, but also the Muslim Shibab emirs in Hesbayya.<sup>525</sup>

The biased attitude of the Western Powers in the region also played a role in the increase of ethnic conflicts. In the eyes of France, since the age of the Crusades, the Maronites were an element to be protected.<sup>526</sup> As for Britain and especially the British settlers in Beyrut, from the 1840s onwards they supported the Druzes against the Maronites who were supported by France.<sup>527</sup> In the house of the servant of the Russian consul in Latakia, there was found an unsigned letter containing threats against the Christians. The Russian consul himself incited the other consuls against the local government.<sup>528</sup>

The massacre of Christians in Lebanon was a heavy blow against the imperial reform process known as the Tanzimat. After the events, the Foreign Minister Fuad Paşa, who investigated the massacres, set out for the region and punished a part of the culprits with great severity. The violent punishments meted out by Fuad Paşa were received with praise and appreciation from the West.<sup>529</sup> Ahmed Paşa, the

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<sup>524</sup> Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism*, 142-144.

<sup>525</sup> Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism*, 137.

<sup>526</sup> Bell, *Lord Palmerston*, 268.

<sup>527</sup> Farley, *The Massacres in Syria*, 56.

<sup>528</sup> BOA, A.}AMD. 93/28 (Abru Efendi's telegram to Kabuli Efendi, dated September 15, 1860).

<sup>529</sup> Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism*, 147. As a result of the investigations directed by Fuad Pasha, 224 people and 6 Ottoman officials including Ahmed Pasha were sentenced to death. In total, 643 people were legally punished. For the names of those who were punished see Richard Edwards, *La Syrie 1840-1862; histoire, politique, administration, population, religions et moeurs, événements de 1860 d'après des actes officiels et des documents authentiques* (Paris: Amyot, 1862), 393-410. Also for some documents and information about the activities of Fuad Pasha in Syria, see again Edwards,

governor of Damascus, was brought to Istanbul under arrest and sent back to Beirut after being divested of his titles.<sup>530</sup> Although Fuad Paşa argued that the clash was a result of the long-time struggle between the tribal communities whose ignorance blocked the reform process,<sup>531</sup> this argument failed to satisfy the Europeans. Musurus Efendi, the Ottoman Ambassador in London, was a diplomat with very important connections in Britain, having close relations with high-level politicians and the press.<sup>532</sup> Although he published a series of articles in the *Morning Post*, in 1860, trying to convince the British public opinion that the Ottoman State was powerful enough to solve the Syrian problem on its own and that the safety and freedom of the Christians in the Ottoman Empire were under guarantee, he was unsuccessful.<sup>533</sup>

The events in Syria brought a heavy cost for the Ottoman State. Ottoman government had to offer bonds to the market to indemnify the victims of the events in Syria.<sup>534</sup>

The Western Powers, no longer trusting the Ottoman government, directly intervened in the problem. According to an agreement that the Ottoman Empire signed on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 1860 with Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia and Russia, in Paris, a number of European soldiers, as many as 12,000 if needed, would be dispatched to help establish peace in Syria. The French Emperor promised that he could supply half of this number without delay. Again, the Great Powers promised to establish the fleet that would establish security on the Syrian coast. The period of stay for European soldiers was determined as 6 months. On its part, the Sublime

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164-241; M. Tayyib Gökbilgin, "1840'tan 1861'e Kadar Cebel-i Lübnan Meselesi ve Dürziler", *Belleten*, X/40 (1946), 689-702.

<sup>530</sup> Farley, *The Massacres in Syria*, 87.

<sup>531</sup> Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism*, 3.

<sup>532</sup> Ann Pottinger Saab, *Reluctant Icon: Gladstone, Bulgaria and the working classes, 1856-1878* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1991), 9.

<sup>533</sup> Saab, *Reluctant Icon*, 39-40.

<sup>534</sup> BOA, İ.HR.. 333/21439.

Porte promised to undertake the catering of these forces as much as it could.<sup>535</sup> However, according to the convention signed by the same countries on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 1861 in Paris, the period of stay of the European soldiers in Syria would be extended to June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1861.<sup>536</sup>

The Russians sought to take the initiative in the Eastern Question through Bulgaria, while the French sought to do the same through Syria.<sup>537</sup> According to Palmerston, France planned to keep Syria under occupation for as long as it could, on the pretext of intervening in the crisis there, and intended to have the half-bankrupt Ottoman government finance this costly military intervention.<sup>538</sup> When the news about the massacres of the Christians in Damascus reached France on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1860, Napoleon III and the Foreign Minister Thouvenel resolved for a military intervention. However, as the British government anticipated, France's purpose in this move was not to protect the Maronites, but to take initiative in the Suez Canal project and to secure a good position in the region.<sup>539</sup> With the boost of self-confidence supplied by its acquisition of Nice and Savoy in March 1860, France was now eager to intervene in the Lebanon crisis as well. As a result, a French force was landed in Beirut in August 1860.

It was no longer the Ottomans' own affair to re-establish the order in Lebanon and to carry out reforms, as an international commission was set up for this purpose. According to Article 1 of the protocol signed by Âli Pasha, Lobanov, La Valetta, Prokesch Osten, Henry Bulwer and Goltz in Pera on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 1861, containing the principles for the reorganization of Lebanon, the country was to be

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<sup>535</sup> *Convention between Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, Russia, and Turkey, respecting measures to be taken for the pacification of Syria*. London: Harrison and Sons, 1861.

<sup>536</sup> *Convention between Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, Russia, and Turkey, prolonging the occupation of Syria to June 5, 1861*. London: Harrison and Sons, 1861.

<sup>537</sup> Bell, *Lord Palmerston*, 269.

<sup>538</sup> Bell, *Lord Palmerston*, 270.

<sup>539</sup> M.S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question*, 156; Albrecht-Carrie, *A Diplomatic History of Europe*, 111.

administered by a Christian governor appointed by the Ottoman government. This governor would secure peace and order in the region; appoint administrative officials and judges based on the authority given to him by the Sublime Porte; and act as the chairman of the administrative council.<sup>540</sup>

The central administrative council in Lebanon would have 12 members, two of them Maronites, two Druzes, two Greek Orthodoxes, two Greek Catholics, two Metualis, and two Muslims. Lebanon would be divided into six administrative regions. The administrative officers here would be selected and appointed from amongst the figures of influence in the region.<sup>541</sup>

In each district, there would be a local administrative council between three and six members. The members of this council would represent the interests of the diverse elements in the region. This local council, which was to assemble once a year, would be headed by the chief of the district. Among the main duties of this council were trying administrative law cases, listening to the complaints and requests of the populace, providing the district with the statistical information necessary for determining the tax distribution, and to offer its suggestions in local matters.<sup>542</sup>

In the new system, the administrative districts would be separated into cantons. At the head of each canton, there would be an official who would be appointed by the governor on the recommendation of the district chief, and there would also be an appointed chief in these units. Everybody would be equal before the law. All the feudal privileges enjoyed by the muqata's owners, among others, would be abolished.<sup>543</sup>

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<sup>540</sup> *Documents Diplomatiques:1861* (Paris: Imprimerie impériale, 1862), 63.

<sup>541</sup> *Documents Diplomatiques:1861*, 63-64.

<sup>542</sup> *Documents Diplomatiques:1861*, 64.

<sup>543</sup> *Documents Diplomatiques:1861*, 64.



In each district, there would be a law council with three to six members. Again in the government center, there would be a superior law council with twelve members. The cases between the sides of different confessions would be tried by the local council. An effort was made as well to set out the workings of the legal system in detail. All the commercial cases would be tried in the commercial court in Beirut, including those between an Ottoman subject and an inhabitant of Lebanon under the protection of a foreign power. All members of the administrative and legal councils would be appointed by the governor following negotiations with magistrates and community leaders.<sup>544</sup> All the judges would be salaried.<sup>545</sup>

All the assemblies of the councils would be open to the public, and the proceedings would be recorded by a clerk.<sup>546</sup>

The accountability of state officials, judges and security officers was also covered by the sixteen-article program. It was planned to establish a seven thousand strong police force through the voluntary subscription.<sup>547</sup>

Administrative expenses, public works and common welfare would be prioritized while spending the tax revenues.<sup>548</sup> In the shortest time possible, it was stipulated, a census had to be made and a system of cadastre had to be introduced for all arable lands.

The regulations concerning Lebanon in 1861 could be accepted as an important achievement of the Ottomans in terms of preserving the integrity of the country. However, it paved the way for demands that similar commissions be established for other regions as well. Suggestions similar to the regulations in Lebanon would be brought before the Ottomans during the Balkan crisis in 1876 as

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<sup>544</sup> *Documents Diplomatiques:1861*, 64-65.

<sup>545</sup> *Documents Diplomatiques:1861*, 66.

<sup>546</sup> *Documents Diplomatiques:1861*, 66.

<sup>547</sup> *Documents Diplomatiques:1861*, 66-67.

<sup>548</sup> *Documents Diplomatiques:1861*, 67.

well. The Syrian crisis revealed the necessity of an administrative reform in the Ottoman Empire, which was made up of diverse cultural regions, and it also triggered the new Vilâyet regulations made in 1864. In this context, the Lebanese Regulation of 1861 could be accepted as one of the documents that would serve as a source for the local administrative reform.

Independent of the issues of Syria and Lebanon, the Christian Question in the Ottoman Empire had been brought up by the Great Powers on several previous occasions. The decisive role of the Syrian crisis consisted in its contribution to the Christian Question being more hotly debated in the West.

### **3.4. The Christian Question**

Konstantin Leontiev, one of the leading Russian thinkers of the 19th century, believed that the "Turkish yoke" enabled the Balkan peoples to maintain the old Orthodoxy, by preventing them from falling into the abyss of Europe's democratic process.<sup>549</sup> According to Leontiev, the "Turk" was an obstacle to the infiltration of the Western petty bourgeoisie and liberal values.<sup>550</sup> This situation, which was confirmed by Konstantin Leontiev, actually corresponded to the central points that the West made at the time about the problem of the Ottoman Christians. Since 1860, Westerners had been handling the Ottoman Empire in greater detail and with more courage; according to the West, the most basic question there was the elimination of the oppression of the Ottoman Christians.

The Christian Question in the Ottoman Empire constituted a critical international problem in 1860. After the Russian government stated to the British Government that the Ottoman authorities were displaying great intolerance against

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<sup>549</sup> Nicolas Berdyaev, *Leontiev* (Orono: Academic International, 1968), 53.

<sup>550</sup> Berdyaev, *Leontiev*, 54.

the Christians living in the country and oppressing them, Henry Bulwer instructed the British Consuls in the Ottoman dominions to write their opinions about the problems and abuses in the regions they served, the remedies for these problems, the improvement of the *reaya*'s status since the declaration of the Tanzimat (1839) and the Islahat Fermanı (Reform Edict of 1856), and finally about the implementation of the objectives that the Sultan declared through these edicts. Accordingly, Henry Bulwer addressed 24 questions to the consuls.<sup>551</sup>

In response to Bulwer's demand, a great number of reports and complaints were received about the cases of injustice against Christians, especially those in the Balkans. Christians did not have any rights to speak in local councils called "Meclis-i Kebir" in these regions; the presence of Christian members in the local councils was completely a matter of formality.<sup>552</sup> A local magnate named Halil Bey could do anything he desired in Manastır. Dismissed from the Local Council on account of his duplicity, this man managed to get back to the same position a few years later. Although an accountant sent from İşkodra did his utmost to remedy the situation in Manastır, this led to the hostility of certain groups and government officials towards him.<sup>553</sup>

Landowners in Manastır were mostly Muslims, while Christian laborers frequently fell into the hands of Muslim usurers, because of their debts.<sup>554</sup> Promises of the Reform Edict of 1856 remained on paper. As of 1861, the former land system in Macedonia maintained its existence along with all the concomitant problems; the

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<sup>551</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 2-4.

<sup>552</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 4-5 (Manastır Consul Richard Geo. Abbott's report to Henry Bulwer, dated July 9, 1860).

<sup>553</sup> *Rusiia, Frantsia y Blgarskoto Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie 1860-1869*, ed. Dimitar Kosev (Sofya: Izdvo na Bulgarskata akademiia na naukite, 1978), 128 (Consul M. Hitrov's message sent from Bitola (Manastır) to Russian Ambassador Lobanov-Rostovski in Istanbul on May 23, 1861). Indeed, Ottoman government decided to sent Accountant Talat Efendi back to İşkodra and continuation of his trials there (BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 518/28).

<sup>554</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 5 (Manastır Consul Richard Geo. Abbott's report to Henry Bulwer, dated July 9, 1860).

same was true of the Greek Clergy.<sup>555</sup> Even Hitrov, the Russian consul in Manastır, heard the complaints of both Christian and Muslim farmers about the abuses perpetrated against them. *Mültezims* (tax-farmers) were among the main subjects of the complaints in Manastır.<sup>556</sup> The Christians also did not have the right to keep bells in the churches of Manastır.<sup>557</sup>

Bandits became more effective around Manastır with the arrival of spring. Additionally, the ineffectiveness of the government caused the people to travel in a region of poor security. The wealthy merchants of Pirlepe had received letters involving money requests and death threats. Furthermore, the murder of a Bulgarian by a Muslim in Pirlepe led to an ethnic riot among the Bulgarians in April 1861.<sup>558</sup>

The army, which was normally the most important power expected to provide security, was almost absent from the scene. Soldiers in Manastır looked as if they lacked new clothes, and there were a great number of problems linked to the subsistence of the army, because of the fact that there was no possibility of making immediate payments for army contractors.<sup>559</sup> An Ottoman soldier even told Hitrov that they would take part in banditry if their salaries were not paid within one month's period.<sup>560</sup>

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<sup>555</sup> *Rusiia, Frantsia y Blgarskoto Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie 1860-1869*, 125 (Consul M. Hitrov's message sent from Bitola(Manastır) to Russian Ambassador Lobanov-Rostovski in Istanbul on April 1, 1861).

<sup>556</sup> *Rusiia, Frantsia y Blgarskoto Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie 1860-1869*, 128 (Consul M. Hitrov's message sent from Bitola(Manastır) to Russian Ambassador Lobanov-Rostovski in Istanbul on May 23, 1861).

<sup>557</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 5 (Manastır Consul Richard Geo. Abbott's report to Henry Bulwer, dated July 9, 1860). Also in a letter sent from Grand Vizierate to the governor of Selanik in 1858, it was stressed that keeping and ringing bells were forbidden in the places where Christians and Muslims live together (BOA, A.}MKT.MHM. 130/75).

<sup>558</sup> *Rusiia, Frantsia y Blgarskoto Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie 1860-1869*, 127 (Consul M. Hitrov's message sent from Bitola(Manastır) to Russian Ambassador Lobanov-Rostovski in Istanbul on May 2, 1861).

<sup>559</sup>TNA, FO 78/1600 (Consul Charles J. Calvert's message sent from Manastır(Monastır) to Sir Henry Bulwer on March 7, 1861).

<sup>560</sup> *Rusiia, Frantsia y Blgarskoto Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie 1860-1869*, 129 (Consul M. Hitrov's message sent from Bitola (Manastır) to Russian Ambassador Lobanov-Rostovski in Istanbul on May 23, 1861). Ottoman authorities admitted the prevalence of disorder in administration and security in

The Christians of Selanik (Salonica) were also facing the same problems. The proportion of the Muslims in Selanik was 31 percent, whereas nearly 64 percent of the population was Christian; however, Muslims were more powerful in the courts and local councils. But the question was not only the disproportionate power of the Muslims in the region. The Christian authorities called *Kocabaşı* were still more cruel and greedy than the Muslim authorities in their respective areas. The priests and metropolitans took part in abuses including oppression and misappropriation. *Kocabaşıs* were collecting extra money from the people in the guise of “gifts.”<sup>561</sup>

The Christians in Üsküb(Skopje) were also complaining about the practices of the local security forces and the local council. The oppressive attitude of the Greek Clergy included the infliction of corporal punishment. As of 1860, humiliating phrases such as *Kafir* (Infidel) and *Giaour* were being used by the administrators against the Christians in Üsküb. The *iltizam* (tax-farming) system was the main cause of the oppression faced by the peasants.<sup>562</sup>

All these problems were clearly observable in the Balkans, but there were Christians living in every other part of the Empire, and the same problems could be encountered in those regions as well. In Halep, for example, agricultural production went into a serious decline and this situation began to threaten the public health in the region.<sup>563</sup> Due to the never-ending uncertainties, the circulation of capital had dropped in towns, while half of the looms had stopped working. All the land owners and farmers in Halep were Muslims. However, almost all of the merchants in the towns were Christians. Those involved in manufacturing were also Christians. Fear

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Manastır in a letter from Grand Vizierate to Abdüllatif Subhi Bey sent in July 1863 (BOA, A.}MKT.MHM. 267/72). In response, Abdüllatif Subhi Bey stressed that Manastır was in a condition of total insecurity (BOA, A.}MKT.MHM. 268/101).

<sup>561</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 10-12 (Consul Charles J. Calvert’s telegram sent from Salonica to Henry Bulwer on July 20, 1860).

<sup>562</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 35-36 (Üsküb Vice-Consul J. E. Blunt’s report to Henry Bulwer dated July 14, 1860).

<sup>563</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 370/91; BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 375/51.

of mistreatment was among the reasons why the Aleppo Christians had no wish to get conscripted in the army. Churches were built in Kesab, Maraş, Ayntab and Kilis. The only incident that took place after their construction was the recitation of Shahada by a group in a church in Antioch.<sup>564</sup>

Kurdistan Province was the subject of many complaints regarding the administrators' and local notables' practices towards Christians. According to the petition of Armenian Patriarch dated 20 May 1858 (7 Şevval 1274), Abdal Ağa who was the *müdür* of Kulp district in the sanjak of Diyarbekir, oppressed Christians throughout his term and committed crimes including collecting extra fees from the people and rape with his brothers.<sup>565</sup> Christians of Kurdistan province, who were under the oppression of aghas and tax-farmers(both Christian and Muslim), gave a petition to Ali Rıza Pasha, who was the Governor of Kurdistan from 1860 to 1861. But as Ali Rıza Pasha gave credence to the testimony of aghas', many Christians of the region migrated from the region.<sup>566</sup> The migration of Christians led to the increase of social and economic problems in the region.

### Local Councils

As Stratford de Redcliffe stressed, in 1857, Muslim fanaticism still prevailed throughout the lower classes, landed gentry and state officials.<sup>567</sup> In these circumstances, the local councils that were established to provide a more corporate structure and to promote the participation of local forces in the administration were among the most serious causes of the aggravation of the Christian problem. The main

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<sup>564</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 49-51 (Consul J.H. Skene's message sent from Halep(Aleppo) to Sir Henry Bulwer on, August 4, 1860).

<sup>565</sup> BOA, MVL 570/62.

<sup>566</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 544/53.

<sup>567</sup> TNA, FO 78/1270 (Stratford Canning's message from Therapia to Earl of Clarendon dated September 7, 1857).

source of the reaction against and the pressure on the Christians was not the appointed officials, but the local notables.

In Üsküb (Skopje), the efforts of the governors to implement the reforms had succumbed in face of the resistance of the local councils. According to Hitrov, the Russian consul in Manastır(Bitola), the local council was the promoter and the source of many evils in the region. Criminals could be protected by the members of these local councils, especially for the crimes committed against Christians. The *müdir*s were mostly unskilled and inactive. The efforts of the skilled administrators who desired to improve the situation in the country failed because of the machinations of the local councils and the inaction of the Ottoman Government.<sup>568</sup> Even the governor of Edirne, Süleyman Pasha, known as a governor who had an ear for the complaints of the people, remained under the direct influence of the malfeasant accountant Tahir Efendi and some *beys* during his six months in service.<sup>569</sup>

Disproportionate representation in local councils was a problem all over the country. Even if there were six thousand Armenians and twenty thousand Greeks in a region, these elements were only represented by a member each in the *Meclis-i Kebir*. Although only two thousand out of the twelve thousand people living in Giresun were Turks, they were represented in the council with seven members while the Christians had only two representatives.<sup>570</sup> The only non-Muslim member of the

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<sup>568</sup> *Rusiia, Frantsia y Blgarskoto Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie 1860-1869*, 148-149 (Consul M. Hitrov's message sent from Bitola(Manastır) to Russian Ambassador Lobanov-Rostovskii in Istanbul on September 14, 1861).

<sup>569</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.1, ch. 2* (Sofia: Izd-vo na Bulgarskata akademiia na naukite, 1987), 152 (N. P. Shishkin's report sent from Edirne to O. P. Kovalevsky on September 3, 1861).

<sup>570</sup> Tchihatcheff, *Lettres Sur La Turquie*, 59.

local council in Bursa was an Armenian jeweler, and because of his trade relations, he condoned all the unlawful practises of the other members of the council.<sup>571</sup>

The representation of the Christians remained quite weak in the Ottoman state structure, compared with their population and general educational level. Ottoman statesmen were never able to acknowledge that the Christian Question would be aggravated unless this representation problem was solved. As long as that problem existed, the local councils remained as a tool used by the Muslims to react against the increasing Christian power, and also as a tool used by local Muslim notables to maintain the old regime of corruption.

#### The Increasing Unrest among the Christians

It is difficult to state that any sharp economic decline that occurred in the Empire's European territories after 1856 was of the kind that would have increased the unrest among Ottoman Christians. It should be noted, however, that the problems issuing from the government's practices in the area of pig breeding caused considerable disturbance. Pigs were bred in great numbers in the European territories of the Empire, and this was an important source of income in the Balkans; however, the pig tax, which was 3 *guruş* until 1858, was increased to 10 *guruş* in 1858.<sup>572</sup> This situation produced negative effects in a great variety of areas from nutrition to the welfare of the people; therefore, the new policy related to the pig tax increased social tensions. According to the information given by the Filibe Consul Blunt, the number of pigs in Filibe was not more than thirteen thousand in 1860, whereas it had been thirty thousand in 1857; the number of pigs in Niş was no more than seventeen

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<sup>571</sup> TNA, FO 78/1209(Consul Sandison's report for the District of Bursa on internal reforms dated March 5, 1856).

<sup>572</sup> James Farley, *Turkey* (London: Sampson Low, Son, and Marston, 1866), 110.



thousand in 1860, whereas it had been thirty thousand in 1857. The peasants were killing the piglets in order to avoid paying more taxes.<sup>573</sup>

The main problems that increased the unrest of the Christians arose from issues related to justice and security. In this context, non-voluntary or voluntary religious conversion of Christian girls was common and constituted one of the main practices that raised tensions among the Christians in the 19th century. Such religious conversions following the abduction of girls were usual in Diyarbekir (Kurdistan) and in Harput.<sup>574</sup> However, these religious conversions also took place under the influence of romantic feelings towards Muslim young men.<sup>575</sup> Forced conversion of Christian girls to Islam was especially common in northern Albania.<sup>576</sup> Such cases of forced conversion occasionally involved figures from the state. The Governor of Erzurum was heard to have detained 2 Christian girls in his home and put pressure on these girls to convert to Islam in 1858.<sup>577</sup> On the other hand, Muslim people and state officials were not very tolerant towards *irtidad* (Abandonment of Islam). In Crete, A Muslim girl's and a young Muslim's wish to change their religion created disturbance among local Muslims and Ottoman authorities in 1857.<sup>578</sup> In that sense, it should be also noted that in the province of Trabzon, Ottoman government did not permit Kurumlis<sup>579</sup> to make the profession of their religion, Christianity.<sup>580</sup> In 1858,

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<sup>573</sup> BOA, HR. SYS. 1917/22 (British Vice-Consul J. S. Blunt's message sent from Üsküb (Skopje) to J. A. Longworth's on April 26, 1859); *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 8.

<sup>574</sup> TNA, FO 78/1212 (Consul W. R. Holmes' message sent from Diyarbekir to Lord Clarendon on September 8, 1856).

<sup>575</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 7 (Manastır Consul Richard Geo. Abbott's report to Henry Bulwer, dated July 9, 1860); *Christians in Turkey*, 33 (Consul Charles Blunt's message sent from İzmir to Sir Henry Bulwer on July 28, 1860).

<sup>576</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 21 (Consul General Longworth's message sent from Belgrade to Henry Bulwer on July 14, 1860).

<sup>577</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 315/82.

<sup>578</sup> TNA, FO 78/1308 (H.S. Ongley's message from Crete to Stratford de Redcliffe, dated April 14, 1857).

<sup>579</sup> Kurumlis were Crypto-Christians who lived in Trabzon region. According to George Stevens, who was British Acting Consul in Trabzon, there were 17260 Kurumlis in 1857. For detailed information about Kurumlis see Anthony Bryer "The Crypto-Christians of the Pontos and Consul William Gifford Palgrave of Trebizond." *Deltio Kentrou Mikraasiatikon Spoudon*, no. 4 (1983): 13-68.

Donald Sandison, who was British consul in Bursa, reported that various persons wished to return to Christianity came to the British consulate for assistance. He also reported the case of 70 Albanian Muslim exile families in Bursa that were secret Catholics. Those families fled from persecution but they faced with hunger and disease in Mihaliç where they were located. Sandison asked the governor of Bursa for help but surprised with the inhumane attitude of the Pasha related to this problem.<sup>581</sup>

One of the main factors that increased the anger of Christians against the state was the unjust decisions in judicial cases. At the end of 1857, according to the statement of Dr. Dickson, a Greek woman was found murdered near the Telli Tabya coastal battery in Istanbul; although it was known almost for certain that a soldier from the battery had committed the murder, he went unpunished.<sup>582</sup>

In the courts, the testimony of Christians against Muslims was refused.<sup>583</sup> For example, a Bulgarian was badly injured as the result of an attack by two Albanians in Kumanova, but the council in Prizren dismissed the case as the only evidence came from a Christian.<sup>584</sup> A Christian named Mane was killed by a Muslim named İsmail Tikve in Papadia village in April 1861, but İsmail Tikve was released after having been imprisoned for six days.<sup>585</sup> These cases were probably considered trivial by the Ottoman authorities.

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<sup>580</sup> TNA, FO 78/1396 (British Acting Consul George Stevens' message from Trabzon to the Earl of Malmesbury, dated April 16, 1858).

<sup>581</sup> TNA, FO 78/1398 (Consul Sandison's message to the Earl of Malmesbury from Bursa, dated December 16, 1858).

<sup>582</sup> Senior, *Turkey and Greece*, 67-68.

<sup>583</sup> In Harput, the testimony of Christians was refused even in a suit between Protestants in 1857 (BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 286/4).

<sup>584</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 36 (Üsküp Vice-Consul J. E. Blunt's report to Henry Bulwer dated July 14, 1860).

<sup>585</sup> *Rusiia, Frantsia y Blgarskoto Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie 1860-1869*, 129 (Consul M. Hitrov's message sent from Bitola(Manastir) to Russian Ambassador Lobanov-Rostovski in Istanbul on May 23, 1861).

Local powers were organized rather well all around the Empire when it came to corruption and persecution of the people. Christians experienced several problems because of the alliance between *Kocabaşıs* and officials. It was reported in 1858 that *Kocabaşıs* (millet administrative leaders) and *zaptiyes* (policemen) of villages had forced villagers to work without wage a few times in Adana.<sup>586</sup> In North-Western Anatolia, *Kocabaşıs* were lending money to villagers at interest and, when the deadline of repayment had arrived, they were buying villagers' produce at less than half of their real prices under the cover of interest payment. The villagers, thus becoming increasingly poorer, would turn into servants for these non-Muslim groups. The heavy burden of exploitation had fallen even over villages of a few hundred households.<sup>587</sup> For governors appointed by a clumsy government apparatus, it was too hard to understand that such details could eventually lead to social explosions.

#### The Position of External Powers

The factors that aggravated the Christian Question were not all of the internal origin. In 1860, Henry Bulwer, the Consul of Britain in Istanbul, was of the opinion that some foreigners virtually struggled to sow dissatisfaction among Christian people and to provoke them to raise complaints that would be heard by the European powers. By this way, the Slavic people could rest assured that they would gain independence through the protection of foreign powers.<sup>588</sup>

The two major powers that supported revolutionary movements in the Balkans were Russia and Serbia. As of 1860, individuals educated in Russia and

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<sup>586</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 306/3.

<sup>587</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 488/22131(Ahmed Vefik Efendi's letter to Grand Vizierate dated 31 May 1863 (Rumi 19 Mayıs 1279).

<sup>588</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 2.

Serbia was provoking students while teaching them in the Christian schools of Niş.<sup>589</sup> In 1860, a Bulgarian with Ottoman citizenship was arrested for carrying out Russian propaganda around Manastır. It had been revealed that this person was in correspondence with the Mount Athos monks as well as with the Russian consuls.<sup>590</sup>

Apparently, the Greek Clergy were acting as a defuser against the increasing Panslav agitation in the regions such as Macedonia.<sup>591</sup> On the other hand, however, the existence of the members of this clergy was another factor that increased the number of problems in the region. The numbers of Greek Archbishops was not less than 12 in the *Eyalet* (Province) of Rumelia, and Christian people had to pay them.<sup>592</sup> As a result, the combination of the geographical proximity of Serbia and Montenegro and the malfeasance of the Ottoman administrators in the Balkans considerably raised the possibility of revolution.<sup>593</sup>

Despite the Russian defeat in the Crimean War, many Ottoman subjects from Greek and Armenian origin began to seek the protection of Russia more than ever. It could be considered a betrayal that the Christian peoples in the Ottoman Empire demanded support from Russia. However, it was quite expected for a population that was fairly distant from Western culture and that had continuously undergone harassment and humiliation to feel sympathy towards a great power that had cultural

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<sup>589</sup> *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli Teftişi*, ed. Yonca Köksal (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 2007), 515 (Secret Instructions sent to Governor of Silistre, Osman Pasha, on August 19, 1860).

<sup>590</sup> TNA, FO 78/1600 (Consul Charles J. Calvert's message sent from Manastır (Monastir) to Sir Henry Bulwer on April 3, 1861).

<sup>591</sup> *Macedonia, Documents and Material*, ed. Dimitur Konstantin Kosev (Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1979), 212 (Consul Hitrov's report to Nikolai Ignatiev, dated January 16, 1864).

<sup>592</sup> TNA, FO 78/1764 (Consul Charles Calvert's message sent from Manastır to Sir Henry Bulwer on September 3, 1863).

<sup>593</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy*, t.1, ch. 2, 317 (M. I. Zolotarev's report sent from Edirne to E. P. Novikov, dated February 12, 1863).

connections with them.<sup>594</sup> Furthermore, there was no other authority that the Ottoman Christians could apply to in the frequent cases of unjust treatment they faced.<sup>595</sup> Therefore, in 1863, 1,400 Armenian families, tired of oppression in Diyarbekir, emigrated to Russian Armenia.<sup>596</sup> Russia also displayed a welcoming attitude towards the immigration of Greeks and Armenians from Anatolia to the Caucasus. For this reason, Russian authorities supported this trend by granting passports to them.<sup>597</sup> The immigrants were provided with convenience in issues such as military duty, and tax, and promised some lands as well. Additionally, immigrants were charged with the duty to renew the roads in the places they settled. Greek and Armenian families were allowed to immigrate to the Caucasus as well as to the Kuban province in accordance with these rules.<sup>598</sup>

In many cases related to justice, Christians were looking for the support of foreign consuls. In one of these cases, a Christian named Papa Stoytcha had been killed by a Muslim named Şerif with a gun in Florina, and then the son of the murdered person, Anton, had attacked Şerif. When the case was brought before the court, Şerif, who was the relative of a member of the local council, accused Anton by claiming that the testimony of Christians was invalid. This grew into a central issue

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<sup>594</sup> *Rusiia, Frantsia y Blgarskoto Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie 1860-1869*, 126 (Consul M. Hitrov's message sent from Bitola(Manastır) to Russian Ambassador Lobanov-Rostovski in Istanbul on April 1, 1861).

<sup>595</sup> In their petition to British Embassy, Christian inhabitants of Crete stated that they were unable to send their grievances and demands to the Sultan; therefore they used the channel of European consuls to submit their complaints (TNA, FO 78/1363, The Petition of the Christian inhabitants of Crete from Canea to British Embassy, dated May 21, 1858). In these circumstances of injustice and insecurity, by 1858, both the Christian and Muslim inhabitants of Candia were armed and both sides were awaiting the right time for the armed conflict (TNA, FO 78/1365, Henry Bulwer's message from Istanbul to Earl Malmesbury, dated July 20, 1858).

<sup>596</sup> *Turkey. No. 17 (1877)*, 110 (Lord John Russell's message sent from Foreign Office to Henry Bulwer on August 13, 1863).

<sup>597</sup> TNA, FO 78/1396 (British Acting Consul George Stevens' message from Trabzon to the Earl of Clarendon, dated February 19, 1858).

<sup>598</sup> Aliy Kasumov-Hasan Kasumov, *Çerkes Soykırımı: Çerkeslerin XIX. Yüzyıl Kurtuluş Savaşı Tarihi* (Ankara: TAKAV, 1995), 37-38.

for all Christians in Florina, who sent delegations to the Russian and Greek consuls to receive their support in resolving this issue.<sup>599</sup>

A similar search for foreign support took place in 1865 in Avlonya. Although the price of the grain was excessive in Avlonya, the akçe in circulation was at a lower value than that determined by the Ottoman government. The value of the Mecidiye gold coins had dropped from 136 *guruş* to 100 *guruş*, and the value of the *guruş* had dropped from 48 *pare* to 40 *pare*. People did not have money or bread. Although Ottoman officers could have eliminated this problem by building roads, their lack of concern about the subject caused complaints among the people. As the *Çorbacı*s (Christian Notables) used the aid sent from Russia for their own interests, instead of distributing them among poor people, a group of more than a hundred beggar women applied to the Metropolit of the region. When they were not received by the Metropolit, they applied to the Russian consulate, which provided them with bread. The Greek consul also helped poor people at this time.<sup>600</sup>

Russia was not the only foreign power that was active in the Balkans. In the same period, there were Greek spies in Thessaly who were provoking people. Greek nationalists had launched activities to create a fund in order to buy support in Thessaly.<sup>601</sup> The consul of France in Filibe was carrying out intensive Roman Catholic propaganda in this region.<sup>602</sup>

Although the Ottoman administrators were continuously complaining about the provocation of Christians by foreign powers, their negligence to address injustice

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<sup>599</sup> *Rusiia, Frantsia y Blgarskoto Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie 1860-1869*, 129 (Consul M. Hitrov's message sent from Bitola (Manastır) to Russian Ambassador Lobanov-Rostovski in Istanbul on May 23, 1861).

<sup>600</sup> BOA, HR. MKT. 382/33 (Letter of Austrian Consul in Yanya, dated April 30, 1865).

<sup>601</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.1, ch. 2*, 296 (A. E. Lagovskii's letter sent from Salonica to E. P. Novikov on January 5, 1863).

<sup>602</sup> TNA, FO 195/719 (Britain's Vice-Consul in Edirne, Blunt's message to Sir Henry Bulwer dated July 25, 1862).

and other problems in the country allowed them, especially Russia, to take the initiative in the Christian Question.

#### The Inspection of Grand Vizier Kâbrîşlı Mehmed Paşa in Rumelia

The first event that raised the Christian Question in the Ottoman Empire to the status of an international problem, after the Crimean War, was the Gorchakov Circular dated May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1860. The Russian Foreign Minister Gorchakov stated in his circular that the situation was grave in regions like Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina; that the status of the Christians was getting gradually worse despite the promises of Ottoman Empire; and that this condition posed a menace for both the Ottoman Empire and the general peace. According to Gorchakov, it was urgently required to conduct local inspections after negotiating with the European delegates, and it was necessary to form a concert between the European powers and the Ottomans, one that would provide the measures necessary to be taken for the improvement of the status of and relations with Christians. This could not be deemed an interference with Ottoman prestige.<sup>603</sup> According to Fuad Pasha, however, the real aim of this interference was to violate the Ottomans' rights of independence under the name of preserving the existence of the Empire.<sup>604</sup> The Gorchakov Circular of 1860 caused a panic among the Rumelian notables and soldiers; now everyone was expecting a Russian move from the north.<sup>605</sup> This circular also implied that Russia would henceforth pursue a more active policy in the issue of Ottoman Christians, and intervene in the affairs of the Ottoman Empire much more frequently.

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<sup>603</sup> *Les Réformes et la Protection des Chrétiens en Turquie, 1673-1904*, 80-81(Gorchakov's circular dated May 20, 1860).

<sup>604</sup> *Ottoman Diplomatic Documents On The Eastern Question IV, Reforms and Foreign Intervention: Rumeli and Syria 1859-1862*, ed. Sinan Kunalp (İstanbul: The Isis Press, 2011), 41.

<sup>605</sup> *Îz Arkhivata na Naiden Gerov*, vol. 2, 551 (Sava Filaretov's letter sent from Sofya to Naiden Gerov dated June 11, 1860).

After the situation of the Ottoman Empire was questioned on an international level, as a result of the Gorchakov Circular, Grand Vizier Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha was compelled to carry out inspections in Rumelia. According to the inspection reports, Antimos, Metropolit of Şehirköy, had seduced and impregnated a woman and used the *Çorbacı*'s power to cover up this issue.<sup>606</sup> Bulgarian priest Kostyentus had similarly given Hungarian gold to Zeynel Pasha, Governor of Niş, to cover up his sexual intercourse with a young girl.<sup>607</sup> Zeynel Pasha was at the top of the bribery mechanism.<sup>608</sup> Here it is important to note that Zeynel who was sentenced to exile as a result of Mehmed Pasha's inspection, would be pardoned after a very short period of time in 1862.<sup>609</sup>

In Vidin, customs officers were charging extra fees, and they exceeded the required amount by registering more sheep during the collection of the sheep-tax (Ağnam).<sup>610</sup> Although the tenure of the *Çorbacı* was limited to Vidin, this was not complied with; *Çorbacı* continued to defalcate.<sup>611</sup>

As a result of the inspection of Grand Vizier Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa in Rumelia, it was understood that the *mültezims* (tax-farmers) were the cause of many cases of abuse.<sup>612</sup> It was decided to bring Karagöz Mustafa, the tithe tax-farmer (*aşar mültezimi*) of Karaağaç village in Hezargrad, before the court on the charge of

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<sup>606</sup> *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli Teftişi*, 402-403 (Report of Artin from Niş Investigation Commission, Gavril Efendi, Futyadi Efendi, Second Dragoman Pavlaki Efendi, Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, Meclis-i Vala member Rasim Bey and Beylikçi Atıf Bey dated August 3, 1860).

<sup>607</sup> *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli Teftişi*, 418.

<sup>608</sup> *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli Teftişi*, 247-249.

<sup>609</sup> BOA, İ. MVL.. 477/ 21617. Even worse, the dismissed officials could be appointed to the same position some time later. A Kurdish notable named Mehmed Bey, who was dismissed from the governorship of Eleşkirt and exiled to Erzurum in hijri 1265 (1848-1849) because of his active role in many crimes committed against Armenians, appointed to this position in 1859 and continued to oppress the people (BOA, A.)MKT.UM..381/56).

<sup>610</sup> *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli Teftişi*, 84 (Instruction sent to Vidin Accountant Hurşid Bey, dated July 4, 1860).

<sup>611</sup> *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli Teftişi*, 86.

<sup>612</sup> *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli Teftişi*, 60,92.



collecting extra taxes from the people.<sup>613</sup> There were also Christians among the *mültezims* collecting extra taxes.<sup>614</sup> Mustafa Efendi, the judge (*naib*) of Radomir district, had collected three *guruş* from each Christian house under the name of *müruriye*.<sup>615</sup>

The collection methods of the tithe (*aşar*), the loose local police organization, and the poor condition of the roads were subjects of complaints came from all people throughout the empire.<sup>616</sup> The great number of the judicial cases in the inspection reports indicated institutional problems and revealed the poor quality of the *zaptiye*-police force, which was unable to provide security.

As a result of the inspection, many administrators and many people from various ethnic origins who had broken the law were put on trial.<sup>617</sup> The Jews in Vidin received permission from Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha to build a synagogue.<sup>618</sup> It was decided to build a maternity hospital in Vidin.<sup>619</sup> Three Bulgarian boys residing at Şumnu (Shumen) were accepted to a medical school (Mekteb-i Tıbbiye) in Istanbul.<sup>620</sup>

According to Longworth, the Consul of Belgrade, Mehmed Pasha was not pleased to be sent on such an inconclusive duty.<sup>621</sup> After all, the public security cases which had decreased during the inspection of Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha increased again around Manastır after the end of the inspection tours.<sup>622</sup> The inspections of Kıbrıslı

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<sup>613</sup> *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli Teftişi*, 271.

<sup>614</sup> *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli Teftişi*, 137.

<sup>615</sup> *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli Teftişi*, 161.

<sup>616</sup> A. du Velay, *Essai sur l'Histoire Financiere de la Turquie*, 116.

<sup>617</sup> *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli Teftişi*, 462- 463.

<sup>618</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 26 (Vice-Consul Mayers' message sent from Rusçuk to Henry Bulwer on July 15, 1860).

<sup>619</sup> *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli Teftişi*, 90.

<sup>620</sup> *Sadrazam Kıbrıslı Mehmed Emin Paşa'nın Rumeli Teftişi*, 265.

<sup>621</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 20 (Consul General Longworth's message sent from Belgrade to Henry Bulwer on July 14, 1860).

<sup>622</sup> *Rusiia, Frantsia y Blgarskoto Osoboditelno Dvizhenie 1860-1869*, 127 (Consul M. Hitrov's message sent from Bitola(Manastır) to Russian Ambassador Lobanov-Rostovski in Istanbul on May 2, 1861).

Mehmed Pasha would not persuade Europe to abandon its firm stance on the Christian Question. According to Gorchakov, direct intervention by Europe was the only way to overcome the crisis.<sup>623</sup>

Countless illegal acts that were detected and complaints received during the inspection tours in Rumelia revealed that the situation in the Balkans had gotten out of hand, and most favorable conditions for riots would develop if a radical administrative change was not undertaken there.

#### The Reaction of Muslims to the Increasing Power of the Christians in the Ottoman Empire

The *Islahat Fermanı* (the Reform Edict of 1856) was an important step for the improvement of the moral and material conditions of the Christians in the country, despite all the problems they had experienced.

Traditionally, humiliating phrases could be used against the Christians in the society, and the most commonly used phrase was *gâvur* (infidel). Thanks to the Hatt-ı Hümayun, a legal basis was established for the punishment of those who uttered humiliating phrases against the Christians.<sup>624</sup> The obligation of the Christians to wear clothes indicating their religious identity had already been abolished. Sometimes Christians could find jobs in the civil and diplomatic services of the Sublime Porte.<sup>625</sup> In 1860, by issuing a decree, the Ottoman government made it necessary for Christians to receive education in the schools where Muslims studied; thus non-Muslims could also take part in public service.<sup>626</sup> In 1861, the employment of

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<sup>623</sup> *Rusiiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.1, ch. 2, 36.*

<sup>624</sup> TNA, FO 78/1209 (Consul Sandison's report for the District of Bursa on internal reforms dated March 5, 1856).

<sup>625</sup> TNA, FO 881/620 (Lord Stratford de Redcliffe's memorandum respecting the Privileges of the Sultan's Rayah Subjects).

<sup>626</sup> Ruben Safrastyan, "Ottomanism in Turkey in the Epoch of Reforms in XIX. Century: Ideology and Policy", *Etudes Balkaniques*, no. 1, 1989, 37.

Christians in public offices was discussed in the Higher Council; although many ministers supported this project, it was never concluded.<sup>627</sup>

These were certainly improvements for the Ottoman Christians. But one of the most significant issues that aggravated the actual Christian-Muslim conflict was the severe crisis experienced by the Muslim society in the 19th century and the gradual decline of Muslim power in various areas ranging from economy to education. This reality mostly went unnoticed by the Western circles and Ottoman government.

With their particular brand of fortitude and fatalism, the Turkish-Muslim populace of the Empire was the strongest pillar that kept it standing. The equalization of formal rights in a period when the Muslim society was weakened meant, for Muslims, the loss of all the superiority they had been enjoying. A Muslim reaction would unavoidably occur in such a situation.

The de facto superiority of the Christians over the Muslims in the Ottoman Empire stemmed from their higher educational level. In the schools of Izmir, for example, the Muslims generally received religious education, while the Christians received a secular education.<sup>628</sup> On the other hand, even in the capital of the Empire, many schools were in dire need of reform.<sup>629</sup> Christians, regardless of the modernization of the Ottoman Empire itself, had already embarked on the process of modernization.

The Muslims were unable to recover their dominant position in urban life that they had lost in the 19th century.<sup>630</sup> For example, there were fifty thousand Christians

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<sup>627</sup> Safrastyan, "Ottomanism in Turkey", 38-39.

<sup>628</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 33 (Consul Charles Blunt's message sent from İzmir to Sir Henry Bulwer on July 28, 1860).

<sup>629</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 481/21788.

<sup>630</sup> James Franklin Clarke, *The Pen and the Sword: studies in Bulgarian History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 173.

and twenty-two thousand Muslims in Köprülü (Veles) in 1862. The majority of this city consisted of Muslim-Turks in the 1820s, but the Muslim population decreased because of poverty; as a result, the domestic and foreign trade of the city was under the full control of Christians.<sup>631</sup>

The Muslims were losing their psychological supremacy as well; they performed the military service, while paying the same tax as the Christian reaya. This injustice in military service paved the ground for the rise of Christians in economic life. The price to be paid for exemption from military service was eight thousand *guruş* for a Turk.<sup>632</sup> The Muslim labor force was significantly eroded because of military service.

The Christians were exempt from military service and constituted the most powerful community in trade and in the high-yielding industrial areas. In addition, they had the advantage of Western protection. These privileges and the support of the West inspired jealousy in the Muslims against Christians.<sup>633</sup> The Christians, who did not perform military service, regarded themselves to be superior as the result of the new privileges. In many parts of the Empire, due to these improvements, they were grateful not to the Sublime Porte, but to Russia.<sup>634</sup> Foreign nationals, Greeks and Armenians also dominated foreign trade in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>635</sup>

Examples of this growing imbalance could be seen throughout the Empire. The greater part of the capital flowing to Selanik as well as all of the trade was possessed by the Christians. In Selanik, the Muslim merchants and craftsmen who

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<sup>631</sup> *Macedonia, Documents and Material*, 195 (Consul Hitrov's report to Nikolai Ignatiev, dated March 1862).

<sup>632</sup> S. G. B. St. Clair and Charles A. Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria* (London: John Murray, 1869), 168.

<sup>633</sup> *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, accompanying the annual message of the President to the second session thirty-eight congress, part IV* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1865) 368 (E. Joy Morris' message from Constantinople to William H. Seward, dated May 21, 1863).

<sup>634</sup> Clair –Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 167.

<sup>635</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 173.

joined the army to perform military service were faced with the increasing economic domination of the Christians on their return.<sup>636</sup>

In the same period, the situation in İzmir was improving day by day; however, this was only valid for the Christians. The pressure of the Muslims on the Christians had decreased with the Tanzimat period; the latter took the initiative in various areas of the economy. This economic growth found demographic support as well with the growth of the Christian population and the immigration of Christians to İzmir. Universal conscription compulsory for the Turks was a very serious factor behind the erosion of Turkish power in İzmir. Lands mostly remained fallow during the term of military service. Entrepreneurs eager to get ahead in the agricultural sector borrowed from Christian usurers, and at the end of the term for the payment of debts, they usually lost the property they owned. As a result of the gradual decline of the Turks, the Turkish population in İzmir dropped from 80,000 in 1830 to 41,000 in 1860, while the Greek population increased from 20,000 to 75,000 in the same time period. In addition, 6,000 Armenians, 12,500 Jews, 3,700 Latins and 19,000 foreign nationals lived in İzmir at this time.<sup>637</sup>

There was a full equality between Christians and Muslims in İzmir, and Turkish peasants were even more vulnerable to the pressures of state officials and local magnates than the Christians. The latter could bring the issues to the attention of the consulates whenever they suffered oppression at the hands of lower-ranking state officials. The officials were aware that consulates would intervene, and they kept this in mind when dealing with the Christians. For this reason, tax collectors in

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<sup>636</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 8 (Consul Charles J. Calvert's telegram sent from Salonica to Henry Bulwer on July 20, 1860).

<sup>637</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 31 (Consul Charles Blunt's message sent from İzmir to Sir Henry Bulwer on July 28, 1860).

particular, were more daring against the Muslims,<sup>638</sup> who were consequently more vulnerable to the negative effects of official abuse.

In Üsküp (Skopje), the Christian peasants were in a better position than the Muslims in all respects. The streets and avenues of Üsküp were under the control of the Christians. After the Crimean War, significant improvements were observed in the economic situation of the Christians; despite increasing labor and material prices, they managed to build new and better houses.<sup>639</sup>

Muslim reaction in response to the increasing power of Christians became more apparent after the Crimean War. Anti-reformist Muslims were very powerful in all of Rumelia.<sup>640</sup> For this reason, Christians were open to attacks, especially in rural areas. Knowing this, they had to hide their wealth and lead a life more modest in comparison to their actual financial situation.<sup>641</sup> The lack of security of property and hoarding of wealth were hindering the development of capitalism in the country.

The reaction against Christians even led to violence in some regions. Van Lennep, one of the leading missionaries in İzmir, stated in a letter dated January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1865 that he had sent his servant to Manisa, where he was threatened by Muslim fanatics. The reaction towards the gradually increasing influence of Christians was now felt vigorously among the people. But interestingly not only Muslims committed such rudeness, but also Armenians. Armenians wounded a servant of Van Lennep, named Garabet, in Manisa.<sup>642</sup> Again in February 1857, the Christian inhabitants put

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<sup>638</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 32 (Consul Charles Blunt's message sent from İzmir to Sir Henry Bulwer on July 28, 1860).

<sup>639</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 36 (Üsküp Vice-Consul J. E. Blunt's report to Henry Bulwer dated July 14, 1860).

<sup>640</sup> *Rusiia, Frantsia y Blgarskoto Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie 1860-1869*, 132 (Consul M. Hitrov's message sent from Bitola(Manastir) to Russian Ambassador Lobanov-Rostovski in Istanbul on June 30, 1861).

<sup>641</sup> *Rusiia, Frantsia y Blgarskoto Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie 1860-1869*, 150 (Consul M. Hitrov's message sent from Bitola(Manastir) to Russian Ambassador Lobanov-Rostovski in Istanbul on September 14, 1861).

<sup>642</sup> *Missionary Herald*, March 1865, Vol. LXI, No. 3, 80.

up a bell in their church in Vidin; this drew a reaction from Muslims and five Muslims attacked the church.<sup>643</sup>

Thus one of the less-mentioned factors that aggravated the Christian Question in the Ottoman Empire was, in fact, the "Muslim Question." This problem, which went ignored, would lead to bloody ethnic conflicts in the future. In 1859, Henry Bulwer remarked that Muslim subjects who could not benefit from the assistance of foreign consuls unlike Christian subjects, would develop a more bitter feeling towards Christians. Therefore he advised consuls to give attention to the problems of Muslims as well.<sup>644</sup>

The hypocritical attitude of the West was among the reasons behind the gradual growth of the Christian problem. According to Edward Jay Morris, Minister Resident of the USA, in Istanbul, the Principalities and Greece were not regarded as countries that would be assisted in their progress, but as bases of intrigue to be used for isolating the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, in such places as Egypt, Greece, and the Principalities, there were groups deriving their power not from indigenous parties, but from the Great Powers. Local welfare was also under the shadow of the selfish plans of the European powers.<sup>645</sup> Again, Henry Layard complained about the desire of the Christians to drive the Muslims out of the Balkans in his speech to the House of Commons on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 1867. He stated that the Christians had already been divided and peace would not be guaranteed among Christians, even if the Muslims were driven out.<sup>646</sup> By these statements, in a way, he criticized the

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<sup>643</sup> TNA, FO 78/1257 (Henry Bennett's message sent from Varna to Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe on February 4, 1857).

<sup>644</sup> TNA, FO 78/1427 (Henry Bulwer's circular sent from Istanbul to the British consuls in the Ottoman Empire on January 1, 1859).

<sup>645</sup> *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, accompanying the annual message of the President to the second session thirty-eight congress, part IV*, 368 (E. Joy Morris' message from Constantinople to William H. Seward, dated May 21, 1863).

<sup>646</sup> Saab, *Reluctant Icon*, 43.

superficial view forming the basis of the reform rhetoric used frequently by the Westerners.

The Christian Question in the Ottoman Empire was not an issue separate from the other issues in the empire, but it constituted a deadlock in which the great depression in the Ottoman Empire and the international debates were entwined with each other. Whether the resolution of this deadlock would occur through catastrophic events or not was one of the most important questions of the 1860s.

Another issue had arisen in the meantime, one that would aggravate the Christian Question especially in the Balkans. This was the forced immigrations from the Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire after 1856.

### **3.5. The Circassian Emigration**

The immigrations from the Northern Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire after the Crimean War did not only mean the displacement of a large population. This event also led to quite critical results for the Ottoman Empire in the long term. Apart from the impact on the country's demographic balance, one of the main reasons for the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–1878 was the Circassian Question in the Balkans, and the arrival of hundreds of thousands of Circassians, which left local administrations in a difficult situation.

The Ottomans tried to maintain the power of the tribes in the Caucasus, despite the peace gained with the Treaty of Paris. In February 1857, a ship named Kangaroo carried troops, ammunition and weapons to the Circassians in the Caucasus; in response, Gorchakov protested Britain. According to the Russians, Stratford de Redcliffe, Prokesch Osten (the Austrian Ambassador in Istanbul), Mustafa Reşid Pasha, Admiral Mehmed Ali Pasha and the Minister of War Rıza



Pasha were the planners of this shipment. Polish Count Zamoyski was the commander of the force sent to Circassia. Eighty out of the 190 troops sent to Circassia were Polish; others were Europeans who had immigrated to Istanbul from various countries.<sup>647</sup> Close relations had also been established with the Mountaineers.<sup>648</sup> By 1858, the Ottomans had come into contact with Muhammed Emin, who was trusted by the Adyge people. He reported that Britain and the Ottoman Empire would help them via Teophil Lapinskiy.<sup>649</sup> Lapinskiy's aim was to form a legion of Polish soldiers from Poles who had deserted from the Russian army.<sup>650</sup>

The year 1859 was a milestone for the power struggle in the Caucasus. The balance of power shifted to the benefit of Russia as a result of the capture of Imam Shamil, the oath of allegiance of Muhammed Emin to the Tsar, and the loyalty oath of the Natukhaj people under the force of Karabatyr to the Tsar following the death of Zanko Sefer Bey in December 1859, and finally the dissolution of the Polish legion under the command of Lapinskiy due to indiscipline and defections. Now Russia had a free hand in the Caucasus with her enormous military power.<sup>651</sup>

The Russians' plan for the Circassians was very simple, even in autumn 1860. Forced immigration to the Ottoman lands was proposed to the Circassians as their best choice. Tsar Alexander II expressed the certainty of this decision to an Adyge delegation that had come to his presence during a visit to the Caucasus in 1861.<sup>652</sup> In 1864, a Russian platoon invaded the village Tonbek, near the Subaşı River, and massacred all of the hundred people captured. Two of the massacred people were

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<sup>647</sup> Kasumov-Kasumov, *Çerkes Soykırımı*, 217-218.

<sup>648</sup> Kasumov-Kasumov, *Çerkes Soykırımı*, 222.

<sup>649</sup> Kasumov-Kasumov, *Çerkes Soykırımı*, 224.

<sup>650</sup> Kasumov-Kasumov, *Çerkes Soykırımı*, 229.

<sup>651</sup> Kasumov-Kasumov, *Çerkes Soykırımı*, 226.

<sup>652</sup> Austin Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire: North Caucasus Mountain peoples and the Georgian frontier, 1845-1917* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 23.

pregnant women and five were children.<sup>653</sup> In the following days, the Russians set fire other Circassian villages.<sup>654</sup> Thousands of immigrants from the North Caucasus flowed to the Ottoman Empire due to the violent coercive attitude of Russia.

Hundred of thousands of Crimean Tatars also immigrated to the Ottoman lands in 1860-1861, even though there was no such demand from Russia. In fact, the Crimean Tatars remained loyal to Russia although they had all the transport vehicles. Allegations regarding the betrayal of Tatars against Russia are quite doubtful.<sup>655</sup>

Immigration from the Caucasus had been continuing for a very long time. However, the main wave of migration from the Caucasus took place after 1856. The number of people who had emigrated from the Western Caucasus between 1858 and 1864 was 493,194 according to the figures given by Adolf Berger, Chargé d'Affaires of the Caucasus Department of the Imperial Russian Geographic Society.<sup>656</sup>

The Russians placed pressure on the Ottoman Empire to resettle the Circassians in regions far beyond the borders of Russia, and they were partly successful in this.<sup>657</sup> In 1865, Russia demanded the Ottomans not to settle Chechen families near Russian borders,<sup>658</sup> and upon this demand, the Ottoman authorities abandoned their plan to settle Chechen families in Muş and Van.<sup>659</sup>

Apparently, the Ottomans tried to increase the Muslim population at the Ottoman borders and in the Balkan provinces. However, the benefits provided by the Ottoman government to these immigrants were extremely limited, as the Ottoman

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<sup>653</sup> James Baker, *Turkey* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1877), 96 (Consul Dickson's message sent from Sohumkale to Earl Russell on March 17, 1864).

<sup>654</sup> Dana Sherry, "Social Alchemy on the Black Sea Coast, 1860-1865", *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Volume 10, Number 1, Winter 2009, 18.

<sup>655</sup> Brian Glyn Williams, "Hijra and Forced Migration from Nineteenth-Century Russia to the Ottoman Empire. A Critical Analysis of the Great Crimean Tatar Emigration of 1860-1861", *Cahiers du Monde Russe*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (Jan. - Mar., 2000), 79-108.

<sup>656</sup> Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire*, 26.

<sup>657</sup> Kasumov-Kasumov, *Çerkes Soykırımı*, 264-265.

<sup>658</sup> BOA, MVL 713/105.

<sup>659</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.MHM. 341/27.

Empire found itself in an economic and administrative crisis. This was the first time that the Ottoman Empire became the destination of such a great number of immigrants. These immigrants were in a difficult situation due to the ongoing modernization process in the administrative organization as well as to the incompetence of the institutions of medicine and the Empire's security forces.

The protection of immigrants and the prevention of their remigration was a matter of pride for Ottoman statesmen.<sup>660</sup> Therefore, the Ottoman Empire made great expenses for the immigrants.<sup>661</sup> In 1860, the Commission of Immigrants (*Muhacirin Komisyonu*) was established to deal directly with this intensive migration and with the problems of the immigrants to be settled.

The Caucasian immigrants suffered heavy losses during immigration. Due to epidemics, the number of casualties was especially high in places such as Trabzon and Samsun.<sup>662</sup> Diseases such as typhus and smallpox were very common in Trabzon. During December 1863, twenty to thirty of the seven thousand Circassian immigrants in Trabzon were dying each day because of these diseases.<sup>663</sup> This process of devastation began at the borders of Russia. Immigrants died of starvation at the beginning of their journey from Russia. The Russians and Cossacks did not fail to take the advantage of this situation; they cleverly plundered the livestock and properties of the immigrants by paying very low prices for them.<sup>664</sup>

Russian warships and merchant ships were used to send the Circassians out of the country, and passports were provided by the Russian consul in Trabzon to those who wanted to transport the immigrants. But during transportation lots of sea

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<sup>660</sup> Abdullah Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri (1856-1876)* (Ankara: AKDITYK Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1997), 98.

<sup>661</sup> Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri*, 153-184.

<sup>662</sup> Kasumov- Kasumov, *Çerkes Soykırımı*, 269-270.

<sup>663</sup> TNA, FO 97/424 (Consul Stevens' message sent from Trabzon to Earl Russell on December 21, 1863).

<sup>664</sup> Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire*, 24-25.

vehicles sank, washing a great number of corpses onto the Ottoman shores.<sup>665</sup> Some officials of the Commission of Immigrants contributed a great share to the increase in the misery of the Circassians. Some officials who were responsible for the affairs of resettlement did not fulfill their tasks, and just sat back and neglected their duties, as was reported by Mutasarrıf (Governor) of Amasya, Abdülhamid Ziyaeddin on 18 February 18<sup>th</sup>, 1864.<sup>666</sup>

The slave trade had been a traditional source of income for the people in these regions; therefore, a big slave market emerged with the immigration of the Circassians. A slave transportation route had been established from Trabzon to Istanbul; even the British took part in this slave trade.<sup>667</sup> Sometimes, the sales of children and relatives were even announced by newspaper advertisements.<sup>668</sup> In a note dated November 6<sup>th</sup>, 1857, Palmerston stated that the only complaint he heard from the Circassians was about the efforts of Britain to hamper slave trade.<sup>669</sup> The tragedy of the young Circassians who were sold into slavery was the subject of some early works of modern Turkish literature like Samipaşazade Sezai's novel *Sergüzeşt* and Ahmed Midhat Efendi's story named *Esaret*.

Considering Russia's concerns, the Ottoman Government was very cautious towards the Circassians; however, the Circassians' entry into the military service of the Ottomans was inevitable. One of the first proposals on this issue belongs to Henry Bulwer, who was the Ambassador of Britain in Istanbul. The proposal of Henry Bulwer was quite interesting, but dangerous as well, on a short term basis. According to Bulwer, the maintenance of each Circassian family by four Turkish

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<sup>665</sup> Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri*, 89.

<sup>666</sup> Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri*, 111.

<sup>667</sup> Kasumov-Kasumov, *Çerkes Soykırımı*, 271.

<sup>668</sup> Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri*, 196.

<sup>669</sup> Ehud R. Toledano, *The Ottoman Slave Trade and Its Suppression, 1840-1890* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 140.

families was a cheap but an ill-fated method. This could burden Turkish peasants and aggravate the survival problems of the Circassians. Instead, if these warrior-immigrants were settled at certain points of the empire, they could act as a barrier against Russia at these inadequately defended points. Circassian colonization in the areas from the Black Sea to Erzurum would provide strategic benefits for both the Ottoman Empire and Europe. Through the militarization of Circassians, the military burden on the agricultural population could be eliminated considerably; a relief would also occur in the economic field, and the problem of recruiting manpower to hold the castles would be partly eliminated. If a road was constructed between Erzurum and Black Sea, and the Circassians were settled around this road, a strong line of defense could be established. The annual cost of this force could be compensated if the necessary measures were taken. Bulwer even proposed the establishment of a Committee in Paris and London that would provide credit for the realization of this objective. In return for this credit, the Ottoman Government could pledge interest incomes and Trabzon's customs revenues as collaterals. According to Bulwer, Ali Pasha and Fuad Pasha also found this project favorable.<sup>670</sup>

The Ottoman Government decided to establish units with the Circassian immigrants and a man named Çürüksulu Ali Pasha came to the fore at this point. Noble Circassians, in particular, had begun to take important roles in the Ottoman Army. The Circassians who did not have any source of income joined the army in great numbers; however, the modern army discipline was not compatible with the Circassian traditions,<sup>671</sup> this problem of armed but undisciplined Circassians would contribute to the aggravation of the Bulgarian Question in 1876.

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<sup>670</sup> TNA, FO 97/424 (Sir Henry Bulwer's message sent from Istanbul to Earl Russell on May 3 1864).

<sup>671</sup> Kasumov-Kasumov, *Çerkes Soykırımı*, 272.

Russia's forced immigration policy became one of the key determinants in the crisis experienced by the Ottomans, especially in the Balkans. In the age of nationalisms, this would lead to the encountering of peoples who did not have a shared past; much blood would flow as a result.

In the initial period after their arrival, the Circassians could not socialize with the Muslim people and remained isolated.<sup>672</sup> The immigrants disrupted the peace almost everywhere they were settled, and thus became a part of the security problem in the Empire.<sup>673</sup> The Circassians that resettled in Dobruca took part in cases of extortion.<sup>674</sup> Integrating the Circassians into the civil life was a vital duty for local administrations as well as for the Ottoman Government.

Concerning all these internal problems, Western observers and especially British statesmen suggested ideas about the implementation of reforms.

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<sup>672</sup> Kasumov-Kasumov, *Çerkes Soykırımı*, 273.

<sup>673</sup> BOA, MVL 738/79 (Lazistan's Governor's letter to Grand Vizierate dated 16 March 1867).

<sup>674</sup> K. N. Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar, Notlar, Raporlar (Osmanlı'nın Diplomatik Mektuplar, Notlar, Raporlar (Osmanlı'nın Sosyal ve Siyasal yapısı ve Rusya İlişkileri 1865- Rusya İlişkileri 1865-1872)* (İstanbul: Kaynak, 2009), 144-145 (Konstantin Leontiev's report drafted on March 1868, and submitted to Russian Embassy in Istanbul). It should be noted that in that period Circassians were not the sole source of troubles related to immigrants. Nogays also created several problems in many provinces. According to a letter came to *The Levant Herald* in 1861, the Mufti of Söke in company with a number of Nogay emigrants applied to a Christian villager for some forage for his horse; when the villager declined Mufti's request, he was killed and his corpse was abused (*The Levant Herald*, May 1, 1861). In some places, Nogay immigrants who were not satisfied with their conditions in the wanted to return to Russia( BOA, A.}MKT.MHM. 233/13).

## CHAPTER IV

### REFORM QUESTION: PROJECTS AND PROPOSALS

#### 4.1. British Reform Proposals

##### Changing Perceptions

In 1856, the relations of the Ottoman Empire with England and France got closer for a short time as a result of the Crimean War. After the declaration of peace, a great ball was organized by the Ottoman Embassy in Paris, and even Emperor Napoleon III participated in this ball.<sup>675</sup> This rapprochement and recently-developed alliance, of course, included certain expectations of the West from the Ottomans.

Undoubtedly, Stratford Canning was one of the most important figures who shaped the British perception of Ottomans. In Stratford de Redcliffe's words used during his conversation with Sultan Abdülmecid, civilisation was a comprehensive system founded on European principles, of justice, finance, government, defence in all branches, and general education, together with a gradual but unfettered development of an empire's resources, and a free international intercourse to

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<sup>675</sup> Türkgeldi, *Mesail-i Mühimme-i Siyasiyye*, 123.

correspond with it.<sup>676</sup> In that sense, Canning tried to influence the Ottoman idea of reform until the end of his office in Istanbul. At the beginning of 1856, in a meeting that was held at the house of the Grand Vizier and at which Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, the Austrian ambassador and Fuad Pasha attended, the French Ambassador defended the reparation and construction of non-Muslims' places of worship.<sup>677</sup> At the end of 1856, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe demanded Grand Vizier Mustafa Reşid Pasha to solve three major problems: slave trade, banditry at the Ottoman-Greek border and the Montenegrin question.<sup>678</sup> What Mustafa Reşid Pasha did was to promise Redcliffe that these problems would be solved. However, as it was understood that the promises could not be kept easily, and as the domestic status in the Ottoman Empire was observed more closely, the Western Powers grew more pessimistic about the regeneration of the Ottoman Empire.

According to Fonblanque, the British Acting-Consul in Belgrade, the return of British soldiers to their homeland after the Crimean War had led to great changes in British public opinion. The British returnees hardly confirmed the comments of travelers about Turkish hospitality, and emphasized the existence of intolerance in the Ottoman Empire in their writings; the attitude of the French returnees would not be different.<sup>679</sup>

In the memorandum submitted to the Grand Vizier by the ambassadors of the guarantor states of the Treaty of Paris, worries were expressed about the unwillingness of the Ottoman Empire in implementing the policies set forth in the

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<sup>676</sup> TNA, FO 78/1274 (Stratford de Redcliffe's message from Istanbul to Lord Clarendon dated December 2, 1857).

<sup>677</sup> TNA, FO 881/626 (Stratford de Redcliffe's message sent from Istanbul to Earl of Clarendon on January 9, 1856).

<sup>678</sup> TNA, FO 78/1194 (Stratford de Redcliffe's telegram sent from Istanbul to Lord Clarendon December 22, 1856).

<sup>679</sup> TNA, FO 78/1198 (Consul Fonblanque's message sent from Belgrad to Stratford de Redcliffe on May 10, 1856).



Reform Edict of 1856.<sup>680</sup> It was discovered that the situation of the Ottomans was more critical than had been thought. Prince Metternich had predicted that Russia would not leave the Ottoman Empire alone for a long time, the Ottoman Government had only two years for reform, and it should do what it could in this period.<sup>681</sup> According to the British Government, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and a chaos in the East would result in a World War.<sup>682</sup> Therefore, reforms had to be accomplished as soon as possible.

Indeed, the weakness of the Treaty of Paris was discovered only a few years after it was signed. Russia had managed to break the imaginary chains attached by the Treaty of Paris, and it had gotten involved in the Christian Question of the Ottoman Empire. Even though the objective of the Treaty of Paris was to eliminate the possibility of Russia's involvement, this treaty made it possible for all countries to intervene in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>683</sup> Although such intervention was officially prohibited,<sup>684</sup> the European states would interfere whenever they found it possible.

Furthermore, the anti-Ottoman thought had been rising in the West, especially after 1860. In 1863, there were members in the House of Commons, like Grant Duff, who used the phrase "Turkish barbarism."<sup>685</sup> All members of the House of Commons except for Henry Layard adopted anti-Ottoman discourses in a session dated May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1863. Poor administration of the economy by Ottomans and the subjection of Christians in the European territories of the Ottoman Empire to Ottoman domination

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<sup>680</sup> Engelhardt, *La Turquie et le Tanzimat*, 161.

<sup>681</sup> Türkgeldi, *Mesail-i Mühimme-i Siyasiye*, 139.

<sup>682</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 2.

<sup>683</sup> Türkgeldi, *Mesail-i Mühimme-i Siyasiye*, 141.

<sup>684</sup> Türkgeldi, *Mesail-i Mühimme-i Siyasiye*, 120-121.

<sup>685</sup> *The Debate on Turkey in the House of Commons on Friday, May the 29th, 1863*, 47.

were among the mostly discussed subjects.<sup>686</sup> In that period, some pamphlets written by authors from the Balkans and published in Western languages were calling for the demolition of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>687</sup>

Since the signing of the Treaty of Paris, the Western Powers, but especially England, got a chance to interfere in the reforms of the Tanzimat. This right of interference had been regarded as patronage over the Ottoman Christians. The great powers of the West had suffered heavy losses to save Ottomans from the hands of Russians, and it was now time for the Ottomans to pay the price of their independence; the West would demand the Sultan to improve the situation of the Christians.<sup>688</sup> However, what the Western states meant by reform was quite unclear. The British and French governments were pressing the Ottoman Empire to make reforms. But these governments were unable to submit a comprehensive text or blueprint covering the reforms that were required as well as the methods to be followed during these reforms. At the same time, the British statesmen and diplomats had made some reform proposals for the resolution of problems; but these proposals did not include a detailed plan.

#### Views on the Ottoman Statesmen

As Lord John Russell stated, the existence of good administrators, a good financial system, an impartial administration of justice, and a disciplined and regular army were significant for the reorganization of the administrative system in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>689</sup> The obligation to realize quick and far-reaching changes like comprehensive legal reforms, renewal of the infrastructure, elimination of

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<sup>686</sup> *The Debate on Turkey in the House of Commons on Friday, May the 29th, 1863.*

<sup>687</sup> For an example of that kind of pamphlets see Vladimir Yovanovitch, *The Serbian Nation and the Eastern Question* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1863).

<sup>688</sup> *The Church Missionary Intelligencer*, Vol. XV. London, 1864, 217.

<sup>689</sup> *Turkey. No. 17 (1877)*, 34 (Lord John Russell's message sent from Foreign Office to Henry Bulwer, May 12, 1860).

corruption, and reformation of the education system was pending. For this reason, Palmerston, by getting support from France, wanted to dismiss Serasker Rıza Pasha, who had showed himself corrupt in administering the army, and he desired to establish an English-French Commission that would control Turkish finance.<sup>690</sup> According to Palmerston, this commission would be effective in the enforcement of the reforms. However, France did not participate in Palmerston's project.

The main reasons for the optimism about the renewal of the Ottoman Empire were the resources of the country and the desire of the new Sultan (Abdülaziz) for the reforms.<sup>691</sup> Also, some Ottoman statesmen, like Fuad Pasha, had a high prestige in the eyes of Westerners. Sir Henry Bulwer was the founder of the Bulwer lodge in Istanbul, and some Masonic meetings were held at the embassy building. Efforts were made to assign Fuad Pasha as the Great Master of Turkey after the resignation of Bulwer.<sup>692</sup> However, most of the Ottoman statesmen did not have the same prestige. According to J. Brant, the British Consul in Erzurum, the Ottomans did not have the ability to reform themselves. Reforms needed to begin from the top. For Brant, Ottoman princes could go abroad for purposes of education and travel like their equivalents in Europe; if this was ensured, the quality of governors would inevitably increase.<sup>693</sup>

### Projects of Infrastructure

The rejuvenation of the Ottoman Empire through ambitious projects was one of the chief issues after the Crimean War. Wealthy Ottoman subjects were not

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<sup>690</sup> Bell, *Lord Palmerston*, 332. Also according to *The Levant Herald*, since 1840s, *Serasker* (Minister of War) Rıza Pasha (1809-1877) had been a great obstacle to administrative and especially to financial reform (*The Levant Herald*, June 19, 1861).

<sup>691</sup> *The Empire*, 225 (Goldwin Smith's letter to the Editor of *Daily News* dated, April 5, 1862).

<sup>692</sup> Orhan Koloğlu, *Abdülhamit ve Masonlar: (1905'e kadar)* (İstanbul: Gür, 1991), 48.

<sup>693</sup> TNA, FO 881/591 (Erzurum Consul Jas. Brant's memorandum on reform in Turkey, dated August 29, 1856).

enthusiastic on investing in grand projects.<sup>694</sup> Most of them preferred mattress saving and this created unfavorable conditions for the Ottoman finance and economy. Moreover, despite the favorable conditions, Ottoman subjects did not submit any industrial or commercial project to the Porte in this period.<sup>695</sup> Parasitic categories as Beys and Aghas were still influential rather than industrious groups.

But in this period, the technical support of the West for the projects also remained limited. The Westerners made many demands regarding the construction of roads from the Ottoman Government, which even allocated money for the construction projects; but these projects were interrupted when their realization was left to the initiative of Ottoman authorities. In 1857, William Nassau Senior stated that when Hanson, a foreign businessman, was asked whether he would undertake the construction of the roads or not, he responded that the government of Thouvenel would prevent this, and that similarly any French company would be blocked by England.<sup>696</sup> The Ottoman government was not the only obstacle in front of the activities of the foreigners in the Ottoman Empire and also the sole reason behind the disruption of some improvements. Although the Europeans did not provide any convenience in customs tariffs, they demanded the Ottoman government achieve economic and technological progress.

It was a must to attract European expertise and capital to the Ottoman Empire for the improvement of the transportation facilities in the country. Apparently, foreign entrepreneurs were also in a rivalry for the resources of the Empire and trying to sell their expensive projects in Istanbul. E. Ward Jackson, one of these

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<sup>694</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, October 13, 1857.

<sup>695</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, January 14, 1858.

<sup>696</sup> Senior, *Turkey and Greece*, 41-42.

entrepreneurs, submitted a project on the construction of a railway from the Danube to the Black Sea and requested the support of Stratford de Redcliffe.<sup>697</sup>

Also, a charming proposal was submitted in a letter entitled “Project on the Manner of Construction of Railways in Turkey” and sent to Âli Pasha from London on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1863. According to the letter, the companies had still not achieved success in the construction of railways until that day. The speculation system and the deformities in the operation methods of the companies were among the main reasons for this situation. The companies were not subject to effective supervision. The necessary funds could be provided for the entrepreneurs by receiving loans from London and Paris. A railway system from Belgrade to Baghdad and Basra would connect Europe and Asia with each other; thanks to these lines, Istanbul would be turned into a warehouse between Europe and Asia. While the government would construct a part of this line itself, it was required to construct the other parts through the support of concessionary companies.<sup>698</sup>

The British Consul in Erzurum, Brant, was of the opinion that the transportation of the raw materials needed by Britain could be provided easily and abundantly through a road between Trabzon and Erzurum. Thanks to this road, the extremely high-priced transport charges would drop, and therefore trade would be doubled in the region. Considering that a substantial part of the public revenues of the Ottoman Empire came from customs dues, the construction of this road would be quite profitable. In addition, as Brant said, the never-ending cereal sources of the Ottomans could be marketed in the West through these roads.<sup>699</sup>

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<sup>697</sup> TNA, FO 78/1190.

<sup>698</sup> BOA, HR. SFR. 381/7.

<sup>699</sup> TNA, FO 881/591 (Erzurum Consul Jas. Brant’s memorandum on reform in Turkey, dated August 29, 1856).

### The Collection of Taxes

The distribution of the taxes in the Ottoman Empire was made in an ordinary, arbitrary and random fashion. The tax burden of the Empire was mainly on the shoulders of the low-income population of the society.<sup>700</sup> According to Lord Hobart and Mr. Forster, who came to Istanbul in order to examine the financial structure of the Ottoman Empire,<sup>701</sup> an accurate census, a cadastral method and a correct calculation of possessions could be the remedies of these problems. The taxes need to be collected from the people according to their wealth. These procedures had been implemented in places such as İzmir, Selanik, Yanya and Bursa, and the changes were supposed to spread throughout the Empire. Istanbul was exempt from direct taxation, and this was an unreasonable tradition that had detrimental effects in all aspects. If there had been a proper taxation system in Istanbul, revenues amounting to 500,000 Pounds could have been collected in Istanbul.<sup>702</sup>

Lord Palmerston advised the Ottoman Government to abolish tax-farming, which was one of the major grievances, and to collect the tithes (aşar) and customs duties through state agents. In response, Musurus Efendi, to whom this suggestion was made, stated that if the tithe was collected by state officials, the complaints about tax-farmers would turn against the state. These statements were strange, but they reflected the general attitude of the Ottoman State.<sup>703</sup> Also, Richard Geo. Abbott, the British Consul in Manastır, had argued that taxes should be collected by government officials, as the collection of the taxes by Armenian bankers or *Beys* through tax-farming methods had to be prevented.<sup>704</sup>

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<sup>700</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 2.

<sup>701</sup> BOA, HR.SFR.3... 59/13.

<sup>702</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 34.

<sup>703</sup> BOA, HR. TO.. 53/94.

<sup>704</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 6 (Manastır Consul Richard Geo. Abbott's report to Henry Bulwer, dated July 9, 1860).

### Trade and Finance

Improvement of the banking and financial system of the Ottoman Empire was also on the agenda in Western circles. According to Farley, a national bank had to be founded to make amortization and interest payments. Order in monetary flow would be maintained through the expansion of the branches of this bank across the country, and a considerable portion of the metal coins would be removed from the market. In addition to this, the bank would be an alternative against usurers for agricultural producers. Large sums that were stored especially in Anatolia and Syria would flow to the funds of this bank.<sup>705</sup> The traders would be protected from the arbitrary interest charges of moneylenders, and unlawful profits would also be prevented.<sup>706</sup> On the other hand, Charles J. Calvert, the Consul in Selanik, suggested the establishment of regional banks for the debts, savings and deposits on the grounds that a significant amount of money was inactive in the country, due to the lack of banks.<sup>707</sup> For example, the trading volume of the İzmir port had doubled between 1852 and 1860; this required an increase in the activities and availability of banks.<sup>708</sup> Eventually, the formation of a commercial society in the Ottoman Empire depended on financial support. But this support required a solid economic structure. Fluctuations in the currency were causing instability in the economy, and as stated by Sandison, the British Consul in Bursa, the reformation of the currency was an important pending duty for the Sublime Porte.<sup>709</sup>

According to Henry Bulwer, the Ottoman government might ask the European Powers about the modification of existing capitulations with a view of

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<sup>705</sup> Farley, *The Resources of Turkey*, 31-32.

<sup>706</sup> Farley, *The Resources of Turkey*, 70.

<sup>707</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 18 (Consul Charles J. Calvert's telegram sent from Selanik to Henry Bulwer on July 20, 1860).

<sup>708</sup> Farley, *The Resources of Turkey*, 78.

<sup>709</sup> FO 78/1209 (Consul Sandison's report for the District of Bursa on internal reforms dated March 5, 1856).

lowering the duty on exports and raising that on imports. For Bulwer, these modifications could lead to great internal prosperity and considerable financial advantage for the Ottomans. Bulwer thought that the presence in Istanbul of some finance specialists, who had the confidence of the European capitalists, might secure a better financial situation for the future.<sup>710</sup>

Although Abdülmecid showed a negative attitude towards Stratford de Redcliffe's recommendation about the possession of landed property by foreigners in the Ottoman Empire,<sup>711</sup> granting the right of owning property to foreigners continued to be one of the reforms strongly argued by British observers. The state had properties like mills and houses from which income could be generated. Lord Hobart and Mr. Forster thought that if the obstacles against the possession of foreigners were eliminated, the sales of these properties would bring significant revenues to the state.<sup>712</sup> According to W. R. Holmes, the British Consul in Diyarbekir, the permission for foreigners to settle in the Ottoman Empire and have properties would be effective in the elimination of the prejudices in the country.<sup>713</sup>

#### Agriculture and Mines

The annual rental income of the imperial farms was quite below the actual income that could be obtained. The suggestion of Lord Hobart and Mr. Forster was the sale or long-term lease of the imperial farms and the allowance of foreign capital flow into this field.<sup>714</sup>

The British Consul Sandison stated that the primitive tools used in agriculture in Bursa had to be replaced with non-domestic tools that could be purchased at cheap

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<sup>710</sup> TNA, FO 78/1433 (Henry Bulwer's private message sent from Istanbul to the Lord John Russell, on July 20, 1859).

<sup>711</sup> TNA, FO 78/1274 (Stratford de Redcliffe's message from Istanbul to Earl of Clarendon dated December 2, 1857).

<sup>712</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 14-15.

<sup>713</sup> TNA, FO 78/1212 (Consul W. R. Holmes' message sent from Diyarbekir to Lord Clarendon on April 7, 1856).

<sup>714</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 15.



prices. However, a proper class of agricultural producers had to be established in order to develop new agricultural facilities; the formation of this class depended on eligible credits. The establishment of the banks that would provide loans for farmers was critical at this point. According to Sandison, the improvement of transportation was of vital importance for the development of agriculture.<sup>715</sup>

One of the most interesting proposals about agricultural reform came from Robert Acheson Carleton, honorary delegate of Manchester Association, who had sent a letter dated May 16<sup>th</sup>, 1862 to Fuad Pasha. In this letter, Carleton suggested the establishment of the Imperial Ottoman Agricultural Society. Carleton stressed that the countries that had made great progress in national wealth and individual welfare had also achieved great progress in the field of agriculture. In addition to this, he stated that agricultural societies played a significant role in the dissemination of new information and the development of agriculture in Europe. The labor cost had become cheaper and the dependence on the labor force had relatively decreased due to the increasing role of science and technology in agricultural production as well as to the development of new inventions and machines. According to Carleton, using all the legitimate ways to increase the efficiency of the soil and bringing welfare to all classes in the society were the requirements of the modern age.<sup>716</sup>

The Ottoman Empire had broad and fertile lands; but its agricultural sector was not efficient in production. The foundation of an Agricultural Society was essential for the development of agriculture and for the importation of the required industry.<sup>717</sup>

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<sup>715</sup> TNA, FO 78/1209 (Consul Sandison's report for the District of Bursa on internal reforms dated March 5, 1856).

<sup>716</sup> BOA, HR. TO. 440/8.

<sup>717</sup> BOA, HR. TO. 440/8.

According to Carleton, this Society had to organize periodical exhibitions of cattle. It had to publish a quarterly journal of agriculture including articles on agriculture and it had to spread agricultural knowledge by sending qualified and skilled instructors to various regions of the country. The Society had to examine the agricultural resources of the country by gathering information about them and publishing in a report all the issues that could affect agriculture. It had to establish a museum in which machines, agricultural practice methods, plans for buildings, irrigation and drainage would be exhibited. The administration of this Society, which would be founded under the patronage of the Sultan, would be carried out by a president, vice-presidents, a general council, two auditors, a treasurer and a secretary. Anybody who paid 500 *guruş* per year could be a member of the Society.<sup>718</sup>

Apart from the suggestions on the development of agriculture, there were recommendations on the efficient exploitation of the Empire's natural resources. Whereas Greece gained 20,000 Pounds from its mines, the Ottoman Empire just gained 9,000 Pounds. Hobart and Forster again suggested a privatization program and the use of foreign capital investment in the mining industry.<sup>719</sup>

#### Increasing Revenues

The regulation of expenditures and the creation of new income sources were necessary for the realization of the new reforms. The expenses made on the Hadj routes were about 48 million *guruş*, in other words, 380 thousand pounds, and this was a great amount of money. These expenses included the salaries of the officials and the expenditures made for the repair of mosques, caravanserais and drinking fountains in Mekke, Medine and Jerusalem. However, the expenditures made in such remote areas were the subject of serious abuse, which would continue until the funds

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<sup>718</sup> BOA, HR. TO. 440/8.

<sup>719</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 16.

allocated for those areas were regulated.<sup>720</sup> The provinces were economically ignored for the sake of Istanbul. The revenues of different regions were collected in Istanbul, where they were spent extravagantly. According to Calvert, the Consul in Selanik, the country could allocate half of the revenues for the construction of roads after 1840; this would yield significant economic profits for the Ottoman Empire.<sup>721</sup>

In the Ottoman State, the payments to ministries were not made from a central organ. As stated by Hobart and Forster, the payments to administrative departments had to be made in line with the instructions of a chief accountant directly responsible to the Ministry of Finance.<sup>722</sup>

Hobart and Forster estimated an increase of 2,370,000 pounds in income through the taxation of Istanbul, reorganization of the relations between the foundations and properties, taxation of the native servants, an increase in the production of stamps and tobacco, and a boost in the tithe revenues.<sup>723</sup> If the Waqfs (Pious Foundations) were converted into private property and their owners taxed, this could generate an extra income at the amount of millions of pounds.<sup>724</sup>

### Provincial Reform

The reformation of the local councils was a significant matter. Abbott, the British Consul in Manastır, had suggested the abolition of the *Meclis-i Kebir* and the granting of a more active position to the Pashas in the provinces by providing them with a free hand in their duties. The members of the other councils had to be elected

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<sup>720</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 17.

<sup>721</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 8 (Consul Charles J. Calvert's telegram sent from Salonica to Henry Bulwer on July 20, 1860).

<sup>722</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 31.

<sup>723</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 37.

<sup>724</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 36.

every year, and the number of Muslim and Christian members had to be proportional to their population size.<sup>725</sup>

A broad authority had been given to the local councils. Thus Consul Calvert stated that executive power had to be in the hands of the *Vali* (the highest regional governor) and the low-ranking provincial administrators serving under the authority of the governor.<sup>726</sup> Also according to J. E. Blunt, the Vice Consul in Üsküp (Skopje), the governors had to be given extensive powers. There had to be more Christian members in the councils, and the councils' judicial functions had to be curtailed.<sup>727</sup>

According to W. R. Holmes, the British Consul in Diyarbekir, the Pasha had to be held responsible for all his doings. He had to be able to ground his actions on his knowledge; and dispense with the Council protocols when he was to make a decision, for doing otherwise would just reveal his lack of capacity. All the relations between the Provincial Treasurer (*Defterdar*) and council had to be eliminated. The members of the council had to be salaried; they had to be prevented from participating in the tax-farming system. The president of the council had to be appointed by the government and stand in charge of the functioning of the council. The power of the council had to be limited, because its members were generally those who were against the improvements in the provinces, intolerant towards the Christians, and all too eager to get richer without any other aim. According to Holmes, the Qadi and the Mufti had to be excluded from the local council. Also,

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<sup>725</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 6 (Manastr Consul Richard Geo. Abbott's report to Henry Bulwer, dated July 9, 1860).

<sup>726</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 16.

<sup>727</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 37 (Üsküp Vice-Consul J. E. Blunt's report to Henry Bulwer dated July 14, 1860).

Holmes stressed that the positions of the commanders and officers' vis-à-vis the civil administrators had to be clearly determined.<sup>728</sup>

### Supervision of Reforms

The formation of new departments for the supervision of reforms was among the suggestions of the British authorities. According to Lord Clarendon, if two or three honest and incorruptible men could be found, these people had to be assigned to a Commission of Inquiry and sent to the provinces in order to inquire whether the rules of the Reform Edict of 1856 were applied or not.<sup>729</sup> Brant, the British Consul in Erzurum, proposed the establishment of a Ministry of Reform, the equipment of this ministry with laws that were more dictating than the Quran, and the removal of the ulema from foundations.<sup>730</sup> This last was one of the clearest statements to the effect that the secular system should be the guide of the Ottoman Empire.

The idea about the supervision of reforms brought along suggestions calling for a more effective intervention of the West in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire. W. R. Holmes, the British Consul in Diyarbekir, stated that the Reform Edict of 1856 would remain a dead letter as long as the Pashas, provincial treasurers and local councils were not supervised by the European consuls. According to him, the number of the consuls and vice consuls had to be increased in order to ensure the progress of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, local governors would act more carefully, being aware of the presence of the consuls. Thus, not only Christians, but also oppressed Muslims would be protected by the consuls.<sup>731</sup>

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<sup>728</sup> TNA, FO 78/1212 (Consul W. R. Holmes' message sent from Diyarbekir to Lord Clarendon on April 7, 1856).

<sup>729</sup> *Turkey. No. 17 (1877)*, 6 (Lord Clarendon's message sent from Foreign Office to Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe on May 19, 1856).

<sup>730</sup> TNA, FO 881/591 (Erzurum Consul Jas. Brant's memorandum on reform in Turkey, dated June 30, 1856).

<sup>731</sup> TNA, FO 78/1212 (Consul W. R. Holmes' message sent from Diyarbekir to Lord Clarendon on April 7, 1856).

J. Brant, the Consul in Erzurum, had prepared a plan for a Reform Council. According to the plan, three Ottoman statesmen, a mullah, a Christian native Christian ecclesiastic, a European ecclesiastic, and a delegate each from Great Britain, France, Austria, Prussia, Sardinia, and the United States had to be included in this council. There had to be two secretaries, one of whom would be Ottoman and the other European, and four clerks, one of whom would be Turkish and the others Europeans. The Ottoman members would be nominated by the Sublime Porte from amongst enlightened people, and these nominees would be submitted for the approval of the ambassadors of the countries that gave members to the council. Brant did not give a place to the Russians in this council.<sup>732</sup>

### Education

The integration of the Christians into the administrative system was among the most significant demands of the British diplomats. According to Stratford de Redcliffe, everyone had to be equal under the law. Christians had to be freely assigned to the civil posts in the Sublime Porte, and the *cizye* (poll-tax) had to be replaced with a war tax. The Christians had to have the right of becoming officers and rising up to the level of colonel.<sup>733</sup> However, there were no sufficiently educated Christians who could fill the local council positions and the administrative tasks to be established for them. C. J. Calvert, the Consul in Selanik, thought that the return of some well-educated and wealthy Ottoman Christians who had immigrated to Europe could be a solution for this problem.<sup>734</sup>

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<sup>732</sup> TNA, FO 881/591 (Erzurum Consul Jas. Brant's appendix to memorandum on reform in Turkey, dated August 29, 1856).

<sup>733</sup> TNA, FO 881/620 (Lord Stratford de Redcliffe's memorandum respecting the Privileges of the Sultan's Rayah Subjects).

<sup>734</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 8 (Consul Charles J. Calvert's telegram sent from Salonica to Henry Bulwer on July 20, 1860).

According to Henry Bulwer, government schools had to be opened under the control of the Ministry of Education in Istanbul; Christian and Muslim children had to study together in these schools. Thus the Muslims and Christians would get used to each other at an early age, and the negative psychological effects of Muslim domination on both sides could be eliminated.<sup>735</sup>

For Brant, it was a must to open secular schools where students from each ethnic group could receive education and where European teachers would lecture. This tendency had already begun in Istanbul, but similar schools had to be established in all big towns. Moreover, when selecting the students to be sent abroad, their capacities were not considered. Consequently, they had difficulties, all the more so as they did not know the language of the country where they went to receive an education. Their duration of residence was short, and as they were educated separately from the other students, Western way of thinking could not influence these students.<sup>736</sup>

#### Justice and Security

As stated before, the problems in the judicial system were among the most significant causes of the crisis experienced by the Ottoman Empire and the Westerners had no confidence in Ottoman law. Therefore, according to the Consul in Selanik, Charles J. Calvert, new laws had to be introduced against corruption.<sup>737</sup>

There was a commercial court ruling the cases between Muslims and non-Muslims in Bursa. But the court in Bursa was administrated by a certain clique in a biased and irregular fashion. Adjudication was in the power of the local majority.

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<sup>735</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 7.

<sup>736</sup> TNA, FO 881/591 (Erzurum Consul Jas. Brant's memorandum on reform in Turkey, dated August 29, 1856).

<sup>737</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 18 (Consul Charles J. Calvert's telegram sent from Salonica to Henry Bulwer on July 20, 1860).

Therefore, the establishment of a new, well-organized and mixed commercial court was the suggestion of the British Consul Sandison.<sup>738</sup>

The problem of the Irregular Militia (*Başıbozüks*), which would cause trouble for the Ottoman Empire in 1876, was touched upon already at the beginning of the 1860s. According to J. H. Skene, the British Consul in Halep, the regular military forces had to provide the internal security instead of bullying irregulars.<sup>739</sup> Lord John Russell also argued for a quick replacement of the Irregular Militia with regular units.<sup>740</sup> Misconducts of the Ottoman police had to be the subject of reform. The organization of a police force that was in contact with the army was suggested by the British Vice-Consul of Üsküp, in 1860.<sup>741</sup>

In a letter to the Ottoman Foreign Ministry dated March 30<sup>th</sup>, 1860, Henry Bulwer recommended the amelioration of the conditions in jailhouses and the employment of prisoners in road construction and mines. Upon this, the Ottoman government made some decisions regarding building new jailhouses, increasing funds for the standard needs of prisoners, and employing prisoners who had committed serious crimes in road construction and mines.<sup>742</sup>

In this period, one of the first warnings about the defense of the Empire's eastern borders and a new Ottoman-Russian war came from Lord Palmerston. As he indicated, the regions populated by Armenians were deprived of troops; the few thousand soldiers in these places were in a very poor physical and psychological state. The soldiers were dressed quite badly and malnourished; their salaries were

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<sup>738</sup> TNA, FO 78/1209 (Consul Sandison's report for the District of Bursa on internal reforms dated March 5, 1856).

<sup>739</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 53 (Consul J.H. Skene's message sent from Halep(Aleppo) to Sir Henry Bulwer on, August 4, 1860).

<sup>740</sup> *Turkey. No. 17 (1877)*, 15 (Lord John Russell's message sent from Foreign Office to Henry Bulwer, May 30, 1860).

<sup>741</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 37 (Üsküp Vice-Consul J. E. Blunt's report to Henry Bulwer dated July 14, 1860).

<sup>742</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 468/31279. About this issue also see TNA, FO 78/1505 (Henry Bulwer's message from Istanbul to Lord John Russell, dated April 18, 1860).



quite low, and they had not received money for months. Kars and the border provinces were also deprived of troops; the fortifications were still as the Russians had left them. Lord Palmerston felt unable to find a logical explanation about the inactivity of the imperial government. While the Russians kept a large army that was disciplined, well-commanded and ready to invade the Ottoman lands, the Ottomans had not taken any measures against a possible Russian occupation. According to Lord Palmerston, this inertia worried the allies of the Ottoman Empire. He demanded Alexander Vogorides call the attention of the Sublime Porte to this situation. An army with disciplined, honest and honorable officers had to be established in Asia. This army had to be well equipped against a possible Russian attack; the payments of the soldiers had to be made on time. If Ottomans did not attempt to protect the strategically and commercially important provinces, all European and British help, provided to a country that did not intend to protect its own lands would be pointless. By exploiting this situation, the enemy forces would seize the opportunity to carry out propaganda against the powers defending the Ottoman Empire. According to Vogorides, who conducted this interview, the idea of a conference that would solve the Italian as well as the Eastern Question was gaining validity day by day.<sup>743</sup>

Even before Lord Palmerston, Stratford Canning emphasized the defective situation of defenses of frontier during his conversation with Sultan Abdülmeçid. Stratford de Redcliffe thought that conscription of Christians into the army could inspire confidence and union in the Empire rather than creating discontent.<sup>744</sup> Also in his conversation with the Grand Vizier Reşid Pasha, Stratford de Redcliffe warned

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<sup>743</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 468/31279.

<sup>744</sup> TNA, FO 78/1274 (Stratford de Redcliffe's message from Istanbul to Lord Clarendon dated December 2, 1857).

him about the impossibility of reforming the army and police without a more regular system of finance and a less extravagant collection of the revenue.<sup>745</sup>

One of the most important results to be drawn from the suggestions made by British diplomats between the years 1856 and 1863 is that they did not conceive the reforms solely for the improvement of the living conditions of the Christians, but as a general question covering all elements in the country. The remarkable point about their suggestions of reform is that the objectives of the new provincial system, which would be put into effect in 1864 with the suggestions for the British diplomats, displayed remarkable parallels with the measures taken in the Tuna Province, the pilot area of this new system between 1864 and 1868. This situation unavoidably created the impression that British statesmen and diplomats had a considerable influence on the local reforms that were carried out after 1860 in the Empire. In parallel to this, Midhat Pasha established very close relations with British diplomats when he was the Governor of the Danube region.

#### **4.2. Reform Efforts(1856-1864)**

The accession of Sultan Abdülaziz to the Ottoman Throne in 1861 especially augmented the Ottoman Empire's credibility in the eyes of European Powers.<sup>746</sup> The positive image given by Abdülaziz reinforced the belief that the Ottoman Empire had entered into a revival period. The new Sultan led a modest life, unlike Abdülmecid; he did not have expensive habits, and he was just the husband of one woman. The impression that he would not be under the influence of the palace circle or the ladies

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<sup>745</sup> TNA, FO 78/1274 (Stratford de Redcliffe's message from Istanbul to Lord Clarendon dated November 27, 1857).

<sup>746</sup> According to Stratford de Redcliffe, Abdülmecid wished his son rather than his brother Abdülaziz to stand first in the line of succession. Şehzade Murad was Abdülmecid's favorite son, and Abdülmecid introduced the 17 year old Murad with Stratford de Redcliffe, which was unusual at that time (TNA, FO 78/1275, Stratford de Redcliffe's message from Istanbul to Lord Clarendon dated December 12, 1857).

in the palace were his other assumed advantages. One of his first tasks in accordance with this was to end the improper behaviors of the ladies in the palace.<sup>747</sup> Sultan Abdülaziz had led a humble life far from the palace until his accession; he hadn't dealt with public affairs. By carrying out economic activities in his own farm around Beykoz, he was a bit closer to the people.<sup>748</sup>

Unlike Abdülmecid, Abdülaziz had frequently participated in the meetings of the Sublime Porte and had made his presence felt.<sup>749</sup> Due to such acts, he had the image of a Sultan who had spent hours for the state affairs. Ottoman statesmen, and Pashas, who supported reforms, would hold a more powerful position in the administration of the Ottoman Empire in the first years of the reign of Sultan Abdülaziz. The growing impact of the European representatives on the Sultan was playing an important role in this "liberal" change of cabinet.<sup>750</sup> Increasing the power of the reform-minded and competent statesmen was an example of the positive impact of the Westerners on the Sultan.

Despite the positive aspects of the new Sultan's personality, some influential observers realized that Sultan would not be able to achieve long-term success in his administration. According to Henry Bulwer, Sultan Abdülaziz was such a dreamer that he had the potential to desire to bring back the prestige of Süleyman the Magnificent's era in only a week.<sup>751</sup> The new Sultan did not have any idea about the constitution and was not familiar with Western civilization or science. Lord John Russell thought that this was a very serious problem for the continuation of reforms

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<sup>747</sup> Melek Hanum, *Thirty Years in the Harem*, 266-267.

<sup>748</sup> Leila Hanoum, *A Tragedy at Constantinople* (New York: William S. Gottsberger, 1888), 66.

<sup>749</sup> Leila Hanoum, *A Tragedy at Constantinople*, 68.

<sup>750</sup> *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, accompanying the annual message of the President to the second session thirty-eight congress, part IV* (Washington, 1865), 369 (E. Joy Morris' message from Constantinople to William H. Seward, dated July 13, 1863). As a result of this trend, Fuad Pasha was appointed as Grand Vizier, Halil Pasha was appointed as the Minister of War, Safvet Pasha was appointed as the Minister of Commerce and Edhem Pasha was appointed as the Director of the Ottoman Bank in 1863.

<sup>751</sup> *A Selection from The Correspondence of Abraham Hayward*, 92.

in the Ottoman Empire, and a crucial obstacle for the protection of peace in Europe.<sup>752</sup> As it could be observed on a long term basis, the Sultan was not a person who would show determination for long-term objectives. But there was a reforming tendency that had commenced in the last years of Abdülmecid's reign, and the impact of this trend would be clearly seen in the reign of new the Sultan.

### Public Relations

Rearrangement of public relations was a subject of several ordinances issued after 1856. It was demanded that governors treat everyone equally and fairly in the regulation dated September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1858, which defined the duties of the district governors and *müdir*s (directors).<sup>753</sup> According to the regulation, the principle of justice would be the main signifier in taxation, and tax-farmers would not misuse their authority.

The ordinance, which was sent to the governors of Vidin and Silistre by Grand Vizier Kibrıslı Mehmed Pasha during the Inspection of Rumelia in 1860, was also one of the significant documents related to reform during the Tanzimat period. According to this regulation, *zaptiyes* (policemen) needed to be selected from amongst reputable, honest and competent persons. The abduction of young girls would be punished severely. The men, who were selected as *zaptiyes*, were not to behave rudely towards people. District governors and *müdir*s were required to make periodic visits to their districts, or inspection tours during important periods such as during the distribution of tithes to farmers. None of the tax-farmers and officials would request free meals from peasants; *zaptiyes* were obliged to pay for those provided to them by civilians. Governors were required to announce the new measures adopted by the government, intended to overcome problems, in a timely

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<sup>752</sup> *Turkey. No. 17 (1877), 27*( Lord John Russell's message sent from Foreign Office to Henry Bulwer on January 29, 1862).

<sup>753</sup> Musa Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Sürecinde Türkiye: ülke yönetimi* (Ankara: İmge, 2007), 246.

manner. These announcements were to be made in Turkish, Bulgarian and Greek; thus, educated people would be informed about their rights. In the case of the violation of their rights, they could freely file complaints to the authorities. Any passenger or any other government official would not demand to stay in the house of a villager if there was not a place allocated for guests.

Even though it was stated that those who were really struggling for the rights' of people must have been separated from opportunists; it was uncertain how to make a differentiation between them. According to the ordinance, governors had to use every means available to secure justice without making any religious or ethnic discrimination among subjects of the Empire.<sup>754</sup>

Despite the orders of Kibrıslı Mehmed Pasha, corrupt practices of the officials and local notables continued in Balkan provinces. Members of the local councils would continue to collect money from the people in the guise of expense.<sup>755</sup> In 1861, some peasants who were free from debt, with the permission of their landlord, quitted their service and acquired their freeholds in Drama. But local authorities enforced them to return to their old masters' farm by threatening them with the imprisonment.<sup>756</sup>

As stated by Vice-consul S. Mayers, the realization of the reforms proposed by Kibrıslı Mehmed Pasha depended on the personal quality of the governor to be appointed by the Sublime Porte. Only a governor with liberal ideas, high energy and good character could lead the Grand Vizier's efforts in 1860 to success.<sup>757</sup>

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<sup>754</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 24-26.

<sup>755</sup> BOA, İ. MVL.. 488/22131 (Abdullatif Subhi Efendi's letter to Grand Vizierate dated May 25, 1863 (hijri 7 Zilhicce 1279)).

<sup>756</sup> An occasional reporters' letter from Kavala, *The Levant Herald*, October 9, 1861.

<sup>757</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 47 (Vice-Consul Mayers' message sent from Rusçuk to Henry Bulwer on July 2, 1860).

### Military Reform

In 1861, Serasker Rıza Pasha, who was one of the most influential figures of Abdülmecid era, was dismissed from his office just after the accession of Abdülaziz to the Ottoman throne. This was one of the signs of the start of a new era of military reforms. After the replacement of Rıza Pasha with Namık Pasha in the Ministry of War, more than a thousand unqualified officers who were enrolled by Rıza Pasha and his supporters and nothing did more than receiving salaries were degraded. Also, several hundreds of useless *katibs* (scribes) and civil employees were cleared off from the Ministry.<sup>758</sup> However, Namık Pasha was removed from his office after three months of service.<sup>759</sup>

One of an essential objectives of the Tanzimat was the reorganization of the army; however, even the salaries of the reformed army's personnel could not be paid by the Ottoman Government.<sup>760</sup> Problems in the payment of the soldiers' salaries could not be solved in the period of Abdülaziz, but significant progress was made in the rearmament of the army and navy. When Abdülmecid died, the Ottoman navy had 105 ships and 1,252 cannons of various sizes and types; 32 ships and 490 cannons were added to the Ottoman navy in the period between the death of Sultan Abdülmecid and 1865. Additionally, new ships were ordered from England and France.<sup>761</sup> After the accession of Abdülaziz, the Ottoman Empire entered into the process of militarization against the ever-present Russian threat and grand designs of Napoleon III. In 1865, Ottoman soldiers were equipped with rifles, which had a

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<sup>758</sup> *The Levant Herald*, July 24, 1861. Ahmed Cevdet Paşa also strongly criticizes Rıza Pasha's recruitment of unqualified personnels and accuses him and his supporters of shamelessness; see Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir II*, 150.

<sup>759</sup> *The Levant Herald*, October 2, 1861.

<sup>760</sup> BOA, Y. EE.. 39/8.

<sup>761</sup> *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, accompanying the annual message of the President to the first session thirty-ninth congress, part III* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1866), 279 (E. Joy Morris' message from Constantinople to William H. Seward, dated February 15, 1865).

range of one kilometer, whereas they had had flintlock muskets that could only shoot up to a 250-step range in 1860.<sup>762</sup>

Abdülaziz believed that the safety of his dynasty depends upon the development of the army and the navy. However, all these armament efforts would cause destructive consequences for the Ottoman economy in the long term. As stated by Stratford Canning; the Sultan had luxurious pleasures like ordering new ironclads for the creation of a strong navy.<sup>763</sup> Sultan Abdülaziz was unaware of the importance of financial systems, the general economy or budgetary equilibrium. Poorly educated Sultan was ignorant of costs of these expensive measures. Against the advices of Fuad Pasha,<sup>764</sup> Abdülaziz preferred to use new credits on extensive armaments rather than making the payments of the troops who were in arrear of pay for years.<sup>765</sup>

#### Municipal Reform

The first stage of the reforms concerning the empowerment of local administrations and modernizing the appearance of urban areas had started after the Crimean War. Local administrative systems were organized for performing works such as cleaning and lighting streets, determining price and quality standards, improving transportation, constructing docks and piers, procuring coal and firewood and constructing public buildings.<sup>766</sup>

One of the most significant effects of the Tanzimat was the modern urban development, especially in the coastal towns. In 1857, a municipality based on French model called the Sixth Chamber was established in Pera and Galata. After the

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<sup>762</sup> *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, accompanying the annual message of the President to the first session thirty-ninth congress, part III*, 280 (E. Joy Morris' message from Constantinople to William H. Seward, dated February 22, 1865).

<sup>763</sup> Lord Newton, *Lord Lyons*, 151.

<sup>764</sup> Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Ma'rûzât*, 53-54.

<sup>765</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, August 15, 1863.

<sup>766</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, "Local Administrations in the Tanzimat" in *150.yılında Tanzimat*, ed. Hakkı Dursun Yıldız (Ankara, 1992), 43.

creation of the Sixth Chamber, a considerable progress was achieved in security,<sup>767</sup> cleanliness, availability of the means of transportation in Pera and Galata faubourgs (suburbs).<sup>768</sup> Public transport, street lights and piped water were among the innovations brought to the capital city, Istanbul.<sup>769</sup> However, Ottoman state officials were not keen on the renovation of the cities. Kibrıslı Mehmed Pasha told Nassau William Senior that they had been thinking about the construction of sidewalks for years, they had been trying to form cash resources for this construction, paving stones had been prepared and were ready in a warehouse, but nothing had been done for years.<sup>770</sup> Even Ottoman pashas, who served at very critical positions of the empire, such as Kibrıslı Mehmed Paşa avoided taking responsibility; they were considering the problems as if they were not statesmen but ordinary subjects of the Empire. As a result, the Ottoman Empire did not have the central and local bureaucratic apparatus and staff required for the implementation of the reforms.

#### Economic Liberalization

The Ottomans did not clearly set the objective of creating a modern European-style economic society. However, taking some steps to revive economic life was inevitable in the existing economic crisis and in an era where the economic effects of European domination had been increasing gradually in the world.

As a result of the Trade Agreement of Kanlıca that was signed between France and Ottoman Empire on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 1861, importation of salt and tobacco to the Ottoman lands was forbidden; gunpowder and war materials were also among the

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<sup>767</sup> Municipal Council reorganized the police in Pera and Galata with a detailed regulation in 1859 (BOA, Y. EE.. 36/2).

<sup>768</sup> *The Levant Herald*, June 19, 1861. For an eloquently drawn plan of Pera and Galata (BOA, PLK.p.. 63), see Appendix F.

<sup>769</sup> Zafer Toprak, "From Liberalism to Solidarism; The Economic Mind in the Age of the Nation State (1820-1920)" in *Studies in Ottoman Social and Economic Life = Studien zu Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft im Osmanischen Reich*, eds, Raoul Motika, Christopher Herzog and Michael Ursinus (Heidelberg: Heidelberger Orientverlag, 1999), 177.

<sup>770</sup> Senior, *Turkey and Greece*, 40.



goods that were prohibited to import. A protection system was implemented within customs via this agreement and export customs duty was reduced in order to promote exportation.<sup>771</sup> Thus, the domestic sector, which was unable to compete with cheap European salt,<sup>772</sup> was protected. The revenue of the Ottoman Empire was 50 million dollars in 1859 and jumped to 75 million dollars in 1862. This was mainly achieved by customs tariff receipts.<sup>773</sup> The Ottoman Government had decided to remove customs in the Empire except for those at the borders. Thus, a great amount of the burden on domestic manufacturers and merchants was eliminated, and trade flourished. Moreover, a great success was achieved against smuggling in 1863 under the leadership of Kani Pasha.<sup>774</sup> Salt, which had been subject to tax-farming previously, was monopolized by the state in this period.<sup>775</sup>

Tanzimat governments had adopted the administrative centralization while at the same time they gave priority to economic liberalization. Those, who would benefit from the economic liberalization, were undoubtedly non-Muslims. In this period of “Glasnost”, Galata and Pera would be centers of modern life and new ways of consumption; Istanbul would be influxed with foreign residents.<sup>776</sup> As a result of the removal of native monopoly in shopkeeping in 1861, Western tradesmen began to be active in all segments of the trade in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>777</sup> The Ottomans did not have entrepots; thus they tried to solve this problem with the help of foreigners. For this purpose, a concession was given to a French company to open entrepots in

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<sup>771</sup> Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu, “Tanzimat Devrinde Yabancıların İktisadi Faaliyetleri” in *150.yılında Tanzimat*, ed. Hakkı Dursun Yıldız (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1992), 94-95.

<sup>772</sup> Kütükoğlu, 99.

<sup>773</sup> *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, accompanying the annual message of the President to the second session thirty-eight congress, part IV*, 369.

<sup>774</sup> *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, accompanying the annual message of the President to the second session thirty-eight congress, part IV*, 371 (E. Joy Morris’ message from Constantinople to William H. Seward, dated August 6, 1863).

<sup>775</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 15.

<sup>776</sup> Zafer Toprak, “From Liberalism to Solidarism; The Economic Mind in the Age of the Nation State(1820-1920)”, 177.

<sup>777</sup> Mübahat S. Kütükoğlu, “Tanzimat Devrinde Yabancıların İktisadi Faaliyetleri”, 105.

İstanbul, İzmir, Sünne, Selanik, Trabzon, Samsun, Rodosto, Enos and Beyrut for 30 years. Goods in the entrepots would be exempt from customs duty after staying 3 months in entrepots. The government also granted the lands on which entrepots would be built for the French company.<sup>778</sup> During this downturn, the Ottomans needed the support of European powers; and, therefore, to please them. At the same time, changes had also occurred in consumption and esthetics; European taste started to replace the oriental style, especially among the Ottoman elite.<sup>779</sup>

The Western powers expected the Ottoman government to carry out reforms; however, reforms and new regulations caused additional financial difficulties; and the government had to create new sources of income because of increasing expenditures and debts. For this purpose, a new cadastral regulation was prepared and the Department of Land Cadaster was established in 1858.<sup>780</sup> One fifth of the revenues of mines was left to the Treasury; however, the state would acquire the right to own newly-discovered mines regardless of the owner of the land with the Land Code of 1858,<sup>781</sup> thus the government would have a new source of income. However, the government achieved only a moderate success in the increase of revenues through land taxes, as the influence of this new cadastral system spread throughout the rural areas quite slowly.<sup>782</sup> Also *temettu vergisi*(the profits tax) was

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<sup>778</sup> *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, accompanying the annual message of the President to the second session thirty-eight congress, part IV*, 368- 369.

<sup>779</sup> Leila Hanoum, *A Tragedy at Constantinople*, 69.

<sup>780</sup> Stanford J. Shaw, “The Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Tax Reforms and Revenue System”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 4 (Oct., 1975), 426.

<sup>781</sup> Shaw, “The Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Tax Reforms and Revenue System”, 434. For a detailed analysis of the Land Code of 1858, see Ömer Lütfi Barkan, “Türk Toprak Hukuku Tarihinde Tanzimat ve 1274(1858) Tarihli Arazi Kanunnamesi” in *Tanzimat I*, (İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1940), 321-421.

<sup>782</sup> *Reports by Her Majesty's Secretaries of Embassy and Legation on the Manufactures, Commerce, etc. of the Countries in which they reside*(London: Harrison and Sons, 1870), 208 ( H. Barron's report on Taxation of Turkey, dated December 1, 1869). Also Karpaz regards the poor state of registers as one of the most important problems led to the inefficiency of 1858 Land Code(Kemal H. Karpaz, “The Land Regime, Social Structure, and Modernization in the Ottoman Empire”, in Karpaz, *Studies on Ottoman Social and Political History:Selected Articles and Essays*, 349.

introduced in 1860 with a rate of 3 per cent.<sup>783</sup> But the consolidation of this measure took decades.<sup>784</sup>

Regarding the land revenues, Waqfs (pious foundations) were the possessors of very important resources that could have been utilized by the Ottoman government. Waqfs had direct responsibility over the issues such as the repair of the mosques, construction of the religious and educational buildings, supporting the religious and educational organizations economically, construction of fountains and organization of charities; so traditionally, many social and educational functions in the Empire were performed by the Waqfs. However, the existing structure of waqfs constituted a problem for a state that needed tax revenues. Also, pious foundations were now incompatible with the political and social needs of the Ottoman Empire. Waqfs were preferred as there was not a regular probate code that would ensure the protection of assets and right of succession.

In 1863, the most interesting and radical suggestion about the solution of the problem derived from the inadequacy of economic resources came from Alexandre Karatheodory, who would then hold important official positions in the Ottoman Empire. According to Karatheodory, implementation of the insurance principle would both allow the establishment of foundations and eliminate the existing disadvantages. Thus, real estates of the waqfs could be inherited to deserving owners in legal ways. Insurers would also gain significant profits in this way, and property owners would be guaranteed against all kinds of risk. The biggest problem here was the lack of scientific methods that would be used in the calculation of insurance premiums. Unlike Europe, the Ottoman Empire did not have a system that would make up for the absence of basic data via existing ones. As there was an immense

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<sup>783</sup> Shaw, "The Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Tax Reforms and Revenue System", 428.

<sup>784</sup> Özbek, *İmparatorluğun Bedeli*, 128.

corruption in the waqfs, revenue of the General Directorate of Foundations (Evkaf İdaresi) was very low. The use of falsified documents was widespread, records were generally inaccurate. Waqf assets of the whole empire were around 450-500 million liras. According to Karatheodory, in case the insurance charges were one-fourth of the real estate price, the tax receipt, which would come from insurance system, would be around 1 million liras. When the risk was removed, prices of land and real estate would increase. By the new regulation, foreign capital would also flow to Turkey continuously. When the real estates and possessions of waqfs were sold to foreigners, significant revenue would be gained from the insurance taxes. As a result of the demand by foreigners to insured goods, the value of the properties and consequently insurance incomes would increase. According to Karatheodory, such a step would also increase the credibility of Turkey in the civilized world.<sup>785</sup> Ottoman statesmen had not been capable of taking such further steps yet; attempts regarding waqfs would be limited and predominantly local in this period.

By 1861, the whole revenue from the mines of the Ottoman Empire was equal to the monthly profit on a single good English copper mine.<sup>786</sup> To increase the revenues from mines, The Council of Public Works drafted a regulation for the administration of the mines in the country. But this regulation was framed article by article after the code of Paris School of Mines. Ottoman government adopted the French model; but France was a non-mining country.<sup>787</sup> Also, the capital shortage experienced in mining works brought to the agenda the founding of a mining fund (bank) in 1862.<sup>788</sup> But this idea did not create a significant result in short term.

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<sup>785</sup> BOA, HR. TO.. 444/64 (Alexandre Karatheodory's letter to Fuad Pasha dated October 23, 1863).

<sup>786</sup> *The Levant Herald*, October 23, 1861.

<sup>787</sup> *The Levant Herald*, October 16, 1861.

<sup>788</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.MVL. 142/29; BOA, A.}MKT.NZD. 403/69.

It was not possible to create new sources of revenue or to expect profits from newly-created fields of income. Therefore it was necessary to enforce the reduction in the ministerial expenditures. Starting to keep budgetary accounts in each department was one of the most important parts of this attempt. As even the Treasury could not keep its accounts properly, the budget of the previous year depended on assumptions.<sup>789</sup> Therefore for Ottoman reformers, it was required to form a strong bureaucratic apparatus in order to ensure fiscal discipline and economic stability. In accordance with this, it was aimed to make officials in the civil service and treasury qualified and capable of doing their jobs.<sup>790</sup>

The most urgent action was to make reductions in the salaries of the high-ranking officials. In Hijri, 1276 (1859 or 1860 in Gregorian Calendar), the salary of the president of the *Meclis-i Vala* (Highest Council) was reduced from 8,000 Pounds to 6,800 Pounds and salary of the president of the Grand Council was reduced from 7,000 pounds to 5,800 Pounds.<sup>791</sup> However, the salaries of the high-ranking officials were still very high.<sup>792</sup> Therefore a significant reduction in the annual expenditures was planned within the scope of new reforms.<sup>793</sup>

One of the considerable issues regarding the economic development in that period was the idea of establishing a school of arts and industry. In 1862, consideration was given to the establishment of a school of arts (crafts) and industry by reason of the requirement to import individuals with specific skills from Europe due to the fact that a number of manufactured goods originated from Europe and local people lacked the skills for the manufacturing of a wide range of products. A

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<sup>789</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 26/1141.

<sup>790</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 26/1141.

<sup>791</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 18.

<sup>792</sup> Also in 1863, an Imperial edict was issued regarding the reduction of high salaries of some officials (BOA, HAT 1648/40).

<sup>793</sup> *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, accompanying the annual message of the President to the second session thirty-eight congress, part IV*, 368-369.

decision was formulated therefore to establish a committee to organize the founding of this school.<sup>794</sup> This idea would be realized by Midhat Pasha when *Islahhanes*(School of Arts and Industry for Orphans) were opened in Niş Province.

#### Infrastructure and Communication

According to the Ottoman statesmen, the main benefit of the progress related to transportation and communication was economic growth.<sup>795</sup> Before 1856, the Ottoman government had been unsuccessful in many of its attempts to construct new roads. Interestingly, one of these roads was only a 20-mile road that would connect Bursa to the coast.<sup>796</sup> On November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1857, Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha told Nassau Senior William that they did not have any proper roads in the country and people were not eager to make contributions to the expensive road projects as they expected everything from the state.<sup>797</sup>

There was a need for the institutional conduct of extensive construction projects. As a result, the Council of Public Works was established to organize the infrastructure projects, activities of navigation, manage the mining and quarrying and benefit from forests, on November 11, 1857.<sup>798</sup> Parallel to this, improvement of infrastructure and construction of roads accelerated after 1860. A 72-mile-road between Damascus and Beyrut was completed in 1862.<sup>799</sup> However, as the state could not pay sufficient wages for the labor force required in its projects, it benefited from the labor of Ottoman subjects without paying wages in many areas, thus a kind

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<sup>794</sup> BOA, İ. DH.. 497/33809; BOA, A.}MKT.MHM. 243/68.

<sup>795</sup> *Archives Diplomatiques*, T. 4 (Octobre, Novembre, Decembre) (Paris: Amyot, 1864), 318 (Report about the ameliorations in the administrative system dated Muharrem 1280(June 1864) and submitted to Grand Vizier by Grand Council (*Meclis-i Vala*)).

<sup>796</sup> TNA, FO 881/591 (Erzurum Consul Jas. Brant's memorandum on reform in Turkey, dated August 29, 1856).

<sup>797</sup> Senior, *Turkey and Greece*, 40.

<sup>798</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 13/540.

<sup>799</sup> *Commercial reports received at the Foreign Office from Her Majesty's consuls between July 1st, 1862, and June 30th, 1863* (London: House of Commons, 1863), 451 (Report by Consul Sandison on the Trade of Beirut for the year 1861, dated August 1862).

of slave labor was used in the construction of the roads. For example, a labor force of adult male prisoners in full health were used 4 days a week in the construction of roads in Albania in the 1860s.<sup>800</sup>

In the Ottoman Empire, a breakthrough was made in the services of communication after 1860. In 1864, there were 76 communication centers within the borders of the empire for communication by telegraph. By Hijri 1283 (1866 or 1867 in the Gregorian calendar), a 267-mile-long telegraph line was completed in the Asiatic lands of the Empire, and 304 miles more of telegraph line were still being laid in 1284 A. H.<sup>801</sup> As the people saw the good aspects of the reforms, they would have a more positive attitude towards the reform attempts. As a result of this, telegraph offices were built with the financial support of the local people and local notables in places such as Vidin, Lom, Plevne, Tiran, and Tirnova (Veliko Tarnovo) in the Balkans; and in Erzincan in Anatolia. It is important to note that when it was decided to construct a telegraph line between Rusçuk and Vidin in 1858, both Muslim and non-Muslim notables of Vidin agreed to cover some expenses.<sup>802</sup>

Ottoman government started ambitious projects to renew the infrastructure of the country. But the government was forced to utilize foreign engineers for such areas as exploration for forests, ports, roads, and rivers to a great extent. Parallel to this, the members of the society established to improve agriculture in 1863, would be appointed on a large scale from amongst foreign engineers.<sup>803</sup>

In 1861, it was pursued to open a civil engineering school due to the shortage of engineers in the country and, beyond that, with a view to securing progress in

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<sup>800</sup> *Commercial reports received at the Foreign Office from Her Majesty's consuls between July 1st, 1863, and June 30th, 1864* (London: House of Commons, 1864), 426

<sup>801</sup> *Archives Diplomatiques*, T. 4, 318 (Report about the ameliorations in the administrative system dated Muharrem 1280 (June 1864) and submitted to Grand Vizier by Grand Council (*Meclis-i Vala*)).

<sup>802</sup> Nesimi Yazıcı, "Osmanlı Haberleşme Kurumu" in *150.yılında Tanzimat*, ed. Hakkı Dursun Yıldız (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1992), 199.

<sup>803</sup> BOA, İ.. MMS. 27/1176.

industry and agriculture. The initial aim was to establish the school in such a manner as to graduate 30 students every year.<sup>804</sup> Probably related to this, Ottoman Council of Public Works<sup>805</sup> drafted a detailed regulation, composed of 46 articles, about establishing a school of engineering on March 26, 1862. The main aim of the project was to raise engineers who could work in the construction of roads, railways and bridges. The school would operate under the authority of Ministry of Trade. The headmaster of the school must have been a member of the Council of Public Works.<sup>806</sup> However, this initiative, although focused on the development of human resources, did not arouse the intended result, either.

In that period, a shipping company named *Şirket-i Hayriye* was established by the Ottoman government in İstanbul.<sup>807</sup> But numerous complaints were made regarding the maladministration of *Şirket-i Hayriye*. Since the steamers were insufficient in number, they were overcrowded and this created a serious risk for passengers lives.<sup>808</sup>

#### Reform in Education

In the state expenditures of 1859, the share allocated to public education and schools was 3.6 percent of the total expenditures.<sup>809</sup> The share allocated to education was very limited when compared to other fields; and the priority given to human development, which would provide the most required source of success for the reforms long-term, was not adequate. Even though the improvements made in education pointed out a change in the basis of quality, these improvements could not meet the requirements of the new era quantitatively.

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<sup>804</sup> BOA, A.}AMD. 93/88.

<sup>805</sup> Secretary and the vice president of Council of Public Works(Meclis-i Meabir) were also Europeans in 1861 (BOA, İ. MVL. 451/20162).

<sup>806</sup> BOA, A} DVN. MKL. 75/20.

<sup>807</sup> BOA, İ. DH., 369/24438.

<sup>808</sup> *The Levant Herald*, August 6, 1862.

<sup>809</sup> Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, “Osmanlı’da Bilim ve Eğitim Anlayışı” in *150.yılında Tanzimat*, ed. Hakkı Dursun Yıldız (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1992), 365.



After 1856 *Rüşdiyes* (Junior High Schools) were opened in many parts of Balkans.<sup>810</sup> In 1857, it was proposed to open *Rüşdiyes* in Kandiye (Heraklion) and Hanya in Crete, and Quran schools in the villages. The main reason behind this decision was the decline of Muslim power as a result of low education levels, and the religious conversion of some Muslims to Christianity in parallel with this status change.<sup>811</sup> Especially during the 1860s, the opening of Quran schools was accelerated in the Balkans in order to strengthen Islamic beliefs. Twelve preparatory schools and twenty-nine primary schools were opened between 1863 and 1864.<sup>812</sup> During his short term of office, Ethem Pasha, the minister of education, showed a remarkable effort to stimulate the public instruction in the country. Under the administration of Ethem Pasha 150.000 books were printed and they were distributed among different schools throughout the Empire. During his term, 100 new schools were established in Bosnia.<sup>813</sup>

The new typography technology was also introduced after 1856. Now, all kinds of books and documents were printed in a faster way; there was a great opportunity for progress in the education.<sup>814</sup> Convenience in reaching foreign publications and the development of typography technology also brought the development of the first scientific societies in the country. A petition for the foundation of one of these societies, *Cemiyet-İlmiyye-i Osmaniyye*, was submitted to the Grand Vizierate by Halil Bey, who was the Ambassador of St. Petersburg, on

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<sup>810</sup> BOA, İ. DH.. 427/28260.

<sup>811</sup> Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908 : Islamization, autocracy, and discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 70.

<sup>812</sup> *Archives Diplomatiques*, T. 4, 318 (Report about the ameliorations in the administrative system dated Muharrem 1280(June 1864) and submitted to Grand Vizier by Grand Council(*Meclis-i Vala*)).

<sup>813</sup> *The Levant Herald*, June 22, 1864.

<sup>814</sup> *Archives Diplomatiques*, T. 4, 318(Report about the ameliorations in the administrative system dated Muharrem 1280(June 1864) and submitted to Grand Vizier by Grand Council(*Meclis-i Vala*)).

April 11<sup>th</sup>, 1861.<sup>815</sup> However, even a bureau was not allocated to this society.<sup>816</sup> The society was able to obtain a central office with the support of Grand Vizier Fuad Pasha and an order was sent to all governors, mutasarrıfs and local governors to encourage people to read *Mecmua-i Fünun*, which was the journal of the society.<sup>817</sup> Nevertheless, obstacles in front of progress in education had not been eliminated fully and this new trend could not gain an institutional identity.

In the Ottoman Empire, the majority of people could not understand the language used in official documents. Translation of books from European languages to this language was not easy; in this context, there were serious problems related to the improvement of the education system. Imams were the only literate people who could read and write in the Ottoman language in the villages; but most of them could not even fully understand the edicts.<sup>818</sup> A famous Muslim intellectual from Russian Caucasia Mirza Fethali Ahundzade, by preparing a new style of letters in 1863 in Istanbul, aimed to eliminate the difficulties faced by Turkish people and submitted his project to the Grand Vizier Fuad Pasha. Fuad Pasha forwarded this project to the Cemiyet-İlmiyye-i Osmaniyye for review; Ahundzade had also participated in the first meeting held by this society. Ahundzade's work was appreciated, but the Ottoman government could not dare to make such a change;<sup>819</sup> alphabet reform could not be achieved because of traditions and financial restrictions.

The most interesting experience in the Westernization of education between 1856 and 1876 was the opening of *Mekteb-i Osmani* in Paris. The opening of this school in Paris could be regarded as the reflection of a leaning towards

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<sup>815</sup> Ali Budak, *Batılılaşma Sürecinde Çok Yönlü bir Osmanlı Aydını: Münif Paşa* (İstanbul, 2004), 173.

<sup>816</sup> Budak, *Münif Paşa*, 175.

<sup>817</sup> Budak, *Münif Paşa*, 183.

<sup>818</sup> TNA, FO 881/591 (Erzurum Consul Jas. Brant's memorandum on reform in Turkey, dated June 30, 1856).

<sup>819</sup> Budak, *Münif Paşa*, 589-590.

westernization. But at first, students of the *Mekteb-i Osmani* in Paris regarded living in Paris as a more important matter than the education.<sup>820</sup> In April 1863, a Greek student named Th. N. Şişkoğlu from the inhabitants of Tırnova (Veliko Tarnovo) started to study in *Mekteb-i Osmani*.<sup>821</sup> From this date on, various non-Muslim Ottoman students such as Greek, Armenian, Bulgarian and French would enter into *Mekteb-i Osmani* in groups and would get ready for a civil career.<sup>822</sup> However, the patronage system was effective in the selection process of Muslim and non-Muslim students. Moreover, the school in Paris caused great expenses for the state and expectations remained unmet. The great loss of the prestige of the French military as a result of the Franco-Prussian War was the final straw for the closure of *Mekteb-i Osmani* in 1874.<sup>823</sup> Ottoman administrators, who opened such a luxury school in Paris, would later have the idea of opening similar schools in Ottoman territories in a more affordable way.

The reform efforts in education conducted between 1856 and 1863 did not have the scope and content required for the transformation of the Empire. Infrastructure projects held a significant position, but the importance attached to the development of human resources was not held at the same level of esteem. International tension was high all the time and with a view to managing this situation the Ottomans needed to generate more comprehensive and fundamental solutions to the problems throughout the country.

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<sup>820</sup> Richard L. Chambers, “Notes on the Mekteb-i Osmani in Paris, 1857-1874”, in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: the Nineteenth Century*, eds. William R. Polk, Richard L. Chambers (Chicago, 1968), 319.

<sup>821</sup> Chambers, “Notes on the Mekteb-i Osmani in Paris, 1857-1874”, 322.

<sup>822</sup> Chambers, “Notes on the Mekteb-i Osmani in Paris, 1857-1874”, 323.

<sup>823</sup> Chambers, “Notes on the Mekteb-i Osmani in Paris, 1857-1874”, 328-329.

### 4.3. Reform Efforts in the Provinces

Reform efforts in the provinces constituted the most important part of the reform practice in the Ottoman Empire after 1856. Chances to establish an effective control over all imperial provinces except Istanbul were limited due to serious problems experienced in transportation and communication; thus the protection of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire mainly depended on the success of local administrations.

The lack of any instructions to designate the duties of provincial and district governors, directors, and administrative servants and the myriad of disturbances in local administration arising from such legal uncertainty resulted in the issue of the provisional regulation dated 21 September 1858 governing the duties of local authorities in 46 articles. The publication of this regulation was accompanied by an annotation that it would be in effect until the issue of a permanent regulation; at this point, it may be argued that the aim of the Ottoman Government to enact a comprehensive regulation on local authorities emerged immediately after the Reform of Edict of 1856.<sup>824</sup>

After the Crimean War, Mustafa Reşid Pasha became Grand Vizier with the promise of extensive reforms. During his term, a commission was set up for provincial reform, and it was planned to select Hüdavendigâr (Bursa) as a model province for the application of new principles of government.<sup>825</sup> The commission was composed of a chief functionary and various members as civil engineers and military officers. The commission made preliminary inquiries for a complete general census; removed mudirs and aghas in various towns and left constables in their stead;

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<sup>824</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 13/549.

<sup>825</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 8/350; BOA, İ. MMS. 8/365. Bursa was chosen to be the model province as the former capital of the Ottomans.

concentrated the authority in the hands of *Kaymakams*. It established a model *Kaymakamlık*(district governorship) in Mudanya. Moreover, it ordered a survey of lakes and marshes in the eastern part of the plain of Bursa with the aim of recovering the alluvial soil for culture.<sup>826</sup> However, conservative approaches prevailed in this special commission.<sup>827</sup> Also, the budget suffered from deficits and irregularities were seen in accounting services.<sup>828</sup> As a result of similar problems, this provincial reform project quickly failed.

The establishment of *Mekteb-i Mülkiye* was another significant project of Ottoman Government regarding the provincial reform. According to the protocol of the Special Commission formed for reforms in state affairs, as there was no educational program to train good public servants, “ordinary” men were being entrusted with district governorship and directorate positions. Most of these individuals lacked due qualifications and could not understand even the orders issued by the state. Therefore the Ottoman government made a decision in 1858 to open a school named *Mekteb-i Mülkiye* to train civil servants to serve in provinces.<sup>829</sup> The goal was to admit 100 students to this school at the initial stage. The period of studies would be 2 years. Courses to be taught during this period of training included history, geography, economy, politics, accounting, *Nizamat-ı Cedide* (New Regulations), and *Muahedat-ı Saltanat-ı Seniyye* (treaties of the Ottoman State with

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<sup>826</sup> TNA, FO 78/1398 (Consul Sandison’ report on the local administration and condition of people in the district of Bursa during the year 1857).

<sup>827</sup> *The Times*’ correspondent’s report from Istanbul, *The Times*, May 22, 1857. A local commission was also established to reform the councils in a province with the inclusion of 30 Muslim, 4 Greek and 1 Jew members from amongst the important figures of Bursa. This commission certified the merits of the members of the Grand Council of Education, Council of Inquiry (Meclis-i Tahkik) and Council on Trade. Moreover, a decision was formulated to have a permanent member from the Greek community sit in the Grand Council of Education and to keep the metropolitan bishop and an Armenian member involved in the council on an ad hoc basis for religious matters and a member from the Jewish community attending the council as relevant matters emerged as a difference from the previous system (BOA, İ. DH. 389/25723).

<sup>828</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 394/26104.

<sup>829</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 12/519.

other countries).<sup>830</sup> However, since they did not have the required experience and quality, graduates of Mülkiye did not perform well in some provinces after graduation.<sup>831</sup>

Provincial reform was a necessity of the age. Even the army could not provide security in many parts of the empire, and public security had become one of the most serious problems. The Special Commission, formed for reforms in state affairs and accounting, concluded that the governors serving the provinces of Yanya, Halep, and Trabzon should be replaced in the shortest time possible on grounds of administrative incompetence in August 1858.<sup>832</sup> Maintaining order became a significant problem in Halep as the activities of the people from some districts and tribes posed a threat to the general security in this period; the governor of this province was authorized to reshuffle the local administration and it was decided to reform the life conditions and discipline of the troops here. According to the Ottoman authorities, as there were a large number of officials and regular troops in Damascus, Sidon, and Maraş, they would prevent the troubles that might be created by the bandits and nomadic tribes in those regions.<sup>833</sup>

Again, there was no administrative order in Iraq for a long time, especially in Basra, and the local government lost its function there. In many cases, Ottoman government remained incapable of dealing with the raids of Arabian tribes. For example, in 1858, Beni Lam tribe in the West of Baghdad proceeded to hinder the river communication with Basra.<sup>834</sup> By 1861, the conditions that had made agriculture and trade attractive occupations had disappeared, economic life entered

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<sup>830</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 411/17887.

<sup>831</sup> BOA, MVL 960/63 ((Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate, dated March 15, 1863 (Rumi 3 Mart 1279)).

<sup>832</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 13/533.

<sup>833</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 14/573.

<sup>834</sup> TNA, FO 78/1368 (Henry Bulwer's message from Istanbul to the Earl of Malmesbury, dated 12 October 1858).

into a decline, and this situation affected the overall finance situation of the region, especially that of military administration and security. In order to eliminate poverty, in line with the opinions of the Governor of Baghdad, it was suggested to transfer the civil and financial administration of Musul, Kerkük and Basra sanjaks to the Baghdad province after turning these sanjaks into district governorships. Second, the revenues, which would come from these sanjaks, were to be used in order to pay the soldiers' salaries, repair the levees and dams on the Tigris and Euphrates, construct fortresses and bridges and clean canals; or to establish a new city around Basra after abandoning Basra completely. At this point, the governor needed to have the authority to amend the place of duty of the officials and managers and to dismiss them if necessary. Mehmed Namık Pasha, who was the governor of Baghdad, also demanded broad powers in order to revive the province economically and to ensure its security.<sup>835</sup>

Actually, the Grand Vizier had already given broad authority to the regional governors in line with the need for reform.<sup>836</sup> However, influential pashas in Istanbul did not always act reasonably; they prioritized personal matters and rivalries in administrative issues. The experiences of Ziya Pasha in the Governorship of Amasya served as one of the best examples that illustrate this point.

Since 1862, the posts of Ziya Pasha had been changing continuously due to the hostility of Âli Pasha and Fuad Pasha towards him. His appointments included such places as Bosnia and Cyprus, which were far from the center of the empire; finally, he was appointed to Amasya in December 1863.<sup>837</sup>

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<sup>835</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 23/1005.

<sup>836</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 3.

<sup>837</sup> Kenan Akyüz, *Ziya Paşa'nın Amasya Mutasarrıflığı sırasındaki olaylar: belgeler I* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi, 1964), 2-3.

Ziya Pasha came to be very successful in Amasya during his term in office that lasted one and a half years; he constructed a big bridge, a covered bazaar (*bedesten*), a shopping center and new roads; built six government offices, six primary schools, six clock towers, one high school and one jailhouse in Amasya. Pasha gained great success in maintaining the safety of the society by trying to prevent actions of the bandits and the abuses of local notables.<sup>838</sup> Ziya Pasha tried to apply reforms in Amasya despite all difficulties and resistance of local notables; and as a conservative reformer, he witnessed the realities of Anatolia. The Tanzimat period included these kinds of personal efforts against the traditional sources of misgovernment, but these separate individual efforts would not be able to come together under an institutional structure.

The abuse of the tithe system<sup>839</sup> and high-interest loans given to peasants were among the problems too often experienced in the Ottoman Empire. State officials had also participated in these cases of corruption. Investigations made by Ziya Pasha during his office in Amasya (1863-1865) on Hacı Hasan Ağa and Lütfullah Efendi, who was the Mufti of Amasya and had been collecting money from the people of Amasya since the declaration of the Tanzimat, was one of the cases that exemplified this situation.<sup>840</sup>

As stated by Ziya Pasha during his term in Amasya, peace and harmony could only be achieved by oppressing local tyrants.<sup>841</sup> However, as a result of his struggle with local notables, Ziya Pasha's place of duty was changed. Nusret Pasha, who was the former president of the Commission of Immigrants, had also taken part in this

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<sup>838</sup> Akyüz, *Ziya Paşa'nın Amasya Mutasarrıflığı*, 3.

<sup>839</sup> At this point Özbek gives examples from Dimetoka and Bucak(Tranzon) that illustrate the abuse of tithe system in the relevant period (Özbek, *İmparatorluğun Bedeli*, 94-95).

<sup>840</sup> Akyüz, *Ziya Paşa'nın Amasya Mutasarrıflığı*, 9-10.

<sup>841</sup> Akyüz, *Ziya Paşa'nın Amasya Mutasarrıflığı*, 19-20.



contrivance.<sup>842</sup> In a letter of complaint sent to the Undersecretary of Grand Vizierate about Ziya Pasha on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1865, Lütfullah Efendi clearly stated that he had a long lasting friendship with the Undersecretary of the Grand Vizierate.<sup>843</sup>

Despite all these maladies of traditional society, and conflicts between local notables and governors, some reformist figures such as Ziya Pasha would achieve partial success in their reform efforts.

One of the most important steps taken to accomplish local reforms was sending the inspectors to the European and Asiatic lands of the Empire in 1863 by the order of Sultan Abdülaziz. Ahmed Vefik Efendi was appointed as the inspector for Hüdavendigâr, İzmir, Konya, and Adana; Rıza Efendi for Trabzon, Erzurum, Harput, Kurdistan, Ankara, Kastamonu, Sivas; Subhi Bey for Tırhala, Yanya(Janina), Manastır(Bitola), and İşkodra; Ferid Efendi for Edirne, Niş, Vidin, and Silistre; and Afif Bey for Bosnia and Herzegovina in March 1863.<sup>844</sup> The most prominent missions of these inspectors were to punish government officials abusing the law, extend economic practices adopted by central administration, examine the working conditions of *zaptiyes*, regulate and correct the practices of local councils and local notables, make contributions to the improvement of transportation and communication systems, take measures for the development of society and encouragement on agricultural production, inspect prison conditions and stabilize the administrations of waqfs.<sup>845</sup>

Rıza Efendi, who was one of these officials charged for the inspection of Northern Anatolia, had dealt with the works such as the establishment of hostleries

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<sup>842</sup> Akyüz, *Ziya Paşa'nın Amasya Mutasarrıflığı*, 22- 23.

<sup>843</sup> Akyüz, *Ziya Paşa'nın Amasya Mutasarrıflığı*, 85-86.

<sup>844</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 26/1150. As a final decision Ziya Bey (later Ziya Pasha) was appointed as the inspector for Bosnia and Herzegovina. But after his dismissal, Ahmed Cevdet Pasha was assigned to this job (Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, *Ma'rûzât*, 60-61).

<sup>845</sup> *Archives Diplomatiques*, T. 4, 315 (Report about the ameliorations in the administrative system dated Muharrem 1280(June 1864) and submitted to Grand Vizier by Grand Council(*Meclis-i Vala*)).

and bazaars, repair of foundation buildings, provision of tax equity, establishment of credit unions, foundation of new irrigation systems, the expansion of sugar cane cultivation and the construction of places like hospitals and barracks.<sup>846</sup>

Subhi Bey, who was charged for the inspection of Southern Rumelia, dealt with works such as the removal of some corrupt government officials, repair of the barracks and government offices, the extension of primary and secondary education, ensuring public peace by solving problems related to banditry, review of local accounts, establishing a militia force comprising of 4,000 militiamen that would be responsible for the security of the villages, improving the mineral source that was found around Manastır, replacing *zaptiyes* with 500 literate officials who would serve as tax collectors and the removal of the illegal fees often times demanded in the process of a wedding. Subhi Bey suggested to the Ottoman Government that the selection procedures for local councils and mukhtars (village headmen) should be changed and the collection of money by *kocabaşıs* under the name of extra charges should be prohibited.<sup>847</sup>

The Governor of Izmir's inspection conducted throughout the province in 1864 was another example of these inspection tours. During the inspection, 10,000 *guruş* of military-exemption tax was collected from Christians in Urla as well as the taxes remaining from the previous year, and the accrued property tax of 56,000 *guruş*. It was decided to construct a road between the town and the coast by the help of inhabitants of Urla. Those inhabitants also had to build a customs bureau in the town.

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<sup>846</sup> *Archives Diplomatiques*, T. 4, 316(Report about the ameliorations in the administrative system dated Muharrem 1280(June 1864) and submitted to Grand Vizier by Grand Council(*Meclis-i Vala*)).

<sup>847</sup> *Archives Diplomatiques*, T. 4, 316-317(Report about the ameliorations in the administrative system dated Muharrem 1280(June 1864) and submitted to Grand Vizier by Grand Council(*Meclis-i Vala*)).

In Foça, it was decided to repair the guns and artillery mounts of the town's fortress which were in a poor condition. According to the decisions taken by the Governor of İzmir, a government office would be constructed close to the seaside with the financial aid of local magnates. A quarantine room and a customs bureau were also planned to be built there.

In Kuşadası, new zaptiye soldiers were added to security forces and it was decided to build a guardhouse within the town. The governor saw that there was also need for a government office and a customs house in Kuşadası. During the inspection, inhabitants donated 1,000 *guruş* to the government. As a result of the inspection, some members of the local councils were changed, and it was decided to make a census of the real estate in some districts.<sup>848</sup>

Ahmet Vefik Efendi, who was in Bursa for inspection, had the damaged mosques and hostelries repaired and again had many bridges, which were located on the transportation lines outside the city, repaired or rebuilt. Moreover, a dignified stance of the Tanzimat was shown by the construction of new roads during his inspection.<sup>849</sup> But Ahmed Vefik Efendi would be the subject of many complaints related to his actions and his tyranny. No matter how right he was, especially his tyranny against the administrators of waqfs was remarkable.

During the inspection of Yenişehir, Ahmed Vefik Efendi sent a man named Çakırzade Hacı İsmail to jail, exhibited him after getting him enchained, insulted him grossly and, although he knew that he was sick, he ordered him to build four shops in the place of ruined shops that were in the courtyard of the mosque built by Sinan Pasha. Çakırzade Hacı İsmail began to build these shops but he died due to his

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<sup>848</sup> For the details of the inspection conducted by the governor see BOA, İ. DH. 520/35425.

<sup>849</sup> *Commercial reports received at the Foreign Office from Her Majesty's consuls between July 1st, 1863, and June 30th, 1864* (London, 1864), 434 (Report by Consul Sandison on the Trade and the Agriculture of Bursa for the year 1863, dated March 26, 1864).

illness.<sup>850</sup> Ahmed Vefik Pasha probably treated Hacı İsmail so cruelly since he profited from the revenues of a waqf.

During his inspection in Bursa, Ahmed Vefik Efendi exiled craftsmen, who had been working in Kaygan Bazaar for a long time and using fire in their works, from the city. The reason for this exile was the fire-risk the craftsmen posed to the city. Ahmed Vefik Efendi took the shop bills of a foundation (waqf) from ironsmiths and sent them to a place where shops were attached to each other around the Mosque of Yıldırım Beyazıd Han outside the city. The value of the place, where ironsmiths were sent, was not even equal to the one shop in Kaygan Bazaar. These negative conditions put craftsmen in a difficult situation. At this point, ironsmiths made an application to stay in the city as coppersmiths, molders, blacksmiths, locksmiths and whitesmiths, who used fire like them.<sup>851</sup>

Ahmed Vefik Efendi also wanted to get the bridge in Subaşı village repaired during an inspection in Yeniçer district. At this point, he established a commission and reviewed the 14-year account of the Foundation of Diyüde Mosque. Determining that there was 14,765 *guruş* missing, Ahmed Vefik Efendi sold all possessions of the trustee of the foundation and used that income in the repair of the bridge. Nevertheless, Ahmed Vefik Pasha pressured the trustee to pay the remaining cost of the bridge.<sup>852</sup> In short, despite the reasonable grounds he had in his acts, he was the representative of the unconscious authority and despotism.<sup>853</sup>

Eastern Anatolia was in the shadow of the Balkans; but as in the Balkans, it was also very difficult to implement local reforms here. In Mardin, there was a long

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<sup>850</sup> BOA, MVL 706/46.

<sup>851</sup> BOA, MVL 706/46 (Petition of ironmasters in Bursa, dated April 4, 1865 (Hijri 9 Zilkade 1281)).

<sup>852</sup> BOA, MVL 706/46.

<sup>853</sup> According to Stratford Canning, Ahmed Vefik Efendi was clever, well-informed and free from corruption, but he was also too arrogant and impracticable in his ideas respecting Turkey (TNA, FO 78/1258; Stratford de Redcliffe's telegram to Earl of Clarendon dated March 29, 1857).

on-going dispute between Arab tribes and Kurdish tribes; and the Governor of Kurdistan tried to put an end to those conflicts by reforming the administration in the region.<sup>854</sup> Kurdish attacks on the lives, properties and chastity of Armenians in the villages in the Bitlis district of the Muş Sanjak could not be prevented as there were not enough soldiers and *zaptiyes* in the district. Because of this, the Armenian Patriarch demanded the removal of this Kurdish nomadic community out of the region in order to eliminate this problem.<sup>855</sup> In 1858, more than 200 families from nomadic tribes in Hısn-ı Mansur (Adıyaman) had already been sedentarized.<sup>856</sup> In the same year, after the repression of the Koçgiri tribes' revolt, an administrative district called *kaymakamlık* was formed for those tribes by unifying some parts from the Dersim and Karahisar sanjaks.<sup>857</sup>

Harput province was among the important places where reform activities aimed towards Kurdish tribes were carried out. It was stated that the Akçadağ tribes were subordinated to the state authority and they were forced to deal with agriculture in the report concerning the improvements made in Harput Province in 1865. The Diricanlı, Kelhorlu, Sinanlı ve Termekanlı and Akuşağı tribes, which led nomadic lives in these regions, were settled in appropriate places, and the local authorities tried to integrate these tribes into agricultural life; by this, the inhabitants of 4-5 districts were relieved of the damage those tribes caused.

Also, security in the region was improved with the construction of a barracks near Akçadağ. The repair of the Keban and Ergani sides of Baghdad Street was initiated. As the local irregulars were not regarded as soldiers and as some of these

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<sup>854</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 440/29056.

<sup>855</sup> BOA, MVL 593/36 (Armenian Patriarch's petition dated December 23, 1859(29 Cemaziyelevvel 1276)).

<sup>856</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 415/27488.

<sup>857</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 398/17322. According to Brant, Armenians resembled the Turks in many negative features and fanaticism. Although they were more open to improvement than Turks due to their education level, it was impossible to expect an improvement from them in a short time (FO 881/591 (Erzurum Consul Jas. Brant's memorandum on reform in Turkey, dated June 30, 1856)).

irregulars cheated people by posing as *zaptiyes*, the authorities kept local irregulars in order by dressing them like salaried *zaptiyes* of Istanbul. Forestation in the province and the construction of a farm which would raise livestock to be used in the Fourth Army in an area named Sultansuyu in Malatya were other significant improvements. It was also decided to build a *Rüşdiye* in Harput with the financial support of local people. Hefthisar Kurds, who plundered villages, invaded pastoral grounds, stole livestock and caused various security problems, were brought under control. New barracks were being built, some Kurdish tribes were brought under control and financial aid was collected from the people for the construction activities. Care and safety of the immigrants was an important duty for the local government even in Harput province.<sup>858</sup>

Between 1860 and 1864 Ottoman inspectors and some governors showed a remarkable energy for the amelioration of the conditions in the provinces. However, many provinces had not been subject to any efforts for reform that had permanent results. For example in the province of Kurdistan, Kurdish *beys* continued with their conflicts for power that constantly disrupted the order and peace among the people in that period. On the other hand, the people were under the cruel hands of the members of local councils. Public officials were in a way officialising the cruelties of the members of local councils. *Müdir*s from local origin had almost dominated the places under their administration. When such directors had been replaced by another person, they would either find a way to return to their positions or prevent their successors from fulfilling their duties in peace. Such on-going problems led to decreases of over 50 per cent in the number of households in a number of villages after 1860. Settlements, finding themselves in the grip of chieftains, members of local councils,

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<sup>858</sup> BOA, MVL 707/59.

tax-farmers, directors, and village heads, were becoming more desolate by the day as a result of long periods of disturbance.<sup>859</sup>

Although there were serious efforts especially in the 1860s, the targets of most reforms were not achieved in many places. Problems encountered in the face of natural phenomena and natural elements like rivers by reason of inadequate infrastructure were addressed in a significant portion of inspection reports.<sup>860</sup> However, while the notable pashas of the future who penned such inspection reports focused on current needs including the construction of bridges and roads, they failed to put forth the general and significant issues experienced by the country or to propose solutions for them, which should have constituted the most critical conclusion of their inspections. In order to get long lasting results from these efforts, local reforms were to be based on a real program and detailed regulations.

Governors and inspectors tried to carry out reforms and make improvements in various provinces between 1860 and 1864; but the most significant of those in this period were undoubtedly made by Ahmed Cevdet Efendi during the Inspection of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

#### **4.4. Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Although Bosnia and Herzegovina were closer to Istanbul than many regions of the empire, it was located in the midst of Serbia, Montenegro and Austria and it was the weakest link of the Ottoman Empire. This region, which was one of the major parts of the dreams of Serbian nationalists, had been in crisis for a long time.

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<sup>859</sup> BOA, MVL 669/79 (Kurdistan's governor Mustafa Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated January 30, 1864 (Rumi 18 Kanun-i Sani 1279)).

<sup>860</sup> For an example of these reports see BOA, İ. DH. 516/35149 (Abdüllatif Subhi Efendi's report sent from Yanya(Janina) dated October 1, 1863(Rumi 19 Eylül 1279)).

A rebellion, which could occur and could not be brought under control here, would probably create a domino effect in the Balkans.

It was the Ottoman Government that successfully lighted a fuse in Bosnia and Herzegovina immediately after the Crimean War. Hacı Ali Pasha, who had been chained by Ömer Pasha in 1850 because of his corrupt activities, had been released when he used his wealth, and then he became the civil governor of Travnik. However, he was dismissed from his position here, and after the removal from the governorship, Hacı Ali Pasha purchased the right to collect the tithe of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1857. As Hacı Ali collected the tithe through bullies, a rebellion broke out in Possavina. A great rebellion was getting closer day by day. Hacı Ali Pasha, who was in Mostar at the beginning of 1858, could not dare to collect tithe due to the increasing threat of civil commotion; thereupon the governor in Bosnia appointed Hacı Ali Pasha as the head of Herzegovinian irregulars. Afterwards, Ali Pasha was appointed as the District Governor of Trebigne by the “reformist” Ottoman Government; in the end, European consuls intervened in this situation.<sup>861</sup>

Economic and administrative problems similar to those observed in the rebellion caused by Hacı Ali Pasha had become chronic in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnia was a region where Christians were absolutely right to complain in the Balkans. There was a struggle between landowners and serfs in Bosnia; landowners were Muslims and thus social problems had also a religious aspect.<sup>862</sup> The near equality in the populations of Muslims and Christians was another factor that increased the risk of ethnic conflicts in Bosnia.

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<sup>861</sup> Lieut. G. Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina; or Omer Pacha and The Christian Rebels* (London, 1862), 37-38.

<sup>862</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 22(Consul General Longworth’s message sent from Belgrade to Henry Bulwer on July 14, 1860).



Actually, the Ottoman governor-general in Bosnia was an impotent figure. In 1858, the Governor of Bosnia had the authority to keep 13.000 irregulars but he could keep on 1.000.<sup>863</sup>

The situation of the Muslims who were working on others' lands was worse than Christians in the same position.<sup>864</sup> Those who carried the products to the markets and sold them were not *mültezims* (tax-farmers), but peasants. Those who met the needs of *mültezims* and his men in housing, feeding and fed their horses were also peasants.<sup>865</sup>

As the consulting of *mültezims* on many subjects related to agricultural products was laid down as a requirement, products of the peasants could be wasted as a result of snow and rain, peasants could even lose nutrients essential for them in the periods when the *mültezims* did not come in time.<sup>866</sup> In Bosnia, the registration transactions for *zeamet*, *timar* and *malikanes* had not been completed, so arbitrariness in the land regime continued.<sup>867</sup>

Also, an important part of the existing irregularities was originating from the fact that religious community leaders were collecting money from people in the name of the church or public works by misusing the tolerance of the state.<sup>868</sup> Christian peasants in Bosnia complained that they suffered more oppression from the priests than they did from the Turks.<sup>869</sup>

In fact, Bosnia had rich underground resources such as iron, lead, copper, mercury, zinc and arsenic; but these mines were not being utilized, because the

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<sup>863</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, March 8, 1858.

<sup>864</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 55 (Consul Zohrab's message sent from Bosna-Serai to Sir Henry Bulwer on July 22, 1860).

<sup>865</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine pendant la mission de Cevdet Efendi* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 1999), 49.

<sup>866</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 49.

<sup>867</sup> BOA, TŞRBNM 10/117.

<sup>868</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 53.

<sup>869</sup> "H.M.J.'s letter from Bosnia to the Editor", *The Times*, May 19, 1858.

regional infrastructure was insufficient.<sup>870</sup> Austrians and the French were the main beneficiaries of the economic advantages of the forests.<sup>871</sup> Austria was trying to isolate Bosnia from the rest of the world commercially, and it succeeded in this aim. The lower tariffs applied to Austrian merchants compared to the higher customs duties imposed by the Ottoman government against domestic trade in Bosnia and Herzegovina made the realization of this aim even easier.<sup>872</sup>

The Sublime Porte had not opened a port that would break the isolation of Bosnia. It had not built roads or bridges that could facilitate trade, it hadn't even repaired them; but it increased the taxes consistently.<sup>873</sup> In the middle of all these troubles, 300 thousand cattle perished as a result of epidemics in Bosnia, just in 1862.<sup>874</sup>

Although Bosnia and Herzegovina must have been prosperous, it was a poor region that was prone to rebellions in that situation. Until the end of the 1860s, the reason for disobeying the state was not national ambitions or the need for freedom, but the financial reasons there.<sup>875</sup>

On the other hand, Herzegovina was probably the most vulnerable Ottoman region to provocation in the Balkans. The main reason for this was its geographical proximity to Montenegro. Montenegrin bands were the permanent source of disturbance in the Montenegro-Herzegovinian frontier.<sup>876</sup> The residents in Herzegovina were made up of 52,000 Catholics, 70,000 Orthodox Christians and

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<sup>870</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 265-266; TNA, FO 881/679 (Henry A. Churchill's commercial report on the Province of Bosnia dated January 25, 1858).

<sup>871</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 265.

<sup>872</sup> TNA, FO 881/679 (Henry A. Churchill's commercial report on the Province of Bosnia dated January 25, 1858).

<sup>873</sup> TNA, FO 881/679 (Henry A. Churchill's commercial report on the Province of Bosnia dated January 25, 1858).

<sup>874</sup> Josef Koetschet, *Osman Pascha, der letzte Grosse Wesier Bosniens, und Seine Nachfolger* (Sarajevo: Daniel A. Kajon, 1909), 5.

<sup>875</sup> Koetschet, 6.

<sup>876</sup> TNA, FO 78/1382 (Jas. Zohrab's message from Mostar to Lord Malmesbury, dated December 24, 1858).

60,000 Muslims;<sup>877</sup> the area was open to ethnic conflicts due to this ethnic composition. Austria also pursued a provocative policy in the region and tried to attract Muslim notables and *beys* by implying them Habsburg government would accord them privileges.<sup>878</sup>

The districts in Herzegovina, with the exception of Mostar, were under control of a local council, qadi and a *müdir* who was assisted by the tax collector. In some issues, the region was governed by a Mutasarrıf who was subordinate to the Pasha in Bosnia and appointed by the Sublime Porte. *Müdir*s were appointed by the Mutasarrıf with the approval of Istanbul. The Qadi of Mostar was an important officer whom qadis in other districts were subordinate to; however, he had no salary, he subsisted on court fees or anything he could find.<sup>879</sup>

Considering Herzegovina's geographical proximity to Serbia and the Adriatic Sea, Ottoman administrators did not make use of the commercial advantages provided by Herzegovina's geographical location. Ömer Pasha was one of the exceptional administrators who realized this in 1852; however, the commercial precautions brought upon by the Austrian government and the shutdown of the harbor, that would have provided exportation of the commercial products to foreign countries from Herzegovina, left the efforts of Ömer Pasha interrupted.<sup>880</sup>

Bringing order to the financial affairs of Orthodox Church was an important matter for the Tanzimat administration. But the Ottoman government did not pursue an active policy against the corruption of Greek clergy. Churches in Bosnia and Herzegovina were administrated by ecclesiastics called Vladika or Metropolitan who were appointed by Istanbul. A person who wanted to be a Metropolitan often times

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<sup>877</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 41.

<sup>878</sup> The Levant Herald's correspondent's report from Mostar, *The Levant Herald*, May 22, 1861.

<sup>879</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 77.

<sup>880</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 70-71.

used his fortune to achieve his goal. A Metropolitan did not have to be a resident of the place where the Church was located in. Since the Metropolitan position was empty in 1861, the petitions demanding the appointment of a Slavic Metropolitan were sent to Istanbul, but due to strategic reasons, the Ottoman government preferred not to weaken the authority of the Greek Church.<sup>881</sup> Appointment of a Slavic Metropolitan was identified with the increase of Russian influence.

In 1861-1862, Arbuthnot, who visited Bosnia and Herzegovina, wrote that the Christians here lacked the humanitarian principles of Christianity which separated itself from Islamism with its central notions of “sword and conquer”. The local communities showed no tendency to improve the life conditions or to show sympathy towards each other. The discourse, “Christians under the Turkish Yoke”, was far from revealing the actual picture.<sup>882</sup>

In Herzegovina, only a dozen Muslim children went to Mekteb-i Rüşdiye (Ottoman junior high school) and the Greek and Latin children’s conditions were also extremely poor. Here, a school which was in service for educating orthodox girls was in good condition, but the main financial supporter of this school was a Russian Empress.<sup>883</sup> As a requirement of the Tanzimat, Rüşdiye schools were established in each *liva*, but the Rüşdiye in Mostar was not different than an ordinary primary school (*mahalle mektebi*) in its quality.<sup>884</sup>

Since 1850, the price of labor in Herzegovina had increased rapidly. The shortage of labor as a result of Christian outbursts was the main cause for that.<sup>885</sup> In the beginning of the 1860s, the export of Herzegovina only totaled to 70,000 Pounds while the imports totaled to 150,000 Pounds. At this point, a lot of coins went out of

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<sup>881</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 43-44.

<sup>882</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 46-47.

<sup>883</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 75.

<sup>884</sup> BOA, TŞRBNM. 10/117.

<sup>885</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 68.

the country and the imported products provided the needs of the society instead of enriching the region. As a result, the region was getting poorer year by year.<sup>886</sup>

In Herzegovina, possession of lands by Christians was undesired, but also Muslims were prevented from possessing lands as they could break the monopoly of landlords. Not only the relationships between the peasants and landlords were not controlled by laws, but also the complaints coming from people were generally ignored by Ottoman governors and the government took the sides of landlords in conflicts between landlords and inhabitants.<sup>887</sup> Due to the lack of land registry and a cadastral system, it was hard to determine the limits of private ownership.

The landlords put the entire tax burden on the inhabitants of their land. Kocabaşıs collected taxes from the residents with excuses such as spending it on churches, etc. Since the government did not function well public security was constantly under threat. A complete disorder prevailed in the *Zaptiye* (police) organization.<sup>888</sup>

During the war with Montenegro (1861-1862), the peasants were forced to carry significant amounts of food to the Ottoman troops with their horses, but they didn't receive payment of the receipts they got in return for their service.<sup>889</sup> It was even observed that men and women carried the food on their shoulders. The road of Herzegovina was ruined and stony; in spite of this, billeting houses were constructed for the army during the war. When the movement of officers and soldiers, and the transfer of provisions and munitions were necessary; the animals of the local people were taken to the bazaars and markets from their villages, and were collected by force. The mentioned animals were even locked up with their owners until the

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<sup>886</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 71.

<sup>887</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 72.

<sup>888</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 73.

<sup>889</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 74.

required amount of animals were collected. The animal owners experienced serious difficulties during transportation and a lot of animals perished. That is why a lot of people abandoned their animals and escaped. These burdens led the local people to seek other protectors.<sup>890</sup>

In 1860, at least nine Serbian secret agents were caught in Herzegovina; their main goal was to increase the unrest which already existed among the agricultural population. The region had been open to these kinds of agitations for a long time and the local Ottoman administration almost served Serbia's ambitions by its corruption and misuse of authority.<sup>891</sup> The Ottoman governors were ignorant and indifferent towards the possibility of a riot in Herzegovina.<sup>892</sup>

In the spring of 1859, a wave of riots occurred in Herzegovina. During these incidents, Slavic newspapers started an uproar about the death of seven Christians, but the killing of 37 Muslims during the incidents was never mentioned.<sup>893</sup> The foreign press constantly tried to generate sympathy towards Christians in the public opinion.

The only road in the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina was built by Ömer Pasha in 1851. This road connected Saraybosna and Brod.<sup>894</sup> Therefore in the case of an insurrection, it was very hard for the regular troops to repress it. While the country was in such condition, such an insurrection did occur in Herzegovina, in 1861. At this point, Ömer Pasha who was the ablest general in the country and of Slavic origin at the same time was the best option for the command of the operation.<sup>895</sup>

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<sup>890</sup> BOA, TŞRBNM. 7/6.

<sup>891</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 61-62.

<sup>892</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 128.

<sup>893</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 133.

<sup>894</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 74.

<sup>895</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 135.

Ömer Pasha published an announcement when he reached the region. According to this, Christians would have the right to build churches, *zaptiyes* would only stay in the special places allotted for them and not in the houses in the villages, taxes would be collected by the chiefs that the residents assigned, and they would be given to the government, and the articles of the agreement signed in Istanbul between landlords and agricultural producers would be put into practice sooner than previously dictated. Also, Ömer Pasha stated that he would beg the Greek Patriarch in Istanbul for the assignment of a native Bishop, who spoke the local language and knew the traditions of the residents, as the Metropolitan of Herzegovina. This announcement was distributed to all districts, towns and villages. But for the bandits whose main aim was plunder, this meant nothing.<sup>896</sup>

The insurrection in Herzegovina was repressed by Ottoman forces; however, it was proof that the Ottomans were too disorganized for such a huge rebellion. Ahmed Muhtar Pasha volunteered for the repression of the insurrection of Herzegovina in 1861 after he graduated from *Mekteb-i Harbiye* (Ottoman Military School), but he experienced difficulties in buying the required supplies for the expedition such as boots, guns, raincoat, etc.<sup>897</sup> During the rebellion, the number of well-educated military officers was very small.<sup>898</sup> The misery of the bandsmen and the poorly clothed and penniless soldiers were the other parts of the negativities concerning human sources of the Ottoman forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>899</sup> The regiment commanders considered being drunk as a privilege.<sup>900</sup> Nowhere else was greed as great as it was in the army. In 1861, 29 of the best battalions of the Ottoman

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<sup>896</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 136-137.

<sup>897</sup> Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Paşa, *Anılar*, 10.

<sup>898</sup> Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Paşa, *Anılar*, 12.

<sup>899</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 167-168.

<sup>900</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 172-173.

Empire were in Herzegovina;<sup>901</sup> however, the best troops in the country were in such a disorganized condition.

In May-June 1862, the Ottoman forces were repulsed while moving to Nikšik; the troops under the command of Ahmed Pasha was left without any water and had to fill their flasks from a puddle of rainwater, tainted by animal manure and urine. In addition to this, when an Ottoman force lacked supplies, 50 horses were slaughtered and their meat was distributed. In the fighting that occurred while moving to Nikšik, the head of Ferik Salih Pasha and noses of 100 soldiers were cut by rebels.<sup>902</sup> Arbuthnot was shocked when he saw women without ears, children without noses, soldier corpses sliced into pieces, and according to him, these could only be made by “quasi” Christians.<sup>903</sup>

As Arbuthnot had foreseen in 1862, the rebels in Bosnia and Herzegovina were the seeds of a greater Christian-Slav uprising that would cause the Ottoman Empire to lose her lands in Europe.<sup>904</sup>

#### Ahmed Cevdet Efendi's Inspection in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The most successful of the provincial inspections in 1863 was conducted by Ahmed Cevdet Efendi. Ahmed Cevdet Efendi's inspection in Bosnia and Herzegovina lasted 18 months.<sup>905</sup>

In 1863, a commission under the presidency of Ahmed Cevdet Efendi held meetings with the landowners and Christian agricultural laborers to come to an agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The applicability of the edict dated 12 Safer 1274 (October 1, 1857) was dependent on only the goodwill of landowners; therefore, the villagers needed to be protected against the torture of the

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<sup>901</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 170.

<sup>902</sup> Gazi Ahmet Muhtar Paşa, *Anılar*, 14-15.

<sup>903</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 153.

<sup>904</sup> Arbuthnot, *Herzegovina*, 134-135.

<sup>905</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 104.



landowners.<sup>906</sup> Ahmed Cevdet Efendi brought Christians the right to own wastelands or cultivated land which had been left to the government since its dead owner did not have any heir. Arif Efendi from Mostar Ulema who opposed to this regulation was exiled.<sup>907</sup>

With the new land regulation, landowners had the right to own one-third of the products obtained from his land. Forced labor was prohibited; the agricultural producer had the right to be autonomous after he gave the landowner the share that he deserved according to the new land regulation. Ahmed Cevdet Efendi was the man who clarified the principles of land ownership. By the coming of principles such as equality under the law and subjection to the laws, the feudalism that had existed in the region for a long time took a major blow. According to the new regulation, two-thirds of the income tax would be paid by the producer and one-third by the landowner. In the edict announced to the agricultural laborers in Mostar and translated into Slavic languages, it was mentioned that the local notables would not abuse the taxpayers; in the case of such an abuse, they would be punished.<sup>908</sup>

After paying the arrears of *zaptiyes* salaries, Ahmed Cevdet Efendi reorganized the *zaptiyes* in Herzegovina. The newly founded gendarmerie consisted of people from every community including the Christians and was based on a more organized manner of work. This was important regarding the decrease in the complaints, mostly coming from rural regions, about security forces. According to new regulations, public servants did not have the right to spend the night in the houses of the villagers or demand food from them.<sup>909</sup> These principles would also be applied for Pandurs and border guards.

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<sup>906</sup> Koetschet, *Osman Pascha*, 6.

<sup>907</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 80.

<sup>908</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 81-83.

<sup>909</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 84.

Ahmed Cevdet Efendi also tried to strengthen the loosening ties between the Christians and the Ottoman government. As a result of the meeting held with the Şuma community, Ahmed Cevdet Efendi declared the rights of Christians to build churches, put bells on the churches and open schools.<sup>910</sup> For the construction of an Orthodox Church and a Latin Church in Herzegovina, Ahmed Cevdet Efendi donated 25 thousand *guruş* to each on behalf of the Ottoman government.<sup>911</sup>

In Herzegovina, Ahmed Cevdet Efendi forced Muslims to send their children to Mekteb-i Rüşdiye.<sup>912</sup> Though this would cause some complaints, Cevdet Efendi had a firm stance on this issue.

Ahmed Cevdet Efendi abolished all the *başıbozuk* (irregular) forces and therefore carried the security on a more organized level all while getting rid of some financial burdens.<sup>913</sup> By connecting the border guards directly to the Ottoman Army, some lawlessness and robberies in the area were prevented.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Muslim community was exempt from military service. Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, unlike the ones in Kolaşin and Nikşik, had forgotten how to fight and most of them had sold their weapons. The security of such a vast area depended upon the army coming from Rumelia. Therefore, a local and permanent force had to be established. At this point, it was attempted to establish a force from the local people in Bosnia via a recruitment project. According to this project, with a *redif* (reserve) force, an army of more than 50 thousand soldiers in Bosnia could be established. However, the cost of such a military force was high.<sup>914</sup>

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<sup>910</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 84.

<sup>911</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 86. BOA, İ. DH.. 519/35394(Ahmed Cevdet Efendi's letter to Grand Vizierate dated December 5, 1863(24 Cemaziyelahir 1280)).

<sup>912</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 87.

<sup>913</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 87.

<sup>914</sup> BOA, TŞRBNM. 10/117.

Ahmed Cevdet Efendi left Mostar on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1863. After coming to Bosnia, Ahmed Cevdet Efendi abolished the local council in Sarajevo.<sup>915</sup> It was planned to replace the old council members with new ones elected by the leading figures of every community.

Cevdet Efendi tried to convince Christians in Bosnia to send their children to Mekteb-i Rüşdiye by saying that through schools that provide education in Turkish their children could be recruited into Ottoman bureaucracy.<sup>916</sup> According to Ahmed Cevdet Efendi, if an *İdadi* (Ottoman high school) would be opened and the Rüşdiye graduates were placed there, some of them could become military officers. By raising such educated and wise people among Bosnians, the general condition of the country could be ameliorated.<sup>917</sup>

The constitution of the new *zaptiye* organization in Bosnia led to the decrease of the problems similar to the ones in Herzegovina, while at the same time provided new employment opportunities to the ones who completed their military duty.<sup>918</sup>

Because of the people's complaints about the local council in Pripol, Cevdet Efendi had two council members arrested and the local people were invited for a new council election. Additionally, the Yeni Varoş council was abolished due to its incapability. Since the Sandjak of Yeni Varoş was on the Serbian border, bandits often penetrated into Bosnia from there. To prevent this, Cevdet Efendi established a guard force and increased the number of the soldiers around Yeni Varoş.<sup>919</sup>

During his inspection, Cevdet Efendi visited the town of Senitza which was the center of the *liva* of Yenipazar Sandjak and located in a very strategic position, and saw that the fortifications were in good condition. In addition to this, he kept the

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<sup>915</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 92.

<sup>916</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 93.

<sup>917</sup> BOA, TŞRBNM. 10/117.

<sup>918</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 94.

<sup>919</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 98-99.

income and expenses of *liva* under control and appointed a commission for putting forth the real financial status of the Sandjak. Completing the inspection of the *liva*, Cevdet Efendi assigned regiment commander Mahmud Pasha with the task of capturing Kolashin which had been in possession of Montenegro since the Crimean War and Mahmud Pasha achieved success in this task. Thanks to this military success, the Muslim community that used to live in Kolashin gained the chance to return to their homes.<sup>920</sup>

In Gradacac(Kal'a), there was farms and land belonging to the government, and in these farms, a Christian population of 1,200 households was working and living. Ahmed Cevdet Efendi made some efforts to give these Christian families the chance of being landowners in this territory. Cevdet Efendi's efforts were so unusual for the people at that time; because of this, Christian inhabitants thought that this act was a trick of the Ottoman Government.<sup>921</sup>

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, tax farming in tithe was abolished and it was replaced by a new system based on collecting fixed tax from inhabitants in some places and collecting the tax by the government agents in other places. The goal here was to remove the problems arising from tax farming and eliminate the public complaints; however, during the collection of tithe by the government, it was observed that people were bullied, and abuses occurred. It took a lot of time to reach the *liva* center Mostar from *kazas* and villages; as a result, carrying the tithe to the *liva* center in a safe way was significantly hard. In this new collection system, the local governments had major tasks to perform.<sup>922</sup>

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<sup>920</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 98.

<sup>921</sup> Pasco Wassa, *La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine*, 99-100.

<sup>922</sup>BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 276/69 (Ahmed Cevdet Efendi's letter to Grand Vizirate dated August 23, 1863(Rumi 11 Ağustos 1279) ).

Ahmed Cevdet Efendi's prolonged inspection in Bosnia and Herzegovina ended with success. Despite his success, Ahmed Cevdet Efendi was in the shadow of Midhat Pasha who was the Governor of Niş. The main fault of the Ottoman Government here was that it did not appoint this exceptional inspector as Governor-General in Bosnia. As a result, most reforms made by Ahmed Cevdet Efendi lost their significance in the long term, and the consequence was the outbreak of the revolt in 1875, which eventually brought the Ottomans' the loss of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The local reform was performed in a limited way in most places due to the problems arising from the lack of a clearly defined administrative vision as well as the huge financial crisis that the government was going through. As a result, there was an inconsistency between local reform expectations and the real financial status that could not be eliminated for a long time.

#### **4.5. Financial Crisis**

The Ottoman Empire had not been able to realize its transformation into a fiscal-military state, a process which the European States had undergone after the Napoleonic Wars. The realization of all prescribed reforms required the creation of accounting systems suitable for the needs of the age. However, the Ottoman Government had made extremely limited progress in this area.

It was a popular view among Western elites that comprehensive reforms must be made in the Ottoman Empire, and during every crisis Ottomans encountered, the Ottomans were constantly reminded that reform was an urgent task. However, the issue of finding the funds necessary for the implementation of the reforms was generally out of their agenda.

The native bankers did not associate their interests with those of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>923</sup> In order to find the required financial resources for the reforms, the Sublime Porte invited the capital of its Western allies into the Empire, especially after 1856.<sup>924</sup> In that period, Rotschild Family and Oppenheim Company were among the main creditors that Ottoman government could demand loan from.<sup>925</sup> After the Ottomans signed the Paris Treaty of 1856, foreign capital rushed into the Ottoman Empire. Thus, Western tutelage over the Ottoman Empire that was revealed through the discourse of reform and regeneration provided some commercial and financial opportunities for the West. However, rather than attracting foreign capital, the Ottomans needed to establish a financial structure that would allow them to make a financial reform and pay their constantly growing foreign debts.

Before the Tanzimat, the basic method that the government used for overcoming the income crisis was to decrease the currency value.<sup>926</sup> During the Tanzimat, banknotes called *kaime*<sup>927</sup> were monetized constantly; *esham-ı mümtazes*(special bonds) were issued for the immediate expenses of state departments;<sup>928</sup> the foreign debts that had been incurred since the Crimean War were also added to that. But these foreign debts would turn into a fettering factor for the country within 10 years.

As soon as the Empire came out of the war, it was highly debated how the Ottoman Government would pay its 1854 and 1855 debts. The debt taken in 1854 was around 3 million *Pounds* which was to be paid back with an annual 6 percentage

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<sup>923</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, January 5, 1857.

<sup>924</sup> Albert Baster, "The Origins of British Banking Expansion in the Near East", 76-86.

<sup>925</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 12/507.

<sup>926</sup> Zafer Toprak, "From Liberalism to Solidarism; The Economic Mind in the Age of the Nation State(1820-1920)", 181.

<sup>927</sup> For detailed information about the introduction and evolution of *kaime* during Tanzimat period, see Ali Akyıldız, *Para Pul Oldu: Osmanlı'da Kağıt Para, Maliye ve Toplum*, (İstanbul; İletişim Yayınları, 2003), 35-157.

<sup>928</sup> For example Ottoman government issued *esham-ı mümtazes* valuing 250.000 kises for the urgent needs of some state departments in 1857 (BOA, A.}MKT.NZD. 235/75).

interest, as well as collateralizing the tribute given to the Ottoman Empire by Egypt. Also, in 1855, a debt of 5 million *Pounds* which was to be paid back with an annual 4 percentage interest.<sup>929</sup> The amortization process of the 1854 debt applied to 1854-1889 and the 1855 debt applied to 1855-1900.

In appearance, the debt of Ottoman Empire did not exceed its 3-years revenue, the policy of retrenchment did not affect public services negatively, tax rates were not as high as scything the production and the country still possessed some significant welfare resources, at the same time the budget deficits did not constitute a threat to the country.<sup>930</sup> But in the period of 1861-1863, the Ottoman Empire experienced difficulties in paying back its debts and carrying out its responsibilities.

Again, in 1858, a debt of 5 million English Liras was taken, to be paid back with an annual 6 percentage interest and with an amortization process covering 1858-1893, while various indirect contributions possessed in Istanbul were collateralized.<sup>931</sup> The Ottoman Government had great difficulty in paying this debt in 1861. In 1862, the bondholders of this debt sent a letter of complaint to Lord John Russell about how the Ottoman Empire did not complete its responsibilities. In 1862, Lord Hobart was sent to Istanbul to inspect the Ottoman Empire's financial status and the complaints of the bondholders. These complaints forced the Ottoman Empire to make new regulations and respond to some concerns by 1864.<sup>932</sup>

Part of these debts were used in the Sultan's private expenses. In 1856, expenditure of Sultan and Palace amounted to 145 million piastres which was equal to 18 percent of the state's total expenditure. In the same period, Queen Victoria's

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<sup>929</sup> BOA, Y.EE.. 28/8.

<sup>930</sup> Farley, *The Resources of Turkey*, 21.

<sup>931</sup> BOA, Y.EE.. 28/8.

<sup>932</sup> TNA, FO 195/288.

civil list did not exist 2 percent of state revenues.<sup>933</sup> Especially the amount spent on the Harem was a fortune and this constituted one of the reasons for financial deficit. The Sultan could only become indebted with high rates of interest and spent the high cost loans. What's more, the current financial structure of the country forced Abdülmecid to set forth financial agreements that would put the country's independence at risk in the future. Since the Ministers did not have any autonomy, there was no legal force to control the expenses of Sultan.<sup>934</sup> Although in his Imperial Edict dated August 18, 1858, Sultan Abdülmecid declared that the members of Imperial Household made various purchases contrary to his will and stressed that the regular allowances granted to them must have sufficed to them,<sup>935</sup> in 1861, the Imperial Court's annual expenses were around 1.2 million pounds which were a little less than the sum of the annual national and foreign debt payments.<sup>936</sup> The easy loan opportunity achieved after the Paris Agreement led to extravagancy<sup>937</sup> and the prestige and the credibility of the Ottoman Empire in the face of the West was damaged due to the burden of high-interest debts.

A building mania had started among the Ottoman nobility and statesmen after 1856. Çırağan Palace, two palaces for the newly married daughters of Abdülmecid in Salı Pazarı, one palace for the two daughters of Fethi Ahmed Paşa in Arnavutköy, one palace at Kandilli for Sultan's daughter, several kiosks, a music-hall and theater were built in this period and cost millions of Pounds.<sup>938</sup>

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<sup>933</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, January 31, 1857.

<sup>934</sup> TNA, FO 78/1255 (Stratford de Redcliffe's message sent from Istanbul to Lord Clarendon on January 30, 1857).

<sup>935</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, September 1, 1858.

<sup>936</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 17. In *Tezâkir*, Ahmed Cevdet Pasha also mentions the continuation of Palace's extravagancy especially after the death of Sultan Abdülmecid; see Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir II*, ed. Cavid Baysun, 131-132.

<sup>937</sup> Türkgeldi, *Mesail-i Mühimme-i Siyasiye*, 142.

<sup>938</sup> *The Times*' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, August 21, 1858.



The country's lack of financial discipline was another factor deepening the financial crisis. After examining the Ottoman financial situation at the end of 1861, Mr. Forster and Lord Hobart claimed that the official documents provided by the Ottoman Empire lacked systematic regulation and classification, and the delays in the preparation of documents caused problems in inspecting the Ottoman Empire's financial status.<sup>939</sup> There was no Minister of Finance responsible for preparing budgets, stabilizing income and expenses, and all issues concerning taxation and the cost of governmental executions.<sup>940</sup> There was no clear accounting and recording system that would allow having information about the general financial situation of the Empire. Consequently, in the times of financial crisis, no consensus could be reached among Ottoman statesmen.<sup>941</sup> Considering these economic uncertainties and the irregularity in accounts, performing a financial reform was quite difficult.

Every minister had the right to borrow without a limit; this made financial security impossible. When the Treasury was emptied, Ministers used their rights to offer to the market their 10-year term bill of debt called *sergi*.<sup>942</sup>

In Hijri 1274-1275 (1857-1859), the budget deficit was 29 million *guruş*; in 1276 (1859-1860) the amount exceeded 150 million *guruş*. The sum of the government debts (foreign debt, national debt, the debt with high interest owed to Galata Bankers, etc.) was 36.5 million pounds.<sup>943</sup> Cyrus Hamlin claimed that the person who inured the Ottoman Empire to its borrowing madness was Henry Bulwer.<sup>944</sup> According to Lord John Russell, the borrowing madness of the Ottomans

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<sup>939</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 1.

<sup>940</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 22.

<sup>941</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 24-25.

<sup>942</sup> Velay, *Essai sur l'Histoire Financiere de la Turquie*, 117.

<sup>943</sup> *Report on the Financial Condition of Turkey*, 38.

<sup>944</sup> Cyrus Hamlin, *Among the Turks* (New York: American Tract Society, 1877), 353.

reached a level that if the loans would continue to be given like this and the present lawless order would go on, one day there would inevitably be a revolution.<sup>945</sup>

Short before his death, Mustafa Reşid Pasha knew that first of all it was necessary to establish a national bank for the development of country.<sup>946</sup> In that sense, absence of a national bank, a lack of credit agencies, a structure open to speculation and high amounts of banknotes floating in the market were some of the reasons that caused the Ottoman economy to fluctuate constantly.

In order to regulate the expenses and re-organize the financial structure, a council was formed in 1859. Composed of seven members, it was affiliated with the Ministry of Finance. This council had four Ottoman and three foreign members. These foreign members were M. Falconett- the English director of the Ottoman Bank, M. de Lahenbacher who was appointed by the Austrian Ministry of Finance, and M. Alleon from France. After a while, Alleon was replaced by Marquis de Ploeuc- the special representative of the French Government who would play a significant role in the Ottoman Finance in the future. The tasks of this council were to work on the reforms to be made in finance, to control the income and expenses of the empire and the implementation of revenue collecting methods. This commission had broad authority in appearance; however, the initiative belonged to the heads of the ministries. Therefore, the council would only play an advisory role.<sup>947</sup> In May 1860, the commission demanded a greater role when the pressure from the West was increasing, but the Ottoman authorities did not give a positive response.

In 1860, the Ottoman Government was financially so desperate that the Grand Vizier forced Musurus Efendi to send a telegraph to Palmerston so as to talk about

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<sup>945</sup> *Turkey. No. 17 (1877)*, 17 (Lord John Russell's message sent from Foreign Office to Henry Bulwer on September 11, 1860).

<sup>946</sup> The Times' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, January 5, 1857.

<sup>947</sup> Velay, *Essai sur l'Histoire Financiere de la Turquie*, 114-115.

the debt issue even though Musurus insistently told him that it would be hard for Britain to make the desired financial aid to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>948</sup>

In 1860, Grand Vizier Kibrıslı Mehmed Pasha requested a debt of 2.5 million pounds from the British Government. The balance of income and expenses between 1859 and 1860 was 2 million pounds against the Ottoman Government. Unless the national revenue was increased, the Government would go bankrupt. According to Lord John Russell, if the property tax revenue was increased, the amount of money coming from customs and stamp tax became higher and the expenses were cut back, the reputation of the Ottoman Empire could be restored and consequently, the Empire could be in a more advantageous position concerning the debts. Lord Russell expressed clearly that he was against the re-issue of inconvertible money. He foresaw that if the mentioned conditions were not fulfilled, the loans given would cause greater problems in the future.<sup>949</sup> During the debt meetings between the Ottoman Empire and Britain in 1860, Sir Henry Bulwer put forward two proposals as permission for selling land to foreigners and secularizations of waqf possessions and estates which Ottoman statesmen would strictly oppose at that time.<sup>950</sup> The only option left for Ottomans for an immediate loan agreement was Banker Mires who accepted to sell Ottoman bills in European market.

The initial debt meetings with French banker Jules Mires were held by Mustafa Reşid Pasha in 1857.<sup>951</sup> According to the 1860 debt agreement signed with Mires, 16 million liras would be taken with a discharging of 6 percentage interest.<sup>952</sup>

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<sup>948</sup> TNA, PRO 30/22/21(Musurus Efendi's telegram sent to Lord Palmerston on October 13, 1860).

<sup>949</sup> *Turkey. No. 17 (1877)*, 18 (Lord John Russell's message sent from Foreign Office to Henry Bulwer on October 25, 1860).

<sup>950</sup> Velay, *Essai sur l'Histoire Financiere de la Turquie*, 156-157.

<sup>951</sup> TNA, FO 78/1255 (Stratford de Redcliffe's message sent from Istanbul to Lord Clarendon on January 30, 1857).

<sup>952</sup> TNA, FO 195/288. According to Şuvla the amount of loan contracted with Mires was 17.600.000 Ottoman gold liras (Refii Şükrü Şuvla, "Tanzimat Devrinde İstikrazlar" in *Tanzimat I*, (İstanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1940), 272).

However, this amount decreased to 2,070,000 English liras, and some indirect contributions and tithes revenues of some *sandjaks* were collateralized while the amortization process was defined as covering 1864-1897. But this debt's rate of the issue was only 53%.<sup>953</sup>

However, the discharging of Mires debt turned the scale unfavorably against the Ottomans and the cunning Mires tried to make a profit from it.<sup>954</sup> The arrestment of Mires in 1861 made the payment of Mires bills an additional problem and this led the Ottomans to seek a new, urgent loan. As a result of the panic felt in the Ottoman markets, the Pound increased to 200 *guruş* in May 1861 while it had been 129 *guruş* in January 1861.<sup>955</sup> This mostly affected the local tradesmen and lower classes in the country. Moreover, the frightening debt owed to Galata bankers was still high.

According to the numbers declared in 1858, the annual budget deficit of Britain was one-tenth of its annual revenue; this ratio was more than 1/3 in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>956</sup> In addition to this, unlike European countries, the Ottoman Empire lacked the human resource and skilled workforce that would allow it to overcome the current financial crisis.

According to the account of Banker Mires, the foreign debt of the Ottomans in 1860 was 310 million Francs, while the debt arising from *sergi* was as high as 86 million Francs. This amount was 56 million Francs in *esham-ı cedides*. The debt owed to Galata bankers was so high that it amounted to as much as 127 million Francs. The short term debt amount exceeded the government's ability to pay.<sup>957</sup> The Ottomans realized that they had to get rid of the debt spiral, and especially the Galata bankers, immediately.

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<sup>953</sup> BOA, Y.EE.. 28/8.

<sup>954</sup> Velay, *Essai sur l'Histoire Financiere de la Turquie*, 159-160.

<sup>955</sup> Velay, *Essai sur l'Histoire Financiere de la Turquie*, 165.

<sup>956</sup> Tchihatcheff, *Lettres Sur La Turquie*, 41.

<sup>957</sup> Velay, *Essai sur l'Histoire Financiere de la Turquie*, 154.

Considering the preexisting condition of the Treasury, the financial reform was a necessity more than ever before. The person that the Sultan had faith in restoring the bad financial status was Grand Vizier Fuad Pasha.

One of the most important reports on the Ottoman financial status written in the 19th century was the February 1862 dated report of Fuad Pasha who had been appointed by the Sultan to carry out the financial reform. According to Fuad Pasha, the process of external borrowing of the Ottoman Empire was not so disruptive compared to the debts of other countries. In 1850, half of Britain's annual expenses went to debt interest, while this ratio was one-third in France. But Fuad Pasha made a partial self-criticism by writing that the government could not handle the financial crisis arising from the Crimean War. The country and the new sultan carried the burdens of the past.<sup>958</sup>

The total amount of government debt was equal to 4 million Bourses (*kises*). Half of this debt arose from the banknotes in circulation, while the other half remained from the war. The monetary value decreased due to the loan policy followed by the Ottoman governments through monetizing *kaimes* constantly; and as a result of this, the economy became unstable, the financial reputation of the government was damaged and the burden of this loan remained on the shoulders of the government and the people. Istanbul, which put the *kaimes* into circulation, provided its needs via importing from Europe or from other regions in the country since it was not an agricultural or industrial city. The most practical way to pay the price for these needs was the issue of banknotes. However, Istanbul was not capable of paying the price for the monetized banknotes; so the banknotes were put into circulation in other cities as well. This situation deepened the financial crisis. From

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<sup>958</sup> BOA, YEE.. 25/93.

this point of view, Fuad Pasha suggested that banknotes not be issued, even in very critical situations.<sup>959</sup>

According to Fuad Pasha's numbers, the capital of the debts taken from Europe totaled 3.3 million Bourses. National debts arising from the bills of exchange and *esham-i cedide* were 334,000 which was one-eighth of the annual expenses of the Ottoman Empire. When calculating the balance of income and expenses of the government, there appeared a budget deficit in the amount of 344,446 Bourses and 375 *guruş*. While the annual revenue of the government was 2,442,368 Bourses and 160 *guruş*, the total debt was 4 million Bourses.<sup>960</sup>

According to Fuad Pasha, there were two ways to eliminate the budget deficit. The first was to increase the sources of revenues and the second was to contract debts. While the amount of tax per capita was 300 *guruş* in England and 250 *guruş* in France, it was 45 *guruş* in the Ottoman Empire. Since the amount of tax collected in various points in the country was very low, a tax reform needed to be made and tax income needed to be increased. Tithe revenue needed to be taken away from tax-farmers and the profit of the tax must be given to the government. It was necessary to regulate the issues concerning legal document tax and patents which were sources that made huge revenues for the governments in Great Powers. Tax could be collected from agricultural expenses, unless it harmed the production. Salt exports could be a significant resource for revenue since the salt in the country was of high quality. If the mines and forests were handled in a scientific way, they could also be the resources of significant revenue. By introducing a new regulation in customs tariffs, these tariffs could be increased up to 30%. If these suggestions were implemented, a new resource of 715,000 Bourses could be provided. If *kaimes* were

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<sup>959</sup> BOA, YEE.. 25/93.

<sup>960</sup> BOA, YEE.. 25/93.

withdrawn from circulation and each government office did the exchange in a proper and stable way, 150,000 *liras* could be saved.<sup>961</sup> According to Fuad Pasha's report, the balance of income and expenses would be calculated by a new method, and a budgetary system would be adopted. Also, each office and ministry needed to be deprived of limitless borrowing authority and all financial matters needed to be managed from a center.

In accordance with his statements, Fuad Pasha tried to introduce financial reforms with great energy. The old recording style which was unsuitable for the modern budgetary systems put the Ottoman Empire in a difficult position in accounting. The Ottoman government brought in something new by publishing a summary of the budget of the 1862-1863 period.<sup>962</sup> Thanks to the new recording system, every ministry could publish their budget in detail; therefore the Ministry of Finance could prepare its budget of 1863-1864 properly.

Fuad Pasha intended to introduce the principle of responsibility into ministerial expenses, but it was not welcomed by the governmental circles. Again, Fuad Pasha's efforts to provide new funds for expenses and therefore to save the government from the high interest debts owed to Galata bankers were attempted to be hindered. Also, Fuad's attempt to collect taxes directly failed due to the influence of groups whose wealth depended on their privileges coming from state revenues.<sup>963</sup>

The most important task of Fuad Pasha was the withdrawal of *kaimes* from circulation. Since *kaimes* were so simple to imitate, a large number of forged money had been thrown into the circulation.<sup>964</sup> The banknotes were too much in the market

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<sup>961</sup> BOA, YEE.. 25/93.

<sup>962</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 96.

<sup>963</sup> Farley, *Turkey*, 122-123.

<sup>964</sup> The Times' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, September 28, 1858; TNA, FO 78/1431 (Henry Bulwer's message sent from Istanbul to the Earl of Malmesbury dated May 11, 1859). Akyıldız, *Para Pul Oldu*, 143-151.

and losing value constantly; as a result, the government incurred a loss of 115 million Francs annually and this made it hard to pay back the high-interest debts and meet the budget deficits.<sup>965</sup> The withdrawal of *kaimes* from circulation was thought to increase the reputation of Ottoman Empire in European markets.<sup>966</sup> The withdrawal that happened in 1862 removed a significant burden on the Ottomans in appearance.<sup>967</sup> Thanks to the withdrawal of 2 million Bourses from circulation, a debt of 1.4 million Bourses was paid back and a deficit and debt of 1.5 million Bourses remained.<sup>968</sup> To be able to finance the withdrawal operation, the Ottoman government took out a loan of 200 million Francs.<sup>969</sup> As a result, the debt of the government was multiplied. But the withdrawal of *kaimes* from circulation could only give some comfort to the Ottoman authorities in the payment of internal debts. In 1861, internal debts of the Ottoman Empire amounted to 25.230.000 Liras; *kaimes* in circulation constituted less than 1/8 of this amount.<sup>970</sup> Also, the withdrawal of *kaimes*, led to the emergence of new problems in the markets.<sup>971</sup>

Since there was an obligation to finance the increasing expenses due to the rejuvenation of the country and the debts that had to be paid back urgently, financial reforms would never satisfy the need for hot money. Under these circumstances, the 1862 Debt Agreement was signed between the Ottoman Bank and Messrs. Devaux of Paris so as to borrow 8 million English liras and discharge with a 6 percent interest

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<sup>965</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 96-97.

<sup>966</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 1291/101554.

<sup>967</sup> For a detailed account of the removal process of *kaime* see Akyıldız, *Para Pul Oldu*, 108-135.

<sup>968</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 26/1141.

<sup>969</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 96-97.

<sup>970</sup> *The Levant Herald*, May 15, 1861

<sup>971</sup> Akyıldız, 151-154. The continuation of great financial problems after the withdrawal of *kaimes* was also stressed in Sultan Abdülaziz's imperial decree dated 20 February 1863-2 Ramazan 1279 (Ignace de Testa, *Recueil des traités de la Porte ottomane avec les puissances étrangères depuis le premier traité conclu en 1536, entre Suléyman I et François I, jusqu'à nos jours, Tome Septieme* (Paris; Ernest Leroux, 1892), 379).



rate. The amortization process covered the years 1862 to 1886.<sup>972</sup> Stamp, tobacco, salt and patent taxes were collateralized.<sup>973</sup>

The 1863-64 debt agreement was signed with the Ottoman bank, with a loan foreseen as 8 million English liras so as to discharge with an interest rate of 6 percent; the emission rate of this debt was 63 percent.<sup>974</sup> The dividends of this debt would be paid to Glyn and Co. in London and Credit Mobilier in Paris.<sup>975</sup> Considering the need for the solution to the unfunded debts, this agreement was substantially important. However, a part of the newly taken loans was spent on the expenses of the Sultan's trip to Egypt.<sup>976</sup> Despite his promise of reform, Abdülaziz also began to construct new palaces; the famous Palace of Çırağan was the product of this period of extravagance.<sup>977</sup>

Establishment of a national bank was one of the suggestions made by Westerners so that the Ottoman economy could get stronger. But the shares of the Ottoman Bank established in 1863 were mainly in the hands of the British and French: 80,000 shares belonged to the English, 50,000 to the French and 5,000 to the Ottomans.<sup>978</sup> So, the Imperial Ottoman Bank was a tool for the penetration of Western capital into a relatively underdeveloped geography rather than being a national bank.

By 1864, the foreign debt of the Ottoman Empire was 29,104,500 Pounds, while the consolidated national debt was 36,363,640 Pounds in 1865.<sup>979</sup> The highness of debt interests and the charm of the stock exchange effected the

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<sup>972</sup> BOA, Y.EE.. 28/8.

<sup>973</sup> FO 195/288.

<sup>974</sup> BOA, Y.EE.. 28/8.

<sup>975</sup> FO 195/288.

<sup>976</sup> *Turkey. No. 17 (1877)*, 35(Lord John Russell's message sent from Foreign Office to Henry Bulwer on May 19, 1863).

<sup>977</sup> The Times' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, September, 1863.

<sup>978</sup> Baster, "The Origins of British Banking Expansion in the Near East", 85.

<sup>979</sup> Farley, *Turkey*, 124.

development of the country in a negative way. Entrepreneurs chose to gamble in the stock exchange instead of transferring their capital to trade and production. The speculations made in the stock exchange led national wealth to be in the possession of foreigners.<sup>980</sup> In this period, the strategy of the Ottoman Empire was based on increasing financial opportunities via the support of foreign finance circles instead of industrialization.

Modernization meant more expenses. However, increasing expenses without doing any reforms in the cabinet system and local administrations drove the Ottoman Empire into a new debt spiral, and this accelerated the demise of the Empire.

After 1864, new debt agreements were signed one after another. These debts brought too many problems when it was time to pay them back. The financial weaknesses of the state decreased the chance of success in the implementation of the new provincial system that came into force in 1864 and required huge expenses in the long term. The pilot province for the new provincial system (the system of *Vilâyets*) was the Tuna Province (*Tuna Vilâyeti*), and Midhat Pasha who was appointed with great expectations as a governor to this province had to deal with the great financial burden of major reform attempts within the prevailing conditions of financial insecurity.

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<sup>980</sup> Baker, *Turkey*, 171.

## **CHAPTER V**

### ***VILAYET OF TUNA (1864-1868): BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT***

#### **5.1. Establishment of Tuna Province**

Starting from the year 1856, the Ottoman Government attempted to put forth the determination necessary to make the situation in the Balkans better from time to time just as it did in the Rumelian inspection carried out by Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha in 1860. But, the steps taken by the Ottoman government for the realization of change were insufficient when they were compared to the strengthening of the nationalistic movements in the Balkans and to the rapid changes in the international system. One of the most significant reasons for this was that the local administration system was far from being sufficient.

Upon the increase of the problems which arose out of the local administration system, inspectors were sent to the regions in 1863. In their inspections, the inspectors pointed out issues such as the insufficiency of the members of the local councils, insufficiency of the infrastructure, insufficiency of schools, and banditry. The reports prepared by taking into consideration these observations were discussed under the hosting of Fuad Pasha in the district of Babıali in the winter of 1863-64 and in the spring of 1864. The only governor who was praised by the inspectors was the governor of Niş, Midhat Pasha. Midhat Pasha was invited to Istanbul so that he

could lead the discussions, which would end up with the preparation of the Provincial Reform Law.<sup>981</sup> According to Consul H. Longworth, in a country like this where the public ethic and intellectual culture are so weak, power should be in the hands of as few people as possible. In other words, there should be centralization. However, the Ottoman State adopted a policy contrary to this during those years.<sup>982</sup> Therefore, with this new provincial law, the centralization of the administrative system was going to be targeted.

Within the framework of this provincial reform, a new provincial law (*Vilâyet Nizamnamesi*) was published in 1864, and in September 1864, the provinces of Silistre, Vidin, and Niş were unified into one new province called the *Tuna Vilâyeti*, which was a province selected as a model in which the reforms were going to be applied.<sup>983</sup>

Why was the province of Tuna selected as the model province?

As Hugh Seton-Watson indicated in his *Sick Heart of Modern Europe*, the lands through which the river of Danube ran was the sick heart where the ancient empires of modern Europe were about to fall.<sup>984</sup> In that respect, the circular of Gorchakov dated May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1860 in which he mentioned the Balkan Question, was the beginning of a new period. Gorchakov clearly emphasized the importance of the realization of the necessary reforms, and he said that these reforms would be a step for the increase of international pressure on the Ottoman Empire. The activities of the Russians in the

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<sup>981</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, "Local Administrations in the Tanzimat" in *150.yılında Tanzimat*, 40-41.

<sup>982</sup> TNA, FO 78/1202 (Consul Longworth's message sent from Manastir to Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe on July 8, 1856).

<sup>983</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>984</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *The "Sick Heart" of Modern Europe : the problem of the Danubian lands*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975.

region during this time had increased, and they even opened a consular office in a place such as Tirnova, where they had no interests to protect.<sup>985</sup>

The appointment of Count Nikolai Ignatiev in 1864 as the ambassador to Istanbul who was a supporter of Panslavism and who had a tendency of making grandiose plans was an important sign of the new Balkan Policy of Russia. During the time when he was the director of the Asiatic Department, Ignatiev was in close touch with the Balkan Slavs. When Ignatiev was appointed as the Director of the Asiatic Department in 1861, he determined three main targets for the Russian foreign policy. According to this:

1. The Paris Peace Agreement had to be eliminated; because this agreement ran down the honor and dignity of Russia. The idea that the proprietorship of the lands around the Black Sea belonged to Russia needed to be spread.<sup>986</sup>
2. Russia found the Black Sea area insufficient for its needs. For this reason, Russia was obliged to appropriate the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles.<sup>987</sup>
3. The Slavic Peoples, each one of whom wanted to protect their own independence had to be made into an ally of Russia. In other words, they needed to be a means for the Russian Policy.<sup>988</sup>

Between 1861 and 1877, all the activities and policies followed by Ignatiev were based on these ideas. The main target was to provide Russian domination in the Balkans and the Black Sea region. The influence of Austria-Hungary over the Slav world had to be broken, and the fate of the Slav Peoples needed to be tied to Russia. According to Ignatiev, social development, improved education conditions, and the

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<sup>985</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Varna Consul St. Clair's report respecting the new organization introduced into the Vilayet of the Danube dated September 17, 1865).

<sup>986</sup> N. P. Ignatiev, *Zapiski(1875-1878)* (Sofya: Otechestvennaia Front, 1986), 49-50.

<sup>987</sup> Ignatiev, *Zapiski*, 51.

<sup>988</sup> Ignatiev, *Zapiski*, 52.

increase in life standards caused the warrior spirit to fall. This situation would cause the people in the Balkans to move away from belligerency and get closer to the West. As time went on, this was more probable to come true; for that reason, they needed to hurry to act.<sup>989</sup>

Against this new term of Russian policy, the Ottomans had to play their own trump card. In this sense, it was meaningful to found the province of Danube and attribute special importance here. Unjust treatment of Bulgarians' caused by maladministration especially in Vidin and Silistre was turning into anti-Ottoman propaganda in Europe.<sup>990</sup> And the condensing of immigrants coming from Russia in Bulgaria increased the burden on the Ottomans again. The Bulgarian Question was such an important matter because in the case Bulgaria announced its independence the center of the empire would easily come face to face with Russia or another big wave of immigration. St. Clair had foreseen that in case the Russians' activities here could not be prevented, a new crisis like the one in 1853 would rise up, but this time no military campaign like the one to Crimea would be organized by France or Britain.<sup>991</sup> According to St. Clair, the British consul in Varna, Russia, Austria and Greece were the three enemies that would expand their lands against the Ottoman Empire if the conditions permitted. With the power and the dimension of its effect in Slav regions, Russia was the most dangerous enemy. When Austria, in the coming future, left Venice to Italy, it could take Bosnia and Herzegovina with Russia's approval as compensation to this. As for Greece, it was weak and it was not in a

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<sup>989</sup> Ignatiev, *Zapiski*, 60.

<sup>990</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 44.

<sup>991</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Varna Consul St. Clair's report respecting the new organization introduced into the Vilayet of the Danube dated September 17, 1865).

position to be feared of. With its bad organization, Moldo-Wallachia was not in a situation to make a barrier from Russia.<sup>992</sup>

In both a political and military sense, the only country which would perform as a barrier for the Ottoman Empire against Russia was Bulgaria. A Bulgaria which was ruled better, owned a railway stretching from the Danube to the Black Sea, had good military and commercial roads, had fortifications around the Danube that were good; and had a limited army, faithful and loyal inhabitants could be a more important trump than a Bulgaria which had an unqualified population.<sup>993</sup> Thrace and Bulgaria were under dense molestation of bandits and the number of bandits was increasing day by day. Although Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha had the necessary intentions to manage this matter, he lacked the required power and will.<sup>994</sup> Right at this point, in order to solve problems, the existence of a skillful and strong administrator was needed. The person whom the Ottoman Government believed had those characteristics was the Governor of Niş, Midhat Pasha.

Midhat Pasha became the secretary of Sami Bekir Pasha's council in 1844 in Konya. And in 1849, he was presented as a candidate for the chairmanship of the *Meclis-i Vâlâ* (High Council) and promoted to the position of *Saniye* (A civil post corresponding to the rank of lieutenant colonel). And in 1851, he was then raised to the position of *Mütemayiz* (senior *Saniye*). Midhat would pass his first serious test in local administration in Damascus and Halep. Here was the existence of the customs house and problems arising from the administration of the commander of the Army of Arabistan, Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha. Within the 6 months he spent here, Midhat gained great success on the issue of customs, made 150 thousand Turkish Pound

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<sup>992</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Varna Consul St. Clair's report respecting the new organization introduced into the Vilayet of the Danube dated September 17, 1865).

<sup>993</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Varna Consul St. Clair's report respecting the new organization introduced into the Vilayet of the Danube dated September 17, 1865).

<sup>994</sup> TNA, FO 195/719 (Edrine Vice-Consul Blunt's message to Sir Henry Bulwer dated July 25, 1862).

remained in the Ottoman Treasury and guaranteed a future surplus of 70 thousand Pounds. And he had seen the responsibility of Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha in the rebellion of Druses and advised the removal of the Pasha from his position. Midhat who drew attention with this success was assigned to an important position in the Superior Council of the State and performed assistantship during the negotiations between Sadık Rifat Pasha the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Menchikov, which happened before the Crimea War in 1852. But when Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha, who had animosity against him, was brought to the Grand Vizierate position, he was again appointed as an administrator in problematic regions. Mehmed Pasha would commission Midhat in the Balkans and Edirne where banditry had deep roots and Midhat would go after banditry events with great determination and austerity. In order not to return to the previous situation, once security was ensured, Midhat prepared a new organizational plan again and submitted this to the new Grand Vizier Reşid Pasha. The plan was accepted and it was thought to bring Midhat Bey to the head of Bulgaria; but the Bursa earthquake which happened right at this moment and Midhat's being one of the statesmen who was commissioned to bandage the wounds of these places would cause all the reform plans to be laid aside. When he came back from Bursa, Midhat Bey went to Vidin and Silistre to inspect the events here and in his report, he pointed out the maladministration in these places and blamed the governor. When Reşid Pasha died in 1858, Ali Pasha, whose power significantly increased among the high officials of the state, sent Midhat abroad to inspect the government models in Europe. Within a period of time of six months, which might be considered as short, Midhat Bey who was situated in Paris, London, Vienna and Brussels and did thorough examinations in those places added the investigation of



the Western models to his local administration experiences.<sup>995</sup> According to Clair and Brophy, Midhat Pasha was an honest man and he possessed an energy which would not ever visit the administrative class in the Ottoman State.<sup>996</sup>

Midhat Pasha had actually grown up in an education process which may be called traditional; he had become a Hafız when he was 10, and at an age which may again be considered as small, he took clerkship education in the Secretary of the Imperial Council (*Divan-ı Hümayun Kalemi*).<sup>997</sup> He had worked in mosques in Vidin and Lofça and taken Arabic and Persian lessons.<sup>998</sup> Until he was 20, Midhat received education from various hodjas in the Fatih Mosque in Istanbul. Midhat Pasha's father Hacı Ali Efendi was a native of Rusçuk.<sup>999</sup>

Since it was nearly impossible for Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha to find any alternative in Niş, he had to send Midhat Pasha here as governor because of the success he showed in duties around Bulgaria before.<sup>1000</sup> Although he was on the side of modernism, his familiarity with ordinary people because of the traditional education he had taken, his father's being native of the region, the duties he took around Bulgaria and because he performed as the governor of Niş, his well-rounded knowledge of the region made Midhat Pasha the most convenient choice for the Governor of the Tuna (Danube) Province.

Midhat Pasha was closer to Fuad Pasha than he was to Ali Pasha;<sup>1001</sup> and during his governorship period, Fuad Pasha would be the main supporter of Midhat Pasha. Fuad Pasha and Midhat Pasha prepared the 1864 regulations together.<sup>1002</sup> This new regulation of provinces (*Vilâyetler*) included both centralization and

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<sup>995</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha* (London: John Murray, 1903), 32-35.

<sup>996</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 384.

<sup>997</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 19.

<sup>998</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 20.

<sup>999</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 32.

<sup>1000</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 29-30.

<sup>1001</sup> Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir:40-Tetimme* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1991), 84.

<sup>1002</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 44.

decentralization in itself. There would be a powerful governor-general in the center, but besides this, local councils and government offices would be more functional. This new provincial administration system which Midhat synthesized was an indicator of Midhat Pasha's closeness to Europe.<sup>1003</sup>

Grand Vizier Fuad Pasha would explain the ideas in the background of the *Vilâyet* model in an interview with the British Acting-Consul of Belgrade. The Grand Vizier said that this was an important political experiment and a fair representational system in which the balance between Christians and Turks would be tried for the first time. Administrative, judicial and financial works would be transferred to concerned departments; in the sense of satisfying both local and imperial expenses, incomes would be divided in a balanced way. Further, had they gone in centralization which was a necessity of the age and now it was time for decentralization. Bulgaria could undertake the duty to be a good school to nurture government officials performing duties in various branches and to reveal "a new class of men" who were able to carry the *Vilâyet* system to other provinces. The person to be responsible for all these would be Midhat Pasha.<sup>1004</sup>

The Province of Tuna which would be ruled by Midhat Pasha was in an area the size of Scotland.<sup>1005</sup> As was the chance of Midhat Pasha there were comparatively qualified persons like Süleyman Pasha in the governorship of Tulça(Tulcea), Rasim Pasha in the governorship of Varna, Sabri Pasha in the governorship of Vidin and Abdurrahman Paşa in the governorship of Niş.<sup>1006</sup>

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<sup>1003</sup> Amand Freiherr von Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, *Serail und Hohe Pforte* (Wien: A. Hartleben, 1879), 240.

<sup>1004</sup> TNA, FO 78/1882 (Consul-General Longworth's message sent from Istanbul to Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer on May 25, 1865).

<sup>1005</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1006</sup> Ebüzziya Tevfik, *Yeni Osmanlılar Tarihi*, v. 1 (İstanbul: Kervan, 1973), 230.

## 5.2. The Bulgarian Question

When compared with other Balkan folks, Bulgarians were peaceful people. But as the 19<sup>th</sup> century began, social tension showed itself and reforms were added yet a rebellious atmosphere rose in the Balkans, the crisis had never disappeared; Even developments like the Paris Treaty and proclamation of the Edict of Reforms (1856) did not mean much for the people living in the European territories of the Ottoman Empire. Because, after the announcement of this edict and the signing of the Paris Treaty in 1856 the old problems would continue just the same for a long time.

Bulgaria possessed very fertile lands; but the majority of those lands were uncultivated.<sup>1007</sup> Also, the Ottoman Government had not tried much to change the primitive production techniques in Bulgaria where a very large portion of the population was in the agricultural sector.<sup>1008</sup>

Epidemic animal diseases had become almost regular. As a consequence of the epidemic disease which showed itself in Tulça, Babadağ, Hacıoğlu Pazarcık and Balçık in 1861, thousands of animals like water buffalos, horses and bulls were destroyed.<sup>1009</sup>

*Çorbacıs* and *Kocabaşıs* used to collect extra money apart from the tax and school expenses of the Christians under the name of village expense. Also by showing the expenses they made higher than they actually were they were pushing the Christians under the great financial burden. Because the situation in Tirnova had become especially serious, Midhat Pasha, who was known as Midhat Efendi in those days,

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<sup>1007</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 269.

<sup>1008</sup> Thomas A. Meininger, *The Formation of a Nationalist Bulgarian Intelligentsia, 1835-1878* (New York: Garland Pub., 1987), 16.

<sup>1009</sup> TNA, FO 195/689 (Varna Consul's message sent from Varna to Sir Henry Bulwer on February 25, 1861).

was sent to Tirnova to do some surveys. The local despots who were arbitrarily collecting money from inhabitants and forcing folks to do drudgery works were prohibited from doing all these by the introduction of the Tirnova Sandjak regulation which was also translated into the Bulgarian language. Serious limitations to the duty terms of *Çorbacı*s were brought in.<sup>1010</sup> But in practice, *Çorbacı*s would keep their power. For example, a rich *Çorbacı* who was subject to complaints in Filibe (Plovdiv) in 1863 had an important influence on Hasan Pasha here.<sup>1011</sup>

Bulgarians were subjected to the taxes of both the government and the Greek priests. The priests were going to each house and collecting money, sheep, pigs and food three times a year.<sup>1012</sup> Moreover, it was possible that the funds spared for orphans might be misused by some Greek Clergy members.<sup>1013</sup> The Greek priests were trying to put their weight against the national tendencies of Bulgarians. When a Greek priest had beaten a Bulgarian merchant who had opened a school giving education in the Bulgarian language, Ottoman authorities took the priests' side and put the Bulgarian merchant in prison.<sup>1014</sup> Hundreds of representatives who gathered together in the Uzuncaova Fair and who came from various cities told the Sultan in a petition dated September 5<sup>th</sup>, 1860 that they were fed up with the pressure of the Greek Clergy and they want Bulgarian priests and asked the Sultan to permit them to build their own church hierarchy.<sup>1015</sup>

Actually, many events told were to deceive foreigners. For instance, in 1857, a Greek teacher named Atanas told Cyrus Hamlin the story of an administrator who

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<sup>1010</sup> M. Hüdai Şentürk, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Bulgar Meselesi, (1850-1875)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1992), 128-130.

<sup>1011</sup> TNA, FO 195/753 (Vice-consul Blunt's message sent from Edirne to Sir Henry Bulwer on July 5, 1863).

<sup>1012</sup> Hamlin, *Among the Turks*, 269.

<sup>1013</sup> TNA, FO 195/753 (Vice-consul Blunt's message sent from Edirne to Sir Henry Bulwer on October 26, 1863).

<sup>1014</sup> Hamlin, 264-265.

<sup>1015</sup> *Macedonia, Documents and Material*, 167.

had captured a virgin and tortured her friends who wanted to obstruct this; but Hamlin saw that this story was nothing but a lie.<sup>1016</sup> Again in 1861, around Sofya, in preparing a petition complaining that the Greeks touched the Bulgarians' honor there was malice of a man named Dimitri, who was among petitioners, and of the people around him.<sup>1017</sup>

Upon demands constantly coming from the Bulgarians, a Bulgarian Church was founded in Istanbul on December 30<sup>th</sup>, 1860. In order to scatter the Russian-Orthodox block, the Ottomans intended to please the Bulgarians.<sup>1018</sup> Istanbul had approved the existence of an institution to be an inspiration for the national resistance of the Bulgarians.

In Bulgaria, tithes were not collected in cash but in kind; and especially when there happened to be a disparity between harvest and tax collecting times, this caused wastage of the production. The ideal way was to pay taxes as cash after harvest.<sup>1019</sup> In order to close the budget deficits, the government officials were sometimes collecting tithes at a rate of 1/5; also according to Naiden Gerov, the working conditions of the people were strenuous.<sup>1020</sup>

During this period, the Ottomans were busy with the construction of military roads. These were the Niş-Manastrır, Niş-Istanbul and Niş-Vidin roads.<sup>1021</sup> During the construction of these roads, the Ottoman Government was imposing compulsory

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<sup>1016</sup> Hamlin, 270-271.

<sup>1017</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 471/47.

<sup>1018</sup> James Franklin Clarke, *The Pen and the Sword*, 330.

<sup>1019</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 59 (Major R. E. Cox's message sent from Bucharest to Lord John Russell on August 11, 1860).

<sup>1020</sup> *İz Arkhivata na Naiden Gerov*, v. 1, 5 (Naiden Gerov's letter sent from Plovdiv(Filibe) to Ivan Aksakov on November 18 (December 1) 1863).

<sup>1021</sup> TNA, FO 195/753, (Vice-consul Blunt's message sent from Edirne to Sir Henry Bulwer on July 5, 1863).

labor on people.<sup>1022</sup> Those who were sent to work in drudgery labor were generally Christians. Many times, Christians sold their labor to Muslims at low prices.<sup>1023</sup>

Another burden on the shoulders of the people was the Caucasian immigrants. The lands which later would constitute the Province of Tuna and Bulgaria were the areas where, during the immigrations to the Ottoman Empire after 1856, most of the immigrants were placed. In the cases where the houses planned for the immigrants were made by the state, the cost was too high. For this reason, in 1856, the governor of Silistre proposed to make use of the inhabitants of the administrative districts and villages as well as the immigrants for construction. But this was not an obligation which the inhabitants of Silistre could overcome by themselves. So, work had to be loaded also onto the inhabitants of places like Vidin, İslimye and Tırnova. Five hundred of the new houses had to be constructed by the inhabitants of Tırnova, 500 of them by the Zıstovi, Niğbolu, Plevne, Lofça provinces and 1,500 of them by the people of the town of Silistre. This proposal was accepted by a decree dated June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1856<sup>1024</sup> and from that date onward, the local people were left with a heavy burden. As of 1861, 142 thousand of 256 thousand people who were resettled in the Ottoman Empire were placed along the banks of the Danube.<sup>1025</sup> This number shows just how great a burden it was that the local people faced.

In Bulgaria, the testimony of even the richest Christian was not as valid as that of a gypsy's.<sup>1026</sup> Although the right to possess was equal to everybody, since the testimonies of Christians were not accepted in courts, this did not mean much.<sup>1027</sup>

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<sup>1022</sup> *İz Arkhivata na Naiden Gerov*, v. 1, 5 (Naiden Gerov's letter sent from Plovdiv(Filibe) to Ivan Aksakov on November 18 (December 1) 1863).

<sup>1023</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 58 (Major R. E. Cox's message sent from Bucharest to Lord John Russell on August 11, 1860).

<sup>1024</sup> Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri*, 123.

<sup>1025</sup> Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri*, 131.

<sup>1026</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 60 (Major R. E. Cox's message sent from Bucharest to Lord John Russell on August 11, 1860).

Faced with all these negativities, some Ottoman statesmen would try to change the conditions in the region. During the inspection by the Grand Vizier Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha, the local councils in Vidin, Berkofça and Şehirköy were abolished and new councils with new members were constituted. Complaint petitions of people were taken without any inhibitions, and investigations were opened about some native rich statesmen, like Zeynel Pasha and some *Müdir*s. With a decree, it would be prohibited to take tax from pigs younger than 1 year of age and the commission of investigation would accept the testimony of Christians.<sup>1028</sup>

In 1861, in spite of the difficulties he faced and the negative attitudes of those in the district, the District Governor Ahmed Rasim Efendi carried on the investigation about Major Kadri Efendi who had ruthlessly behaved against a Christian in Köstence (Constanta) and gained the credence of Christians.<sup>1029</sup>

Before the Governor of Filibe Muhlis Efendi came to Filibe, the discomfort which had arisen from religious matters especially between Bulgarians and the Greek Clergy was at its highest level. During his 27 months that he performed his duty till 1863, Muhlis Efendi played the role of mediator between the groups in the district successfully and ensured tranquility again; the closeness the governor had developed especially with the Bulgarians was remarkable.<sup>1030</sup>

The construction of a new church in Eski Zağra disturbed the native Muslims and caused some displays of disobedience actions to stand out in 1863. When the events became threatening, two cavalry troops invaded the town, the Ottoman

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<sup>1027</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.1, ch. 2, 44* (M. A. Baikov's report to Lobanov Rostovskii on conditions in Vidin, dated February 8, 1861).

<sup>1028</sup> Christians in Turkey, 66 (Mr. Ricketts' report sent from Niş to Consul-General Longworth on August 11, 1860).

<sup>1029</sup> TNA, FO 195/689, (Lieutenant Colonel Sankey's report to Varna Consulate, dated February 26, 1861).

<sup>1030</sup> TNA, FO 195/753, (Vice-Consul Blunt's message sent from Edirne to Sir Henry Bulwer on February 16, 1863).

Commissioner in Bulgaria Nusret Efendi and the new Governor of Filibe Hasan Pasha came for investigations.<sup>1031</sup> Within the period 1862-1863, a lot of effort was made to ensure the public order, the police force was much more active, the issue of Albanian armament was scrutinized and the Albanians' power was lessened; accordingly, some Albanians who committed crimes like murder and thievery were executed.<sup>1032</sup>

In spite of the efforts of some statesmen and officers, a ceaseless instability was still in question. This instability and disorder had prevented towns from growing and developing. For example, in 1861, the commercial activities in Vidin were very weak. With M. A. Baikov's expression, it was taking shape according to the needs of a backward society. Particularly the native religious functionaries were the pioneers of the social awakening here. In Vidin, commerce and craftsmanship were substantially in the Christians' hands. Christians had to give foods like butter, goats, sheep and hens to the archbishop twice a year. The improprieties while collecting tithes were what made things more problematic. Producers could not collect any products they had grown without the coming of tax-farmers to the district. While placing the CrimeanTatars, the government distributed free bread provided by the local people to the immigrants.<sup>1033</sup>

In K ostence, the local notables who were about to be pacified in the administration period of S uleyman Bey, gained power again when R usd u Efendi was assigned in the place of S uleyman Bey. After this replacement, the balance of relations between Muslims and Christians returned to its former state. The sale of

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<sup>1031</sup> TNA, FO 195/753, (Vice-Consul Blunt's message sent from Edirne to Sir Henry Bulwer on March 13, 1863).

<sup>1032</sup> TNA, FO 195/753, (Vice-consul Blunt's message sent from Edirne to Sir Henry Bulwer on May 5, 1863).

<sup>1033</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.1, ch. 2*, 43-45 (M. A. Baikov's report to Lobanov Rostovskii on conditions in Vidin, dated February 8, 1861).



private land was stopped and permission for construction was given only to the Muslim population. Within this period and by the effect of the local council, the controversy between Muslims and Christians increased again. The police were authorized to arrest anyone that walked in the street at night after 21:00 o'clock. This practice would, of course, make it difficult for those who worked in foreign companies.<sup>1034</sup>

In Tulça, a Russian who was an Ottoman citizen killed a Jew and burned down the house of the person he had killed. He was-when compared with the crime he had committed-very lightly punished. Again according to rumors, there were negotiations carried out between the Pasha's Mansion (Paşa Konağı or Governor's residence) and an Ionian prisoner to release this prisoner and a big amount of money was wanted for the prisoner to be released. Besides these injustices, big improprieties in managing the customs were in question.<sup>1035</sup>

In every administrative unit, there existed abuses of officers which could never be tolerated. Economies in the town were suffering because of this atmosphere of distrustfulness. It should also be expressed that it would not be right to describe the Muslims in Bulgaria as strictly fanatic elements. For instance, Clair and Brophy could not hide their astonishment at the hospitality and generosity - they met in Muslim and Turkish villages.<sup>1036</sup> The main problem here was as a result of the new practices introduced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, like in many other places, the Muslims were the losers in Bulgaria. In 1860, while the Turks in Bulgaria were obliged to send one

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<sup>1034</sup> TNA, FO 195/719 (Lieutenant Colonel Sankey's message to Varna Consulate, dated May 2, 1862).

<sup>1035</sup> TNA, FO 195/719 (Vice-consul Barker's message sent from Tulça to Sir Henry Bulwer on April 10, 1862).

<sup>1036</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 21-23.

man per home for military service, there was no such obligation for the Christians<sup>1037</sup> and this made the situation comparatively good for them. Most of those who dealt with commerce in Bulgarian towns were Christians and they were pushing the Muslims further out of this field day by day.<sup>1038</sup> In a country where the political community was weak and the education level was low, Muslims naturally directed their anger towards Christians.

### Russian Intrigues

Russia had been defeated in the Crimean War and with the Paris Treaty of 1856, admonished in a sense about the Balkans. But Russian nationalists-Slavists-Panslavists began acting in the Balkans right after the Crimean War. Education constituted one of the most important components of this activity. In a letter dated November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1857 and sent to the Samakov Archbishop Matel in Istanbul, it was written that a Russian patriot named Mikhail Georgevich who spent a few days with the Yukarı Cuma(Gorna Cumaya) community four weeks prior had imbued them to collect money to open a school in the district and this Russian did the best he could and pledged to find money from somewhere.<sup>1039</sup> In 1858, 20 Bulgarian students were accepted by the theological academy in Odessa.<sup>1040</sup> Bulgarian students in Moscow received support from the Moscow Slav Committee.<sup>1041</sup>

The authorities of the Asiatic Department which were affiliated with Russia lacked the ability to control the spies and agents acting in the Balkans most of who were Panslavists. Russian consular officers and diplomats were working for the

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<sup>1037</sup> Ömer Turan, *The Turkish Minority in Bulgaria (1878-1908)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1998), 36.

<sup>1038</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 58 (Major R. E. Cox's message sent from Bucharest to Lord John Russell on August 11, 1860).

<sup>1039</sup> *Macedonia, Documents and Material*, 148.

<sup>1040</sup> *Macedonia, Documents and Material*, 152-153 (A Russian agent's letter to Alexei Bekhmetev in Moscow, dated August 22, 1858).

<sup>1041</sup> *Macedonia, Documents and Material*, 186.

independence of the Slavs disregarding their governmental positions in St. Petersburg.<sup>1042</sup>

According to the Sublime Porte and Fonblanque (British Consul in Belgrad) Bulgarians, Bosnians and Montenegrins have been indoctrinated in Belgrad and became Panslavic emissaries.<sup>1043</sup> In 1858, 8-10 men came from Belgrad to Bulgaria and tried to agitate the Bulgarian community and they were sent back to their country and agreements were made with the Serbian administration to prevent their unauthorized passage through the border. These spies were oriented by the Russian General Consul in Belgrad.<sup>1044</sup> Again in 1861, information was received that the consuls in Belgrade and Vidin were agitating the communities in Bosnia and Bulgaria.<sup>1045</sup>

Russia had consecrated schools and churches all over Bulgaria; and it was striving to make Bulgarian teachers who had been educated in Russia to sneak into every town. Russian secret agents were constantly delivering money, books and brochures in the region.<sup>1046</sup>

Russians also were supplying the revolutionaries in the region with arms. In the summer of 1862, a Russian vessel named Vladina had passed via Tulça without any problem; but this vessel, with a very high probability, carried military ammunition and a lot of vessels like this were allowed to pass before. Once these types of vessels arrived at Moldova or Wallachia, it was no longer possible to control

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<sup>1042</sup> Duncan M. Perry, *Stefan Stambolov and the Emergence of Modern Bulgaria, 1870-1895* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 10.

<sup>1043</sup> TNA, FO 78/1376 (Belgrad Consul Foblanque's message to Lord Malmesbury, dated April 30, 1858).

<sup>1044</sup> BOA, HR. TO.. 431/20.

<sup>1045</sup> BOA, HR. MKT. 379/25.

<sup>1046</sup> TNA, FO 195/719(Britain's Vice-Consul in Edirne, Blunt's message to Sir Henry Bulwer dated May 3, 1862).

them. The Ottoman administrators were completely helpless. Moldo-Wallachia had turned into a tunnel for shipping arms from and by Russia to the Balkans.<sup>1047</sup>

Before the Crimean War, Russia had hoped that the Bulgarians would revolt, but it could not find a response. After the Crimean War, the new strategy of the Consuls of Russia in the Balkans was to encourage Bulgarians to immigrate to Russia. As expressed by Kibrıslı Mehmed Pasha, the Russian Embassy in Istanbul and the Russian Consuls in Thrace and Bulgaria did everything they could in order to encourage Bulgarians to immigrate to Russia. Mehmed Pasha was determined to obstruct this movement.<sup>1048</sup>

In order to test the first immigrant groups, the Russian government decided to place them along the Black Sea coasts of Caucasia. According to General Bariatinski, the Slavs' immigration to Caucasia could make the domination of Russia in Caucasia absolute.<sup>1049</sup> Between only the months of July and November in 1861, 10,990 people making up 1,560 Bulgarian families had immigrated to Russia. When leaving, the emigrants paid their taxes and left their wine barrels, grapes and bread without selling them. Despite this, the immigrants had not finished the money in their pockets.<sup>1050</sup> Those that immigrated were generally rich families. However, some of the Bulgarians whose situations had gone worse were also inclined to emigrate. The conditions of the Bulgarian agriculturists in Tikveş had become unbearable and looking for a new place to live, emigration had become the most important option at hand. In one known case, eight Bulgarians who had begun working on a farm in Selanik were ordered to go back to North Albania where they had left because there

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<sup>1047</sup> TNA, FO 195/719(Vice-consul Barker's message sent from Tulça to Sir Henry Bulwer on August 25, 1862).

<sup>1048</sup> TNA, FO 195/719( Britain's Vice-Consul in Edirne, Blunt's message to Sir Henry Bulwer dated May 3, 1862).

<sup>1049</sup> Kasumov-Kasumov, *Çerkes Soykırımı*, 265-266.

<sup>1050</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.1, ch. 2*, 168 (M. A. Baikov's report to N. P. Ignatiev'e sent from Vidin on October 29, 1861).

had been no opportunity for them.<sup>1051</sup> At this point, there was no other option at hand than immigrating to another country.

Because of the disregard the administration displayed to the local people, migrations would begin from especially the villages. Among the main reasons for the migration of Bulgarians, there was the local administration which did not care about the security of the people and public peace, and there also was the highness of the pig tax.<sup>1052</sup> One of the Ottoman administrators in the region, the Governor of Tulça Raşid Pasha tried very hard to prevent the Bulgarians from immigrating to Russia; for this reason, according to the British Vice-Consul Barker, there was the effect of Russian intrigues in the background of Raşid Pasha's removal from his position.<sup>1053</sup>

The Bulgarian colonists who very hopefully settled down on the lands which the Circassians had left could not stand the dampish climate created by the forests and the coast and this lowered the respectability of Russia to a great extent in the eyes of the Bulgarians.<sup>1054</sup> After the Crimean War, 30 thousand Bulgarians were persuaded to migrate to Crimea; but because of these migrations, Bulgarians suffered considerable losses.<sup>1055</sup> Since families who had sold everything they had had and migrated to Russia were not welcomed as warmly as they had expected, they decided to go back.<sup>1056</sup>

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<sup>1051</sup> TNA, FO 78/1600(Consul Charles J. Calvert's message sent from Manastır(Monastir) to Sir Henry Bulwer on November 28, 1861).

<sup>1052</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 519/42 (Vidin Governor Süleyman Paşa's letter dated November 23, 1861(Hijri 21 Cemaziyelevvel 1278)).

<sup>1053</sup> TNA, FO 195/719 (Vice-consul Barker's message sent from Tulça to Sir Henry Bulwer on March 6, 1862).

<sup>1054</sup> TNA, FO 78/1869 ( J. Longworth'un report on the Bulgarian Church Question, dated October 10, 1865).

<sup>1055</sup> TNA, FO 78/1974 (Consul-General Longworth's message sent from Belgrade to Lord Lyons on August 21, 1867).

<sup>1056</sup> TNA, FO 195/719 (Britain's Vice-Consul in Edirne, Blunt's message to Sir Henry Bulwer dated May 3, 1862). BOA, İ.MTZ.(04) 3/83 (The letter sent to the Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs by Ottoman Consul in Odessa, dated June 20, 1862).

The Circassians and Crimean Tatars who came in place of the migrated Bulgarians did not work with the same efficiency. For this reason, with Bulgarians being the first priority, preventing Christians from migrating was the most important duty of the Ottoman Government.<sup>1057</sup> It was approved to help some of the Bulgarians who wanted to come back from Crimea and especially those who were poor,<sup>1058</sup> and even more, it was even decided to pay the debts of some of them that had migrated from Vidin to Russia and then wanted to come back by the treasury.<sup>1059</sup> 1,260 of the Bulgarians who had migrated to Russia in 1861 came back to Sünne after 6 months in 1862 and since they had no money in their pockets, the governor of Sünne had people deliver 300 dirhams (about 1000 grams) of bread to each one of them.<sup>1060</sup>

### Brigandage

Bandit gangs which made their presence felt all over the country were one of the most important factors which affected the prosperity of people. These bandit attacks, as for the results they caused, were a great threat especially where Christians were in minority, but the local authorities stayed mostly passive against these attacks.<sup>1061</sup>

In 1859, between the beginning of March and the end of April, several incidents related to banditry occurred. A gang organized an attack on a Bulgarian village in Kumanova and collected money valued at 80 pounds. The son of one of the landlords in Köprülü organized a surprise attack on a Bulgarian village near Skopje and damaged the church there. In Koçana, a Bulgarian shepherd was tortured and killed by robbers. An Albanian gang of 55 bandits which organized a surprise attack

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<sup>1057</sup> TNA, FO 78/1600 (Consul Charles J. Calvert's message sent from Manastir (Monastir) to Sir Henry Bulwer on November 28, 1861).

<sup>1058</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 522/47.

<sup>1059</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.NZD. 383/95. For a decree on the return of some sold properties and animals to their previous Bulgarian owners who returned from Russia, see BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 528/30.

<sup>1060</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 562/51.

<sup>1061</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 60 (Major R. E. Cox's message sent from Bucharest to Lord John Russell on August 11, 1860).

on a village in Isthip killed an outstanding farmer there and his wife and took their money. The same gang attacked a Bulgarian neighborhood in the town of Isthip and killed the son of a merchant there and also wounded his wife. Again the same bandits entered another Bulgarian village near Isthip, here they raped a young bride and killed her afterwards. The bandits then looted and burned some houses and captured a farmer. Another gang acting again around Dubnitsa and Samakov looted a village near Samakov. These events and many other events like these happened in only seven weeks. In all of these events, the Bulgarians were the victims, because Bulgarian peasants did not have the right to carry guns, in contrast to the situation of the Muslim peasants.<sup>1062</sup>

In 1862, there was a very big robbery gang between Gabrova and Tırnova which took aim at the Muslims and disarmed them. It was said that this gang had hundreds of members.<sup>1063</sup> During this period in which banditry events rapidly increased the police were paid low salaries; for this reason, they did not hesitate to collect money from people with various methods; besides the pressure of bandits, the tyranny of the *zaptiyes* was also trying the people.<sup>1064</sup>

In the years 1859-1860, a large number of crimes were committed against Bulgarians and within this period, even the Bulgarian children were under threat. For example, a Turk attacked a Bulgarian village and raped a young boy who was famous for his beauty and also raped his sister and afterwards scorned the peasants saying that the Ottoman were incapable of doing anything to help them.<sup>1065</sup>

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<sup>1062</sup> BOA, HR. SYS. 1917/22 (British Vice-Consul J. S. Blunt's message sent from Üsküb(Skopje) to J. A. Longworth'a on April 26, 1859).

<sup>1063</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.1, ch. 2*, 233 (N. P. Shishkin's message sent from Edirne to N. P. Ignatiev on July 4, 1862).

<sup>1064</sup> *Christians in Turkey*, 60 (Major R. E. Cox's message sent from Bucharest to Lord John Russell on August 11, 1860).

<sup>1065</sup> BOA, A. }AMD. 92/53.

A person named Hacı Abbas Bey who came to a village called Malushka went into the house of a Bulgarian and caressed the breasts of the daughter of this person and asked him the question “for whom you grew these breasts?” and afterwards took the girl with him and kept her with him for 3 nights. The same Abbas Bey would take and keep another Christian girl for a few days and would then give her back to her mother. Pushing some peasants out of their houses, demanding girls or women from the peasants were real circumstances.<sup>1066</sup>

In the beginning of 1860 and in Niş and its districts alone, 38 incidents like kidnapping girls and changing their religion were reported. It was not only girls who were forced to change religion. In one village a child of four years of age was kidnapped and converted to Islam.<sup>1067</sup>

The tithes which were taken in kind before were now demanded in money and the Bulgarians who did not respond to this were arrested.<sup>1068</sup>

Between 1856 and 1864, the Bulgarians’ health and safety were never under guarantee in practice. The Bulgarian independence movement would get stronger stage by stage.

#### The Bulgarian Revolutionary Movement

The Ottoman Empire’s free trade philosophy and privileges given to certain occupational groups also played an important role in the awakening of the Bulgarians in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the flourishing of industries and the international trades in the Balkans ensured the Bulgarians’ control of craft guilds and their initiatives in towns. Merchants and guilds, in particular, constituted the first leading group of the Bulgarian national movement. Tradesmen would be pioneers in opening new schools giving education in the Bulgarian language and in the

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<sup>1066</sup> BOA, A.}AMD. 92/53.

<sup>1067</sup> BOA, A.}AMD. 92/53.

<sup>1068</sup> BOA, A.}AMD. 92/53.



development of the anti-Greek church movement and would stand against *Çorbacı* who constituted a conservative factor.<sup>1069</sup> As of the 1870s, thousands of Bulgarians were living outside their homeland in places like Vienna, Bucharest, Odessa and Istanbul. Especially after the Crimean War, the effect of those living abroad would increase fast both in financial and intellectual sense compared to those living in Bulgaria.<sup>1070</sup> Even Istanbul was one of the centers which played role in the development of Bulgarian nationalism. At the time of the Crimean War, 30-40 thousand Bulgarians were living in Istanbul. Wealthy merchants among them were effective; but craftsmen constituted the majority of the Bulgarian colony; and most of them were the tailors who contractually sewed uniforms for the state.<sup>1071</sup> Therefore, the benefits of the Bulgarian colony in Istanbul depended upon good relations with the state. But this did not prevent them from helping the cultural revival of the Bulgarians.

Half of the Bulgarian nationalist intellectuals had come from the towns of the Balkan Mountains like Karlovo, Kotel, Gabrovo and Koprivshitsa where Turkish and Greek effects were felt less. Eighty percent of the nationalist intellectuals were not of rural origin, and almost half of those intellectuals were the children of businessmen who were rich or had medium sized incomes.<sup>1072</sup>

Bucharest was the center of the Bulgarian guerrillas in the 1860s. The guerrillas had the chance to get into the Ottoman lands, attack and go back from there.<sup>1073</sup> In the 1860s, 55-60 thousand Bulgarians were living in the Russian Bessarabia and 27 thousand were living in the Bessarabia which belonged to

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<sup>1069</sup> James Franklin Clarke, *The Pen and the Sword*, 173-174.

<sup>1070</sup> Perry, *Stefan Stambolov*, 6.

<sup>1071</sup> Meininger, *Bulgarian Intelligentsia*, 10.

<sup>1072</sup> Meininger, *Bulgarian Intelligentsia*, 123-127.

<sup>1073</sup> Perry, *Stefan Stambolov*, 8.

Romania.<sup>1074</sup> Yet, the Bulgarian national movement was not only a movement of actions, but also of intellect. Names like Lyuben Karavelov, Raiko Zhinofov and Georgi Rakovski had spent a lot of effort towards the revival of Bulgarian national literature, language and folklore. But the number of publications which could feed the Bulgarian intellectual movement was inadequate. Between 1806 and 1877, the number of works issued in the Bulgarian language didn't even reach two thousand.<sup>1075</sup> In 1861, there were only three periodicals of the Bulgarians (Balgarski Knizhitsi, Tsarigradski Vestnik and Dunavski Leded).<sup>1076</sup>

In this renewal period's education, Bulgarian instructors distanced themselves from using Greek books and tried to teach reading and writing in their own language.<sup>1077</sup> Bulgarian intellectuals had never gotten along well with the Greeks. According to the expressions of Konstantin Mladinov, the Greeks in Vienna were behaving like shepherds against the Bulgarians who they thought were sheep; and they also claimed that Macedonia belonged to them.<sup>1078</sup>

The Russian effect on Bulgarian intellectuals was also limited. Symbolic figures of the Bulgarian independence movement like the poets Hristo Botev, Stefan Stambolov and Lyuben Karavelov had had education in Russia. In 1861, Nayden Gerov, Karavelov and Zhinofov were receiving their education in Moscow in the Faculty of Philology, and Stoyanov in the Faculty of Law.<sup>1079</sup> But the students who were educated in Odessa, Moscow and St. Petersburg were impressed by Western

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<sup>1074</sup> Meininger, *Bulgarian Intelligentsia*, 12.

<sup>1075</sup> Petrovich, *The Emergence of Russian Pan Slavism*, 97.

<sup>1076</sup> *Macedonia, Documents and Material*, 175.

<sup>1077</sup> Hamlin, *Among the Turks*, 264.

<sup>1078</sup> *Macedonia, Documents and Material*, 180 (Konstantin Mladinov letter sent from Zagreb to Georgi Rakovski in Belgrade on January 31, 1861).

<sup>1079</sup> *Macedonia, Documents and Material*, 175.

philosophy and literature rather than Orthodoxy or autocratic ideas.<sup>1080</sup> At this point, Russia could only have a political effect on Bulgarians rather than intellectual.

The most important name of the Bulgarian revolutionary movement before 1867 was Georgi Rakovski. Georgi Rakovski did not trust the Ottoman reform movement. He longed for the political-social systems in Italy, France and England. As a result of a rebellion that may be sparked, Russia might run to help the Christians and at the same time, the West might look at this case with sympathy.<sup>1081</sup> Nonetheless, Rakovski thought that Pan-Slavism like Pan-Hellenism was a trend which would do harm to the Bulgarians. It was a great misfortune that the Bulgarian church movement was seen in Europe as a reflection of Pan-Slavism in Europe.<sup>1082</sup> Rakovski was very cautious especially towards Russia and he was against the settlement of Bulgarians in Russia.

According to Georgi Rakovski, the Greek Clergy, Pan-Hellenism, Catholic and Protestant missionaries, Russia and Russian Holy Synod were the enemies of the Bulgarian national cause.<sup>1083</sup> A national Bulgarian church would have to be founded against the effect of all these. Rakovski complained that Bulgarian folks were exploited by the patriarchate which collected a lot of money from them.<sup>1084</sup>

Rakovski was the originator of the unconventional warfare in Bulgaria. According to Rakovski, the bandits and gangs organized in Serbia and Romania could be the dynamic power of the independence movement.<sup>1085</sup> With the help of a vanguard war these would fight, the Bulgarian people could rise up. By the time the

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<sup>1080</sup> C. E. Black, "The Influence of Western Political Thought in Bulgaria, 1850-1885", *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 48, No. 3. (Apr., 1943), 509.

<sup>1081</sup> Black, 510.

<sup>1082</sup> Asen G. Dimof, "Georgi S. Rakovski in the Struggle for the Reestablishment of the Bulgarian Church", *East European Quarterly*, 8:2 (1974:Summer), 193.

<sup>1083</sup> Dimof, 184.

<sup>1084</sup> Dimof, 187.

<sup>1085</sup> Meininger, *Bulgarian Intelligentsia*, 371.

end of 1860 approached, Georgi Rakovski's fame had been spread all over Bulgaria and Macedonia.<sup>1086</sup>

As a result of the crisis in 1862-1863, Serbia took a step backwards and this disappointed Rakovski and the other leading Bulgarian revolutionaries and made the Belgrade legion result in failure.<sup>1087</sup> Because of this failure, the Bulgarian nationalists, in the new period, chose Romania as a partner of an alliance as it was politically closer to the West.<sup>1088</sup>

As of the 1860s, the Bulgarian nationalist movement, which had become stronger, now stood before the Ottoman Government as a problem bigger than before. And as of 1864, Midhat Pasha, who had been assigned as the head of the Tuna Vilâyeti (Province of Danube) which was made up of by the combination of three Eyalets (provinces), was now face to face with the obligation to struggle with those revolutionaries who were spread over a vast area including Serbia and Romania.

### **5.3. Midhat Pasha's Governorship of the Niş Province**

Midhat's most important experience before his Governorship of Tuna was his Governorship of Niş. Midhat Pasha had planned many of the reforms in Niş to be examples also for other places. Midhat Pasha's activities in the Province of Tuna were actually continuations of the projects that he had implemented during his governorship in the *Eyalet* of Niş.

The Grand Vizier Kırılıslı Mehmed Pasha assigned Midhat Pasha to Niş, from where many people immigrated abroad and which, because of its location, was

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<sup>1086</sup> *Macedonia, Documents and Material*, 172 (Kuzman Shapkarev's letter sent from Ohrid to Georgi Rakovski in Belgrade on December 10, 1860).

<sup>1087</sup> Meininger, *Bulgarian Intelligentsia*, 372-373.

<sup>1088</sup> Meininger, *Bulgarian Intelligentsia*, 375.

convenient to cause an international crisis and where public disorder prowled around, in 1861.<sup>1089</sup> As noted earlier, Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha had always used to assign Midhat to such duties in order to punish him; but unconsciously he was step by step preparing the birth of a legend.

A short time before Midhat Pasha was appointed as governor, the population of the Niş Province was 500,000 and one-sixth of this population was Muslim. Zeynel Pasha who governed Niş was a lazy person and accustomed to taking bribes. The local council was as spoilt as Zeynel Pasha.<sup>1090</sup> His successor, Osman Pasha was also charged with the acts of tyranny.<sup>1091</sup>

The main subject of complaints in Niş was the tax-farmers. Tax-farmers were a factor which scythed the economy of the district. A Christian tax-farmer named Rangel in Leskofça had collected twice the amount of the tax determined for pigs and as a result, a serious decrease in the pig trade happened. Again from wine, without taking into consideration if the producer personally consumed or sold it, 20% tax was taken.<sup>1092</sup>

Many wealthy Christians in Niş, Leskofça and Vlasinitza gave loans to the peasants there. The peasants who could not repay their wealthy creditors then ultimately began to not pay taxes and defied the Muslim landlords. As a result of the tension mutually occurred, production dropped and the wealthy Christians who took initiative here tried to capture the lands of the Muslims. Thereby, making the agricultural community poor was a strategy of the rich Christians in the district.<sup>1093</sup>

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<sup>1089</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 35.

<sup>1090</sup> Christians in Turkey, 61 (Mr. Ricketts' report sent from Niş to Consul-General Longworth on August 11, 1860).

<sup>1091</sup> For a short letter of Midhat Bey(Pasha) regarding Osman Pasha's austerity in Tırnova see BOA, A.}MKT.UM.. 277/23.

<sup>1092</sup> Christians in Turkey, 62 (Mr. Ricketts' report sent from Niş to Consul-General Longworth on August 11, 1860).

<sup>1093</sup> Christians in Turkey, 64 (Mr. Ricketts' report sent from Niş to Consul-General Longworth on August 11, 1860).

The number of Muslim merchants was not as high as that of the Christians and also they were not as rich as them; artisans constituted the largest group of the Muslims who were mainly active in large towns.<sup>1094</sup> The Muslim economic community's loss of power was a factor which increased the probability of ethnic clashes here too.

Wages of the 800 policemen in the Province of Niş could vary; in such a case, it was not possible to not expect some form of justice to be supplied in a certain balance.<sup>1095</sup> Because of all these conditions, it was quite probable that banditry in Niş and Üsküp would face an uptick.<sup>1096</sup>

In these circumstances, Midhat Efendi had replaced Osman Pasha, and raised to the rank of Pasha, thanks to this appointment.<sup>1097</sup> When Midhat Pasha came to Niş, Bulgarians in the district were migrating in families to Serbia. Carrying guns and banditry were very common as Muslims and Christians did not trust each other.<sup>1098</sup>

To solve the problems in the area, Midhat chose communicating with people rather than prove himself an uncompromising authority. With this purpose, he organized meetings with the local notables and listened to their complaints and produced solutions taking these meetings as a base.<sup>1099</sup> An office was opened where applications to the government could be made anytime.<sup>1100</sup>

As a result of the meetings here, Midhat saw that two main problems most effectively made the situation worse. Firstly, the lack of roads was an obstacle for the agricultural producers to find a market for their products. The banditry matching this

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<sup>1094</sup> Christians in Turkey, 63 (Mr. Ricketts' report sent from Niş to Consul-General Longworth on August 11, 1860).

<sup>1095</sup> Christians in Turkey, 63 (Mr. Ricketts' report sent from Niş to Consul-General Longworth on August 11, 1860).

<sup>1096</sup> BOA, HR. SYS. 1917/22 (British Vice-Consul J. S. Blunt's message sent from Üsküb(Skopje) to J. A. Longworth'a on April 26, 1859).

<sup>1097</sup> The Times' correspondent's report from Istanbul, *The Times*, February 21, 1861.

<sup>1098</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 31.

<sup>1099</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 35.

<sup>1100</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 34.

had led to immigration, especially to Serbia. The Bulgarians who went there hoped to find an environment of a sufficient security and production in a Slavic country.<sup>1101</sup>

First of all, Midhat ordered the soldiers to go back to their barracks. He started the construction of a road between Niş and Sofya and side roads in connection with this. This way, military patrols sent in every direction were able to make much progress in preventing banditry. The roads made and bridges constructed over rivers provided the agricultural producers with the possibility to go to different places and higher sales were assured.<sup>1102</sup> Before the roads were made, a 150 *okka* load (about 192.3 kg) could be transported in three days, but once the roads were made, a 500 *okka* (about 641 kg) load could be transported in a day. The Bulgarians who saw this would ask for more roads.<sup>1103</sup> The destruction caused by the river of Nishava which flowed every year was prevented by opening a canal.<sup>1104</sup> Additionally, Midhat Pasha organized a conference between the representatives of landlords and tenants in order to solve the disagreements between the two sides; although serious troubles occurred, points were found for both sides to come to a compromise.<sup>1105</sup>

Increasing the prestige of the state by the construction of new government buildings and improving the living conditions of the medium and low-ranking state officials was the administrative principle of Midhat Pasha since his term of the Governorship of Niş. Since there was no government office in many administrative districts in the Province of Niş, *Müdir*s, scribes and *zaptiye* soldiers stayed in rented places and the rent of those places cost quite much for the treasury. In Şehirköy, Midhat Pasha himself had seen the impropriety of the place where the officers stayed

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<sup>1101</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, 35.

<sup>1102</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, 36.

<sup>1103</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 33.

<sup>1104</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 34.

<sup>1105</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 36.

for 150 *guruş* a month. Thereupon, on the land of the old building, he decided to have two apartments be built of which one of them was consisted of two flats made of stone where directors, collectors and treasurers would stay and next to it, another one for *zaptiyes* which at the same time had a barn and a prison. This also would be a sample for other districts.<sup>1106</sup> Again in the town of Niş, although the government office was in good condition, there was no director's office or courts in the administrative districts. All of them were rented. Midhat Pasha himself had seen that the government offices in İpek and Prizren were ruined and in very bad condition. The annual repairs of such buildings could cost almost 30-40 thousand *guruş*. But with the sum of these costs over 2-3 years and with the addition of money from the sales of redundant places, a new government building including a prison, a police dormitory and even a telegram office could be built. Similarly, in Üsküp, after an inspection with an engineer, Midhat Pasha had seen that a building in very bad condition was used as the townhouse for a rent of 600 *guruş* a month, but if the harem of the old townhouse which was placed in the castle right in the middle of the town was arranged again, officers could stay inside and there could be a prison and a police dormitory as well. Midhat Pasha had this reported to the Governor of Üsküp. And in the district of Prizren, it was thought to build a new government building on the location in the center of the town where there was a ruined artisans' bazaar or an inn which belonged to the Foundation of Sultan Murad Khan.<sup>1107</sup> It was taken as essential for the new government buildings to be always in central places and to ensure that the term to find places to rent was ended.

To solve the immigrant problem, Midhat Pasha acted with an energy that was unseen anywhere else. 1502 of the immigrants who migrated from Belgrade to the

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<sup>1106</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 507/22917 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated April 3, 1864).

<sup>1107</sup> BOA, MVL 969/61.



Province of Niş because of the Belgrade events in 1862 were placed in the town of Niş in a very short time, and 350 of them in the town of Şehirköy. These immigrants were placed in houses of a ratio of 10% in each Muslim neighborhood; some of them were placed in inns and madrasas, and those whose moralities were not suspected were taken into the houses of local people with some widows being placed with other widows or with those women that lived alone. For the transportation of the mentioned immigrants from the border of the district of Berkofça to Niş, Bulgarians in the district of Şehirköy gave their carts free of charge to the use of the government. And some needs of immigrants like bread, coal and candles were supplied especially by Muslims. It was decided that the needs of the immigrants in the coming stages like bread, coal and candles would once again be supplied by the monetary aid of the natives of Niş and it was also decided that bread would be given to everybody from the subdivision of the treasury and 5 *guruş* per week would be given to those who were helpless and weak. One of the most serious problems was that those who had come were not agriculturists, but were salaried and from occupational groups like fishermen and barbers. The matter of permanent settling was another problem. There was no place empty or without an owner in the town of Niş. Therefore, a decision was made to build a Muslim and a Christian neighborhood on the land of 500 *dönims*(about 46.000 m<sup>2</sup>) around the Mosque of Fethiye which was outside the town. Upon the arrival of immigrants from Belgrade, immigrants would be given the right to buy parcels of 500 or 1,000 Turkish yards(*arşins*) on this land. The prices of parcels would be paid either with the prices of the estates they had left in Belgrade or these parcels of land would be donated by the government.<sup>1108</sup>

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<sup>1108</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 499/33937 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated November 9, 1862(17 Cemaziyelevvel 1279)).

Within the period in which Midhat Pasha performed the Governorship of Niş, as indicated before, Bulgarians were migrating in families to Russia. Before Midhat, instead of persuading and dissuading them from migration, 20-30 soldiers were placed in every village and these soldiers settled in peasants' houses and caused them to be homeless, this situation became even more encouraging for the Bulgarians to migrate. Midhat abolished this system and sent these soldiers away from the villages. Midhat promised local people to eliminate the banditry in the region and to save them from their debts to treasury and great landowners. With an announcement issued, Midhat Pasha made the migration to the Serbian side free.<sup>1109</sup>

Even during his Governorship of Niş, disregarding their religion, Midhat Paşa wanted to bring the children wandering in streets to the working life by education and he followed the purpose of constituting an educated society. After neighborhood schools (*mahalle mektepleri*) had been built, *zaptiyes* and other government officers were deployed to almost forcefully take children to the schools; and children who were successful in schools were integrated into the working life, crafts and arts. This situation gave great enthusiasm to people.<sup>1110</sup>

Education of children was an important matter; but besides this, there was an orphan problem. An important part of the orphan issue was when they grew up, they often times spent their lives in prisons and they were pushed out from society. In order to change this destiny, Midhat Pasha founded an *Islahhane* (Orphanage) in Niş. The wealthy people of the district helped this *Islahhane* financially. Children who were older than 5-6 years and younger than 12-13 years were taken into this *Islahhane*. Among the ones who were accepted here were also children who had committed a crime, even murder. The children were kept in the house till they were

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<sup>1109</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 32. As they fell into a bad situation in Serbia, many migrating Bulgarians had to return to Niş (*Bulgaristan Mesalihine Dair İradat-ı Seniyye cild 3*, 113-118).

<sup>1110</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 525/36231.

gained back by society. The expenses of this place would be covered by the income of a mill which was built in Niş and by the incomes of an inn, of a store and of a vegetable garden which were bought with the money from the mill and by the money from the trade of shoes which were made by the children in this *Islahhane*. Muslim and Christian children stayed mixed in the house and their number exceeded 50. Some of these children had fathers and also parents. For the administration of Midhat Pasha, Christian and Muslim children were both just as important. In one of the villages of Şehirköy, a Bulgarian had sold his two children whose mother was dead to a Serbian and then the children were taken from the Serbian and put in the *Islahhane*. The moral progression of the children in about 6-7 months, their little progressions in reading and writing, the progressions they achieved in crafts like tailoring and shoemaking also encouraged the people and consequently, in order to build a special place for another *Islahhane*, some money with an amount of 50 thousand *guruş* was collected from the people.<sup>1111</sup> The target was the development of the social responsibility of both the government and the people in a modern way. Since this application was a first in the empire and there had been no similar foundations before, it was given the name *Islahhane*.<sup>1112</sup>

Midhat Pasha apparently was rejuvenating the traditional “father state” image of the Ottoman Empire; yet, what was actually happening here was the induction of the social state implementation to be adapted to the Ottoman Empire and *islahhanes* were assumed to become the first industrial and artisanship schools in the empire.

As a part of the education movement in the Province of Niş, by collecting 30,000 *guruş* from the wealthy members of the society, a ruined school building in

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<sup>1111</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 525/36231 (Midhat Paşa’s letter to Grand Vizierate, dated May 9, 1864).

<sup>1112</sup> *Midhat Paşa’nın Hatıraları*, 34-35. Again for the *islahhane* established in Niş Province see BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 302/67; and for Midhat Paşa’s effort related to orphans, see BOA, İ. MVL. 502/22735.

Üsküp was repaired and it was planned by Midhat Pasha to transform and restore this building into a Rüşdiye School with the addition of new rooms.<sup>1113</sup>

During his Niş experience, Midhat Pasha saw that it was impossible to follow the bandits with regular troops; therefore he decided to establish the gendarme organization and duly adopted the relevant permissions to this end and he gained success against the bandits by organizing platoons.<sup>1114</sup> The number of *zaptiyes* would have been smaller than before during the Midhat Pasha era, yet since the conditions for the *zaptiyes* had improved, the *Zaptiye* organization became more efficient.<sup>1115</sup> Also erecting the blockhouses along the Serbian border was an important step taken so as to prevent the bandits leaking from Serbia which was then among the most important shelters for the bandits.<sup>1116</sup>

Another one of the very old problems the Ottoman Empire suffered from was related to the accommodation of the soldiers in the provinces. Since there were no barracks to accommodate the soldiers at Niş, the soldiers in Niş used to stay at the inns and the houses owned by the local people by the payment of significant rent amounts and they were also subject to numerous complaints. With the help of the locals, a stone Barrack was constructed in Niş in six months. Also, the ruined prison was going to be rebuilt.<sup>1117</sup> It was also decided to have a women's prison built in Niş for 20 thousand *guruş* in 1864.<sup>1118</sup> The barrack which was constructed and completed in Niş was two-storied. This building had the capacity of accommodating a regiment of cavalries and two batteries of soldiers (even a battalion).<sup>1119</sup> One of the issues

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<sup>1113</sup> BOA, MVL 980/18.

<sup>1114</sup> Hayreddin Nedim Göçen, *Vesâik-i Tarihiye ve Siyasiye*, 240.

<sup>1115</sup> BOA, HSD. AFT. 3/10.

<sup>1116</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 36.

<sup>1117</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 34.

<sup>1118</sup> BOA, MVL 979/6.

<sup>1119</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 474/21461 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Sultan dated August 24, 1862(Rumi 12 Ağustos 1278)).

which gained attention was that works were done at a speed that had not been seen before in the Ottoman Empire.

Midhat Pasha always gave importance to the procurement of new weapons, pushing all the financial opportunities. The Governorship of Niş had made an application for replacing the old muzzle-loaded rifles and carbines with revolvers and his request was accepted.<sup>1120</sup> Following this request, it was decided to send Niş approximately 400 modern rifles.<sup>1121</sup> Midhat Pasha was not only a statesman who aimed at developing the economic and educational social evolution of the state, but he also was ambitious about the improvement of the Ottoman Empire in military terms although it was for defensive reasons.

The Albanian problem was another issue that Midhat Paşa dealt with when he was Governor of Niş. The areas where Albanians were largely and densely populated in the Balkans were the places which were open to the emergence of an authority gap and a chaotic environment. In the 1860s, the Ottoman Government had difficulty maintaining control in Prizren. Due to maladministration, when chaos occurred in Prizren, the locals aimed their reactions towards the state and the people of İpek and Yakova refused to pay taxes and provide soldiers; in the end, some people from İpek attacked the hospital and shot the Governor (*kaymakam*).<sup>1122</sup> After that, Prizren was to be under the supervision and governance of the Province of Niş where Midhat Pasha had shown significant success during the term of 3 years when he was in charge.

According to Midhat Pasha, Albanian tribes in Yakova and Prizren lived in a state of nature. Mainly, those tribes would carry out plundering expeditions in rural

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<sup>1120</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 289/82.

<sup>1121</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 290/23.

<sup>1122</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 36.

areas.<sup>1123</sup> Midhat Pasha did not have too many soldiers with him when visiting regions like Prizren, with torn people and armed locals. This was because Midhat Pasha knew that the trust of people cannot be obtained by visiting their town with plenty of soldiers and that this could lead to armed conflicts which could impair the authority of the state.<sup>1124</sup> Midhat Pasha was the representative of a different way of public relations management. At the time, blood feuds were frequently seen among Muslims at places like Ipek and Yakova especially.<sup>1125</sup> Midhat Pasha met the notables of Prizren to resolve the issue of blood feuds which were widely seen among the Albanians and he had allocated a permanent commission which would collect blood money so as to prevent blood feuds. He also tried to prevent the locals from bearing guns, organized gendarme forces and caused taxes to be collected more peacefully. He also strived to stop religious violence and he had hospitals constructed; hospitals which could be used by anyone without any discrimination of identity.<sup>1126</sup> As the result of the Albanian uprising at Kurşunlu at the Serbian Border, Midhat Pasha sent a group of soldiers to the region and immediately stopped the attempt of civil disturbance before it even started.<sup>1127</sup>

The success shown by Midhat Pasha in Niş did not only cause him to be appreciated by the Bulgarian residents, but he also became pretty popular in Serbia too. One of those who would have praised Midhat Pasha's successes was Ilija

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<sup>1123</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 509/24636.

<sup>1124</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 274/37.

<sup>1125</sup> BOA, HR. SYS. 1917/22 (British Vice-Consul J. S. Blunt's message sent from Üsküb(Skopje) to J. A. Longworth'a on April 26, 1859).

<sup>1126</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 37.

<sup>1127</sup> TNA, FO 78/1814 (Acting Consul-General Blunt's message sent from Belgrade to Charge d'Affaires in Istanbul William Stuart on December 10, 1864).

Garashanin.<sup>1128</sup> Serbian statesman Jovan Ristic was even one of those who had to accept the successes of Midhat Pasha.<sup>1129</sup>

Based on these successes, in 1864, Midhat was invited by Âli Paşa and Fuad Pasha to discuss the new provincial system in Istanbul.<sup>1130</sup>

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<sup>1128</sup> TNA, FO 78/1814 (Acting Consul-General Blunt's message sent from Belgrade to Charge d'Affaires in Istanbul William Stuart on December 10, 1864).

<sup>1129</sup> TNA, FO 78/1869 (J. Longworth message sent from Belgrade to Lord Russell on October 16, 1865).

<sup>1130</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, 37.

## CHAPTER VI

### MODERNIZATION OF TUNA PROVINCE(1864-1868)

#### 6.1. Administrative Reform

##### The New *Vilâyet* Structure

The blueprint of the administrative reform in Tuna Province was the Tuna Provincial Constitution (*Tuna Vilâyet Nizamnamesi*). This constitution was an arrangement aimed towards the principles of the election of the officers to be elected to the general and special administration of Tuna.

Based on the provincial regulations to be allocated around the ideas of predominantly Midhat Pasha and Fuad Pasha, the *Vilâyet* (Province) was going to be divided into sanjaks (boroughs, districts) which were to be the center of the administration and a District Governor (*kaymakam*) was going to be appointed to each sanjak.<sup>1131</sup> Each sanjak was going to be divided into *kazas* (cantons) and each *kaza* would have been a *müdirlik* (directorate); the capital venue of each *kaza* was going to be designated as the place where the *müdür* stayed.<sup>1132</sup>

The *kazas* were to be divided into *karyes* (villages) and each *karye* would have a municipal administration. The small administrative units consisting of the

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<sup>1131</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 2.

<sup>1132</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 3.



total of some villages would not become cantons yet, and they would be designated as *Nahiyes*.<sup>1133</sup>

In towns and cities, each quarter would consist of at least fifty households and each quarter would have the status of a village.<sup>1134</sup>

The governor general would be responsible for the general administrative, fiscal and security issues of the province and also the execution of the regulations were among the governor's liabilities.<sup>1135</sup>

The fiscal affairs of the *Vilâyet* would be under the supervision of an officer appointed under the responsibility of a director of finances (chief accountant).<sup>1136</sup>

The director of correspondences (*mektubcu*) was to be responsible for the general correspondences and the officer was going to be assisted by a correspondence office by virtue of whom all official correspondences and documentation works would be maintained. The main target at this point was to obtain a provincial archive, as it can clearly be seen. It was also among the most important provisions of the regulations that there would be a provincial publishing house which would be under the director of correspondence's supervision.<sup>1137</sup>

Verbal and written correspondences would be established with the foreign officials by a state official; and this official, who would be appointed by the Foreign Ministry, would be present in the province.<sup>1138</sup>

An official of the Public Works department would perform his duty and this official would be in charge of the road and building construction projects with the engineers under his supervision.<sup>1139</sup>

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<sup>1133</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 4.

<sup>1134</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 5.

<sup>1135</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 6.

<sup>1136</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 7.

<sup>1137</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 9.

<sup>1138</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 10.

Another officer appointed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce would be in charge of the province's imports and exports, as well as agriculture and trade.<sup>1140</sup>

A council of administration would be established under the supervision of the governor and in this council, three of the members would be elected among Muslims and others would be elected among the members of the non-Muslim community. This council would consist of the *Müfettiş-i Hükkam-ı Şer'iyye* (Head of the Judiciary), director of finances, director of correspondence, director of foreign affairs and in addition to them, six members to be elected among the Muslim (3) and non-Muslim community (3).<sup>1141</sup> This Council of Province would negotiate the matters relating to administrative, fiscal, foreign affairs, yet they would not interfere with the legal affairs.<sup>1142</sup>

Provincial police would be under the supervision of the Governor-General and the Governor-General would decide the method of distribution and allocation of the police in settlement areas and decide to transfer them from one point to another. The provincial police would be under the supervision of the *Alaybeyi* (chief of police) and it was to be under his command entirely.<sup>1143</sup> The Governor-General would also have extensive authorities relating to the administration of the military forces.

A new *Meclis-i Temyiz-i Hukuk* (Civil Tribunal) was to be established in the province.<sup>1144</sup> This tribunal would be led by the *müfettiş-i hükkam* (head of judiciary) and in this council, there would be six members consisting of three Muslims and

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<sup>1139</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 11.

<sup>1140</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 12.

<sup>1141</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 13.

<sup>1142</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 14.

<sup>1143</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 15.

<sup>1144</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 18.

three non-Muslims named as examinant. In this tribunal, there would also be an assigned officer who was in charge of and had extensive knowledge of legal affairs.<sup>1145</sup> The same system of membership was also in effect for the *Meclis-i Cinayet* (criminal court) established.<sup>1146</sup> In addition to these courts, a commercial court would be established. With these articles, the court system would be renovated and centralized, and the number of the courts active in different branches increased.

A *Meclis-i Umum-i Vilâyet* (General Council) was to be founded in the province and this council would consist of two Muslim and two Non-Muslim members to be elected from each sanjak. The person who would act as the head of the council was the Governor-General of the *Vilâyet*.<sup>1147</sup> This council would gather once a year at the town center and the duration of the meeting would not exceed 40 days.<sup>1148</sup> The primary duties of the council were the construction and maintenance of the roads within the province, construction and repair of the municipal buildings and also receiving the people's requests on these matters. Negotiating the matters of improving and facilitating agriculture and trade, and making new tax enactments were also among the duties of the council.<sup>1149</sup> Briefly, this council was in charge of negotiating all matters necessary for the development of the nation.<sup>1150</sup>

The councils of elders assigned in the villages would also have significant functions. The regulations would also explain the conditions necessary to be elected to the council.

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<sup>1145</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 19.

<sup>1146</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 23.

<sup>1147</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 27.

<sup>1148</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 28.

<sup>1149</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245, Article 29.

<sup>1150</sup> *Tuna* (Newspaper), no: 215, date: October 16, 1867 (18 Cemaziyelahir 1284) (Midhat Paşa's speech on the General Council of Vilayet).

It was stipulated in the Provincial Constitution under which authority each officer would be, from cities to provinces, under many articles, so in a way, the legal steps were taken towards the construction of a more rational government in this field.

In 1866, some modifications were made in the organization of departments in the province. According to this, provincial administration was divided into 20 sections consisting of the following:

- Administrative Council of the Province,
- Correspondence Office
- Accounting Office,
- Documents Office,
- Head of Judiciary
- Criminal Court,
- Civil Tribunal,
- Council of Province,
- Commercial Court,
- Court of Appeal,
- Directorate of Foreign Affairs,
- Public Works Directorate,
- Agricultural Directorate,
- Directorate of Foundations,
- Directorate of Land Registry,
- Commission of Immigrants,
- Publishing House Administration,
- Directorate of *Islahhanes*,
- Administration of Coach Company, and

- Chief of Police, the Police and Inspection Officers.<sup>1151</sup>

One of the innovations brought by the provincial system would be the presence of a Director of Foreign Affairs who was a member of the General Council. This director, who had a good command of French, had to maintain the relations between foreign officials in the *Vilâyet* and the local Ottoman authorities as well as to ease the burden of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.<sup>1152</sup>

In the old administrative system, there were *eyalets* and *mutasarrıflıks* under the direct supervision of Istanbul.<sup>1153</sup> In the new system, *Vilâyets* were the main units of administration and these provinces consisted of *livas*, *kazas* (cantons) and *nahiyes*. The Province of Tuna was divided into 7 *livas*, 45 *kazas* and 19 *nahiyes* based on the new organizational structure.<sup>1154</sup>

The Governor-General was much more powerful in the new system. However, as it can be understood from the previously highlighted subjects, the departments under the supervision of the state were diversified and the number of the bureaucrats was increased. The duties of all of these officers were very extensive and they were in charge of assisting the governors that were in charge of all fields.<sup>1155</sup> As the Governor-General was made to become more powerful, authorized with more privileges, the objective was not to create an autocrat, but to organize a modern bureaucratic structure.

One of the reasons for the establishment of the provincial administration was to define the borders of duties and activities properly.<sup>1156</sup> Conclusively, these branches and the limits of duties and tasks of the authorized officers had been previously

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<sup>1151</sup> BOA, Y.EE.. 36/9.

<sup>1152</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Varna Consul St. Clair's report respecting the new organization introduced into the Vilayet of the Danube, dated September 17 1865).

<sup>1153</sup> TNA, FO 195/829.

<sup>1154</sup> *Tuna*, no: 2, date: March 21, 1865(24 Şevval 1281).

<sup>1155</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1156</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

eliminated in practice most of the time and public services were performed unprofessionally with human resources lacking the required qualifications.

As expressed by Midhat Pasha, previously, it was not even needed to define the quality of the previous directors; yet the properties and lives of many people were supervised by these men (this involved a small criticism aimed towards the previous governments).<sup>1157</sup> Therefore the governorate building in Rusçuk was furnished with boxes at easily accessible points for everyone to place their petitions and pass on their wishes.<sup>1158</sup> The new provincial system also aimed for the quality of the administrators to be increased as well.

The basis of the “Powerful Governor” design was creating a government system which was more proactive and focused on deeds. Midhat Pasha had pointed out with a letter he wrote as of April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1865 that it was required that the government intervene in its precincts in a timely manner and showed that this was a basic reason to increase the number of steamers in the province.<sup>1159</sup> The province was constantly facing assaults from its borders; Midhat Pasha had a proactive stance and was focused on action.

Konstantin Leontiev claimed that the new regulations of the provinces were an example of civil despotism which deprived the Christians of the freedoms they had been able to previously exercise.<sup>1160</sup> According to this, Ottoman Pashas were in the provincial commissions on one side and on the other side stood coward *beys* with a lack of education, in which case, there would be no freedom of thought.<sup>1161</sup>

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<sup>1157</sup> *Tuna*, no: 58, date: April 1, 1866 (Hijri 16 Zilkade 1282).

<sup>1158</sup> Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv(hereafter HHSA) (Wien), PA XXXVIII, Konsulate 164 ( Georg von Martyrt’s letter from Rusçuk to Alexander von Mensdorff-Pouilly dated January 26, 1865).

<sup>1159</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 333/71 (Midhat Paşa’s letter sent to Grand Vizierate on April 23, 1865(Rumi 11 Nisan 1281)).

<sup>1160</sup> Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar*, 69 (Leontiev’s report drafted in 1867).

<sup>1161</sup> Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar*, 70.

Under the new system of the provinces, there were two councils: namely the administrative council and the legal council. Five of eight of the members of the legal council consisted of Muslims. Also, the non-Muslims who were subject to injustice under the ethnical composition also faced a lack of justice in the distribution amongst them.<sup>1162</sup> The members of the council were elected from amongst the local wealthy Bulgarians who were under the supervision of the government; so, in a way, they were appointed.<sup>1163</sup> During the first commission elections, the wishes of the local notables came true and the candidates who were nominated by the Metropolitan could not be chosen. There was also a man named as Stefan Karagözov in the Council of Vilâyet to whom Konezhnikov sent letters to in Babiali pertaining to how he was involved in malevolent actions. The local notables took precedence over other groups.<sup>1164</sup> According to Suchenkov, the Russian Consul in Rusçuk, the members of the Council of Vilâyet were elected by the Governor-General, governors and subgovernors instead of local people.<sup>1165</sup>

Following the establishment of a new legal court, the fact that Christians were trialed by a legal commission led by a judge who was appointed by the Shaykh-ul - Islam was also subject to criticism.<sup>1166</sup> Furthermore, according to Konstantin Leontiev, it was not good that the supervision of the stand-alone courts which were envisaged to be established at the district governorships were to be led by a Muslim judge.

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<sup>1162</sup> Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar*, 72-73.

<sup>1163</sup> Safrastyan, "Ottomanism in Turkey", 41.

<sup>1164</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy*, t.2 (Sofya: Izd-vo na Bulgarskata akademiia na naukite, 1990), 162 (Konezhnikov's report sent from Tirmova to N. P. Ignatiev on March 24, 1865).

<sup>1165</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya: Izd-vo na Bulgarskata akademiia na naukite, 2002), 111-112 (A. E. Suchenkov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on November 17, 1867).

<sup>1166</sup> Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar*, 73-74.

As Leontiev rightfully pointed out, since the old system was not limited to any regulations and did not contain any precise methods, it was more advantageous for those of the Orthodox faith.<sup>1167</sup> In the new system, the bureaucracy was more involved in affairs and the system had a more central basis. However, despite all institutionalization efforts, the success of the administration in the provinces was directly connected with the success of the pasha managing the province.<sup>1168</sup> Even if the regulations were excellent, the human factor was the final determinant in the end.

The criticisms by Leontiev could be seen as correct at this stage and there was also no justice in the distribution of wealth. However, with the new provincial regulations, even these enacted changes had a revolutionary effect and influence when compared with the previous positions of the Christians and taking into consideration that fanaticism was still influential in the society. The progress towards the Parliament of 1876 was slowly advancing.

#### Inadequacy of the State Officials

The new provincial system expanded the powers of the Governor and provided the opportunity to act more easily and to solve problems more quickly regarding the demands of governors. However, such a system forced the Governor to deal with even the most insignificant work when deprived of the necessary human resources and staff. In this sense, as noted by Robert Dalyell, the Ottoman government needed to enable the existing officials to gain experience in two-three positions where the new provincial system would be implemented first, then expand the system by assigning these officials to other provinces with promotion to higher positions.<sup>1169</sup>

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<sup>1167</sup> Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar*, 76.

<sup>1168</sup> Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar*, 77.

<sup>1169</sup> TNA, FO 78/2035 (Robert Dalyell's report drafted on April 24, 1868, in Rusçuk).



In the strictest sense, the Tuna Vilâyeti (Province of Danube) was a model province. In the following period, it was decided to send the copies of the regulations and mandates printed in Tuna to other provinces.<sup>1170</sup> For example, regulations that defined the tasks and the duties of civil servants in the Tuna Province were sent to the far away province of Trablusgarp (Tripoli).<sup>1171</sup>

Governing a large province which would be formed from the merging of three *eyalets* into a *Vilâyet* could be achieved only by a rarity of a man in the Ottoman Empire. This man was Midhat Pasha whose energy, determination and flexibility surprised J. A. Longworth, the British Consul-General in Belgrade. Midhat Pasha was the most liberal and fair Turk seen by Longworth; Midhat believed that Muslims and Christians needed to be treated with the same fairness. However, these characteristics had caused him to face the hostility of anti-reformist groups both in Istanbul and its periphery.<sup>1172</sup>

Midhat Pasha first met the opposition of the administrative staff under his command. Names like Naib (judge) Sururi Efendi and Mektubcu (Director of Correspondences) Senih Efendi who were opponents of the provincial system generated propaganda displaying the new provincial system as hostile to the religion.<sup>1173</sup> *Çorbacıs* formed another group which was against innovations.<sup>1174</sup> Kadi Sururi Efendi, who spread propaganda to the people that the provisions of the Quran had been made invalid, would be met with the strong reaction of Midhat Pasha. When Midhat Pasha met with Sururi Efendi, he told Sururi that the first person to be shot would be him if a popular outburst occurred. As a result of the friction, Mahmud

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<sup>1170</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 58-59.

<sup>1171</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 358/95.

<sup>1172</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

<sup>1173</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 45.

<sup>1174</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.2*, 146 (Konezhnikov's report to N. P. Ignatiev dated January 24, 1865).

Feyiz Pasha (Governor of Rusçuk), Nazif Molla (Head of Judiciary), Senih Efendi (Director of Correspondence) as well as Sururi Efendi resigned. The person appointed in place of Nazif Molla was Necib Efendi who was known to be close to Mustafa Reşid Pasha and had a moderate attitude towards reform.<sup>1175</sup>

Ulema, scribes and religious fanatics in Istanbul reacted to the defeat of Midhat Pasha's opponents in Rusçuk with great anger. Also, government officials who supported the continuation of the old regime and the beneficiaries of the corrupt order opposed the administration of Midhat Pasha.<sup>1176</sup> Reaching such a privileged position, Midhat Pasha was faced with the reactions of leading anti-reformists such as Shaykh-ul-Islam Sadeddin from the ulema, but in this matter, no one could ignore the support of Fuad Pasha for Midhat Pasha.<sup>1177</sup> Reform-minded pashas and state officials firmly stood behind Midhat Pasha. Midhat Pasha was not only a government official sent to the Tuna province to reform it, but he was also an ace that would enable reformists to gain the upper hand in their debates with the conservatives.

In 1866, replacement of Fuad Pasha by Mehmed Rüşdü Pasha as a Grand Vizier, the appointment of Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha to the head of the Supreme Assembly (*Meclis-i Vala*) and Namık Pasha's rise to the head of the Ministry of War risked the future of Midhat Pasha in the Tuna Province. The only minister not against Midhat Pasha in the cabinet was Ali Pasha who served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The pashas who were jealous of Midhat Pasha took advantage of the situation and tried to discredit Midhat. Whereupon, Odian Efendi who was Midhat Pasha's most trusted man was sent to Istanbul, to defend the actions of Midhat

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<sup>1175</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

<sup>1176</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

<sup>1177</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 38.

Pasha.<sup>1178</sup> This downswing did not last long; eight months later when it was learned that Ali Pasha had been appointed as Grand Vizier and Fuad Pasha as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Midhat Pasha was so glad that he called for a military band and celebrated the changes in the Ottoman Government the very same night.<sup>1179</sup>

Consuls in the province emerged as other elements of the opposition against Midhat Pasha. According to St. Clair, the British Consul in Varna, consuls in the province were divided into three classes. The first one was the merchants titled honorary consul who would lose everything in the occurrence of a fair administration and the elimination of exploitation. The second were those who were indifferent to the changes in the Ottoman Empire Finally, the third were the Russian consuls who tried to force the new provincial organization to fail as they knew that the power of Russia would decrease in Europe as a result of the increasing power of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>1180</sup>

In Felix Kanitz's words, Midhat Pasha changed the situation in Bulgaria almost with a magic wand. According to Kanitz, Midhat's ability to organize was comparable to that of Peter the Great. Midhat Pasha was a statesman having the capacity to carry out the reforms needed by the country with sedulity and strong will.<sup>1181</sup> But only one man's efforts would not be enough to change many things. The low-ranking officials in the Ottoman Empire had low moral quality regardless of their nationality. St. Clair and Brophy separated them into three classes, accordingly; idiots constituted the first class, the second was made up with those who were stupid

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<sup>1178</sup> *The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey*, ed. Sommerville Story (London: Constable and Company Ltd., 1920), 30.

<sup>1179</sup> *Ismail Kemal Bey*, 31.

<sup>1180</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Varna Consul St. Clair's message sent from Aix La Chapelle to Lord John Russell on September 17, 1865).

<sup>1181</sup> F. Kanitz, *La Bulgarie Danubienne et Le Balkan* (Paris: Hachette, 1882), 21.

and greedy, and the third was composed of those who were cunning and greedy.<sup>1182</sup> For Midhat Pasha, it was very difficult to remedy the situation in the country with such a staff.

Pashas or *Kaymakams* had the responsibility of keeping order in Bulgaria; but, it was not so easy to persuade them to do this. Even worse, dealing with corrupt low-ranking officials was as tiring as dealing with the banditry.<sup>1183</sup> Midhat Pasha had seen that the situation in Varna, where he stopped during his travels to Istanbul, was worse than S. Mayers had told him; and Midhat Pasha told Mayers that he had difficulty in finding people who were able to govern districts and he complained about this.<sup>1184</sup>

Provincial staff was insufficient, but it did not entirely consist of ignorant and incompetent people. Midhat Pasha was often benefiting from non-Muslim advisors, at this point, this was a quite unique attitude considering the general attitude of the other provincial governments. One of the closest men to Midhat Pasha was a Molokan named Ivan Ivanovich.<sup>1185</sup> It was amazing for Westerners that there were Bulgarian government employees during this period.<sup>1186</sup>

There were qualified district governors in Tuna Province. One of them, Süleyman Pasha, the District Governor of Tulça, was a man that had the idea of new Turkish state patriotism and thought to save Turkey with his friends in the West by, in Leontiev's words, not depending on Islam. He spoke German and English and he

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<sup>1182</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 27.

<sup>1183</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 131.

<sup>1184</sup> TNA, FO 195/804 (Varna Consul S. Mayers' message sent from Varna to Sir Henry Elliot on December 12, 1868).

<sup>1185</sup> Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar*, 114 (Konstantin Leontiev's report to Russian Embassy in Istanbul, dated October 1867).

<sup>1186</sup> Kanitz, *La Bulgarie*, 22.

had indulgence for people of other religions. He did not accept any bribes and any person of any social status could connect with him.<sup>1187</sup>

Their insufficiency was not the only reason for the state officials to not take initiative in the province. Midhat Pasha was an extremely dominant and paternalistic figure. The people around Midhat Pasha either did not care to advise him or did not dare to.<sup>1188</sup> Suchenkov claimed that Midhat Pasha was not sincere while saying that people should not be afraid of expressing their ideas in his speech at the meeting of the General Assembly and that people around him were afraid to express their views.<sup>1189</sup> Here, the point Suchenkov skipped was that there was not a strong tradition of consultation in the Ottoman way of administration. Therefore, Midhat Pasha's paternalistic attitude was not the only reason for this inhibition.

The number of officers increased considerably in the Tuna Province, the schools and churches were under more stringent supervision than ever before.<sup>1190</sup> Midhat Pasha aimed to spread the use of Turkish in parallel with the development of the bureaucratic structure. The strengthening of the bureaucratic structure would raise the increase of control over Christians. But the new provincial system was more costly than the old system. As a result, the salaries of the officers were still high and the costs of many public officials increased with the new arrangements.<sup>1191</sup>

Midhat Pasha had to both make reforms in the region and solve problems between administrators and civil servants who were the agents of the reform. For example, there were never-ending disputes between Süleyman Pasha, who was the

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<sup>1187</sup> Leontyev, 156-157 (Konstantin Leontiev's report to Russian Embassy in Istanbul, dated July 1868).

<sup>1188</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883.

<sup>1189</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy*(Sofya, 2002), 111 (A. E. Suchenkov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on November 17, 1867).

<sup>1190</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.2.,* 429 (V. F. Konezhnikov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on April 15, 1867).

<sup>1191</sup> TNA, FO 195/829 (Robert Dalyell's message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Lyons on July 22, 1866).

Governor of Niş, and the military commanders and some officers, and Midhat Pasha saw that there were serious misunderstandings between Kerim Pasha, who was the Governor of Sofya, and some officers. Midhat Pasha realized that these problems could not be solved easily and he found the remedy to this situation by appointing the district governors (*kaymakams*) to other places.<sup>1192</sup> But these assignments carried the risk of driving a wedge between Midhat Pasha and the district governors as well.

On the other hand, the authority which engaged in assigning district governors, subgovernors, and other staff in the Tuna Province was the Sublime Porte, not the Governor-General. When the Governor recommended the appointment of a new officer, the person appointed by the Sublime Porte as a replacement could be even worse. Furthermore, it was very difficult to convince a good scribe or secretary to leave Istanbul and serve in the Tuna Province with a lower salary.<sup>1193</sup>

Tuna Province was faced with the demands from Istanbul for the reduction in expenses. In response to these requests, which meant cutbacks in the number of officers and their salaries, Midhat Paşa defended his policies by writing that the provincial revenues had been increased and that revenues of Hijri 1282 resulted in an excess amount of 15 million *guruş*; however, he still guaranteed the reduction in the number of *zaptiyes* and some state officials.<sup>1194</sup> But, the Sublime Porte, which requested the curtailment of expenses of the government officials, decided that the 2.5 million *guruş* required for the transport of the supplies and troops in Bosnia must be covered by the Tuna province. However, Midhat Pasha would initially respond negatively to this.<sup>1195</sup>

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<sup>1192</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 571/25672 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated August 27, 1866 (Hijri 16 Rebiülahir 1283)).

<sup>1193</sup> TNA, FO 195/829 (Robert Dalyell's message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Lyons on July 22, 1866).

<sup>1194</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 32/1317 (Midhat Paşa's letter dated August 3, 1866(Hijri 22 Rebiülevvel 1283)).

<sup>1195</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 360/99 (Bosnia's governor Osman Paşa's telegram sent to Grand Vizierate on June 28, 1866(Rumi 16 Haziran 1282)).

The price of the financial difficulties was always paid by the salaried state employees in the Ottoman Empire. They would experience either delay in their payments or the cuts in their salaries. By struggling against this situation as much as he could, Midhat Pasha tried to take a step against this chronic problem that was mostly derived from the corrupt mentality of the high ranking Ottoman statesmen.

#### The Creation of Municipal Organization

One of the most important innovations introduced by the experiences of Tuna Province was the establishment of municipal offices. Firstly, according to the text published with the name of *Instructions of the Municipal Council of Rusçuk*, the municipal councils were to consist of one chief of the municipality, one chief assistant of the chief and six members. An engineer, inspection officers and an infantry unit from the *Zaptiye* organization would be at the disposal of the municipality. A scribe of the municipal office and state treasurer would also be employed. There would be an appointed mayor in the municipality. Two members of the municipal council would be selected from the Muslims, two from the Bulgarians, one from the Armenians and one from the Jews. Members of the municipal council would serve without salary for two years, but they would be replaced every year in the future. These members would be elected by the councils of elders in towns and had to be confirmed by the government.<sup>1196</sup>

The Assistant of the Mayor would be appointed from the first class of the inspecting officers. The engineer would be selected by the Public Works Commission and the *zaptiyes* by *Alaybeyi*. The executive officer, inspection officers, government treasurer and *zaptiyes* would be in the municipal building every day. There would be guards in the building at night and during holidays. The

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<sup>1196</sup> *Tuna*, no: 42, date: December 27, 1865 (9 Şaban 1282).

contracted officers would be in the service of the municipal office and the council.<sup>1197</sup>

In 1859, it became necessary to take out loans of about 40,000 *guruş* from bankers and moneylenders because of the projects put into practice by the Sixth Municipal District in Istanbul.<sup>1198</sup> With respect to these kinds of financial difficulties, new sources of revenue had to be created for the new municipal organizations in the Province of Tuna. For this aim, taxes taken from the construction and repair of buildings, two *guruş* from the passport and transition fees of the passengers going to Romania and Serbia, and the revenues of abattoirs managed by the provincial administration would be allocated to the municipal office; furthermore, the surplus of town taxes would be donated to the municipal fund as deemed appropriate by the state.<sup>1199</sup> By the construction of a slaughterhouse in Tulça, Midhat Pasha planned to use the income of this place for municipal affairs.<sup>1200</sup> But over time, the incomes remained inadequate; therefore, some changes were made within the tax system. It was requested by Midhat Pasha that some indirect taxes be allocated to the municipalities. According to Midhat, this application would constitute an example for other municipalities.<sup>1201</sup>

According to the Regulation of Municipalities, the salary of the scribe and the government treasurer was 500 *guruş*, the others would receive whatever they had been paid before. Checking the construction of streets, sewers, sidewalks and waterways, and the construction of buildings; inspecting the use of length and weight measures in economic life; preventing the sale of unsanitary products; ensuring the

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<sup>1197</sup> *Tuna*, no: 42, date: December 27, 1865 (9 Şaban 1282).

<sup>1198</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 432/28579.

<sup>1199</sup> *Tuna*, no: 42, date: December 27, 1865 (Hijri 9 Şaban 1282). For the revenues of the municipalities see also BOA ,İ.. MVL. 527/23658 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated January 15, 1865(Rumi 3 Kanun-i Sani 1280)).

<sup>1200</sup> BOA ,İ.. MVL. 527/23658.

<sup>1201</sup> BOA, İ.. ŞD.. 2/57.



safety of the town, and protecting public assets were among the basic tasks of the municipal offices. The municipalities would not spend more than their income. Income surplus of the municipalities would be invested into the Menafi-i Umumiye (General Interest) Funds. The charges for the construction and repair of roads would be taken from the shops and the houses on the way, the costs which could not be paid by the poor and helpless would be covered by the municipal fund. An income and expense report would be presented to the municipal council and this report would be sent for the approval of the provincial administration. Garbage trucks would be sufficiently manufactured and supplied for the towns.<sup>1202</sup>

Firefighting equipment would be bought, and it would be used in a coordinated manner with the coach company during the transfer of this firefighting equipment to other places. *Zaptiyes* would look after the fire department for a while. The inspection officers would continuously monitor the town, and they would impose fines. In addition, when these officers encountered poor sick patients, they would transport them to the hospital by coach and the cost of these transportation activities would be covered by the municipal office fund.<sup>1203</sup>

In this way, a municipal office was established for the first time after the Sixth Chamber in Istanbul.<sup>1204</sup> The municipal councils were established firstly in Rusçuk and later at the places where there was a *reis-i liva* (head of *liva*) and in the larger towns; their establishment in the other kazas was considered as necessary in 1867.<sup>1205</sup> The opening of the municipal offices in Tuna Province was an important move in the history of Ottoman urbanization. But, as it was not easy to find a competent chief of municipal office that properly knew the regulations and laws

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<sup>1202</sup> *Tuna*, no: 42, date: December 27, 1865( Hijri 9 Şaban 1282)..

<sup>1203</sup> *Tuna*, no: 42.

<sup>1204</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 56.

<sup>1205</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 582/26138 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated November 5, 1867 (Rumi 24 Teşrin-i Evvel 1283)); *Tuna*, no: 238, date: January 4, 1868 (Hijri 10 Ramazan 1284).

and was able to execute them, it was also hard to find the sufficient number of men for the municipal council seats in all municipalities.<sup>1206</sup>

### Census and the Land Registration

Conservative statesmen in the Ottoman Empire succeeded in creating the overview that enabled them to ignore problems every time they arose. For example, Ahmet Vefik Efendi, who was one of the leading names of the conservative group, claimed that Muslims constituted two-thirds of the population in the province. On the contrary, Midhat Pasha claimed that there were more Christians than there were claimed.<sup>1207</sup> Carrying out a census was important in order to eliminate the effect of such deceptive statements and to obtain more reliable data for the solution of some problems.

As a result of his conversations with the Bulgarians and his observations, Longworth, who visited Varna, Şumla, Tırnova, Ziştovi, Rusçuk and Vidin, became convinced that the percentage of Muslim was no more than one-third in Bulgaria. Niş was the place with the lowest ratio of Muslim population; Muslims constituted only one-tenth of the population there.<sup>1208</sup>

In Tuna Province, the census of population and real estate would be started by officers sent from Istanbul.<sup>1209</sup> According to the conducted census, the total number of households, shops, stores and other buildings were 6,602 in the town of Rusçuk in 1865. Of the total of 20,644 people living in this town, 10,765 were Muslims, 7,676 were Bulgarians, 778 were Armenian, 956 were Jews, and 469 were Gypsies.<sup>1210</sup>

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<sup>1206</sup> BOA, A.) MKT. MHM. 396/31.

<sup>1207</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

<sup>1208</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

<sup>1209</sup> *Tuna*, no: 18, date: July 12, 1865 (Hijri 18 Safer 1282).

<sup>1210</sup> *Tuna*, no: 24, date: August 24, 1865(Hijri 2 Rebiülahir 1282).

As a result of the real estate count in Silistre, the sum of the fields, households, shops, stores and other buildings was 4,820. The population of the town was recorded as 8,046 including 4,667 Muslims, 2,263 Bulgarians, 267 Armenians, 193 Jews and 156 Gypsies.<sup>1211</sup>

By 1869, the population of the *Vilâyet* was about 3.5 million according to the estimations of Robert Dalzell. There were 1,750,000 Bulgarians, 1,250,000 Turks, 240 thousand Tatars, 100 thousand Albanians, 100 thousand Circassians and Abkhazians, 45 thousand Serbs, 30 thousand Romanians, 20 thousand gypsies, 18 thousand Greeks, 10 thousand Russians, 8 thousand Jews, and 4 thousand Armenians in the *Vilâyet*.<sup>1212</sup>

Redistribution of the villages to administrative regions was made in line with the population and housing censuses and the renewal of the administrative organization. Some villages in the *Vilâyet* were not within the administrative domain of the nearest *kaza* center. Therefore, when the inhabitants of these villages wanted to demand help from governmental offices, they were greeted with great difficulties arising from geographical obstacles. For this reason, the villages were re-classified according to their proximity to *kaza* centers as a result of the cadastral survey conducted in the *Vilâyet*.<sup>1213</sup>

In Tuna province, it was intended to conduct the Land Registry in accordance with the laws and rules under the supervision of a central government. At this point, it was decided that a special official and an assistant would be assigned in order to reform the issues regarding the land registry.<sup>1214</sup> Moreover, Namık Efendi, who was an officer of the land registry in Silistre, became the director of the provincial

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<sup>1211</sup> *Tuna*, no: 34, date: November 1, 1865 (Hijri 12 Cemaziyelahir 1282).

<sup>1212</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1213</sup> *Tuna*, no: 58, date: April 1, 1866(Hijri 16 Zilkade 1282).

<sup>1214</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 532/23882 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated December 18, 1864 ( Rumi 6 Kanun-i Evvel 1280)).

registry office (*Vilâyet Defterhanesi*). The main duties of this office in this period were to identify the unregistered and deedless lands by conducting a cadastral survey, and to keep the records of these lands in detail. It was decided to employ a land officer with a salary of 1,500 *guruş* (piaster) and 2-3 scribes attached to him for these works within each sanjak.<sup>1215</sup> As a first step, 100,000 *hüccets* (deeds) needed to be given to the real estate owners who had no bonds or *hujjat* in the Tuna Province.<sup>1216</sup>

The creation of a provincial archive was also an important step in the history of Ottoman local administration. Accordingly, there would be two register books in the scribal department (*mektubi odası*) for the registration of telegrams written from the Province to Istanbul and sent to the officers and the district governors in the Province and they would be respectively and numerically recorded in. The Document Room (*Evrak Odası*) would keep the record of all correspondence in the Province. All correspondences in the Document Room would be registered with their summaries and the sequence numbers.<sup>1217</sup> When these records were needed to be stored in a more spacious place, in time, a document treasury would be built. It was decided that a document cellar must be built at a charge of 40 thousand *guruş* (piaster) when the building of this document treasury was not enough to maintain a large number of valuable province documents over time.<sup>1218</sup>

### Judicial Reform

Midhat Pasha pursued a moderate policy towards Christians as much as possible. Therefore, even the Russian vice-consul in Varna mentioned the liberality of Midhat Pasha's administration. Regarding the violation of Christians' rights by the

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<sup>1215</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 551/24714

<sup>1216</sup> BOA, A. MKT. MHM. 338/88.

<sup>1217</sup> BOA, Y.EE. 36/9.

<sup>1218</sup> BOA, İ. ŞD. 1/28 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated February 5, 1868 (Rumi 24 Kanun-i Sani 1283)).

state servants, the only serious incident took place in October 1865 when a Bulgarian girl was kidnapped by a group of soldiers.<sup>1219</sup> One of the most important needs for providing a peaceful life to the people of the province without distinguishing Christians and Muslims and for the mitigation of rebellious tendencies was judicial reform.

Before Midhat Pasha's term, the existing *eyalet* and *kaza* tribunals and courts had to deal with so many lawsuits; and this situation caused a great confusion in the judicial system. So there was a need to establish new councils and tribunals whose tasks were better defined. Also, in the old courts and councils, incompetent people could serve as there was no coherent system that measured the quality of public personnel. Since the judges' subsistence relied on the money that came from the suits, they did not think about anything other than trying as many suits as possible and earning money.<sup>1220</sup>

With the introduction of the modern provincial system, the fees and receipts belonging to the previous Shariah courts were given to the responsibility of the Treasury, and the government began to pay a salary to the Muslim judges.<sup>1221</sup> Previously delegated judges of the *nahiyes* tried the suits by wandering from village to village. This situation was changed by the implementation of the new provincial system.<sup>1222</sup>

The departments and the courts were divided seemingly functional in the new system; however, it would not be so easy to achieve this distinction. For example, in Rusçuk which was the provincial center, it was decided to merge the civil tribunal

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<sup>1219</sup> TNA, FO 78/1869 ( J. Longworth's report on the Bulgarian Church Question, dated October 10, 1865).

<sup>1220</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 29/1245.

<sup>1221</sup> *Tuna*, no: 58, date: April 1, 1866 (Hijri 16 Zilkade 1282).

<sup>1222</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 542/24356 (General Council of Tuna Province's letter to Grand Vizierate dated September 30, 1865 (Hijri 10 Cemaziyelevvel 1282)).

and the criminal court as the criminal court could not deal with all the cases alone.<sup>1223</sup> Midhat Pasha favored the appointment of a state official from Istanbul for the chairmanship of the Trade Council (commercial court), which was planned to be established in the *Vilâyet* due to the limitation of human resources in the Province.<sup>1224</sup>

The main opponents of reform in the Province related to the testimony of Christians were the members of the *ulema*. As seen earlier, in accordance with the new regulations, some members of the court were to be Christians. However, in the prevailing circumstances, even the court testimony of Christians in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna was still not fully accepted in 1865.<sup>1225</sup> It would not be so easy to break the influence of the traditional powers in the country.

In appearance, the courts were partially modernized in the Vilâyet of Tuna. However, the courts of qadis continued to maintain their existence as a mark of the old regime. Both elected and appointed members of the courts were deprived of legal education.<sup>1226</sup>

Maintenance of *ulema*'s status in the new local councils and courts also meant that the policies required for the secularization of the administration could not be exactly performed. The similar negative effects could be observed when the situation of traditional Christian groups came into question. Clair and Brophy saw that the Greek priests in the Province played entirely different roles from Imams in the area of public relations. While the Imams many times tried to help the local

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<sup>1223</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 530/23773 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated March 19, 1865 (Rumi 7 Mart 1281)).

<sup>1224</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 531/23808 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated January 15, 1865 (Rumi 3 Kanun-i Sani 1280)).

<sup>1225</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

<sup>1226</sup> Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar*, 77.

people, the priests made every effort to build a luxurious life.<sup>1227</sup> Not surprisingly, the clergy supported by the Ottoman Empire caused a decline of Ottoman prestige in the eyes of Bulgarians.

#### Accountability of State Officials

Unlike the traditional Ottoman statesmen, Midhat Pasha advocated that the administrators should be kept responsible for their actions as much as possible and the officials engaged in corrupt practices should be punished. His era of Governorship of Tuna was full of examples related to the punishment of state officials from various ranks.

In 1866, when it was understood that Haki Bey, the clerk of the state treasury in Tulça embezzled 4,500 *guruş* from the revenues of the state treasury, he was sent to Vidin to stay in jail for five years. After a few weeks after this incident, the governor of Hırsova was dismissed from his post due to mismanagement.<sup>1228</sup> The principle of accountability was in operation in the Province of Tuna, and provincial administration openly informed the public about the activities and crimes of government officials.<sup>1229</sup>

The muhtars of Christian villages and the members of village councils had made an alliance, and they gathered extra fees from the peasants during the tax collection from the villages of the Niğbolu District in the Sanjak of Rusçuk. When this situation became clear as a result of the investigation conducted in seven villages, 27 people involved in the incident were sent to prison in Rusçuk. Taxes had to be gathered in exchange for an official certificate. Therefore, it was decided that the governor of Niğbolu, who had not sent the certificates on time, tolerated the

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<sup>1227</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 113.

<sup>1228</sup> *Tuna*, no: 125, date: November 24, 1866 (Hijri 17 Receb 1283).

<sup>1229</sup> *Tuna*, no: 119, date: November 4, 1866 (Hijri 26 Cemaziyelahir 1283).

corrupt practices of the Christian gentry, and had not shown the required responsibility in his duty; thus, he had to be discharged and prosecuted.<sup>1230</sup>

Yunus Ağa, the Governor of the Radomir District in the Sanjak of Sofya, levied an extra 8 *guruş* from each peasant during the process of tithe collection, and he was dismissed from his post when this was revealed by the official investigators.<sup>1231</sup>

Abdullah Ağa, who was the Governor of the Pravadi District in the Sanjak of Varna, did not deliver the records of civil administration on time, which were required to be sent to the Chief of Liva at the beginning of each month, and he did not direct his attention to the apprehension of thieves in Pravadi. As a result of his disinterest towards state affairs, he was dismissed from his post.<sup>1232</sup>

The Governor of the District of Pravadi, İbrahim Ağa, failed in the administration of his post and did not have the capacity to handle the affairs there, so the officer of the Provincial Civil Tribunal, Şakir Efendi, was appointed to the Governorship of Pravadi in his place.<sup>1233</sup>

The organizational success achieved during the administration of Midhat Pasha had wide-reaching effects in a very short time. A commission was established by the Ottoman government to discuss the installation of a new provincial system in the newly created provinces, and it was decided to consult the ideas of Midhat Pasha who had gained great appreciation from within the Ottoman government.<sup>1234</sup> Upon the considerable improvements made in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna, a Provincial

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<sup>1230</sup> *Tuna*, no: 141, date: January 19, 1867 (Hijri 14 Ramazan 1283).

<sup>1231</sup> *Tuna*, no: 154, date: March 9, 1867 (Hijri 4 Zilkade 1283).

<sup>1232</sup> *Tuna*, no: 176, date: June 1, 1867 (Hijri 29 Muharrem 1284).

<sup>1233</sup> *Tuna*, no: 212, date: October 6, 1867 (Hijri 8 Cemaziyelahir 1284).

<sup>1234</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 560/38982.



Constitution covering the whole country would be published in 1867 based on the Provincial Regulation of Tuna Province.<sup>1235</sup>

## 6.2. Infrastructure Works

The absence of roads and the poor condition of the existing ones were among the characteristic features of Bulgaria.<sup>1236</sup> Despite the rapid development of the region's economy and the presence of the Danube River, the volume of trade was far below capacity. The main reason of this was the lack of adequate infrastructure.

The products were mostly transported from inland to the river through the grain bullock-carts in Bulgaria.<sup>1237</sup> Due to limitations on transportation, agricultural surpluses were lost. For instance, as the Sanjak of Sofya and its districts were far from the ferry docks, and as they did not have roads that connected them to the wharfs, the agricultural surplus of the farmers remained unsold.<sup>1238</sup> Until the 1860s, the difficulty to enter the Danube River was also a major obstacle before delivering the grains to other markets by vessels.<sup>1239</sup>

Unlike the situation in Erzurum there was no threat of nomadic tribes in the Tuna Province that could retard the new communication and transportation systems; so, Tuna Province had more favorable conditions in terms of the implementation of the new provincial system and infrastructure reforms.<sup>1240</sup>

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<sup>1235</sup> For the articles of this new provincial constitution see *Documents Diplomatiques* (Constantinople: Imprimerie Centrale, 1868), 85-99.

<sup>1236</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 24-26.

<sup>1237</sup> Liddel, *Report on the proposed railway between the Danube and the Black Sea, (from Tchernavoda to Kustendjie) and the free port at Kustendjie* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1857), 8.

<sup>1238</sup> BOA, MVL 1072/29 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated September 14, 1865 (Hijri 23 Rebiülahir 1282)).

<sup>1239</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1240</sup> TNA, FO 195/829 (Robert Dalyell's message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Lyons on July 22, 1866).

The most ambitious and spectacular project of Midhat Pasha was to solve the problem of transportation in the Province of Tuna. Midhat Pasha exposed his ambitions within a very short time.

#### Construction of Roads, Bridges, Telegraph Stations, and Seaports

Felix Kanitz wrote about how he had experienced difficulties and how he had been faced with dangers due to the poor roads when he came to Vidin in 1860. Nevertheless, when Kanitz came in Vidin in 1864, the situation was quite different. The road of Niş-Vidin-Sofya was built with great success thanks to Midhat Pasha, and this road connected the North and South Balkans without the need to cross through Serbia.<sup>1241</sup>

The construction of a road planned to extend from Ruşçuk to Şumnu and from Şumnu to Varna had been left unfinished in 1864. Therefore, the announcement of the resume of the construction of these roads by the Governor-General of Tuna on March 14<sup>th</sup>, 1865, was an indication of the presence of a more energetic administration. However, it is remarkable to note that in this announcement, it was also mentioned that during the construction activities, local people would be used in their spare time.<sup>1242</sup> According to this, the people would be employed on days which did not hinder their agricultural work.<sup>1243</sup> During the construction of roads, the salaries of some of the engineers were covered by Midhat Pasha.<sup>1244</sup> The salary for

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<sup>1241</sup> Kanitz, *La Bulgarie*, 72-73.

<sup>1242</sup> *Tuna*, no: 1, date: March 14, 1865 (Hijri 16 Şevval 1281).

<sup>1243</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 556/24965 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated May 29, 1866 (Hijri 15 Muharrem 1283) ).

<sup>1244</sup> *Tuna*, no: 1, date: March 13, 1865(Hijri 16 Şevval 1281).

the Chief Engineer was 3,600 *guruş*<sup>1245</sup> which was a considerable amount at that time.

The length of the roads built during the period of Midhat Pasha's governorship was 3,000 km, and the number of large and small bridges was 1,420.<sup>1246</sup> The amount of work completed was enormous. But there were many serious problems in the background of this majestic success.

One of the main problems related to the construction of roads was that construction works had been launched before the term of Midhat Pasha and many times the Sublime Porte had the last word in these matters. It was not too difficult for a foreigner who had money enough to bribe to be hired in jobs such as engineering or mining inspectorate in the Ottoman Empire. Unless his inadequacy was understood, there was no obstacle for him to fill his own pockets. In such a situation, none of the Westerners would care about the Ottoman Empire's future. In parallel to this, a foreign engineer who was responsible for the Varna-Ruşuk road's construction embezzled the money given to him to pay the salaries of laborers and benefited from the free labor of peasants during the construction of roads.<sup>1247</sup>

In 1867, the road starting from Ruşuk was in very good condition up to 6-7 miles outside the town of Ruşuk, and there were trees planted at regular intervals along the road as in the models of France and Belgium. However, after a certain distance, the condition of the road became worse and the road became insecure after

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<sup>1245</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 386/10.

<sup>1246</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 48. According to Tuna newspaper, length of roads opened with the help of the people was close to 2 million Turkish yards (*Tuna*, no: 142, date: January 22, 1867(Hijri 17 Ramazan 1283)).

<sup>1247</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 27.

a cart journey of 3-4 hours. Only 30 kilometers of the Rusçuk-Devan road, which totaled to 120 kilometers, was in good condition for traveling.<sup>1248</sup>

A post road starting from Varna and passing through Devna, Yenipazar, Şumnu, Hezargrad and Rusçuk was also built. The conditions of bridges on the post road were not good at all, but they could be used if a competent engineer made some improvements on them. There were a lot of deficiencies and irregularities that needed to be eliminated, especially on the part of this post road near Varna. Furthermore, the stones that had been laid on the road were not in good shape or quality.<sup>1249</sup> Despite these negative factors cited by foreign observers, İsmail Kemal Bey indicated that these roads drew attention with their durability when they were compared with the roads constructed in Bulgaria and Serbia after the end of Ottoman rule.<sup>1250</sup>

As the deficiencies of highways in the province were eliminated, the need for maintenance and repair emerged, especially in the remote residential areas of these roads. For this reason, it was decided to employ salaried road guards-Christian or Muslim- into service by the provincial administration; furthermore, an instruction pamphlet for road guards was published.<sup>1251</sup>

Large and small stone bridges were built along the roads throughout the Province.<sup>1252</sup> They would provide significant economic and military advantages to the Ottoman Empire in the long run. For example, Osman Pasha was able to move

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<sup>1248</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 28.

<sup>1249</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Varna Consul St. Clair's report respecting the new organization introduced into the Vilayet of the Danube, dated September 17, 1865).

<sup>1250</sup> *İsmail Kemal Bey*, 29.

<sup>1251</sup> *Tuna*, no: 232, date: December 15, 1867 (Hijri 19 Şaban 1284).

<sup>1252</sup> *Tuna*, no: 215, date: October 16, 1867 (Midhat Paşa's speech on the General Council of Vilayet).

very quickly at the first Battle of Plevna (1877) over the stone bridge in Dolni-Dabnik, which had been built on 44 stone bases by Midhat Pasha.<sup>1253</sup>

While there were no telegraph stations in most of the *kazas* of the *Vilâyet* before 1864, there were telegraph stations in 34 *kazas* as of October 1867.<sup>1254</sup> The demand for the construction of telegraph stations came especially from tradesmen.<sup>1255</sup> Although the telegraph stations had opened, there was a shortage of personnel familiar with the external world. For example, when Claire and Brophy wanted to send a telegram from Varna to Frankfurt am Main, the telegraph station's employees told them that they had never heard of such a place, and they had been unable to find the location of this place in their books, and that they didn't even have a map to search its place.<sup>1256</sup>

The Provincial administration aimed its attention at the construction of wharfs for the development of the regional economy. It was intended to build a landing stage having a large number of stores in Varna. In addition, the construction of a breakwater which would protect the port of Varna was among the projects.<sup>1257</sup> It was decided to repair the Varna coal wharf which had been damaged continuously in the storms.<sup>1258</sup> A dock and a pier were constructed at the town of Tutrakan situated on the banks of the Danube River and thus the ferries began to visit there. Thereby, it was intended to develop the regional trade and to incorporate products into commercial life rapidly.<sup>1259</sup>

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<sup>1253</sup> Kanitz, *La Bulgarie*, 270.

<sup>1254</sup> *Tuna*, no: 215, date: October 16, 1867 (Midhat Paşa's speech on the General Council of Vilayet).

<sup>1255</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 549/24647 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated December 14, 1865 (Hijri 25 Receb 1282)).

<sup>1256</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 35.

<sup>1257</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Trade report for the year 1864 drafted by Varna Consul on May 5, 1865).

<sup>1258</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 573/25713 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated April 13, 1867 (Hijri 9 Zilhicce 1283)).

<sup>1259</sup> *Tuna*, no: 9, date: May 9, 1865 (Hijri 14 Zilhicce 1281).

It was not suitable to benefit from the forced labor of peasants repeatedly for the road construction. Thus, the General Council of the Vilâyet decided that guardhouses, that would be funded by the inhabitants of the villages, would be constructed on the roads at the intervals of 1, 1.5 and 2-hours, and guards who would take care of the situation and repair of the roads in these guardhouses would be employed with salaries of approximately 120 to 150 *guruş*.<sup>1260</sup> Also in 1867, it was intended to recruit a total of 200 guards by placing them at appropriate points on the roads; these guards would deal with the maintenance and repair of the long roads just like in Europe. The group of these new officers had a total annual salary of 250-300 thousand *guruş*. It was intended to meet this new expense by collecting one *guruş* per annum from 200,000 houses situated in the towns and villages.<sup>1261</sup>

The length of roads had increased in the Province, but this also increased the need for repair and it did not diminish the need for the construction of new roads. Moreover, when the construction of a railway was planned to be extended from Niğbolu to Plevne, the need for engineers doubled.<sup>1262</sup> The roads needed to be repaired, but it was difficult to accomplish this in a period where the Ottoman finances resembled a "sea of embezzlement".<sup>1263</sup>

Achievements were quite spectacular at that time. A very long road was built, which extended from the *kaza* of Ivryanya to Leskofça and from there to the town of Niş in a relatively short period of time, and 77 new bridges were also built on this road.<sup>1264</sup> The peasants had free days to perform work for the construction of roads

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<sup>1260</sup> BOA, MVL 1072/40 (General Council of Vilayet's protocol dated November 1, 1865 (Rumi 20 Teşrin-i Evvel 1281))

<sup>1261</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 579/25981.

<sup>1262</sup> BOA, İ. ŞD.. 2/62 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated February 5, 1868 (Rumi 24 Kanun-i Sani 1283)).

<sup>1263</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 29.

<sup>1264</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 536/24075.

and the restoration activities; stones were abundant, there were water buffalos; in this situation, the only thing that the government of Vilâyet needed was money.<sup>1265</sup> At this point, the expenses of the bridge were mostly met by the towns' wealthy.<sup>1266</sup> Nevertheless, ordinary people also paid an important amount with respect to their financial situation during the construction of bridges. When it came to the repair costs of a bridge between Niş and Leskofça, the daily wages of the workers were covered by the local treasury. Nevertheless, the local people would also "subsidize" the essential stone and timber.<sup>1267</sup> Due to flooding that occurred as a result of heavy rainfall in 1281/1282 (Hijri Calendar) during the winter season, two bridges between Leskofça and Ivranya and the bridges in the bazaar of Leskofça were destroyed, the foot of the bridge between Leskofça and Ivranya were damaged, and in addition to this, 20 shops on a bridge in Leskofça were destroyed. Their repair and reconstruction required large expenses. In this situation, the provincial administration relied on the monetary aid of local people and the regional treasury.<sup>1268</sup>

The Ottoman government was at the risk of running out of money in the full sense of the word at the end of 1865. Aside from the old debts, even the payment of the interest on the debt was a compelling action from the state.<sup>1269</sup> So, Midhat decided that these new projects had to not bring a new financial burden to the state; so he forced the people to purchase bonds by using *zaptiyes*. This situation angered even the Muslim people.<sup>1270</sup>

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<sup>1265</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 30.

<sup>1266</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 48.

<sup>1267</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 562/25253.

<sup>1268</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 535/24018. Also about the provision of construction materials such as timber and stone from local people in Tirmova canton and the villages of Hezargrad see BOA, MVL. 1072/4.

<sup>1269</sup> Lord Newton, *Lord Lyons*, 149 (Lord Lyons' telegram sent from Istanbul to Earl of Clarendon on December 6, 1865).

<sup>1270</sup> Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, *Serail und Hohe Pforte*, 242.

Midhat often collected donations from the rich. For example, some government officials in Sofya, with Mehmed Aga and one of the notables in Köstendil donated a total of 19,440 *guruş* for the Imperial Treasury.<sup>1271</sup> 240 *guruş* was donated to the state treasury by Mehmed Emin Bey a local notable from the *Kaza* of Maçin and 1,360 *guruş* by Molla Ömerzade Mehmed Ağa from Maçin.<sup>1272</sup> Such donations were seen in the other places from time to time. This situation indicated that people had savings, but since there were no banks and companies, these savings did not open the doors to much greater fortunes.

### Railways

The construction of a railway extended from Edirne to Serbia was a dream of the Ottoman Government.<sup>1273</sup>

In September 1861, the Ottoman government made an agreement with a British group for the construction of a railroad, which had a total length of 224 km, between Rusçuk and Varna. However, the Ottomans could not show a remarkable progress in the construction of this railroad line until a company was established under the name of the “Rusçuk-Varna Railway Company” in 1863.<sup>1274</sup>

The Rusçuk-Varna railway which was built by the Rusçuk-Varna Railway Company during the governorship of Midhat Pasha was 140 miles long. The construction of the railroad was started in June 1864, and the railroad was projected

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<sup>1271</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 532/36916.

<sup>1272</sup> *Tuna*, no: 133, date: December 23, 1866 (Hijri 16 Şaban 1283).

<sup>1273</sup> BOA, A. } MKT. MHM. 309/21.

<sup>1274</sup> Charles Morawitz, *Les Finances de la Turquie* (Paris: Guillaumin et cie, 1902), 374.



to open in early 1866. The cost of materials that was brought for the construction of the railway to the port of Varna amounted to 30,000 Sterling.<sup>1275</sup>

Half of the arable lands were empty despite the presence of thousands of Circassian immigrants to Bulgaria. Numerous people could be interested in operating in the agricultural sector with the facilitation of transportation and the increase in product marketability as a result of the construction of this railway, and so this problem could be resolved.<sup>1276</sup>

Ruşuk-Varna railway tripled the value of homes along its route in only a few years.<sup>1277</sup> Shortly before Midhat Pasha completed his governorship tenure, the Nigbolu to Plevne railroad's construction process commenced.<sup>1278</sup> The Rusçuk-Varna railway greatly benefited foreigners in this region thanks to its connections to the Danube ferries; but interestingly, the peasants preferred to transfer their products with their carts. In addition, the villagers complained about the passing trains killing their animals from time to time. The Rusçuk-Varna railroad was not strategically situated very well; it passed north of Varna Lake, which could easily be seized by the Russians, and in such an occurrence there would be an interruption in the communication between Varna and Şumnu.<sup>1279</sup>

Furthermore, the expeditions on the Rusçuk-Varna railroad did not attract very many people. First, Varna and Rusçuk were towns which had only 20-30 thousand inhabitants. The absence of cross-roads connecting passengers and other regions to this line was another factor reducing its interest. The lack of a sufficient port in

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<sup>1275</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Trade report for the year 1864 drafted by Varna Consul on May 5 1865).

<sup>1276</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883(Trade report for the year 1864 drafted by Varna Consul on May 5 1865).

<sup>1277</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Varna Consul St. Clair's message sent from Aix La Chapelle to Lord John Russell on September 17, 1865).

<sup>1278</sup> *Tuna*, no: 218, date: October 27, 1867 (Hijri 29 Cemaziyelahir 1284).

<sup>1279</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 30.

Varna also made this road non-functional.<sup>1280</sup> Wagons had derailed and accidents had occurred during the first expeditions on the Rusçuk railway. Moreover, the railway did not operate due to difficulties on the tracks when snow fell.<sup>1281</sup> According to the news in the 174th issue of the *Tuna* newspaper, there were people who set stones on the tracks to derail train wagons.<sup>1282</sup> Sometimes jerry-built railway lines or people who set stones on the railway could be the reason of the accidents; once the locomotives collided even.<sup>1283</sup> While the money that came from the passengers and transportation fees covered only the costs of the line operation, the payments of the railway company's staff could not be met by the railways' revenues.<sup>1284</sup>

Another commercial idea of Midhat Pasha was the railway to be extended from Niğbolu to Plevne. Plevne was an economically developed region. This line would be added as a new supply line to the main transportation line by extending from Danube to Plevne. But, Niğbolu was not seen fit to be a beginning point of a railway line by the experts. However, Midhat did not care and launched the construction near the River of Osma that was near Niğbolu; thus, the foundations of a new residential center named Sultaniye were laid there, and new buildings began to rise. Here, Midhat forced thousands of inhabitants to work free of charge, wanting to complete the project without incurring expenses. This project did not continue after the end of Midhat's era, and the buildings that had begun to be built in his term remained in ruins.<sup>1285</sup>

With the improvement of transportation facilities within the territories of the province, the peasants began to transport their products safer and quicker. Thanks to

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<sup>1280</sup> Edward Dicey, *The Morning Land*, v.1 (London: Macmillan & Company, 1870), 23.

<sup>1281</sup> *Tuna*, no: 129, date: December 9, 1866 (Hijri 2 Şaban 1283).

<sup>1282</sup> *Tuna*, no: 174, date: May 25, 1867 (Hijri 22 Muharrem 1284).

<sup>1283</sup> *Tuna*, no: 205, date: September 10, 1867 (Hijri 12 Cemaziyelevvel 1284).

<sup>1284</sup> Dicey, 24.

<sup>1285</sup> Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, *Serail und Hohe Pforte*, 240.

this, peasants experienced less difficulty in finding the capital they needed. Although transportation by horse was common in some places, after the construction of roads most goods were transported by wheeled vehicles.<sup>1286</sup>

### Financial Burden

In his speech to the General Council of Vilâyet in 1867, Midhat Pasha had not mentioned how the provincial administration laid the burdens of its great projects on its inhabitants during the construction of roads, telegraph lines, telegraph stations, police stations, and the settlement of the Circassian immigrants, as A.E Suchenkov said.<sup>1287</sup>

The burdens of the public works were primarily on the shoulders of Christian peasants, and this was mainly related to the attitude of local authorities.<sup>1288</sup> The people of Tırnova had worked in a substantial part of the construction of the road from Rusçuk to Tırnova and the inhabitants of Rusçuk also had shown a considerable effort during these construction activities.<sup>1289</sup>

As the wooden bridge called Büyük İskr, which was on the road passing from the village of Vrazdina in the *Kaza* of Orhaniye situated near Sofya, was devastated, it was decided to build stone pillars for this bridge and stone barriers around it. However, in addition to the construction charge of 200 thousand *guruş*, the price of iron and nails and the workers' daily wages would be paid by the local people.<sup>1290</sup>

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<sup>1286</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1287</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876:dokumenty i materialy*(Sofya, 2002), 112 (A. E. Suchenkov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on November 17, 1867).

<sup>1288</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1289</sup> *Tuna*, no: 34, date: November 1, 1865 (Hijri 12 Cemaziyelahir 1282).

<sup>1290</sup> *Tuna*, no: 42, date: December 27, 1865 (Hijri 9 Şaban 1282).

The local people also worked on the construction of 56 blockhouses from Vidin to Rusçuk. In addition to this, the people worked on the construction of 48 telegraph stations, upon which construction was started in the spring of 1868.<sup>1291</sup>

Midhat Pasha, who was described as an intelligent man, was rarely seen among the Ottoman ruling class by Clair and Brophy, and he was too hasty and a daydreamer. Forgetting that Rome had not been built in a day, he wished to increase the civilizational level of his country up to the high civilizational levels of France and England.<sup>1292</sup> Midhat Pasha also had a spark that was rare among the governors of the Ottoman state; however, he was also too challenging and incautious.<sup>1293</sup> Midhat's character caused him to depend heavily on the human factor. The energy which was the source of Pasha's power conflicted with the conditions many times. Nevertheless, as we have indicated in this study, in Midhat's times, technology, education, infrastructure, and military forces in the world were developing very quickly; the enemy was not asleep. The Province of Tuna, which was at very critical situation at this point, was supposed to be the subject of a highly quick reform program under these conditions; and such a rapid development program had some prices.

After 1856, the Sublime Porte had favored the use of regional revenues by local governments more than ever before when the public works of local governments came into question. However, even the payment of allowances of Provincial Public Works Commission's (*Vilâyet Nafia Komisyonu*) engineers turned

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<sup>1291</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy*(Sofya, 2002), 113 (A. E. Suchenkov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on November 17, 1867).

<sup>1292</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 26.

<sup>1293</sup> Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, *Serail und Hohe Pforte*, 239.

into a problem in the Tuna Province.<sup>1294</sup> Only 13 percent of the revenues collected in the Vilâyet of Tuna could be allocated to public works. Very limited sources remained to complete the public projects after the expenditures made for the salaries of civil servants and the judiciary in the Province, the salaries of the gendarme, schools, prisons and hospitals. It was for this reason that the administration of Midhat Pasha resorted to free labor from the people for the construction of roads. At the same time, good technical staff, engineers, and materials needed to be used in order to build roads of good quality. The British personnel commissioned for the construction of the railways were completely out of control. Irregularities related to the construction of the railways had not been subject to the attention of the Sublime Porte, despite the fact that Midhat Pasha wrote continuously to Istanbul on the subject. A Prussian engineer, Major Wagmann was charged with the supervision of the construction of the railways. But as of 1865, he had not set a single foot in Rusçuk.<sup>1295</sup>

The conditions of Christian peasants in the province were better than those of the Muslims. That's why local authorities mainly benefited from the free labor of Christians in large-scale projects. For example, for his tithe, a Bulgarian peasant would pay one-tenth of his production made in the part of 50 acres out of 150 acres of land he owned, but potatoes and other vegetables were not included within the scope of this tithe, so the planting of the remaining area was tax-free. When the person owned 1,000 acres or larger pasture land, he paid three *guruş* per sheep and four *guruş* per pig; cows, horses and water buffaloes were outside the scope of the

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<sup>1294</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 538/24161-4 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated April 15, 1865 (Hijri 20 Zilkade 1281)).

<sup>1295</sup> TNA FO 881/1393(Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

tax. In addition to this, these peasants (subjects of the empire) had the right to cut trees on their lands and to sell the wood at market.<sup>1296</sup>

In fact, in the words of Clair and Brophy, the peasant in Bulgaria had conditions so advantageous that they could be found nowhere else in the world. The Bulgarian peasants, who made celebrations 185 days of the year in accordance with the Greek Calendar, were a part of a lazy culture.<sup>1297</sup> Within these conditions, their main problem was the heavy impositions laid on them by the Greek priests.

The Christian peasants in Bulgaria owned so much land that they did not know what to do with it. They were deprived of the knowledge and agricultural techniques which would allow them to cultivate the soil efficiently.<sup>1298</sup>

As far as the Eastern Question is concerned, Clair and Brophy came to a conclusion that the demands of the West which intended to provide ample opportunities to the Christian *reaya* were meaningless in general as the quality of the human source was concerned; and these demands would only lead to abuses.<sup>1299</sup> While the English and French workers worked approximately 313 days a year, the Christian *reaya* in Bulgaria had been working 120 days a year. Even if the Ottomans had the most fertile lands for wheat farming, productivity was still low because of the *reaya*'s idleness.<sup>1300</sup> Due to this, the bread prices in Europe were more expensive than they should have been. If the Rayah worked hard enough, the bread prices in the

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<sup>1296</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 149-150.

<sup>1297</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 150.

<sup>1298</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 152.

<sup>1299</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 159.

<sup>1300</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 160.

UK and France would be 20% cheaper.<sup>1301</sup> The Ottoman government was excessively indulgent in the idleness of Bulgarians.

As Clair and Brophy pointed out, the Christian farmers had been spending half a year with feast days according to the calendar scheduled by the Orthodox Church while the Turks were busy performing their military service.<sup>1302</sup> Those celebrations, where several customs and traditions took place, were a major obstacle to the civilizing process of the Bulgarians. The Christian Rayah in Bulgaria was paying approximately 25 *guruş* in tax to become exempt from the military service like the other communities living across the Empire, and the income tax was only 30 *guruş* per family.<sup>1303</sup>

Taking into account all of these, the improvements in the field of transportation that were made within the conditions of the financial crisis should be analyzed in an unbiased manner as far as the region's economic situation is concerned. The impassioned Midhat Pasha, who was caught between the financial difficulties and his age's necessities, forced the normal rhythm of life. Therefore, his loss of popularity was a quite natural historical result.

### **6.3. Problem of Immigrants**

The *Tuna Vilâyeti* was one of the provinces where the densest resettlement of the immigrants occurred after 1856. In these tough times, Nusret Pasha was charged by the Immigrant Commission to deal with the problems of immigrants in Varna and K stence.<sup>1304</sup>

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<sup>1301</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 161.

<sup>1302</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 170.

<sup>1303</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 149.

<sup>1304</sup> Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas G çleri*, 111.

Around 60,000 immigrants came to the Varna and Köstence harbors until the midst of July in 1864 and they were resettled in the region of Danube.<sup>1305</sup> According to the *Takvim-i Vekayi* dated August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1864, the Bulgarian residents living in the province of Şehirköy and Niş worked voluntarily with their carts to transport the immigrants. Bulgarians also brought aid materials from their houses.<sup>1306</sup> But it is still unknown how much of these actions were truly voluntary.

Four thousand Turks who had to leave their homeland due to the Belgrad Incidents in 1862 had been living in bad conditions in Bosnia and Bulgaria.<sup>1307</sup> Almost all the Bulgarians who immigrated to Serbia in the year of 1861 came back to their homeland by using their right to return that was given by the Sublime Porte.<sup>1308</sup> The region of Varna was one of the places where the immigrants faced too many problems due to overpopulation. In June 1866 alone, four thousand immigrants came to the area around Varna in fifteen days.<sup>1309</sup> Twenty-six families consisting of 113 immigrants that had immigrated to Russia applied to the Niş governor in 1867 in order to return to their homeland, and after the application, the families were resettled to their former places.<sup>1310</sup> In September 1867, 250 Abkhasian immigrants landed in Varna by the ship called Brusa and were settled to the barracks. A few days later the immigrants were sent to another place.<sup>1311</sup> There was an unstoppable immigrant rush in the Province.

When Midhat Pasha became the Governor-General of Tuna Province, his tasks concerning the immigrant problem would never be easy. Firstly, a struggle related to authority occurred between Nusret Pasha, who was the head of the

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<sup>1305</sup> Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri*, 138.

<sup>1306</sup> Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri*, 187.

<sup>1307</sup> TNA, FO 78/1813 (Consul Longworth's message sent from Belgrade to E. M. Erskine dated February 2, 1864).

<sup>1308</sup> TNA, FO 78/1923 (Consul Longworth's message to Lord Lyons dated January 16, 1866).

<sup>1309</sup> Saydam, *Kırım ve Kafkas Göçleri*, 127.

<sup>1310</sup> *Tuna*, no: 153 date: March 6, 1867 (Rumi 22 Şubat 1282).

<sup>1311</sup> *Tuna*, no: 207 date: September 17, 1867 (Hijri 19 Cemaziyelevvel 1284).



immigrant commission in Tuna province, and Midhat Pasha. Forcing his authority, Nusret Pasha tried to act independently in the Province of Tuna.<sup>1312</sup> According to Midhat Pasha, Nusret overrode his authority and struggled with civilian officers and therefore hindered the works in the Province.<sup>1313</sup> Before Midhat Pasha took over the governorate of the Tuna Province, Nusret Pasha had also been subject to a complaint lodged by the District Governor of Varna due to his involvement in civil matters as a step beyond his authorities as a military inspector in August 1863.<sup>1314</sup>

Again according to Midhat Pasha, the ulema and Nusret Pasha fabricated information that Midhat Pasha had not allowed the Circassians to perform the salaah. Assertions about Midhat Pasha were that he was a tyrant, a charlatan and a Panslavist. Nusret Pasha had committed violence against some subgovernors too.<sup>1315</sup>

The cost of the immigrant commission was also high for the province. A total of 30.000 *guruş* was given monthly to the Immigrant Commission officers. The amount of money which was given from the treasury for immigrants to pay for their expenses was about 1 million *guruş*.<sup>1316</sup>

Nusret Pasha wanted the Circassians to be settled in places as highlands and forested lands which would remind the Circassians of their own country. In accordance with this, he wanted them to be placed at the Serbian border. On the contrary, Midhat Pasha wanted to distribute immigrants among the Turks and Bulgarians as much as possible.<sup>1317</sup> Nusret Pasha's model was not civilizing, but encouraged banditry.

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<sup>1312</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 46.

<sup>1313</sup> BOA, MVL 1074A/17.

<sup>1314</sup> BOA, A.}MKT.MHM. 278/35.

<sup>1315</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

<sup>1316</sup> BOA, Y.EE. 36/9.

<sup>1317</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

Most of the immigrants who came to the Danube region remained homeless or stayed in peasants' houses. Also, the money which was granted by local people for the immigrants' use and also immigrants' daily wages were the objects of corrupt practices. In order to put an end to these things, Kolağası Şükrü Efendi, who was in Vidin that time, and Tahir Efendi, who was in Şumnu, were called back to the provincial center. Some questions were asked to them regarding the number of immigrants, places where the homeless would be settled, and the expenses that had been incurred up to that time. But no clear answers to these questions could be received and it was understood that some records and account books about all these matters were missing.<sup>1318</sup> The immigration commission headed by Nusret Pasha was poorly managed.

The expenses related to the houses, school and wells which were necessary for the settlement of immigrants were on the shoulders of the natives of Bulgaria. Half of the immigrants' daily wages was again paid by the natives. But the management of the money supplied both by the government and the peasants to cover the expenses was a mess. In spite of the money taken from the treasury and the money which was given by the local people, houses were not able to be constructed for the immigrants in many places and similarly, during the delivery of animals to the immigrants many disorders occurred. Most of the 7,000 immigrants who landed on Varna docks were poorly dressed.<sup>1319</sup>

According to Midhat Pasha, there was no end to giving daily money to the immigrants; therefore, they had to be integrated into the agricultural sector, crafts and arts. They had to be placed in even positions beneath their credentials, such as servitude as soon as possible. They had to be incorporated into the economic

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<sup>1318</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 133/5690 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated February 2, 1865 (Rumi 21 Kanun-i Sani 1280)).

<sup>1319</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 133/5690 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated February 2, 1865).

production cycle. It was also decided to aid those who were artisans and wanted to open a workplace, with a capital of 1,250 *guruş* each.<sup>1320</sup>

There were 8-10 physicians and pharmacists assigned for the treatment of immigrants in Köstence and in some other places. Their wages were about 2,000-2,500 *guruş* a month. They did not work very much, and even if they could reach all of the villages, it was not possible to heal all the sick people as the hygienic conditions were not good enough. Paying these physicians was nothing more than a waste of money; moreover, the medicine was not used properly and they were wasted as well. Therefore, Midhat Pasha decided to construct health facilities in Plevne, Rusçuk, and if needed in Köstence, and employ doctors and health personnel in said places.<sup>1321</sup>

The number of Circassian families which needed agricultural tools were about 4-5 thousand and in total, these tools cost about 500,000-600,000 *guruş*. As Midhat Pasha wrote, the Treasury could not meet all these financial needs. Reforming the poor administration of the Immigrants Commission and the employment of immigrants in regular jobs could bring solutions to the problems.<sup>1322</sup>

During Midhat Pasha's administration, extensive projects were carried out to improve the immigrants' life conditions and to integrate them into the social life. During his inspection in Tulça, Dubrovica and Köstence, Midhat Pasha demanded the construction of an *Islahhane* (Artisan School and Orphanage) in Kostence to help the immigrants living in this region and to help educate their children. It was decided that the officers active in the Immigrants Commission were to be transferred to the

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<sup>1320</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 133/5690 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated February 2, 1865).

<sup>1321</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 133/5690 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated February 2, 1865).

<sup>1322</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 133/5690 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated February 2, 1865).

*Islahhanes* due to the fact that there was no need for the Immigrants Commission anymore.<sup>1323</sup>

In 1865, in Niş, 80 uncircumcised Circassian immigrant males aged between 15 and 60 were circumcised and interestingly this was made with a ceremony.<sup>1324</sup> In 1866, 100 immigrant children in Tulça were inoculated.<sup>1325</sup> The physician of the Third Cavalry Regiment of Second Army in Sofya, Galib Efendi gave medical treatment to the poor and immigrants free of charge three days a week.<sup>1326</sup>

It was decided to construct six hospitals where the sick immigrants and the very poor members of the society in the *Vilâyet* could be treated.<sup>1327</sup> Three pharmacists were employed at the immigrant hospitals with salaries of 700 *guruş* a month.<sup>1328</sup> It was also decided to dig 18 wells for the immigrants who were accommodated at Pazarcık in the Sanjak of Varna.<sup>1329</sup>

The Tuna provincial administration also tried to prevent the slave trade which was widespread among the Circassians. As some of the chiefs of the Circassian tribes could not be convinced about the prohibition of the slave trade, *Vilâyet* administration decided to issue bonds which emancipated slaves in return for their services to their masters between 2 to 5 years.<sup>1330</sup>

Some of the immigrants worked in railway and road construction as a form of livelihood. Although they were subject to the universal conscription, they were not

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<sup>1323</sup> *Tuna*, no: 4, date: April 4, 1865 (Hijri 9 Zilkade 1281).

<sup>1324</sup> *Tuna*, no: 15, date: June 21, 1865 (Hijri 27 Muharrem 1282).

<sup>1325</sup> *Tuna*, no: 49, date: February 14, 1866 (Hijri 29 Ramazan 1282).

<sup>1326</sup> *Tuna*, no: 173, date: May 21, 1867 (Hijri 18 Muharrem 1284).

<sup>1327</sup> *Tuna*, no: 21, date: August 1, 1865 (Hijri 9 Rebiülevvel 1282).

<sup>1328</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 530/23784.

<sup>1329</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 547/24579.

<sup>1330</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 54-55.

employed in the army and they did not have a positive approach towards the regular army.<sup>1331</sup>

It was decided to limit the mobility of the immigrants within the Tuna province, and those who wished to temporarily leave the places they lived were asked to explain the reason for this. The main reason behind this decision was that the provincial government tried to employ immigrants in regular jobs.<sup>1332</sup> However, since the agricultural lands were not distributed to the Crimean Tatar, Nogay and Circassian immigrants who came to the Sanjaks of Rusçuk, Varna and Tulça and instead lived in the Dobruca plain, there were conflicts between the immigrants and the local people. Upon this, a group of officers was assigned to manage the distribution of lands under the supervision of a director of land registry named Namık Efendi, in 1865. These officers started to work in the *Kazas* of Hırsova and Mangatia. As the result of the work completed in Hırsova, the land provided for 1,011 refugees in 10 villages was approximately 110,080 thousand square meters, which meant distribution of land ranged from 60 thousand square meters to 130 thousand square meters per couple.<sup>1333</sup> In parallel to this, great progress was achieved in the incorporation of Circassians into the agricultural economy after 1864.<sup>1334</sup>

In later stages, an administrative commission which was headed by a staff officer named Şakir Bey, was established to collect the tithe from immigrants who started to do agriculture in Rusçuk. The tithe collected by the commission would be used for meeting the immigrants' primary needs, the construction of mosques and schools which would provide services for the immigrants, and hospitals constructed

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<sup>1331</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

<sup>1332</sup> *Tuna*, no: 25, date: August 31, 1865 (Hijri 9 Rebiülahir 1282).

<sup>1333</sup> *Tuna*, no: 35, date: November 8, 1865 (Hijri 19 Cemaziyelahir 1282).

<sup>1334</sup> Kanitz, *La Bulgarie*, 103.

after the formation of Tuna Province.<sup>1335</sup> The tithe began to be collected from Circassian immigrants after March 1866.<sup>1336</sup>

### Compulsory Work Continues

The number of Crimean Tatars and Nogay immigrants who were resettled to the Dobruca region and to the Sanjaks of Vidin and Rusçuk totaled at 200,000. During the resettlement of the immigrants, Midhat Pasha confessed that Muslim and Christian inhabitants of the region suffered from some problems.<sup>1337</sup>

In the Sanjak of Sofya, 2038 houses were constructed for the Circassian immigrants and a significant amount of monetary aid was collected from the notables of the region as well as the officers, state officials and local people for the construction of houses, and the provision of food and clothes. Local people in the *Kaza* of Cuma-i Atik constructed 120 houses for the Circassian immigrants and supplied them with food supplies.<sup>1338</sup>

The construction expenses of the 683 houses built for the Circassian immigrants in the *Kaza* of Şumnu and the supplies given to the immigrants for 7 to 8 months were covered by the local people there. Also, three new villages were established in Şumnu for the Circassian immigrants.<sup>1339</sup>

In the town of Babadağı, in the Sanjak of Tulça, 797 houses were constructed by local people for the immigrants and a mosque was also constructed here for the immigrants with the financial support of Kolağası Hasan Ağa, who was among the

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<sup>1335</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 54.

<sup>1336</sup> BOA, Y.EE. 36/9.

<sup>1337</sup> *Tuna*, no: 58, date: April 1, 1866 (Hijri 16 Zilkade 1282).

<sup>1338</sup> *Tuna*, no: 18, date: July 12, 1865 (Hijri 18 Safer 1282).

<sup>1339</sup> *Tuna*, no: 29, date: September 27, 1865 (Hijri 7 Cemaziyelevvel 1282).

administrative council members of the town<sup>1340</sup> Again, in this period, 47 houses were constructed for the immigrants by the inhabitants of Silistre.<sup>1341</sup>

Inhabitants constructed 250 houses for Circassian immigrants that resettled in the town of Maçın. Furthermore, the carts were provided for these immigrants at lower prices, and government donated them agricultural machinery and equipment; local people also donated agricultural tools and equipment to them worth 520 *guruş*.<sup>1342</sup>

The local people provided the construction materials such as lumber and cane needed for the construction of 58 houses for the Circassians in the *Kaza* of Hırsova.<sup>1343</sup> Also, with the help of the inhabitants of the *Kaza* of İzladı in Sofya, a village was founded for 21 Circassian families and named Şerefabad.<sup>1344</sup>

The inhabitants of Hamidiye and Hayriye Villages in the *Kaza* of Adliye donated wheat weighting 21,806 kilograms to the Circassian immigrants. Also the local people in the *Kaza* of Adliye donated 30 carts of cement which was required for the poor's hospital being constructed in Vidin.<sup>1345</sup> An entire quarter was constructed in Niş where the Turkish immigrants from Belgrade were to stay.<sup>1346</sup>

In Vidin, as houses constructed by the Bulgarians did not meet the immediate need for the settlement of immigrants, the immigrants were placed into the houses of the Bulgarians as guests. The peasants merely became the immigrants' servants and they had to deal with tasks such as bearing wood and carrying water to them. So there was a possibility of an outbreak of unrest in the region. In Rahova and Belgradcık, the administration had to place the immigrants in the houses of

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<sup>1340</sup> *Tuna*, no: 40, date: December 13, 1865 (Hijri 25 Receb 1282).

<sup>1341</sup> *Tuna*, no: 45, date: January 17, 1866 (Rumi 5 Kanun-i Sani 1282).

<sup>1342</sup> *Tuna*, no: 65, date: April 29, 1866 (Hijri 14 Zilhicce 1282).

<sup>1343</sup> *Tuna*, no: 73, date: May 26, 1866 (Hijri 12 Muharrem 1283).

<sup>1344</sup> *Tuna*, no: 80, date: June 20, 1866 (Hijri 7 Safer 1283).

<sup>1345</sup> *Tuna*, no: 164, date: April 13, 1867 (Hijri 9 Zilhicce 1283).

<sup>1346</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

Bulgarians as “guests” due to a lack of means. Midhat Pasha was capable of seeing these negativities.<sup>1347</sup> A few years before, Midhat Pasha had witnessed the Bulgarians of Vidin immigrating to Russia and he had no idea how they could attempt this despite having understood how troublesome this had been.<sup>1348</sup> What Midhat could really not understand was that even housing the immigrants at Bulgarians’ houses in winter was sufficiently disturbing for Bulgarians to want to leave.

Despite all efforts made by the government administration and the people, Konstantin Leontiev had witnessed in Tulça that the Circassians were yet far from being sentimentally attached to their new country.<sup>1349</sup>

There were even rumors among Turks of the Danube region that the Circassians were cannibals.<sup>1350</sup> The efforts made by the administration to tame the Circassians in Tulça were not fruitful.<sup>1351</sup>

The policy implemented by Midhat Pasha to integrate the immigrants into the Ottoman system obtained moderate success. It was especially clear that the housing of the immigrants had become a burden for the local people. However, in order to prevent the immigrants from becoming a threat to the fabric of social life over the long term, immigrants had to settle down and obtain professions. To this end, it was obligatory to implement the rapid housing policy.

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<sup>1347</sup> BOA, MVL 1071/11 (Midhat Pasha’s letter to Grand Vizierate dated January 1, 1867 (Rumi 20 Kanun-i Evvel 1282).

<sup>1348</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 333/71 (Midhat Pasha’s letter to Grand Vizierate dated April 23, 1865 (Rumi 11 Nisan 1281)).

<sup>1349</sup> Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar*, 116 (Leontiev’s secret report dated October 20, 1867).

<sup>1350</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

<sup>1351</sup> Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar*, 159-161.



#### 6.4. Efforts for the Creation of a Strong Economic Society

In his letter dated 15 Zilkade 1291 (December 24th, 1874) Cevdet Pasha, the Governor of Yanya, told Midhat Pasha that based on what İbn-i Haldun had written on state policies, the roots of the political economy which the Westerners show as their own works were taken from İbn Haldun.<sup>1352</sup> His interest towards İbn Haldun gave hints about his political and administrative attitude and approach.

According to Midhat Pasha, the more well-heeled the people were, the better the standing of the state would be.<sup>1353</sup> The idea of creating a powerful economic society was one of the milestones Midhat Pasha had within his idea of rejuvenation. The French author Collas stated that there was no country as much deprived of commercially apt harbors, warehouses, waterways, capital, and credit institutions as the Ottoman Empire when it came to agriculture.<sup>1354</sup> What Midhat Pasha did was to obtain and provide these.

Bulgaria, as St. Clair stated, was an area that only had an agricultural community; there was no aristocracy here or a middle class which would cause the civilization to develop. Yet, Bulgarians were morally apathetic and lacked the ambition to this end. The people had no close relations with trade and no one had any relations with anyone other than those in their immediate surroundings.<sup>1355</sup> Since they were the main target of Muslim gangs, the Bulgarians were very skillful in saving money.<sup>1356</sup>

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<sup>1352</sup> BOA, Y. EE. 38/1.

<sup>1353</sup> *Tuna*, no: 58, date: April 1, 1866 (Hijri 16 Zilkade 1282).

<sup>1354</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 327.

<sup>1355</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Varna Consul St. Clair's report respecting the new organization introduced into the Vilayet of the Danube, dated September 17, 1865).

<sup>1356</sup> TNA, FO 881/684 (Edward St. Jno. Neale's Statistical report on Bulgaria, dated March 28, 1858).

### Creation of Banks and Credit Cooperatives

The high prices in transportation detrimentally affected agriculture and diminished profits, so the peasants kept their agricultural areas and activities as limited as possible. Furthermore, the Ottoman peasants who had no protection against the pashas, who were the local administrators, preferred pretending to live in poverty instead of devoting themselves to the agricultural development, so they avoided the danger presented from high ranking officers. A significant amount of wealth was concealed by the peasants since there was no security of property.<sup>1357</sup> What Midhat Pasha wanted was to try to involve the people into the economy more actively and reveal this wealth. However, Midhat Pasha knew that economic activities such as incorporating a steamship company meant nothing to the people in rural areas, so he was going to deal with establishing agricultural treasuries.<sup>1358</sup>

The people of Tuna Province, mostly farmers, had to apply to either domestic or foreign tradesman for loans.<sup>1359</sup> At this point, Midhat Pasha made one of the most important steps in his career; he was about to open a bank of agriculture in Tuna Province under the name *Menafi-i Umumiye* Treasuries, which is known by its contemporary name today as Ziraat Bankası of the Republic of Turkey.

*Menafi-i Umumiye* had the objective of providing loans to farmers and artisans and the first treasuries were incorporated in Ruscuk, Cuma-I Atik, Niş, Şehirköy, Leskofça and some other towns. These treasuries would provide loans to the farmers and artisans at the rate of one percent. So, important steps were taken against the pawnbrokers who loaned money at 3 percent, 5 percent or even more per month. In an environment where the villagers owed money to the guarantors at the

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<sup>1357</sup> Collas, *La Turquie*, 330-331.

<sup>1358</sup> BOA, MVL 1071/2 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated December 11, 1864 (Rumi 29 Teşrin-i Sani 1280)).

<sup>1359</sup> BOA, YB..04. 9/8 (Grand Vizierate's decree dated March 3, 1865 (Hijri 6 Şevval 1281)).

rate of 60 percent per year, *Menaḫi-i Umumiye* would provide loans at the annual rate of approximately 12 percent.<sup>1360</sup>

*Menaḫi-i Umumiye* funds were established in all sanjaks rapidly with the utmost efficiency; however, they were established comparatively late in Tulça Sanjak due to reasons such as animal diseases, raids of locusts, and pouring rains.<sup>1361</sup> One of the factors that rendered the Tuna Province as different from the Ottoman Empire was their capacity to distribute innovations from the center to all of their administrative units rapidly and efficiently.

To finance the agricultural treasury, empty lands from each village would be allocated or rented and corn would be planted here since the lands were very productive; Muslims would work on Fridays and Christians would work on Sundays to collect the crops in these farms. The products obtained from this would be collected by the commission of the elderly and by taking them to town centers, they would be sold at auctions under the supervision of the administrative council. with the money collected, a treasury allocated for these villages would function.<sup>1362</sup> Each year, two-thirds of the interests paid to the Treasuries would be added to the development and public cost of the villagers and the remainder would be added to the treasury capital.<sup>1363</sup> At the start, the capital of these Treasuries was insufficient to meet the farmers' needs. Thus, *Menaḫi-i Umumiye* would adopt the decision to open fields in the quantities needed to increase the capital of the Treasuries wherever it was needed.<sup>1364</sup>

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<sup>1360</sup> *Tuna*, no: 1, date: March 13, 1865 (Hijri 16 Şevval 1281).

<sup>1361</sup> *Tuna*, no: 138, date: January 9, 1867.

<sup>1362</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 49.

<sup>1363</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 50. For a memorandum related to the establishment of agricultural credit cooperatives and the management of their capital see BOA, İ. DH. 533/36970.

<sup>1364</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 583/26172.

In the *Menafi-i Umumiye* treasuries, a clerk who could write in both Turkish and Bulgarian was to be assigned and four treasury officers would be in charge of these treasuries, two of whom were Muslims and two of whom were non-Muslims. The salaries of these officials would be met by the income from charges from the treasury. Also, inspectors would be assigned to inspect and audit these treasuries.<sup>1365</sup>

This entrepreneurship action proceeded under the supervision of an inspector of agriculture found significant success from the start. St. Clair also had the opinion that this attempt was going to be very useful for the protection of the poor against the pawnbroker-merchants in towns.<sup>1366</sup>

Use of the capital of *Menafi-i Umumiye* treasuries for purposes other than supporting agriculture and commerce was strictly prohibited. The subgovernor of the Town of Hezargrad had borrowed money from *Menafi-i Umumiye* treasury so as to remedy the deficit in the collection of emval-i miriye, yet when the absence of money was discovered, it was decided to put back the money with the interest having accrued from the day it was drawn.<sup>1367</sup> It was continuously shared with people the amount of capital reserved by the *Menafi-i Umumiye* Treasuries by virtue of the Tuna Newspaper. This was an attempt taken towards the transparency of the state.

Tevfik Efendi and Ahmed Bey from Rusçuk Sanjak were assigned so as to execute the accounting transactions of the *Menafi-i Umumiye* Treasuries for the year 1282 (1867 in Gregorian Calendar) as the head of the inspectors; as the results of the inspections they conducted, they eliminated some unconformities related to the

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<sup>1365</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 583/26172.

<sup>1366</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Varna Consul St. Clair's report respecting the new organization introduced into the Vilayet of the Danube, dated 17 Eylül 1865).

<sup>1367</sup> *Tuna*, no: 19, date: June 18, 1865 (Hijri 24 Safer 1282).

*Menafi-i Umumiye* treasuries of some *Kazas*. They were supposed to prepare the accounting books of each treasury and submit the same to the administration.<sup>1368</sup>

However, it was necessary to find guarantors so as to obtain loans from *Menafi-i Umumiye* Treasuries. The farmers who failed to find guarantors had to borrow money from pawnbroker and merchants. So, the method applied was giving loans to the farmers who failed to find guarantors, but only against pledges.<sup>1369</sup>

Yet, Midhat Pasha was often cheated by the local people during such attempts made with good intentions. *Menafi-i Umumiye* (The Bank of Agriculture) and the orphanages were subject to these abuses.<sup>1370</sup>

Midhat's vision relating to the expansion of banking was not limited to the *Menafi-i Umumiye* Treasuries. According to Midhat Pasha, treasuries were necessary for the poor, servants and laborers to save money at just like in Europe. In this context, the rules applicable in Europe would be the basis and a new bank would be established under the name, of *Emanet Sandığı* (Treasury of Funds). The persons having deposited their money into the bank would have a bank account.<sup>1371</sup> It was decided to start a treasury of funds where the poor, laborers and servants were to deposit their money and have such money returned with interest and open it in Rusçuk as an example. It was also decided to open the same treasury in the other parts of the province. According to the regulations of the Treasury of Funds, the objective was to protect the money saved by the soldiers, servants, laborers, children and other poor people. The Treasury of Funds would be active on any day other than Friday and Sunday.<sup>1372</sup>

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<sup>1368</sup> *Tuna*, no: 177, date: June 4, 1867(Hijri 2 Safer 1284).

<sup>1369</sup> *Tuna*, no: 141, date: January 19, 1867(Hijri 14 Ramazan 1283).

<sup>1370</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 390-392.

<sup>1371</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 583/26200 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated November 16, 1867(Hijri 20 Receb 1284)).

<sup>1372</sup> *Tuna*, no: 248, date: February 11, 1868 (Hijri 18 Şevval 1284).

### Attempts for Improving the Agricultural Sector

One of the first acts of Midhat Pasha so as to improve the agricultural economy was constructing depositories around the Tuna River in Rusçuk for storing wheat and other agricultural products and goods. He also had the old depositories repaired. This way, the merchants would have buildings so as to make their buying and selling power stronger.<sup>1373</sup> Many of the depositories in the province were not sufficient to store the agricultural products. It was decided to repair and restore the agricultural product repositories around the Vidin fortress, even the drawings and plans of these depositories that were planned to be reconstructed were sent to Istanbul.<sup>1374</sup> Also, it was decided to construct a new repository for storing the corn at Belgradcık Township of Vidin Sanjak and the old repository was to be repaired with the surplus materials from the construction of the other.<sup>1375</sup>

In 1866, it was decided to breed high-quality seeds in the Vilâyet by using the financial support of *Menafi-i Umumiye* funds.<sup>1376</sup> Another decision to be adopted was to standardize the measurements used in the trade of agricultural products and the purpose of this decision was to improve agriculture. The mostly Greek oriented merchants who came from Istanbul used incorrect and faulty measurements so as to fault the Bulgarian villagers.<sup>1377</sup> At this point, significant measures were taken so as to standardize the measurements used by the tradesmen and merchants. Kiles which were made identical to the Istanbul *kile* measurements were made in Europe and

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<sup>1373</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 510/23031.

<sup>1374</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 540/24247.

<sup>1375</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 570/25640 (Midhat Pasha's letters to Grand Vizierate dated September 2, 1866, and February 24, 1867). Also for the warehouse planned to be construct in the customhouse of Tulça, see BOA, İ. MVL. 538/26202.

<sup>1376</sup> BOA, MVL. 1073/17 (General Council of Vilayet's protocol dated April 22, 1866 (Rumi 10 Nisan 1282)).

<sup>1377</sup> TNA, FO 881/684 (Edward St. Jno. Neale's Statistical report on Bulgaria, dated March 28, 1858).

distributed throughout the province by means of municipal offices. In this way, the commercial losses due to measurement issues were diminished.<sup>1378</sup>

A certain amount of American cotton seeds were provided from the Manchester Cotton Supply Association and they were sent to various parts of Tuna Province for tests in farming. The best results were obtained in Vidin.<sup>1379</sup> Midhat Pasha sent specimens of the cotton farmed in Vidin to Longworth, the British Consul-General in Belgrade.<sup>1380</sup>

An attempt was to be made to organize a German colony in Tuna Province although it was going to be on a very small scale. During this era, it was planned to deploy a few hundred German families who had extensive knowledge and experience in agriculture to Rumeli and to employ them in seven farms near Ahyolu-Bergos and to Yanbolu in the Province of Edirne. These families were to be sent to the areas of settlement in question in Vidin.<sup>1381</sup> In a similar way, German families would be allocated at Babadağı in the Tulça Region of the Tuna Province.<sup>1382</sup>

Traditionally, the Bulgarian families used to make their own ploughs.<sup>1383</sup> During the Midhat Pasha's governorship, efforts were made towards developing agricultural technology. According to the Vilâyet administration, importing agricultural machinery and establishing factories were not possible by the capital and power of few entrepreneurs.<sup>1384</sup> Provided that the costs were to be covered by the *Menafi-i Umumiye* funds, the *Meclis-i Umumi* made the decision to purchase a

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<sup>1378</sup> *Tuna*, no: 215, date: October 16, 1867 (Midhat Paşa's speech on the General Council of Vilayet); BOA, MVL. 1073/17 (General Council of Vilayet's protocol dated April 22, 1866(Rumi 10 Nisan 1282)).

<sup>1379</sup> TNA, FO 78/1939 (Midhat Paşa's letter sent from Rusçuk to General-Consul Longworth in Belgrade on December 15, 1865).

<sup>1380</sup> TNA, FO 78/1939 (Consul-General Longworth's message sent from Belgrade to Lord Clarendon on January 28, 1866).

<sup>1381</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 335/39.

<sup>1382</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 530/23778.

<sup>1383</sup> FO 881/2956.

<sup>1384</sup> BOA, MVL. 1073/17 (General Council of Vilayet's protocol dated April 22, 1866(Rumi 10 Nisan 1282)).

plough machine made in England and after that Kevork Efendi, the head of the Provincial Department of Agricultural Affairs, visited the agricultural machines depot in Galatz and bought a plough machine. This machine was first to be tested in Rusçuk and as a result of such testing, other machines were to be procured for other townships.<sup>1385</sup> It was seen and verified that these machines had the capacity of molding the plough which had been processed by the villagers in 3 weeks, in only 3 hours.<sup>1386</sup> Since the Tuna Provincial Commission had positive results from the tests of these machines, it was decided to purchase new agricultural machinery from Europe. Relevant companies were also incorporated so as to open modern factories.<sup>1387</sup> Furthermore, some ploughs purchased from Prussia and some new devices were to be tested in a model farm in Tuna Province; so the main goal was to have these devices become widely used in other regions too.<sup>1388</sup> The machines were purchased to become pioneers for the agricultural producers. It was also planned to deploy the children to be sent from *Islahhanes* (Artisan School and Orphanage) so as to learn the new agricultural methods. By using the statistical methods of the Agricultural Directorate which was under the supervision of the Provincial Administration, the required seeds and fertilizers needed to grow the products were going to be supplied.<sup>1389</sup>

Despite these efforts that could be seen, not much distance was covered towards modernizing the way of agricultural production. As it was previously planned, a model farm was opened in Rusçuk and two steam powered threshing machines, two steam powered mills and one steam-powered plough were purchased and the seeds of various methods of agriculture were distributed among the people;

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<sup>1385</sup> *Tuna*, no: 77, date: June 9, 1866 (Hijri 26 Muharrem 1283).

<sup>1386</sup> *Tuna*, no: 102, date: September 5, 1866 (Hijri 25 Rebiülahir 1283).

<sup>1387</sup> *Tuna*, no: 133, date: December 23, 1866 (Hijri 16 Şaban 1283).

<sup>1388</sup> *Tuna*, no: 215, date: October 16, 1867 (Midhat Paşa's speech on the General Council of Vilayet).

<sup>1389</sup> BOA, Y.EE. 36/9.



however, the agricultural production of the Province was still performed with the former primitive methods. Most of the arable lands continued to lay idle. For example, only half of the usable corn fields were under agricultural production. Fertilizers were not used frequently. However as a result of the improvement of the roads and transportation, the relations between the foreign and domestic markets significantly increased.<sup>1390</sup> A significant amount of agricultural products were exported to Europe from the Province.<sup>1391</sup> Thus, it can be said that the development in agriculture depended the most on the improvements in transportation.<sup>1392</sup>

There was also an attempt from the Provincial Administration aimed towards the improvement of mines by bringing an engineer from Vienna and re-operating the idle mines. This was a part of the Provincial Administration's policy to make further use of the lands by obtaining more efficiency from them.<sup>1393</sup>

There were plenty of garths in the Tuna Province named as *sayvad* which were used to feed the animals. The annual income provided from the garths, some of which were allocated to the Crimean Tatar and Circassian immigrants, for the government was approximately 3,000 *guruş* per year. The provincial administration decided to put to auction parcels of idle land and to increase the present *sayvad* income by 10 times.<sup>1394</sup>

It was strived to render the unused natural resources usable as much as possible. However when Midhat Pasha was removed from his office in the Tuna Province, a significant proportion of the forests were still not used<sup>1395</sup> which was a problem relating to Midhat's early dismissal from his post.

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<sup>1390</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1391</sup> *Tuna*, no: 138, date: January 9, 1867.

<sup>1392</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1393</sup> *Tuna*, no: 242, date: January 19, 1868.

<sup>1394</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 548/24614.

<sup>1395</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

### Establishment of State-Run Companies and Factories

The idea of making the transition to a Western-style economic community through the establishment of companies in a country where Muslims did not own any companies was the product of quite a unique understanding of the 1860s. The person who wanted to turn this idea into a reality in the Province of Tuna was Midhat Pasha.

Midhat had already established a precedent while he was the governor of the Province of Niş, where the first application of the strategy to open companies had taken place in the form of the Carriage Companies Plan. During his time as Governor of Niş, significant steps were registered in road construction and horse carriages were being used where it had been impossible before. The local villagers used mainly oxen and water buffalo carts. One of the purposes of constructing these roads was to make it possible to travel by stage coaches and to create better conditions for the transportation of freight and goods. However, as Midhat Pasha said in his own words, no matter how much you promote such an entrepreneurial initiative among the people, it is very difficult to put to work ignorant people who do not know and have not seen such things. Therefore he believed that the state should take the initiative to create a carriage company that was active from Niş to Filibe and in which a few civil servants were stakeholders. The carriages belonging to the company would work between Niş and Istanbul and would perform cheaper and faster than Postal Tatars (Messengers).<sup>1396</sup>

The Danube Carriage Company was established in Niş in the September of 1863; it consisted of 50 shares and had a capital of 100 thousand *guruş*. By May 1865 it had 64 two-horse carriages and 46 one-horse carriages. The balance sheet of 18 months after its inception was published in the provincial newspaper.<sup>1397</sup> The

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<sup>1396</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 498/22521.

<sup>1397</sup> *Tuna*, no: 8, date: May 2, 1865 (Hijri 7 Zilhicce 1281).

implementation of such a carriage company was taking place in the empire for the first time and it was in its totality Midhat Pasha's project.<sup>1398</sup>

In order to make the carriage company fully operational they had to wait for roads to be repaired and improved.<sup>1399</sup> When the construction of causeways was intensified, new roads were paved between towns; the company grew and so did its capital. New branches of the company were opened in different places.<sup>1400</sup> A second company was established in Rusçuk. Eventually, the merger of the companies in Niş and Rusçuk was decided upon at a later period.<sup>1401</sup>

The main task of the carriage company was to transport people and the post between places connected by paved highway, but serving towns like Varna and Rusçuk became an exigency. The phaetons that used to serve in Rusçuk were badly maintained; however, when carriages started to provide services inside the town 15–20 phaetons furnished with bellows and glass also appeared. Because the first carriage company constituted a successful example, the establishment of new companies followed it and a new company was established in Varna.<sup>1402</sup> In the same period, there were also three posts offices, two Austrian and one French, which transported letters to Europe.<sup>1403</sup>

In Rusçuk a factory belonging to the company was also founded; it worked to build horse carriages and phaetons that were used in the village.<sup>1404</sup> By 1869 this company owned 450 horses and 160 carriages. The company also owned two omnibuses that took people from Rusçuk to the rail station and 15 carriages that

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<sup>1398</sup> Kanitz, *La Bulgarie*, 94.

<sup>1399</sup> *Tuna*, no: 7.

<sup>1400</sup> *Tuna*, no: 48 date: February 6, 1866 (Hijri 21 Ramazan 1282).

<sup>1401</sup> *Tuna*, no: 76 date: June 5, 1866 (Hijri 22 Muharrem 1283).

<sup>1402</sup> *Tuna*, no: 137 date: January 6, 1868 (Rumi 25 Kanun-i Evvel 1283).

<sup>1403</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 32.

<sup>1404</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 52.

served within the city. However, there were complaints that the company was being mismanaged and that the profits were being used badly.<sup>1405</sup>

A second leg of the establishment of local companies was the foundation of a shipping company on the Danube. The shipping activity between Belgrade and Rusçuk was almost completely managed by the Imperial Austrian Steam Navigation Company. This company also had a monopoly over all people and goods traffic from Vienna to the Black Sea. Seven percent of the company's capital was guaranteed by the government; its total capital amounted to 2.5 million Sterling. By 1863 the Austrian company had 130 steamers. In 1863 alone the company made a profit of 216,234 pounds.<sup>1406</sup> The founding of this ship company had actually been settled in 1859.<sup>1407</sup> However, this idea could only be put into action during the time when Midhat Pasha served as the General-Governor of Tuna.

In a sense, the publication of an article on the strengthening of the local shipping company in the 10<sup>th</sup> issue of the *Tuna*, presented to the public the vision for the historical development of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna as planned by Midhat Pasha and his administration. The article stated that 250 years before Europe was behind in development when compared to the Ottoman State. But in the process the Ottoman State fell into a state of negligence and ignorance; meanwhile, the Europeans created an economic civilization by establishing companies and factories. While trade increased, the power of national education was strengthened. As a result of the development of education and knowledge, this period's valuable means of transportation and communication such as the ferry, rail and telegraph had been invented. The driving forces of Europe were companies and the private sector,

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<sup>1405</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1406</sup> TNA, FO 78/1882 (Report by Acting Consul General Blunt on the trade of Serbia for the years 1863 and 1864, drafted in Belgrad on April 20, 1865).

<sup>1407</sup> BOA, İ.DH.. 427/28242.

progress in education and science were brought forth by this power as well. Similarly, the commercial-scientific system could be established in the Ottoman Empire. Even though it would be established through the agency of the State, the foundation of such a company and its shareholders as well as a capital accumulation in unprecedented amounts would be priceless. The Lloyd Company began 25 years ago with 2–3 steamers and by 1865 it has 101 steamers. The Danube Company also began business with 2–3 ships and reached a number of 120 steamers.<sup>1408</sup>

When the *Tuna* published these examples, it was a sign that the long term struggle had begun. Establishing companies through the agency of the State was part of the strategy to close the gap with the European powers. Private enterprises were initiated by the agency of the State, but eventually, they were able to stand on its own. The local people who witnessed the success of these State established businesses wanted to build their own companies and factories. All this reflected positively on education and knowledge. Statism, one of the main foundational ideas of the development strategy of the Republic of Turkey, can be traced back to these articles.

What Midhat Pasha wanted to implement was a form of statism. Especially in cities like Niş and Sofya, the local inhabitants did not know what companies were, and had never even seen a ferry or ship ticket. It was unrealistic to expect that these people would accumulate money and capital to found a company.<sup>1409</sup> Therefore the State had to take the initiative. Making use of the vigor of the river Danube, the regeneration of the Rusçuk Shipyard was one of Midhat Pasha ambitious projects. For this purpose Midhat Pasha envisaged the establishment of a River Council of Directors composed of civil servants. The tasks of the Council prioritized the

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<sup>1408</sup> *Tuna*, no: 10, date: May 16, 1865 (21 Zilhicce 1281).

<sup>1409</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 533/36970 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated December 18, 1864 (6 Kanun-i Evvel 1280)).

construction of new structures on the River Danube, but also included renewal jobs. The chair of the Council had a salary of 5 thousand *guruş*. Each year one or two new ships were added to the fleet, so the Ottoman power on the River was steadily increased. The ships had to be ordered, particularly from Austria and Bavaria. Economic conditions permitting, buying cargo ships and ferries from Europe was also among the strategic priorities. During winter the ships on the Danube need to be sheltered, therefore a wall of 200 *arşın* length (approximately 14 meters) was built on the top of the Rusçuk Shipyard. This wall was eventually to become longer and the plan was to transform it into a harbor. During the renewal of the Rusçuk Shipyard it was also planned to bring in technical personnel and engineers who would work the loom, the forge and would be carpenters.<sup>1410</sup> The actual port was built in Taşaltı of Tulça.<sup>1411</sup>

The actualization of Midhat Pasha's plans involved the following: the money obtained from the sale of the new fairgrounds and shops in Karasu and Cuma, from the parceling of the woods of Tırnova and by deeds sold to the villagers went to purchasing the ferries that were called Niş, Seyyare, Sofya and Midhat Pasha. A special office was created that managed the ferries and ensured that they could compete with the Austrian ferries in the Danube.<sup>1412</sup>

In the selection of the boats to be purchased Midhat Pasha asked for the help of people who knew the river Danube, so he turned to Consul Mayers, who had nine years of experience in the region. Mayers presented to Midhat Pasha pictures of the boats that could be purchased and descriptions of the properties.<sup>1413</sup> Navigation in the

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<sup>1410</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 586/39430 (Midhat Pasha's memorandum on the reformation of Tuna seapower and the renewal of the shipyard in Rusçuk, dated August 31, 1867 (Rumi 19 Ağustos 1283)).

<sup>1411</sup> BOA, A. } MKT. MHM. 394/46.

<sup>1412</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 51-52.

<sup>1413</sup> BOA, HR. SFR. (3) 137/76 (Varna Consul Joseph Mayers' letter to Müsürüs Efendi dated March 26, 1868).

Danube had a very important place in the economy of the region, so in order to benefit from it, Midhat Pasha had four ships sailing under the Ottoman flag on the river Danube.<sup>1414</sup> The ferry called Midhat was built in the UK and had a capacity of 800 passengers.<sup>1415</sup>

In this period four ferries were ordered from the Austrian city of Linz. Of these two ferries, one with 20 horsepower and the other with 30 horsepower, were used for the transportation of passengers, and four cargo ships were used for the transportation of soldiers and freight.<sup>1416</sup> Midhat Pasha, during the last period of his governorship, requested the immediate acquisition of a Palmerston steamer of 100 horsepower from England. The cost of the steamer was 8 thousand lira. In order to make the purchase he decided to use as a last resort the money coming from the fair grounds of the Rusçuk Shipyard and the sale of land.<sup>1417</sup>

During the last days of 1867, tradesmen wanted to establish an anonymous company called the Rumeli Company in Varna. The Council of Trade in Varna investigated the conditions of the people who would become civil servants in the company. The authorities of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna were of the opinion that the proliferation of trade associations would make major contributions to the country. Accordingly, this initiative contributed to the development of the country, by increasing the country's wealth and its public works so the administration of the *Vilâyet* gave the initiative its support.<sup>1418</sup>

During the governorship of Midhat Pasha, the construction of new factories that contributed to crafts and arts was also adopted as a principle of policy. The local

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<sup>1414</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 39.

<sup>1415</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1416</sup> *Tuna*, no: 236, date: December 28, 1867 (Hijri 3 Ramazan 1284).

<sup>1417</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 573/39902 (Midhat Paşa's letter dated March 19, 1868 (26 Zilkade 1284)).

<sup>1418</sup> BOA, İ. ŞD.. 1/11 (General Council of Vilayet's letter to Grand Vizierate dated December 3, 1867 (Rumi 21 Teşrin-i Sani 1283)).

people here were different from the people of Europe and were not used to doing business through companies so they did not build factories. A cloth factory was opened in Sofya and ferry mills were established in some areas so that they would serve as examples to the people. Also, brick machines for the town of Rusçuk, as well as a water machine to be used to pull water from the Danube, were acquired from Europe. In order to increase the number of machinery and factories when conditions permitted, it was decided to use the capital of the *Menafi-i Umumiye Sandığı*.<sup>1419</sup>

In 1867, The Council of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna discussed the following projects: the construction of a hotel in a convenient place in Varna in return for which a company with a capital of four thousand lira and 400 shareholders would be established; the acquisition of carriages, sickles and a threshing making machine to introduce modern agriculture into the town of Hacıoğlu Pazarcığı and in return establish a company of 400 shares (each share to be sold for 250 *guruş*); and the establishment of a company with a capital of 300 thousand *guruş* in Sofya which then would build a sugar factory.<sup>1420</sup> It was also decided to begin work for the renovation of the iron factory in Samakov.<sup>1421</sup> There were also initiatives to set up factories independent of the state. An individual called Angel, who was the son of a priest in Tırnova(Veliko Tarnovo), learned how to produce paper during his studies in Vienna and set up a paper factory in the village of Kalofer, near Tırnova.<sup>1422</sup>

#### Measures aken for improving Trade

Midhat Pasha also strived to increase the customs revenues of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna, even when this meant antagonizing certain sections of society due to the

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<sup>1419</sup> *Tuna*, no: 215 date: October 17, 1867 (Midhat Paşa's speech on the General Council of Vilayet).

<sup>1420</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 582/26134(Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated November 5, 1867 (Hijri 9 Receb 1284).

<sup>1421</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 583/26197.

<sup>1422</sup> *Tuna*, no: 15, date: June 21, 1865 (Hijri 27 Muharrem 1282).



introduction of new implementations. In 1866, the decision was taken to build a customs house in Niş.<sup>1423</sup> Moreover, custom officers and guards were to be settled in the district of Maçin, which was midway between the villages of Taşburun and Tabya.<sup>1424</sup> As a result taxes that could not be collected before were collected from then onwards.

The piers that were left ownerless now were being re-appropriated with the purpose of increasing their income. Until then, none of the piers and ports on the Danube River had asked for taxes from ferries run by the foreign companies, yet taxes was being requested from the ferries run by the company established by the Ottoman state. The ships belonging to Bavaria, Austria and even Greece were exempt from these costs. Midhat Pasha believed that this cost imposed on ships sailing under the Ottoman flag was a very bad practice that would lead to the discouragement of new Ottoman entrepreneurs and that the situation needed to be remedied.<sup>1425</sup> This showed itself very clearly in the form of capitulation. Midhat Pasha was in a real sense the first representative of nationalist stance in economics. It is one the main reasons why some Western consuls did not like Midhat Pasha.

Internal customs in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna were abolished one by one. The exceptions were the Districts of Niğbolu (Nikopol), Silistre, Rahova, Dobnitza, Lom and Niş. Therefore, there were few entrepreneurs who were willing to bring goods to these provinces. This practice continued even though the income from the internal customs was very low, thus leading to the development of the districts that were not

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<sup>1423</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 546/24513.

<sup>1424</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 553/24806.

<sup>1425</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 584/26277 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated November 3, 1867 (Hijri 7 Receb 1284)).

subject to customs and to the stagnation of the districts that were. Based on this, the Council of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna decided to abolish internal customs.<sup>1426</sup>

In order to increase trade with Romania, Midhat Pasha decided to put in efforts to clear the difficulties in front of traders, ships and boats that came from Galatz and Braila to Sünne. Besides facilitating taxes and transportation, Midhat Pasha's innovations included the construction of new grain storehouses and depots.<sup>1427</sup>

During the rule of Midhat Pasha, bazaars were established in towns where there had been none before.<sup>1428</sup> The fair organized in Hacıoğlu Pazarcığı of the *Sanjak* of Varna had suffered from attacks of bandits in previous years, but its security was ensured under Midhat Pasha's governorship and it ran smoothly.<sup>1429</sup>

Another problem that plagued the Province of Tuna was the theft of animals.<sup>1430</sup> As a solution to the problem the sale of animals had to be done with proof of authorization. So if someone lost his animal, to begin its search the owner had to show a document signed by the council of the village and the elderly council of neighborhood. The document described the characteristics of the lost animal. Also, before an animal could be sold, it had to be shown to either the council of the village or the elderly council of the neighborhood. Making these documents compulsory before the sale contributed to the curbing of animal theft.<sup>1431</sup>

The directorate of the *Kaza* of Cuma in the *Sanjak* of Rusçuk sold cheaply and without holding an auction a few animals that were ownerless. Under the pretext

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<sup>1426</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 578/25954 (General Council of Vilayet's letter to Grand Vizierate dated August 15, 1867 (Rumi 3 Ağustos 1283)). For some information about the problem of internal customs in the Vilayet, see BOA, MVL. 1074/50 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate, dated December 27, 1867).

<sup>1427</sup> BOA, İ. ŞD.. 6/328.

<sup>1428</sup> *Tuna*, no: 215, date: October 16, 1867 (Midhat Paşa's speech on the General Council of Vilayet). For the establishment of a bazaar in Hacıoğlu Pazarcığı in Varna see. BOA, İ. MVL. 531/23830.

<sup>1429</sup> *Tuna*, no: 17, date: July 5, 1865 (Hijri 11 Safer 1282).

<sup>1430</sup> *Tuna*, no: 215, date: October 16, 1867 (Midhat Paşa's speech on the General Council of Vilayet).

<sup>1431</sup> *Tuna*, no: 39, date: December 6, 1865 (Hijri 18 Receb 1282).

of using the funds for immigrants, undocumented expenses were made. Upon this and similar complaints of corruption, an officer and an inspector were sent from the city center to investigate.<sup>1432</sup>

According to the announcement published in the 115<sup>th</sup> issue of the *Tuna Newspaper*, an authorization was printed for the sale of animals in villages or bazaars and this was distributed everywhere, even to villages. People who wanted to sell their animals had to notify the mukhtar, describe the traits of the animal and pay 20 *para* to get the authorization letter, which was a voucher stating that the animal really belonged to that person. The buyer also had to request to see the voucher during the sale. The *zaptiyes* and municipality officers investigated the number of animals that were slaughtered in slaughterhouses and butcher shops every day. They were also in charge of collecting the authorization letters of the slaughtered animals and handing them in to the government.<sup>1433</sup> This new practice was very successful and in a short time, in Rusçuk alone many stolen animals were found.<sup>1434</sup>

As was the case with the sale of animals, other trade activities were subjected to new regulations as well. Shops, stores and peddlers who sold tobacco, cigarettes and edible tobacco also had to hold licenses. This regulation concerned both the taxes collected by the sale of tobacco and the sale itself.<sup>1435</sup>

A few mukhtars began selling Mahmudiye gold and old 20 carat golds. They used local people and villagers in particular, to introduce this gold while doing trade. The administration of the *Vilâyet* warned the people against these mukhtars that were cheating them and announced that fines would be imposed upon anyone who made

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<sup>1432</sup> *Tuna*, no: 48, date: February 6, 1866 (Hijri 21 Ramazan 1282).

<sup>1433</sup> *Tuna*, no: 115, date: October 21, 1866 (Hijri 12 Cemaziyelahir 1283).

<sup>1434</sup> *Tuna*, no: 136, date: January 2, 1867 (Hijri 26 Şaban 1283).

<sup>1435</sup> *Tuna*, no: 13, date: June 7, 1865 (Hijri 13 Muharrem 1282).

use of this gold.<sup>1436</sup> They also banned the use of the Egyptian *nühhas*(copper) coins that there brought back by soldiers.<sup>1437</sup>

### Attempts for Efficient Taxation

Before the establishment of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna, the agents who collected taxes in Bulgaria were fired *zaptiyes* or soldiers.<sup>1438</sup> The new regulations defined duties better and *zaptiyes* were prevented from harassing people as tax collectors. The taxes were collected either by the *mukhtar* or the officers of the municipality.<sup>1439</sup> Also, the collection of the estate tax had been taken from the responsibility of the *zaptiyes* and it was transferred to the newly established Administration of Tax-collection.<sup>1440</sup> Thus, the irregularities in estate tax were reduced.

The tax on immobile property was also regulated more fairly. Previously this tax was too high in certain places and comparatively too low in other places. The new regulation aimed at the establishment of fairer principles, hence the crucial importance of the practice of land registry.<sup>1441</sup>

It was decided that collection of the taxes would be done periodically, piece by piece, not as a whole on an annual basis in the Province of Tuna. Giving a certificate to the taxpayer after the collection was made compulsory. All tax receipts were priced at 5 *guruş*.<sup>1442</sup> According to the type of tax, they were printed in the form of white, red and yellow papers. Each district's and village's amount of tax would be registered in a record book with cross tabulation. Thus, the exact number of villages

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<sup>1436</sup> *Tuna*, no: 164, date: April 13, 1867 (Hijri 9 Zilhicce 1283).

<sup>1437</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 33/1353 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated June 17, 1866 (Rumi 5 Haziran 1282)).

<sup>1438</sup> TNA, FO 881/684 (Edward St. Jno. Neale's Statistical report on Bulgaria, dated March 28, 1858).

<sup>1439</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

<sup>1440</sup> Midhat Paşa, *Tabsıra-i İbret*, 56-57.

<sup>1441</sup> *Tuna*, no: 58, date: April 1, 1866 (Hijri 16 Zilkade 1282).

<sup>1442</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

and districts of each sanjak and the amount of taxes paid by them would be known.<sup>1443</sup>

There were also attempts to collect taxes from Muslim gypsies and Christian gypsies.<sup>1444</sup> Before, tax collection for the gypsies varied from region to region. While the amount of money collected from the gypsies should have been 800 thousand *guruş*, half of it was lost. Moreover, gypsies were subject to the oppression of the *Çeribaşıs* and leaders. In the new taxation period, one standard was developed and the phenomena described above were prevented. Also, tax collection became more effective.<sup>1445</sup>

In the *Vilâyet* of Tuna the price for oxen, sheep and goats varied from place to place. The standardization of the price also involved treating animals in their own categories based on their value.<sup>1446</sup>

Taxes, poll-tax (*cizye*) and tithe payments were to be paid in installments, the last of which had to be paid in January. The payment of taxes was documented in order to prevent abuses by the mukhtars. The taxpayers were given vouchers, which were cheap and documented the payment. This is how this *Vilâyet* reached an incomparable success in tax collection compared to others.<sup>1447</sup>

There are several reasons why the taxes could not be collected by state officials in all fields. The monthly tax to be paid by each adult male was less than the daily wage of a man. Many times taxes amounting to more than the assigned amount were collected and this was the true root of the problem. The results of having the

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<sup>1443</sup> BOA, Y.EE.. 36/9.

<sup>1444</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 545/24482.

<sup>1445</sup> *Tuna*, no: 58, date: April 1, 1866 (Hijri 16 Zilkade 1282).

<sup>1446</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 133/5691 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated December 21, 1865 (Rumi 10 Kanun-i Evvel 1281) ).

<sup>1447</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 57.

leaders of the community serve as tax collectors were bad and the method of the direct tax collector was no better than the system described before.<sup>1448</sup>

The Vilâyet of Tuna step by step established the method of doing the tithe auction for each village separately rather than all together. The method of auctioning tithe for each village separately increased the tithe fee collected from 113,100 *guruş* to 7,030,000 *guruş*.<sup>1449</sup> As a result of the higher income from the taxes of 1867, tax-farmers presented a high offer during the tithe auction of 1868. Consequently, the government received a total amount of 4 million *guruş*.<sup>1450</sup>

According to the 12<sup>th</sup> Article of the tithe regulation regarding the tithe of grain provisions of towns and villages, the town people or villagers had to carry the provisions for free; however, if the provisions had to be transported over a longer distance the tax-farmer had to pay the carrier a price. In the *Vilâyet* of Tuna, when the administration learned that the tax-farmers were misusing this practice, it warned the local inhabitants and emphasized that under all conditions the tax-farmer had to pay money and if there was a disagreement about the price then the tax-farmers had to apply to the local council to decide on the correct amount.<sup>1451</sup> Despite all these efforts, the power of some tax-farmers was not broken. They were called *çorbacı* and they resorted to all kinds of harsh repressions on the people.<sup>1452</sup>

One of the reasons why the reforms of Midhat Pasha were effective was that he worked in concordance with the local authorities. Not only were there no objections to the new tax system, but also the new system was more reasonable as the tax income had increased. Also, the salaries of the local judges and military

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<sup>1448</sup> TNA, FO 78/1974 (Consul-General Longworth's message sent from Belgrade to Lord Lyons on August 21, 1867).

<sup>1449</sup> *Tuna*, no: 103, date: September 9, 1866 (Hijri 29 Rebiülahir 1283).

<sup>1450</sup> *Commercial Reports Received at The Foreign Office From Her Majesty's Consuls, in 1869* (London: House of Commons, 1870), 222 (Report by Vice-Consul Mr. Mayers, on the Trade and Commerce of Varna during the Year 1868).

<sup>1451</sup> *Tuna*, no: 120, date: November 7, 1866 (Hijri 29 Cemaziyelahir 1283).

<sup>1452</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

police were increased.<sup>1453</sup> The income of the *Vilâyet* had steadily increased despite income losses due to: i- decreases in certain taxes; ii- the entrance of sheep coming from Austria to pasture was forbidden; and iii- a part of the pastures called *sayvad*, were given to Circassian immigrants who had relocated in the region.<sup>1454</sup> This increment also balanced the increment in expenditures that were incurred by the *Vilâyet*.

Before the system of *Vilâyet* was implemented, there was great squandering which was a result of spending for immigrants, building new buildings, and irregular payments for *zaptiyes*. One of the successes of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna was to balance the budget in terms of incoming and outgoing money and to provide regular reports to the Ministry of Finance. The administration of Tuna Province would lead in making a true local government budget. The balance of income and expense of provinces between the rural accounting officers and Treasury was always a subject of contention due to the uncertainties in yearly accounts sent by local authorities. The budgetary book which was sent to the Ottoman government related to the revenues of 1281 (Hijri Calendar) gained great appreciation due to its systematical structure and so it was decided to send copies of this book to every *Vilâyet* and *eyalet*, and so assumed to be a model to the other places.<sup>1455</sup> Thus, the administration of Tuna exhibited the importance of the local development initiative to the Ottoman government and presented a solution to one of the long-lasting problems of the Ottoman state.

The result of relatively efficient taxation and budgetary discipline was part of the success in the increase of government revenues. In 1280, the income of the *Vilâyet* was 127,750,000 *guruş*; by 1283 the amount had gone up to 135,763,500

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<sup>1453</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 39.

<sup>1454</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 57-58.

<sup>1455</sup> BOA, YB. 04, 9/24

*guruş*.<sup>1456</sup> The employment of officials and the reorganization of courts and local councils had increased the expenses. And yet, despite this increment, the budget was balanced. The income from the poll-tax (*cizye*) in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna in the years 1864-1865 was 139,862 Sterling; this income during the years 1867-1868 jumped to 256,050 Sterling.<sup>1457</sup>

### The Management of Waqfs

As in the rest of the Empire, the management of waqfs was quite irregular in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna. For example, a *hamam*(Turkish bath) of the Zaganos Pasha Foundation near Sofya was in very bad condition, and it needed restoration. Although there was a 4,900 *guruş* tithe of the village affiliated to the waqf, not even one akçe was given to the foundation trustee from 1267 Hijri to 1281 Hijri.<sup>1458</sup>

Midhat Pasha stressed that division of tasks among officers in this new era had become more prominent and stated that a special administration should be established in the center of the Province for regulating the work of the foundations and that efficient officers should be elected for this administration and they should be paid the amount they deserved.<sup>1459</sup> Thus, it was aimed to establish a stronger state control over the pious foundations and to provide order in the management of waqfs.<sup>1460</sup> In accordance with these objectives, a special department would be established to handle the issues related with waqfs in the Province.

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<sup>1456</sup> *Tuna*, no: 161, date: April 2, 1867 (Hijri, 28 Zilkade 1283).

<sup>1457</sup> *Reports by Her Majesty's Secretaries of Embassy and Legation on the Manufactures, Commerce, etc. of the Countries in which they reside* (London, 1870), 216 (H. Barron's report on Taxation of Turkey, dated December 1, 1869).

<sup>1458</sup> BOA, İ.. MVL. 543/24393.

<sup>1459</sup> BOA, İ.. MVL. 533/23906 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Ministry of Pious Foundations dated January 14, 1865 (Rumi 2 Kanun-i Sani 1280) ).

<sup>1460</sup> For documents about the administration of pious foundations in Tuna Vilayeti see BOA, İ.. MMS. 34/1395.



### Results of Midhat's Efforts

By the time Midhat Pasha left the *Vilâyet*, boatmen, fishermen, armorers, tanners and pipers were predominantly Muslim, while the shoemakers, tailors, masons, and distillers were Christians. The Bulgarians were the masters of carpentry. They had also gained great experience during the process of railroad construction. The towns also had a few businessmen dealing in trade. There were very few business people who owned great capital. Most of the businessmen were Christians and they had contacts that brought in goods from Vienna and Istanbul. The number of businessmen who exported directly was very small.<sup>1461</sup>

The destructive effect of the military service in economic terms on the Turkish families and villagers still persisted. Moreover, Turkish women did not work in the fields, while whole Bulgarian families did. As a result, the Turkish villagers were comparatively worse off than their Bulgarian counterparts. With the income of the Turks being lower and their expenses being higher, the savings of the Turks were less.<sup>1462</sup>

In Bulgaria, the daily wages of a laborer were around 5-6 *guruş*, while one *okka* (1282 grams) of bread was 20 *para*. The meat was cheap and a good wine was reasonably priced at half a penny. In this respect, a Bulgarian laborer was better off than an English one.<sup>1463</sup> On average, a Bulgarian villager owned a couple of oxen, one cow, 20 sheep, 1 or 2 pigs, and, depending on his profession, 25-30 *dönüm* (23,000-27,600 square meters) of a field, 2-3 *dönüm* (1,840-2,760 square meters) of a

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<sup>1461</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1462</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1463</sup> TNA, FO 78/1974 (Consul-General Longworth's message sent from Belgrade to Lord Lyons on August 21, 1867).

vineyard, a threshing floor, a vegetable garden of 1 *dönüm* (920 square meters) and a house.<sup>1464</sup>

In Rusçuk, until very recently, the officials and local inhabitants had brought in the goods that could not be found locally, including clothes, simple materials and such from cities like Galatz, Braila, Bucharest and Vienna. However, after the establishment of the *Vilâyet*, the population Rusçuk increased, crafts were developed, new shops and stores were opened and therefore the demand to buy things from abroad decreased. Moreover, while travelers before had had no place to stay except for rundown inns and coffee shops, more than 90 hotels and restaurants were opened in this period.<sup>1465</sup>

In the beginning, Midhat Pasha was branded as the “Giaour Pasha” (Infidel Pasha) and his presence was resented, but afterwards the Muslims were very thankful for him.<sup>1466</sup> Midhat Pasha showed that one way to break the reactionary attitude of the people was to increase their economic welfare, hence convincing people to change.

## 6.5. Urban Renewal

Upon the encouragement of the Russian General-Consul, the Christian delegates of the Provincial Council requested the building of new churches. To this request Midhat Pasha replied: “We hope that in a time period no longer than a half of a man’s lifetime we will build neither churches nor mosques; we will build only schools and hospitals.”<sup>1467</sup> These words did not only express a radical vision of the future, they were also a reflection of a desire for a city design that is modern and

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<sup>1464</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1465</sup> *Tuna*, no: 133, date: December 23, 1866 ( Hijri 16 Şaban 1283).

<sup>1466</sup> Kanitz, *La Bulgarie*, 231.

<sup>1467</sup> Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, *Serail und Hohe Pforte*, 241.

secular. Of course, new churches were built, especially in the countryside.<sup>1468</sup> However, the establishment of a modern European city, the expansion of a settled life, the improvement of the silhouette of towns was very distinctly among the governing principles of Midhat Pasha. Even by 1865, travelers coming from Bulgaria to Belgrade told of how well Niş and Rusçuk were being governed.<sup>1469</sup> What impressed the visitors must have been the continuously changing images of the surroundings.

### New Rules in Urban Spaces

Midhat Pasha was applying his policy of centralized administration in all spheres, and towns were an important site of this change. In accordance with the centralization policy, in the second issue of the *Tuna* Newspaper of March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1865 rules were published forbidding the use of *endaze* in the bazaar; instead, the use of *arşın* became compulsory. Those who persisted in using *endaze* were fined and their *endaze* was smashed into pieces. Also in the measurement of grains and provisions the use of anything other than that of Istanbul was forbidden. Among other banned things were opening a vending place outside the bazaar; selling provisions in front of provision stores; leaving the animals to roam in the streets; slaughtering animals in public spaces or in the bazaar; and also draining sewers in the street. People who walked in the street after 1 am during the whole year and after 3 am during Ramadan were stopped and taken to the police station. The shops that left the street dirty after cleaning the inside of their own shops were fined. Building without a license was also banned. If children older than 6 years old were not sent to school, or older children were not sent as apprentices to a craftsman, their parents were held

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<sup>1468</sup> For some instances of church construction in the villages see BOA, İ..HR.. 220/12783, İ.. HR.. 221/12784, İ..HR.. 208/12016.

<sup>1469</sup> TNA, FO 78/1868 (Belgrade Consul J. E. Blunt's message to the Charge d'Affaires' in Istanbul, dated May 8, 1865).

responsible. It was forbidden for children to play dangerous games, to skate on ice, and harass walkers by. Children who were caught twice doing forbidden things were sent to workhouses. Beggars who did not have handicaps were arrested on sight by government officials and were punished.<sup>1470</sup> When we look at all these changes, we see that their purpose was to bring the Western lifestyle and order to the *Vilâyet*, and to change the silhouette of the cities and towns accordingly.

There were also rules to increase the safety and peace in towns. Subsequently, wandering around with unlicensed arms was forbidden in the *Vilâyet*; and law-breakers were fined. Depending on the situation, certain people who walked around with unlicensed guns could also receive heavier punishments.<sup>1471</sup> It should be noted that the limit of punishment and the evaluation of the crime was left vague. In future days, based on the warning letter concerning Mukhtars, anyone besides the *zaptiye* was forbidden to carry a gun in the *Vilâyet*, independently of whether they were Muslim or Christian.<sup>1472</sup> Upon learning that a lottery was being held, it was announced that the organizers of the lottery would face legal charges.<sup>1473</sup>

#### Protection of Forests

In order to protect the forests, forest officers were employed permanently. A foreign expert and two students from the school of forestry Hüseyin Efendi and Refik Efendi were charged to explore and inspect the forests of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna. After a certain period, deductions were made from their salaries. The assignment of a professional team to explore and control the forests was an important development. However, the monthly salary of the foreign expert was too high at 3 thousand *guruş*

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<sup>1470</sup> *Tuna*, no: 2, date: March 21, 1865 (Hijri 24 Şevval 1281).

<sup>1471</sup> *Tuna*, no: 2.

<sup>1472</sup> *Tuna*, no: 29, date: September 27, 1865 (Hijri 7 Cemaziyelevvel 1282).

<sup>1473</sup> *Tuna*, no: 141, date: January 19, 1867 (Hijri 14 Ramazan 1283).

per month.<sup>1474</sup> Moreover, officers from Istanbul had already produced the map of the Deliorman and its surroundings.<sup>1475</sup> In order to protect the forests, a person who peeled a tree crust was fined double the amount the tree was worth. This practice was directed towards villagers.<sup>1476</sup> So there was a systematic effort to protect the natural vegetation of the *Vilâyet*.

### An Incredible Energy

Midhat Pasha very quickly initiated the planning and restoration of the biggest settlements in the *Vilâyet*. Accordingly, he took important decisions during his trip to Plevne in the summer of 1865. In order to help the poor of Plevne, based on investigations it was ordered that people with an income of more than 30 thousand *guruş* per year were to pay a tax that went under the name of rice cooked for the poor and those in need. The *imaret* (public kitchen, foodhouse) of Gazi Ali Bey and Süleyman Bey Foundation, which had a yearly expenditure of more than 20 thousand *guruş*, was in ruins. Subsequently, in the location of this *imaret* was built a hospital for the poor and shelter house for those in need, the expenses of the *imaret* were met by the income of the Village of Trstenik.<sup>1477</sup>

The Town of Köstence did not have any pavements and its streets were so full of mud; at times it was difficult to cross them walking. Moreover, carts bringing provisions from the villages used to get stuck in the mud. Therefore it was decided that Köstence was in dire need of pavement. The *zira* (0.57417 m<sup>2</sup>) of each pavement cost 3 *guruş*. Shops, stores and buildings which had pavement in their front would be recompensed if they spent more than the decided amount. The expense for the pavement on land that did not have an owner was calculated in the

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<sup>1474</sup> BOA, HR. TO.. 448/44.

<sup>1475</sup> BOA, Y.EE.. 36/9.

<sup>1476</sup> *Tuna*, no: 19, date: June 18, 1865 (Hijri 24 Safer 1282).

<sup>1477</sup> *Tuna*, no: 21, date: August 1, 1865 (Hijri 9 Rebiülevvel 1282).

value of the land when it was sold; but, at the time of the construction, its expense was covered by the local treasury. To realize this project a committee consisting of rich Muslim and Christian businessmen was established. The method used for the construction of pavements in Kostence was implemented faithfully in other places as well.<sup>1478</sup>

Tula did not have a marketplace and its street had no pavements. During rainy days it was impossible to walk in the streets and transportation was problematic, at times animals died trying to walk. The image of the town was far from civilized. Accordingly, the market place and streets were renovated to the point of being built from scratch and pavements were constructed.<sup>1479</sup> Moreover, sewers were built below the streets of Kustendil and roads that needed repairing were repaired.<sup>1480</sup>

In time, as the society gained economic strength, marketplaces and bazaars were also renovated. The fair in the town of Hacıođlu Pazarcıđı (Dobrich) consisted of old shops which were moved outside the town, the new fair was surrounded by a wall and its shops were sold one by one to buyers. The shops of the fair in the town of Cuma were wooden and old. So it was decided to build a new fair with walls made of stone, brick and mudbrick and to sell them one by one to prospective buyers.<sup>1481</sup> The old fairs were affected by weather conditions and lay in the mud.<sup>1482</sup> For this reason, the building of new fairs was important.

Parallel to the economic growth and increased foreign trade in the renovated cities, luxury buildings and new hotels were built. A new hotel overlooking the Danube River with 24 rooms, a big saloon, a large coffeehouse and a garden was

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<sup>1478</sup> BOA, MVL 1071/46 (Midhat Pasha's letter dated April 1, 1865 (6 Zilkade 1281) ).

<sup>1479</sup> *Tuna*, no: 34, date: November 1, 1865 (Hijri 12 Cemaziyelahir 1282).

<sup>1480</sup> *Tuna*, no: 113, date: October 14, 1866 (Hijri 5 Cemaziyelahir 1283).

<sup>1481</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 585/26288.

<sup>1482</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 51.

built. This property belonged to the workhouse of Rusçuk. All the furnishings for the hotel were bought in Vienna. It was decided that the hotel would be rented for two years.<sup>1483</sup>

Ships sailed frequently to Silistre; however, when the castle gates were closed travelers had difficulties finding places to stay overnight. Midhat Pasha suggested to the Austrian ferry company that the government build a hostel as requested by the employees of the Austrian company. According to this, the construction would be done by the local people and the Austrian company would rent it once it was finished. The construction would be undertaken by the *Islahhane* of Rusçuk, a job that brought in an extra source of income to the *Islahhane*.<sup>1484</sup>

Among the implementations was to rid the city of places which made it look dirty. For instance, the tanning house was located on the shore of River Danube. The building was never renovated and it looked dirty and run down. It was argued the building left a bad impression on visitors and also posed a threat to the health of the local population. Based on these two factors the Council of the *Vilâyet* decided to move the tanning house and build it somewhere else in 1866.<sup>1485</sup>

The work that was carried out by the *Vilâyet* administration between the years 1864 and 1868 possessed an energy never witnessed before in the history of the Ottoman administration in the region. From the month of Muharrem of the year 1283 (May/June 1866) till in the month of Rebiülahir of the same year (August/September 1866) there was a speedy repair of roads and bridges in the surroundings of Niş. During this period, a solution was found for the drinking water for the barracks of Taşlıbayır, which housed two battalions, two artillery batteries, and the military

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<sup>1483</sup> *Tuna*, no: 48, date: February 6, 1866 (Hijri 21 Ramazan 1282).

<sup>1484</sup> BOA, MVL 1074A/50 (Midhat Pasha's letter to Grand Vizierate dated May 28, 1865 (Hijri 3 Muharrem 1282) ).

<sup>1485</sup> *Tuna*, no: 68, date: May 9, 1866 (Hijri 24 Zilhicce 1282).

squadron. This was done by the discovery of a new water source. In Niş, the bridge near the workhouse needed repair, so it was decided to build a small bridge across the gate of the workhouse. During his governorate in Niş, Midhat Pasha had built a watermill whose income was used for charity. Due to the strength of the water flow the mill had fallen into disrepair, and so it was repaired. The building of housing for Muslim immigrants from Belgrad had been begun, but was not finished. The last 6 of the 60 houses were built and 6 new families moved in. The water problem for the inhabitants of the Niş fortress was also solved by building a new water cistern. A new pharmacy was opened in Niş, and the money from its income went to the *Islahhane* of Niş. This pharmacy provided medicine for free for the children's hospital, the hospitals of the workhouse and similar institutions. The pharmacy was open night and day without intermittence. All this was done within four months.<sup>1486</sup>

Again, from the month of Muharrem of the year 1283 (May/June 1866) till the end of Cemaziyelahir (November 1866) the projects conducted in Tulça are another example of the same energy. The old lights of the Tulça marketplace were in ruins so the municipality brought gas lamps from Vienna. The town of Sünne, due to its proximity to the River Danube suffered flooding frequently. The resulting bogs and marshes were the source of many inconveniences. The administration of the municipality built dams and ditches in a relatively short time with contributions from the local inhabitants as well. In the Town of Mecidiye, roads were paved. In Maçın, the government building was in ruins and the building of a new one was commenced. In Hırsova, also, the government building was renovated. The previous year, 10,411 meters of pavement were constructed in Köstence; and in a matter of months, 11,500

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<sup>1486</sup> *Tuna*, no: 132, date: December 19, 1866 (Hijri 12 Şaban 1283).



meters of roads more were paved. Again, road construction in the region covered great distances.<sup>1487</sup>

In the *Sanjak* of Sofya from the beginning of Rebiülahir of 1283 (August 1866) till the end of November 1866, 574 meters of pavement were paved in Sofya and approximately 574 meters of pavement were built in Samakov. In the towns of Samakov and Dobnitza, the building of telegraph houses was completed. Some of the expenses for them were covered by the local tradesmen and rich local notables. Also with the contribution of the local notables of Samakov rose saplings were purchased and rose gardens were created. Also in Samakov, two *çorbacı*s called Kristo and Zakharia, sons of Hadji Gurev began the construction of a spirit distillery with the help of a European manufacturer. As a raw material, it used the dried fruit and rye coming from the areas near town. In the Karamani neighborhood of Dobnitza, Hacı Abdül Ağa financed the construction of a four roomed Mekteb-i Rüşdiye, in the garden of a Nakshibandi lodge. Moreover, a teacher, books and pamphlets were brought from Istanbul. Also in Dobnitza, a *çorbacı* called Malchiu began the building of a poor hospital with contributions from the church and the rich Christian people of the town.<sup>1488</sup>

Looking good in the eyes of the people was also among the duties of the state. Therefore, in the new government buildings, the rooms built especially for the administrative council's civil tribunals were furnished accordingly.<sup>1489</sup> Although the government building in the center of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna was new, its capacity was based on the old number of employees. The new structure had 8 councils and many more employees so the building could not house even half of them. Moreover, there were a lot of civil servants and foreign officials that passed through Rusçuk and they

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<sup>1487</sup> *Tuna*, no: 135, date: December 30, 1866 (Hijri 23 Şaban 1283).

<sup>1488</sup> *Tuna*, no: 138, date: January 9, 1867 (Rumi 28 Kanun-i Evvel 1282).

<sup>1489</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 386/95.

needed to be hosted accordingly. To solve the residence problem the women's section of the old government building was renovated and its expense was no more than 30-40 thousand *guruş*.<sup>1490</sup> In the town of Varna a stone building was built as a residence for civil servants and the storage of the *Menafi-i Umumiye*'s capital in 1867.<sup>1491</sup>

In 1865, in the *Vilâyet* there should have been 57 government buildings that served as residences for the director and the civil servants, but their number was only 28. Of these 28, 14 were so run down that they were inhabitable. Where there were no residences, directors rented houses. Therefore it was decided to build bigger residence government buildings consisting of 14-16 rooms at the cost of 52 thousand *guruş*, and smaller ones with 12-14 rooms at the cost of 40 thousand *guruş*. In *nahiyes*, guards' residence buildings consisted of 4-6 rooms and cost 20-25 thousand *guruş*. The construction of the government residence houses began in Şumnu and Ziştovi (Svishtov). The spaces in front of the *Vilâyet* administration had to be reorganized. The administration faced the important task of reorganizing the living spaces and rebuilding the bureaucracy. Contributions from the local population were also expected for the actualization of these efforts.<sup>1492</sup>

### Municipal Services

The role model for the administration of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna was clearly Europe. Engineering was considered one of the principles of civilization in Europe; therefore, it was essential to use it during organization, cleaning and decoration of the living spaces, streets, and pavements. The first example was implemented in Beyoğlu, then, in the model Province of Tuna it was decided to establish

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<sup>1490</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 519/23364 (Midhat Paşa's letter dated October 2, 1866 (Hijri 23 Cemaziyelevvel 1283) ).

<sup>1491</sup> *Tuna*, no: 174, date: May 25, 1867 (Hijri 22 Muharrem 1284).

<sup>1492</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 535/24016.

municipality councils. The recurrent expenses would be covered from the money levied as passport fees, construction permit taxes and the incomes from the slaughter places. According to the *Tuna* Newspaper, the advancement of the municipality bureaus had a tremendous impact on the towns and cities, common spaces were clean, the streets were paved, and well-lit till morning; there were at least one or two city gardens, and there were tall buildings.<sup>1493</sup> The increase in safety, peace and welfare were the result of modeling after European municipalities.

Small tradesmen like grocers, butchers, bakers, greengrocers and stallholders exercised their trade under the supervision of the municipality. Roaming animals were collected and those who kept pigs in their houses were fined. Among the other duties of the municipality was to deal with street children, control the normal flow traffic in the city, and fine street vendors. A *zaptiye* and a civil servant were to always be present in locations where balls or theater plays took place. The villagers were responsible for cleaning up the rubbish left behind by their carts in the marketplace.<sup>1494</sup> The municipality bureaus were responsible for the cleanliness of the town, maintenance of pavements, protection of provisions, the control of the scales and measurements used in the marketplace, and the regulation of prices.<sup>1495</sup>

The Municipality of Rusçuk did not have an income, so its performance remained limited. Initially among the tasks planned were broadening a street and normalizing its slope, paving a street that was very muddy so as to prevent the hindrance of the passage of carts, making pavements for people to walk on, and planting trees on each side of the road.<sup>1496</sup>

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<sup>1493</sup> *Tuna*, no: 42, date: December 27, 1865 (Hijri 9 Şaban 1282).

<sup>1494</sup> *Tuna*, no: 42.

<sup>1495</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 56.

<sup>1496</sup> *Tuna*, no: 68, date: May 9, 1866 (Hijri 24 Zilhicce 1282).

Lighting the streets with gas lamps was also among the important duties of the new stance of the municipality. For the country to develop, people had to be able to make use of the night time as well. This made safety at night a priority too. By this point many roads had been constructed and many pavements had been built in Rusçuk; fifty new lampposts were in place and their number was planned to be increased to 350.<sup>1497</sup> Soon after, 30 more gas lambs were acquired.<sup>1498</sup> When Sultan Abdülaziz spent two nights in Rusçuk, he had a firsthand chance to witness the dazzling effect of streetlights, oil lamps and torches.<sup>1499</sup> Sultan Abdülaziz decided to bestow one additional salary to each soldier in Rusçuk, half a salary to gendarme guards, 75 thousand *guruş* to be given to pupils of the *islahhane* of Rusçuk and pupils in other schools, and 50 thousand *guruş* to go to the poor.<sup>1500</sup>

The town of Rusçuk enlivened in streetlamps was living its most magnificent days. Previously, the rents for houses and stores in the city had been 200-300 *guruş*, now with the new improvements, and the increase in the number of civil servants, tradesmen and people of all classes the rents went up to 1,000-1,200 *guruş*. The same was true of land prices, where two years ago the price had been 2-3 *guruş* per arşın (68 cm<sup>2</sup>), their new worth was 30-40 *guruş* per *zira* (0.57417 m<sup>2</sup>). The street from the ferry pier to the poor's neighborhood was renovated; the street was renamed *Teşvikiye Caddesi* and it became one of the most distinguished places in town. Many

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<sup>1497</sup> *Tuna*, no: 118, date: October 31, 1866 (Hijri 22 Cemaziyelahir 1283). Sünne also had gas streetlights in that period (*Tuna*, no: 135, date: December 31, 1866).

<sup>1498</sup> *Tuna*, no: 138, date: January 9, 1867 (Rumi 28 Kanun-i Evvel 1282).

<sup>1499</sup> Nihat Karaer, *Paris, Londra, Viyana : Abdülaziz'in Avrupa Seyahati* (Ankara: Phoenix, 2003), 141.

<sup>1500</sup> *Tuna*, no: 195, date: August 6, 1867 (Hijri 6 Rebiülahir 1284). However, Sultan Abdülaziz did not only see the new beautiful improvements. The villagers wanted to tell the Sultan of their complains, like the tax of 3 *guruş* for each pig and the refusal of Circassians to show respect for anyone's property. But the authorities did not reply to this request. The Bulgarian villagers were only granted the right to write a thank you note to the Sultan (*Rusiya i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 69 (A. Baikov's report sent from Vidin to N. P. Ignatiev on July 29 1867) ).

new buildings were built in the new style and only that summer the length of paved roads reached 24,732 meters.<sup>1501</sup>

In Varna, the charity activities organized in the Western style were also a sign of the steadily improving economic situation of the town and of the presence of a local business and civil servant class. These affluent people of Varna established a society for charity purposes and organized a ball to collect funds. The amount collected was 5-6 thousand *guruş*.<sup>1502</sup> Also, for the benefit of a Bulgarian school in Varna, the trustees of the school ran a lottery under their guarantee.<sup>1503</sup>

### Creation of New Towns and New Settlements

One of the most impressive developments in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna during the period of 1864-1868 was the organization of new towns and *kazas*, and the establishment of new villages and settlements on old lands. One of the examples of this constructive energy was the transformation of Tutrakan into the center of the *kaza*. Tutrakan possessed an economically strategic port between Rusçuk and Silistre on the shores of the River Danube. Its importance increased also because Oltenitza, which had good economic standing, was located on its opposite shore. The location was attractive to foreign businessmen and the surroundings of the pier had been filled with provisions stores and its streets had been improved. Austrian ferries also stopped in Tutrakan's port. Its distance to Rusçuk was 12 hours and it did not have a court or council that would judge the trials of the villages surrounding it. The villagers had to travel 15-16 hours to solve their issues.<sup>1504</sup> Ten years beforehand, the town of Tutrakan was a settlement with 300-500 houses. Due to the economic recovery of the region and because its location favored trade, the number of houses

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<sup>1501</sup> *Tuna*, no: 123, date: November 17, 1866 (Hijri 10 Receb 1283).

<sup>1502</sup> *Tuna*, no: 157, date: March 20, 1867 (Hijri 14 Zilkade 1283).

<sup>1503</sup> *Tuna*, no: 180, date: June 16, 1867 (Hijri 13 Safer 1284).

<sup>1504</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 542/24356 (General Council of Vilayet's letter to Grand Vizierate dated September 30, 1865 (Hijri 10 Cemaziyülevvel 1282)).

surpassed 1,000 and the number of shops was 300-400. It was due to Tutrakan's characteristics as well as for administrative reasons that it was decided that 40 villages that had previously belonged to Rusçuk, Hezargrad (Razgrad) and Silistre would then be administratively managed by Tutrakan; and thus, together they constituted their own directorate.<sup>1505</sup> These changes also meant the creation of more positions for civil servants, but also for more financial responsibilities.

The village of Somuncu in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna had more than 200 houses; moreover, the road that directly connected Sofya and Plevne passed through the village. It was therefore decided to transform the Somuncu village into a new town called Orhaniye.<sup>1506</sup> The building of a new town meant new pavements, bridges and government buildings. The work for the construction of a marketplace and government buildings began very quickly. Upon the decision that the town of Orhaniye had the right to use the river water that went from Orhaniye to Etropol, it was also decided to build a mosque and a bathhouse (*hamam*). The land prices in Orhaniye rose steeply from 5 *guruş* to 25 *guruş*.<sup>1507</sup>

There were nine important sites on the railroad from Rusçuk to Varna. Of these İnebeyinci and Kasbiçan had attracted the interest of the people, so huts and sheds had been built randomly there. Building without permission could lead to disorder, even to the violation of property borders of other people. Therefore maps of the location where there were buildings and neighborhoods were made; building licenses was given accordingly and land was sold at auctions.<sup>1508</sup>

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<sup>1505</sup> *Tuna*, no: 108, date: September 25, 1866 (Hijri 16 Cemaziyelevvel 1283).

<sup>1506</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 542/24356 (General Council of Vilayet's letter to Grand Vizierate dated September 30, 1865(Hijri 10 Cemaziyelevvel 1282) ).

<sup>1507</sup> *Tuna*, no: 66, date: May 2, 1866 (Hijri 17 Zilhicce 1282).

<sup>1508</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 566/25450 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated May 22, 1867 (Hijri 19 Muharrem 1284) ).

Part of the mission of the administration of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna was to create new settlements so that nomads could be settled. The first examples of this implementation were in the region between Hezargrad and Şumnu. This territory had few villages and many empty fields, therefore waiting stations had been built at one time, but were now lying in ruins and there were no *zaptiyes* to protect them. The *islahhane* of Rusçuk was given permission to build a new outpost for the *zaptiye* and also an inn with a few rooms and a stable to keep the carriages of the Rusçuk Carriage Company. The income was to go to the *islahhane* of Rusçuk. In its surroundings a neighborhood of 30 houses was built and Circassian immigrants were settled there, thus transforming the place into a village. The people of Hezargrad donated the amount of 7 thousand *guruş* in wood building material to the building of the village.<sup>1509</sup>

Around the Balkan Mountains, in the proximities of the *Sanjaks* of Niş and Sofya, some village people had settled on the skirts of the mountains in order to be closer to pastures. However, the houses were dispersed, people saw little of each other, and their lifestyle was almost nomadic. They lived in great poverty and away from social norms. They didn't know how to read and write and some could not even speak their mother tongue properly. The council of the *Vilâyet* decided to build new settlements for these people with the purpose of civilizing them. They were relocated to new villages made up of 70 or 80 houses, where there was water and trees so that new villages could be established.<sup>1510</sup> At some point, the council even considered relocating them to neighboring towns. Bringing together people who had lived dispersed in the mountains and in forests and settling them into villages was an item on the agenda of the *Vilâyet* administration. This item was not as yet implemented in

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<sup>1509</sup> *Tuna*, no: 27, date: September 14, 1865 (Hijri 23 Rebiülahir 1282).

<sup>1510</sup> *Tuna*, no: 160, date: March 30, 1867 (Hijri 25 Zilkade 1283).

the Albanian side of the *Sanjak* of Niş. The project was successful in the Greater Balkans, where new villages were founded and by the contributions of the local people, schools were opened.<sup>1511</sup> According to The *Tuna* Newspaper the Nomadic Gypsies people had been alienated from human virtues. They were taught to steal and commit other crimes from childhood, and they stole property and animals from the villages where they wandered close to. The General Council of the Vilâyet had decided to settle the gypsies in whatever town or village the gypsies chose in order to civilize them.<sup>1512</sup>

### Public Health

Between the years 1864 and 1868, precautions were taken to protect the health of the public. There were many practices that illustrated this. In 1885, cheap spirits made from grain and rye went bad came from Wallachia and were sold in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna. The local people mixed this spirit with water and drank it as *rakı*, but this constituted a danger to public health. Upon this, it was decided that spirit selling tradesmen needed to have a license, and it was forbidden to import spirits from Wallachia and to use them as *rakı*. This spirit was widely spread among Bulgarians, who did not really care about the potential health problems.<sup>1513</sup>

During an epidemic of cholera in Rusçuk, Midhat Pasha did his best to bring in doctors from the near towns. Rusçuk was divided into quarters and each quarter had medical personnel responsible for it. Certain basic drugs were successfully distributed to the population by trusted people, both Muslim and Christian. The *Tuna* Newspaper published adverts containing precautionary information about the

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<sup>1511</sup> *Tuna*, no: 215, date: October 16, 1867 (Midhat Paşa's speech on the General Council of Vilayet).

<sup>1512</sup> *Tuna*, no: 233, date: December 18, 1867 (Hijri 22 Şaban 1284); BOA, MVL. 1074/60 (General Council of Vilayet's protocol dated October 22, 1867 (Rumi 10 Teşrin-i Evvel 1283) ).

<sup>1513</sup> *Tuna*, no: 1, date: March 14, 1865(Hijri 16 Şevval 1281).



disease. The preventive measures increased the popularity of Midhat Pasha among Muslims and Christians alike.<sup>1514</sup>

In the two years since the establishment of the Tuna Province, in many localities in the region, an animal disease was reported; this had not yet a cure and had caused the death of many animals. In some cases, veterinarians from the army had been brought in, but without results.<sup>1515</sup> Finally, the efforts produced success when Veterinarian Major Ahmed Efendi was brought to the *Vilâyet* of Tuna. Midhat Pasha tried to keep the veterinarian in his employment by raising his salary.<sup>1516</sup>

In order to protect public health in the city, new regulations were formulated with regard to burying animals and even the sale of fruit and vegetables. There were instances of typhoid fever in the city, because the dead were not buried deep enough, so it was forbidden for the dead to be buried within the city. Moreover, the depth at which the bodies were to be buried outside the city was also regulated.<sup>1517</sup> More diseases appeared during summer compared to winter. Leaving dead animals and rotten fruit in the streets in summer spoiled the image of the city and also was hazardous to the health. This was especially true for cholera. As a preventive measure the following were forbidden in the city: keeping pigs in the city; the sale in the marketplace of raw fruits, pale cucumbers that have stayed long in the sun, the sale of unripe watermelons, as well as fruits that were believed to increase the risk of malaria like plums and apricot fruit; and the burial of horses and similar animals.<sup>1518</sup> In many villages, garbages and dungs were dumped to the village squares. As a result, dunghills emerged and epidemics appeared in summers. General Council of

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<sup>1514</sup> TNA, FO 195/829 (Robert Dalyell's message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Lyons on August 16, 1866). Doctor Shishmanyen was engaged to help stop the spread of the disease at the salary of 4 thousand *guruş* per month and 1500 *guruş* per diem (BOA, İ. DH. 540/37589).

<sup>1515</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 564/25334 (Midhat Paşa's letter dated October 21, 1866 (Rumi 9 Teşrin-i Evvel 1282)).

<sup>1516</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 564/25701.

<sup>1517</sup> *Tuna*, no: 3, date: March 27, 1865 (Hijri 1 Zilkade 1281).

<sup>1518</sup> *Tuna*, no: 27, date: August 9, 1865 (Hijri 23 Rebiülahir 1282).

Vilâyet made dumping the garbages outside the villages and using dungs for agricultural purposes compulsory.<sup>1519</sup>

Civilian hospitals were built in Rusçuk, Vidin, Tulça, Pazarcık, Plevne (Pleven) and Sofya. The number of hospital beds in each city was the following: in Rusçuk 50 for men and 25 for women; in Vidin 30 for men and 20 for women; in Tulça 40 for men and 20 for women; in Plevne 25 for men and 10 for women; Sofya 50 for men only; and in Pazarcık 30 for men only. Each hospital had a head health officer, a doctor, an assistant doctor, a pharmacist, a midwife, nurses and a caretaker for men. Each nurse was responsible for one patient. Each hospital also had a secretary and an administrator. This system was not applied very faithfully, except for the hospital of Rusçuk.<sup>1520</sup> Additionally, in Rusçuk, a hospital for the poor was also established. Poor people and those with no one to care for them used to lie in the corners of inns or coffeehouses. Now, these people received care in a hospital. Initially, the hospital had 40-50 patients. Immigrants and outsiders could also be treated in the hospital. After its success, it was decided to build a children's hospital and a pharmacy next to it. Sofya also had many immigrants so it was decided to build a poor's hospital there as well.<sup>1521</sup> The purpose of the hospital was to treat and provide medicine for free to homeless people, the poor and those who have no one to look after them.<sup>1522</sup> In the 144<sup>th</sup> issue of the *Tuna* published on 29 January 1867, there was a seven-item regulation concerning the distances to be observed between men and women in the poor's hospital. Thus, modernization showed itself in a very limited way regarding the gender relations. This is one of the first instances where we see direct concern for gender relations during these efforts of modernization.

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<sup>1519</sup> BOA, MVL. 1073/17v(General Council of Vilayet's protocol dated April 22, 1866 (Rumi 10 Nisan 1282)).

<sup>1520</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1521</sup> *Tuna*, no: 138, date: January 9, 1867 (Rumi 28 Kanun-i Evvel 1282).

<sup>1522</sup> *Tuna*, no: 205, date: September 10, 1867 (Hijri 12 Cemaziyelevvel 1284).

As it was the case with the poor's hospital, different methods were developed to aid the poor. Charity from the richer sections of the society was the most widespread. In the *Sanjak* of Sofya, donations were collected for the treasury from civil servants, local notables and the local people. The people of Radomir gave 29,050 *guruş* to the treasury; a *Çorbacı* called Velichko from the Village of Gadindol in Sofya donated 1,400 *guruş*. Two sheep-tax farmers, Salih Ağa and Yusuf Ağa donated 1,100 *guruş* to the *islahhane* in Niş.<sup>1523</sup> These donations were voluntary in principle, however, the governor was new to the region and these prosperous contributions from the wealthy section of the society were also the result of a certain pressure. The modernizing efforts of the governor were unpopular among all sections of the society and among the Westerners as well. According to Carl Sax, the governor was surrounded by obscure Young Turks and some people who were not well loved. The big projects that also concerned beautifying the city were implemented by frequently breaching property rights. These public works were done by money collected through increased taxes and "voluntary" donations which were resented by the Bulgarian population.<sup>1524</sup>

Midhat Pasha had very quickly made apparent his constructive energy and actualized a partial urban transformation. However, this did not go hand in hand with the creation of a class of educated and talented administrators, therefore the moment Midhat Pasha cut his ties with the *Vilâyet* these projects did not continue. Midhat Pasha's experience in 1868 in Varna was a clear example of this. At the end of 1868, Midhat Pasha traveled to Istanbul through Varna and saw that the situation was worse than what the British Consul S. Mayers had said. Midhat Pasha had complained to Mayers that he had difficulties finding qualified people to work as

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<sup>1523</sup> *Tuna* Newspaper, no: 17, date: July 6, 1865.

<sup>1524</sup> HHSA, PA XXXVIII, Konsulate 175 (Sax's message from Rusçuk to Graf von Beust dated June 22, 1867).

administrators in districts. In Varna, the person in charge of repairs on fortifications was an ignorant major who was against reforms and of whom the local people disapproved as well. Upon witnessing this, Midhat Pasha charged an engineer to prepare construction plans for a neighborhood located between the fortification walls in an empty space where previously it had been forbidden to build. It was again Midhat Pasha who ordered the quick construction of a road connecting Varna to Balçık Port which had been needed and requested by the local people for a long time.<sup>1525</sup>

Midhat Pasha had demonstrated the importance of the individual's role in the urbanization and modernization of the urban spaces, but did not fail to introduce the institutional element which would help the continuation of the process. However, the Ottoman political system was problematic enough to make ineffective even the initial steps made towards institutionalization.

## **6.6. Modernization of Education**

In 1867, a member of the administration of the *Vilâyet*, İsmail Kemal Bey, requested to publish a monthly magazine titled *Mecra-yı Efkar* in Bulgarian and Turkish. İsmail Kemal Bey, who was to become the first prime minister of Albania in 1912, wrote an advertisement for the magazine which resembled a manifesto of the modernization vision of the administration of the *Vilâyet*. The article stated that the Ottoman Empire was almost in ruins, lagging seriously behind in trade and industry. The fields in the country were good to grow any product and the land was rich in natural resources. The reason for the lack of development despite the

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<sup>1525</sup> TNA, FO 195/804 (Varna Consul S. Mayers' message sent from Varna to Sir Henry Elliot on December 12, 1868).

existence of resources was the neglect of education and science. Education, science and technology were identified as means to make the country and society prosper.<sup>1526</sup>

The administration of the *Vilâyet* aimed to transit to an education system that was more secular and scientific. The aim to secularize and make scientific the education system was not only to develop the country. Due to the weakness of the education system in the Ottoman Empire, Russia was trying to increase its sphere of influence by profiting from the power vacuum. In particular, Tulça was a crossing point for people who came from Russia, and who did not possess many positive characteristics according to the Ottomans. A piece of propaganda that was spread by the Russians was that Bulgarian children should attend Russian schools, because in the future the region would be under the domination Russia.<sup>1527</sup>

By 1861, 33 Bulgarians were being educated in the Russian religious and teacher schools. Of these 18 attended the Kherson seminary, 10 attended Kiev Seminary, two attended the Velsky school connected to the Smolensk episcopate, one attended Smolensk Seminary, one attended Theology Academy and one attended Kiev Academy.<sup>1528</sup> There was always the danger that these students would return to their towns and engage in revolutionary activities. To give an example: a student by the name of Vassil T. Mishaikov had promised Slavic Committee to return to Bulgaria after the graduation.<sup>1529</sup> Bulgarian priests who were educated in Russia were active among the people; they distributed books and pamphlets printed in St. Petersburg.<sup>1530</sup>

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<sup>1526</sup> *Tuna*, no: 176, date: June 1, 1867 (Hijri 29 Muharrem 1284).

<sup>1527</sup> TNA, FO 195/891 (Robert Dalyell's message sent from Rusçuk to Henry Elliot on December 1, 1867).

<sup>1528</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.1, ch. 2*, 31.

<sup>1529</sup> *Macedonia, Documents and Material*, 226 (Vassil T. Mishaikov's letter to Slavic Committee in Moscow, dated March 16 (28), 1866).

<sup>1530</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Varna Consul St. Clair's report respecting the new organization introduced into the Vilayet of the Danube, dated September 17, 1865).

Young Bulgarian people educated in Russia, Austria and France were the most active proponents of Bulgarian separatism. However, their collective efforts to realize an action plan that would include the whole region did not produce results.<sup>1531</sup> The lack of education among the local population prevented the spread of the Russian influence.<sup>1532</sup> It did not make sense to expect that the reforms would have a calming effect on these young people, who returned to their country with strong nationalist feelings and had modest religious tendencies.<sup>1533</sup>

It would be wrong, however, to explain the different path that the Bulgarian education took only from the activity of external forces. Until 1850, there had been almost no schools that provided education in Bulgarian. By 1858, the number of schools which taught in Bulgarian had reached 110 and by 1865 their number was 229. In 1865, in the *Sanjak* of Filibe (Plovdiv), there were 5 academies, 15 schools for girls and a total of 229 Bulgarian schools.<sup>1534</sup> The number of students in these schools was 12,650. Most of these schools had been built within the previous 10 years. They taught basic sciences, Turkish and French. The expenses for the schools were covered by the Bulgarian population.<sup>1535</sup> As Christians did not have enough schools for the secondary education, pupils who wanted to continue their education were sent to the schools in Wallachia, Serbia, Greece and Russia.<sup>1536</sup> Besides Russia and Serbia, 200 Bulgarian young people were being educated in Europe. Their education expenses were covered by their own families, rather than the governments

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<sup>1531</sup> TNA, FO 78/1868 (Belgrade Consul J. E. Blunt's message to the Charge d'Affaires' in Istanbul, dated March 7, 1865).

<sup>1532</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Varna Consul St. Clair's report respecting the new organization introduced into the Vilayet of the Danube, dated September 17, 1865).

<sup>1533</sup> TNA, FO 78/1869 (J. Longworth'un report on the Bulgarian Church Question, dated October 10, 1865).

<sup>1534</sup> Baker, *Turkey*, 32.

<sup>1535</sup> TNA, FO 78/1869 (J. Longworth'un report on the Bulgarian Church Question, dated October 10, 1865).

<sup>1536</sup> BOA, MVL 1075/24.

of the countries where they were studying.<sup>1537</sup> Based on all these data it is not wrong to say that after 1850 the region was experiencing a Bulgarian Renaissance.

The Bulgarians were the first to make use of the rights given to non-Muslims to attend the military school in Istanbul and the Mekteb-i Sultani in Paris.<sup>1538</sup> In 1850, the Ottoman Government for the first time allowed Bulgarian students to be admitted to the Galatasaray School of Medicine.<sup>1539</sup>

In the Tuna province, ninety percent of the people were illiterate.<sup>1540</sup> When the *Vilâyet* of Tuna was established, schools in the towns of Silistre, Şumnu (Shumen), Hezargrad, Cuma and Yenipazar were in ruins and had been so for a long time. Schools in villages did not have teachers so they were all closed.<sup>1541</sup> Most Muslim schools in the province were deprived of a regular financial support.<sup>1542</sup> During his tour in the town of Plevne in 1865, Midhat Pasha saw that at least 1,000 children were of school age and of these only 300 attended schools, and even the existing schools' building conditions for these children were bad.<sup>1543</sup> Schools were opened without the appropriate human resources, so the education reform was not progressing as it should.

The letter Midhat Pasha wrote to the governor of Plevne (Pleven) specifies the principles of the education policy. According to Midhat Pasha, scientific education is based on three things. First, the arrangement and improvement of the existing buildings should go hand in hand with the introduction of the principles of education and training; second, teachers are necessary for the education of children

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<sup>1537</sup> TNA, FO 78/1869 ( J. Longworth'un report on the Bulgarian Church Question, dated October 10, 1865).

<sup>1538</sup> TNA, FO 78/1868 (Belgrade Consul J. E. Blunt's message to the Charge d'Affaires' in Istanbul, dated March 7, 1865).

<sup>1539</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.2, 253* (V. F. Konezhnikov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on January 23, 1866).

<sup>1540</sup> BOA, MVL 1075/24.

<sup>1541</sup> BOA, MVL 1013/42.

<sup>1542</sup> BOA, MVL 1075/24.

<sup>1543</sup> *Tuna*, no: 21, date: August 1, 1865 (Hijri 9 Rebiülevvel 1282).

and their salaries should be worthy of this duty; third, the state should show its strength so that children go to school and parents send them to school. While some of the schools in town were supported by foundations, others did not benefit from this arrangement. Therefore, it was decided that repair and maintenance expenses for the schools supported by foundations should be paid by the latter, and that the expenses of the rest would be met by money legated to charitable purposes or the local inhabitants of the town. The salaries of the teachers would not be lower than 500 *guruş* per year; therefore, each school was assigned the yearly amount of 600 *guruş*. As a result either the foundation was in charge of allotting the amount to the school; or if such a foundation did not exist, the money went from one-third of money legated by local notables. Otherwise, each neighborhood collected the money and paid for the school to which its children attended. When this money was collected, it was required that it would be provided on a monthly or weekly basis if children were to attend school. Poor children did not have to pay any money. New teachers were enrolled by examination, the parents and the relatives of the children who wandered in the streets rather than attend school were remonstrated, and orphan children were sent to the *islahhane* in Niş and Rusçuk.<sup>1544</sup>

The fundamentals of education discussed by the *Meclis-i Umumi* (Grand Council of Vilâyet) in 1865 were the following: reforming the schools in Christian and Muslim neighborhoods and villages, constructing schools where there had been none previously, payments for teachers, having a Rüşdiye in each town, building İdadis in 7 liva centers, and providing basic science education.<sup>1545</sup> The *Meclis-i Umumi* of the *Vilâyet* had decided that half of the expenses for these would be met by the income of the *Vilâyet*, while the other half would come from the local

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<sup>1544</sup> *Tuna*, no: 21, date: August 1, 1865 (Hijri 9 Rebiülevvel 1282).

<sup>1545</sup> *Tuna*, no: 35, date: November 8, 1865 (Hijri 19 Cemaziyelahir 1282).



inhabitants of the *Vilâyet*.<sup>1546</sup> In 1866, General Council of *Vilâyet* made the elementary education to the children over 7 years old compulsory. General Council decided to start mixed education for Christians and Muslims in *İdadis* where lessons were taught in Turkish. It was planned to levy extra taxes from the internal trade of wood, coal and cereal made in the province to meet the financial needs of educational activities.<sup>1547</sup>

The main purpose behind Midhat Pasha's education reform was to stop young Bulgarians from becoming part of the Pan-Slavic agitation propaganda by attending universities in Kiev, Kharkov, and Odessa.<sup>1548</sup> Midhat Pasha aimed to create a common system where Turkish was used as common language. Even though many people in the European as well as Asian lands of the Empire did not know the language, this was the only language that could be used commonly.<sup>1549</sup> In this context, a translator from the printing house of the *Vilâyet*, Yovaço Efendi had prepared a book for Bulgarian children to learn to read and write Turkish. The book was titled in Bulgarian *Etfaline Mahsus İnşa-i Cedid* and consisted of letters and stories.<sup>1550</sup> Moreover Midhat Pasha commissioned Yovantcho Sentchovich (Yovaço Efendi), who was also president of Rusçuk Commercial Court to form an assembly to work on a system of public education for all Bulgarians in Ottoman Europe. This assembly could meet in Filibe outside the jurisdiction of Midhat Pasha.<sup>1551</sup>

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<sup>1546</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 60-61.

<sup>1547</sup> BOA, MVL 1075/24.

<sup>1548</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 40.

<sup>1549</sup> Hyde Clarke, "On Public Instruction in Turkey", *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (Dec., 1867), 502.

<sup>1550</sup> "Bulgar Etfaline Mahsus İnşa-i Cedid", *Tuna*, no: 105, date: September 14, 1866 (Hijri 6 Cemaziyelevvel 1283).

<sup>1551</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 ( Consul Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated October 10, 1867).

During the years Midhat Pasha was governor, Muslims and non-Muslim had equal status in schools.<sup>1552</sup> Bulgarians attended *Rüşdiyyes* as well.<sup>1553</sup> In the Bulgarian schools in Rusçuk, students had to attend classes and were examined on theology, arithmetic, Bulgarian history, algebra, geometry, physics, geography, French, Bulgarian, Turkish, and general history.<sup>1554</sup> However, initially it was difficult to find instructors that could teach in Bulgarian. For this reason, in the town of Vidin, the position of a teacher of Bulgarian was announced by advertisement.<sup>1555</sup>

In the summer of 1865, Midhat Pasha thought to build a new school at equal distance from both Muslim and Christian neighborhoods in Tırnova (Veliko Tarnovo).<sup>1556</sup> These mixed school projects were to be financed in half by the *Vilâyet*, and the other half by voluntary donations.<sup>1557</sup> The new schools had to have the financial support of the people. The Bulgarian people of Tırnova saw the danger of losing their schools, therefore the local notables of the city and members of craft guilds had decided to leave part of the income from inns, houses, shops, and workshops to schools.<sup>1558</sup> Thus Bulgarians made their move in response to Midhat Pasha's proposal.

At the same time, the prefect (*kaymakam*) faced serious opposition from the Muslim population and Muslim gentlemen on the issue of mixed schools. On January 10<sup>th</sup>, 1866, Midhat Pasha announced his opinions on mixed schools to the members of the council of the *Vilâyet* and the *çorbacıs*. The draft had been turned into a

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<sup>1552</sup> TNA, FO 78/1869 ( J. Longworth's report on the Bulgarian Church Question, dated October 10, 1865).

<sup>1553</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

<sup>1554</sup> *Tuna*, no: 183, date: June 24, 1867 (Hijri 22 Safer 1284).

<sup>1555</sup> *Tuna*, no: 156, date: March 16, 1867 (Hijri 11 Zilkade 1283).

<sup>1556</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.2, 254* (V. F. Konezhnikov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on January 23, 1866).

<sup>1557</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 41.

<sup>1558</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.2, 254* (V. F. Konezhnikov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on January 23, 1866).

program, translated into Bulgarian and distributed to all prefectures. The draft was met with a negative reaction from *çorbacıs* as well on the grounds that the draft would weaken the Christian community and would eliminate the religious and national feelings of the new generation. The influential Christians who were members of the council expressed their support by citing the examples of young people who went to study in Istanbul and did not lose their national consciousness.<sup>1559</sup> Consequently, Midhat Pasha attempted to reform the education system in order to advance the people and secularize Bulgarian schools so that they would not just teach religion, but his efforts were met by refusal by the Bulgarians.<sup>1560</sup>

The Bulgarians also met Midhat Pasha's draft with a plan of their own. Instead of Midhat Pasha's plan to close old Bulgarian schools and open new mixed schools in their place, Hristo Georgiev opened a free school for Bulgarian children in Bucharest, thus bringing forth the idea of free education.<sup>1561</sup> Moreover, Russian propaganda continued. Konstantin Leontiev, vice-consul of Russia in Tulça, produced a circular insisting Bulgarians to send their children to Russia. The circular asserted that Russia would give sufficient education to them to occupy later in Bulgaria the positions of teachers and professors.<sup>1562</sup>

Despite these negativities, Midhat continued his efforts for the mixed-school project. At the meeting of General Council of Vilâyet in October 1867, Midhat Pasha submitted the new project of education; and this was met with disfavor by the Muslim members of the council. Midhat Pasha, who has presided as he promised,

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<sup>1559</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.2, 254- 255* (V. F. Konezhnikov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on January 23, 1866).

<sup>1560</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 387.

<sup>1561</sup> *Îz Arkhivata na Naiden Gerov*, v. 1, 275 (Hristo Georgiev's letter sent from Vienna to Naiden Gerov on October 25, 1867).

<sup>1562</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Consul Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated November 4, 1867).

allowed greater freedom for discussion. While Christians have the freedom to express their views, there are even among these who wanted to abolish the study of Turkish language and the French language in schools, arguing the futility of the study of these languages. Bulgarian members proposed a) The complete separation of the elementary classes according to students's religious and national identity; b) The administration of Christian schools exclusively by Bulgarians; c) The complete separation of school funds, funds raised by the Christians was to be exclusively used in the maintenance of Bulgarian schools. The educational needs of students of different religions must have been met by separate budgets. In vain, the Governor General tried to find a combination that could be accepted by both parties of the meeting: He proposed to establish either a tax of one *guruş* per head in the villages, of three *guruş* in cities. A tax whose amounts had been allocated for school maintenance would be levied on the wood or coal cars, as well as the proposal of a government grant to be shared between schools; every proposal was rejected by the Christian members. According to Schefer, the freedom left to the Bulgarians inspired their excessive boldness by the effect of foreign influences. This boldness has not led by the claims made in a liberal sense, but by ill-will in a systematic way against Ottoman rule.<sup>1563</sup>

Also in 1867, prominent Bulgarians tried to convince the Ottoman Government to establish a private public education commission. This commission was to be responsible for funding related to education, curricula, school books, and appointment of teachers. The commission was to be headed by the Minister of

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<sup>1563</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Consul Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated November 12, 1867).

Education (*Maarif Naziri*), the rest of the members would be five elected Bulgarians. For this new reform in education each Bulgarian man would pay 2 *guruş*.<sup>1564</sup>

Anyway, the draft considered by Midhat Pasha was submitted to the Porte. According to Midhat's project, a permanent council composed of two Muslims and two Christians commissioners would be established; members would be appointed by the government which also appoint a president of the council. These board members would be paid by the school fund, Muslims by the fund of the Turkish schools, Christians by the Bulgarian schools.<sup>1565</sup> Nevertheless, the response submitted by Istanbul to the Tuna Province featured the decision to postpone this project on the grounds that the financial resources required for educational reform were not available and the state did not approve of Christian and Muslim children attending the same class.<sup>1566</sup>

#### *Islahhanes (Artisan School and Orphanage)*

As stated by Ignatiev, Midhat Pasha's project of mixed-schools would remain null and void.<sup>1567</sup> However, Midhat Pasha's boldest education reform was not the mixed schools, but rather the *islahhane*. In the *Islahhane* of Niş, there were approximately 100 children, Muslim and Christian, aged between 7 and 14. These children were taught to read and write in Turkish and Bulgarian, as well as a craft in tailoring or shoemaking. They produced daily up to 30 uniforms for *zaptiyes* and 25 pairs of shoes. In an exam, Ahmed of Belgrad made 3 pairs of *zaptiye* shoes in the short time of 8 hours.<sup>1568</sup> In 1866, the *Islahhane* of Niş attempted to produce boots

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<sup>1564</sup> Baker, *Turkey*, 41-42.

<sup>1565</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Consul Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated November 12, 1867).

<sup>1566</sup> BOA, MVL 1074/65.

<sup>1567</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.2*, 259 (N. P. Ignatiev's letter sent from Istanbul to V.F. Konezhnikov on February 21, 1866).

<sup>1568</sup> *Tuna*, no: 13, date: June 12, 1865 (Hijri 13 Muharrem 1282).

and shoes for soldiers.<sup>1569</sup> It was also thought that a factory could be built for these children who were learning a craft in *islahhane* so that they would further their skills.<sup>1570</sup>

Once a year, the children in *islahhane* entered an exam in the industrial branch and craft in which they were taught. The exam of 1867 took place in a setting attended by Midhat Pasha, the *kaymakam* of center, civil servants and a few experts of the industry. The fields of examination were typesetting, tailoring, shoemaking, and forging. Muslim pupils entered a reading and writing Turkish language exam, Bulgarians were tested in reading and writing both in Turkish and Bulgarian. Nine pupils who were better at reading and writing were sent to the *Vilâyet* School and made to study accounting. Thus, orphan children were not only protected, they were becoming beneficial to the state and society.<sup>1571</sup>

Ten children from the *islahhane* of Niş and Rusçuk, who were mastering in tannery, were sent to the central tannery in İstanbul to specialize.<sup>1572</sup> It had become common practice to send to Europe five or six gifted children from the *Islahhane* to learn looming, machinery, spermaceti, and carpentry. Of the six children sent to France one was Turkish, one Circassian, one Crimean Tatar, one Bulgarian, and one of them was an Armenian.<sup>1573</sup>

Blind children who used to beg in the streets of Rusçuk were taken in and registered in the *Islahhane* of Rusçuk, where they were taught a craft. Thus even children who were heavily handicapped were given a chance to improve their conditions in life.<sup>1574</sup> In one case, a newborn baby was about to be abandoned in the

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<sup>1569</sup> *Tuna*, no: 124, date: November 21, 1866 (Hijri 14 Receb 1283).

<sup>1570</sup> *Tuna*, no: 139, date: January 12, 1867 (Hijri 7 Ramazan 1283).

<sup>1571</sup> *Tuna*, no: 172, date: May 18, 1867 (Hijri 15 Muharrem 1284).

<sup>1572</sup> *Tuna*, no: 68, date: May 9, 1866 (Hijri 24 Zilhicce 1282).

<sup>1573</sup> *Tuna*, no: 215, date: October 16, 1867 (Midhat Paşa's speech on the General Council of Vilayet).

<sup>1574</sup> *Tuna*, no: 14, date: June 14, 1865 (Hijri 20 Muharrem 1282).

courtyard of a mosque in Rusçuk because the family was poor and the mother didn't have milk to give or money to employ a wet nurse, and the *Islahhane* of Rusçuk took the baby in.<sup>1575</sup>

An *islahhane* was also built in Sofya.<sup>1576</sup> The children placed there were taught looming and were trained to work in a cloth factory that was newly built.<sup>1577</sup> The income of the *Islahhane* in Sofya did not reach satisfactory levels, but its expenses were reduced by the share of the income from the cloth factory.<sup>1578</sup>

However, these *islahhanes* accepted only orphan boys. Consequently, by the time Midhat Pasha's governorship of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna was finished, *Meclis-i Umumi* had made the decision to build an *islahhane* for girls with the provision of building more, conditions permitting. The personnel that worked as teachers in this *islahhane* were also women.<sup>1579</sup> The building of the *islahhane* for girls was also financially supported by Muslim and Bulgarian local notables.<sup>1580</sup> Midhat Pasha donated 5 thousand *guruş* to this.<sup>1581</sup>

New income sources were needed continuously for the *islahhanes*. Therefore it was decided that out of 100 thousand *guruş* donated to the *Islahhane* of Rusçuk by the Sultan, 20 thousand *guruş* were to be invested in the Rusçuk Carriage Company by buying 10 out of the 13 shares that had not been sold.<sup>1582</sup> The income of the provision depots made out of stone near Hezargrad and Işıklar was given to the *Islahhane* of Rusçuk; these depots were rented out at 100 thousand lira per year.<sup>1583</sup>

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<sup>1575</sup> *Tuna*, no: 63, date: April 19, 1866 (Hijri 4 Zilhicce 1282).

<sup>1576</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 52.

<sup>1577</sup> FO 881/2956.

<sup>1578</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 53.

<sup>1579</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 584/26270 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated November 5, 1867 (Rumi 24 Teşrin-i Evvel 1283)).

<sup>1580</sup> *Tuna*, no: 228-229.

<sup>1581</sup> *Tuna*, no: 233, date: December 18, 1867 (Hijri 22 Şaban 1284).

<sup>1582</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 334/65 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated September 1, 1866 (Hijri 21 Rebiülahir 1283)).

<sup>1583</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 53.

Yet another source of income was the charity money that came from the affluent people in the area. In 1865, Muhtar Ağa of the *Kaza* of İvranya (Vranya) donated 3 thousand *guruş* to the *Islahhane* of Niş.<sup>1584</sup> Garabet Ağa, a member of the *Vilâyet* council and a prominent member of the Armenian community in Rusçuk, donated 5,622.5 *guruş* to the *Islahhane*.<sup>1585</sup> During the building process of the *Islahhane* of Rusçuk, many prominent members of the society, as well as civil servants, donated significant sums. Midhat Pasha participated in the donation campaign with the sum of 7,500 *guruş*. The names of the donors were published one by one in the *Tuna Newspaper*.<sup>1586</sup>

By 1869, three *ıslahhanes* had a total of 465 children. In the *Islahhane* of Niş, of the 210 children: twelve worked in the tannery, one was trained to be a pharmacist, two apprenticed in the Bureau of Correspondence, 150 of the children were trained to become tailors and shoemakers, and eight children were sent to Istanbul to study agriculture. In Rusçuk, of the 165 children: six were apprenticing in the Bureau of Finance, two in the Bureau of Correspondence, two in the Bureau of Telegraphs, and 35 in the printing house of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna. Five children were trained to become engineers, two as mechanics for the state-owned mills, and four were to work in the state-owned bakery houses. Twelve children worked in the Chuket carriage manufactory, while six children were sent to Paris to be trained in different areas.<sup>1587</sup>

The combined income of the *ıslahhanes* in Niş and Rusçuk by 1867 was as high as 415 thousand *guruş*. The money that came from the sale of goods produced by the *ıslahhanes* was an important line in the budget. Other budget lines included

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<sup>1584</sup> *Tuna*, no: 9, date: May 9, 1865 (Hijri 14 Zilhicce 1281).

<sup>1585</sup> *Tuna*, no: 188, date: July 13, 1867 (Hijri 12 Rebiülevvel 1284).

<sup>1586</sup> *Tuna*, no: 19, date: July 18, 1865 (Hijri 24 Safer 1282).

<sup>1587</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.



the income from writing petitions, and from the land, shops, inns, houses and gardens donated to the *islahhanes*. The income of two corn shops opened at the Varna train station also belonged to the *Islahhane* of Rusçuk.<sup>1588</sup>

According to Suchenkov this educational project aimed to destroy the Bulgarian national spirit and to weaken religion in order to distantiate the Bulgarians from the Russian co-religionists. Moreover, the schools of the *islahhane* provided educational opportunities for hundreds of Muslim children who then, later on, went to work in good jobs. According to Suchenkov, the Muslims of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna were eight times less the number of Bulgarians (a highly exaggerated number), but this was an opportunity for them to become stronger.<sup>1589</sup> Moreover, it was the Bulgarians who had to pay for the education of the poor Muslims.<sup>1590</sup>

From what we understand from both the wide coverage in the *Tuna Newspaper* and also from Midhat Pasha's correspondence, Midhat Pasha attributed great importance to the *islahhanes* and the issue of the education of children. The exams of the pupils were now and then covered in the *Tuna*; local administrators and notables provided refreshments and gave banquets for pupils during the exam period.<sup>1591</sup> The General of the Second Army and several officers and civil servants were present during an exam at the school rebuilt specifically for Armenian children in Şumnu.<sup>1592</sup> The administration of the *Vilâyet* aimed to send each year ten children to Europe for training.<sup>1593</sup> Four pupils were sent to Istanbul to study veterinary

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<sup>1588</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1589</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 129 (A. E. Suchenkov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on November 14 (26), 1867).

<sup>1590</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 130 (A. E. Suchenkov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on November 14(26), 1867).

<sup>1591</sup> *Tuna*, no: 227, date: November 28, 1867 (Hijri 2 Şaban 1284).

<sup>1592</sup> *Tuna*, no: 233, date: December 18, 1867 (Hijri 22 Şaban 1284).

<sup>1593</sup> TNA, FO 195/891 (Robert Dalyell's message sent from Rusçuk to H. P. T. Barron'a September 5, 1867).

sciences, because of the high instances of disease in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna.<sup>1594</sup> Education became increasingly scientific. By imperial sanction in 1867-1868, the curriculum of the newly established İdadi in Rusçuk also contained mental and moral philosophy classes.<sup>1595</sup>

#### Uncompleted Reform

Even though Midhat Pasha's education reform in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna was successful in certain ways, it also faced several problems once Midhat Pasha left his office. According to Ottoman authorities, by 1869 there were 800 Muslim schools with 32 thousand pupils. According to Robert Dalyell, these numbers were inflated because schools were frequently closed and pupil attendance was extremely irregular. Education was based on basic reading and writing and the teachings of the Quran. Girls who lived in small towns were allowed to attend only till they reached the age of nine or ten. Parents paid a weekly fee to the school that varied from 20 para to 2 *guruş*; this was the part of the economic support system of which foundations were a part of as well. The weekly wages of teachers varied from 50 to 100 *guruş*.<sup>1596</sup>

One of the success stories of the *Vilâyet* in this period was the construction of 27 Rüşdiye for 2,500 pupils. However, each of these schools had only two teachers, which were brought over from schools in Istanbul. The salaries of these young teachers varied between 600 and 1000 *guruş*. The classes taught here were Turkish, Arabic, Persian as well as calligraphy, arithmetic, mathematic and geography. There were also preparations to improve the education program. One of the aims of the new education system was to improve the tie of the Bulgarians to

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<sup>1594</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 391/54.

<sup>1595</sup> Baker, *Turkey*, 33.

<sup>1596</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

Ottoman State. Nonetheless, there were great deficiencies regarding school books in Bulgarian.<sup>1597</sup>

All bigger towns had schools for Bulgarian girls. In these schools girls were taught to read and write, as well as basic sciences and sewing. There were 1,000 Bulgarian elementary schools attended by 20 thousand pupils and 30 girl schools with 2-3 thousand pupils. There were 50 Bulgarian high schools with 6-7 thousand students. But like in the Muslim schools, attendance was irregular. These schools were supported by Bulgarians who lived in Russia, Wallachia, and Austria as well as the church and affluent Bulgarians. Bulgarian teachers were of a questionable, albeit better, quality than Turkish teachers.<sup>1598</sup> The monthly salary of a Bulgarian teacher was only of 200 *guruş*.<sup>1599</sup>

#### Provincial Printing House and the Provincial Newspaper

Since the establishment of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna, the printing house was a source of prestige for Midhat Pasha's administration. It also symbolized the ideocultural strife in the region. Here were printed documents like state statutes, law drafts, certificates, and account books. The printing house initially had two lithography machines. Bulgaria did not have a printing house at the time, so everyone who passed by the *Vilâyet* read everything that was published in order to be informed of internal and external developments. Moreover, due to the lack of a printing house, the needed books were imported from Russia and Austria. Particularly the use of books that came from Russia in the churches all over Bulgaria, especially of books containing praise and prayers for the Russian Tsar, was worrisome and dangerous for the future. The printing house was planned as an

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<sup>1597</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1598</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1599</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy*(Sofya, 2002), 129 (A. E. Suchenkov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on November 14 (26), 1867).

important tool in the struggle against the Russian influence. Commercially printed books and pamphlets were produced at a ten percent discount.<sup>1600</sup>

The machinery used in the printing house of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna was the latest model.<sup>1601</sup> Printing types, tools and machinery of the printing house were purchased in Bucharest, Vienna and Istanbul with money from the administration of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna.<sup>1602</sup> The printing house printed both in Turkish and Bulgarian.<sup>1603</sup> The printing house distributed 2 thousand books of the Turkish alphabet for free to schools in the *Vilâyet*, including Bulgarian ones, to be given to poor pupils.<sup>1604</sup> The books of Bulgarian alphabet were also distributed for free.<sup>1605</sup> It also printed the criminal code in one book in two languages, Turkish and Bulgarian.<sup>1606</sup> The commercial code was translated into Bulgarian by İstoil Efendi and printed here as well.<sup>1607</sup> As of the April of 1866, the printing house had printed up to 20 books of regulations and instructions.<sup>1608</sup> It had also printed a calendar for the year 1867 prepared by the one of its Bulgarian employees, Nikola Efendi.<sup>1609</sup>

For the printing house, initially a typesetter and a lithography officer were sent from Istanbul at the salary of 800 *guruş* each. The required Bulgarian letters were purchased from Europe. As the work at the printing house increased, more workers who knew typesetting were needed. The wages for lithography officers, translators, writers, and machinery officers were met by the printing house by March/April of the year 1865, the year 1284 of the Rumi calendar. The extra

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<sup>1600</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 535/37115 ( (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated February 24, 1866 (Rumi 12 Şubat 1281) ).

<sup>1601</sup> BOA, C. DH.. 255/12711.

<sup>1602</sup> BOA, MVL 1072/27.

<sup>1603</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 535/37115.

<sup>1604</sup> *Tuna*, no: 3, date: March 27, 1865 (Hijri 1 Zilkade 1281).

<sup>1605</sup> *Tuna*, no: 12, date: May 31, 1865 (Hijri 6 Muharrem 1282).

<sup>1606</sup> *Tuna*, no: 127, date: December 1, 1866 (Hijri 24 Receb 1283).

<sup>1607</sup> *Tuna*, no: 139, date: January 12, 1867(Hijri 7 Ramazan 1283).

<sup>1608</sup> BOA, Y.EE.. 36/9.

<sup>1609</sup> *Tuna*, no: 107, date: September 22, 1866(Hijri 13 Cemaziyelevvel 1283).

income from the printing house was to be donated to the islahhane. Thirty Muslim and Christian children from the islahhane were sent to apprentice as typesetters. Among the children, there were Crimean Tatars and Circassians as well. These children played an important part in the printing of the issues of the *Tuna*.<sup>1610</sup>

Tuna Newspaper is an important milestone in the Turkish local press history. It produced publications of a quality never witnessed before. It was printed both in Turkish and Bulgarian. Many booklets from outside sources were printed in French; therefore, having a state publication in Bulgarian was an important move.<sup>1611</sup> After the third issue, the *Tuna Vilâyet Newspaper* had 529 subscribers.<sup>1612</sup> The readers were informed about events related to law, foreign affairs, and even port prices.<sup>1613</sup> To illustrate, the Department of Agriculture of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna announced through the *Tuna Newspaper* to agricultural producers the agricultural techniques which minimize problems in the face of impending drought.<sup>1614</sup> The language the Newspaper used was comparatively simpler to that used by the press in Istanbul and was used as a means to reduce the distance between the administration and the local population. The economy of the Ottoman Empire was based on natural resources, but fighting the frequent droughts through spreading information to the public was not a commonly used method. The newspaper also published in schemes the number of animals in the *Vilâyet*. In this regard, the issues number 63 and 64 published the number of animals in Sofya and Tirnova, respectively. Again, the issue dated 18

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<sup>1610</sup> BOA, Y.EE.. 36/9.

<sup>1611</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Varna Consul St. Clair's report respecting the new organization introduced into the Vilayet of the Danube, dated September 17, 1865).

<sup>1612</sup> *Tuna*, no: 5, date: April 11, 1865 (Hijri 16 Zilkade 1281).

<sup>1613</sup> *Tuna*, no: 9, date: May 9, 1865 (Hijri 14 Zilhicce 1281).

<sup>1614</sup> *Tuna*, no: 16, date: June 28, 1865 (Hijri 4 Safer 1282).

Safer 1282 had an interesting announcement. It advised fathers to consult their daughters before marrying them off in order to prevent the number of elopements.<sup>1615</sup>

Petko Slaveykov, one of the important names of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Bulgarian cultural renaissance, wrote to Naiden Gerov to say that he was unhappy with the publication of the *Tuna Newspaper*. He suggested that the Bulgarian community in Istanbul should publish a newspaper in accordance with the national aspirations.<sup>1616</sup>

The predominated understanding regarding newspapers in the *Vilâyet* was liberal. Newspapers published elsewhere were easily accessible, even the opposition newspaper *Muhbir* was read in Rusçuk and other regions.<sup>1617</sup> The print and local journalism in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna served as an example to others. Moreover, it is possible to think of the print and newspaper as a step towards the cultural awakening of the Muslims in the region. However, after 1868, the enthusiasm of the Midhat Pasha period was not captured again.

## **6.7. Renovation of the Police Organization and the Construction of Military Buildings**

Bulgaria, as many regions in the Balkans, experienced frequent incidents of banditry. It was indeed difficult to catch the bandits because of geographic conditions, but also because the local population informed the bandits of the moves of the gendarme (*zaptiye*).<sup>1618</sup> In Tırnova, after 1863, the number of both Muslims and Christians who carried weapons increased.<sup>1619</sup> Murderers were usually capable of

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<sup>1615</sup> *Tuna*, no: 18, date: July 12, 1865 (Hijri 18 Safer 1282).

<sup>1616</sup> *İz Arkhivata na Naiden Gerov*, v. 2, 264-265 (Petko R. Slaveykov's letter sent from İstanbul to Naiden Gerov on May 23, 1864).

<sup>1617</sup> Ebüzziya Tefrik , *Yeni Osmanlılar Tarihi*, 231-232.

<sup>1618</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 122.

<sup>1619</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy*, t.1, ch. 2, 320 (V. F. Konezhnikov's report sent from Tırnova to E. P. Novikov, dated February 11, 1863).

escaping from prisons. It was generally believed that prison guards were bribed to allow the escapes.<sup>1620</sup>

In this period, where banditry and individual armament were very common; the *Vilâyet* of Tuna needed to create a new security organization. The high incidence rate of banditry cases led to the strengthening of both the land security forces in the *Vilâyet* and naval forces on the River Danube.

While reforming the *zaptiye* force in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna, Midhat Pasha took as a basis the innovations he made to the *zaptiye* troops when he was the governor of Niş. During his governorship in Niş, Midhat Pasha reduced the number of enrolled troops of the *zaptiye* from 2,000 to 1,600, but increased their expenditures. Due to the new organizational and economic system the perpetual complaints about the cruel and bad behavior of the *zaptiye* stopped. Midhat Pasha divided the troops in two. The first group was made officers who were stationed in outposts and followed up on the activities of the bandits. They were thus given mostly the duties of gendarmes. The second group was stationed around towns and checked on the situations and the people who came in and out of the town. They were thus given mostly the duties of policemen.

To do this job, he demanded that a corporal was allocated for the infantry division. However, the biggest problem with the *zaptiye* was that the number of people who could read and write was very small, both among employees and enrolled troops. The monthly salary was of 100 *guruş*, thus making it impossible to find qualified personnel. Also, cavalry salary was about 2 times the salary of that of the infantry. But the fact was that the most difficult duties were done by the infantry, who chased after the bandits in the mountains, waited in ambush at night and were

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<sup>1620</sup> TNA, FO 881/684 (Edward St. Jno. Neale's Statistical report on Bulgaria, dated March 28, 1858).

responsible for transferring prisoners. Because the duties were difficult and paid very little it was common to see sergeants and corporals who resigned and then applied for a position as part of the cavalry.

Midhat Pasha's solution was to cut by 20 *guruş* the salaries of 384 cavalry troops and to distribute these funds among the *zaptiyes* who served as policemen. Thus, whereas the salary of a sergeant was 200 *guruş* that of a corporal was 170 *guruş*, and a policeman was paid 150 *guruş*. Among the duties of policemen was to write intelligence notes to the administration. Therefore the selection criteria for the position of policeman were to know how to read and write and have good morals. A policeman was expected to dress well, so that he would be respected more by the local people and would constitute a good example in the area.<sup>1621</sup>

A new organization came into being in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna based on these principles. Even through the administration spent a lot of money on the *zaptiye*, previous dissatisfaction with the *zaptiye* was abundant. With the new order, the security forces of the *Vilâyet* had the following numbers: 2,400 infantry *zaptiyes*, 1,000 cavalry *zaptiyes*, 190 debt collectors, 120 police commissioners, and 60 prison guards. With the introduction of the new system, crime rates were reduced 30 to 40 percent.<sup>1622</sup> The police force was reorganized, and the *zaptiye* were given new uniforms and salary raises; however, by 1865 they were badly organized and did not obey the orders of their superiors.<sup>1623</sup>

Despite the improvements, *zaptiye* soldiers often either fled from their jobs or abandoned their jobs entirely. The fact was that a porter who worked in the ports of Tulça and Varna made 200-300 *guruş* a month, while the salary of a *zaptiye* soldier

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<sup>1621</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 496/22455.

<sup>1622</sup> *Tuna*, no: 58, date: April 1, 1866(Hijri 16 Zilkade 1282).

<sup>1623</sup> TNA, FO 78/1883 (Varna Consul St. Clair's report respecting the new organization introduced into the Vilayet of the Danube, dated September 17, 1865).



was 83 *guruş*. In order to prevent the desertions, Midhat Pasha requested that the salaries of the *zaptiyes* around Niş and Sofya be increased by 15 percent.<sup>1624</sup>

The number of police commissioners was reduced from 120 to 47 in order to save money. The saving in yearly salaries was 1,089 *guruş*. However, because the Bulgarian question gained sensitivity, the number of police commissioners was insufficient. In this case, new security personnel was needed again.<sup>1625</sup> There were many complaints by the people regarding the *zaptiyes*.

Midhat Pasha took strict measures against *zaptiyes* who acted badly towards the people. The salaries of the *başibozuks* (irregulars) were increased, but so had the disciplinary measures.<sup>1626</sup> The central administration of the *Vilâyet* learned that a police commissioner called Panayot received 30 *guruş* akçe as a fine from a tavern owner called Dimitri and issued an inquest on the subject; if the crime was confirmed, the punishment was 3 to 15 years of prison. Again in the *Kaza* of Vranya, in the Hijri year of 1280 the officer responsible for counting the tithe profit for the people of a village received akçe and reported fewer revenues; he was punished with jail in the castle. In the *Kaza* of Berkofça, *zaptiyes* asked for 8 *guruş* from the wood carts that passed by and they were tried for it.<sup>1627</sup>

In a village in Tırnova, a *zaptiye* went into a Bulgarian house with the aim of raping the woman and killed both her and her husband. When he was caught a little time later he was executed in front of the whole village by orders of Midhat.<sup>1628</sup> Again in Niğbolu (Nikopol), a thief that was hiding in a coffee shop was captured and the lieutenant who led the *zaptiyes* prevented the *zaptiyes* from doing their work

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<sup>1624</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 583/26223 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Ministry of Finance dated November 16, 1867 (Hijri 20 Receb 1284) ).

<sup>1625</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 578/25972 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated September 2, 1867 (Hijri 4 Cemaziyelevvel 1284) ).

<sup>1626</sup> FO 195/891.

<sup>1627</sup> *Tuna*, no: 9, date: May 9, 1865 (Hijri 14 Zilhicce 1281). The custom was that many outposts took one piece of wood from each wood cart that passed by (BOA, İ. MVL. 546/24511).

<sup>1628</sup> TNA, FO 78/1979 (S. Mayers' message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Lyons on June 19, 1867).

and the thief escaped. When Midhat Pasha learned about this situation he insisted that the lieutenant be tried in court.<sup>1629</sup>

Midhat Pasha had shown through many of his deeds that he wanted the buildings in the country, the urban spaces and the state civil servants to look European. This also held true for the *zaptiyes*. Midhat Pasha initiated the renewal of the *zaptiye* uniforms when he was the governor of Niş. By the end of 1864, the uniforms of the *zaptiyes* in the *Sanjak* of Vidin were made by a tradesman at a high price and a very bad cloth which was quickly torn, but the uniforms of the *zaptiye* soldiers of Niş were in very good condition.<sup>1630</sup> Many of the personnel of gendarme in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna were Bulgarians. Their clothes were so neat and clean that they looked even more elegant than the elite dragoon regiment in Istanbul.<sup>1631</sup> In this period Christian *zaptiyes* were not only enrolled as troops, but also as officers.<sup>1632</sup> Sultan Abdülaziz told Midhat Pasha that when he was returning from Europe through the Danube on his way to Istanbul he saw the police and gendarme who saluted him from the port in Rusçuk. The sultan was duly impressed that said that Rusçuk looked like Europe.<sup>1633</sup>

Attempts were also made to ensure the social security rights of the *zaptiyes*. In 1865 a corporal *zaptiye* was injured while doing his duty, he was pensioned with 60 *guruş* a month.<sup>1634</sup> Despite all improvements bandits were still very active across the *Vilâyet* in 1867; the local people believed that even though the regional structure did not permit the full eradication of banditry, more could have been done. The *zaptiyes* did still behave harshly towards the people. Even though the administration

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<sup>1629</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.2, 148.*

<sup>1630</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 320/84.

<sup>1631</sup> Ebüzziya Tevfik, *Yeni Osmanlılar Tarihi*, 229.

<sup>1632</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

<sup>1633</sup> Ebüzziya Tevfik, *Yeni Osmanlılar Tarihi*, 230.

<sup>1634</sup> *Tuna*, no: 5, date: April 11, 1865 (Hijri 16 Zilkade 1281).

issued certain reforms more measured needed to be taken. Christians were still not considered acceptable witnesses in court, despite all the assurances given by Midhat Pasha to the British Consul, Christians still faced many difficulties.<sup>1635</sup>

#### Creating a Guardhouse Network

The *Vilâyet* of Tuna was surrounded by a web of outposts; this was an important part of Midhat Pasha's strategy of stopping the bandits that came over from Romania and Serbia.<sup>1636</sup> When Midhat Pasha took over the position of governor, there were almost no outposts on the shores and along the borders. Midhat Pasha's first project was to build 300 police stations between Vidin and Sünne and employ a salaried watchman for each station. The local people were charged to help the watchman during his watch.<sup>1637</sup> Initially, up to 60 outposts were built with quick work between Vidin and Rusçuk. In 1865, three outposts in the *Kaza* of Niş bordering Serbia were in ruins; Midhat Pasha ordered repairs and asked that two of them be built anew.<sup>1638</sup>

In the distance between the Varna trains station and the town of Rusçuk and its surroundings was not negligible. Moreover, this was a busy road with passers by day and night. Previously, there had been a station with a custom's guard and two *zaptiyes*, but later the building fell into ruin. In its stead, a new stone building was built, which could accommodate ten enrolled troops and one officer.<sup>1639</sup> These stations built on the roads served a double purpose: they provided shelter for the horses and were also a resting point for the people.<sup>1640</sup> Again in 1868, in the town of

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<sup>1635</sup> TNA, FO 195/891 (Robert Dalyell's message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Lyons on March 11, 1867).

<sup>1636</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 71.

<sup>1637</sup> *Tuna*, no: 58, date: April 1, 1866 (Hijri 16 Zilkade 1282).

<sup>1638</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 539/24230 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated August 20, 1865 (Hijri 28 Rebiülevvel 1282)).

<sup>1639</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 567/39454.

<sup>1640</sup> Kanitz, *La Bulgarie*, 94.

Varna, it was decided that a police station was to be built in the poor neighborhood of the gypsies.<sup>1641</sup>

During Midhat Pasha's time as governor of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna there was a high level of construction activity never witnessed before in Ottoman history. However, this construction activity disrupted the already existing equilibrium and created economic difficulties for the local population. To illustrate, in Niş, the construction of a police station cost 25 thousand *guruş* and the funds for it came from the people.<sup>1642</sup> In order to reduce the costs of having paid soldiers as guards, the local people decided that they would all take watch turns, independently of nationality and religion.<sup>1643</sup>

It was also decided that it was important to increase the number of watchmen and guards in the *Vilâyet*. However, limits needed to be set in terms of the relations of watchmen to the people. For this reason, *Meclis-i Umumi* published a detailed guideline concerning the duties and responsibilities of the watchmen and guards employed in the *Vilâyet*. First of all, the applicant had to get a document from the municipality, and then he had to find a guarantor who would sign the surety bond. Unlicensed people could not serve as a watchman. The watchmen had to be selected by the people. Villages that did not have a watchman needed to elect one. The sum of money paid to the watchman by the people was decided in advance and was put in writing; the agreed sum was not to be exceeded.<sup>1644</sup>

Through the establishment of a network of police stations and watchmen, in theory, the *Vilâyet* was a big success. By 1867, all along the right side of the Danube

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<sup>1641</sup> BOA, İ. ŞD.. 1/34 (Şura-yı Devlet's protocol dated March 31, 1868 (Rumi 19 Mart 1284) ).

<sup>1642</sup> BOA, MVL 996/33.

<sup>1643</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 71-72.

<sup>1644</sup> *Tuna*, no: 237, date: December 31, 1867 (Hijri 6 Ramazan 1284).

River, there were watch stations.<sup>1645</sup> There were 2 thousand border guards from Tulça to Rusçuk by 1868.<sup>1646</sup>

### Strengthening Fortifications and Building New Barracks

The already existing forts were strengthened and this was part of the new defense strategy in the *Vilâyet*. The forts that occupied important positions in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna were assigned officers, and work to strengthen their fortifications began. In particular, strengthening the fortifications of the castle of Niş was given priority. In the Hijri year of 1283, three artillery divisions were formed for the defense of the castles of Niş and Belgradcık. The appointment of experts in fortifications and artillery was considered very important.<sup>1647</sup> Repairs were also made to the fortress of Niğbolu, which played a strategic role in the defense of Danube.<sup>1648</sup> However, the dominating method of covering the repair costs for the castle was unprofessional. The repair costs for the castle of Kale were not met by the State Treasury, but by the local administration. Soldiers who had been drafted into the army helped on the repair work and renovations.<sup>1649</sup>

During Midhat Pasha's governorship in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna, a project for new barracks was drawn and new barracks were built. In 1865 in Niş, the barracks for the cavalry and artillery were in very good condition, but this was not the case for the infantry. Due to limited space, soldiers had trouble finding accommodation. That was why Midhat Pasha initiated the construction of new barracks and new infantry dormitories.<sup>1650</sup> Barracks that could accommodate 2 thousand soldiers were built in

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<sup>1645</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 26 ( M. A. Baikov's report sent from Vidin to N. P. Ignatiev dated June 2, 1867).

<sup>1646</sup> Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar* , 140.

<sup>1647</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 401/39.

<sup>1648</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 561/39057.

<sup>1649</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 351/8.

<sup>1650</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 532/23865 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated April 22, 1865 (Hijri 27 Zilkade 1281) ). For the illustration of the barrack planned to be construct, see BOA, İ. MVL. 461/20759.

Silistre.<sup>1651</sup> Besides building new infantry barracks in the town of Silistre, plans were also made for a hospital with a capacity of 30-40 patients. Moreover, because of the great number of cavalry soldiers, two new big stables were built.<sup>1652</sup> A new military hospital was built in Sofya.<sup>1653</sup>

Yet another object of the administration of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna was the improvement of prisons. The prison uniforms of the inmates were in very bad shape, in many cases not even covering the prisoner fully. Following the method that had been previously applied in the prison in Niş, when the 200 inmates of the prison of Rusçuk were transferred to the new building they were also given new uniforms which were funded by money collected from fines. In Vidin, 400 out of 600 prisoners were also given new uniforms, which had been ordered from the *Islahane* in Rusçuk. Again, the costs of the uniforms were covered by the fine funds.<sup>1654</sup> Part of administration's agenda was also the regular inspection of prisons.<sup>1655</sup> Because the prison of Vidin was in very bad conditions, it was decided that its new location would be the fortress in Vidin called *İçkale*, which used to serve as a place of storage for gunpowder and munitions, but had since been abandoned. The old prison called *Pasbanoğlu Konağı* was transformed into military barracks.<sup>1656</sup> The new prison in Vidin looked like the prisons in Europe.<sup>1657</sup>

#### The Project of Local Militia

The Ottoman Government had aimed to concentrate 30 thousand soldiers. In the northern Balkans, the Ottoman troops numbered around 20-22 thousand soldiers. According to Dalyell the distribution of troops was the following: 8-9 thousand in

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<sup>1651</sup> FO 881/2956.

<sup>1652</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 566/25448 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated July 21, 1866 (Hijri 9 Rebiülevvel 1283) ).

<sup>1653</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 317/81.

<sup>1654</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 550/24680.

<sup>1655</sup> BOA, Y.EE.. 36/9.

<sup>1656</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 322/100.

<sup>1657</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 55.

Ruşçuk, 8-10 thousand in Şumnu, and 4-5 thousand troops in Vidin and Silistre. These soldiers were generally in good condition, and their camping location in Rusçuk had been chosen wisely.<sup>1658</sup> Midhat Pasha calculated that covering the whole Romanian border with soldiers would be too expensive. As an alternative, he decided to create the National Guard, who numbered at 40 thousand and consisted of both Muslims and Christians.<sup>1659</sup> The role played by the Muslim population in resisting banditry in Ziştovi (Svishtov) during the summer of 1867 aided in the decision to establish the National Guard.

These troops were found in all Muslim villages and were under the command of a corporal officer and junior officers.<sup>1660</sup> Each person in the force did not serve more than one month in 10 years.<sup>1661</sup> The reserve forces were headed by a corporal and sergeant who conducted drill exercises during the free days as frequently as possible. If the force was sent outside the village, each reserve soldier received 40 *para* per day. Those who did not have weapons were given ammunition from Niş, Vidin and Niğbolu, and the former başıbozuk rifles.<sup>1662</sup> Moreover, 40 thousand rifles were requested from the government and they were distributed to the reserve force.<sup>1663</sup> This was a compulsory militarization against the possibility of an insurrection. However, this force, founded on the principle of enrolling one gendarme from ten families, was undisciplined and badly armed.<sup>1664</sup> This practice was abolished during the rule of Mahmud Nedim Pasha.<sup>1665</sup>

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<sup>1658</sup> TNA, FO 195/829 (Robert Dalyell's message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Lyons on June 30, 1866).

<sup>1659</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 45.

<sup>1660</sup> FO 195/891 (Robert Dalyell's message sent from Rusçuk to Henry Elliot on December 1, 1867).

<sup>1661</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 45.

<sup>1662</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 390/40.

<sup>1663</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 70-71.

<sup>1664</sup> FO 881/2956.

<sup>1665</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 71. For the regulation concerning the local militia in Tuna province see *Bulgaristan Mesalihine Dair İradat-ı Seniyye cild 4*, 4-11.

Midhat Pasha also brought to the *Vilâyet* the newest rifle models to be used and tried out. In 1866, Midhat Pasha brought in 10 Carabine rifles from America.<sup>1666</sup> Because the rifles of the reserve forces in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna were old, Midhat Pasha requested from the Grand Vizierate that the 1866 model Chassepot or Schneider rifles be assigned.<sup>1667</sup>

### Increasing Sea Power

In order to intervene quickly in cases of banditry and public order in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna, having a flotilla of ships on the Danube was essential. Transferring troops was both important and difficult. The government did not have the capabilities to transfer soldiers and materials so it had to rely on the Austrian ships to do it and was paying a lot of money for this.<sup>1668</sup> Midhat Pasha worked very hard to change this during his governorship. Besides the already existing boats that patrolled the River Danube, three monitors and two military ships called Kılıç Ali and Hayreddin were acquired.<sup>1669</sup> When needed, these boats and freighters were furnished with cannons and were used to transfer soldiers.<sup>1670</sup> The rumor that besides the three monitors and two military ships already patrolling River Danube, three more monitors would be sent attracted Leontiev's attention. He believed that with six monitors and two military ships the Turks would be a significant power in the Danube. Moreover, the impact of these monitors reached all the way to Belgrad and beyond.<sup>1671</sup>

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<sup>1666</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 352/70.

<sup>1667</sup> BOA, İ. MMS. 35/1454 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated February 18, 1868 (6 Şubat 1283)).

<sup>1668</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 586/39430 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated January 31, 1867 (Rumi 19 Kanun-ı Sani 1282)).

<sup>1669</sup> *Tuna*, no: 236, date: December 28, 1867 (Hijri 3 Ramazan 1284). 3 armored ships to be used on River Danube were ordered to be built in Toulon. One of these was tried out in Safer 1282 (*Tuna*, no: 18, date: July 13, 1865).

<sup>1670</sup> BOA, İ. DH. 586/39430 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated August 31, 1867 (Rumi 19 Ağustos 1283)).

<sup>1671</sup> Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar*, 146 (Leontiev's secret report to the Russian Embassy in Istanbul, dated March 24, 1868).



One of the interesting assessments of Midhat Pasha's politics of increasing the military strength in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna belongs to Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, who claimed that Midhat Pasha felt antipathy towards Bulgarians, but was hiding it. Midhat Pasha had national concerns. According to Russian propagandists and nationalists, he was trying to prove that on the Ottoman lands it was the Ottoman government and not the Grand Moscow that had authority.<sup>1672</sup> Ensuring the purchase of the newest rifle and ship models reveals that besides the security dimension, Midhat Pasha had military dreams as well. The innovations in security and defense forces were a model to re-establishing security which was generally waning in the provinces. Additionally, the improvements from uniforms to armament, from militia troops to marine forces were to a large degree examples of the military revival of the Ottoman military.

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<sup>1672</sup> Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, *Serail und Hohe Pforte*, 241.

## CHAPTER VII

### MİDHAT PASHA'S LAST MOVES AGAINST BULGARIAN NATIONALISM

#### 7.1. Midhat's Struggle with Bulgarian Revolutionaries

Ottoman authorities were generally unsuccessful in fighting banditry, which eventually became intertwined with insurrection activities in the Balkans. Midhat Pasha was not a statesman keen on showing himself only in civil reforms. Midhat Pasha established his own intelligence network in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna, militarized the region and instated his own projects in the attempt of preventing insurrections. Thus, he was mobilizing the people and the civil servants against Russia, whom he never trusted, and was also laying the psychological grounds for a potential war in the Balkans.

From the 1860s onwards, Bulgarian insurgents were very active throughout the capitals of the Balkan provinces in raising aid for ammunitions, men and foreign support. Bucharest was the center of these activities because of its wealthy Bulgarian community. Bulgarian revolutionaries were also trained in Serbia. Belgrade was the center where publications in Bulgarian were printed.<sup>1673</sup> While Prince Cuza was the head of Moldavia and Wallachia, his agents spread the rumor that there was an

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<sup>1673</sup> Leften Stavros Stavrianos, *Balkan Federation : a history of the movement toward Balkan unity in modern times* (Hamden, Conn. : Archon Books, 1864), 87.

insurrection about to take place in Bulgaria. However, the Christians of were not interested in having a revolt at this time.<sup>1674</sup>

In 1867, the Secret Bulgarian Central Committee presented a petition to Sultan Abdülaziz suggesting the establishment of a Turkish-Bulgarian state where the Sultan would be known as the Tsar of the Bulgarians as well as Sultan of the Turks.<sup>1675</sup> What encouraged the Bulgarian insurgents in this period were the Crete revolt of 1866, as well as the overthrowing of Cuza and his replacement with Prince Carol (Karl of Hohenzollern Sigmaringen) in Romania during the same year.<sup>1676</sup>

According to news that reached Midhat Pasha in 1866, a great number of rifles and 2 thousand revolvers were sent to the Serbian-Ottoman border to arm a militia and people all over Serbia were being trained militarily. In the same time period, the activities of two Bulgarian priests educated in Russia were closely observed.<sup>1677</sup> The priests had entered the *Vilâyet* of Tuna through Serbia. In March 1867, 10 bandits came to the village of Arbeş in the *Kaza* of Belgradcık from Serbia, kidnapped the son of village's *çorbacı* and requested 12 thousand *guruş* as ransom.<sup>1678</sup>

In 1867, through agents he sent to Wallachia, Bucharest, Odessa and Galatz, Midhat Pasha found out about the secret Bulgarian committees, which consisted of 12-13 people and aimed at creating 20 bands. He also learned of the existence of a band of 300 people in Oltenitza, which was funded by a Bulgarian merchant in Odessa. Two bands gathered in Galatz passed the Danube and entered Mecidiye. The aim of these bands was to kill the Turks in the regions they passed through and

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<sup>1674</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.2, 246* ( V. F. Konezhnikov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Stremouhov, dated December 30, 1865).

<sup>1675</sup> Stavrianos, 89.

<sup>1676</sup> *İsmail Kemal Bey*, 31.

<sup>1677</sup> TNA, FO 195/829 (Robert Dalyell's message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Lyons on October 7, 1866).

<sup>1678</sup> *Tuna*, no: 157, date: March 19, 1867 (Hijri 14 Zilkade 1283).

instigate insurrections. Midhat Pasha took preventive measures against them and followed them closely.<sup>1679</sup>

The committees in Bucharest and Galatz had attempted to establish secret branches in all the towns of Bulgaria. The center for these activities was Ziştovi, where 300 people were members of the revolutionary committee. Most of the members were young men who were made to swear on their souls, property and honor when they joined the committee. The committee in Ziştovi was responsible for the safe delivery of documents between Bucharest and Sofya.<sup>1680</sup> As a preventive measure against the activities of the bands, Midhat Pasha sent a cavalry detachment to meet the Bulgarian bands that crossed the Danube between Ziştovi and Rusçuk and infiltrated the region. These bands were making preparations to begin a big revolt in Bulgaria.<sup>1681</sup> In Schefer's words, these were not the agents of the Bulgarian committees of Bulgarian notables who seek harmless demonstrations for an improvement in their conditions; they are the members of the Bulgarian committees, salaried by Russian agents. There were many Russians among their members and these committees only wanted to create chaos and civil war, and this situation could provide Russian government the circumstances for intervention.<sup>1682</sup>

At the end of May beginning of June 1867, the armed bands that had infiltrated Ziştovi massacred five Muslim children aged between 8 and 12. Midhat Pasha believed the reason for the massacre was to anger Muslims.<sup>1683</sup> Upon learning of the massacre, Midhat Pasha sent two military companies in a steamship to Ziştovi,

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<sup>1679</sup> TNA, FO 78/1979 (S. Mayers' message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Lyons on May 17, 1867).

<sup>1680</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 387A/1 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated June 18, 1867 (Rumi 6 Haziran 1283)).

<sup>1681</sup> TNA, FO 78/1979 (S. Mayers' message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Lyons on May 20, 1867).

<sup>1682</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Consul Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated November 4, 1867).

<sup>1683</sup> *İsmail Kemal Bey*, 31.

and then went to Zıştovi in person in order to smooth over the tensions between Muslims and Christians.<sup>1684</sup>

The revolt prepared by a Bulgarian band in Tirnova was to begin by attacking a Muslim village, but it was suppressed with the help of the Muslim villagers. Of the members of the band, 8 were caught alive and 15 were killed. Many local Christians from Zıştovi were involved in this revolt, but they feared being captured and escaped to Braila.<sup>1685</sup> The band that prepared the attack was reinforced by young Bulgarians in Zıştovi. The rumor was that Midhat Pasha had sent many heads as a victory sign but in reality, according to Carl Sax, only the son of a *çorbacı* was beheaded.<sup>1686</sup> However, any such rumors were bound to create discontent among the Bulgarian people.

Despite his goodwill towards the people Midhat Pasha was merciless against even the smallest of revolts.<sup>1687</sup> Upon his return to Rusçuk, Midhat Pasha began playing the role of judge and executioner.<sup>1688</sup>

He brought back from Tirnova and Zıştovi 48 Bulgarian prisoners. Among Bulgarians who died in clashes between the rebels and Ottoman forces was also a Bulgarian father of one of the cavasses in the Russian Consulate. Midhat Pasha had also participated in the later stages of the operation in which 3,000 soldiers, *zaptiyes* and villagers captured 5 bands.<sup>1689</sup> The attempt of Bulgarian bands to start the rebellion was literally driven back.

Upon Midhat Pasha's request, British and Prussian consuls also participated in the trial of the Bulgarian bands. During these trials, some of the band leaders were

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<sup>1684</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 43.

<sup>1685</sup> TNA, FO 78/1979 (S. Mayers' message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Lyons on June 11, 1867).

<sup>1686</sup> HHSA, PA XXXVIII, Konsulate 175 (Sax's message from Rusçuk to Graf von Beust dated June 12, 1867).

<sup>1687</sup> Kanitz, *La Bulgarie*, 22.

<sup>1688</sup> Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, *Serail und Hohe Pforte*, 241.

<sup>1689</sup> TNA, FO 78/1979 (S. Mayers' message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Lyons on June 16, 1867).

given a death sentence, while 17 band members were sentenced to exile.<sup>1690</sup> Two *Çorbacıs* from Zıştovi and much more from Tirnova were subjected to investigation.<sup>1691</sup> Midhat Pasha's response was quite harsh. The fear of experiencing an episode like the one in Crete ensured that the penalties were very harsh.

As a result, Midhat Pasha was accused of being cruel against Christians. Count Offenberg, a Russian representative in Bucharest laid the claim that the rebellion was suppressed extremely harshly.<sup>1692</sup> The French consul of Filibe claimed Midhat Pasha was at the time drunk; therefore, he did not feel any reserves in giving death penalties.<sup>1693</sup> However, according to Sax, the decision to hang the rebels was the right one, because it stopped the Turks from taking justice into their own hands. The trials were open to the public, and Midhat Pasha even tried to soften the penalties. However, the execution of the youth from Zıştovi created resentment among the Bulgarians.<sup>1694</sup>

According to Midhat Pasha, the aim of the insurgents was to bring the brother of Prince Charles to the throne of the Principality of Bulgaria and to this purpose they had sent a telegraph to Berlin. The greatest worry of Midhat Pasha was a possible clash between Christians and Muslims. However, no big clashes resulted; there were skirmishes between two Muslims and a Christian in a village,

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<sup>1690</sup> TNA, FO 78/1979 (S. Mayers' message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Lyons on June 21, 1867).

<sup>1691</sup> HHSA, PA XXXVIII, Konsulate 175 (Sax's message from Rusçuk to Graf von Beust dated June 12, 1867).

<sup>1692</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 50 (Baron Offenberg's report sent from Bucharest to Gorchakov dated June 24 (July 6), 1867).

<sup>1693</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 81 (M. I. Zolotarev's report sent from Edirne to N. P. Ignatiev dated August 21, 1867).

<sup>1694</sup> HHSA, PA XXXVIII, Konsulate 175 (Sax's message from Rusçuk to Graf von Beust dated June 22, 1867).

and between two gypsies and a Christian. The people involved were sent to Rusçuk to be tried.<sup>1695</sup>

Twenty-seven people from Zıştovi were sent to Istanbul to face trial. When Ignatiev attempted to defend these people through informal ways he was informed that they were armed robbers. According to Ignatiev, many innocent people were treated unjustly due to Midhat Pasha's ambition to create a "model *Vilâyet*." Midhat Pasha had applied state terror against as-of-yet inactive groups in order to prevent a possible insurgency. According to Ignatiev, Midhat Pasha's merciless efforts towards the Bulgarians had pleased the Sublime Porte.<sup>1696</sup>

Ignatiev demanded the Sublime Porte to tell their hard-working Governor-General that his efforts were enough.<sup>1697</sup> However, Midhat Pasha did not pay much attention and continued in his way despite the order from the center to stop the executions. What stopped him was the threat of removal from duty.<sup>1698</sup> Midhat Pasha behaved dismissively against the pressures from Ignatiev, because he believed that the secret entity responsible for all this was Russia. According to the information Midhat Pasha gave to British Consul Robert Dalyell, some of the Bulgarian youth involved in the last revolt had previously served in the regiments of the Russian army. According to Midhat Pasha, Russian officers of various ranks were active in the Danube region and their headquarters were in Belgrad.<sup>1699</sup>

The timing of the attempted rebellion was pretty bad. The ethnic issue portrayed by Pan-Slavism did not make much sense to the regular Slavs who lived in

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<sup>1695</sup> BOA, A.} MKT. MHM. 387A/1 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated June 10, 1867 (Hijri 8 Safer 1284)).

<sup>1696</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 53 (N. P. Ignatiev's report sent from Büyükdere to Gorchakov dated June 27(July 9), 1867).

<sup>1697</sup> Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, *Serail und Hohe Pforte*, 241.

<sup>1698</sup> Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, 242.

<sup>1699</sup> FO 78/1979.

Varna, Burgas and Edirne when compared to the price of grains and pork.<sup>1700</sup> The peasants did not show interest to the initial attempts of the agitators.<sup>1701</sup> As Suchenkov indicated, the Bulgarian revolt would not have been successful without foreign support.<sup>1702</sup>

In the Balkans, revolutionary activity and banditry were intertwined. Therefore, the insurgents were not very popular among the local people. St. Clair and Brophy refer to the report prepared in 1867 and called "Reports received from Her Majesty's Ambassador and Consuls relating to the condition of Christians in Turkey" the consuls' blind to the banditry cases in Bulgaria. Foreign consuls were reluctant to travel and do research beyond the place they were stationed. Mistreated peasants did not report the injustices to the authorities because they were in fear of their lives. This was the main reason behind the silence of the consuls.<sup>1703</sup> Carl Sax, wrote the following about the attempted revolt of 1867: "A war of independence could only but start with such dirty methods." Money, bribery and murder came to the forefront.<sup>1704</sup>

Influenced by the unsuccessful revolt attempt, Midhat Pasha increased the number of military precautions. In the August of 1867, 1,200 soldiers and a few cannons were sent to the Serbian border.<sup>1705</sup> Midhat Pasha sent 1,500 soldiers who came for security purposes from Istanbul through Varna to Niş by train. Because the Ottomans took better precautions than expected on the border with Serbia, the

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<sup>1700</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 207.

<sup>1701</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 ( Consul Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated September 25, 1867).

<sup>1702</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 15 (A. E. Suchenkov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on May 23 (June 4), 1867).

<sup>1703</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 115-116.

<sup>1704</sup> HHSA, PA XXXVIII, Konsulate 175 (Sax's message from Rusçuk to Graf von Beust dated June 22, 1867).

<sup>1705</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 85 (A. E. Suchenkov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on August 22 (September 3), 1867).



Serbian had to reduce their support of the Bulgarian bands.<sup>1706</sup> Midhat wanted to have the authority to create construction and maintenance sites for the Danube warships and increase the number of the warships to ensure the river's defense in case of war. He also wanted to increase the capacity of garrisons in the Vilâyet whose number does not exceed 17,000 men. According to Midhat, these garrisons must have been reinforced 40 to 50,000 men in the Spring of 1868 by the support of local Muslim population.<sup>1707</sup> Midhat Pasha also decided to arm Muslim and Christians loyal to the Sultan living all over the *Vilâyet* against potential attacks from armed groups coming from Serbia and Romania.<sup>1708</sup> At that time, extraordinary recruits from Muslim population in the region could reach 50,000 men.<sup>1709</sup> This people's force was to support the regular army. Initially, the aim was to arm ten percent of the Muslim villagers in the *Vilâyet*.<sup>1710</sup> As we mentioned, Christians were also to be armed at this stage, but it was feared that Christian villagers would help the Bulgarian insurgents and pass their arms over to them. In the beginning of 1868, 12 cannons were brought from Istanbul to Varna and a militia force was also created by arming one in two Muslim men from a family.<sup>1711</sup>

Midhat Pasha did not stop at mobilizing the Muslim population by enrolling them. Even before the revolt attempts of the Bulgarian bands, a donation campaign was started for the families of victims of the Cretan Revolt in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna. Midhat Pasha was one of the key figures in this campaign, with his donation of 2,000

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<sup>1706</sup> TNA, FO 78/1979.

<sup>1707</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated October 10, 1867).

<sup>1708</sup> Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar*, 109 (Konstantin Leontiev's report to Russian Embassy in Istanbul, dated August 1867).

<sup>1709</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated October 10, 1867).

<sup>1710</sup> *Bulgaristan Mesalihine Dair İradat-ı Seniyye*, cild 4, 3. *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 73 (A. E. Suchenkov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on August 8 (August 20), 1867).

<sup>1711</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 208 (A. E. Suchenkov's letter sent from Rusçuk to E. E. Staal on February 8, 1868).

*guruş*.<sup>1712</sup> The names of the donators and the donated sums were published in each issue of the *Tuna Newspaper*. The Governor was trying to mobilize the national feelings and politicize the Muslim population around the idea of national unity by this kind of charity as well as the newspaper. The *Tuna Newspaper* of April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1867, issue 162 published a long piece against the Bulgarian committee in Bucharest. Especially after this issue, the *Tuna Newspaper* wrote extensively on the issue of insurgents, against the Bulgarian committees, and bands. The administration did not ignore the incident; it chose the path of direct intervention through propaganda.

According to the Russian side, Midhat Pasha aimed to weaken the trust of the people in the Russian Empire.<sup>1713</sup> Midhat Pasha sent to Suchenkov, the Russian emissary in Rusçuk, a few examples of the propaganda against the Ottomans published in Russian newspapers.<sup>1714</sup> There were all kinds of reasons for the Russians to be bothered by Midhat Pasha. The rich local notables of Filibe collected signatures and wrote a letter to the Government House requesting that the Russian Consul of Filibe Naiden Gerov be sent away. Midhat Pasha also sent a letter on this subject to the Sublime Porte.<sup>1715</sup> Midhat Pasha's influence went beyond the borders of the *Vilâyet* and reached Filibe.<sup>1716</sup>

Midhat Pasha believed that Serbia was preparing for military action and was attempting to attack Novi Pazar. If the Serbians captured Novi Pazar, their access

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<sup>1712</sup> *Tuna*, no: 155, date: March 12, 1867 (Hijri 7 Zilkade 1283).

<sup>1713</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 141 (A. E. Suchenkov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on December 7 (December 19), 1867).

<sup>1714</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 85 (A. E. Suchenkov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on August 22 (September 3), 1867).

<sup>1715</sup> *İz Arkhivata na Naiden Gerov*, vol. 2, 741-742 (Chaliki's letter to Naiden Gerov dated August 16, 1867). According to French Consul in Rusçuk, Naiden Gerov was one of the most active Russian agents in the region (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated September 30, 1867; see AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1).

<sup>1716</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 81 (M. I. Zolotarev's report sent from Edirne to N. P. Ignatiev on August 21, 1867).

and communication with Montenegro would be greatly facilitated. This was the reason behind Midhat Pasha's decision to deploy troops to Niş. Furthermore, Midhat Pasha had received news that General Cherniaev had left Belgrade with two officers.<sup>1717</sup>

According to Midhat Pasha, Russia increased the agitation activity in Bulgaria and Rumelia because it wanted the Ottoman troops to be relocated there so the Ottomans' hand in Crete would weaken. Referring to the positions in Romania, Midhat Pasha foresaw that if the Russians took over Galatz and İsmail, the Ottomans would not be able to hold Bulgaria.<sup>1718</sup> Midhat Pasha's prediction came true in 10 years' time; it showed that he was a man of vision and also that he was aggressive enough to take on the Great Powers when needed. Midhat Pasha's prediction meant that harsher politics towards Romania needed to be followed.

The Governor that behaved as a ruler in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna had attracted the reaction of the foreign consuls. They frequently appeared in front of the Pasha and the foreign affairs director to claim that the rights brought forth by the capitulations were being infringed.<sup>1719</sup> An Austrian ferry was raided at the time when the consequences of the revolt attempt continued. The gendarme confiscated the Austrian ferry named *Germania* on the grounds that it opened fire on them. The gendarme heavily wounded the revolutionary agents on board, among whom, one was Serbian. The incident was met with a strong reaction from Europe.<sup>1720</sup> Due to the *Germania* incident, the Austrian Consul was humiliated in front of Midhat Pasha.

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<sup>1717</sup> TNA, FO 78/1979 (Robert Dalyell's message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Stanley M. P. on September 7, 1867).

<sup>1718</sup> TNA, FO 195/891 (Robert Dalyell's message sent from Rusçuk to Henry Elliot on December 1, 1867).

<sup>1719</sup> Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, *Serail und Hohe Pforte*, 242.

<sup>1720</sup> Kanitz, *La Bulgarie*, 22; Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 46.

Midhat Pasha's energy had gone too far. The Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Graf von Beust, wrote a circular to the Sublime Porte stating that it had reason enough to remove Midhat Pasha. According to Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, this was one of the reasons for Midhat Pasha's exile to Baghdad in 1869.<sup>1721</sup> The precautions taken by Midhat Pasha, his attitude towards Russians, Serbs and Romanians, and the harsh sentences of the tribunals were all causes for big criticisms. However, the dimensions of the events of 1867 in the Balkans were not limited to Bulgaria; they showed that the Ottoman presence in the Balkans was about to be greatly threatened by the efforts of Serbia, Romania and Russia.

#### Russia, Serbia and the Attempt for the Creation of a Balkan Alliance

By the spring of 1867, the Ottoman garrisons in Serbia were emptied due to the problems in Crete; however, this was not enough for the Serbs.<sup>1722</sup> Even though this castle was emptied, people loyal to Prince Mihailo began to circulate in Bulgaria attempting to bring about a revolt.<sup>1723</sup> The French and American Revolutions had inspired feelings of self-fulfillment around modern and democratic ideals;<sup>1724</sup> however, the nationalist question of the Balkans was based on principles of force.

Belgrade had long been the center of Pan-Slavic activities. Here Pan-Slavic publications were printed and distributed to Ottoman provinces.<sup>1725</sup> In 1866, Gorchakov told the Russian Consul in Romania that the Eastern policies aimed to strengthen Serbia materially and morally, so that it would become the leader of the movement in the Balkans.<sup>1726</sup> The duty of Serbia at this point was to gather the Balkan people to fight the Turks. On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1866, Serbia and Montenegro

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<sup>1721</sup> Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, 243.

<sup>1722</sup> Kellogg, *The Road to Romanian Independence*, 114.

<sup>1723</sup> Kanitz, *La Bulgarie*, 25.

<sup>1724</sup> Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals*, 9.

<sup>1725</sup> TNA, FO 78/1868 (Belgrade Consul J. E. Blunt's message to the Charge d'Affaires' in Istanbul, dated March 7, 1865).

<sup>1726</sup> MacKenzie, *Serbs and Russians*, 9.

signed a treaty with the help of Russia. According to this treaty, a united Serbia-Montenegro would be established under the Serbian dynasty and Prince Nicholas would abdicate. In the case of the death of Prince Mihailo, Prince Nicholas would sit on the throne.<sup>1727</sup>

The Russian Minister of War, Milyutin, in 1867-1868, sent Russian officers to train the Serbian army.<sup>1728</sup> Moreover, towards the end of 1867, Ignatiev the Russian Ambassador in Istanbul asked Naiden Gerov to write a report on the reforms wanted by the Bulgarians. With financial aid from the Embassy, a few young men decided to establish banditry bands in the Balkans. However, when Naiden Gerov mentioned autonomy, he was met with a cold reply from the Bulgarians, because they had great expectations.<sup>1729</sup>

Even though Russia frequently rejected responsibility for the revolt movements in the Balkans, it supported the insurgents of 1866-1867 as well as Serbia's expansionist projects. For example, a Bulgarian revolutionary named Karakanovski who came to Lofça to found a Bulgarian committee there in 1867 was a brother of a doctor in the Russian embassy in Istanbul.<sup>1730</sup> In 1867, Bulgarian revolutionaries and Russian agents increase their efforts to establish Bulgarian committees in various parts of Bulgaria and Rumelia. All the efforts of Russian agents were directed against Midhat Pasha, whose energetic approach cripple their subsequent attempts.<sup>1731</sup> Russian Consul Suchenkov encouraged Bulgarians to resist the Ottoman authorities, and not to accept the increase in aşar tax, while the Bulgarians themselves recognize that this extra charge had to barely felt thanks to the

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<sup>1727</sup> Stavrianos, *Balkan Federation*, 92.

<sup>1728</sup> M.S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question*, 166.

<sup>1729</sup> *Îz Arkhivata na Naiden Gerov*, vol. 2, 287 (Naiden Gerov's letter to M. Petr Nikolaevich Stremouhov dated December 9, 1867).

<sup>1730</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated September 25, 1867).

<sup>1731</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated September 25, 1867).

extraordinary abundance of the harvest.<sup>1732</sup> The Russian emissaries spread the rumor of an upcoming war between France on the one hand, Russia and Italy on the other; they announced that the war in Europe would necessarily spread to other countries or at least reduce other powers to inactivity, and then Russian troops crossed the Danube to save Bulgaria from Ottoman rule. In the district of Tulça, monasteries of Çelikdere, which received grant from Russia, appeared to be the home of the maneuvers of the agents.<sup>1733</sup> Four Russian officers arrived in Rusçuk for a geogenic mission in Balkans in November 1867. Among the Russian officers, there was a man named Scalon. During Schefer's stay in Trabzon, an officer of the same name had collected numerous statistical information on Anatolia and very accurate information on the Kurdish tribes. But according to Schefer, it was quite difficult, however, to explain the beginning geogenic mission operations in the middle of November, while the Balkans were covered with snow and that their communications were about to be interrupted.<sup>1734</sup>

In Serbia, Ilija Garashanin was the ringleader of the warmongers in 1867. In the March of 1867, he prepared a plan of insurrection together with Greskovic in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, due to warnings from Austria, the Serbs retreated.<sup>1735</sup> Serbia also was the financial supporter of the Bulgarian legion established by the famous Bulgarian independence movement activist Georgi Rakovski.<sup>1736</sup> The Bulgarian legion headed by Rakovski was also present during the

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<sup>1732</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, October 10, 1867).

<sup>1733</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, November 4, 1867).

<sup>1734</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, November 8, 1867). For Lieutenant Scalon's compilation of the statistical information about European Turkey and note about military objectives of Russia in the Orient, in 1867-1869 see Voенно Istoricheskii Arkhiv(Moscow), Fond 450, opis' 1, delo 79.

<sup>1735</sup> MacKenzie, *Serbs and Russians*, 104-105.

<sup>1736</sup> Perry, *Stefan Stambolov*, 8.

clashes of 1862 between Ottoman and Serbian forces.<sup>1737</sup> In the attempt to form a coalition in the 1860s, Georgi Rakovski went to Athens in 1862 to convince the Greeks to join the Balkan coalition against the Ottoman State.<sup>1738</sup> The Serbian government had conducted a meeting with the Greeks to the same effect in 1861.<sup>1739</sup> The Bulgarian insurgents, which were led by Georgi Rakovski, had as basic strategy establishing voluntary forces from Serbia and Romania that would benefit from the war that may result between the Ottoman Empire and these countries.<sup>1740</sup>

Large numbers of Bulgarians who came to work temporarily on the left shore of the Danube constituted a mass which could be instilled with national feelings by Bulgarian nationalists without being subject to any control in the Danubian Principalities. The number of this mass of people that the Bulgarian insurgents wanted to use as soldiers was around 30 thousand.<sup>1741</sup> Garashanin, who was in Istanbul in 1862, believed that the Bulgarians who did not have a good leadership and were under the influence of Russia should be left out of the Serbo-Greek coalition.

Rakovski's aim, on the other hand, was to incite a Bulgarian revolt and then bring King Mihailo to declare war. However, events developed against Rakovski and he was excluded by the Serbs, despite his Bulgarian legion.<sup>1742</sup> One of the most prominent intellectual figures of the Bulgarian independence movement before 1879 was Lyuben Karavelov, whose basic political suggestion was friendship with Serbia.

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<sup>1737</sup> Iv. Mich. Mintschew, *La Serbie et le Mouvement National Bulgare* (Lausanne: Librairie centrale des nationalités, 1918), 33.

<sup>1738</sup> Perry, 8.

<sup>1739</sup> Stavrianos, *Balkan Federation*, 85-87.

<sup>1740</sup> Doino Doinov "The Participation of the Bulgarian Volunteer Force in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878" in *Insurrections, Wars and the Eastern Crisis*, eds. Bela K. Kiraly and Gale Stokes, vol. 17 of *War and Society in East Central Europe* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 172 .

<sup>1741</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy, t.1, ch. 2*, 247 (Baron Offenbergs' message sent from Bucharest to N. P. Stremouhov on August 10, 1862).

<sup>1742</sup> Stavrianos, *Balkan Federation*, 88.

According to him, Serbs and Mihailo Obrenovic were the primary allies of the Bulgarians.<sup>1743</sup>

In 1867, the initiatives to form a Balkan coalition against the Ottomans under the leadership of Serbia had intensified. In this sense, the defeat of Austria by Prussia in 1866 produced very negative consequences for the Ottoman government. It strengthened the hand of the Southern Slavs who asked for independence; the formation of an Austrian-Hungarian Empire had increased the Slavs' faith in independence. Again in 1866, Karl von Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen under the name of Prince Carol and with the support of France was raised to the throne of the United Principalities of Romania. This did great damage to the image of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>1744</sup> Ilija Garashanin in these years thought of a Balkan coalition that would solve the Eastern Question. Serbia and Greece would carry the military burden, while Montenegro, Romania and Bulgaria would provide support. Russia would also provide material and moral support and it would ensure the prevention of European Powers' interference.<sup>1745</sup> Garashanin's vision came mostly true in 1876, a few years after he had died.

Serbia reached an agreement with Greece in the August of 1867 against the Ottoman Empire. Accordingly, in a case of victory against the Ottomans, Serbia would get Bosnia and Herzegovina while Greece would get Thessaly and Epirus.<sup>1746</sup> During these talks, Serbia promised 60 thousand soldiers, and Greece would provide 30 thousand soldiers.<sup>1747</sup> And moreover, Romania had a military force it could provide as well. The new Romanian force established in 1859 was modeled after the

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<sup>1743</sup> Mercia MacDermott, *The Apostle of Freedom : a portrait of Vasil Levsky against a background of nineteenth century Bulgaria* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1967), 177.

<sup>1744</sup> Millmann, *Britain and the Eastern Question*, 30.

<sup>1745</sup> MacKenzie, *Serbs and Russians*, 105.

<sup>1746</sup> Kellogg, *The Road to Romanian Independence*, 114.

<sup>1747</sup> Roussos, "Charilaos Tricoupes", 93.



French, and was trained by the French. Prince Carol had served in the Prussian army for 9 years and supported the militarization of Romania.<sup>1748</sup> The newly crowned Prince Carol liked to think of himself as the “Charlemagne of the East.”<sup>1749</sup> The Romanian diplomatic representative in Paris, Balaceanu, told the Greek King George I in 1867 that Greece, Serbia and Romania should form an Eastern Confederation as this was the way to solve the Eastern Question.<sup>1750</sup> By 1867, there were rumors in Istanbul that a Serbian-Greek-Montenegrin-Romanian pact was being formed.<sup>1751</sup>

It was alleged that the Bulgarian committee was under the protection of France and was close to Romania. The Bulgarian committee in Bucharest was influenced by French, Polish and Romanian ideas, and wanted to see the brother of Prince Carol of Romania, Friedrich, on the throne of Bulgaria. According to Ignatiev, the Bulgarian committee close to the Serbs was directed more cleverly and in accordance with the plans of Garashanin.<sup>1752</sup> Under the orders of Garashanin, Magasinovich requested the support of Russia through Offenberg for weapons and ammunition required for the Bulgarian revolt.<sup>1753</sup> N. M. Toshkov, stationed in Odessa, asked Stremouhov, the director of the Asiatic Department of Russia, for 3,000 high- quality Belgian rifles and wrote that 1,000 of these were to come to Odessa. Toshkov was worried about the difficulties of their transportation to Serbia with the Danube ships due to the presence of Austrian agents. Despite all difficulties, Toshkov managed to have 3,000 swords sent to Serbia. In Nikolaev, there were

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<sup>1748</sup> *Reminiscences of the King of Roumania*, ed. Sidney Whitman (New York, London Harper & Brothers, 1899), 250-251.

<sup>1749</sup> Lord Newton, *Lord Lyons*, 157.

<sup>1750</sup> Kellogg, *The Road to Romanian Independence*, 112-113.

<sup>1751</sup> Kellogg, *The Road to Romanian Independence*, 115.

<sup>1752</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 53 (N. P. Ignatiev's report sent from Büyükdere to Gorchakov dated June 27(July 9), 1867).

<sup>1753</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 50 (Baron Offenberg's report sent from Bucharest to Gorchakov dated June 24(July 6), 1867).

14,000 rifles which were waiting to be carried onto a ship. However, in order to have a Bulgarian revolt, 40 thousand rifles were needed and Toshkov began talks with the arms factory owner in Belgium. At this point the most serious need was money.<sup>1754</sup> This correspondence demonstrates Russia's role in the Balkan rebellions and attempts at war, even in 1867.

After Mihailo's ascendance to the throne, the Serbs began preparing for a big war. By 1862, the Serbian army had 4 thousand regular and 131 thousand militia troops, at a total of 135 thousand soldiers and 44 cannons. In a short time, Serbia increased the numbers to a force of 165 thousand men and 200 cannons. Of this force, only 3,130 soldiers belonged to the regular army; and only 118,100 soldiers and 104 cannons were reserves. Most of the soldiers were young and undisciplined. Infantry militia soldiers had to buy their own uniforms. The armament for the artillery and cavalry was provided by the government, but they had to provide their own horses and equipment. The Serbian army was headed by Colonel Georgevich, who had served in the Russian army for 20 years with the military rank of major.<sup>1755</sup>

The Serbian Government intentionally showed a lower military budget spending for the year 1867. This maneuver in the budget, during a year in which 65,000 muskets and 72 steel cannons had been purchased, aimed to hide the preparation for war. Serbia made these acquisitions with loans taken from the West and Russia.<sup>1756</sup> The Serbian administration was nationalist enough to get into debt for armament rather than to compensate for the deprivations in areas such as public works and education.

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<sup>1754</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 125-126 (N. M. Toshkov's letter sent from Odessa to N. P. Stremouhov on October 26, 1867).

<sup>1755</sup> TNA, FO 78/1868 (Belgrade Consul J. E. Blunt's message to the Charge d'Affaires' in Istanbul, dated March 27, 1865).

<sup>1756</sup> TNA, FO 78/2033 (J. G. Longworth's message sent from Belgrade to Sir Henry Elliott on January 15, 1868).

While Serbia was fervently making war preparations, an inspection from four Russian officers who arrived at Belgrade in May 1867, showed that in the case of war, Serbia would stand little chance against the Ottoman Army.<sup>1757</sup> On the other hand, based on observations done in 1866 the Serbian military attaché Captain Ljubomir Ivanovich had reached the conclusion that the Greek military power was insufficient as well.<sup>1758</sup>

In the instance of a Balkan war or rebellion, the Bulgarians had very little chance of gaining popular support. According to Konstantin Leontiev in Tulça, Bulgarians were so afraid of Midhat Pasha that they did not go to the Russian Consulate.<sup>1759</sup> The secret service of Midhat Pasha played a great role in this.<sup>1760</sup> The man who was at the head of Midhat Pasha's secret police organization was a Bulgarian named Velichko Simeonoglu towards whom Midhat had full confidence.<sup>1761</sup> Midhat Pasha had many agents and informants. This was enough to make the people reluctant to cooperate with the rebels.

At a time when the Balkan coalition was on the agenda, it is important to note the rumor that a Serbian agent made an assassination attempt on Midhat Pasha. According to the allegation, a man named Jovan<sup>1762</sup> claimed he wanted to become Muslim and work for the administration of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna. He attracted attention by staying too long with Midhat Pasha and subsequently was followed by agents in Rusçuk. The investigation revealed a letter written in Serbian by this man

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<sup>1757</sup> MacKenzie, *Serbs and Russians*, 105.

<sup>1758</sup> Stavrianos, *Balkan Federation*, 97.

<sup>1759</sup> Leontyev, *Diplomatik Mektuplar*, 107 (Konstantin Leontiev's secret message sent from Tulça to Pyotr Nikolaievich on August 21, 1867).

<sup>1760</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 141 (A. E. Suchenkov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on December 7 (December 19), 1867).

<sup>1761</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated February 6, 1868).

<sup>1762</sup> According to French consul in Rusçuk, the name of the assassin was Ivan Milo Savlovich; for some information regarding the assassination attempt, see AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier dated September 14, 1867).

and it stated the purpose of the assassination attempt. Jovan did not know that the letter was in the hands of the administration. Under the pretense of determining the eligibility of entering the civil service, Jovan was dictated a letter in Serbian and the handwritings were compared, thusly confirming that Jovan was the author of the former letter.<sup>1763</sup> Similarly, a Russian agent named Trete who arrived from Odessa to Tulça in October 1867, demanded a job from the provincial administration. Süleyman Pasha answered that they could employ him in a modest position. Suspecting that the Ottoman authorities were watching him, Trete hastily left Tulça in a French ship.<sup>1764</sup>

Between 1860 and 1875, Serbian, Romanian, Greek, Montenegrin and Bulgarian authorities and leaders met many times separately, but for different reasons a coalition never came into existence.<sup>1765</sup> On the other hand, the mountainous terrain in the Balkans and the dense forests of Bulgaria provided a favorable environment for the guerilla war of Bulgarian rebels.<sup>1766</sup> According to Robert Dalyell, by the autumn of 1867, before leaving Rusçuk, Midhat Pasha came very close to finishing off banditry.<sup>1767</sup> However, the defeat of Bulgarian rebels in June 1867 was a temporary victory and the scattered gangs were re-positioned in a way that could arise in other forms. The aim of the Bulgarian committees was to continue their actions long enough for the West to intervene.<sup>1768</sup> In fact, in 1868, one of the Bulgarian committees organized various meetings in the house of the

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<sup>1763</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 580/26048 (Midhat Paşa's letter to Grand Vizierate dated September 7, 1867 (Rumi 26 Ağustos 1283)).

<sup>1764</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier dated 10 October 1867).

<sup>1765</sup> Stavrianos, *Balkan Federation*, 84-122.

<sup>1766</sup> TNA, FO 78/2035 (Robert Dalyell's message sent fro Rusçuk to Lord Stanley on January 30, 1868).

<sup>1767</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1768</sup> HHSA, PA XXXVIII, Konsulate 175 (Sax's message from Rusçuk to Graf von Beust dated June 12, 1867).

dragoman of the Netherlands Consulate The Russian and Dutch Consuls participated in these meetings.<sup>1769</sup>

When we take into consideration all the events that took place in the Balkans in 1867, we can say that the mild militarization efforts of Midhat Pasha had a deterrent effect on the forces attempting a Balkan war. However, due to the lack of military force, the idea of creating a paramilitary force only with Muslim soldiers can be considered as a kind of gamble in the long run. Midhat Pasha needed to have remained longer as Governor of the Tuna for the elimination of drawbacks of this condition to take place, for the completion of comprehensive defense projects, and for the institutionalization of a regional security-intelligence force. This was not permitted.

## **7.2. The End of Midhat's Governorship**

In 1867, together with the end of the absolutism of Napoleon III, Ottoman state dignitaries also began to look for ways to renew their ruling. This search accelerated especially after the European travels of Abdulaziz. As a result, on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1868 the State Council (*Şura-yı Devlet*) was established.<sup>1770</sup> The Council of the State was divided into five sections, each consisting of ten members. These were Interior/War, Finance/Endowments, Justice/Law, Public Works/Trade, and Public Instruction.<sup>1771</sup> Midhat Pasha was appointed as the head of the State Council. In March 1868, Sabri Pasha was appointed as Governor-General of Tuna instead of Midhat Pasha.<sup>1772</sup>

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<sup>1769</sup> TNA, FO 195/891 (Robert Dalyell's memorandum dated January 26, 1868).

<sup>1770</sup> Stanford Jay Shaw, "The Central Legislative Councils in the Nineteenth Century Ottoman Reform Movement before 1876", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Jan., 1970), 75.

<sup>1771</sup> Shaw, "The Central Legislative Councils in the Nineteenth Century Ottoman Reform Movement before 1876", 76.

<sup>1772</sup> TNA, FO 78/2035.

According to the statement dated June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1881 by Midhat Pasha to the *Yıldız Mahkemesi* (Yıldız Court) upon the return of Midhat Pasha from Istanbul to the *Vilâyet* of Tuna, people burned candles in towns like Varna, Rusçuk, Prevadi (Provadiya) and Zıştovi to show their satisfaction. When Ignatiev heard of this, he mentioned it to the Sultan saying that Midhat Pasha was actually announcing his vice-royalty in the Danube. According to Midhat Pasha, this was the reason he was made the head of the State Council, even though he had wished to remain in the Danube.<sup>1773</sup> Ignatiev told Abdülaziz that if the restructuring continued in this way, the *Vilâyet* of Tuna would end up being like Egypt; thus leaving the body of the empire.<sup>1774</sup> Indeed, the *Vilâyet* of Tuna in terms of civil, political, legal and judicial officers resembled more a *beylik*(principality) than a *Vilâyet*.<sup>1775</sup>

When Midhat Pasha left the *Vilâyet* of Tuna in 1868, he was leaving behind many unfinished projects. The full arrangement of government buildings, the resettlement in the province of approximately 8 thousand Abkhasian migrants, the improvement of iron factories in Samokov, the construction of a battalion barracks in the fortress of Silistre and the construction of an artillery barracks in Rusçuk were some of the projects in which Midhat Pasha was directly involved with and which the administration of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna had not completed yet. Again, due to the great benefits of the existing 56 police stations from Vidin up to Rusçuk, the construction of outposts further along the Danube River was planned. Thus a strong security and defense line was to be created.<sup>1776</sup> Before the end of his term in Tuna Province, Midhat Pasha took decisions regarding the start of ambitious road

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<sup>1773</sup> Mehmed Zeki Pakalın, *Son Sadrazamlar ve Başvekilleri*, v.1 (İstanbul: Ahmet Sait, 1940), 320.

<sup>1774</sup> Ali Haydar Midhat Bey, *Life of Midhat Pasha*, 41.

<sup>1775</sup> Ebüzziya Tefik, *Yeni Osmanlılar Tarihi*, 232.

<sup>1776</sup> *Tuna*, no: 215, date: October 16, 1867 (Midhat Paşa's speech on the General Council of Vilayet).

construction projects.<sup>1777</sup> The establishment of a free port at Sünne, with land concession for the construction of stores, dealers would be obliged only to pay a small fee for building docks on the riverfront; the repurchase of Rusçuk-Varna railway by the provincial government, with funds collected in the province; the creation of commercial courts in Köstence, Balçık, Maçın, Silistre and Zıştovi, were the other important projects of Midhat Pasha.<sup>1778</sup> Midhat Pasha also wanted to propose a further a loan project of 10 million Turkish liras. The revenues of the province are estimated one million 800 thousand liras and after all services were paid, 1.5 million liras remained. According to the Governor General, that amount would be enough for 20 or 30 years to pay the interests and amortize the principal amount.<sup>1779</sup>

The most serious difficulty, in the short term, of the removal of Midhat Pasha from his post, concerned the insurgent activities in the region. After the failed attempt of 1867, a new and similar revolt was expected to take place in 1868. At a time when Midhat Pasha was trying to increase security measures in the province,<sup>1780</sup> being recalled to Istanbul gave rise to a void of authority much wanted by the Bulgarian revolutionaries in the area.

In this period, a convoy carrying 15-20 thousand small arms arrived from Serbia. Approximately 100 Bulgarian soldiers were being trained in Belgrade. Of these 30 were raised to the rank of sergeant and corporal.<sup>1781</sup> The Ottoman authorities

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<sup>1777</sup> BOA, MVL. 1074/64 (General Council of Vilayet's protocol dated October 25, 1867).

<sup>1778</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier dated November 12, 1867).

<sup>1779</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier dated January 5, 1868).

<sup>1780</sup> At the beginning of 1868, Ottoman Government gave Midhat the right to manage both administrative and military issues in Tuna Province (*Bulgaristan Mesalihine Dair İradat-ı Seniyye, cild 4*, 17-21); thus obtained extraordinary power.

<sup>1781</sup> TNA, FO 78/2035 (Robert Dalyell's message sent from Rusçuk to Sir Henry Elliot on January 18, 1868).

had foreseen that by the end of February, the revolutionaries would attempt to begin multiple rebellions in 6-7 locations across Bulgaria, with the support of Serbia.<sup>1782</sup>

The first gangs came from Wallachia to Zıştovi in July 1868 and crossed near the Yantra River.<sup>1783</sup> Clashes lasted around 3-4 nights until dawn near Zıştovi. Although all the soldiers available were sent, their numbers were not great enough to suppress the gangs. Sabri Pasha saw that these gangs were stronger and better prepared than those of the previous year. The gangs that were heading in the direction of Karaisa (Chernolik) were driven back by the participation of the common people in the conflict.<sup>1784</sup> According to the testimony of Bulgarian gang members who were captured during the initial conflict, the number of gangs that had infiltrated the Vilâyet was over 100.<sup>1785</sup>

Sabri Pasha had given his best efforts against the insurgents, but the gangs were not really driven back. According to the information given by the Governor of Tırnova, there were three initial clashes. The number of gang members killed or taken prisoner was around 70-80. Twelve soldiers had died, while 29 were wounded. Among the civilians, 15 died and around 40-50 were wounded.<sup>1786</sup> The Ottomans suffered great losses. The gang members escaped to the mountains and forests and easily disappeared without a trace. Seeing the issue had reached a significant dimension the Sublime Porte decided to send Midhat Pasha back to the region.<sup>1787</sup> At the time, he had been serving as the Chairman of the State Council.

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<sup>1782</sup> TNA, FO 78/2035 (Robert Dalyell's message sent from Rusçuk to Lord Stanley on January 30, 1868).

<sup>1783</sup> Ahmed Refik, "1284 Bulgar İhtilali", *TTEM*, Sene XV, sayı 9 (86) (İstanbul 1341), 138 (Sabri Pasha's telegram dated July 19, 1868).

<sup>1784</sup> Ahmed Refik, "1284 Bulgar İhtilali", 139-140 (Sabri Pasha's telegram dated July 19, 1868).

<sup>1785</sup> Ahmed Refik, "1284 Bulgar İhtilali", 140.

<sup>1786</sup> Ahmed Refik, "1284 Bulgar İhtilali", 148 (Sabri Pasha's telegram dated July 23, 1868).

<sup>1787</sup> Ahmed Refik, "1284 Bulgar İhtilali", 147-148.



Midhat expected this new attempt of revolution and made plans to suppress this uprising even in September 1867.<sup>1788</sup> After the arrival of Midhat Pasha, some of the people near Kızanlık were given arms and were included in the suppression of the revolt.<sup>1789</sup> In Buzluca the clashes with a gang that was surrounded lasted for 3.5 hours. During the conflict, the leader of the gang Hadji Dimitar was killed. The gang consisted of a total of 124 men, many of whom were unskilled laborers and workers from Romania, a few of them had been trained militarily in Serbia. Circassian immigrants also took part in the conflict. One hundred and one gang members were killed and 22 were captured alive. After public trials were held, five people were executed in Tırnova, two in Kızanlık, one in Zıştovi, one in İslimye (Sliven), one in Gabrova (Gabrovo), and one in Eski Zağra (Stara Zagora). Three convicts of younger age were sentenced to 15 years of harsh imprisonment in the Vidin Prison.<sup>1790</sup> Seventeen *zaptiyes* died during the clashes, 25 were wounded. A total of 20 people from the reserve soldiers, Circassians and locals also died during the clashes; 30-35 were wounded. Ottoman losses were this heavy because the gang members were hidden in groves, while the Ottoman forces were exposed to their fire. Moreover, the Bulgarian gang members fought to the very end. According to information from the gang members captured alive, some of them were fleeing due to crimes they had committed in Romania and Serbia. The main purpose of this particular gang attack was to unite other gangs that were to follow.<sup>1791</sup>

Midhat Pasha arrived in Tırnova with 6,000 soldiers, thus almost destroying the Bulgarian forces. Many of the Bulgarian rebels and those thought to be

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<sup>1788</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated September 30, 1867).

<sup>1789</sup> Ahmed Refik, "1284 Bulgar İhtilali", 150 (Midhat Pasha's telegram dated August 3, 1868).

<sup>1790</sup> TNA, FO 195/891.

<sup>1791</sup> Ahmed Refik, "1284 Bulgar İhtilali", 150-152 (Midhat Pasha's telegram sent from Tırnova on August 3, 1868).

connected to the events were tortured.<sup>1792</sup> Suchenkov considered the executions to be part of Midhat Pasha's terror.<sup>1793</sup> The French Ambassador claimed that there may be a new revolt in Bulgaria, even though everything seemed quiet. Ignatiev claimed that if this was to take place, the fault would be Midhat Pasha's, who had angered the Bulgarian people with his deeds.<sup>1794</sup> The main sources of the criticism towards Midhat Pasha were the use of Circassians during the repression of the rebellion, and the cruel methods implemented during the executions of Bulgarian revolutionaries.<sup>1795</sup> Some insurgents' heads, which were cut off, were placed in the knives' edges by *bashibozuks* and paraded in the villages.<sup>1796</sup> This attempt of rebellion was more daring than the previous one; and Midhat's methods were more brutal in 1868.

The Sublime Porte believed that if the proper intervention steps were not taken in Bulgaria, the whole thing would turn into a second Crete incident.<sup>1797</sup> Midhat Pasha's harshness, especially during the second rebellion, caused his popularity to increase among the Young Ottomans.<sup>1798</sup> However, for an administrator like Midhat Pasha, the fact that the rebellion was suppressed was not enough. Midhat Pasha believed that it was essential to take, precautionary measures. He wanted to reinforce 1000 regular soldiers in the Danube cordon<sup>1799</sup>, build a

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<sup>1792</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 295 (Baron Offenbergh's report sent from Bucharest to Gorchakov dated 26 July, 1868).

<sup>1793</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 313 (A. E. Suchenkov's report sent from Rusçuk to N. P. Ignatiev on August 10, 1868).

<sup>1794</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 315 (N. P. Ignatiev's report sent from Büyükdere to Alexander II on August 13, 1868).

<sup>1795</sup> HHSÄ,PA XXXVIII, Konsulate 182 (Consul Carl von Dragoritsch's message from Rusçuk to Graf von Beust from Rusçuk dated August 1, 1868).

<sup>1796</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated August 13, 1868).

<sup>1797</sup> *Rusiia i Bulgarskoto Natsialno-Osvoboditelno Dvizhenie, 1856-1876: dokumenty i materialy* (Sofya, 2002), 300 (N. P. Ignatiev's report sent from Büyükdere to Alexander II on August 2, 1868).

<sup>1798</sup> Ignatiev, *Diplomaticeskii Zapiski*, 250.

<sup>1799</sup> Midhat's demand was accepted by Sublime Porte after the suppression of Bulgarian revolt and Ottoman Government decided to send two battalions consisted of 1500 soldiers to reinforce the military force in the Danube line (*Bulgaristan Mesalihine Dair İradat-ı Seniyye cild 4*, 78).

barrack in Tirnova, establish a garrison in Gabrova, establish forts on certain points of the Balkans and install some Circassian colonies in the forests that cover the mountains.<sup>1800</sup> According to Midhat Pasha, the Porte had to look seriously to enlighten the people through a system of public education that allowed him to reduce and even destroy the tireless efforts of Russian influence.<sup>1801</sup> He wrote an extensive document on the measures that need to be taken in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna against the Bulgarian insurgents.

#### Midhat Pasha's Memorandum

In his memorandum dated 16 August 1868 (27 Rebiülahir 1285), Midhat Pasha referred to the preparations made by gangs to cross along the shore between Tulça and Vidin. However, this had been prevented by the presence of the regular and reserve soldiers along the River Danube.<sup>1802</sup> Because the ideas of Slavism were spreading further among the youth from year to year, those who went to be educated in Serbia, Romania and Russia became individuals who were staunchly anti-Ottoman. The Russians were materially and morally supporting the ever increasing Bulgarian forces that demanded independence. Only one year before, committees had been active only in Odessa, Bolgrad, Galatz, Braila and Bucharest; now, these Bulgarian committees had spread to all the cities and towns of Bessarabia. Russian agents were busy preparing and delivering munitions along the shoreline from Odessa to Izmail. Upon warning from the Sublime Porte, the Romanian government had imprisoned a few gang members; however, the prisoners were not among the gang leaders and were let free after a certain period.<sup>1803</sup>

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<sup>1800</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated August 8, 1868).

<sup>1801</sup> AMAE, Turquie, Roustchuk et Widdin, 1 (Schefer's letter from Rusçuk to Marquis de Moustier, dated August 13, 1868).

<sup>1802</sup> Ahmed Refik, "1284 Bulgar İhtilali", 157.

<sup>1803</sup> Ahmed Refik, "1284 Bulgar İhtilali", 158.

A few victories over the gangs were not enough to solve the problem, because unless existing conditions were changed there would be similar events every year. A few thousand gang members lived on the other shore of the Danube and in Bessarabia. They were becoming financially stronger every day and also more experienced after each clash and attempted rebellion. According to Midhat Pasha, a broad agitation was not possible at this point because the welfare of the people had increased. The Bulgarian insurgents were aware that gangs of 300-500 members which infiltrated the *Vilâyet* of Tuna were not able to bring about great revolts. Their aim was to enter into clashes and create an environment for Muslim and Christian people to fight each other. With regard to the Bulgarian committees, contacting the Romanian government and making use of diplomatic channels were not effective ways of dealing with the problem.<sup>1804</sup>

In the *Vilâyet* of Tuna there were 12 thousand regular soldiers, approximately 3,300 *zaptiyes*, and 30 thousand reserve soldiers; at first glance, these were very big numbers. However, when we take into consideration the size of the *Vilâyet*, these numbers were still insufficient as at some of the locations where clashes were taking place, troops couldn't even be deployed. The local reserve soldiers had been useful during the clashes with gangs in Tırnova. They were brought over from Zıştovi and Rusçuk, but they lacked arms and discipline. Other localities, besides Zıştovi and Rusçuk, had reserve soldiers only on paper; therefore the alleged reserve force was not a real force. The only real force at hand were the regular troops and upon the emergence of bandit gangs, 5-6 battalions of the regular forces were deployed to the shores of the Danube.

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<sup>1804</sup> Ahmed Refik, "1284 Bulgar İhtilali", 159.

Niş and Vidin were also considered important positions; therefore, troops were stationed at these localities as well. Given that this was the case, the number of soldiers stationed within the *Vilâyet* was inadequate. Due to an insufficient number of troops the panicked Muslim population grabbed their arms and became involved in the last clashes with the gangs. This was the dreaded turning point that would lead to adverse events.<sup>1805</sup>

According to Midhat Pasha, other positions besides those on the shore should take security measures; outposts and military waterfronts should be established. However, such a long track could not rely solely on regular soldiers, because the regular soldiers were needed inside the *Vilâyet* as well. A battalion was always stationed in the vicinities of Sünne and Diyakova (Gjakova), but its soldieries were not very orderly. According to Midhat Pasha, the number of outposts from Tulça to Sünne (Sulina) and Diyakova which was at that time 28, and from Rusçuk to Vidin which was 54, needed to be increased to preferably 200, or at the minimum to 180. On the track from Gabrovo to Shipka, and between Toryan and Derbent the number of soldiers needed to be increased from 20 to 50; therefore, strongholds and blockhouses capable of accommodating these bigger numbers needed to be built. A new force called “waterfront soldiers” (*kordon askeri*) consisting of 1,500 troops needed to be established. Even though the expenses and salaries of this new force would be 30 yük *guruş* a year, they would facilitate the work of a significant number of regular army soldiers, including the battalion in Sünne. Therefore, in the event of any incident, panic due to a lack of troops would not occur.<sup>1806</sup>

The most critical points to the Bulgarian issue were Ziştovi, Tırnova, Gabrova, İslimye (Sliven), Kızanlık and Filibe. Besides the Second Army artillery

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<sup>1805</sup> Ahmed Refik, “1284 Bulgar İhtilali”, 160.

<sup>1806</sup> Ahmed Refik, “1284 Bulgar İhtilali”, 161.

troops, in the *Vilâyets* of Edirne and Tuna there needed to be in total 15 thousand soldiers who served as infantry and cavalry. Of these, four battalions needed to be stationed in Rusçuk, Tırnova, Zıřtovi and Gabrova. Three battalions needed to be located in Filibe, Kızanlık and İslimye, the rest of the soldiers needed to be in řumnu, Niř, Vidin and Sofya.<sup>1807</sup>

Even when there were barracks that could accommodate these soldiers, some of them had serious problems. To illustrate, in the government building in Tırnova the barracks of the soldiers were in very poor condition. Therefore, a new and stone-walled barracks needed to be built in the meadow outside the town Marnopol and it needed to have the capacity necessary to accommodate one battalion. Again, in Gabrova two more wards needed to be added to the already existing two in the government building. All these would cost approximately 4-5 yük. In Rusçuk, the cavalry barracks were repaired each year at the cost of 30-40 thousand *guruř*. For this reason and due to the importance of its position, it was critical to renovate the barracks in Rusçuk. Midhat Pasha suggested that the expenses for the renovation activities be covered from the tithe that was collected from the emigrants. Subsequently, the administration of Midhat Pasha had begun collecting the tithe from emigrants who were taught farming and had planned to use the money in the health sector and to help poor emigrants. The money collected from tithe in a year reached 5 million *guruř*, so part of this income was used to meet the expenses of the barracks.<sup>1808</sup>

Ever since they had discovered the importance of education, Bulgarians tried to send their children to school. However, because they were not capable of meeting their own demands, the Russians were filling in the void. Bulgarian children were

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<sup>1807</sup> Ahmed Refik, “1284 Bulgar İhtilali”, 161.

<sup>1808</sup> Ahmed Refik, “1284 Bulgar İhtilali”, 162.

taught in schools for free in Nikolaev, Kishinev and Odessa. Children from all over Bulgaria were sent to these schools and the Russians distributed books for free. Therefore, memorandums prepared on innovation in education were being evaluated in the Grand Council of Tuna. According to Midhat Pasha, the state needed to provide more support towards the reform in education, including the funds necessary for these reforms.<sup>1809</sup>

As can be seen in this memorandum, Midhat Pasha had a clear vision concerning the Bulgarian Question. According to Hayreddin Nedim Bey, if Midhat Pasha had stayed 2-3 years longer in the *Vilâyet* of Tuna, the Balkan problem would not have reached such dimensions in 1875-1876.<sup>1810</sup> But Midhat Pasha was not cognizant of the diplomacy of the Sublime Porte. That is why he was not on good terms with Ali Pasha.<sup>1811</sup> Ali Pasha, profiting from his own closeness to the French Ambassador Bourêe had Midhat Pasha removed as head of the Council of the State and appointed as Governor of Baghdad.<sup>1812</sup> Midhat Pasha did not consider the move to Baghdad a holiday. As soon as he reached Baghdad in 1869, he used local resources to establish the first Rüşdiye of Baghdad.<sup>1813</sup>

### The End of Reform

In the words of Ebüzziya Tevfik, the *Vilâyet* of Tuna opened a new era in Ottoman history. The laws of the state were in no time period and in no place applied with such success as in this *Vilâyet*.<sup>1814</sup> By 1869, Bulgaria was known among the Christian *Vilâyets* as the one most prosperous.<sup>1815</sup> When Duc de Leuzon was

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<sup>1809</sup> Ahmed Refik, "1284 Bulgar İhtilali", 163-164.

<sup>1810</sup> Hayreddin Nedim Göçen, *Vesâik-i Tarihiye ve Siyasiye*, 105.

<sup>1811</sup> Hayreddin Nedim Göçen, *Vesâik-i Tarihiye ve Siyasiye*, 105-106.

<sup>1812</sup> Ahmet Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir: 40-Tetimme*, 94.

<sup>1813</sup> Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire*, 115.

<sup>1814</sup> Ebüzziya Tevfik, *Yeni Osmanlılar Tarihi*, 229.

<sup>1815</sup> Dicey, *The Morning Land*, 22.

defending the reforms in 1876, the *Vilâyet* of Tuna and Midhat Pasha's deeds were his point of reference.<sup>1816</sup>

Due to the climate conditions in 1868 in Bulgaria, the harvest of grain and its trade suffered a great loss, whose results were extremely negative for the government, farmers, leaseholders and traders. As a result, the government had trouble finding tax-farmers willing to participate in the tithe auction.<sup>1817</sup> The local people believed that abundance had left the region because Midhat Pasha had been taken from his position as governor in 1868.<sup>1818</sup> Midhat Pasha was known by two names among the people: the first was Gözlüklü Pasha (Bespectacled Pasha), the second Gavur Pasha (Giaour Pasha).<sup>1819</sup>

There were attempts to replicate the example of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna in other regions of the Empire as well. But as Ismail Kemal Bey said, these replications were not successful because none had a Midhat Pasha.<sup>1820</sup> Sabri Pasha was appointed to replace Midhat Pasha. He had previously served as Governor of Vidin. While he was occupying this position, Longworth, the British Consul in Belgrade, called Sabri Pasha a man with the most character and the cleverest among the governors with whom he had worked.<sup>1821</sup> However, Sabri Pasha did not serve long as governor. In 1871, another governor, Ömer Fevzi Pasha who had great plans was appointed in Sabri's place. But soon after that Ömer Fevzi was appointed to Kandiye (Heraklion).<sup>1822</sup>

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<sup>1816</sup> L. (Louis) Léouzon Le Duc, *La Turquie, est-elle incapable de réformes?* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1876), 19-20.

<sup>1817</sup> *Commercial Reports Received at The Foreign Office From Her Majesty's Consuls, in 1869*, 222 (Report by Vice-Consul Mr. Mayers, on the Trade and Commerce of Varna during the Year 1868).

<sup>1818</sup> *Commercial Reports Received at The Foreign Office From Her Majesty's Consuls, in 1869*, 224 (Report by Vice-Consul Mr. Mayers, on the Trade and Commerce of Varna during the Year 1868).

<sup>1819</sup> Clair-Brophy, *Residence in Bulgaria*, 393.

<sup>1820</sup> *İsmail Kemal Bey*, 29.

<sup>1821</sup> TNA, FO 881/1393 (Report by Consul-General Longworth on the Organization of the Vilayet of the Danube drafted on August 4, 1865).

<sup>1822</sup> Kanitz, *La Bulgarie*, 226.



As was stated by the Vice-Consul Mayers in Varna after Midhat Pasha left the *Vilâyet* improvements were no longer seen and even the traces of the actualized reforms began to fade.<sup>1823</sup> After Midhat Pasha, people frequently complained that their taxes were going to the pockets of the “great” pashas.<sup>1824</sup> After Midhat Pasha, Istanbul reduced the salaries of the employees, while the offices of vice-governor and foreign affairs department were shut down.<sup>1825</sup> Midhat Pasha had established a modern farmstead in the region between Hezargrad and Vetovo which was up to Western standards.<sup>1826</sup> However, the following administrations considered the short-term interests rather than the welfare of the people. Due to corruption, Midhat Pasha’s innovative methods of agriculture did not produce any effects. After the departure of Midhat Pasha, *ıslahhanes* also fell into debt.<sup>1827</sup> The *Vilâyet* steamship company which was to own seven steamships stopped its activity due to the lack of vision of the people appointed afterwards.<sup>1828</sup> Just as reforms had come to the point of stopping completely, the civil servants working for the governor were sent away from the *Vilâyet* unpleasantly.<sup>1829</sup> Thus the administration team that had been so difficultly put together was quickly disintegrated. The *Vilâyet* of Tuna was no longer the center for the production of new reforms.

The results of the discontinuation of the project of the *Vilâyet* of Tuna became clearer in 1875. After the Rebellion of Eski Zağra (Stara Zagora), the rebels requested the following from the Governor of Edirne, Hurşid Pasha, and from the Governor of Filibe, Tosun Pasha: freedom of press, to make Bulgarian the official language, to have civil servants selected from the Bulgarian population, to have

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<sup>1823</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1824</sup> Kanitz, *La Bulgarie*, 370.

<sup>1825</sup> *Midhat Paşa'nın Hatıraları*, 58.

<sup>1826</sup> Kanitz, *La Bulgarie*, 527.

<sup>1827</sup> TNA, FO 881/2956.

<sup>1828</sup> Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, *Serail und Hohe Pforte*, 239-240.

<sup>1829</sup> Schweiger-Lerchenfeld, 244.

Bulgarians drafted as soldiers, to give Bulgarian soldiers the same rights as the Turkish ones, soldiers were to have uniforms and these uniforms were to be designed according to the Bulgarian traditions, and to have flag. According to the rebels, the tax-farming system needed to be lifted, a commission controlling the work of the civil servants and the collection of taxes was to be established, the taxes needed to be reduced, land deeds had to not be altered often, regional assemblies had to be elected by the people, and the Bulgarian people had to have the right to carry arms as freely as the Circassians and the Turks did. The government was to not follow repressive politics, the public administration needed to respond quickly to petitions submitted by the people, and bribery had to be stopped; these were also among the requests.<sup>1830</sup> As can be seen from the demands, the developments after 1868 had been close to nil.

According to Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, Midhat Pasha strengthened nationalism among the Muslims and pushed the Bulgarians into the arms of Russia. It was due to this condition that Russia claimed that Bulgarians were being mistreated and decided to interfere. Even though complaints about the misdeeds of tax-farmers were very common among the people; these tax-farmers also had influential people who protected them in Istanbul so they managed to silence the civil servants through bribery. Because problems such as these were not solved, Russia had the opportunity to offer protection to the Bulgarians. According to Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, Midhat Pasha supported war with Russia. For this reason, he caused the public to become agitated by encouraging war with Russia.<sup>1831</sup>

However, what Ahmed Cevdet Pasha failed to see was that Midhat Pasha had frequently brought forth reform proposals in Bulgaria and had even implemented them in many cases. When needed, Midhat Pasha had also protected Bulgarian

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<sup>1830</sup> *İz Arkhivata na Naiden Gerov*, v. 1, 83-84.

<sup>1831</sup> BOA, Y. EE.. 38/133.

orphans. As we saw in the memorandum prepared by Midhat Pasha in 1868, he had had a vision of ensuring security in Bulgaria and about the Bulgarian issue. The punishment of the rebels who attempted to revolt was a necessity, as it was pointed out by Carl Sax. Ahmed Cevdet Pasha's accusations that Midhat Pasha was supporting war with Russia were only part of his foresight with regard to war and it turned out to be true. The Article of the Treaty of Paris in 1870 on the demilitarization of the Black Sea was breached at the London Conference and talks about freeing Russia's military hands in the Black Sea were discussed. In 1881, Ahmed Cevdet Pasha became the main prosecutor and interrogator of Midhat who accused him of being involved in the murder of Sultan Abdülaziz,<sup>1832</sup> and his sole aim behind the criticism of Midhat's attitude towards Russia was to belittle Midhat and nothing more.

There is truth in the opinion criticized in recent years regarding the decline paradigm in the Ottoman Empire. First of all, we should bear in mind that the problem Midhat Pasha was trying to fix in 3-4 years was neither new nor a few years old. This was a problem that had roots that were part of a process which had been continuing for centuries in the empire. For years, the State had stayed away from industrial production, the people were lazy and uneducated, and the treasury had very little to invest; these all set limits to what could be done. Midhat Pasha appeared to be among the most competent statesmen among the Ottomans to develop detailed projects in this environment. Despite the large looming crisis, he rowed against the current in the Balkans thus forcing the process.

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<sup>1832</sup> Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, 216.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONCLUSION

After the Crimean War, the realization of reforms in the Ottoman Empire relied on the European system established with the 1856 Paris Peace Treaty. However, in 1867, Ali Pasha sorrowfully described how the hope for the Paris Peace Treaty to establish security for the Ottoman Empire, which would be able to set things right in the meantime, evaporated immediately due to the attitude of the West. As Ali Pasha put it, Napoleon, for the sake of winning Russia, acted against the Ottoman Empire in the Moldo-Wallachia, Serbia, Montenegro, Syria and Crete issues even before the ink on the Paris Peace Treaty dried.<sup>1833</sup>

In this period, Britain's "balance of power" strategy would wear off and the Paris Peace Treaty would turn into a dead letter in a short while. The Ottomans encountered nationalism which was strengthening in the Balkans as well as the Syrian and Cretan crises almost like a continuous wave of crisis. The rise of the German Empire after the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) changed the balances of power in continental Europe, and the rapid rise of Germany also overshadowed the achievements of Russian imperialism.

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<sup>1833</sup> *Belgelerle Tanzimat*, 9.

The events in Crete (1867) constituted a turning point, for these events resulted in a weakening of the political groups which supported the Ottoman Empire in the West. For instance, there had not been a great anti-Ottoman force in the British parliament during the Syrian Crisis (1860-61). However, in 1867-68, the perception of 'Turkish brutality' was already present in the British Parliament. During the events in Crete, passionate Christian conservative figures such as Charles James Monk, Christopher Darby-Griffith and the Duke of Argyll appeared in the Parliament;<sup>1834</sup> this situation would play an important role in the anti-Ottoman discourse in terms of its influence over public opinion. Reform attempts such as the project of Tuna Province were overshadowed by the debates on the Cretan Crisis. In a period of economic growth and of imperial conflicts, European powers could not be expected to give up their imperial designs and support Ottoman reform attempts, even under the best of conditions. For strategic reasons, it was Britain that wanted the Ottoman Empire to gain power; however, due to the changes British politics underwent, such support would gradually disappear. In short, the Paris Peace Treaty (1856), which could be understood as the guarantee of Western support for Ottoman reform attempts, turns out to be only an anomaly.

After the Crimean War, many improvements were accomplished in the last years of Âli Pasha (1812-1871) and Fuad Pasha (1815-1869). However, in an atmosphere where the success of reforms depended on individual efforts, the subsequent deaths of these two pashas meant a deceleration for the reforms achieved during their vizierate. Âli Pasha and Fuad Pasha knew that the issue of reforms was also an international issue; yet expecting Sultan Abdülaziz and the groups which seized power after the death of these pashas to act with the same awareness meant

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<sup>1834</sup> Ann Pottinger Saab, "The Doctors' Dilemma: Britain and the Cretan Crisis 1866-69", *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 49, No. 4, On Demand Supplement. (Dec., 1977), D1396-D1398D1383-D1407.

expecting these groups, whose interests depended on the corruptness of the regime, to eliminate themselves.

One of the matters that best exemplified the problem of a lack of institutionalization in reforms was the provincial reform. Due to the success of the new provincial system in model provinces, particularly in the Tuna Province, the system was extended to a general system implemented on a national scale with the establishment of new provinces such as Bursa, Konya, Çanakkale, Trabzon, Izmir, Ankara, Diyarbakir, Sivas, Kastamonu, Selanik, Yanya, Prizren and İşkodra.<sup>1835</sup> Yet in 1872, Mahmud Nedim Pasha chose Selanik and Sivas as model provinces and tried his own system; in this context, *sanjaks* became new power centers, and larger *sanjaks* were created contrary to the reform in 1867. Rapid failure of the system would end Mahmud Pasha's post in the vizierate.<sup>1836</sup>

Again, in this second round of the Tanzimat, despite the presence of tens of students sent abroad, it is very difficult to say that a generation of science that would lead Ottoman Empire in the face of rapid international changes emerged. For instance, the fact that the purchase of periodicals containing the latest scientific studies in Europe stopped after the second opening of the *Darülfünun* in 1870<sup>1837</sup> indicates that conservative and spontaneous tendencies were still powerful in a period in which the Ottoman Empire was claimed to have opened itself to the West. Again, the inclusion of courses for the introduction of Western science and technology in the *Darülfünun* curriculum, rather than those for the introduction of Western law and economics<sup>1838</sup> shows the Ottoman administrators' distance to the idea of reorganizing the empire in the civil arena and the priority of conservative

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<sup>1835</sup> Shaw, "Local Administrations in the Tanzimat" 45.

<sup>1836</sup> Shaw, "Local Administrations in the Tanzimat", 47.

<sup>1837</sup> İhsanoğlu, "Tanzimat Döneminde İstanbul'da Darülfünun Kurma Teşebbüsleri", 413.

<sup>1838</sup> İhsanoğlu, "Tanzimat Döneminde İstanbul'da Darülfünun Kurma Teşebbüsleri", 421.

elements over reformist ones. The process and potentials indicated that disintegration of the empire was unavoidable in the long run with then present human resources and that it was moving towards a nation-state that would replace the Ottoman Empire.

As Hobsbawm claims in his general approach to the matter, the attempt to transform society and state based on merely political power failed, because this attempt was not supported by economic independence.<sup>1839</sup> Moreover, slow growth of the Muslim commercial society and the fact that newly emerging social segments were denied the permission to get organized in associations, through which they could represent their interests, thoroughly limited the extension area of political leadership.

Rejuvenation means unclouded intellect. However, Ottoman statesmen want to see “the change” on one side and kept themselves close to the pragmatic and conformist understanding governing the old regime to a great extent. This was the reason why ideas put forth until 1864 had remained on paper to a high degree and could not be transformed into concrete projects. The Ottoman elite was dominated by an administrative attitude that generated solutions of a provisional and nearly always local nature through the entrusting of specific duties to certain highly qualified statesmen rather than reforming the country with an energetic approach through central regulations. The Ottoman government had not been able to demonstrate the necessary commitment in such crucial matters as the renewal of human resources and formulation of legal and administrative standards. In this context, the emergence of the Young Ottoman movement was not only a matter that would be associated with the birth of a generation raised with new ideas. The year 1868 witnessed the emergence of a generation that would criticize the Ottoman government with a

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<sup>1839</sup> Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital*, 148.

radical rigidity kneaded with an artistic sensibility. This was, in a sense, a result of the failure of the Ottoman administration to satisfy expectations and the lack of energy they found themselves in during the 1856-1868 period. In fact, the groups of intellectuals led by Namık Kemal and Ali Suavi were observed to focus frequently on post-1856 politics and the general failure to establish genuine legal and institutional principles of reform in their articles.

It became obvious that the realization of reforms was impossible without touching the old corrupt political structure which represented a network of intrigues. Therefore, after 1868, the main focus of intellectuals like Namık Kemal shifted to the political system, i.e., rebuilding of the administrative system. The impossibility of rebuilding the society through old methods and institutions was clearly seen. This rendered the emergence of an innovation- and reform-oriented political movement – even a political party – a historical necessity. Holding the leading role of a die-hard reformer, Midhat Pasha, whose efforts for the completion of his Tuna Province project were stopped, and who was discharged from his post as the President of the State Council, in the Coup of 1876 and the Young Ottomans' realization of their dreams of a parliament were not separate from this issue. All these were an extension of the issue of the provincial reform interrupted by 1869, of a reform conflict, an internal feud.

Even before 1876, there had been reform efforts in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Eastern provinces, and Bulgaria. Neither the reform efforts nor the idea of reformism was new. However, there was a lack of stability in the realization of these intended reforms; the administrative center never displayed the necessary determination. What the Ottoman administrators construed from reform was mostly limited to efforts to construct and repair bridges, to combat banditry, and to reveal corruptive practices of



local authorities. However, the concept of innovation did not hold a permanent place in the minds of Ottoman statesmen both in Istanbul and in the provincial organization. The meaning of innovation in their minds was obscure. The reform efforts most time remained spontaneous. The same problems emerged in the same form in different periods, and thus the promise of reform failed to attract the attention of the West in 1876 when Ottoman statesmen were more sincere than before.

The Ottoman Empire faced both internal and external threats. Therefore, external threats are occasionally considered to be the factor that made it impossible for the Ottomans to realize reforms immediately. Nevertheless, as seen in this study, the Ottoman Empire was not the sole country to face internal and external problems. European Powers were also dealing with really serious internal and external issues, and Russia was far from the power that could sustain another big conflict in the aftermath of the Crimean War. Thus, in that period, in which it was possible for the Ottoman Empire to find loans and credits easily no matter how dire the circumstances were, they did not pay enough heed to the advice of British statesmen and foreign observers and failed to utilize their opportunities.

Here, by opportunity, we do not mean that the Ottoman Empire would step into a new age. However, it is obvious how important the Bosnian Revolt that started in 1875 and the Bulgarian Revolt in 1876 were for the outbreak of the 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian War as well as the consequent loss of territory suffered by the Ottoman Empire and her weakening. If the project of Tuna Province had been continued, it would have enabled significant achievements in the de-escalation of the Bulgarian Crisis, and, as it was initially intended, with the extension of the project to the surrounding provinces, it would have prevented the bloody and destructive series of events in regions such as Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia. Therefore, it would

have been less possible for Russia to declare war against the Ottoman Empire in 1877.

Ottoman statesmen attempted to carry out a modernization process devoid of a comprehensive secularization program. Yet, this Janus-headed system which contained both modern and traditional elements produced nothing but chaos. Due to the failure of a complete transition to a secular legal system, the conflict between Muslims and Christians continued, and reforms were attempted to be realized without the support of a strong legal order. In parallel to this, a partial secularization was achieved in the Tuna Province which was the focus of the provincial reform project, but, as was the case in other parts of the Empire, traditional elements lingered there as well, in a different structure. Also, since an educational system in which basic sciences would predominate was not adopted, both Christians sought the support of the West and Russia in this regard, and the uneducated Muslim population largely devoid of the technical knowledge of the new century kept losing power.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Christians grew stronger vis-à-vis Muslims in both urban and economic life; yet this was not due to the Ottoman reforms, but because of the loss of power suffered by Muslims due to the corruption and failures in the system. Christians, who established better relations with the West and met new riches as the Ottoman Empire weakened, and who filled the gap left by the male Muslim population since universal conscription was being applied only to Muslims, would later see the serious results produced by the systemic problems that only appeared to have granted them benefits.

One of the most significant reasons behind the failure to add permanence to the prescribed reforms was a problem arising from the inability to centralize the affairs accompanied by instability in administrative ranks. The Ottoman State was

bereft of a central structure that would allow the practices it had resolved to put into action to be disseminated around the provinces. As can be seen in this study, decentralization and powerful local elements did not strengthen, but usually weakened the process of reforms. Muslim magnates grouped together in local assemblies and, supported by religious fanatics, constituted the greatest obstacle for reforms. This anti-reformism sometimes showed itself among non-Muslim traditional elements such as the *Çorbacıs* in the Balkans whose interests depended on the continuation of the old system. These local powers very well comprehended the foundations of the Istanbul-based corrupt system. In order to maintain their power, these local notables established monetary relations with both administrators in Istanbul and those appointed to local units, and then entered political alliances based on such monetary relations. It was not difficult for them to pacify those administrators who intended to eliminate the problems in their regions or those with whom they simply had problems. While maintaining their power, they largely depended on a type of religious fanaticism that we may call Muslim nationalism.

The perpetual weakening of Muslims vis-à-vis Christians in both economic and educational terms due to the failures in strengthening the Muslim economic society, in freeing the people from these local powers through education and economics, and in expanding military service so as to include Christians as well constituted the main factors which strengthened Muslim nationalism. In this period, Ottoman governments failed to integrate non-Muslims into the state and thus surrendered to the possible reactions, with Muslim fanaticism being subjected to the state dignitaries in the Tanzimat period, which is usually considered by the modern Turkish people to be predominated by Westernization.

In the period of reforms, failure in subjugating local elements and in controlling the reactions of the Muslim society resulted in a great trouble known as the Armenian Question. Unlike Bulgarians, Armenians did not have a single large geographical region where they held the majority in terms of population. Therefore, an independence movement was not a nation-state era necessity for Armenians. Thus, through reforms, gradual dissolution of local powers which were loyal to the old system could have prevented the Armenian crisis from reaching a dimension that had a heavy cost such as the events in 1890-1918. What limited the force of local powers vis-à-vis reforms was the inability of these powers, which were not affected much by the modernization, to form a national-scale network.

The Bulgarian question and the responding attitude of Midhat Pasha represent only one of the examples documenting the unchangingly fixed attitude of Ottoman statesmen and intellectuals. Ottoman administration had addressed the national question insistently as a mere question of religion during the rise of nations until the demise of the empire. What is more, they believed that improvements in public works and education would be sufficient to restrain national awakenings. Revolutionism was considered to be almost synonymous with ordinary banditry and Russian conspiracy. Even one of the most moderate Ottoman statesmen, Midhat Pasha, and perhaps the most important intellectual in Ottoman history, Namık Kemal, had convinced themselves that an order based on the supremacy of Muslims could survive in areas where Christians held the majority. This shallow outlook is exemplified by the lack of the papers of any depth written by Midhat Pasha and Ottoman state dignitaries with respect to the Bulgarian revolutionary movement.

When Midhat Pasha was Governor-General of Tuna, he was accused, especially by Western and Russian observers, of gathering all the power into the

administration and of adopting an excessively dominant attitude. However, Midhat Pasha had already attained sufficient experience with respect to the circumstances of the country before he was appointed as Governor of Tuna. He was aware of the fact that rejuvenation was impossible without subjugating Muslim and Christian local powers, strengthening the economic society with the help of the state, extending the basic sciences and vocational education to the detriment of traditional elements, and using a Westernization formula. Midhat Pasha's knowledge of the actual laws that governed the Ottoman Empire in practice underlaid his firm attitude and his iron-handed administration. In terms of his paternalistic-modernist stance, it can be said that Midhat Pasha was a prototype of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. In this regard, it is both unscientific and problematic to criticize the paternalistic attitudes of reformers such as Midhat Pasha without knowing the historical positions of local powers in Turkey, and, based on this point, without foreseeing the possible consequences when religious fanaticism comes together with decentralization.

Midhat Pasha had a level of energy unprecedented among Ottoman statesmen and was putting forth innovations that surprised his enemies in the Balkans. The Ottoman elite, led by the Reform Edict (*Islahat Fermanı*), Ali Pasha and Fuad Pasha, had failed to create the charismatic impact required to encourage young Ottoman intellectuals and Istanbulians that wished for the state to regain its strength. The charisma of Midhat Pasha is a product of a search for charismatic reformists initiated by the revolutionist opposition emerging in the 1880s; it is an ascription. On the other hand, Enver Pasha, again boasting exceptional energy, led a large audience to believe that he was an enigmatic statesman awaited for years. There is an unshakeable bond between the rejuvenation of Turkey and the charisma of Mustafa Kemal. Charisma and reform are two concepts that remain inseparable in the eyes of

masses that expect the state to gain strength. In this respect, there would be no exaggeration in stating that the success achieved by Midhat Pasha as the Governor of Tuna was the starting point of a tradition that established the link between reform and charisma in Turkey and of the succession represented by Midhat Pasha, Enver Pasha, and Mustafa Kemal.

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Ziya Paşa, “Mesele-i Müsavat”, *Hürriyet*, no: 15, date: October 5, 1868(18 Cemaziyelahir 1285).

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

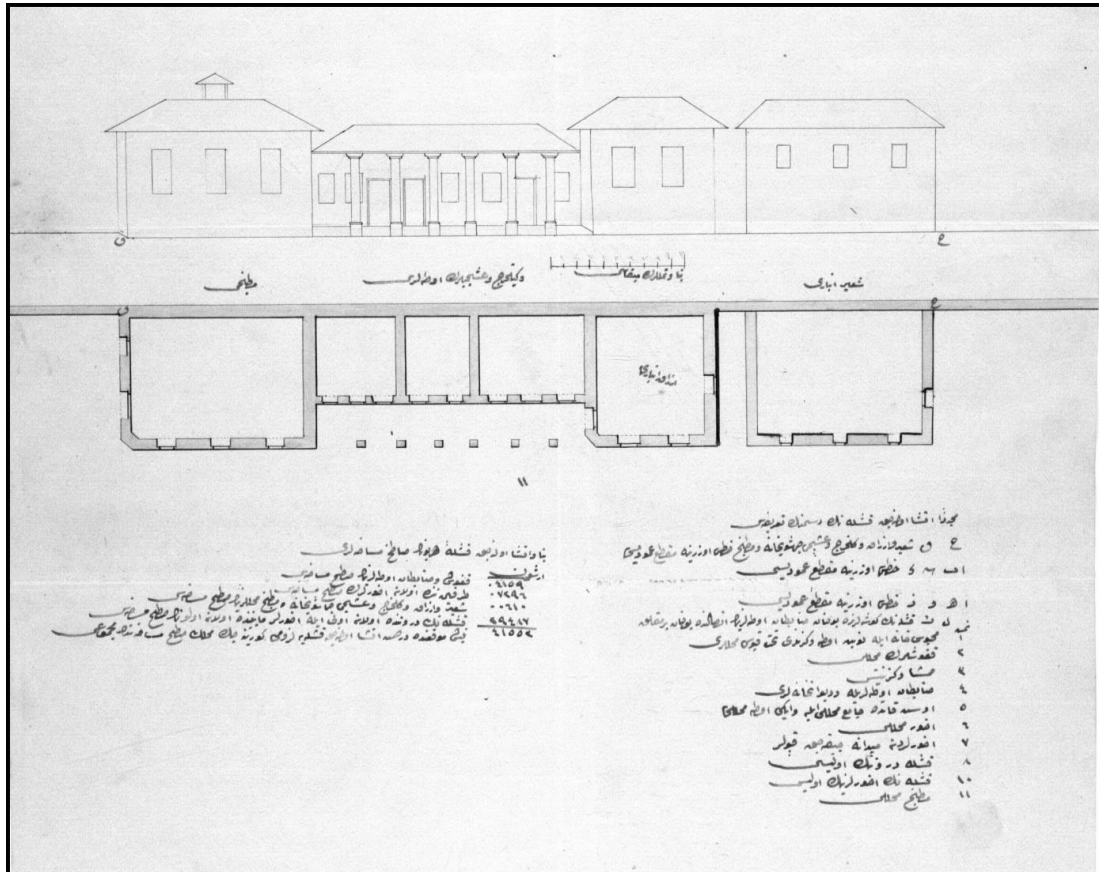
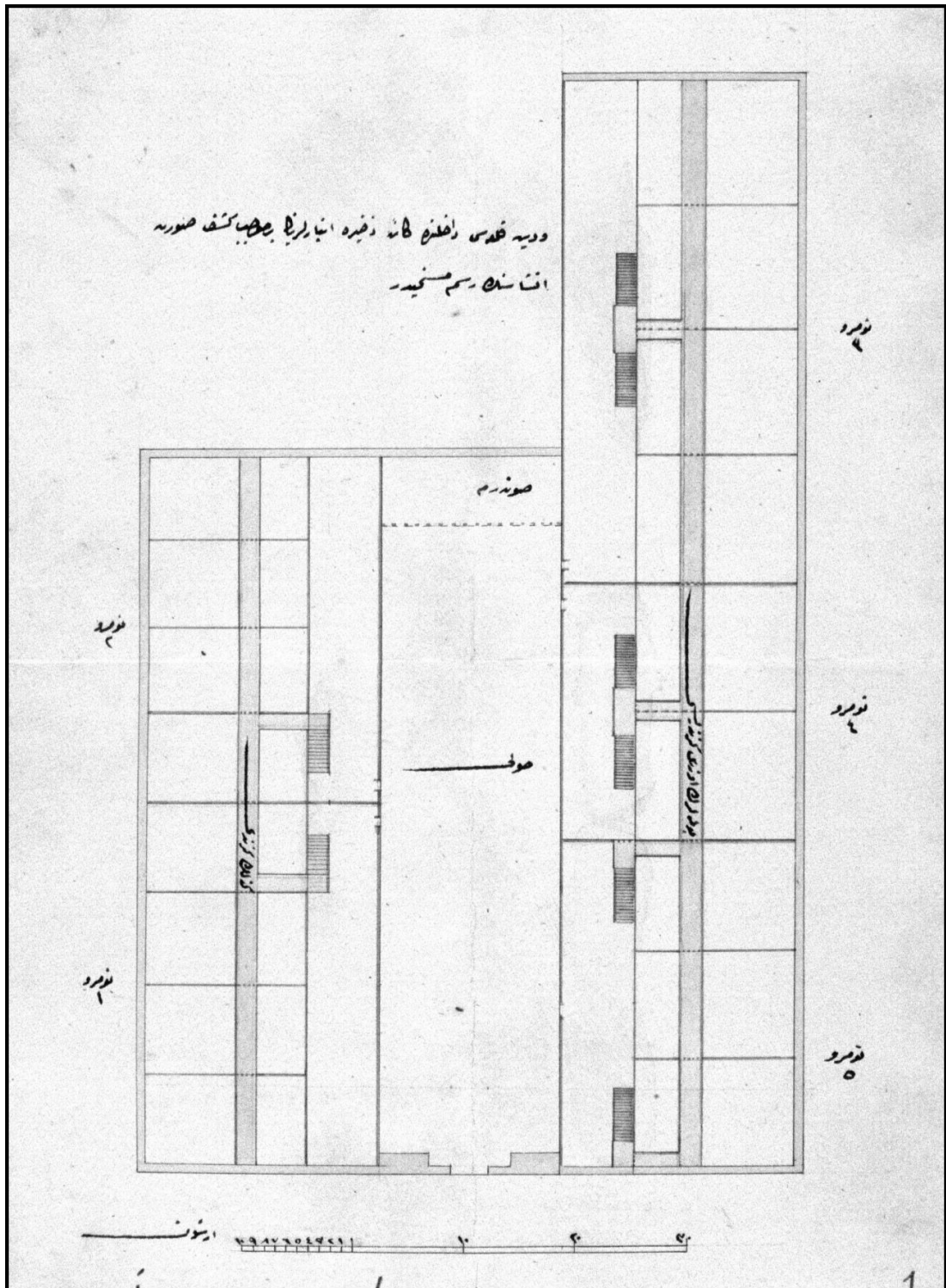


Illustration of the Barracks Constructed in Nis<sup>1840</sup>

<sup>1840</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 461/20759.



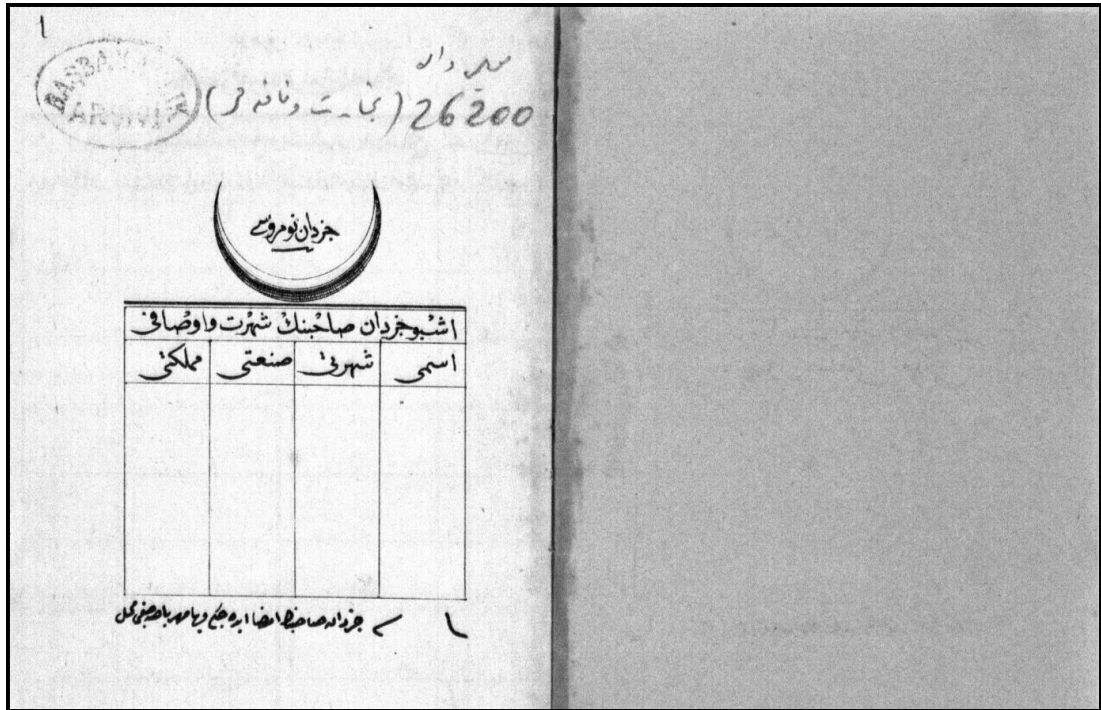
APPENDIX B



Drawing of a Grain Depot Planned to be Constructed in Vidin<sup>1841</sup>

<sup>1841</sup> BOA, I. MVL. 540/24247.

APPENDIX C



*The Passbook Designated for the Use of the Clients of the Emanet Sandığı<sup>1842</sup>*

<sup>1842</sup> BOA, İ. MVL. 583/26200.

## APPENDIX D



**The Map of Tuna Province**

APPENDIX F



The Plan of Pera and Galata<sup>1843</sup>

<sup>1843</sup> BOA, PLK.p.. 63.