

SWORD VS. MOUNTAIN: FOLK SONGS' DEPICTION OF
OTTOMAN SETTLEMENT POLICIES TOWARDS NOMADIC
TRIBES IN ÇUKUROVA

A Master's Thesis

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September 2021

HAMDİ KARAKAL SWORD VS. MOUNTAIN: FOLK SONGS' DEPICTION OF OTTOMAN
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Bilkent University 2021

To my family and friends

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

by

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In partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of MASTER
OF ARTS IN HISTORY

THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
İHSAN DOĞRAMACI BİLKENT UNIVERSITY ANKARA

September 2021

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in History.

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ABSTRACT

SWORD VS. MOUNTAIN: FOLK SONGS' DEPICTION OF OTTOMAN SETTLEMENT POLICIES TOWARDS NOMADIC TRIBES IN ÇUKUROVA

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August 2021

The historiography of Ottoman state actions towards migrant tribes depends more on the official documents of the government. The case of Fırka-i Islâhiye (Reform Division) in 1865 was no exception. It has been researched heavily depending on official sources and Ahmed Cevdet Efendi's accounts, which favors the Ottoman state. However, oral materials like songs created by nomads uncover an alternative approach as, in this case, Dadaloğlu and other folk songs of nomads had their narratives. This thesis will discover this alternative approach and compare this narration with official Ottoman documents in the case of Fırka-i Islâhiye expedition. The topics covered in this thesis are Ottoman centralization and settlement policies in the mid-19th century, the civilizing mission, Fırka-i Islâhiye activities, and nomads' folk songs as a reaction to the Ottoman settlement policies.

Keywords: civilizing mission, Fırka-i Islâhiye, nomads, Dadaloğlu, Ottoman state

ÖZET

KILICA KARŞI DAĞ: OSMANLI DEVLETİ'NİN ÇUKUROVA'DAKİ GÖÇEBE AŞİRETLERE KARŞI İSKÂN POLİTİKALARININ FOLK ŞARKILARDA TASVİRİ

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Ağustos 2021

Osmanlı Devleti'nin göçebelere yönelik faaliyetlerinin tarih yazımı daha çok devletin resmi kaynaklarının analizine dayanmaktadır. 1865 yılındaki Fırka-i Islâhiye harekâtı da buna bir istisna teşkil etmemektedir. Bu harekât, literatürde devletin lehine üretilmiş resmi kaynaklar ve Ahmet Cevdet Efendi'nin eserlerine yönelik araştırmalara dayanmaktadır. Fakat göçebeler tarafından üretilen folk şarkılar gibi sözlü kaynaklar, alternatif bir yaklaşım sunmaktadır, bu kapsamda Dadaloğlu ve diğer folk şarkılar göçebelerin kendi tarih anlatımını inşa etmiştir. Bu tez, bu alternatif tarih anlatımını keşfetmeye gayret ederek harekâta dair bu anlatımın Osmanlı resmi kaynaklarıyla kıyaslanmasını amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışmanın içerildiği konular; Osmanlı'nın 19.yüzyılın ortalarında merkezileşme ve yerleşimci politikaları, medenileştirme misyonu ve Osmanlı oryantalizmi, Fırka-i Islâhiye faaliyetleri ve göçebelerin Osmanlı yerleşimci politikalarına karşı üretilen folk şarkılardır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: medenileştirme misyonu, Fırka-i Islâhiye, göçebeler, Dadaloğlu, Osmanlı devleti

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Asst. Prof. Dr. Owen R. Miller for his endless support and guidance. He believed in me from the very first day until the end, showing me the way when I got lost and keeping me on track with his helpful feedbacks and great encouragement. He always made time to discuss my research with patience. I will miss our conversations. I would like to thank Asst. Prof. Dr. Kenneth Weisbrode, my acting supervisor at the time, for his guidance and encouragement for which I will be always grateful. I learned so much from his classes. To my examining committee member, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Metin Atmaca, thank you for your time and invaluable feedback. I can not Express my gratitude for all my professors at Bilkent University. I feel privileged to study at such an outstanding university.

I would get lost without support of great people: Alice Löhmus, Widy Susanto, Mert Deniz, Marium Soomro, Dr. Tarık Tansu Yiğit, Bahadır Vural, Nuray Özdemir, Burak Yemenici, Dilara Erçelik, without whose support I would not have been able to succeed in my study. I appreciate your friendship and companionship during my study. There are other special people to whom I would like to thank for their unconditional love.

I owe so much to my family, especially my parents: Saniye and Yaşar. I thank you for your endless love and huge sacrifices that you have made for me. To my siblings, Uğur and Yusuf, thank you for being there always for me. I can not find true words to describe what my family means to me. Last but not least, to my lovely Feyruz the cat, I am so happy to have such a special companion. She has

been my roommate and friend during hard and happy times. Thank you for your
limitless love.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Objectives

“We are sad, it is true, but that is because we have always been persecuted. The gentry use the pen, we the gun; they are the lords of the land, we of the mountain.” quotes Eric Hobsbawm at the beginning of his book, “Bandits” from an old brigand from Roccamandolfi.¹ It was a striking statement redefining “us” and “them” from the perspective of a mountain-dweller “brigand.” It has been a longstanding question of what motivations and who define those as bandits or popular heroes, in other words, criminals or justice seekers. Either has it been sometimes the state authority or feudal lords which used their legitimacy to define who were bandits. It was usually the legitimacy of the modern rulers in the center against the periphery in world history. The pen in the quotation of Hobsbawm symbolizes this power to redefine its subjects or citizens, being *the lords of the land*. On the other hand of the story, the pre-modern power holders, usually mountain-dweller nomads, were the forces who usually challenged the so-called legitimate and modern power by their will to sustain their popular, de-facto semi-autonomous structure of power. They sought to maintain their lifestyle and administration over the periphery, namely villages and mountains, fighting to remain independent of centralized state power. The popularity of these agents derives from tribes’ belonging to the tribal leaders as in a pre-modern form. Nomadic tribes were among these groups. Since they were mobile between uplands

¹ Hobsbawm, E. J. “Bandits.” *Pantheon Books* (New York, 1981): 17.

and lowlands, it was difficult for states to keep track of them to register them for taxation and conscription. Since the nomadic groups showed resistance to the central power and sought a pre-modern, so-called primitive lifestyle as an alternative to the state power. They were also often seen as uncivilized masses by the ruling elite. However, the literature did not voice their approach, nor is their approach commonly researched.

The Ottoman context of nomads in South Anatolia was no exception. The 19th century was the era of a transformation of the governmental system in the Ottoman state through a set of reforms to centralize the state and provincial administrations. The ruling elite transformed the understanding of state mechanisms and state-subject relationships due to the effects of revolutions and reforms that Western counterparts had applied at the end of the 18th century. It led to reforms such as Tanzimat and Reform Edict (Islahat) were the most important ones. The ruling elite believed that saving the Empire and pursuing to make it raceable with Western powers again was possible through these reforms. The reforms following Tanzimat and Islahat aimed to bring reform blessings to the provinces and transform nomadic groups' way of living and their relationship with the state in the mid-19th century.

The Tanzimat elite aimed at extending the Tanzimat reforms and so centralization agenda of the Empire towards the provincial administration in terms of registering nomadic subjects to benefit from taxation, conscription, and boosting production in Çukurova. These reforms made it inevitable to settle nomadic tribes in lowlands such as towns, plains, and villages in the eyes of the Tanzimat elite. These efforts materialized to civilize nomadic tribes by settling them and preventing them from banditry and brigandage in 1865.

The mission was called “Fırka-i Islâhiye” (Reform Division), which consisted of military and civilian commanding mechanisms. The mission aimed to convince the nomadic tribes to settle in the lands and stop their mobility between winter and summer pastures to control them better. Thus, they would be more effectively taxed, conscripted into the army, and taken under control to prevent their banditry activities in the region which had turned into a semi-autonomous government of the tribal leaders. If they had not convinced tribes, the Reform Division would use force when necessary, and eventually, their act was already forceful.

Kozan and Gavur mountains (today’s Amanos mountains) in the region of Çukurova were de-facto governed by the tribal leaders. The region was quite steep and challenging to keep under state control for centuries by other empires such as Romans and Mamluks. The nomadic groups were going back and forth to uplands and lowlands depending on the season. The reasons were the unendurable heat in the summer and the traditional lifestyle with their tents and animals. The civilizational narrative of the Ottomans justified the violent act of Reform Division towards nomadic tribes. As they were defined as “deprived of knowledge and all the attributes of civilization (*gayrimedenî*),”² the state constructed a discourse to justify the forceful approach and its inevitability.

This thesis attempts to present a framework for discovering the tribes’ perspective on the mission of Fırka-i Islâhiye. The thesis pursues discovering the narrative of the mission from the concept of the civilizing mission, which led to creating a political and cultural hierarchy between the so-called civilized and uncivilized. By doing so, the thesis argues that the nomad’s reaction to the civilizing mission of the Reform

² Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, 15.

Division in 1865 in Çukurova alternatively provides a significant approach to the clash between central state and periphery through their folk songs, which historical research usually ignores. By discussing the Reform Division's activities, it also aims at presenting the reform in practice. As the thesis's primary purpose, I suggest using oral folk materials such as poetry and songs to uncover the people's perspectives and compare them with the state narrative. Since the nomadic groups were illiterate and did not leave many written sources, their rich oral materials that have been widely still alive tell another story different from the state approach. While the literature primarily lies on the state sources, this thesis will try to write an alternative history in light of oral sources.

I will present a general picture of the reasons for Ottoman centralization efforts in Chapter 1. This chapter will focus on the financial crisis, conscription, and reformation. Then I will describe nomads and local politics in Çukurova, which will provide insights into the situation around Adana, specifically areas until the Reform Division arrived. This chapter also mentions Çukurova under Egyptian invasion, which would have impacts on the reform policies. Finally, Chapter 3 will focus on Fırka-i Islâhiye. It will initially discuss the concept of the civilizing mission, then Ottoman civilizational narrative towards nomadic tribes and Fırka-i Islâhiye's activities in practice. Chapter 3 will end with folk songs' depiction of the reform mission. I will argue that folk songs to uncover the people's history by their own narration could be an alternative source for reconstructing the Ottoman history of nomads.

Historiography

As mentioned above, the research on the Fırka-i Islâhiye is usually studied, referring to the state sources and perspective. Also, travelers' accounts and foreign consuls' reports present a scene of Çukurova in the eyes of missionaries, foreign consuls, and foreign travelers. Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, the head of the legal and civilian body of Fırka-i Islâhiye, left a wide range of accounts about the topic, which made him an essential author regarding the research on the *Fırka*. He is the most cited writer as a primary account apart from the Ottoman archival sources. This section provides a literature review on Fırka-i Islâhiye.

Faruk Sümer, in his research published in 1963, "*Çukurova Tarihine Dair Araştırmalar: Fetihden XVI. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısına Kadar*", wrote about history of Çukurova with a wide spectrum of chronology. His main topics are histories of prominent families and conquest of Cilicia (Çukurova, he defines this region basically from Mersin to Iskenderun) until the 16th century. Although his research is out of the scope of this thesis topic, his points provide an essential framework that influences following research regarding the topic. He writes that there was neither work nor research about the general or partly the history of Çukurova. To him, tribes' lifestyles, immigration, derebey system, and folk songs' depiction are the main topics for the history of Çukurova. As he also states, it is necessary to know the social, economic, and political history of Çukurova better to understand folk songs of minstrels such as Dadaloğlu. Therefore, Sümer shows us a direction for understanding and analyzing these folk songs. Sümer also notes that he traveled around the region three times to uncover unknown villages, towns, places, and castles during his research.

Sümer begins with the conquest of Cilicia by Muslims during the era of Umayyads, and later Abbasids placed Turks on this border with Byzantines. Then in the meantime, it was captured back multiple times by different sides. It is essential to

state, as Sümer points out, that Armenians founded their kingdom, whose center is Sis (Kozan). Sümer says that Turcomans who took part in the conquest of Cilicia had been settled around Syria by Baybars of Mamluks in the 13th century. These Turcomans, called Şam Türkmenleri (Damascus Turcomans), included Avşars (or Afşars) as well. Especially in the 14th century, Mamluks organized raids with Turcomans' support against the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia. Eventually, Sis, the center of the Armenian Kingdom, was captured by Mamluks in 1375, where Turcomans gradually settled around the region.

Sümer states that the Turcoman population exceeds minorities, mostly Armenians in the upcoming centuries in Adana and other cities and towns in the region except for Sis. According to his findings, the Armenian population was a bit more than Turcomans in 1519. Sümer continues with Turcoman settlement in Çukurova. He finds it attractive that clusters of Armenian and Greek people migrated to Çukurova after the 16th century. According to Sümer, Ottomans faced most of the population settled in the land when they captured the region in the first half of the 16th century. However, the nomadic life returned to Çukurova after the Celali rebellion from the end of the 16th century, as Sümer points out since farmers and villagers of Çukurova abandoned their lands and nomads arrived. Sümer makes a connection of local state officials' persecution and incapability with the rebellion and rise of derebeys of nomadic tribes in following centuries until Fırka-i Islâhiye removed the derebeys. Sümer considers this period an obstacle to social and economic development when Çukurova began to develop again after the 1865 reforms. On the other hand, Sümer concludes that the joyful, happy, and wealthy life of nomadic migrants of Çukurova was destroyed by Fırka-i Islâhiye and turned into a poor, modest, less cheerful, abstentious life.

Sümer uses a quite rich range of sources in his book. He cites from state official sources (especially tahrir defters), travelers' accounts of different languages, Mamluk sources, historians' primary accounts including Mamluk historians like Makrizî, folk songs, and as well as his fieldwork observations about the exploration of lost villages, towns, castles and place names.

Yusuf Halaçođlu, a student of Dr. Cengiz Orhonlu, wrote about Fırka-i Islâhiye as well in 1973. In his work, "Fırka-i Islâhiye ve Yapmış Olduđu İskân," he points out that Fırka-i Islâhiye was not only a military campaign but also it re-established state administration around Çukurova, Gâvur mountain (Cebel-i Bereket), Kurd mountain and Kozan mountain. Hence, it was not only a military action since it successfully provided nomads' settlement (iskân). By asserting this, he argues that the settlement places and villages turned into important centers that helped nearby cities and districts develop. For the sake of supporting his argument, he also challenges Faruk Sümer's point that the purpose of the Ottoman government was to overcome the significant problem of conscription combined with lack of manpower in the army rather than establishing more prosperous living conditions. Halaçođlu relies on Ahmet Cevdet Efendi's reports and account, *Mâruzât*, which claims that the mission was to re-establish the order before getting intervened by foreign powers. The Ottoman government feared that the relationship between British officials and Kozanođlu in the 1850s could result in an autonomous region demand in Çukurova, supported by the British. The suggestion of Pizani, a British official, to Reşid Paşa in a meeting about the Crimean War of 1853-1856 with Russian Tsardom that the British government could convince Kozanođlu to send his tribesmen to the military had raised the Ottoman government's concern for foreign intervention in domestic

politics. Therefore, one could state that Halaçođlu's research about Fırka-i Islâhiye securitizes the reform activities in Çukurova.

Halaçođlu provides short information about important tribes who lived around Çukurova and mentions new villages, settlement lands created for tribes by Fırka-i Islâhiye. His work describes the destinations of Fırka-i Islâhiye; firstly, Gâvur mountain and Kurd mountain, then Çukurova and Kozan. He keeps a positive approach towards this reforming policy of Çukurova and nearby mountains, asserting that the prosperous life of settled tribes encouraged the nomads to do the same. He states that Fırka-i Islâhiye won over tribes by a good will and help and successfully got them settled despite some difficulties such as some conflicts with tribes, as he points out. Still, he doesn't detail conflicts except for Kozanođlu Yusuf Bey's disobedience and tribes helping him. Halaçođlu draws significant attention to Kozanođlu's de-facto administration in Çukurova among tribes and emphasizes that Kozanođlu and his administration had not obeyed any orders given by the government at all. When mentioning a victory of Kozanođlu against a large tribe from Central Anatolia, Halaçođlu comments that Kozanođlu "got spoiled," referring to Cevdet Efendi's account, *Mâruzat*. His comment was the same for Kozanođlu when they had defeated the Egyptian army led by Mısırlı İbrahim Paşa around Kozan in 1832. However, they had already captured Adana before marching on Kozan.

Halaçođlu's work is mainly based on state documents and Cevdet Efendi's accounts. He also mentions the poetry of İlbeyođlu, a Turcoman *ozan* (folk poet), about Avşarlar's grievances for settlement. Although the poetry reveals Avşarlar's misery about *iskân* policies and Sultan's orders through Fırka-i Islâhiye, Halaçođlu points out that migrants from Caucasia had been already settled in Uzunyayla, where

Avşarlar was supposed to settle in. The poetry depicted this problem as one of the main issues regarding this settlement order.

In his article “Lords or Bandits? The Derebeys of Cilicia,” published in 1973, Andrew Gould writes about local derebeys (rulers) of Cilicia, the nature of their powers, and how they sustained their power until 1865. 1865 refers to Fırka-i Islâhiye mission in Cilicia. Gould’s perspective is to analyze local dynamics instead of focusing on the center, Istanbul. His approach examines local politics and power amongst informal rulers and their extent by investigating whether they are considered lords or bandits. Gould makes a solid point that these local derebeys gained popular support in mountains, unlike paşas, notables, or local Ottoman officials who did depend on urban phenomena. Therefore, as he points out, these derebeys were considered by the state as “rebels” and “bandits” and, at the same time, as “legitimate local authorities” from whom the state expected to fulfill administrative duties such as collecting taxes and helping the government with conscription. To Gould, the Ottoman state was unable to do both.

Gould talks about local derebeys and their relations with state authority and, he also explains how they maintained their power until 1865 reforms. The geographical situation of mountains around the region against massive attacks and controlling accesses to the mountain passes provided the local derebeys and their forces with physical dominance in Cilicia. Gould states that the people made a living out of raiding caravans and villages in the plain, which led to naturally establishing leadership of derebeys against an attack from outside.³ Then, he gives examples of

³ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973), p. 486.

local derebeys such as the Küçük Ali-oğulları tribe of Payas as one of the most important ones. Küçük Ali's son, Halil, dominated the Gulf of Iskenderun at the turn of the 19th century. Gould adds that Halil held a strategic position in the region as well. As Gould points out, mountains were asylum and an escapeway against outside attacks for derebeys of southern Anatolia like Halil. Gould further mentions Halil's descendants, Dede Bey and Mustuk Bey (Mustafa). These derebeys struggled with local and central political actors while they established alliances as well. Eventually, Mustuk's power sphere even reached the Ottoman state thanks to his relations with the governor of Aleppo, which caused the replacement of the treasurer of Adana, who did not get along with Mustuk Bey. Gould also touches upon Mustuk Bey's relations with foreigners. The British consul in Aleppo praised him for protecting Christians from disorders in Damascus in 1860 and for his offer to help catch the murderer of an American missionary. However, Gould argues that the Ottoman elite did not appreciate these approaches towards Mustuk Bey since the central government expected more direct control over the region. Gould adds that such relations of foreigners with derebeys even made the Ottoman officials fearful of foreign intervention.⁴

Gould states that Mustuk Bey made efforts to help the Ottoman state draft different tribes' men into military and with controlling brigandage in the mid-19th century. The story Gould tells goes on with other tribes. When it comes to Kozanoğulları, he portrays the power of the tribe around Kozan. He makes an interesting point about them performing some bits of state practices in the region, such as issuing deeds, collecting taxes, drafting manpower out of tribes who

⁴ Ibid, p.489.

Kozanoğulları allows to go through mountain passes, using official titles like kaymakam. Gould also draws our attention to Kozanoğulları's skills in politics and diplomacy, referring to European travelers' accounts which stated that the knowledge of Kozanoğulları about the Ottoman Empire and European affairs was impressive.⁵

According to Gould, although Kozanoğulları avoided an open confrontation with the Ottoman Empire, in 1851, the tribe defeated the Fifth Army, which was the only direct attack before the Fırka-i Islâhiye attack in 1865. Gould points out that the Crimean War made Kozanoğlu Çadırcı Mehmed Bey more powerful in the region with his demands from the government. After the death of Çadırcı Mehmed Bey in 1857, the Ottoman state followed a different strategic path to rank his two descendants in West and East Kozan as kapıcıbaşı. Gould notes that the state's primary concern was to avoid any foreign intervention in the region for any reason. He adds that especially Damascus massacre and Zeytun fighting raised concern among the region in the 1860s. Therefore, Kozanoğulları became natural allies with the Armenian clergy and aristocracy in Kozan. He puts out that they had a common interest to continue the traditional autonomy against reformers of Istanbul. Gould, then, mentions the "dissension within the family" as a reason leaving the tribe the most significant weakness to fight the invasion.

Gould eventually comes to the point of how Fırka-i Islâhiye subdued these derebeys and tribes. According to Gould, Fırka-i Islâhiye used skillful diplomacy of reconciliation rather than force the first hand. It worked well to convince beys to settle and accept the appointment of generous posts and salaries by the government. Gould argues that the Cilicia beys of 1865 mainly considered obedience this time as an

⁵ Ibid, p.493.

advantage of benefit over rebellion as they were not ideologically “committed to rebellion.” Gould further draws attention to Fırka-i Islâhiye’s generous approach towards tribes as ruling elite instead of criminals. Thus, the division faced little resilience.⁶ Although there were few attempts for rebellion after the Fırka-i Islâhiye reforms, not many tribesmen supported these few attempts, and the state brought the region under control.

Gould uses a wide range of sources in his research, including state documents, travelers’ accounts, foreign consuls’ reports, and finally, folk songs created by minstrels of tribes. He presents different approaches towards beys of Cilicia and investigates whether they are bandits or lords. He concludes that minstrels and folk singers lamented the exile of Cilicia beys. They were heroes against the central authority, whether for the sake of their profit or “love of freedom,” they did not become “champions of the oppressed or primitive-revolutionaries.”⁷

Cengiz Orhonlu’s work, “*Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Aşiretlerin İskânı*” presents a framework about the state-semi-nomadic tribe relations, state settlement policies, and nomads’ socio-economic conditions. Orhonlu argues that the Ottoman central government more seriously addressed the tribes’ settlement (iskân) issues in the 19th century after the Tanzimat period. In this case, the Ottomans' method was to grant tribes’ leaders (aşiret reisleri) authority with an official imperial seal to confirm tribe members who would like to travel to somewhere other than the government assigned, with a condition to give security. This permission was called *mürûr tezkeresi* as travel permission. According to Orhonlu, this authority granted to tribes’ leaders was a way of getting these influential leaders into state service or at least incorporate them into

⁶ Ibid, p.499.

⁷ Andrew G. Gould, *Lords or Bandits? The Derebeys of Cilicia*, (International Journal of Middle East Vol.7 No.4, Cambridge University Press: 1976), p.506.

state responsibility to control masses more effectively. Orhonlu points out that the settlement policies after Tanzimat were not successful since the government officials did not become well aware of how to settle them. He claims that the previous unsuccessful attempts played a role in this period. He adds that *iskân* was not a simple thing anymore, but quite complicated as correspondences between the central government and local administrations kept so long regarding the issue.

The government's solution in 1842 was that the tribes would settle in sanjaks, where they located summer and winter pastures. This solution would have encouraged them to cultivate the empty fields allocated for them, and as well as these new settlers were supposed to provide new and fresh power for the military. The government implemented this policy in Bursa, Sivas, Ankara, Konya, and Aydın. Local administrations were to implement the whole process. The semi-nomadic tribes which were of concern were Yeni-İl, Rışvan, Reyhanlı, Avşar (or Afşar). The prominent tribes like Rışvan and Avşar did not settle collectively; instead, the state ordered them to settle in different lands separately. Orhonlu states that these settlement efforts were more realistic and encouraging since empty lands were allocated free of charge.⁸

The attempts to settle some semi-nomadic tribes in the land had not been quite successful in South and Southeast Anatolia. The government commissioned a large division called Fırka-i Islâhiye (Reform Division), including a military troop in 1866. At the end of his book, Orhonlu mentions the activities of Fırka-i Islâhiye around Çukurova. He states more the strategy of the division to get migrant tribes settled; general amnesty in 1865 for those “who have a tendency to rebel against the state,” appointing officials who know tribes well to persuade settling in lands, using the role

⁸ Cengiz Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Aşiretlerin İskânı*, (Eren Yayıncılık ve Kitapçılık: 1987), pp.114-115.

of tribes' leaders who have obedience to the state. Orhonlu writes in detail that Reform Division created new settlement places, villages, etc. to encourage settling. He concludes with remarks that tribes settled in Çukurova mostly made livings out of cotton production, but they needed time to get used to making money via trade of their products. Orhonlu eventually asserts that "Thanks to Fırka-i Islâhiye, as security is settled in two years around Çukurova, tribes settled were adjusted to permanent settlement in a short time." Orhonlu's book published in 1987 is highly based on state sources (even central government sources: İrade-Meclis-i Vâlâ, Divân-ı Hümayûn Mühimme Defteri, İlm-ü Haber Defteri) and Cevdet Efendi's accounts (Tezâkir, Mâruzât), Yusuf Halaçoğlu's "Fırka-i Islâhiye ve Yapmış Olduğu İskân".

Chris Gratien, in his Ph.D. Dissertation "*The Mountains are Ours: Ecology and Settlement in Late Ottoman and Early Republican Cilicia, 1856-1956*," written in 2015, writes about how state and society, especially people of Cilicia, dealt with ecological problems such as malaria derives from the settlement. The study uncovers the activities of people in Cilicia from the 19th century to the 20th century, including continuities from the late Ottoman period to post-WWII. Gratien's work provides an environmental perspective towards the settlement process in Cilicia in four different periods, namely 1856-1878, 1878-1914, 1914-1922, 1923-1956.

Gratien begins with his narration by stating that the ecology of Çukurova plain changed following the Crimean War of 1853-1856. Due to the arriving groups of settlers and expansion of farming lands out of swamps and grasslands, these settlers suffered malaria over generations until after the Second World War. Gratien asserts that the Ottoman central administration had social, economic, and political questions after the Crimean War to 1878. It was making an agricultural frontier in Cilicia by reestablishing an institutional order over migratory pastoralists. At the same time,

they made an effort to introduce large numbers of refugees fleeing from Crimea and Caucasus into Cilicia. Gratien defines this process as the “development of political ecology of transhumance in Ottoman Cilicia” and explains why state and traders sought to change the political ecology after the Crimean War. At this point, the rise of the cotton trade during the US Civil War and the flow of migrants led the Ottoman government to reclaim a more direct control over the local autonomy of tribes over the plain, according to Gratien. Thus, the Ottoman government would have better-controlled taxation and conscription more. Then Gratien further discusses whether these dramatic events only caused the Ottoman settlement policy. He more closely examines that incapability of Ottomans’ finding of the murderer(s) of an assassination of an American missionary, Jackson Coffing, was a pushing reason for substantial reform in the region even though officials were reluctant to do so. However, the Ottoman government also faced US diplomats’ pressure. These reasons pushed the Ottoman government to restore an institutional order in Cilicia through the forced settlement of tribes and, in Gratien’s words, an attempt to spread civilization (medeniyet) in the countryside.

Gratien defines the Ottoman reforming efforts in 1865 over Cilicia as a “civilizing mission,” based on Ahmet Cevdet Efendi’s writings about bringing medeniyet to the “uncivilized” that refers to nomadic tribes, in other words, local derebeys. He explains discourses of imposing Fırka-i Islâhiye activities more from this perspective.

The military campaign against local derebeys did not end the conflict over geography in the following decade. Gratien argues that the increase in mortality rate because of malaria led to other rebellions against the settlement order. Hence, the local officials had to compromise that to settlement order by allowing pastoralists who Fırka-i Islâhiye had settled to migrate to avoid malaria. He finally states that even if this

compromise created a “looser practice of accommodation,” the general system established by Fırka-i Islâhiye would endure. Then in the second part of his work, he deals with new forms of seasonal labor migration in Çukurova plain with the rise of the cotton industry. The need for laborers met with seasonal migration from Eastern Anatolia and Northern Syria. As Çukurova economically and demographically grows with arrivals and departures of the seasonal laborers, Gratien points out that the eastern part of the plain was comparably less developed. This part of the plain was the area where the state settled pastoralists.

Gratien states that the Ottoman administration’s understandings of and approaches towards malaria keeps a continual changing trend over the last decades of the Empire. The changing approaches included permission of partial mobility, if not entirely, anti-mosquito campaigns and swamp drainage. However, Gratien argues that these measures did neither fundamentally change the effects of malaria on people. He further claims that the importance of transhumance was proved in terms of public health. Nonetheless, it did not mean anything since the state removed the transhumance economy.

Gratien finds a connection between conflicts and frontier settlement in Çukurova the ending years of the Empire. He argues that Ottoman Cilicia faced hostility towards Armenians and communal clashes derived from competition and tension over land with agrarian transformation. This conflict was between Muslims and Christians, whose example was the Adana massacre of 1909. Gratien further adds that Ottoman settlement policy and changing ecology contributed to the tension in the region.

His study is quite comprehensive and source-wise rich. He uses Ottoman official sources, officials' accounts like Cevdet Efendi's, folk songs, travelers' accounts as primary sources.

Sources & Methodology

This thesis will answer how people reacted to the Reform Division and its activities through folk materials. This perspective suggests that historians could methodologically study these oral materials to write an alternative history made by common people. While the literature presents a wide range of primary sources on Fırka-i Islâhiye and Çukurova, people's making of history in Çukurova, as Febvre put the term "*history seen from below and not from above,*" is challenging to find out. This challenge is not the absence of people's reaction voiced in Çukurova, nomads in this case. Still, to what extent a historian could study people's reactions since they did not leave any written primary materials. To overcome this challenge, I suggest using oral materials produced by nomadic groups, namely anonymous or not folk poetry or songs.

Nomadic tribes produced many folk songs to immortalize their traditions, memories, and heroism. Whether their way of telling stories is accurate or speculated by tribe leaders, the narration portrayed in the folk songs provides an alternative story behind the settlement policies and Reform Division from the people's perspective to the state sources. This thesis tries to discover the people's views through their narratives in folk songs. Through the text analysis of folk materials, I try to portray political and social messages which the nomadic tribes orally intended to give to the next generations. The limitation in this study is the absence of a field study due to the pandemic conditions. Otherwise, I planned to conduct a field visit to the still ongoing traditional upland summer festival of Avşarlar and interview people to discover

unwritten sayings about the issue. In addition to this, although I e-mailed several Avşarlar's cultural associations to interview, I, unfortunately, received no response. Thus, this thesis will analyze the folk materials orally produced, later recorded in a written format.

To answer the research question, first, it is fundamental to discuss the situation in the Ottoman Empire in the mid-19th century and what was behind the Reform Division. Ottoman official sources and Ahmet Cevdet Efendi's accounts are baselines to understand Fırka-i Islâhiye in this study. Second, the thesis benefits from prominent secondary sources on the case reviewed in the last section. Even though Gratien and Gould mention folk songs in their studies, I put the camera on the issue with more folk songs as an alternative historical narrative and compare nomads' resistance through folk songs with the Ottoman official approach. It is how this thesis differs from the works of Gratien and Gould. Cevdet's work is also widely cited in this work to compare with oral folk materials.

CHAPTER II

OTTOMAN CENTRALIZATION AND LOCAL POLITICS IN ÇUKUROVA: GETTING THE PERIPHERY CENTRALIZED?

Ottomans were neither exception in the nineteenth-century centralization policies nor were ignorant of this transformation of a state happening in different parts of the world. The agents and reasons for the Ottoman centralization have distinct elements. Among those, this research looks into the financial crisis and taxation system, conscription, and reformation. This chapter will discuss how the policies towards these factors shaped Ottoman centralization policies. The chapter will go from general to specific, from the center to periphery, to uncover how the central efforts affected the periphery, namely Çukurova in southeastern Anatolia, by analyzing the *Tanzimat* rule's effect on the mission of *Fırka-i Islâhiye*. The chapter will continue with the situation of nomads and local politics in Çukurova to present a regional picture.

Financial Crisis

In the 17th and 18th centuries, timar's land and taxation system was a military and economic system to provide cavalry soldiers to the Empire from landholders in return for holding lands. It gradually turned into a corrupted institution as the state distributed many fiefs to favorite officials losing the actual purpose to produce fighting men for the Empire. The high-rank officials enjoyed the income of these fiefs, acquired by favoritism. Therefore, in many provinces, a new power of notables (*âyans*) emerged as they reached both an economic strength and a political one. In time, they even gained enough power to challenge the central authority. Especially in the 18th century, the rise of landholders in provinces led to defacto decentralization of

power. Local officials became hereditary in these landholders' families, and the central government could not control them.⁹

These developments brought financial crisis undoubtedly. At the same time, the Empire was suffering long-lasting wars from the 17th century to the 19th century. The state could not sufficiently benefit from the revenues of the land since it was illegally turned into *vakıf* on purpose. The landholders did not need to pay taxes because *vakıf* lands were exempted from taxes. The financial burden resulting from continuous wars, heavy taxes, rebellions, the tyranny of local authorities in the 17th and 18th centuries increased significantly.¹⁰ They were charging taxes among the peasantry in Anatolia, so it caused a number of them to abandon their lands and go back to their semi-nomadic lives. Therefore, the lands remained uncultivated.¹¹ As a result, the government endeavored to make peasants work the land. As Gould pointed out in his dissertation, the Ottoman state had a new desire to benefit from tariff revenues and meet European powers' commercial demands for agricultural materials. Hence, the encouragement for a sedentary life over tribes included the pacification of countryside, settlement of subjects, and extension of governmental administration to *tashra* (rural areas).¹²

The Ottomans abolished the tax farming system (*iltizâm*), replacing it with the *muhassıl* system, a modern and centralized revenue system by the Ottoman state in the Tanzimat era. According to these changes, officials of the *muhassıl* system

⁹ Ibid, pp. 17-18.

¹⁰ Karen Barkey, *Bandits and Bureaucrats: The Ottoman Route to State Centralization*, (Cornell University Press: Ithaca and London, 1994) pp. 141-188; Ahmet Cezar, "*Osmanlı Maliyesinde Bunalım ve Değişme Dönemi (XVIII. Yüzyıldan Tanzimat'a Mâli Tarih*, (İstanbul: 1986).

¹¹ Halil Cin, *Osmanlı Toprak Düzeni ve Bu Düzenin Bozulması*, (Konya: 1992), pp. 10-15.

¹² Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973) p. 4.

appointed as tax collectors were responsible for collecting all state revenues, which would be directly transferred to the central treasury. As Inalcık argues that “imperial finances were the main concern of the Tanzimat in 1839, and the prescribed administrative innovations were mostly designed to realize a substantial increase in state revenues using a more centralized revenue system.”¹³ The main reason for this reform was to prevent fraud by local governors or notables in collecting taxes. In order to implement the new law, central Tanzimat bureaucrats were taking measures, even if it meant fining local governors, administrators, and even *muhassıls*, to make sure the new system working fair and well.¹⁴

Conscription

Apart from the efforts to save the Empire from the financial crisis, the state pursued conscription. The state considered the military as a primary element of the state. It has to reform for several reasons urgently; the reactionary and disobedient stance of Janissaries, the view among bureaucrats that the main reason for falling behind European powers, corrupted *timarlı sipahi* (cavalry provided by fief holders) system. Mahmud II eventually managed to get rid of Janissaries by shooting them in their barracks. The Ottomans disbanded Janissaries and replaced them with *Muallem Asâkir-i Mansure-i Muhammediye* (Trained Victorious Mohammedan Soldiers) in 1826. The state established a new army in European style consisting of professionally trained soldiers recruited in provinces by state officials. Zürcher points out that recruitment was not made according to a system, but the state’s need yearly, which the imperial council would decide.¹⁵ Apart from the *Mansur* army, the Ottomans

¹³ Halil Inalcık, “*Application of the Tanzimat and its Social Effects*”, (Peter de Ridder Press: 1976), p.8.

¹⁴ Mühimme defterleri, no. 254 (1256-58/1840-1842), BOA.

¹⁵ Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Ottoman Conscription System: 1844-1914*, (International Review of Social History: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p.438.

formed new modernized armies in parallel, called *Hassa* and *Redif*. *Redif* was formed to maintain order and law in the countryside, which were constituted as a copying model of the Prussian army of Landwehr.¹⁶ However, these new armies did not apply as in the form of universal European conscription. After governor Mohammad Ali's army of Egypt beat the Ottoman army, the Ottomans reconsidered the conscription system, inspired by Mohammad Ali's army, trained as an example of the European model.

In *Tanzimat* Edict, the Ottomans replaced the lifetime service in the military with a fixed-term service of 5 years, emphasizing that the lifetime service had decreased the population in some areas. Although the regulations have often changed since then, a regulation on drawing lots (*kur'â nizamnâmesi*) in 1848 introduced the conscription system. According to Zürcher, the new conscription system "put the strength of the army at 150,000, which meant that, with five-year service, the army needed to recruit 30,000 men a year."¹⁷ The new system required those drawn in the lots to serve in the regular army (*Nizâmiye*), while the *Redif* army recruited others. The state introduced more comprehensive reforms in the conscription system in the 1870s and 1880s. The officials faced challenges in population count to be able to set up a new conscription system. This challenge especially required centralized control over the census in a sizeable imperial land at the same time. Significantly, the nomadic tribes made it almost impossible for officials to count the population in the peripheral lands of the Empire. The first count took place in the 1830s in modern times and the second in 1844 for specific conscription purposes. However, the difficulties in counting the population made it a rough estimate and unreliable. Moreover, the long-lasting wars

¹⁶ Ibid, pp.438-439.

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 440.

and rebellions also caused the loss of manpower in the army. Therefore, the Ottoman state extended military service for conscripted soldiers, making military service unpopular for the subjects.¹⁸

Reformation

To better understand Ottoman reform policies in the peripheral lands, *taşra*, it is pretty significant to take Ottoman centralization efforts along with modernization of the center. The center, in this sense, challenged peripheral structures to tackle the decline of the Empire since the 1860s. The *Tanzimat* reformation in 1839 led to a repercussive effect on the periphery of the Empire. The *ferman* guaranteed equally Muslim and non-Muslim subjects security of life, property, honor, and better administration regardless of religion by Sultan. According to scholars of decline theory, the reformation that preceded *Tanzimat* could be traced back to the 17th century when Ottomans realized they had remained behind Europe and Ottoman officials realized western superiority.¹⁹ Even though the Ottomans tried to keep up with western progress since then, reactionary and traditionalist movements in the military and ulema circle prevented the reformists, including Sultans. What made the *Tanzimat* Edict unique was also its social effects. The previous attempts mainly included military reforms. Selim III (1789-1807), apart from military reforms, also introduced economic and social reforms; however, it was again reacted by ulema and military as Selim III was dethroned and then murdered.

Selim III's successor, Mehmed IV, had a brief reign since he was dethroned by Selim's followers leading Mahmud II to ascend the throne in 1807. He stayed in

¹⁸ Ibid, p.442.

¹⁹ Seçil Akgün, *The Emergence of Tanzimat in The Ottoman Empire*, (The Center for Ottoman Studies Ankara University: 1991), p.2.

power for thirty-two years, pursuing various reforms preparing the Empire for the *Tanzimat* era. Although he was a moderate reformist than Selim III, his era came across significant challenges. Mahmud II introduced many reforms to keep the Empire alive and prevent exploitations of the system. These reforms were indirectly or directly to re-establish the state authority. The state expanded its authority and made its power more visible and prevalent over the Empire's periphery. The range of reforms was quite broad, social, educational, economic, administrative, military, etc. To prevent the Empire from collapsing, the state drove a top-down reform process targeting almost all central and provincial institutions and the Sultan's subjects. The reforms in the local administration system were based on the strengthening bureaucracy since Mahmud II's reign. Mahmud II made a solid effort to raise the power of bureaucracy as a tool to deal with an anti-reform party such as Janissaries, ulema, local notables (*ayans*). The power of the bureaucracy in the periphery was a reform instrument and so contributed to the centralization.²⁰

Furthermore, reforming the periphery was limited to strengthening the power of bureaucracy as Mahmud II also destroyed the power of local notables (*derebeyis*) by a combination of military and diplomatic means. The *derebeyis* were either taken in exile or killed.²¹ Mahmud II harshly instructed the administrators in provinces to suppress dissident notables.²² In this regard, the military expeditions into provinces to establish the central power over peripheral lands did not start with the Reform Division in 1865. As a result of Mahmud II's policies to eliminate opponent power

²⁰ Halil Inalcik, *The Nature of Traditional Society in Turkey*, in R. E. Ward and D. A. Rustow (eds.), *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton, 1964), p. 54.

²¹ Roderick H. Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire: 1856-1876*, (Princeton University Press: 1963), pp. 26-27.

²² Şükrü Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, (Princeton University Press: 1963), p.60.

groups and strengthen bureaucracy, Davison argues that the central state abolished its arbitrary checks, and with the rise of central power, the possibility of the corrupt exercise of power now depended on the characters of officials and Sultans. He adds that “When, on the other hand, the bureaucracy produced strong men who could control weak or indifferent sultans, officialdom was supreme. This was generally case from the time of Mahmud’s death in 1839 to 1871 and during the year 1876.”²³

Reform in Provincial Administration

After the reign of Mahmud II, the Ottomans’ purpose was to extend the central control over provinces, accompanied by establishing a new system to have a local check-and-balance system for governors’ actions and to ensure having a proper administration in provinces. The assembly of provincial notables in Istanbul in 1845 led the Ottoman state to have further reforming instruments, although it did not meet most of the assembly’s demands. The Ottomans called one Christian and one Muslim representative from each province to the assembly to discuss the tax and economic issues. The state expected them to exchange their views with each other to improve the administration in their provinces. Abdülmecid I even attended one of the assembly gatherings behind a screen. After the assembly of 1845, the lesson learned by the Ottomans was to extend the practice of sending out inspection commissions to provinces, which were called “*meclis-i imâriye*” (commissions of improvement). These commissions helped the center better understand problems in provinces as these inspections were quite influential on the *vilâyet* law in 1864.²⁴

²³ Ibid, p.32.

²⁴ Ibid, pp.47-48.

The provincial law of 1864 created provincial executive councils consisting of two Muslim and two non-Muslim representatives among the local population, as a Tanzimat idea of spreading the representation of all communities in the Ottoman bureaucracy to the provinces, to serve along with the bureaucrats. Hanioglu argues that this body had nothing to do with political decision-making in a representative democratic sense. It was instead “a policy designed to co-opt different ethnoreligious groups into the administration by soliciting advice and intelligence from their loyal and respected leaders without actually allowing them to participate in political decision-making.”²⁵ These commissions as a body served as the purpose of the Ottoman state to extend its control over provinces and increase knowledge among provincial problems. At the same time, it was a system integrating the Muslims and non-Muslims into a unified Ottoman entity, which was a policy pursued since 1853. On the one hand, it furthered the centralization, whereas the extension of local representation thanks to provincial commissions eased the resistance in the provinces against the center. However, one must accept that this representation was restricted with the central ambitions to extend its power.

The center and periphery relations in the 19th century lay on fixing the taxation system and having a more effective and efficient conscription system. The center established these councils in its relationship with the periphery to deal with peasants’ unwillingness to pay their taxes and fulfill their obligations²⁶ such as conscription. Even though the provincial councils represented locals, the central government wanted checks and balances to raise local notables by appointing more than half of the council members and restricting suffrage in these councils. These councils were also

²⁵ Şükrü Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, (Princeton University Press: 2008), p.76.

²⁶ Kemal Karpat, “*Social Change and Politics in Turkey*, (E. J. Brill, Leiden: 1973), pp. 11-90.

not sufficiently representing nomadic populations but favored local notables. Despite centralization efforts in the periphery, the nomadic populations were not obeying the law and showed resistance. In the eyes of the Ottoman officials, the ethnicity of these groups did not matter at all.²⁷ However, their resistance was considered *gayrimedenî* (uncivilized)²⁸ since they refused to be *temeddün*²⁹ (civilized, settled in town).

Applying Tanzimat in Adana

The Ottoman state was keen on applying *Tanzimat* reforms in Adana province, as happened in many places of the Empire. The Ottomans' main goal was to reform tax collection in Adana as it initially sent a tax agent (*muhassıl*) there as soon as they got rid of Egyptian forces. However, the local politics would have been a massive challenge against the application of reforms in Adana. Gould discusses the power struggle between the central authority and provincial council where local notables were powerful and unwilling to support *muhassıl* to collect taxes since notables wanted to maintain their independent leadership and authority in Adana. These notables did not have a single characteristic, but they also represented different sides of power struggles. It was neither simple nor is this all about the story. Local power factions were in a complex form where different *derebeys* supported other local notables.³⁰ The complexity in the power struggle would have drawn central attention in the following years.

²⁷ Şükrü Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire*, (Princeton University Press: 2008), pp.87-88.

²⁸ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Kozan ve Gavur Dağı Ahvaline Dair Layiha*.

²⁹ Halet Efendi, *Risâle der Beyân-ı Lüzûm-i Temeddün ve İçtimâ-i Benî Âdem*, Süleymaniye Library, no. 765/13 [1815-16], pp. 1-3.

³⁰ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973), pp. 34-35.

It was clear that the power of central authority around Adana through governors and treasurer -then turned into “tax agent”- was not strong to claim full authority. This situation was because of weaknesses of local officials against the local notables and *derebeys* and lacking cooperation of these local officials such as governors with each other.³¹ The *derebeys* were also quite popular among the local population, making Ottoman officials afraid of a rebellion. For this reason, they had known that it would not have been easy to get rid of these popular *derebeys*. This was not the end of the story for Ottoman officials and these tribes, but it must be a beginning.

The strategy of the Ottoman state was first to introduce settlement policies among some nomadic tribes around Cilicia. In the 1840s, some *derebeys* agreed to mostly make their tribe settled and have a sedentary life while enjoying restricted tax exemptions or appointment of *derebeys* to the government posts such as the rank of *kaymakam*. However, it was not successful in the long term because the Ottoman state did not manage to protect them from unsettled nomadic tribes; according to Gould, “Only a general settlement of tribes could solve that problem.”³² Then, the governor of Adana, Osman Nuri Paşa, proposed general settlement order with the help of the Fourth and Fifth Armies; however, only the Fourth Army was present in 1850 when Osman Nuri Paşa was replaced with his successor. The new governor was more determined with the help of the Fourth Army, but he was not familiar with tribes and the region. The approaches to these issues also differed from one governor to another. Lack of officials’ knowledge about tribes and the region and absence of a general standard policy did not result in a permanent solution.

³¹ Ibid, pp. 36-37.

³² Ibid, p. 38.

Nomads and Local Politics: Kozan and Gavur Mountains until 1865

“...Ekende yok biçende yok
Yiyende ortak Osmanlı”*

Cilicia (Çukurova) was the name of the region where Avşarlar’s big part is located. Mountains and sea surround the region. Cilicia consists of huge plains from Silifke through Osmaniye, which has fertile soil. Toros mountains surround the plain in the north and north-east, Gavurdağları (Gavur mountains) in the east from the sea at the coast of İskenderun-Payas towards the south.³³ The region also has large and small range mountains. Therefore, it is only possible to reach Çukurova through mountain passes. Two rivers, Ceyhan and Seyhan, enrich Çukurova, which divides the region into two. It proves that the region throughout history has been attractive to different powers. However, due to the Çukurova’s geographical characteristics, it had been quite challenging to establish dominance over the land for centuries, even if it was rich. Before the Ottomans, Hittites, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, and Mamluks had trouble fully control this mountainous area.³⁴

When the Ottomans captured Cilicia (Çukurova) in the 16th century, they encountered a settled and sedentary population dealing with agriculture. Due to *Celâlî* rebellions across Anatolia, from the end of the 16th century to the mid-17th century, settled farmers in Çukurova who had been exposed to violence by officials and rebels

*An anonymous Anatolian folk song. Translation: “...Neither are there Ottomans in cultivating, nor in cropping / But are Ottomans there eating.”

³³ Ahmet Ünal, *Çukurova'nın Antik Devirlerde Taşındığı İsimler ile Fiziki ve Tarihi Coğrafyası*, (Yapı Kredi Yay., İstanbul: 2000) pp. 23-24.

³⁴ Bahadır Alkım, *Sam'al ile Asitavanda Arasındaki Yol. Amanos Bölgesi'nin Tarihi Coğrafyasına Dair Araştırma*, (Belleten 24/95: 1960), p. 355.

had to leave their fields. It left the fields uncultivated for a long time. Therefore, migrant tribes had begun to migrate to Çukurova where was an excellent area for winter pasture. *Cerid* and *Tecir* tribes were among these tribes, as well as *Avşars* who had been wintering around Aleppo. *Avşars* then started wintering over an area between Ceyhan and Kozan.³⁵ With the arrival of these tribes, Çukurova turned out to be a nomadic area until the second half of the 19th century. This chapter deals with how such a nomadic way of life in Çukurova developed and how it intertwined with local politics.

The region was on trade and pilgrimage routes, which made it greatly important for its economy. The *Celâlî* rebellions crashed the regional economy, as mentioned earlier. Sümer argues that the nomadic life in Çukurova established because of rebels had become a significant obstacle against the development of social and economic life in the region until the second half of the 19th century when *Fırka-i Islâhiye* organized a military expedition. He further states that Çukurova developed economically and socially after the rule of *derebeys* had been ended, and nomadic tribes had been settled.³⁶ However, there were two faces of the view around Çukurova after the settlement. As Gratien puts it, "...settlement remained consistently associated with a cataclysmic moment of hardship, sickness, and a gradual break with tradition. The sweet aroma of progress had been accompanied by the rotting stench of death. The settlement meant an improvement of the land, but it also meant death and suffering for those doomed to do the labor of improvement."³⁷ Even though the approaches differ, it is undeniable that the settlement in Çukurova destroyed the

³⁵ Faruk Sümer, "*Çukurova Tarihine Dair Araştırmalar (Fetihten XVI. yüzyılın ikinci yarısına kadar)*", (Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi vol.1: 1963), p.31.

³⁶ *Ibid*, p.61.

³⁷ Christopher Gratien, *Mountains are Ours: Ecology and Settlement in Late Ottoman and early Republican Cilicia, 1856-1956*, (PhD Dissertation, Georgetown University: 2015), p.169.

nomadic way of life and created new battle frontiers for settlers, namely hunger and epidemic malaria. This question will be more examined in Chapter 3 from the people's perspectives.

In the 1850s, Adana was where most people performed transhumance activities, especially in the east of the Çukurova plain, whereas people in the western part settled in villages.³⁸ Nomadic pastoralists could not bear up against the hot weather in the plain, which would lead to diseases for them and their animals. An American Reverend, Jackson Coffing, in his visit to Hadjin to establish a mission, mentions this dichotomy that the higher land of Taurus was a picturesque scene while the roads around the Hadjin had swamps and filth.³⁹ As a British official also stated, "I visited the place last summer, and without exception, it is the most disgustingly filthy town I have yet seen."⁴⁰ the situation was not favorable to the nomadic tribes who left the plain for upper lands and mountains. Travelers' accounts also indicate that the plain consisted of swamps, and the area was associated with diseases caused by these swamps.⁴¹

The general situation around Çukurova was as followed: the prominent families were *Kozanoğlu* in Kars and Sis, *Küçükaliogulları* in Payas, *Menemencioğlu* (*Melemencioğlu*) in Kara İsalu as there were some other smaller but influential families: *Kerimoğlu*, *Sirkintioğlu*, *Karsantioğlu*. Besides families, the prominent tribes were *Avşar*, *Bozdoğan*, *Varsak*, *Cerid* and *Tecir*.⁴² The autonomy in

³⁸ Victor Langlois, *Voyage dans la Cilicie: Dans les Montagnes Du Taurus*, (1861), pp.18-23.

³⁹ ABC 641/235, Coffing to Pratt, Adana (3 November 1860).

⁴⁰ FO 222/7/1, 1881 No. 11, Bennet to Goschen, Marash (11 May 1881).

⁴¹ Vere Monro, *A Summer Ramble in Syria, with a Tartar trip from Aleppo to Stamboul* (London: R. Bentley: 1835), p. 158.; Henry Teonge, *The diary of Henry Teonge : Chaplain on board H.M's ships assistance, Bristol and Royal Oak 1675-1679*, (Routledge: London, 2005)), p.112.

⁴² Faruk Sümer, "Çukurova Tarihine Dair Araştırmalar (Fetihten XVI. yüzyılın ikinci yarısına kadar)", (Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi vol.1: 1963), p.84.

mountainous areas and nomadic lifestyle created a power vacuum that would be filled with "...a class of hereditary governors to consolidate local legitimacy and establish semi-autonomous governments in the hinterland of the Adana province."⁴³ These were called either *derebeys* or *ayans* among these families in Çukurova. Gould's work reveals the transformation of these nomadic tribes from *Evlâd-ı Fâtihân* (children of conquests) to tribal bandits or local despots.⁴⁴ Ancestors of these nomadic pastoralists played a significant role in conquests at the service of the Empire in previous centuries. However, 19th-century tribe leaders had a different approach towards their relationships with the state. After the reign of violence,⁴⁵ the Ottomans lost control among tribes in the periphery in the 18th century until the 1860s. Due to the lack of control, the Ottoman state could not collect taxes and prevent these nomadic tribes from attacking settled villagers and conscript tribesmen. Therefore, the Ottoman state followed the centralization efforts in the form of reclaiming the power over the area. On the other hand, some of these tribes considered their nomadic lifestyle free from state control as an indispensable feature of their existence. In a folk song, Dadaloğlu, a famous and leading folk singer in his tribe and Anatolia, says that "it is better to die than to live like this," with a tone of being humiliated after the horses of Avşars were taken by the government officials in exchange for unpaid taxes.⁴⁶

⁴³ Christopher Gratien, *Mountains are Ours: Ecology and Settlement in Late Ottoman and early Republican Cilicia, 1856-1956*, (PhD Dissertation, Georgetown University: 2015), pp.73-74.

⁴⁴ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973).

⁴⁵ Dr. Oktay Özel defines *Celâli* rebellions as "reign of violence." Oktay Özel, *The Reign of Violence: The celalis c.1550-1700*, in "The Ottoman World" ed. Christine Woodhead, (2011).

⁴⁶ Ahmet Özdemir, (1985), p. 153. The original song:

Yara yara bir kavgaya giremedik
Sağa-sola kılıçları vuramadık
At üstünde döğüşerek ölmedik
Ok değmeden gözlerimiz kör oldu.

Birden kapıştılar kulunu, tayı
Kanı garrah oldu yoksulu, bayı

Among prominent families in Çukurova, *Kozanoğlu* was remarkable to understand local politics and administration in Adana. Although it was debatable from where *Kozanoğlu* family was descended, Cevdet Efendi states that they were from the *Ariklı* tribe of *Varsak* Turks⁴⁷ whereas a Western traveler, P. V. Tschihatscheff, traveling around Kozan in the summer of 1853, states that Kozanoğlu Çadircı Mehmed Bey was a famous *derebey* from *Avşar* tribe.⁴⁸ No matter who their ancestors were, the *Kozanoğlu* family was a leading figure in the region's administration. Gould states that they performed state practices such as issuing deeds, collecting taxes, drafting manpower out of tribes whom *Kozanoğulları* allows going through mountain passes, and using official titles like *kaymakam* (district governor). Gould further mentions *Kozanoğulları*'s skills in politics and diplomacy, referring to European travelers' accounts which stated that the knowledge of *Kozanoğulları* about the Ottoman Empire and European affairs was impressive.⁴⁹ Although the *Kozanoğlu*

Böyle sağ gezmezden ölmemiz iyi
Maşerce söylenecek şor oldu.

Bütün iskân oldu Avşarlar, Kürtler
Yürekten mi çıkar ol acı dertler
Mezada döküldü boyn'uzun atlar
At vermemiz iskânlıktan zor oldu.

Öğüt versen öğütlerden almayan
Çağırınca mencilise gelmeyen
Yurtlarının kıymetini bilmeyen
Her birisi bir kötüye kul oldu.

Der Dadaloğlu'm da sözün sırası
(her) yara biter, bitmez dilin yarası
Mağrıpınan maşırığın arası
Size bol da bizim ele dar oldu.

⁴⁷ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973), pp.19-20.

⁴⁸ Faruk Sümer, "Çukurova Tarihine Dair Araştırmalar (Fetihten XVI. yüzyılın ikinci yarısına kadar)", (Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi vol.1: 1963), p.84; Pierre de Tchihatcheff, *Reisen in Kleinasien und Armenien*, (1867).

⁴⁹ Andrew G. Gould, *Lords or Bandits? The Derebeys of Cilicia*, (International Journal of Middle East Vol.7 No.4, Cambridge University Press: 1976), p.493; Pierre de Tchihatcheff, *Reisen in Kleinasien und Armenien*, (1867).

family were sedentary, they maintained their power as a leading figure over nomadic pastoralists passing their power centers; Taurus towns, Feke and Hadjin. Their relationships with Armenian political and religious leaders in Sis and Hadjin prove that the family's local power derived from their diplomatic skills.⁵⁰

Another famous family was *Küçükalioglu* in Payas. Halil Bey, the leader of this family in the late 18th century, was a charismatic leader in establishing his power in the strategic hajj roads between Istanbul and Mecca. He was pretty powerful that he taxed travelers and managed to kidnap the *kadı* of Aleppo and even the Dutch consul if he was not satisfied by the toll.⁵¹ When Halil Bey received attacks, he often hid into the mountains as an asylum and gateway until it became safe again around Payas as he avoided any open confrontations with regular troops. It was not because he held a certain number of manpower, but instead, he maintained his power by disrupting strategic roads for hajj around Gavur mountains, Payas and İskenderun.⁵² After his death, the new leader of *Küçükalioglu* became his son, Dede Bey. Dede Bey was an ambitious, powerful *derebey* who continued the raids. With its *derebey* ally Çapanoğlu Emin Paşa, the Ottomans organized a military campaign against Dede Bey, but he defeated this army by taking mountain passes. In 1817, the governor of Adana eventually captured him. His head was sent to Istanbul, and his body was burned in Adana as a punishment for a warning to others.⁵³ Then the Ottoman state sent Dede Bey's male relatives into exile except for his 12 years old brother, Mustuk Bey (or Mustafa Bey). Mustuk Bey was another politically active *derebey* in the

⁵⁰ Christopher Gratien, *Mountains are Ours: Ecology and Settlement in Late Ottoman and early Republican Cilicia, 1856-1956*, (PhD Dissertation, Georgetown University: 2015), p.77.

⁵¹ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973), pp. 22-23.

⁵² Ahmed Cevdet, (1893), "Târih-i Cevdet", vol. 2 (Dersaadet [Istanbul]: Matbaa-yı Osmaniye), p.268.; BOA, HAT 14/552 (ca. 1202 [1787/8]).

⁵³ Ahmet Cevdet efendi, "Tezâkir", Yay. Haz.: Cavid Baysun, (Ankara: 1991), p.131.

region. Dede Bey and Mustuk Bey struggled with local and central political actors while they established alliances as well. Eventually, Mustuk's power sphere even reached the Ottoman state thanks to his relations with the governor of Aleppo, which caused the replacement of the treasurer of Adana, who did not get along with Mustuk Bey. Mustuk Bey's relations with foreigners are also worth mentioning to explain his power and diplomacy in the area. The British consul in Aleppo praised him for protecting Christians from civil conflict in Damascus in 1860 and for his offer to help catch the murderer of an American missionary. However, Gould argues that the Ottoman state did not appreciate these approaches towards Mustuk Bey since the central government expected more direct control over the region. Such relations between foreigners and derebeys made the Ottoman state fearful of foreign intervention.⁵⁴ However, Mustuk's politics was not monolithic as he also made efforts to help the state with drafting tribes' men into the military and controlling brigandage in the mid-19th century. One can argue that his activities were only a continuity to help him maintain his power in the area.

The Egyptian governor Muhammad (Mehmed) Ali's son Ibrahim Paşa's rule over Çukurova from 1832 to 1840 was considered a first step to transforming the plain into commercial agricultural land. However, it had been a site of transhumance activities till then.⁵⁵ Muhammad Ali's ambition to build an independent Egypt led him to be very interested in the timber of Çukurova and Syria. His fleet needed much more timber that did not exist at a sufficient amount in Egypt. Therefore, Muhammad Ali wrote to his son in his letter, "the matter of timber was as crucial as crippling the army

⁵⁴ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973), p.489.

⁵⁵ Meltem Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Making of the Adana-Mersin Region 1850-1908*, (Brill: Leiden and Boston, 2010), p.41.

of Constantinople.”⁵⁶ Toksöz states that “When Ibrahim Paşa took over Çukurova in 1832, the situation in the region was similar to that of Egypt when Muhammad Ali came to power. Egyptian agriculture had been suffering from various factors, including the quality of land, which had deteriorated due to the silting up of the canals. The delta, as a result, had lost a third of its cultivable area. The Fayum was depopulated for fear of tribal (Bedouin) raids.”⁵⁷ as she presents a similarity between Muhammad Ali’s rule over Egypt and Ibrahim’s over Çukurova. When Ibrahim Paşa ruled Çukurova for a short time, he encouraged settlement and agricultural activities just like Muhammad Ali had done in Egypt “in order to keep up with modernizing mercantilist economies.”

For this reason, Ibrahim Paşa even made efforts, for instance, to drain the marshes around Iskenderun port to make the ports more active in trade.⁵⁸ However, it was not Muhammad Ali or Ibrahim Paşas who made Çukurova a commercial agriculture center. Their attempts to transform the area caught Ottoman and western investors’ attention in commerce and agriculture, later specifically cotton as a rising commodity in the following decades.⁵⁹

The Egyptian invasion of Çukurova in the 1830s affected shaping the local politics in the area. The political stances of Çukurova *derebeys* varied from each other towards the invasion. The *derebeys*’ priority was to strengthen their position out of this battle as competitors against each other. While a leading figure among

⁵⁶ Khaled Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali, His Army and the Making of Modern Egypt*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), p. 50; in Meltem Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Making of the Adana-Mersin Region 1850-1908*, (Brill: Leiden and Boston, 2010), p.43.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p.43.

⁵⁸ Songül Ulutaş, *Gelenekten Moderne Tarsus'ta Tarımsal Dönüşüm (1839-1856)*, (History Studies 4 (4): 2012), pp.447-466.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, pp.47-50.

Menemencioğulları family, *Menemencioğlu* Ahmed Bey, supported Egyptian forces, another *Menemencioğlu* derebey, Hacı Habîb Bey was on the Ottoman side. Similar to this, *Kozanoğlu* Samur Ağa took the side of Egypt whereas *Kozan-ı Garbî derebey* Çadırcı Mehmed Ağa, Ottomans'.⁶⁰ On the other hand, *Küçükaliolu* Halil Ağa joined Ottoman forces led by Hafız Paşa against Egyptian Ibrahim Paşa in 1831. Dadaloğlu even praised Halil Ağa's support in a folk song.⁶¹ A conversation between *Menemencioğlu* Ahmed Bey and his brother, Hacı Habîb Bey, revealed the difference of opinion. Ahmed Bey asked his brother to stop the Egyptian army with hundreds of tribal soldiers when the huge Ottoman Paşas could not. Hacı Habîb Bey's answer was interesting and foreseeing that he would reemerge seven years later even if he failed.⁶² Hacı Habîb Bey's answer was quite interesting, but he was confident about his knowledge of Egypt for seven years since he had lived there.⁶³ As mentioned before, the main goal of derebeys, however, was to sustain and even strengthen their power in the area, so their priority was not just to help one side achieve their goals. Therefore, they even changed sides in advance.

İbrahim Paşa also organized military expeditions over Kozan. He established an alliance with Samur Ağa in *Kozan-ı Şarkî* (Sis) whereas he was resisted by *Kozan-ı Garbî derebey* Çadırcı Mehmed Ağa. Çadırcı's success in preventing Egyptian forces from taking over Kozan strengthened *Kozanoğlu* Çadırcı Mehmed Ağa's position in his relationships with the Ottoman government. Cevdet Efendi writes that Çadırcı's

⁶⁰ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Tezâkir*, Yay. Haz.: Cavid Baysun, (Ankara: 1986), p.110.

⁶¹ İsmail Görkem, *Yeni Bilgiler Işığında Dadaloğlu, Bütün Şiirleri*, (E Yayınları: İstanbul, 2006), pp.350-351; Ahmet Şükrü Esen, *Anadolu Aşıkları II: Dadaloğlu*, ed. İsmail Görkem, (Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları: İstanbul, 2020), p.172.

⁶² The original conversation is as followed: Ahmed Bey: "Koca koca Osmanlı paşaları karşı duramayıp Ereğli ve Ulukışla'dan dönüp bakmakta iken sen birkaç yüz aşiret askeri ile bu koca orduyu nasıl durduracaksın?" Hacı Habîb Bey: "Şimdi batarsam 7 seneden sonra yeniden çıkarım." Yılmaz Kurt and Menemencioğlu Ahmed Bey, *Menemencioğulları Tarihi*, (Akçağ Yayınları: Ankara, 1996), p.190.

⁶³ Ibid, p.173.

victory over the Egyptian army made *Kozanoğulları* more famous and this victory was even appreciated by the Istanbul government (*Bu vak'a ile Kozanoğulları bir mertebe daha şöhret bulmuştur ve ol vaktin hükmünce Çadırcı'nın bu muzafferiyeti nezd-i Devlet-i aliyye'de dahi şayan-ı tahsin olmuştur*).⁶⁴ On the other hand, Cevdet Efendi was critical of Çadırcı for calling him *serkeş* (rebel, disobedient) that Çadırcı was not obedient to the Ottoman state orders even after Egypt had withdrawn. Cevdet Efendi quotes that he once replied to the state orders for him that “*Ammim oğlu bunca memâliki havza-i tasarrufuna geçirmiş. Bir avuç Kozan dağlarını dâhi bana çok görmemelidir.*” He uses a pejorative language by calling the Sultan as his “cousin (uncle’s son)” that was being used at a time for fellow people in an informal way in Anatolia. Then he continues saying that the Sultan took over these huge lands so he should not grudge himself Kozan mountains as a piece. His tone sounded disturbing to Cevdet Efendi as he calls Çadırcı “insolent” due to his response.⁶⁵

Initially, İbrahim Paşa’s activities can be considered a set of reform attempts in Çukurova, inspired by his father’s policies in Egypt. Toksöz draws our attention to the “striking similarity” between cases of Egypt and Çukurova.⁶⁶ Muhammad Ali implemented several policies in Egypt to improve agricultural production. These policies were settling nomadic tribes by appointing them to the government posts, recruiting tribesmen in the military, and finally capturing those who did not obey.⁶⁷ Toksöz further argues that Muhammad Ali’s reforms in Egypt had been more successful than the reform of Fırka-i Islâhiye in 1865. İbrahim Paşa’s reforming

⁶⁴ Ahmed Cevdet Efendi, *Tezâkir 21-39*, Yay. Haz.: Cavid Baysun, (Ankara: 1991(3)), p.110.

⁶⁵ Ibid, pp.110-111.

⁶⁶ Meltem Toksöz, *Nomads, Migrants and Cotton in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Making of the Adana-Mersin Region 1850-1908*, (Brill: Leiden and Boston, 2010), p.44.

⁶⁷ Gabriel Baer, *Social Change in Egypt: 1800-1914* in: ed. by P.M. Holt, “Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt: Historical Studies from the Ottoman Conquest to the United Arab Republic”, (Oxford: Oxford UP pp, 1968), pp. 138-140.

attempts in Çukurova also included dealing with the tribes initially. He sought support from tribes, established alliances with some of them, and even used these tribes against others, such as *Menemencioğulları*, against Kurdish tribes. Even if some tribal leaders were successful in defending themselves such as *Küçükalioğlu Mısdık Bey*, *Kozanoğlu Çadırcı Mehmed Ağa*, he tried to establish a secure dominion in the lower plain by keeping permanent forces in strategic locations and passes in Çukurova. Making sure that the lower plain was safe, he tried to manage the transition to sedentary life in the lower plain from where he pushed away from the tribes to the eastern mountainous area. About three decades later, the Ottoman Reform Division would follow the same path to drive away from the tribes from the lower plain to secure settlements and cultivation in this area. The area in the lower plain where Ibrahim Paşa intended to secure would later turn into the center of the regional economy.

For this reason, Egypt's administration in the region played an essential role in later developments. It is probable that Cevdet Efendi even studied the Egyptian policies in Çukurova before he planned the reforms. Ibrahim Paşa's other policies provided manpower to Çukurova among Arabs, mainly from Syria and even north Africans who would be part of commercial and industrial life in Çukurova. These immigrants were expert laborers supervising cultivation, particularly of cotton. Last but not least, Ibrahim Paşa was quite active in draining swamps to gain more land for agricultural production. The cotton already cultivated since the 16th century in the area was among the most important commodities for Egyptians who were already producing in Egypt. Ibrahim Paşa brought from Egypt a new crop in Çukurova, sugar cane. For all of these steps, he was inspired by the example of Egypt, and these steps were followed by bringing a skilled labor force and new landlords in Çukurova from

Syria and even Egypt.⁶⁸ Ibrahim Paşa's reforms in a short time seduced the Ottoman state's attention in Çukurova, which would result in more Ottoman interest in the area for the following decades and even more developments in there following more decades later. Ibrahim Paşa left Çukurova as an area whose potential to turn into an agricultural commerce center with his investments. Therefore, his administration had a significant role in Çukurova even though it was only eight years. Cevdet's account can be considered an example of the attraction of Ottomans to the agricultural development in Çukurova. He states that *Kozanoğulları* was stealing Adana's animals since the governor of Adana was weak. Thus, he also interestingly refers that due to this situation, Çukurova turned into a barrack whereas it was not utilized as agricultural land. Only a tiny piece of land was cropped between Adana, Mersin and Tarsus, and Misis.⁶⁹ According to him, tribes were an obstacle to security and agricultural development despite the richness of Çukurova. His account was to justify the Fırka-i Islâhiye's intervention in terms of security and agriculture.

After Egypt left Çukurova in 1840, the scene in Çukurova was not sufficiently settled along with Ibrahim Paşa's reforms. The attempts to raise agricultural input were shy of the set goals, and the investment to transform the region into a commercial region was not materialized. However, it was a step in the right direction. One of the half-finished reforms concerned the nomadic tribes. After the Egyptian departure, the nomadic tribes returned to the lower plain from the mountainous regions. Before the 1865 reforms, the Ottoman government tried to settle the tribes in Çukurova and conscript them. Kıbrıslı Mehmed Paşa, governor of Aleppo appointed in 1850 and later the commander of Fifth Army, proposed to the Ottoman state a

⁶⁸ Ibid, pp.46-49.

⁶⁹ Ibid, p.28.

harsh expedition against these tribes. The paşa's idea was to destroy the tribes by confiscating their tents, horses, and guns crucial for their lifestyle. However, the High Council (Meclis-i Vâlâ) softened this proposal so their guns and tents would be bought, and they would keep their animals. Mehmed Paşa sent a large force against rebels in the mountains, which would be unexpectedly defeated despite the new plan.⁷⁰ Then through a mediator, an agreement over conscription was reached.⁷¹ According to this agreement, the settlement was not considered a condition for conscription. Cerid and Tacirlu tribes agreed on this proposal to continue their nomadic way of life, whereas the *Kozanoğlu* tribe did not. Even though the Ottoman state ordered the forces in Central Anatolia to prevent supplies from reaching the rebels, the issue of Kozan was not quite concerned by the Ottoman state at this point due to the Crimean War of 1853-1856.⁷² Thus, the first attempts to pacify provinces in Çukurova with the provincial reforms were not entirely successful, partly for the outbreak of the war.

The war in the 1850s preoccupied the Ottoman state. This situation caused a lack of administrative presence in Çukurova as the *Avşar* tribe settled in the Yozgat area migrated to Çukurova, opposing the state authorities.⁷³ On the other hand, some of the Çukurova tribes were not against the government, as they supplied men for the army to fight the Russians. For instance, Kara Fatma, the leader of the *Cerid* tribe,

⁷⁰ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973), pp. 42-43.

⁷¹ BOA, İradeler, Dâhiliye, 14879.

⁷² Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973) p. 44.

⁷³ BOA, İradeler, Meclis-i Vâlâ, 9667. From Ankara Valisi.

sent her tribesmen to the war and was rewarded with a silver medal and a monthly salary of 100 piastres, demonstrating that not all tribes were hostile to the state.

After the war, a new phase began in Ottoman provincial reformation that would be supposed as more determined. According to Orhonlu, the reason for the failure of the Ottoman government in its settlement policies in the pre-1840s was the complexity of the issue and the government's lack of consideration for winter and summer pasture way of life.⁷⁴ Although the government was determined to settle the tribes into the land and sedentary life, the officials did not deal with this question. As a result, the correspondence between Istanbul and local officials was quite long and took time to implement.⁷⁵ Gould also argued that the first phase of the reforms became unsuccessful because of a lack of trained administrators and soldiers. However, this time, the Ottoman state had trained officials to implement policies in Southern Anatolia.⁷⁶ These new reforms in 1858 strengthened the authority of local governors even with providing regular troops. The governors were also given authority to move officials from one part of the province to another. This reform caused troubles in the provinces.⁷⁷ For instance, the governor of Aleppo sent troops to the Turcoman tribes that closed the road to Istanbul in Amik plain to restore order.⁷⁸ As another incident in the region was that the leader of the *Karayığitoğlu* tribe, known in official documents as a brigand of Gavurdağı, was arrested and exiled.⁷⁹ From now on, the violence and brigandage in the region got more common. Hence, this new

⁷⁴ Cengiz Orhonlu, "*Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Aşiretlerin İskânı*", (Eren Yayıncılık ve Kitapçılık: 1987), p.114.

⁷⁵ İrade-i Meclis-i Vâlâ, no. 624.

⁷⁶ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973), p.47.

⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 48.

⁷⁸ FO (Great Britain), 226/148, Skene to Bulwer, 3/31/60.

⁷⁹ BOA, Iradeler, Meclis-i Vâlâ, 17917.

reformation process became a precedent for 1865 reforms in Çukurova. In addition, riots and clashes around Damascus in 1860 led the foreign intervention in the incidents to protect the Christian population in the Empire, so did the Ottoman state. Foreign powers were already involved in Ottoman domestic affairs, especially after the war against Russia as urged the reformation in the Empire. As a result, the Ottoman officials felt it necessary to quickly respond to domestic orders to prevent foreign powers from interfering with the internal policies.⁸⁰ For a famous instance, it concretely came to exist when the British Embassy, in a meeting with Ottoman officers such as Reşid Paşa, offered to get Kozanoğlu tribesmen into the Ottoman forces with their efforts. However, Reşid Paşa was anxious about the foreign involvement in domestic issues, especially in Cilicia, fearing for an autonomous region in Kozan if the relations advanced.⁸¹

In 1862, there was additionally a murder that played a role in increasing tension in the mountains of Cilicia. Jackson Coffing, a resident in Hacin, was first expelled⁸² from the region by local *derebeys* and then was killed on the road near Payas. This incident was critical because Payas was located on the route to Syria and Arabia and the Muslim pilgrimage.⁸³ After the Coffing incident, the Ottomans sent Kabuli Efendi to the region to investigate the incidents. In his reports, he recommended exile *derebeys* and establishing a capable administration. With the idea

⁸⁰ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973), p. 51.

⁸¹ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Ma'ruzat*, pp. 271-272.

⁸² Josephine Coffing, ABCFM, no. 239.

⁸³ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973), p. 54.

of a more capable administration, a new, more general reform program was discussed in Istanbul, so the *Fırka-i Islahiye* (Reform Division) of 1865 emerged.

Until the arrival of the Reform Division, there were still some policies to capture and exile derebeys to take Cilicia under control in 1863 and 1864. However, it would increase tension and disorder in the region on the eve of the 1865 reforms.

Besides all factors about the local politics explained above, the tension between nomadic tribes and the sedentary population was also crucial. The complaints made by settled and sedentary people to Istanbul were often about nomadic tribes harming the crops or boundary conflicts.⁸⁴ However, this was not the case all the time. The settled villagers were not mostly happy with nomadic tribes using their grassland or pastures. They were trying to stay them away with the support of state officials sometimes by making up excuses to complain. The case of the Rişvan tribe is one example. After villagers complained about the Rişvan tribe's harms over settled villagers and their crops, the *kadı*'s investigation resulted in the tribe's innocence and the incorrectness of the claims.⁸⁵ There are more similar examples about the tension between the settled and nomads, affecting the state's policy against the nomadic tribes.

Finally, the local officials' inability and even mismanagement caused nomadic tribes to get in trouble. The local officials asked these mobile groups to pay heavy taxes in some cases. For instance, the Tacirli tribe was inquired with the claim of not paying taxes in 1860. However, it was then understood that they had paid their taxes in the sancak of Maraş, and they did not want to pay again as it would be doubled in

⁸⁴ BOA, MVL, nr, 638/85; BOA, A. {MKT. UM, nr, 120/40

⁸⁵ Faruk Söylemez, *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Aşiret Yönetimi: Rişvan Aşireti Örneği*", (Kitabevi Yayınları, 2. Baskı, İstanbul: 2007), pp.56-57.

their winter pasture, the area of Üzeyir-Payas. As a result, a new decree was issued that the nomadic groups would only pay their taxes in either their summer or winter pasture.⁸⁶ This kind of issue led the issues of banditry to happen in some cases too. Although the payment of compensation which Tacirli tribe was again charged for harming crops and lands was made already in Maraş, they were asked to pay that in Adana too, so they reacted by blocking an important bridge on the Ceyhan river. Then it was found that payment had already been paid in Maraş, but the officials did not notify the Adana council and did not even send the money.⁸⁷ These incidents contributed to the tension and banditry in the region.

⁸⁶ Murat Polat, *Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Tacirli Aşiretinin İskân ve Islâhı*”, (Journal of History School, Year 11, Issue XXXV: 2018), pp.690-705.

⁸⁷ Ibid, p.706.

CHAPTER III

FIRKA-I ISLÂHIYE: REESTABLISHMENT OF ORDER OR RECONQUEST OF MOUNTAINS

“Amma Gâvur Dağı ahalisi cehl içinde kalmışlar diyânetlerini bilmezler. Ne hocaları var ne mescid ve mektepleri var. Hayvanlar gibi dağlarda gezüb haydutluğu ve hırsızlığı kendülerine kâr ve san’at edinmiş bir vahşi halk idiler.”⁸⁸

“But Gâvur Mountain communities are in the darkness of ignorance, do not know their religion. They neither have hodjas nor masjid, nor school. They wander around mountains like animals and are savage people who make a practice of banditry and theft.”⁸⁹

The chapters about Ottoman centralization efforts and the nomads and local politics of Çukurova provided a background story about Fırka-i Islâhiye regarding the central approach and the local perspective. This chapter will deal with the Ottoman narrative and practice. After displaying an overview of the concepts drawing a framework, this chapter will present the Ottoman discourse and narrative. Then Fırka-i Islâhiye and its activities in Çukurova towards nomadic tribes and mountaineers will be discussed. Finally, the chapter will depict the Ottoman expedition and settlement policies in the eyes of nomadic tribes of concern through folk songs and oral materials.

Civilizing Mission

⁸⁸ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Kozan ve Gavur Dağı Ahvaline Dair Layiha*, ed: Saim Yörük, ideal kültür&yayıncılık: İstanbul, 2017), p.30.

⁸⁹ Translated by Hamdi Karakal.

The conceptualization of central state discourses towards the nomadic tribes does not lie on any unique characteristics of the Ottoman case. There is a global phenomenon better to describe the civilizational narrative against the yet-uncivilized. Although the civilizational discourse was produced to describe better European view of the Orient, which happened to explain the relationship between “the civilized” and “the uncivilized,” the Ottoman example of the 19th-century provincial reforms and its narrative could set an example of the global civilizational modernist narrative produced by the central administration against so-called “the uncivilized people” in the periphery.

Schaebler states that the term of “civilization” and “savagery” has to be examined not between “Europeans and its others but within them,” which emphasizes the urge for a global framework to uncover “the civilized” and “the savage” of local conceptualizations within local context as every context has its own “complex processes of self-authentication.”⁹⁰ The French invention of the term “*mission civilisatrice*” refers to the idea that the French as the cultural and racially superior to uncivilized inferior others is tasked a mission to bring civilization and its values to so-identified “barbarians” or “savages.” This civilizing mission initially gained a universal definition: there is only a single universal civilization in favor of reason, progress, and reform. Others were in a state of barbarianism and savagery, resisting such developments. Even though it had a universal meaning, those uncivilized were outside of a country and within the border like those in the countryside.⁹¹ The

⁹⁰ Schäbler, Birgit, *Civilizing Others: Global Modernity and the Local Boundaries (French, German, Ottoman, Arab) of Savagery*, (2004).

⁹¹ *Ibid*, pp.8-10.

Ottoman mission of bringing civilization to “tent-dwelling tribes” and mountaineers of Çukurova can be considered one of these occurrences 1860s.

Ottoman Narrative towards Çukurova

The Ottoman state’s approach to the tribes in Çukurova was dynamically unstable. The dichotomy of the central approach revealed that there was not a continuity of policies. On the one hand, the state appointed some tribal leaders to the government positions, but it securitized the issue and problematized incivility among the nomadic tribes. Even though there were specific reasons for the state’s policies, as mentioned in the previous chapter, its attitude contributes to the narrative constructed to justify its expedition. This section will examine the state narrative behind Fırka-i Islâhiye. The literature largely depends on the state resources which produced the narrative and knowledge among the tribes in the periphery.

Chris Gratien reveals, in his work, that the activities of the Reform Division in Cilicia were based on the state’s civilizing mission, depending on Cevdet Efendi’s writings. Ironically enough, during this mission, Cevdet Efendi mentions that the officers camped in high places because the weather was too hot, so he complained of the severe hot weather.⁹² From this writing, one could argue that the officers and at least Cevdet Efendi himself got aware of the reasons why migrant tribes went for summer pastures. Therefore, the Division's activities had a unique characteristic of a moral dimension against tribes that would have to be civilized by force. The state would have moral control over the population besides the political one.

The Ottoman state depicted migrant tribes as “deprived of knowledge, the productive sciences, and all the complete human attributes that are the result of the

⁹² BOA, Y-EE 142/7, no. 14 (16 Muharrem 1282 [11 June 1865]).

shape and form of civilization (*medeniyet*).”⁹³ Cevdet Efendi draws a line between villagers and “tent-dwelling tribes,” asserting the former as more civilized, the latter less. Cevdet Efendi, as a historian, makes his comments in a more sophisticated way, unlike other officials reports. As Gratien argues, Cevdet Efendi played a leading role in the construction of state narrative, on the one hand, as was a reformist side of the Empire that struggled to pacify the region, and on another side was barbaric “tent-dwelling tribes” of Cilicia, which had no idea about civilization.

Cevdet’s categorization of tribes was absolute rebels, partly obedient but might-not-be-trustworthy, ignorant, or uncivilized (*gayrimedeni*). The mobile, nomadic tribes who spent winter on the east side of the river and summer in the Anatolian mountains were considered Kozan tribes by the Division since their route was through Kozan. Kozan tribes were armed rebels who took hostages and stole animals even in their summer pastures in central Anatolia. The Çukurova tribes, as Cevdet defines, such as *Karsantioğulları* and *Menemencioğulları*, were partly obedient because they were allied with *Kozanoğulları*. The villages and towns of *Kars-ı Zülkadiriye* (today’s Kadirli) were absolute rebels, as Cevdet points out.⁹⁴ The category of Gavur Mountain’s inhabitants was ignorant and *gayrimedeni*, for they did not know their religion. They had none of the imams, religious scholars, masjids or mosques, schools, according to Cevdet Efendi. He further states that these people were wandering like animals around mountains as they were savages who engaged in theft and banditry.⁹⁵ Even if there was no unity of education in the Empire, one could see that there was a modernist and centralist tendency judging the periphery on not having

⁹³ Ahmet Cevdet efendi, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, 15.

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, pp.28-29.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p.30.

schools, religious places. Therefore, this central narrative justified the introduction of significant discipline and intervention.

Fırka-i Islâhiye (Reform Division) and Its Activities

The Reform Division was an officials' commission combined by military and civil officers assigned to control and facilitate the transition of migrant tribes from a nomadic way of life to a sedentary one. It was an institution that had a more broad and systematic agenda than the previous ones.⁹⁶ The commission was established in 1863 to deal with Southeastern semi-nomadic tribes. Derviş Paşa and Ahmet Cevdet Efendi⁹⁷ were the prominent figures of the commission. On 1864 June, the general of the 4th Army centered in Anatolia/Erzurum, Derviş Paşa, was appointed as the commander of Fırka-i Islâhiye.

Paşas leading the Reform Division

It is worth mentioning a brief biography of Ahmet Cevdet Efendi (1822-1895) and Derviş Paşa leading the expedition. Derviş Paşa (1812-1896), also known as İbrahim Derviş Paşa, was from Lofça, a son of İbrahim Ağa who was an *ayan* of Lofça. Derviş went to Istanbul and volunteered in the military when he was young. As Cevdet notes, thanks to his cleverness and activities, he was ranked major (*binbaşı*) in 1836 and became a military assistant (*yâver*) of Ömer Paşa. After taking part in many military activities, he was raised to commander (*müşir*) on the 28th of April 1862.⁹⁸ He is also known as *Müşir* Paşa.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 74.

⁹⁷ BOA, MKT.MHM., 1281 (1864), 315/79.

⁹⁸ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Kozan ve Gavur Dağı Ahvaline Dair Layiha*, ed: Saim Yörük, (ideal kültür&yayıncılık: İstanbul, 2017), pp.30-31.

Ahmet Cevdet Efendi was a part of *ulemâ* (*âlim*; official religious scholars in the Ottoman Empire), historian, translator, educator, and statesman. He was one of the most important Ottoman intellectuals and bureaucrats during the *Tanzimat* era. Born in Lofça/Bulgaria in 1822 under the reign of reformist Sultan Mahmud II, he received a traditional education in *medrese* as it was his main to work a part of *ulema* almost in all his life. Then he became one and even climbed up the ranks thanks to his ability and his loyalty. Young *âlim* even attracted Sultans, Abdulmecid, and Abdulaziz, who even ordered the grand vizier to promote him. The highest rank in the *ulemâ* circle had been *kazasker* until the direction of his post changed to *vezir* in 1866, even though he had not been in favor.⁹⁹ He was under patronage of key *Tanzimat* figure, Mustafa Reşit Paşa and then Fuad and Âli Paşas. Reşit Paşa played a significant role in him as his teacher, friend, patron, and supporter. Cevdet writes that he had “wept for him (Reşit Paşa) than his father” when Reşit passed away shortly after his father.¹⁰⁰

As an important intellectual of the *Tanzimat* era, Ahmed Cevdet left outstanding accounts and books. Among these books, the most important ones are *Mecelle-i Ahkâm-ı Adliye* (Ottoman civil law), *Tezâkir*, *Vekâyi-i Devlet-i Âliye-i Osmâniye* known as *Târih-i Cevdet*, *Kavâid-i Osmâniye*. With these various works, it is necessary to state that he was genuinely ambitious to take up challenging tasks in different fields such as law, history, grammar since he did not hesitate to enter these fields when he was offered to do so if convinced that there would have been a benefit of improving his knowledge on different matters. His lead of the *Mecelle* Commission had been one of this kind. The task of the Commission was to draft a reformed Ottoman civil code while he had not been on a legal task before. The Commission

⁹⁹ Richard Chambers, *Ahmed Cevdet Efendi: The Formative Years of an Ottoman Transitional*, (PhD Dissertation: Princeton University, 1968), pp.172-173.

¹⁰⁰ Ahmed Cevdet Efendi, *Tezakir II*: 40.

collected and classified Ottoman traditional law on a selective basis and codified it by adapting the Western law code. He later came up with *Mecelle* completed in 1876 and applied as the law code of Ottomans and Turkey until 1926.¹⁰¹ Moreover, he contributed to language and education reforms.

As a statesman, he actively served to settle issues in Egypt, İşkodra, Bosnia, and Kozan before becoming a *vezir* as governor of the newly extended Aleppo province over Adana province and Kozan sanjak. His local reforms could be considered to apply Tanzimat reforms and settle issues such as conscription, taxation, and local disputes. He confidently states in his writings that he fulfilled his tasks as the state favored in his missions. These tasks seem like they prepared him for the *vâli* post and added to his already-gained medrese and ulemâ circle skills.

Ahmed Cevdet was neither solely traditionalist nor reformist. While his background was firmly based on tradition, he also successfully read the needs of the time in the state, and he did not refrain from taking part in *Tanzimat* reforms as an *âlim*. Therefore, Richard Chambers, in his biography about Cevdet Efendi, defines him as “transitional,” conceptualized by Daniel Lerner, which means Cevdet Efendi was in between extreme forms of ideologies, conservative or liberal, reactionary or reformer.¹⁰² His character also fell into his stay in the middle.

Before he was instructed to settle issues in southern Anatolia, Cevdet Efendi’s last tasks were to settle issues in Albania and Bosnia as a *kazasker*. There was discontent in Balkans because of the conscription policies of the Ottoman state, which resulted in armed rebellions among the Muslim population. In brief, the Ottoman state had failed to succeed in conscripting by using military force. Ahmed Cevdet was instructed to

¹⁰¹ Richard Chambers, *Ahmed Cevdet Efendi: The Formative Years of an Ottoman Transitional*, (PhD Dissertation: Princeton University, 1968), p.154.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, p.2.

settle the issues with locals and negotiate with them on the matter. According to the new law, his primary purpose was to convince the local Muslim groups to serve in the military five years of active service and seven years of reserve duty.¹⁰³ He successfully won over these groups by using the narrative of the concept of holy war. The biggest challenge for the locals was to serve outside of their region, and Cevdet Efendi and local figures in the assembly agreed that the soldiers in this region would serve in their provinces with one additional year of reserve duty. Therefore, he fulfilled his task in bringing up the traditional narrative with the new law of conscription.

After this big success that the military had achieved, Cevdet Efendi's efforts were recognized by Sultan Abdulmecid. He was bestowed upon the Order of Osmani of the second class, which had not been provided before to someone in *ulemâ*.¹⁰⁴ Then he faced some rumors in İstanbul that he sought the position of *Şeyhü'l-İslam* because of his friendship with Fuad Paşa, who was grand *vezir* at the moment. Although he refused these rumors, it would shape his new task to enforce reforms around Kozan, as Chambers calls it, "temporary exile" since Fuad Paşa found these rumors dangerous to his position. Cevdet Efendi was appointed as *me'muriyet-i mahsûsa-i fevka'l-'de* (extraordinary authority or high exceptional post) in charge of the civil matter reform along with Derviş Paşa in charge of military matters.

Reconquest and Colonization of Mountains

Ahmet Cevdet Efendi's writings, especially in his *Lâyhâ* and *Tezâkir*, indicate that the expedition was carefully planned and conducted this time step by step according to the plan. The Reform Division arrived at Iskenderun port at the end of

¹⁰³ Ahmed Cevdet Efendi, *Tezâkir* II: 40.

¹⁰⁴ Richard Chambers, *Ahmed Cevdet Efendi: The Formative Years of an Ottoman Transitional*, (PhD Dissertation: Princeton University, 1968), p.168.

May 1865. The first thing done by the Division was to declare a general amnesty already dated back to June 7, 1864. This strategy was applied as a peaceful call for obedience to the law brought by the center to the area. The expedition's goal was to convince the migrant tribes to settle either in their winter or summer pastures and abandon their nomadic ways.

For this reason, the commission was initially on the mission to overcome Çukurova and Kozan tribes where the government authority could have hardly been claimed until then. Another goal was to benefit from the manpower of the tribes for the army. The conscription of new men became a significant deal for the state because of the wars with Russia and the Balkan uprisings.¹⁰⁵ However, the villagers and tribesmen resisted the conscription attempts because they neither wanted to lose manpower nor trusted the conscription system of five years service as an active duty or seven years in the reserves. Cevdet Efendi believed that the solution to the conscription issue was not necessary to hire non-Muslim subjects but to keep the areas of the countryside like Çukurova under administrative control.¹⁰⁶ However, he also knew that this expedition would be a difficult task to achieve since the central government had been desperate to deal with these nomadic tribes.¹⁰⁷

Therefore, the Division aimed to achieve settlement either with or without the use of force. Fırka-i Islâhiye was circulating the note that “*Pâdişâh size bir kitâb ile bir kılıç yollamış. Kitâba itâ’at edenlerin kılıç ile işi yok ve illâ kılıç hazırdır.*”¹⁰⁸

(Translated by Gratien: “The Sultan has sent to you a book and a sword. Those who

¹⁰⁵ Cengiz Orhonlu, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Aşiretlerin İskânı*, (Eren Yayıncılık ve Kitapçılık: 1987), pp. 115-116.

¹⁰⁶ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Ma’ruzat*, pp. 272-274.

¹⁰⁷ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Kozan ve Gavur Dağı Ahvaline Dair Layiha* ed: Saim Yörük, (ideal kültür&yayıncılık: İstanbul, 2017), pp.28-29.

¹⁰⁸ Ahmed Cevdet Efendi, *Tezakir* 21-39, Yay. Haz.: Cavid Baysun, (Ankara-1991(3), p.168.

obey the book have no business with the sword, and otherwise, the sword is ready.”)¹⁰⁹ The discursive analogy between sword and book sent from the center was applied in the periphery with blood and force by integrating locals into the new centralist and conscript state. Also, Cevdet Efendi’s writings uncover the forceful approach of the state towards the migrant tribes. Hence, the mission of the Reform Division got into bloody clashes with tribes and created new reordering of the region with the creation of new villages and settlement places as if the Ottoman government was reconquering Çukurova and even broader Çukurova.

After the Division arrived in Iskenderun, Cevdet Efendi writes that there was no security around Payas because Küçükalioglu Mushtuk Paşa’s son, Dede Bey, who took the hills, was raiding travelers and people living in lowlands. He was also attacking pilgrimage caravans whose route was through mountain passes around this area. A pilgrimage caravan had already been raided in 1863, so that the Ottoman state decided to use an alternative road by sea through Beirut port. However, the road to Aleppo through Belen passes of Antakya, which travelers used, had strategic importance. For this reason, the Ottoman state planned to take control over the “bandit” mountaineers to secure the way.

Cevdet’s writings reveal that the Ottoman state had studied the failure and partial success of Mısırlı İbrahim Paşa and Kıbrıslı Mehmed Paşa expeditions during the planning phase.¹¹⁰ The Division was to be able to fight in the mountains as İbrahim Paşa had done. Even though İbrahim Paşa had employed mountain fighter Druze men in his army for his Cilicia campaign, he faced a significant challenge against

¹⁰⁹ Christopher Gratien, *Mountains are Ours: Ecology and Settlement in Late Ottoman and early Republican Cilicia, 1856-1956*, (PhD Dissertation, Georgetown University: 2015), p.136.

¹¹⁰ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Kozan ve Gavur Dağı Ahvaline Dair Layiha*, ed: Saim Yörük, (ideal kültür&yayıncılık: İstanbul, 2017), pp.26-27.

Alibekiroğulları mountaineers since they were carrying heavy equipment in such a hilly area. The ability and success of Derviş Paşa and his Albanian and Zeybek troops, acquired in Albania, also a mountainous area, is praised by Cevdet Efendi, as “*Dağlarda ve taşlarda keklik gibi sekerlerdi.*” (They would bounce in the mountains like a partridge).¹¹¹ Fırka-i Islâhiye consisted of eleven infantry battalions and one cavalry battalion. Two infantry battalions joined the Division; one in Payas and one in Bulanık sub-province, and overall, the Division included thirteen infantry battalions. In addition, there were assisting forces; four infantry and one cavalry battalions commanded by Kurt İsmail Paşa on the way from Sivas to Eastern Kozan. Also, Arslan Paşa and Eleşkirdli Mehmed Bey with five-six hundred Georgian, Kurdish and Circassian cavalries were on the way to join Fırka-i Islâhiye at that time. Cevdet Efendi praises the ability of all these forces.¹¹² This is the first time an army in such a big size arrived in the region since Egyptian forces. The army was the one which was constituted for re-establishing state order and control over the region, as one can argue of this expedition as a re-conquest.

On their to İskenderun, Cevdet and Derviş discussed which strategy would be followed step by step. Initially, the strategy proposed was to land in Payas and climb up Gavur mountain to fight the rebellious *Ulaşlı* tribe. However, it was not appropriate since the mountain was quite steep in this way. The Egyptians’ campaign was also studied in detail thanks to Cevdet’s background as an official historian (*vakânüvis*). The fact that İbrahim Paşa had not used this way was also considered. Instead of Gavur mountain’s steep way, they preferred to land in İskenderun and keep Belen pass under control, so they planned to use the way to Amik plain and valley

¹¹¹ Ibid, p.34.

¹¹² Ibid, pp.33-34.

between Gavur mountains and Kurd mountain. Even if there was a risk of being caught between two fires in this valley, the plan was first to control Kurd mountain, which would cut off the *Ulaşlı* tribe's supplies.¹¹³ During this time, Ahmed Cevdet Efendi's *yâver* (military assistant), Binbaşı Hüseyin Hüsnü Bey, who had been on duty in Bosnia with Cevdet, played an essential role on convincing tribesmen in Kozan according to Cevdet's writings. Before the Division, Hüseyin Hüsnü Bey was instructed to go to Kozan to incline people to the side of the state by declaring general amnesty. This act was supposed to familiarize people with the state's intention and break prejudices while the Division headed to Gavur mountains through Belen to Soğuksu, where the *Fırka* was settled. Although Cevdet Efendi states that Hüseyin Hüsnü Bey had been quite successful in his task as he gained support from Gençoğlan Ahmed Ağa, who was the chief of *Yağbasan* tribe.¹¹⁴

The decree (*Beyânname*), which was circulated among tribes, has bold messages to its audience. It begins with the definition of subjects by the Ottoman state as in a *Tanzimat* form the state would like to have. In this definition, everyone (*herkes*) is urgently invited to the service of state (*hidemât-ı devleti edâya müsâra'at*), which serves everyone's interests so that the security of the country (*vatanın âsâyişi*) would be achieved through everyone's efforts. The conjuncture of *Tanzimat* and *Islahat* reform is reflected in this definition. Then, it continues by stating that *derebeys'* violent and ignorant rule is disobedient, non-Islamic, and inhumane, which, clearly says, incriminates the whole population (*bütüün ahâlîyi nazar-ı töhmet altında*).¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Ahmed Cevdet Efendi, Tezakir 21-39, Yay. Haz.: Cavid Baysun, (Ankara: 1991(3), p.137.

¹¹⁴ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973), p.87.

¹¹⁵ Ahmed Cevdet Efendi, Tezakir 21-39, Yay. Haz.: Cavid Baysun, (Ankara: 1991(3), pp.138-139.

Therefore, Fırka-i Islâhiye comes to save the whole population in terms of their and state's interests. After Sultan's general amnesty is declared, the decree says;

“Bir elde berât-ı emân ü merhamet ve diğesinde seyf-i ma'delet-i şerî'at olarak gelindi. Hemşehrîlerimizden bir ferdin bir damla kanının dökülmesi istenilmez. Lâkin ser-keşlik ve bâgîlik edenin te'dibi dahi şer' ü kanunun ahkâmı iktizâsındandır.”¹¹⁶

The factors which made *Fırka* different from the previous expeditions or reforms could be listed as such; technological developments of military equipment and communication tools with the center, having more knowledge about and flexibility to adapt to the local context, lessons learned from previous attempts, size of the army, and preparedness of Derviş Paşa's and soldiers' mobility into the local mountainous circumstances.¹¹⁷

The Division initially marched towards Hacılar, Tiyek, and Ekbez districts. To secure a retreat route, they to pay the leader of the *Reyhanlı* tribe, Mustafa Bey, for fifty cavalries to be ready to defend the Division as the police force of Amik plain. Although the *beys* of Hacılar and Tiyek had declared their loyalties to the *Fırka*, they were not trusted, so Mustafa Bey was employed in the case.¹¹⁸ One could see that there had been a severe trust issue between the state and its supposed-subjects tribes.

The reforms applied in Çukurova consisted of establishing towns and villages to be settled by tribes. The names of these towns and villages had ideological

¹¹⁶ “As, on one hand, there is an edict (*ferman*) of amnesty and, on the other, shariah's justice sword. It is not favored to have fellow citizen's one drop of blood spilled. However, those who are disobedient and rebellious have to be disciplined according to (along with) the necessity of shariah.” Translated by Hamdi Karakal. Ibid, p.139.

¹¹⁷ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973), pp.85-86.

¹¹⁸ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Kozan ve Gavur Dağı Ahvaline Dair Layiha*, ed: Saim Yörük, (ideal kültür&yayıncılık: İstanbul, 2017), pp.34-35.

connotations and were preserved to this date. For example, the Division founded its first village called “*ordu*,” meaning “army.” Then the Division went to Tiyek, three hours away from *Ordu*, to construct a military barracks. When they were in Tiyek, Hacilar, Tiyek, and Ekbez ağas and beys declared their loyalty to the Division. Then these three districts were reorganized under one town, which would be named after “*Hassa*” since the Hassa army¹¹⁹ was the first to step in here among the Division. The Division’s traces could also be seen in new towns, *Cevdetiye* and *Dervişiye*,¹²⁰ named after Cevdet and Derviş. These two places are still there as today’s districts close to the city of *Osmaniye*¹²¹, which Fırka also established. *Osmaniye* consisted of Tecirli and Cerid tribes’ winter pastures and some districts, where several tribes were settled.

When the army was in *Hassa*, three infantry battalions and several cavalries were sent to Çerçili. Reyhaniye tribe *bey*, Mustafa Bey reached to Nigolu Castle. When Çerçili bandits surrounded him, forces arrived on time to rescue them. The bandits were defeated as some of them were kept hostage. The Division arrived in the castle and encamped here. Cevdet Efendi keeps a note in Nigolu Castle that there was a script in the Greek language as written that “*İskender burada ceza kanunu vaz etti*” (Alexander imposed criminal code here). In his notes, he realizes of this script that this castle had been built before Alexander the Great, who had repaired it, so it is interesting for the Ottoman central administration to experience the discovery of this region where had been under her sovereignty for centuries. This castle would be repaired again, this time and used as a military post to punish local nomads and so-

¹¹⁹ Hassa army was special army mercenaries based in Istanbul, mostly protecting Sultan. Most of battalions in the Reform Division consisted of Hassa army.

¹²⁰ Cevdetiye town/district: <https://www.cevdetiye.bel.tr/cevdetiye/cevdetiye-kasabasi>. Dervişiye village: <https://www.osmaniye.net/osmaniye-ilceleri-ve-koyleri/osmaniye-merkez-koyleri/dervişiye-koyu>

¹²¹ Today *Osmaniye* is a province in Turkey. See *Osmaniye* governorate’s website: <http://www.osmaniye.gov.tr/ilcelerimiz>

called bandits, just similar to Alexander's imposed criminal code here. The districts around here were centralized under a *kaza* who was newly established and called *İslâhiye* as a traced sign of Fırka-i Islâhiye. Today's *İslâhiye* town is a district of Gaziantep.¹²² The town had great strategic importance since the roads between Çukurova and Aleppo, Ayıntab (today's Gaziantep, Kilis, İzziye, and Maraş-İskenderun roads get through this town. Rebels who were defeated here fled to the mountains, and Cevdet Efendi ordered to burn villages of these rebels "to keep them from returning."¹²³ The Division settled Delikanlu and Çelikanlu tribes in *İslâhiye* and appointed Şevki Efendi as *kaymakam*, previous *kaymakam* of Payas and Cafer Efendi, who was from Kabartay/Circassian ulema as *mufti*. In here, two towers were constructed, named as "Cevdet Efendi Kulesi" and "Derviş Paşa Kulesi."¹²⁴ The provincial organizations and new names of administrative settlement places could give a fruitful insight towards the Ottoman centralism approach. The Division was undoubtedly determined to leave significant traces of its acts in this area of rebellious bandits' dwell.

The following steps of the Division were to create a new town close to the barracks and to tax settlers of Hacılar, Ekbez, and Tiyek districts by registering a specific number of households. People in these three districts were obligated to build houses to settle in Hassa town.¹²⁵ Ordu village also was registered as a village consisting of thirty households that were forced to settle in. These were applied at first

¹²² Today there are two neighborhoods in Islâhiye; Cevdetpaşa and Dervişpaşa. These traces are still derived from the legacy of Fırka-i Islâhiye. See the district governorate's website:

<http://www.islahiye.gov.tr/mahalli-idareler>

¹²³ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973), p.94.

¹²⁴ Ahmed Cevdet Efendi, Tezakir 21-39, Yay. Haz.: Cavid Baysun, (Ankara: 1991(3), pp.149-150.

¹²⁵ Hassa ilçesi (district) is still an official district of Hatay: <https://hatay.ktb.gov.tr/TR-201611/hassa.html>

reforms such as security, taxation, and building new settlement order, which makes it similar to a reconquest. The general pattern was followed in almost all places where the Division applied in 1865 Çukurova reforms. The Division forced tribes to settle in newly established towns and villages. Then registering the population to *defters* would be needed to keep track of taxation and conscription. Cevdet Efendi writes that the Division checked registers of Mısırlı İbrahim Paşa around Gavur mountains of these districts.

Regarding earlier registers, since people could not pay the registered taxes, the registered taxes were remised. However, they were asked to hand over timbers to construct barracks in this area, the triangle of Hacılar, Tiyek, and Ekbez under Hassa town. Thus, military control would be initially attained by building barracks and military buildings in newly built towns and villages.

Each year, officials were tasked to conscript locals, whereas they did not attend the army for a long time. Therefore, military service had to be officially rearranged for most of the community. However, it was considered impossible for the whole conscript community, so that the Division declared another amnesty over conscription and rearranged the rule instead. According to the new rule, conscription would be based on drawing lots over the locals as the people at the drafting age were included in the drawn lot.

Then Kurd Mountain was kept under control while Deli Halil migrated from there to Gavur Mountain. The rest of *ağas* and *beys* who were tired of Deli Halil's domination declared their obedience to the Division. Thus, Kurd Mountain was organized as a town of "*İzziye*," named after Şehzade Yusuf İzzeddin Efendi, the

eldest son of Sultan Abdulaziz¹²⁶ on the contrary to Gould's presumption which the name came from *Okçu İzzeddinli* tribe.¹²⁷ The Division's strategy of keeping beys and ağas under control in the rearrangement of land is to integrate them into the new system as officials of new districts. One of the examples given by Cevdet Efendi was Paşo Bey, appointed as *kaymakam* (district governor) of Elbistan.¹²⁸ Paşo Bey, *bey of the Çobanoğlu tribe*, was among the first *beys* of its kind who came to offer support to the Division in Iskenderun just after the army arrived. Paşo Bey's agenda regarding his support was to take his enemy, Mehmed Bey of Tiyek, down. This support was well-recognized as Paşo Bey's district, Hacılar, turned into the first reform center.¹²⁹ As expected, Mehmed Bey of Tiyek rebelled and was sent an exile to Antakya by the Division with Paşo Bey's help. He was forced to settle there with an allowance.¹³⁰ Another example of tribe leaders' using the Division's power to overcome their enemy fellows was Mehmed Bey, appointed as *kaymakam* of Birecik. Thanks to his obedience, he mobilized Tiyek people to fight against the Ulaşlılar tribe with his new official title.¹³¹ These cases indicate that the tribes politically used central intervention of the Division as a power struggle on their fellow enemies on the ground apart from its mission to civilize and settle mountaineers. The new power coalition in the periphery with direct intervention by the center was rearranged in its new form in 1865.

¹²⁶ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Kozan ve Gavur Dağı Ahvaline Dair Layiha*, ed: Saim Yörük, (ideal kültür&yayıncılık: İstanbul, 2017), p.37.

¹²⁷ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973), p.90.

¹²⁸ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Kozan ve Gavur Dağı Ahvaline Dair Layiha*, ed: Saim Yörük, (ideal kültür&yayıncılık: İstanbul, 2017), p.38.

¹²⁹ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Mâruzat*, pp.290-291.

¹³⁰ Andrew G. Gould, *Pashas and Brigands: Ottoman Provincial Reform and Its Impact on the Nomadic Tribes of Southern Anatolia, 1840-1885*, (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles: 1973), p.90.

¹³¹ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Kozan ve Gavur Dağı Ahvaline Dair Layiha*, ed: Saim Yörük, (ideal kültür&yayıncılık: İstanbul, 2017), p.38.

Although Cevdet Efendi generally talks about *ağas* and *beys* in his accounts, he writes about the people of settlers as a whole population in the Çerçili district. Cevdet Efendi states that Çerçili was a den of thieves and bandits. These bandits fled from the district to the mountains, just as locals stayed. Even though these locals declared their obedience to the Division, Cevdet Efendi reminded of an old saying, “*Hâin korkak olur*”¹³² betrayers are cowards. Most locals climbed up the Ulaş Mountains, so the Division burned their houses and forbade new ones.¹³³ In this case, we can see that Division challenged *beys* and *ağas* as feudal leaders and local people who did cooperate with the Division.

Then Deli Halil in Kayabaşı was thought to go to Kurd Mountain and capture the Izziye town. For this reason, the Division sent a few battalions to defeat Deli Halil in Kayabaşı; however, Deli Halil fled to Ulaş Mountains and joined *Alibekiroğulları* just like Dede Bey. Therefore, the next step was to launch an expedition on *Alibekiroğulları* and surround the rebels. Depending on areas, measures taken by the Division were to forbid nomads to go upland or seize animal flocks. For a group of Tecirli tribe, the Division applied both measures since they had attempted to go upland. For this case, the different battalions of the Division came across the tribe in different circumstances, unaware of each other, and hit the tribe several times.¹³⁴ This instance indicates that the Division was not fully organized in some cases in this steep land. Then the Division finally started to march on *Alibekiroğulları*. When Dervish and Cevdet Efendis, with small forces, were on the military exploration of the hills where *Alibekiroğulları* took, they did not realize how close they were to rebels.

¹³² Ahmed Cevdet Efendi, Tezakir 21-39, Yay. Haz.: Cavid Baysun, (Ankara-1991(3), p.151.

¹³³ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Kozan ve Gavur Dağı Ahvaline Dair Layiha*, ed: Saim Yörük, (ideal kültür&yayıncılık: İstanbul, 2017), p.40.

¹³⁴ Ibid, p.85.

Rebels fired their guns against them, but they were rescued by additional forces who were called on. Then Dervish Paşa prepared seven battalions with mules -because they were better than horses for mountainous areas- for an attack against *Alibekiroğulları*. Georgian and Circassian cavalries led by Arslan Paşa also organized a joint attack. Rebels were eventually defeated. In the meantime, *Alibekiroğulları* and Deli Fakı shot several soldiers all of a sudden until Miralay İbrahim Bey shot at them, and they ran away.

After this campaign, Fırka-i Islâhiye 's camp had important guests from tribes. Among these visits was Kozanoğlu Ömer Ağa and respected *ağas* from Kozan with him. In his meeting with Cevdet Efendi here, Ömer Ağa was advised to obey the *ferman*. Ömer Ağa made a promise that he would even convince Ahmed Ağa back home, even if Ahmed Ağa would not obey, Ömer Ağa would join the army.

Dervish Paşa eventually finished the reform by capturing Dede Bey and Deli Fakı, who surrendered themselves, as Cevdet Efendi asserts. Soon *Alibekiroğlu* Ali Ağa also turned himself in as promised. The next step of Fırka-i Islâhiye was Kozan.

Kozan

Kozan was an important mission in the eyes of the Reform Division. The importance of Kozan lies in the power that the leading figure, *Kozanoğulları*, had gained. This impressively fascinating tribe had not only filled the power vacuum left by the state, but it was also de facto diplomatic relations with American missionaries and British consul in Aleppo. It was a respected tribe among other tribes in the area and was mentioned and occasionally praised by foreign travelers. On the other hand, the tribe did not often get along with the state's laws, was in a struggle and fight with

some tribes, and even they had been active and successful resisting the Egyptian army.

The Division's strategy was initially to convince *Kozanoğulları* to obey the new rule. The arrival in Sis (or Kozan) was quiet since it was the time when people were in the upland pasture. Cevdet Efendi's assistant Hüseyin Bey had been with Kozanoğlu Ahmed Ağa, the *ağa* of *Kozan-ı Garbî* (Western Kozan) making efforts to convince him to obey the Division. Cevdet Efendi writes about Ahmed Ağa's intentions to gather meetings with the Kozan people and prominent beys and ağas to seek ways to defend themselves against the Division. However, they decided to turn in because *ulema* strictly express their opinion that “*Eğer bu gelen orduya ahâlimizden mukâbeleden olur ise cenâzesi kılınmaz.*”¹³⁵ Therefore, people would not be easily persuaded to fight as Ahmed Ağa thought. Ahmed Ağa also met the Armenian *kethüdâ* (chamberlain) circle. However, he was convinced to turn himself in by Armenians because Armenian *kethüda* said it would not be good to wander from mountain to mountain when ağas' beloved families and relatives were in the Ottomans' hands. However, if he turned in, he would be the one to be respected and to be liked. Although Dervish Paşa had concerns about Hüseyin Bey's hope to convince Ahmed Ağa to surrender, Hüseyin Bey succeeded to bring Ahmed Ağa with him to the Division. Hüseyin Bey promised Ahmed Ağa to either stay in Kozan or, if he was not allowed to stay, to become a *mîrimîrân* (*beylerbeyi* or *kaymakam*) of a big sancak. Cevdet Efendi considered granting the rank of *mîrimîrân* of Kütahya appropriate for Ahmed Ağa. This promise caused a difference of opinion between Cevdet Efendi and Dervish Paşa. While Cevdet Efendi stood by Hüseyin Bey's word since he sent him

¹³⁵ “If anyone among our people fights this army, it is forbidden to perform his funeral prayer.” Translated by Hamdi Karakal, Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Kozan ve Gavur Dağı Ahvaline Dair Layiha*, ed: Saim Yörük, (ideal kültür&yayıncılık: İstanbul, 2017), pp.51-52.

with authorization to negotiate with Kozanoğlu Ahmed Bey, Dervish Paşa was against providing this rank to the Ağa because he did not trust him. Kütahya was not in the scope of the Division's authority. Cevdet Efendi reminded him of Hüseyin Bey's promise, but Dervish Paşa responded that becoming such a small liar was no harm. At least, he asked to receive Istanbul's approval. In response, Cevdet Efendi insisted that Hüseyin Bey gave the word upon Cevdet Efendi's particular assignment with authorization, and he added that "Hüseyin Bey's word means state's word. Not keeping this promise would be inappropriate (*câiz olmaz*).” As a result, Cevdet Efendi sent a telegram to Istanbul by stating that Ahmed Ağa was appointed as *mîrimîrân* of Kütahya and he asked for the Sultan's approval before Ahmed Ağa left for his post in Kütahya. He told Dervish Paşa that he would resign if it were not approved. Finally, the telegram from Istanbul settled the issue as Cevdet Efendi received the approval he sought.¹³⁶ Thus, one could argue that the Division's reforms were not preplanned. This is to say that the Division had a broad authority but, at the same time, lacked a single way of implementation.

Ahmed Ağa's father, Ömer Ağa, asked to be settled in Konya with a farmhouse and enough salary. His request was also approved; however, he died on his way to Konya with his other sons. Other beys of Kozanoğlu were sent to Kayseri and Sivas with enough amount of salary for each one.

While Western Kozan *ağas* happened to accept the rule of Fırka-i Islâhiye, the situation in *Kozan-ı Şarkî* (Eastern Kozan) was slightly different. The *müdür*¹³⁷ of Eastern Kozan was Yusuf Ağa, who was reluctant about the Division's reforms as central in his power area. Had been aware of his reluctance, the Reform Division

¹³⁶ Ibid, pp.54-55.

¹³⁷ A government post applied in here.

appointed Hacı Bey, the brother of Yusuf Ağa, as *müdür* of Eastern Kozan after he and the mufti of Eastern Kozan had submitted the Division at their visit to the army camp. Hacı Bey was provided a hundred police officers escorting him to his new post in Hacin.¹³⁸ Also, he encouraged the settlement of tribes around Sarız plain. While Hacı Bey supported the Reform Division, his brother, Yusuf Ağa, reluctantly agreed to settle in exile around Sivas. However, Yusuf Ağa secretly communicated with the villagers and received their and his fellow tribesmen's help to flee from exile to Kozan. They planned a rebellion against the Division in the mountains of Kozan.¹³⁹ Kurt İsmail Paşa communicated the news to the Division. However, these days in Kozan, the Division faced an invisible, deadly enemy: cholera epidemic despite the success of taking control of some beys of Kozan. Cevdet Efendi notes that the army was miserable of the cholera epidemic as some dead soldiers were buried in mountains and some with cholera were treated. Then the Division arrived in Feke, uniting with Kurt İsmail Paşa and his forces. The soldiers having cholera in the Division kept themselves in quarantine not to spread it over other soldiers. İsmail Paşa was quite sorry for the quarantine and came close to the Division with his soldiers, and they also kept themselves in quarantine then.¹⁴⁰ For this reason, most of the battalions were away to spend winter in their hometowns. The situation was, therefore, concerning for Cevdet Efendi as the remaining number of soldiers was low. The Reform Division declared that Yusuf Ağa was wanted dead or alive.¹⁴¹ In order to quickly help Kurt İsmail Paşa, irregular troops (*başıbozuklar*) of one thousand men were recruited among tribes around Kozan under the command of Eleşkirdli Mehmed

¹³⁸ Ahmed Cevdet Efendi, Tezakir 21-39, Yay. Haz.: Cavid Baysun, (Ankara-1991(3), p.157.

¹³⁹ Cevdet and Halaçoğlu, *Marûzât*, p. 168.

¹⁴⁰ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Kozan ve Gavur Dağı Ahvaline Dair Layiha*, ed: Saim Yörük, (ideal kültür&yayıncılık: İstanbul, 2017), p.56.

¹⁴¹ Cevdet and Halaçoğlu, *Marûzât*, p. 169.

Bey. Even though these tribesmen were not quite sympathetic with the Division, Mehmed Bey accepted the command. At the same time, Dervish Paşa ordered Ahmed Muhtar Bey to take one battalion left in Beylanköy to unite with İsmail Paşa in Kozan. Most of the irregular troops left before they arrived, and the remaining ones refused to fight against Kozanoğlu. Mehmed Bey agreed but persuaded them to stay in the army. Mehmed Bey's strategy was to scare Yusuf Ağa and his forces. Yusuf Ağa separated his forces and commanded a group to his thirteen-year-old sons, Ali Bey, who would go to Sis. As Yusuf Ağa with his forces went to attack İsmail Paşa, Ali Bey saw Eleşkirdli Mehmed Bey and his forces in the mountains, and Mehmed Bey's strategy worked well so that Ali Bey retreated when they saw this big army. Finally, Yusuf Ağa was defeated and captured by İsmail Paşa's forces. During this time, a spy of bandits was caught and hung by the Division. When the Division returned to Sis with news about Yusuf Ağa being captured, Cevdet Efendi stated that the people in Sis congratulated the army.¹⁴² Cevdet Efendi further states that although the Division agreed that he would be sent to exile in Istanbul, he attempted to escape so was killed by the guards.¹⁴³ Gratien cites an Armenian source telling another story about the death of Yusuf Ağa. According to the source, in Gratien's words, "...Kozanoğlu Yusuf Agha was brought to Hadjin, publicly shamed before a large crowd of onlookers, executed, and left to rot in a barrel in the center of town for months as a cautionary sign for those contemplating any similar acts of defiance...."¹⁴⁴ The death of Kozanoğlu Yusuf Ağa is largely mourned in folk songs, which had orally produced and have reached today, as one can see that the bey of

¹⁴² Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Kozan ve Gavur Dağı Ahvaline Dair Layiha*, ed: Saim Yörük, (ideal kültür&yayıncılık: İstanbul, 2017), pp.61-62.

¹⁴³ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Tezakir* 21-39, Yay. Haz.: Cavid Baysun, (Ankara: 1991(3), p.188.

¹⁴⁴ Christopher Gratien, *Mountains are Ours: Ecology and Settlement in Late Ottoman and early Republican Cilicia, 1856-1956*, (PhD Dissertation, Georgetown University: 2015), p.136; Poghoşean, *Hachēni ēndhanur patmut 'iwnē*, p. 529.

Kozanoğulları had been considered people's hero in the region. The famous minstrel of Çukurova, Dadaloğlu, mourns that he wishes he had died before the Kozanoğlu since, he says, tribes had lost face and felt humiliated when their bey was killed. He continues his song as in the following, "Let Derviş Paşa gloat (let him be happy of the situation), . . . , But get him prepared for defending himself day and night from us, We will take revenge at the first chance we get."¹⁴⁵ In his words, Dadaloğlu condemns and vowed to take revenge from Derviş Paşa. In another mourning for the Kozanoğlu, Dadaloğlu indirectly condemns the Sultan; "tyrants of Padişah (Sultan)/you cannot take the world with you (even Sultan Süleyman could not)"¹⁴⁶ when he also calls the Division "infidels who vowed to kill the Kozanoğlu bey."¹⁴⁷ In his songs, the killing of the bey was not only a leader's death. However, it was also humiliation the tribes and ending their lifestyle as he uses symbols that are important in nomadic way of life, such as dark tents that symbolize the death of beys and horses, which characterizes the strength of the tribe taken away from them the Division. He also mentions the incident of their horses seized by the Division in another song, "It was more difficult to give horses than being settled."¹⁴⁸ Also, he mentions children of the tribe left orphans; women left as widows by the Division.¹⁴⁹ The humiliation towards the tribe, in their approaches, hurt their honor so much that the loss on the battlefield is covered in oral folk materials as if they continue fighting in words against the

¹⁴⁵ The original song is: "N'olaydı da Kozanoğlu'm n'olaydı/Sen olmadan bana ecel geleydi/Bir çıkımlık canımı da alaydı/Böyle rüsvay olmasaydık cihanda/.../Derviş Paşa gayri kına yakınsın/Böbür böbür dört bir yana bakınsın/Amma bizden gece gündüz sakınsın/Öç alırız ilk fırsatı bulanda." Ahmet Z. Özdemir, *Dadaloğlu* (İstanbul: Tur yayımları, 2017), p.116.

¹⁴⁶ The popular saying means that one can't own the world since he/she will be dead anyways so the world would not belong to anyone at the end of the day even though one claims it.

¹⁴⁷ The original song is: "...Öldürürler beyim seni/O kâfirler dünden sözlü/.../Padişahın zalımları/Bu dünya size kalır mı/..." Ibid, p.110 & 112.

¹⁴⁸ The original song is: ".../At vermemiz iskânlıktan zor oldu/..."

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, pp.109-113.

sword as a symbol of civilizing mission and maintaining state orders expressed in the ferman and Cevdet Efendi's accounts.

Post-Reform (Dis)Order

The mission to Kozan was not entirely successful. Although Fırka-i Islâhiye had managed to incorporate local *derebeys* into the new order with exiles and salaries and managed to settle nomads around the plains of Adana partly by force, the settlement was not quite successfully sustained because of the climate; harsh weather conditions which made people suffer.¹⁵⁰ Therefore, the tendency to rebel against the settlement (*iskân*) was provoked in the following summers when the harsh weather conditions resulted in malaria among the settled population in the swampy plains. After the reform of Fırka-i Islâhiye, the tribes settled whether by force or persuasion and had to fight an invisible enemy; mosquitos and diseases they bring. Therefore, the Division's settlement of nomads by force was not permanently adopted by settled tribes. The post-reform order was also reflected in folk songs. Besim Atalay, a member of the Committee of Union and Progress and an Ottoman intellectual and a statesman in Ankara during the Independence War, refers a folk song about the settlement by Ulubey from the Avşar tribe in his book called "Maraş Tarihi ve Coğrafyası," one of the first books about the history of the region. In the song, Ulubey exclaims that the Avşar is miserable because the tribe is away from their home as they fall in *gurbet* (in a foreign land or far from home). Here, it means mountains and pastures by home, and since they are away from the mountains, they felt miserable. The song continues with a reproach against the Padişah to be put responsible for issuing an *iskân* ferman

¹⁵⁰ Christopher Gratien, *Mountains are Ours: Ecology and Settlement in Late Ottoman and early Republican Cilicia, 1856-1956*, (PhD Dissertation, Georgetown University: 2015), p.166.

separating Avşars from their green pastures. In the song, the interesting part is the claim that the brides and girls were kept captive (*yesir gitti gelinleri kızları*).

Although it is unclear how and why they were kept captive, it might mean that as some tribesmen had been killed or sent exile, the women in the tribe were left alone and felt necessary to get married to strangers or might have been even forced to do so.¹⁵¹ Whether true or not, it is told to be such a tragedy in the folk song. Besides displaying how tribes saw the settlement, the different versions of the song today in Turkey soften the tone and change some words. According to the Öner Yağcı¹⁵² and the Ferruh Arsunar¹⁵³ published by the People's Houses of CHP in 1947, the song does not mention Padişah. They also take the line about brides and girls of the tribe out, and Yağcı's version includes a line that brides and girls were made to settle (*iskân oldu*). Nowadays, this soft version is known more. Even though it is pretty common that many oral folk materials are sung differently from time to time, the difference is significant between one of the first printed versions and the last version common in today's Turkey. Nevertheless, oral folk materials indicate that there is an important discontent for the settlement.

The temporariness of *iskân* order was highlighted in a folk song as followed:

“Göründü de Hemite'nin kalesi / Hiç gitmiyor aşiretin belâsı / Yıkılıp Yarsuvat viran kalası / Bu yıllık da burada kalsın elimiz...”¹⁵⁴ Hemite fortress and Yarsuvat were the places where the Bozdoğan tribe was settled. The lines of the song include a wish that the Yarsuvat castle would be demolished. Also, it implies that they would stay there

¹⁵¹ Besim Atalay, *Maraş Tarihi ve Coğrafyası*, (İstanbul: Dizerkonca Matbaası, 1973), pp.74-75.

¹⁵² Öner Yağcı, *Dadaloğlu, Yaşamı ve Şiirleri*, (İleri Yayınları: 2006), pp.115-116.

¹⁵³ Ferruh Arsunar, *Anadolu Halk Türkülerinden Örnekler I*, (Ankara: CHP Halkevleri Yayınları, Milli Kültür Araştırmaları IV, 1947).

¹⁵⁴ Ali Doğaner, *Çukurova Bölgesi Konargöçerlerinde Halk Kültürü ve Halk Edebiyatı*, (PhD Dissertation, Çukurova Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü: 2013), p.638.

this year where they are settled, but then they might be leaving. The dissatisfaction about the settlement is depicted in the rest of the song: “...*İçilmez suları yosunlu kokar / Yatılmaz gecesi mucuğu çokar / Sehillemiş açılmıyor gülümüz...*” In these lines, the complaint was that in the plain where they were forced to settle, even the water smells mossy, sleeping is impossible because mosquitos and roses have not blossomed. The song continues with the comparison between what they faced in their new area of life and what they missed in their previous life. The elements of their previous lifestyle in the folk song they missed most are horses, camels, and mountains, where a vast amount of pastures as far as an eye can see dwell in their nomadic life. In another similar folk song, their “immobility” and staying stuck in the lowland out of their pastures in the highland are remembered with great sadness.¹⁵⁵ Thus, it can be seen that nomadic tribes considered mobility an inseparable part of their lifestyle and the upland, a mobile home where they are provided with all the freedom.

The post-Reform Division order resulted in the destruction of lifestyle and death in the eyes of the settled population. In his book about the history of Maraş, Atalay provides his findings of the settlement issue of the Reform Division. He states that people had been cheerful in the pre-reform order as tribes’ lives were quite colorful with riding horses and playing traditional games in pastures. However, the tribes’ lives were destroyed (*aşâirin mahvı, cundiliğin mahvı*) with the settlement order by the state as responsible as he suggests. He further asserts that these tribes were descendants of those who helped the Ottoman army in the Balkan raids and specifically even in the Siege of Vienna. Therefore, he criticizes this settlement policy

¹⁵⁵ The original song is as followed: “...Ağladım yaylayı melul görünce / Aşiret sehilde mahsur kalınca / Kıpırdamaz olmuş bizim birimiz...” This means: “...I cried when I saw the upland (pasture) / When the tribe stayed stuck / Each one of us stood still...” Translated by Hamdi Karakal; Ibid, pp.445-447.

of the Reform Division that if the settlement was necessary, then different ways such as communicating benefits of the settlement with tribes must have been applied so that they would have settled. In parallel, the famous minstrel of Çukurova, Dadaloğlu, makes an interesting analogy in which he seems to greet the memory of Ottoman raids in the Balkans. He reminds that these Turcoman tribes had actively participated in Ottoman raids alongside the Sultan against Balkan kingdoms, and he ends the song by justifying Kozanoğlu's rebellion.¹⁵⁶ The memory that he narrated is thought to present the Ottoman state's dangerous acts; the former allies who helped gain vast territories became the enemy of the state now. In the same song, Dadaloğlu further states with considerable confidence praising Kozanoğlu fighting Ottoman forces "...if Sultan has *firman*s (official edicts) and *tughras*¹⁵⁷, our mountains are the house of a lion, fighting is derived from our faith."¹⁵⁸ Dadaloğlu, in another song, calls Ottomans "unreliable" in a slang form; "...*kaypak Osmanlılar size aman mı...*"¹⁵⁹ Dadaloğlu's narration of

¹⁵⁶ Ahmet Şükrü Esen, *Anadolu Aşıkları II: Dadaloğlu*, ed. İsmail Görkem, Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları: İstanbul, 2020), pp.50-51.

¹⁵⁷ Ferman and tughra symbolize central state's and Sultan's official power among the *memâlik-i Osmaniye* which is the Ottoman realm.

¹⁵⁸ Bilgi, *Halk Şiirleri: Kozanoğlu'nun Sultanlara İsyanı*, (Bilgi: Resimli Haftalık Mecmua: Mersin, 1928), p.2. Full song is as followed:

"Yüz bin askerim var Kozan Dağı'nda
Yüz bin askerim var Alaca Han'da
Yüz bir askerim var salt (?) Karaman'da
Pir oğlu pirlere (de) yaman geliyor

Altmış bini kara postal geyici
Yetmiş biri Allah Allah deyici
Seksen bini tatlı tatlı cana kıyıcı
Doksan bini Tatar Han'dan geliyor.

Kozanoğlu der ki ey "Dadal curası(?)"
Sultan'ın fermanı varsa tuğrası
Bizim de dağımız arslan yuvası
Cenk etmek biz(ler)e imandan geliyor"

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, pp.72-73. Dadaloğlu
"...Aşağıdan iskân evi geliyor
Kötüler de kaç yiğide gülüyor
Kitab'ın dediği günler oluyor
Yoksa devir döndü âhir zaman mı

Aşağıdan iskân evi gelince

what happened in Çukurova around the 1860s is similar to Besim Atalay's findings in his book. Therefore, Atalay accuses the Division of killing many people, including beys, women, and children bombarded by the soldiers, burning pastures, and capturing young women (he clearly says young brides). He states that "raw settlement means annihilation" (*kuru iskân imha demektir*).¹⁶⁰ Even though his motivation lay on the nationalistic view that the nomadic tribes represented the Turkic culture destroyed by the Ottoman state, his criticism about the settlement reform is rough regarding the means of the old regime, which must have, in his words, been *tedrîcî* (gradual).¹⁶¹

The Reform Division settled Varsaks and Cerits in the Adana plain and Cebel-i Bereket (the area between Gavur mountains and the Belen pass, later Yarpuz), Avşars in Göskün and Kayseri, Bozdoğan in Andırın (a town in today's Maraş), Tecirs in Maraş and Islâhiye.¹⁶² However, they would try to return to their pastures whenever they found a chance in the following years. It was also because of "the unhealthiness" of newly established settlement towns. The British clergyman, E.J. Davis, visited some of these newly established towns in the 1870s had found that the towns were marshy and unhealthy, so this would be a "great obstacle to colonization."¹⁶³ This issue caused, as Gratien finds out in his research, the climate and geography affected the social and economic troubles over the population such as diseases, hunger, poverty. However, the settlement failure was not even touched upon in Ottoman archival sources in the following years.¹⁶⁴ The houses built by the Reform Division

Sararup da gül benzimiz solunca
Malım mülküm seyfi gözlüm kalınca
Kaypak Osmanlılar size aman mı...“

¹⁶⁰ Translation to English belongs to Dr. Christopher Gratien; Besim Atalay, "*Maraş Tarihi ve Coğrafyası*, (İstanbul: Dizerkonca Matbaası, 1973), pp.76-77.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, p.77.

¹⁶² Ibid, p.78.

¹⁶³ Edwin John Davis, *Life in Asiatic Turkey*, (1879), p.103.

¹⁶⁴ Christopher Gratien, *Mountains are Ours: Ecology and Settlement in Late Ottoman and early Republican Cilicia, 1856-1956*, (PhD Dissertation, Georgetown University: 2015).

were partly ruined soon in Osmaniye in the 1870s as the security was also fully ensured after the Division left.¹⁶⁵ Thus, this was another indication that the settlement policy of the Reform Division had failed.

The Division's next step to reform was Zeytun. However, the Division could not make it right after the reform of the Kozan and Gavur mountains because of cholera hitting the army hard. For this reason, the reform over Zeytun was delayed. Similarly, the reform had been intended to extend over Dersim, Akçadağ, and Kurdistan; however, it was also delayed since the troops were needed to overcome the disorder in Eflak (Wallachia) and Boğdan (today's Moldova). Cevdet Efendi's writings reveal that the order was not fully established yet. As the governor of Aleppo after the mission to Kozan, he reported several incidents around the region. After the reform, he continued to decrease the tension and secure the area by military manners without pointing to the troubles the settled population went through. He instead explained the issues from the security perspective. He continued to define those who had a part in these incidents as "bandits" and as "mass who used to benefit from shoulders of people in times of Kozanoğlu."¹⁶⁶ According to him, there was a continuity of banditry in the region, fed by the old de-facto regime, which shows that the Reform Division could not permanently settle the population into the land.

Cevdet Efendi sent Hüseyin Bey to Zeytun with the mission to settle the issues later. Hüseyin Bey took control with the help of the gendarme by sentencing leaders with a stick penalty. Then Hüseyin Bey threatened prominent figures in Zeytun that "*İtaat altında durmayacak iseniz ben giderim, taburlar gelir.*" (If you do not obey, I

¹⁶⁵ FO 222/7/1, 1880 No. 12, Bennet to Goschen, Adana (December 1880).

¹⁶⁶ Ahmet Cevdet Efendi, *Kozan ve Gavur Dağı Ahvaline Dair Layiha*, ed: Saim Yörük, (ideal kültür&yayıncılık: İstanbul, 2017), p.66.

will go and troops will come) so they guaranteed to obey the rule.¹⁶⁷ Therefore, Cevdet Efendi calls Hüseyin Bey “spiritual conqueror of Kozan as well as the true conqueror of Zeytun.” One can see that the expedition of Firka-i Islâhiye can be considered reconquest of the periphery and reconnecting periphery with the center by stabilizing people under the central control, which were to regulate the taxation, conscription, and creating new settlement places.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, p.67.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

To conclude, people's history tells a different story than state sources in the Ottoman Empire. While it is difficult to figure out, folk songs present a broad and rich collection of sources orally produced by nomads. These oral materials' strength derives from their transfer from generation to generation, although they were not recorded in the written format. Beyond producing an alternative historical narrative, one can see that these oral materials are nomads' resistance field to the authority by words. When sword wins, nomads come up with words as if the fight goes on and leaves their side of the story to the next generations by immortalizing their legacy.

The Ottoman Empire in the 19th century considered nomads in Çukurova problematic because they did not regularly pay taxes, were challenging to be conscripted and did not take part in agricultural production. Besides these reasons, the nomadic tribes acted like the autonomous or semi-autonomous governments of their regions as they controlled mountain passes and essential trade and pilgrimage roads. The local authority worried the Ottoman state in a financial and military crisis state after the loss of continuous wars. Besides these reasons, this was when the Ottoman Empire made efforts to centralize its power to tashra. Not only centralizing administration but also centralizing the concept of Ottoman subject took place. Although it was not today's concept form of a citizen, it was a new way of defining subject in the 19th century by the Ottoman Empire. While defining a new form of subject, it also defined the opposition of this form. It was applied in the case of Fırka-i Islâhiye when the Ottoman Empire considered these nomads as backward, ignorant,

and uncivilized. Therefore, this was a civilizing mission of the Division that justified the military expedition, usually a bloody one. Ahmet Cevdet Efendi and official sources did not include bloody clashes as much as oral sources, but rather these sources mentioned the inevitability and necessity of this mission resulting in a successful intervention for both people living here and the state.

Fırka-i Islâhiye's activities upon nomadic tribes in Çukurova were colonization and reconquest of mountainous areas. The purpose of the mission was to resettle order and security by settling nomads into the land. Thus, it established new settlement areas such as villages and towns for nomads to control them and make them a new form of subjects registered in defters, paying taxes, drafted in the army, and made them more civilized. Cevdet states that settled human beings are superior to mobile nomads wandering around mountains by mountains like animals. The moral dimension behind the mission was this civilizing mission of the center, self, towards the periphery, other, in the eyes of the Ottoman state.

Oral materials portrayed nomads' reaction to Fırka-i Islâhiye, especially in Dadaloğlu's folk songs as well as anonymous sayings and songs. Folk songs define the Ottomans' expedition as tyranny which forced them to destroy their lifestyle by force and blood. It was the lifestyle that nomads see vital for their life as well as their dignity. That is why they would prefer to die than to live like this in a Dadaloğlu's song. The analogy between mountains and ferman is also worth to be analyzed. Mountains are not only heaven, an asylum, but more importantly, their freedom, so they do not understand obedience to the central government since they do not have this kind of a concept in their mind. In its perspective, the concept of freedom in its form clashes with the central administration's interference. When the Ottoman soldiers burned their tents and captured their animals, it was an attack of central

power on their freedom and even their life and so their existence in a romantic way as folk songs cover.

Moreover, within the scope of this thesis, I found out that a folk song's tone changed and softened in time. While it claims that women were taken hostage as cited in the Besim Atalay's book in the 1930s, the line changed to a softer version where it only states that women were settled in later sources. There is a further need for study with regards to folk songs from the anthropological perspective. I suggest that folk songs could be an alternative approach to Ottoman history. Finally, it is pretty interesting to see how these oral materials, without having been written for a long time, survived and reached today's generations, although Derviş Paşa was not well-known. It seems that the fight by nomads is fought in words even though they were bloodily defeated. Thus, historical research could go deeper into these alternative sources.

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