

A CRITICAL APPROACH TOWARD CEVDET PASHA'S UNDERSTANDING OF
REFORM: GRANDVIZIERS, SULTANS, AND SOCIETY IN THE CONTEXT OF
TEZAKİR AND MARUZAT

by

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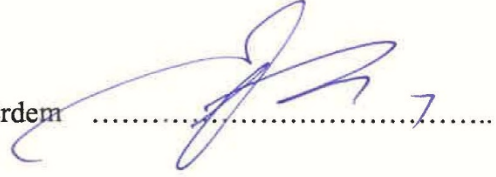
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ABSTRACT

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This thesis aims to reassess the reliability of Ahmed Cevdet Pasha's *Tezakir* and *Maruzat* as the substantial primary sources of the Tanzimat period and go beyond the understanding of the 'incontestability' of Cevdet Pasha's writings. Being originally from the *ilmiye* class, Cevdet Pasha was one of the most prominent statesmen of the Tanzimat era and actively involved in the implementation of numerous reforms. Therefore, while his accounts are dealt with, it is important to figure out the expectations, purposes, and perspectives that formed the basis of Cevdet's narration in order to evaluate to what extent Cevdet's accounts are objective and reliable. In this study, first, Cevdet's subjective attitude toward the five grand viziers —Reşid, Fuad, Âli, Mahmud Nedim, and Midhat Pashas— of the era is examined. Second, Cevdet's notion of the sultanate is considered and his attitude toward the two sultans of the Tanzimat era—Abdülmecid and Abdülaziz— and their reigns is analyzed. Third, Cevdet's state-centered view while describing and interpreting the oppositional movements of the people of different strata and diverse regions of the empire is illustrated. Fourth, Cevdet's manner toward İstanbul society, in which he spent most of his life, and societies of Bosnia and the Çukurova region, to where he was sent as a state official are considered. Lastly, the Ottoman political thought is briefly mentioned in order to understand the roots of Cevdet's traditional and conservative outlook on rulership.

ÖZET

CEVDET PAŞA’NIN REFORM ANLAYIŞINA ELEŞTİREL BİR BAKIŞ: *TEZAKİR*
VE *MARUZAT* BAĞLAMINDA SADRAZAMLAR, PADİŞAHLAR VE TOPLUM

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Anahtar Kelimeler: Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, Tanzimat Dönemi, Tarafgirlik

Bu tez Tanzimat döneminin önemli birincil kaynakları arasında olan Ahmed Cevdet Paşa’nın Tezakir ve Maruzat’ının güvenilirliğinin yeniden değerlendirilmesini ve Cevdet Paşa’nın eserlerinin sorgulanamazlığı anlayışının ötesine geçmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Aslen ilmiye sınıfından olan Cevdet Paşa, Tanzimat döneminin en önde gelen devlet adamlarından biriydi ve dönemin birçok reform hareketinin uygulanmasında aktif olarak rol aldı. Bu yüzden, eserleri ele alınırken Cevdet Paşa’nın anlatımının temelinde ne tür beklenti, amaç ve bakış açısının yattığını ortaya çıkarmak, Cevdet’in yorumlarının ne dereceye kadar objektif ve güvenilir olduğunu değerlendirmek açısından önemlidir. Bu çalışmada, öncelikle Cevdet’in dönemin beş sadrazamına—Reşid, Fuad, Âli, Mahmud Nedim ve Midhat Paşa— karşı takındığı subjektif tavrı incelendi. İkinci olarak, Cevdet’in saltanat kavramı göz önünde bulunduruldu ve Tanzimat döneminin iki padişahı—Abdülmeccid ve Abdülaziz— ve dönemlerine karşı tavrı incelendi. Üçüncü olarak, Cevdet’in imparatorluğun çeşitli bölgelerindeki farklı sınıflardan insanların muhalefet hareketlerini tasvir ederken ve değerlendirirken devlet merkezli bakış açısı gösterildi. Dördüncü olarak, Cevdet’in hayatının çoğunu içinde yaşadığı İstanbul toplumuna ve devlet memuru olarak gönderildiği Bosna ve Çukurova bölgelerinin halklarına karşı tavrı ele alındı. Son olarak, Cevdet’in iktidar konusundaki geleneksel ve muhafazakar bakış açısının kökenlerinin anlaşılabilmesi için Osmanlı siyasi düşüncesine kısaca değinildi.

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INTRODUCTION

The Tanzimat period (1839-1876), which signified an era of comprehensive institutional reforms and modernization of the Ottoman Empire, has been the subject of many works since the time of the promulgation of the edict in 1839. The significance of Ahmed Cevdet Pasha (1822-1895) originates from the fact that he was actively involved in the implementation of numerous reforms, and recorded the events in such a way that many of the details in his works cannot be found in any other source. Being originally from the *ilmiye* class, he was one of the most prominent statesmen of the era. As a leading figure, he directly experienced and played a crucial role in the ongoing events (Baysun 1986, XIV).

When Cevdet served as official chronicler, he took notes of his observations and experiences. His work *Tezâkir-i Cevdet* (“Memoranda of Cevdet”) consists of the texts that Cevdet compiled from these notes to send to his successor Ahmet Lütfi Effendi. Although Cevdet never intended it, these were later published under the same name. The first parts of *Tezâkir* were published in the volumes 44-47 of *Tarih-i Osmanî Encümeni Mecmuası* (*Journal of Ottoman History Committee*) under the name of “Vak’anüvis Cevdet Paşa’nın Evrakı” (Chronicler Cevdet Pasha’s Documents) in 1917. A full publication of *Tezâkir* in Latin alphabet was prepared by Cavid Baysun as four volumes. In 1953, the first volume (*tezkire* no. 1-12), in 1960, the second volume (*tezkire* no. 13-20), in 1963, the third volume (*tezkire* no. 21-39), and in 1967, the last volume (*tezkire* no. 40) were published by Turkish Historical Society. Respectively in 1986 and 1991, the second and the third editions of the same four volumes were published by Turkish Historical Society (Halaçoğlu and Aydın 1993, 448; Aykut 2018, 207).

Additionally, Abdülhamid II (r. 1876-1909) ordered Cevdet to write reports about the situation during the reign of his father Abdülmecid (r. 1839-1861) and his uncle Abdülaziz (r. 1861-1876), as he needed to have reliable information about the previous

periods. These reports constitute the text called *Maruzat* (“Representations”). For the first time in 1924-1925, *Maruzat* was published serially by Ahmed Refik Altınay in different volumes (XIV-XVI) of *Türk Tarih Encümeni Mecmuası* (*Journal of Turkish History Committee*) (Halaçoğlu 1980, XIII). Yusuf Halaçoğlu transcribed *Maruzat* into Latin alphabet and published as a book in 1980.¹ These two complementary sources are considered among the most substantial primary sources of the Tanzimat period in Ottoman history.

In this thesis, Cevdet’s approach toward the Tanzimat era will be taken into consideration through his accounts in *Tezahir* and *Maruzat*. However, studying the primary sources of a historical personality like that of Cevdet has its own complications. Being a sophisticated statesman, a leading character, and a prolific author of his time, his writings, inevitably, confine the reader his own view of the time. On the other hand, except for a few recent studies, most of the literature about Cevdet has failed to go beyond rephrasing Cevdet while considering his accounts and has tended to treat his works as objective sources that are incontestable. Therefore, before mentioning the aim and significance of this study, it is important to take look at the literature on Cevdet.

A Review of the Literature on Cevdet

As Ercüment Kuran (1986) states, after the death of Cevdet Pasha, events in the Ottoman Empire developed contrary to Cevdet’s views (p. 12). Cevdet was in favor of the absolute monarchy and concerned about the protection of the dignity of the “sultanate,” and of the continuity of the empire. He was against a constitutional regime and opposed it when the first arrangements began during the Abdülhamid II’s period (Hanioğlu, 2004, 390). Despite the proclamation of the Ottoman Constitution in 1876, the parliament was closed by Abdülhamid II in 1878 after sitting only fifty times (Hanioğlu 1995, 30). However, together with Young Turk revolution in 1908, constitutional monarchy was founded. After twelve years, the Ottoman Empire officially ended when the sultanate was abolished in 1922 and Turkish Republic was founded in 1923.

¹ See: (*Maruzat* 1980).

Cevdet was a pro-Tanzimat statesman and devoted his life to contributing to the implementation of Tanzimat reforms in the administrative, judiciary, intellectual, and educational spheres. However, in 1860s, the Tanzimat reforms began to be criticized by the first relatively liberal intellectuals of the time, such as Ziya Pasha, Namık Kemal, Ali Suavi etc., who were favoring a constitutional regime (Georgeon 1996, 97). After the Young Turk revolution in 1908, Unionist authors began to condemn the era vigorously. For instance, Ziya Gökalp claimed that the Tanzimat made a ruinous mistake by imitating the cultural values of the European nations (Parla 1985, 30). In line with Unionists, intellectuals of the early periods of the Turkish Republic severely criticized the Tanzimat era. For example, Yusuf Akçura believed that the Tanzimat period caused political, socio-cultural, and economic fiasco (Georgeon 1996, 98).

Therefore, in such an environment, aside from his prominence as a historiographer, Cevdet's identity did not attract much attention immediately after his death. Other than his daughter Fatma Aliye's book about her father's life² there was almost no literature on Cevdet Pasha until the 1940's. However, this circumstance began to change after the 1940's, as the Tanzimat era and its actors began to be reevaluated.

In 1945, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Cevdet's death, the folklorist M. Şakir Ülkütaşır published a monograph³ about Cevdet's life, personality, and works. In the same year, the Faculty of Law of Istanbul University decided to publish a book about Cevdet, for which Ebül'ulâ Mardin prepared a monograph, *Medeni Hukuk Cephesinden Ahmed Cevdet Paşa (Ahmed Cevdet Pasha from the Aspect of Civil Law)*,⁴ about Cevdet's life, personality, views, and contributions to the development of Islamic and Ottoman law.

According to Christoph Neumann (2000), this was bad timing for a rehabilitation, since from that period onwards debates about Cevdet focused on either his "progressivism" or "reactionism." For conservatives and right-wing intellectuals, the discovery of Cevdet as

² See: (Fatma Aliye 1994).

³ See: (Ülkütaşır 1945).

⁴ See: (Mardin 1996).

a progressive but also faithful statesman began (p. 10). For instance, Ümit Meriç's doctoral thesis, which was defended in 1975 and then published as a book under the name of *Cevdet Paşa'nın Cemiyet ve Devlet Görüşü (Cevdet Pasha's View of Society and State)*⁵, is overwhelmed by this flaw. She presents Cevdet as one of the defenders of Islam of the late Ottoman period and claims that "Cevdet Pasha is muslim and the Ottoman" (Meriç 1979, 11) without questioning what "muslim" and "the Ottoman" are if they are represented by a person in history. This kind of approach toward Cevdet has led not only Meriç but other conservatives to pick their arguments according to how they wanted to present Cevdet.

As Ortaylı (1986) indicates, there has been a tendency to evaluate the scholars of the nineteenth century in a partisan manner. Radical conservatives embraced Cevdet without a critical examination of whether he fits their categorization or not (p.73) Ortaylı (1986) chooses to question the repeated conventionality and pan-Islamism of Cevdet by looking at the reactions of the reactionaries of Cevdet's time towards Cevdet himself. Contrary to what is commonly claimed by Islamists, Ortaylı states that Cevdet was not the pioneer of the Islamist side of his time, since his interpretations and actions were noticeably contrary to the views of the existing nineteenth century *ulema* (p. 76-77).

Although Cevdet became a symbol for conservatives and fell victim to political polarization during these years (Neumann 2000, 10), academically more reliable studies were conducted and seminars were held about Cevdet in the following decades. In the new edition of the Encyclopedia of Islam that was prepared under the patronage of the International Union of Academies, Cevdet is described as "a curious mixture of the progressive and the conservative," in both his conduct and works. According to the article, on the one hand he was a progressive, since he continually promoted the greater enlightenment of Ottoman society and dispraised zealotry and self-seeking in the ruling class; on the other hand, his standpoint was in essence shaped by his early *madrasah* education (Bowen 1986, 286).

The Center for Historical Research in Istanbul University's Faculty of Letters organized a seminar with a title "Ahmed Cevdet Paşa Semineri" (Seminar on Ahmed Cevdet Pasha)

⁵ See: (Meriç 1979).

in 1985. These papers were published under the same title⁶ a year later. The seminar addressed different aspects and features of Cevdet Pasha. Ten years later, in 1995, a symposium was held by the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation in reference to the hundredth year of Cevdet's death. This was a large scaled symposium that took three days with the participation of almost forty academics and scholars. Cevdet Pasha was considered from different aspects as a scholar, statesman, linguist, author, and legist. In 1997, the Türkiye Diyanet Foundation press published the symposium's papers together with their discussions.⁷

A thoroughly analytical work on Cevdet was realized by Christoph Neumann as his PhD project, completed in 1992. After a revision, this project was translated into Turkish and published under the name of *Araç Tarih Amaç Tanzimat: Tarih-i Cevdet'in Siyasi Anlamı (History as Vehicle, Tanzimat as Goal: The Political Significance of Cevdet's History)*⁸ in 2000. In this work, Neumann critically and carefully analyzes the twelve volumes of the *Tarih-i Cevdet*, which took Cevdet Pasha almost thirty years to complete. Since it was such a long writing process, there were critical changes in the way Cevdet produced his work. Neumann, first analyzes the historical background of the work, paying attention to the textual inconsistencies and looking at its long writing process with a critical eye, since all those years saw changes not only in Cevdet Pasha's life but also in the way the text was constituted. Therefore, Neumann makes textual comparisons between different versions of some parts of *Tarih-i Cevdet*. Then, he tries to demonstrate how Cevdet describes and interprets the historical events. The importance of Neumann's work comes from its wide range of research and its critical view that is lacking in most published or unpublished dissertations and studies on Cevdet. Neumann looks at Cevdet from a revisionist perspective that questions the accepted idea that being an early modernist history writer, Cevdet was different from the classical chroniclers.

In 2018, the first three of the twelve volumes of *Tarih-i Cevdet* was transcribed into Latin alphabet by Mehmet İpşirli, Şevki Nezihi Aykut, and Abdülkadir Özcan as a project of Turkish Historical Society. For this project, Şevki Nezihi Aykut prepared an introductory

⁶ See: (Ahmed Cevdet Paşa Semineri 1986).

⁷ See: (Ahmed Cevdet Paşa: Vefatının Yüzüncü Yılına Armağan 1997).

⁸ See: (Neumann 2000).

volume about Cevdet under the name of *Ahmed Cevdet Paşa; Hayatı, Eserleri, Tarihçiliği Hakkında Yapılan Araştırma ve İncelemeler* (*Ahmed Cevdet Pasha; Researches and Examinations About His Life, Works, and Historiography*).⁹ As the name suggests, this volume is a comprehensive study about Cevdet's life, works, and historian identity as well as the studies conducted on him such as doctoral theses, books, and articles.

Finally, there are various master's and doctoral theses, and published books written on Cevdet and his works in different fields of study. His *Al-Majalla* was studied by scholars in the field of Islamic Law. His *Tarih*, *Tezakir*, and *Maruzat* have been the focus of works conducted in the fields of history and political science. For instance, in her master's thesis, titled "The Reformist Horizons of Ahmed Cevdet Paşa: The Notions of Civilization (*Medeniyet*), Progress (*Terakki*), and Solidarity (*Asabiyet*),"¹⁰ Hatice Sezer examined Cevdet's reformist horizon by looking at his understanding of the three notions; civilization, progress, and solidarity. In his master's thesis under the name of "Ahmed Cevdet Pasha and Change: A Three-Tiered Approach," İsmail Noyan discussed Cevdet within the context of his conservatist attitude toward change.¹¹

The Goal of the Study

Many secondary sources write about how "neutral" (Halaçoğlu 1997, 247) or "critical" (Doğan 1997, 229; Kuran 1986, 7; Şimşirgil and Ekinci 2008, 34) Cevdet's works are. This thesis contests this understanding and argues that in historiography, Cevdet constitutes a paradigm that is quite tough to move beyond. He was a sophisticated statesman and was of crucial significance for the recording of the history of his era, but he had his own agenda while composing his works. This is exactly why his works need a study that examines the expectations, purposes, and perspectives that form the basis of Cevdet's narration. This is essential for the reassessment of the reliability of his accounts.

⁹ See: (Aykut 2018).

¹⁰ See: (Sezer 2015).

¹¹ See: (Noyan 2018).

Cevdet was one of the main figureheads of the late Tanzimat period and worked for three sultans; Abdülmecid, Abdülaziz, and Abdülhamid II. He was primarily a bureaucratic man who produced many of his works as a side job. As Neumann (2009) rightly points out, in the center of Cevdet's thoughts there was not a program for making the empire "more Islamic." Rather, his political outlook and views revolved around "the state" (p. 85). Thus, he did not hesitate to suggest the amendment of various government practices, no matter their Islamic origin, if they were not beneficial for the necessities of the time (Karpas 2001, 189). His perspective was shaped by a pragmatic statist view with a concern for reinforcing the power and continuity of the empire (Neumann 2009, 87).

Furthermore, he firmly believed in the absolutist sultanate as a principal characteristic of the Ottoman government. For this reason, he was against a constitutional regime and was a supporter of reform and legislation under "the aegis of a sultanic enlightened despotism" (Findley 1980, 225). Consequently, he had a strong belief in the "obedience to those charged with authority" (*Ulü'l emre itaat*) and never approved of any opposition by "the subjects" to the state or the sultan. In other words, he had a traditional and conservative political outlook centered on the state.

While dealing with Cevdet's accounts, the common pitfall is to disregard Cevdet's possible agenda that underlies his reports. However, when the above-mentioned statist and conservative monarchist stance of Cevdet is considered, the need for a critical approach toward Cevdet's accounts becomes obvious. Moreover, when *Maruzat* and *Tezahir* are taken into consideration, they should be evaluated as retrospective interpretations, since although Cevdet witnessed the period in which the events he described and interpreted took place, he wrote both sources decades later.

As mentioned, the addressees of both sources were specific people. It is apparent that Cevdet reconsidered the events of his time in *Tezahir* according to his personal views, and prepared his successor Lütfi Effendi in line with this outlook. For example, he tries to justify or excuse the acts of the statesmen to whom he was attached, even if he criticizes them softly. On the other hand, he does not hesitate to use harsh expressions when talking about people with whom he had personal disputes. It is also obvious that Cevdet chooses his expressions in *Maruzat* accordingly and tries not to arouse the sultan's suspicions.

As can be seen in the points above, for academically credible studies there are essential points to be aware of when dealing with Cevdet's works, such as his partiality and state-centered view. The aim of this thesis is to reveal these points and go beyond the understanding of the "incontestability" of Cevdet's writings in order to fill the gap of approaching Cevdet from a critical perspective. It is quite important to ask to what extent Cevdet's accounts are objective and reliable. In other words, this thesis is a modest attempt to reassess the dependability of *Tezakir* and *Maruzat* as primary sources of the Tanzimat period. What needs to be stressed is that the goal is not to underestimate and diminish the significance of Cevdet's accounts, but in fact, to raise an awareness about what needs to be paid attention to when using these primary sources to increase the reliability of the studies conducted about Cevdet Pasha.

Outline of the Study

In *Tezakir* and *Maruzat*, Cevdet gives details about the prominent Tanzimat grand viziers with whom he had close ties owing to his active involvement in political affairs through various governmental duties and ministerial posts. The first chapter of the thesis aims to deal with Cevdet's attitudes toward the five most mentioned grand viziers—Reşid, Fuad, Âli, Mahmud Nedim, and Midhat Pashas—to be able to reveal the subjectivity of Cevdet's accounts, because there is an obvious difference in Cevdet's attitudes toward each of these grand viziers. The chapter intends to highlight those differences that arose from Cevdet's personal relationship with them.

In the second chapter, Cevdet's attitude toward two sultans—Abdülmeçid and Abdülaziz—and the palace and economy of the Tanzimat era is considered. For this, the focus is first on Cevdet's notion of "sultanate" to understand his concern about protecting the dignity of sultans and avoiding direct criticisms against them. Secondly, the main themes that Cevdet focuses on, such as the "prodigality" of the palace ladies or the case of the dethronement of Abdülaziz, and Cevdet's possible agenda for putting emphasis on these themes during the reigns of each sultan, are examined. Lastly, Cevdet's concerns about the situation of the economy and the palace are analyzed, and his different attitudes toward the two sultans when it comes to these issues are taken into consideration.

In the third chapter, Cevdet's accounts of the reactions to the reform measures of the Tanzimat era are tackled to reveal his state-centered perspective. Cevdet had a conservative and traditional political outlook, and never approved of any opposition against the sultan or state, since he saw common people as unreliable subjects whose opinions were not legitimate to be voiced. Because the era of reforms brought about rapid changes in almost every sphere of social life, these led to reactions from people of different strata of society. The objective of this chapter is to analyze Cevdet's statist manner toward these reactions. In this sense, the reactions of Muslims and non-Muslims to the Reform Edict of 1856, the Mecca Rebellion of 1855, the Kuleli incident of 1859, and the Syrian uprisings of 1860, are considered.

In the fourth chapter, Cevdet's attitude toward the society of the Tanzimat era is analyzed. Cevdet spent most of his life in İstanbul, and most of his accounts are about the society of İstanbul, which was going through a process of reformation. Thus, first Cevdet's accounts of İstanbul society, which only focus on the Westernization of life-style and the increase in "prodigality," is taken into account. Then, his accounts of the society of Bosnia and Çukurova are dealt with. Cevdet was sent to these regions as a state official and came into contact with different strata of local people. The chapter illustrates how Cevdet viewed these societies from a statist perspective to fulfill the demands of the central government.

In the last chapter, Cevdet's traditional and conservative understanding of the "rulership" is briefly analyzed by examining the Ottoman political thought from the beginning of the formation of the state. It is seen that as a nineteenth century statesman, Cevdet represents an interesting case by adopting much older rulership and being a member of the authoritarian Sublime Porte at the same time. Cevdet attaches a special importance to the notion of the "sultanate" in *Tezakir* and *Maruzat*, since according to him, the monarch's dignity and the absolutist place in the government should never be harmed. Additionally, in the chapter, Cevdet's emphasis on the "caliphate" as an element for legitimization of the Ottoman sultan is taken into account. As the last point, contemporary counter positions to Cevdet's authoritarian understanding is analyzed by looking at the Young Ottomans.

1. A CRITICAL APPROACH TOWARD CEVDET PASHA'S ACCOUNTS OF THE PROMINENT TANZIMAT GRAND VIZIERS

After the death of Mahmud II in 1839, the Ottoman Empire's character underwent a radical change, since the initiative had passed from the Palace to the Sublime Porte. The state entered into a new political period in which none of the sultans were able to dominate reform policy until Abdülhamid's succession in 1876 (Ahmad 1993, 28). The leading branch of officialdom became the civil bureaucracy and the Porte performed as the real center of the government. This period is called the *Tanzimat*, which literally means "reforms" and "reorganizations" and has been described as a time of "extreme political imbalance" and of "reform par excellence" (Findley 1980, 13).

In this period, it became ordinary practice for a foreign minister to continue to serve as grand vizier, and revolving through both positions the triad of Reşid (1800-58), Fuad (1815-69), and Âli (1815-71) Pashas had the greatest influence on this epoch. Along with their colleagues, they formed a group of elites who served as minister or provincial governor interchangeably (Findley 2008, 13). In other words, it was a period that can be referred to as the time of bureaucratic dictatorship and the happy days of the Sublime Porte (Hanioglu 2006, 153).

Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, as a leading and influential character, directly experienced the ongoing events of the period (Baysun 1986, XIV) to the extent that "there seems to be no assembly activity which he did not attend" (Neumann 2000, 156). Therefore, his accounts in *Tezakir* and *Maruzat* about the era and the personalities of his time are inarguably significant when it comes to dealing with the period as a whole. Both of the sources give the sense that the reader is peeping into the government mechanism of the late Ottoman Empire in a way that no archival report can.

At this point, the question of this chapter emerges: Were all the writings of Cevdet Pasha objective or had he been influenced by his personal experiences and relationships while, intentionally or unintentionally, transmitting these pieces of invaluable information to future generations? As Baysun (2011) rightly points out, considering that Cevdet Pasha was often the only witness to the events he describes, it is possible to doubt the veracity of *Tezâkir* and *Maruzat* at some points (p. 230). Nevertheless, one common pitfall, particularly in studies conducted in Turkish academia, is to regard Cevdet Pasha's accounts as if they are unquestionable.

Hence, in this chapter, Cevdet Pasha's treatment of the prominent grand viziers of the era who played the chief role in shaping the period will be tackled with a critical approach in order to contextualize Cevdet Pasha's accounts by considering the possible reasons or psychology behind them. While seeking a critical approach, the aim is not to decrease Cevdet Pasha's value or minimize the importance of his accounts, but to draw attention to the fact that Cevdet Pasha was a human being who was affected by his own experiences and feelings. Since the scope of this study is limited, only five of the most commonly mentioned grand viziers — Reşid, Fuad, Âli, Mahmud Nedim, and Midhat Pashas — will be taken into account.

1.1 Cevdet's Hero: Reşid Pasha

If we consider the first step in the career of young Cevdet to be his move to İstanbul from his hometown Lofça (the present-day Lovec in Bulgaria), the second would be his acquaintance with Reşid Pasha (*Tezâkir* IV, 21). Cevdet's daughter Fatma Aliye (1994) states that young Cevdet's first encounter with Reşid Pasha was during Reşid Pasha's first grand vizierate in 1846. When Reşid Pasha became the grand vizier, he demanded an open-minded scholar from the *shaykh al-Islam* to obtain information on the *shari'a* related arrangements he had designed, whereupon Ahmed Cevdet was sent to him (pp. 48-49).

At that time, Cevdet was 24 years old (*Tezâkir* IV, 19). He had no relatives in İstanbul, to which he had come seven years previously for the purpose of education, and there was

no one to support and guide him. He tried to educate and cultivate himself regardless of the economic difficulties he experienced. Furthermore, he did not go to his hometown during *Ramadan* and *eids* but took lessons from every possible scholar (*Tezakir* IV, 16-17).¹² He received a decent education (*Tezakir* IV, 17), was a graduate of a *madrasah*, and had the potential to one day become a high ranking *ulema*.

The encounter with Reşid Pasha allowed young Cevdet to begin a new career path. He was freed from economic troubles thanks to Reşid Pasha and spent his days in the Pasha's home. As he describes it, he reached "a period full of happiness and enjoyment" (*Tezakir* IV, 21). Transferring from the *madrasah* to a political environment he began to promenade along the Bosphorus together with Reşid Pasha and his statesmen companions. In particular, Âli and Fuad Pashas' friendship became like a school for him, since he gained a vast amount of knowledge on political issues and began to learn French (*Tezakir* IV, 20-21). Leading up to his historical role, it was this encounter with Reşid Pasha that changed and shaped the whole flow of his life. By this means, he had opportunities to develop and prove himself. Indeed, being well informed on Western thought and systems as a result of this environment was the determinant factor for all his works (Aydın 1986, 22).

Considering Reşid Pasha's large role in young Cevdet's life, it is clear that the Pasha becomes the most prominent person in Cevdet's life, more than anyone else, including his own father (*Tezakir* II, 40-41). When closely examining their relationship and the way that Cevdet mentions Reşid Pasha, it is clear that their acquaintance formed an affinity between the two insomuch that Cevdet Pasha became a member of Reşid Pasha's household and his confidant (*Tezakir* II, 63). Cevdet felt a strong attachment to him, and was grateful to him throughout his life (Neumann 2000, 18). Therefore, Cevdet's accounts of Reşid Pasha differ conspicuously from his accounts of others in both works. Although there are a few criticisms, Cevdet writes of Reşid Pasha in a strikingly positive way, especially when compared to the other pashas of the *Tanzimat* era.

¹² In the last volume of *Tezakir*, Tezkire no. 40, Cevdet Pasha describes educational life in İstanbul, the general circumstance of the *madrasahs*, and his situation as a student in detail. See: (*Tezakir* IV, 16-17).

Cevdet avoids negative statements about Reşid Pasha. Using more delicate expressions such as “generous, humane, pure in heart, having a superior character, and appreciative” (*Tezakir* I, 17), he eulogizes Reşid Pasha and displays a sensitivity in his approach at different points. Particularly, in the part of *Tezakir* where Mahmud Nedim and Reşid Pashas are addressed in the same paragraph, the contrast in Cevdet’s approach reveals itself quite plainly. While he severely criticizes Nedim Pasha, he seems to favor the latter (*Tezakir* I, 16-17). The same circumstance appears when Cevdet mentions Reşid and Âlî Pashas together. While Cevdet exalts Reşid Pasha for his efforts to train many people for the sake of the state, in the same line he disparages Âlî Pasha while referring to a rumor that he had prevented the training of new people (*Maruzat*, 1).¹³

Especially in *Maruzat*, which was presented to the Sultan, Cevdet Pasha avoids negative statements and assessments with respect to Reşid Pasha. However, his attitude in *Tezakir* is more forthcoming, which is why assessment of Reşid Pasha seems sincerer in *Tezakir*. In *Maruzat*, criticisms can be found only at two points, which relate to Reşid Pasha’s “extravagance.” In one of these points, Cevdet argues that “Reşid Pasha was competing with Fethi Pasha to make expenses easier for women of the palace for whom the Sultan shows strong affection, even if the treasury was not able to compensate their costs” (*Maruzat*, 10).

In the other point the criticism is an interesting one in the sense that although he states that “Reşid Pasha consumed exceeding amount of money,” Cevdet cannot help exhibiting a defensive attitude right after this criticism by highlighting that “Reşid Pasha did not burden the treasury with debt but only spent what was available” (*Maruzat*, 239).¹⁴ However, in *Tezakir* he records the addition of more than two hundred thousand purses of gold debt to the Privy Purse (*Hazine-i Hassa*) during Reşid Pasha’s grand vizierate, which consequently tainted the magnitude of the Pasha’s dignity (*Tezakir* II, 30-31).¹⁵

¹³ “Reşid Paşa devlete pek çok âdemler yetiştirdi. Âlî Paşa ise “âdem yetiştirmek şöyle dursun yetiyecek âdemlerin yollarını uruyor” deyü beyne’n-nâs mat’ûn idi” (*Maruzat*, 1).

¹⁴ “Reşid Paşa, hükm-i zamâna ittibâ’ ile bir dereceye kadar alafangaya i’tibâr etmekle devlete pek çok para sarf ettirmiş idi. Lâkin mevcûddan yiyüp, Hazîneyi borç altına komamış idi” (*Maruzat*, 239).

¹⁵ “... bu sadâretinde Hazîne-i hassa’nın dünyununa iki yüz bin keseden ziyâde zam ve ilâve vuku’ buldu. Bu cihetlerle Reşid Paşa haylice lisâna geldi. Elhâsıl Reşid Paşa bu devlette kat kat haysiyet kazanmış iken her sadâretten infisâlinde bir kabuğu soyularak azamet-i şânına hayliden hayli nakîse geldi” (*Tezakir* II, 30-31).

Cevdet plainly expresses his admiration for Reşid Pasha by asserting that “there was no greater man than him in this age” (*Tezahir* I, 14), and shows veneration by stating that “he trained many people to serve the state” (*Maruzat*, 17) and “led the state to begin a new era with the proclamation of the *Tanzimat* edict” (*Maruzat*, 256). He was also the one who “constituted the method of diplomacy in the Ottoman State” (*Tezahir* I, 7) and who “broke new ground for recording every written document” (*Tezahir* IV, 58, 75) in the archives and for “paving the way for simple and eloquent prose” (*Tezahir* IV, 21).

On the other hand, in *Tezahir* Cevdet does not ignore Reşid Pasha’s foibles and wrongdoings. For instance, he acknowledges that Reşid Pasha’s compassion toward his son Ali Galip became his weak point, which prevented Reşid Pasha from acting as attentively as his status in the administration required. He was also obsequious to the women of the palace and the black eunuchs in order to make his son son-in-law of the Sultan (*Tezahir* I, 10). He did whatever his son wished such as appointing or dismissing people according to Ali Galip’s will (*Tezahir* II, 70). As Cevdet writes, “Reşid Pasha made many sacrifices for the sake of making his son the son-in-law of the palace.” Due to his son’s incapability (*Tezahir* II, 22), this sacrifice did not result in anything beneficial for either Reşid or Ali Galip. In fact, it worked in quite the opposite way by creating “disturbance and harm” (*Tezahir* II, 71).

Furthermore, Cevdet asserts that Reşid Pasha was a high-income earner. Like other grand viziers, he made money apart from his salary from both commissions and delegations. Additionally, “he occasionally received abundant presents from the Sultan” (*Tezahir* I, 19) and possessed a tremendous amount of wealth. Through this revenue, “he too had a desire to invest in real estate property” (*Tezahir* I, 10). That is to say, he revealed a weakness for goods and properties, which gave rise to the objections and reactions of the public, creating unfavorable results for him (*Tezahir* I, 20).

Cevdet also does not hesitate to record Abdülmecid’s deprecating thoughts about Reşid Pasha. After the death of Reşid Pasha, Abdülmecid visited the Sublime Porte, and in the presence of the committee, the Sultan pointed at Foreign Minister Ali Galip Pasha, who was then the Sultan’s son-in-law, and said, “we formerly appointed him (Ali Galip Pasha)

the minister of the the Privy Purse. He showed me Fatıma Sultan's¹⁶ notebook with a record of thirty thousand purses of debt. At the time, I was afraid of his father's (Reşid Pasha) nastiness. His father went to the devil and we got rid of him, but he will become more seditious than his father" (*Tezakir* II, 55). In another instance, when Abdülmecid once was talking about Grand Vizier Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha he said, "like Reşid Pasha, does this man want me to use force against him?" (*Tezakir* II, 67).

Despite these few criticisms, Cevdet's manner as a whole is conspicuously favorable towards Reşid Pasha. As mentioned in the very beginning of this section, Cevdet came from a province to the capital where he had no one to support him. Meeting Reşid Pasha and entering his service became a turning point for Cevdet's life (Baysun 2011, 216). By having the opportunity to get involved in Reşid Pasha's private realm and receiving his patronage, Cevdet became aware of the hidden side of state affairs (Baysun 1986, XIV), had the chance to develop and prove himself, and was actively involved in the state administration in ways that would not otherwise have been possible. Therefore, Cevdet's positive accounts about Reşid Pasha in *Tezakir* and *Maruzat* can be read as a sign of how Cevdet's strong "attachment" (Tanpınar 1988, 165) and "loyalty" to Reşid Pasha (Ortaylı 1983, 174) affected his attitude.

1.2 Cevdet's Close Friend: Fuad Pasha

Cevdet also had a close relationship with Fuad Pasha. Fatma Aliye asserts that, "it was not possible for my father to disregard the companionship of Fuad Effendi. My father loved him so much and they used to live just like they were brothers" (Fatma Aliye 1994, 108). When Cevdet was newly transferred from the *madrasah* environment to the political one, he spent his time in Fuad Pasha's seaside residence as well as Reşid Pasha's residence. As Cevdet records, these were nice times for him and he was surrounded by constant pleasure (*Tezakir* IV, 21). Therefore, Cevdet's favorable attitude toward Fuad Pasha is apparent throughout the sources. But still, although not harshly, Cevdet directs criticisms against Fuad Pasha at some points.

¹⁶ Abdülmecid's daughter and Ali Galip Pasha's wife.

Cevdet states that Fuad Pasha was “tolerant” (*deryâ-dil*) (*Maruzat*, 50, 175; *Tezakir* II, 263; *Tezakir* III, 198) and “one of a kind” (*zât-ı bî-mu’adil*) (*Tezakir* III, 198). He also adds, “I had full confidence in Fuad Pasha and would implement his oral orders without any hesitation” (*Tezakir* II, 267). “His attachment to me and good thoughts about me were indisputable” (*Tezakir* III, 198). “When Fuad Pasha came to the post of the grand vizierate, he consulted with me about significant issues just like Reşid Pasha did” (*Tezakir* IV, 82).

Apparently, the two spent much time together while involved in state affairs. For instance, when the rebellion and revolution broke out in Moldavia and Wallachia, Fuad Effendi, who was not yet Pasha, was given exceptional powers and sent to Bucharest, and Cevdet accompanied him. Then, Fuad Pasha was sent to St. Petersburg to meet the Russian emperor. However, the coldness of Russia harmed Fuad Effendi’s health and he decided to go to the thermal springs of Bursa when he came back to İstanbul. Cevdet went with him to Bursa too (*Tezakir* I, 12; *Tezakir* IV, 42). Their alliance formed a harmony and when they were together in Bursa, they traveled around, worked, and made efficient use of their time. For instance, they wrote an Ottoman grammar book, *Kavâ'id-i Osmâniye (Ottoman Grammar)* which was later published to be studied in junior high schools (*Rüşdiye mektepleri*). That is to say, their days were both pleasant and productive (*Tezakir* I, 12-13; *Tezakir* IV, 44-45; Aykut 2018, 24).¹⁷

In another instance the governor of Egypt, Abbas Pasha, let the British build a railway to Suez that made it easier for the British to travel to India, a situation that caused discomfort in Istanbul. To solve the problem, Fuad Effendi, as the grand vizier’s assistant secretary, went to Egypt with a special commission. Since it was necessary for a scholar to accompany him, Cevdet came along (*Tezakir* IV, 59; *Tezakir* I, 13).

Cevdet exhibits a clearly positive approach toward him in *Maruzat* as well. Cevdet states that “Fuad Pasha was a very tolerant person and he had a special love for me and cared about me” (*Maruzat*, 175). Cevdet also admits that he did not like Âli Pasha as much as he liked Fuad Pasha (*Maruzat*, 52). These lines can be read as a confession of why Cevdet

¹⁷ For a quite detailed description of the time they spent in Bursa together, see: (*Tezakir* IV, 42-45).

is so favorable towards him, since he had a good personal relationship with Fuad Pasha. When Cevdet compares Fuad Pasha with Mahmud Nedim or Âli Pashas, the difference of his treatment toward them becomes apparent.

For instance, he asserts that “Fuad Pasha progressed thanks to his intelligence and knowledge,” while Mahmud Nedim Bey, on the other hand, “did not have that ability and intelligence but had an irresolute and capricious personality” (*Maruzat*, 5). In another example he writes that Fuad Pasha was “tolerant” but Âli Pasha was a dissembler (*içinden pazarlıklı*) and intolerant (*teng-dil*) (*Maruzat*, 50). He also writes, “it was predicted that Fuad Pasha would get ahead of Âli Pasha with his impressive eloquence and perspicacity” (*Tezakir* II, 31).

Cevdet also appreciates Fuad Pasha for his success in diplomatic relations. When Russia and Austria were about to go to war with the Ottoman Empire, Fuad Effendi was sent to St. Petersburg to meet with the Russian Emperor. There, he won the Russian emperor’s favor and the problem was gently fixed. This accomplishment brought Fuad Effendi into prominence in Europe (*Tezakir* IV, 29). Cevdet also praises Fuad Pasha for his success in fighting off the Greek bandits who occupied the borders while the state was involved in the Crimean War. Fuad Effendi was sent to this area with a special mission and commanded the soldiers. According to Cevdet, he was a great commander who “defused the bandits and saved the state from the Greeks.” Cevdet continues to exalt Fuad Pasha by asserting that, “Fuad Effendi had proved that his commandership was as powerful as his writing” (*Tezakir* IV, 67-68, 72).

When it comes to his criticisms, both in *Maruzat* and *Tezakir*, Cevdet expresses his annoyance with Fuad Pasha’s family. For him, with the effect of the prodigality of the wives of the rulers of Egypt in İstanbul, the families of Fuad and Âli Pashas were acting extravagantly. In *Maruzat*, Cevdet’s word choices are more conspicuous than *Tezakir*. For example, Cevdet argues Fuad Pasha was so stolid that although he was aware, he ignored his family's improper attitudes. According to Cevdet, Fuad Pasha’s wife inherited her carelessness from her father since her father was Nusayri¹⁸ and Nusayris were careless

¹⁸ Nusayri is a member of a minority sect of Shi’ite Muslims living chiefly in Syria.

when it comes to protecting their dignity. Not only her, but also her brother Kamil Pasha's dishonorable actions were inherited from his father¹⁹ (*Maruzat*, 2). Moreover, Cevdet writes that Fuad Pasha's family imitated *madamas* (referring to French-speaking women) and set a new fashion every month that dissuaded innocent Muslim women, and that Fuad Pasha was not able to control them (*Maruzat*, 12).

Cevdet also seems bothered by the nonchalance of Fuad Pasha, writing that Fuad Pasha's character was such that he did not occupy himself with any problem, and did not attach importance to anything (*Maruzat*, 2). Nonetheless, Cevdet cannot help defending Fuad Pasha and continues to state that the main reason for Fuad Pasha's indifference was the heart disease he inherited from his father; because the best cure for heart diseases is not to take anything seriously, Fuad Pasha did not place any importance on anything (*Maruzat*, 2). In fact, Fuad Pasha's nonchalance is also mentioned by İbnülemin Mahmud Kemal İnal, who writes that Fuad Pasha did not care about the gossip that people could spread about him or what kind of bad thoughts they had about him, so Fuad Pasha said whatever he wanted to say or did whatever he wanted to do without any hesitation (İnal 1955, 178). However, he does not link this situation with Fuad Pasha's heart disease as Cevdet does.

Another criticism of Cevdet against Fuad Pasha is about his economic actions. Cevdet argues that the treasury was driven into debt during Fuad Pasha's time (*Maruzat*, 239). On different occasions, Cevdet talks about Fuad Pasha's efforts to heal the state's economy. According to Cevdet, Fuad Pasha thought that the amelioration of the economy was the state's most important issue (*Tezakir* II, 227, 256-257). However, these were not effective. For example, Cevdet claims that when the state was dealing with the fiscal crisis, instead of paying attention to ways to save, Fuad Pasha supported investigating ways to borrow (*Tezakir* I, 21). According to Cevdet, although the Sultan was displeased with the idea of external debt (*Tezakir* I, 22; *Tezakir* II, 64), Fuad Pasha, one way or another, managed to borrow five million liras from Europe. Thus, gold prices began to decline.

¹⁹ "Fuad Paşa, o rütbe kayıdsız idi ki, familyasının ırz u nâmûsunca lâübâliyâne harekâtını bildiği halde iğmâz eylerdi. Çünkü zevcesi hânımın pederi Ahmed Efendi, Nusayrî taifesinden olup, Nusayrîlerde ise ırz u hamiyet dâiyeleri olmadığından, hanımın mübâlâtsizliği pederinden mevrûs olup, birâderi ma'hûd Hâriciyye teşrifâtçısı Kâmil Bey'in ma'lum olan hamiyetsizliği de mirâs-ı peder idi" (*Maruzat*, 2).

However, this led to more dissipation and indebtedness. Cevdet desperately wishes that he had not been successful in borrowing money (*Tezakir* II, 60-61). Although in other sources the economic actions of Fuad and Âli Pashas were more severely criticized (Pakalın 1942, 72),²⁰ Cevdet also seems to be uneasy about the economic damages brought about by Fuad Pasha's policies.

Another criticism of Cevdet is about Fuad Pasha's efforts to flatter and please Âli Pasha. Cevdet claims that "Fuad Pasha did whatever Âli Pasha wanted" to get along with him, which led to nepotism in the appointments (*Maruzat*, 50). Cevdet records that, as he was annoyed with this situation, he told Fuad and Âli Pashas, "you are not able to achieve a great success like Sokollu and Köprülü because you are engaged in personal pursuits." However, Cevdet still cannot help defending Fuad Pasha right after criticizing him. He adds, "upon my words, Fuad Pasha was not resentful, as he was gentle and sincere. However, since Âli Pasha was malevolent and troublesome, he was annoyed" (*Maruzat*, 49). Additionally, he also believes that when Fuad Pasha died of heart disease the state lost its balance, since Âli Pasha remained as the sole power in the administration (*Tezakir* IV, 94). As İbnülemin (1955) also states, in these lines Cevdet's personal views toward these two Pashas has an effect on his arguments (p. 181). Thus, while Fuad Pasha is defended, Âli Pasha is dispraised.

1.3 Cevdet's Contentious Collaborator: Âli Pasha

Âli and Cevdet Pashas had something essential in common: they both received the patronage of Reşid Pasha (*Tezakir* I, 16). According to Cevdet, although Âli Pasha's passion for political authority caused their relationship to deteriorate (*Tezakir* IV, 61), Âli Pasha was the person to whom Reşid Pasha showed the most favor (*Tezakir* IV, 23). Reşid Pasha

²⁰ Pakalın quotes from an article published in the newspaper *Hürriyet* that claims that no one, including the officials of the finance ministry, knew where the millions of gold coins were spent during the times of Âli and Fuad Pashas. See: (Pakalın 1942, 72).

esteemed Cevdet very highly (*Tezakir* IV, 72-73)²¹ and protected both Âli and Cevdet Pashas. However, Reşid Pasha's first encounter and relationship with Âli Pasha was much older. According to Öztuna (2006), Reşid Pasha met young Âli, who was then 18 years old, when Âli was appointed to the Council's Translation Bureau (*Tercüme Kalemi*) in 1833 (p. 30). He began to follow the professional progress of Âli with interest, and in 1838 when Reşid Pasha was appointed ambassador to London, he took Âli with him as counselor, giving young Âli a crucial opportunity to have long discussions with Reşid Pasha on political issues. Reşid Pasha became not only young Âli's mentor but also a very close friend (Andic 1996, 7).

When it comes to Cevdet's attitude toward Âli Pasha, it can be described as unsteady and ambivalent. On the one hand, Âli Pasha was "worthy" (*değerli*) (*Tezakir* IV, 38), a "skillful" (*mahir*) diplomat who served as a crucial assistant to Reşid Pasha and who also had the potential to be successor of him (*Tezakir* I, 14). He was "prudent" (*dûr-endîş*) when it comes to politics (*Tezakir* III, 122), and his merit and expertise was known by everyone (*Tezakir* II, 86). "There was nobody who was deserving of the post of foreign ministry other than him and Fuad Pasha at the time" (*Tezakir* II, 22).²²

On the other hand, he was depicted as a "dissembler" (*içinden pazarlıklı*) and "intolerant" (*teng-dil*) (*Maruzat*, 50), "vindictive" (*kindâr*) (*Maruzat*, 36), nepotistic (*Maruzat*, 50), "prone to despotism" (*istibdâda mâil*), (*Tezakir* II, 21) and politically greedy (*Tezakir* II, 265; *Tezakir* IV, 61; *Maruzat*, 202) which consequently made him the opponent of Reşid Pasha (*Tezakir* IV, 61). At some point, Cevdet considered him a maverick and audacious who did not think of consulting with others even if the issue concerned the entire nation (*Tezakir* II, 21).²³ Moreover, he was an impudent person who intended to intimidate Sultan Abdülaziz with the Europeans in order to take him under his control (*Tezakir* II, 150; *Maruzat*, 39).

²¹ Reşid Pasha dignified Cevdet with the post of *qadi* of Mecca and membership on the Tanzimat council, and wanted to have Cevdet with him all day, particularly when he was dismissed from the grand vizierate. See: (*Tezakir* IV, 72-73). Cevdet Pasha gives an account of how Reşid Pasha confided his secrets in him, which he did not even share with his confidant Besim Effendi. See: (*Tezakir* IV, 69-70)

²² "Ol vakit ise Âli ve Fuad Paşa'lardan başka Hâriciye nezâretine şâyan zevat yok idi" (*Tezakir* II, 22).

²³ "Umur-ı mu'azzamada eşrâf-ı kavimden kimesne ile müzakereye tenzül etmiyerek üç beş kişi ile hod be-hod böyle hukuk-ı milletten olan mevadd-ı cesîmeye karar vermek dahi pek yolsuz ve büyük cesaret idi" (*Tezakir* II, 21).

To get a better understanding of Cevdet's attitude toward him, it is important to consider the issue in more detail. From Cevdet's accounts, it is easy to see that his relationship with Âli Pasha was not as close as his relationship with Reşid and Fuad Pashas. However, Âli Pasha was still one of his most important collaborators in the political affairs (Neumann 2000, 43). On the one hand, Cevdet argues that "the state lost its balance when Fuad Pasha died of heart disease," because Âli Pasha remained as the only influential power (*Maruzat*, 201-202). On the other, he writes that "the meaning of the grand vizierate was lost after the death of Âli Pasha." According to him, after Âli Pasha's death, no matter who occupied this position, they had to be dismissed within a short period of time owing to their "infamy" (*Tezâkir* IV, 123). This confession might be related to the fact that Cevdet's political influence gradually began to decline, especially after the death of Âli Pasha in 1871, since he remained as the only member from Reşid Pasha's team (Neumann 2009, 84).

Cevdet's relationship with Âli Pasha went through many ups and downs. At some points the reader gets a positive impression from Cevdet's accounts. For instance, during his inspectorship in Bosnia, the Austrian embassy complained about some of Cevdet's implications to the Sublime Porte. Âli Pasha defended Cevdet Pasha against the embassy in a harsh manner. For this reason, Cevdet expresses his gratitude and lifelong thankfulness to Âli Pasha for his decisive manner in this case (*Maruzat*, 76). In addition to this, Cevdet admits in various parts that Âli Pasha showed respect to Cevdet's status as an educator. Cevdet writes, "since I taught Âli Pasha logic and literature for a little time, he showed respect for me" (*Maruzat*, 35-36, 202; *Tezâkir* IV, 94).

Nonetheless, more often than not Cevdet severely criticizes Âli Pasha. In both of the sources, even if what he argues might be correct, the tone of his comments about the Pasha sound quite offensive. For instance, although other sources also mention that Âli Pasha had not attempted to cultivate any person to become his successor (Davison 1963, 268; Abu-Manneh 2006, 332), Cevdet claims that Âli Pasha's behavior originates from his strong sense of rivalry. For him, it is not only about the Pasha's disincentive actions while training any novice for the benefit of the state (*Maruzat*, 1),²⁴ but his fear that if

²⁴ "Âli Paşa ise, "âdem yetiştirmek şöyle dursun, yetiştirilecek âdemlerin yollarını uruyor" deyî beyne'n-nâs mat'ûn idi" (*Maruzat*, 1).

any competent person were to be trained in foreign affairs, they would become his rival (*Maruzat*, 2).

Cevdet further claims that Âli Pasha even regarded Cevdet as his rival, writing, “I did not give any credit to the likelihood that Âli Pasha would regard me as a rival.” However, he continues that, as it was reported to him, “Âli Pasha saw Cevdet as his contender.” In fact, Cevdet’s argument that Cevdet never thought himself as rival to Âli Pasha becomes unconvincing when Cevdet states that Cevdet was among the three of the candidates for the grand vizierate position when Âli Pasha died²⁵ (*Maruzat*, 218). He describes the situation by unconvincingly claiming, “when it comes to me, I did not engage with people but paid attention to my duties” (*Maruzat*, 202). However, as understood from his words, Cevdet saw himself as a candidate for the grand vizierate position. These accounts suggest the possibility of Cevdet’s feelings of hidden rivalry toward Âli Pasha, since Cevdet seems to care about the issue of competition and tries to highlight his naiveté, which in fact generates suspicions toward him.

One of the conspicuous criticisms Cevdet makes toward Âli Pasha regards his decisions when it comes to the appointments of officers to governmental offices. Cevdet argues that Âli Pasha favored those who obeyed him, thus disregarding whether a person was competent or not when appointing him for a position (*Maruzat*, 50). In addition to this, he criticized Âli Pasha for the accreditation of Armenians in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Cevdet writes that “essential affairs of the Ministry were handed over to the Armenians.” Not only that, but in accordance with the *Islahat* Edict Christians also had to be assigned to offices in political and foreign affairs. Cevdet expresses clear discontent about these implementations since, for him, it was better that these groups of people be assigned to financial fields rather than to positions regarding pivotal affairs (*Maruzat*, 1-2).

Another striking point is that in both *Tezâkir* and *Maruzat*, Cevdet insistently emphasizes the Sultan’s dislike of Âli Pasha; indeed, in different parts of both works he writes that Abdülaziz hated Âli Pasha. Just after these remarks, he does not neglect to mention the Sultan’s contentment with Fuad Pasha (*Tezâkir* II, 265, 259; *Maruzat*, 51, 60). Following one of these accounts, Cevdet talks about a conversation between him and *Mabeyn-i*

²⁵ “Âli Paşa’nın vefatında üç kişi Sadâret’e namzed idik” (*Maruzat*, 218).

hümayun chief secretary Mustafa Effendi, in which Mustafa Effendi was complaining about Âli Pasha's manners that created annoyance among the public. At this point, Cevdet manifests his feelings about Âli Pasha and begins his sentence, "Although I do not like Âli Pasha as much as I like Fuad Pasha..." (*Maruzat*, 52).

Furthermore, he also talks about how Âli and grand vizier Kamil Pashas' acceptance of the Sultan's gift of two thousand purses of gold fed the Sultan's hatred toward them. In this case, Cevdet asserts that although the Sultan himself bestowed the money, Âli Pasha failed by accepting it since the Sultan was only testing their tendency towards bribery (*Tezakir* II, 257-258; *Maruzat*, 52-53). İbnülemin (1955) quotes Ziya Pasha about the same issue. Ziya Pasha in *Zafername Şerhi* claims that Âli Pasha and other pashas accepted gifts from both Abdülmecid and Abdülaziz on different occasions (p. 36). However, the way Cevdet interprets the situation makes it seem more inexcusable than İbnülemin.

Cevdet also seems irritated by the debauchery of Âli Pasha. He asserts that "owing to his fear of the reactions of foreigners, Âli Pasha tried to hide his pederasty" (*Maruzat*, 9). Moreover, while Cevdet was claiming that the "expenditure of Âli Pasha's household exceeded three to four thousand gold per month," he relates this situation with Âli Pasha's love affair. Cevdet argues that since Âli Pasha was spending money on a boy named Ali, his grand vizierate salary was insufficient. (*Maruzat*, 7).

As the last attention-grabbing point, when Cevdet talks about Âli Pasha's funeral, the way he interprets the situation betrays another indication of Cevdet's feelings about Âli Pasha. Allegedly, since the *muezzins* misunderstood each other a proper funeral prayer could not be performed, and nobody who attended the funeral commented on whether Âli Pasha was a good or bad person. There was a total disappointment of people in the funeral. Cevdet writes, "what a poor situation for a person's relatives and friends that the person passes away when he was hated by his community" (*Tezakir* II, 44).²⁶

²⁶ "Ba'dehû Âli Paşa vefat ettikte cenaze namazı Yeni-cami'de kılınıp Süleymaniye camii'nde defn olundu. Lâkin garibdir ki müezzinler birbirini yanlış anlamakla bir dürüst namaz kılınmadı... Yenikapı Mevlevihânesi şeyhi Osman Efendi üç def'a "Bu zâtı nasıl bilirsiniz" deyu sordu... Cümlesinin nutku tutuldu. Bir cevâb veremediler. Böyle tezekiyede sükût-i tâm ile mukabele olunduğunu görmedik ve hiçbir tarihte vuku'unu dahi işitmedik. Bir adamın beraber

İbnülemin (1955) believes that although Cevdet enjoyed the compliments and patronage of Âli Pasha, he did not refrain from commenting against him (p. 36). In particular, he claims that Cevdet misinterprets the situation of the funeral, arguing that when it is asked what people think of the deceased person in the funeral, even if the person was a bad person and even if there are people among the crowd who did not know the deceased, they all bear testimony to his goodness (İnal 1955, 26). Therefore, he believes that Cevdet is distorting the reality.

In the *Tanzimat* period Reşid, Âli, and Fuad Pashas were the main figures and played the principal roles in state affairs. Until the last decade of the period Cevdet was not a person who could dream of serving in high ranking positions, since he met Reşid Pasha in 1846 and was newly introduced to the political environment with no background in politics. However, according to Cavid Baysun, as the years passed and he gained experience in state affairs, the ambitions hidden in the heart of Cevdet came to the surface (Baysun 2011, 217).

For instance, on different occasions in *Tezâkir*, Cevdet talks about rumors of the possibility of his appointment to serve as *shaykh al-islam* (*Tezâkir* II, 262-263; *Tezâkir* III, 105, 197-198). Although he tries to give the impression that he was satisfied with his existing position and was not keen on being *shaykh al-islam* (*Tezâkir* II, 262-263), Baysun argues that Cevdet dreamed of that position and strove to occupy it with the help of Fuad Pasha. However, he encountered the opposition of Âli Pasha and some other influential people (Baysun 2011, 219). Indeed, Cevdet talks about how Âli Pasha was among those who believed that serving as *shaykh al-islam* was not right for Cevdet Pasha (*Tezâkir* III, 105). At this point, the aforementioned possibility comes to our minds; Cevdet might feel a hidden rivalry toward Âli Pasha, which may explain his ambivalent attitude toward the Pasha.

Fatih Şeker (2011) has a different opinion, as he argues that Cevdet's position on the opposite side of Âli Pasha originates from a totally a personal reason (p. 128). According to him, Cevdet's disagreement with Âli Pasha was the result of the difference between

yaşadığı milleti içinde menfûr olarak âhirete gitmesi akraba ve ahbâbına ne mertebe müessir olacağı muhtâc-ı beyân değildir" (*Tezâkir* II, 44).

their points of view in the last stage of their relationship. It is known that Âli Pasha proposed the direct implementation of the French code of civil law (Kreiser 2008, 265). Şeker (2011) asserts that the *Mecelle* (Ottoman code of civil law prepared under the chairmanship of Cevdet) was a result of Cevdet's reaction to Âli Pasha, who did not agree with Cevdet on the issue (p. 128).

Cevdet records the opposition of some deputies and statesmen throughout the preparation process of the *Mecelle* (Maruzat, 201). However, as Ebul'ula Mardin (1996) states, Cevdet was seriously offended by Âli Pasha. The reason was his dismissal from the position of the presidency of the *Divan-ı Ahkâm-ı Adliye*. Although Cevdet believes that the dismissal originated from French ambassador Bourée's propaganda, he was hurt and offended by this situation, which lasted for a year and a half (pp. 88-89). Hence, Mardin (1996) attributes Cevdet's remarks about the funeral of Âli Pasha to his deep heartbreak (p. 91). In spite of Cevdet's awareness that the rumors reached the Sultan's ears during the preparation of the *Mecelle*, Cevdet hoped that Âli Pasha would not be affected by all this hostility and opposition. However, the result was Cevdet's resentment toward Âli Pasha and a total disappointment in him, since he fell victim to these propagandas (Maruzat, 201; Mardin 1996, 91).²⁷

All in all, these arguments with their different perspectives give us a clue about why Cevdet adopts a negative attitude toward Âli Pasha. First of all, although they were both guided by the same worthy mentor, Cevdet was not able to shine as much as Âli Pasha did. As mentioned, Cevdet had an ambitious personality (Baysun 2011, 217) and dreamed of reaching higher positions. However, at certain points Âli Pasha was one of those who interfered with Cevdet's desires, which led Cevdet to resent him. Moreover, Âli Pasha's disagreement with Cevdet about the preparation of the *Mecelle* was another point of controversy. All these reasons may have led Cevdet to feel a hidden rivalry toward Âli Pasha, and brought about an aggressive attitude toward him.

²⁷ “Âli Paşa ol vakit müteferrik ve müstakil bi'r-re'y olduğu cihetle ana bu makule esbâbın çendân te'siri olmazdı. Fakat zîrde muharrer esbabdan dolayı o dahi böyle azlime bahâne olacak sözlere kulak asmağa başlamış idi” (Maruzat, 201).

1.4 Cevdet's Persistent Opponent: Mahmud Nedim Pasha

Cevdet's judgments are most severe when it comes to Mahmud Nedim Pasha. His statements contain almost no favorable points about the Pasha but only rigid criticisms. Moreover, at some points he writes diatribes against the Pasha's character that leave no chance to think anything positive about him. According to Cevdet he was egocentric and a "fair-weather friend" (*iyi gün dostu*) who had not made any sacrifice for his master or friends. He was a "indecisive" (*mütelevvin*) and nobody trusted him. He had diabolical manners and deceived influential people through adulatory and hypocritical attitudes (*Tezakir I*, 16-17). As well as being fickle he was quite "irresolute" (*kararsız*), and he ruined what he had done just the day before, causing disorder in the state affairs. He was "vindictive toward those by whom he was a little offended in the past." He was thoroughly inept and "destroyed the basic and procedural principles of the state" (*Maruzat*, 210), and "he did not think of anything other than his personal interests" (*Maruzat*, 208).

Cevdet's only positive reference to Mahmud Pasha is about his services and efforts during the settlement of local people in Kolaşin after getting the attack of Montenegrins under control (*Maruzat*, 93). Apart from this, there is literally no positive reference to him or his actions, characteristics, or thoughts. Cevdet argues that "although Mahmud Nedim is a member of Reşid Pasha's group, he watches for benefits from both sides and enjoys the advantages of the predominant side. He is not benevolent for any side but only interested in his own benefits" (*Tezakir I*, 16-17).²⁸ For Cevdet, Mahmud Pasha's hypocrisy was such that on the one hand, "he flattered British ambassador Stradford Canning due to his affiliation with Reşid Pasha," while on the other, "he tried to win the French embassy's favor." However, he argues, "it was known through his conversations with his intimate

²⁸ "Amedci Mahmud Nedim Bey dahi Reşid Paşa'nın havass-ı mensubanından iken iki tarafı kollar ve kanğı taraf galebe ederse andan istifadeye çalışır idi. Çünkü mîr-i mumâileyh iyi gün dostu olup *el için ağlayan göz kör olsun* diyenlerden olmasıyla Efendisi yahud rufekası için değil menafi-i mahsusasını belki bir günlük eğlencesine bile feda edemediği cihetle şayan-ı vüsuk ve emniyet değil idi ve gayet mütelevvin ve tavr-u mişvarı garib ve herkes hakkında su-i zannı galib bir adem olarak kimesne hakkında anın dahi emniyeti yok idi" (*Tezakir I*, 16-17).

friends that he was on the side of Russian politics ever since, as he believed that it was better to be buttressed by an adjacent neighbor than by distant ones” (*Tezakir* I, 26-27)²⁹

Christoph Neumann (2000) argues that one of the reasons for the disagreement between Cevdet and Mahmud Pasha was Mahmud Pasha’s political stance toward Russia. Neumann states that in Cevdet Pasha’s history, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, Cevdet takes an anti-Russian position in which he describes Russians as insidious, hypocritical, untrustworthy, and swindlers. Reşid Pasha also had an anti-Russian attitude (pp. 43-44). However, Mahmud Pasha reversed the trend of the previous decade, in which British or French support was sought, since Mahmud Pasha was closer to the Russian ambassador Ignatiyef than any other diplomat (Davison 1963, 283). Thus, in both sources, one of Cevdet’s major criticisms is of Mahmud Pasha’s pro-Russian stand. Cevdet argues that the authority of the Sublime Porte had been handed over to the Russian embassy, since Mahmud Pasha gave control to Ignatiyef during his grand vizierate (*Tezakir* IV, 146).³⁰ He claims that Mahmud Pasha acted on Ignatiyef’s advice in all respects, and thus state affairs developed in accordance with the wishes of this ambassador (*Maruzat*, 225).

Although Mahmud Nedim joined Reşid Pasha’s group (Abu-Manneh 1990, 258), and was affiliated with Mustafa Reşid by working closely with him for twelve years, it is hard to regard him as Reşid Pasha’s protégé since he does not seem to have fallen under the influence of Reşid Pasha as did Âli and Fuad Pashas. It seems that Mahmud Pasha was not convinced that the new arrangements of the *Tanzimat* were good for the state (Abu-Manneh 1990, 261-262). Hence, he took an antireformist and traditionalist position in state affairs (Somel 2010, 171) and the first thing he did when he came to power was to undo what had been applied during the *Tanzimat* period (Akyıldız 2003, 374). Therefore, it is quite clear that there was a huge difference between the views of Ahmed Cevdet,

²⁹ “Mahmud Nedim Bey Reşid Paşa’ya mensub olduğu cihetle Canning’e temellük etmekte olduğu halde Rıza ve Savfeti Paşa vasıtalarıyla Fransa Sefaretine dahi hoş görünmek isterdi. Halbuki bazı yaranıyla mahremane musahabeti esnasında “Uzak devletlere dayanmaktan ise câr-i mülâsik olan bir devlet ile her nasıl olursa olsun uyuşup da hoş geçinmek evladır” deyu daha ol vakit Rusya taraftarı olduğu sıkladan mervidir” (*Tezakir* I, 26-27).

³⁰ “Bu defâki sadâretinde ise bütün bütün efkâr-ı umûmiyyeye karşı bir hâl ü harekette bulunmuştur ve: “Sakalını Rusya elçisi İgnatiyef’in eline verdi. Bâbiâli’nin nüfuzu Rusya sefaretine geçti” deyu efkâr-ı umûmiyye anın aleyhine düştü” (*Tezakir* IV, 146).

who served the *Tanzimat* movement (Ortaylı 1983, 174), and Mahmud Pasha toward the state government.

One damaging action of Mahmud Nedim was to repeatedly change the ministers and governors. A few days after appointing someone to a position, he would appoint them to another, surprising both those who were appointed and those who were dismissed (*Maruzat*, 210). Mehmed Memduh (1990) interprets Mahmud Pasha's attitude as such that since the *Tanzimat-ı Hayriyye* abolished execution and the seizure of property, Mahmud Pasha was exiling the ministers and officers randomly as a show of strength (p. 56). On the other hand, Cevdet associated these actions with Mahmud Pasha's irresolute character (*Maruzat*, 210) and jealousy. In *Maruzat*, Cevdet argues that Mahmud Pasha exiled Cevdet to Maraş in 1872 because the Pasha was jealous of him (*Maruzat*, 211). In *Tezakir*, his exile to Maraş is explained as Mahmud Pasha's reaction to Cevdet's opposition. Cevdet argues that he disagreed with Mahmud Pasha's unreasonable ideas and that his dissent led to Mahmud Pasha's resentment and suspicion towards Cevdet. For him, Mahmud Pasha aimed to eliminate of those who directly opposed him and send them out of İstanbul. Consequently, Cevdet was appointed as the governor of district Maraş due to his opposition (*Tezakir IV*, 120).

It seems that the struggle between these two pashas, and Cevdet's opposition to Mahmud Pasha's intentions and implementations, repeatedly cost Cevdet Pasha. As mentioned above, Cevdet was exiled to Maraş in March 1872. In March 1876, during his second grand vizierate, Mahmud Pasha sent Cevdet to Rumelia as an inspector after Cevdet opposed Mahmud Pasha's idea to hand over to foreign investors the right to collect customs revenues (*Tezakir IV*, 148). When Cevdet came back from Rumelia he was still opposed Mahmud Pasha's ideas about this economic issue, and this opposition led to Cevdet's dismissal from the post of Justice Minister and his exile to Syria (*Tezakir IV*, 151; *Maruzat*, 226).

One of Cevdet's interesting criticisms of Mahmud Nedim is that he ascribed everything to the Sultan whether it was good or bad. According to Cevdet, it was a tradition that "the things that seemed pleasing in the eyes of the people were attributed to the Sultans and those which were disliked were associated with the ministers, particularly with the grand viziers. If anything created a stir among the public, a few changes in these posts were

made by the Council of Ministers” to appease the people (*Maruzat*, 226; *Tezakir* IV, 151)³¹

However, according to Cevdet’s argument, Mahmud Pasha attributed anything and everything to Sultan Abdülaziz. For Mahmud Pasha it did not matter whether what was attributed was good or bad. Cevdet’s claim is that “Mahmud Pasha’s aim with this attitude was to enhance his own bad intentions. As a consequence, public opinion was tainted and most people dared to speak improperly against the Sultan.”³²

On the other hand, it is striking that Cevdet neither mentions anything about Mahmud Nedim Pasha’s actions to weaken the bureaucracy of the Sublime Porte and strengthen the authority of Sultan Abdülaziz (Somel 2010, 171), with which the Sultan was happy (Davison 1963, 280-281), nor how the Sultan himself lacked the ability and the tact to handle this problematic situation (Abu-Manneh 1990, 226). He only talks about how Mahmud Nedim encouraged people to speak out against the Sultan.

In fact, Mahmud Nedim Pasha was unfortunate enough to be dismissed by the Sultan in order to exonerate the Sultan himself. According to Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha (1983), despite the fact that Abdülaziz was happy that his strengthened power as a result of Mahmud Nedim Pasha, he was afraid of the consequences of wanton exiles and other destructive acts. Moreover, Mahmud Pasha was accused of selling himself to the Russians. In addition to this, European public opinion about the Ottomans was in turmoil. For all these reasons, Abdülaziz temporarily sacrificed the grand vizier Mahmud Pasha and charged him with a number of events that had created disturbances in the eyes of the public and foreigners. In this way the Sultan aimed to placate the general discontent and to protect himself from the prospective hostility of influential figures such as Hüseyin

³¹ “Çünkü öteden beri bu Devlet-i aliyye’de hey’et-i vükelâ Mâbeyn-i hümayûn ile efrâd-ı ahâlî beyninde bir perde idi. İcrâât-ı vâkı’adan enzâr-ı enâmda hoş görünen şeyler padişahlara ve nâsın beğenmediği işler vükelaya ve ale’l husûs sadrazamlara azv olunurdu; ve bir aralık efkâr-ı âmmede heyecan görülse hey’et-i vükelâca bir tebeddül icrâsiyle efkâra sükûnet geliverirdi” (*Maruzat*, 226; *Tezakir* IV, 151).

³² “Mahmud Paşa ise nîk ü bed her ne olursa olsun hep Sultan Abdülaziz Han hazretlerine atf eder ve aġrâz-ı zâtîyyesini tervîc için icrâ ettiđi işleri dahi ana tahmîl eyler idi. Bu cihetle efkâr-ı âmme bozuldu. Ekser-i âs Zât-ı şâhâne aleyhinde nâbe-câ tefevvühâta cesâret eder oldu” (*Tezakir* IV, 151).

Avni Pasha (p. 47). That is to say, Cevdet seems to overlook the fact that the Sultan was content with the situation, and had secretly supported Mahmud Pasha.³³

Moreover, it seems that Cevdet Pasha is jealous and disgruntled about Mahmud Nedim Pasha occupying the post of grand vizierate instead of himself. Cevdet states that “when Âli Pasha died, Cevdet himself was among three of the candidates for the position. However, Mahmud Nedim Pasha got ahead of them and became grand vizier.” At this point, Cevdet begins to attack Mahmud Pasha, claiming that “the Pasha ruined the whole system of the state,” and that henceforward whoever would occupy this position would be dismissed shamefully (*Maruzat*, 217-218).³⁴ These statements can be interpreted as a sign of his disappointment about his own hopes of being named grand vizier.

In addition to this, he indirectly charges Mahmud Nedim Pasha with the dethronement of Abdülaziz, writing, “this case was the result of wrong implementations that continued to be practiced for many years,” and which were led by Mahmud Nedim Pasha (*Maruzat*, 240).³⁵ However, the increase in the animosity of pashas, such as Midhat and Hüseyin Avni Pashas, towards Abdülaziz also arose from Abdülaziz’s protectionist attitude toward Mahmud Nedim Pasha. Both sides, Mahmud Nedim Pasha and the other pashas, worked tirelessly to get rid of each other when they had power. However, everyone was aware of the fact that Abdülaziz supported Mahmud Nedim Pasha, which increased the hatred towards the Sultan (Uzunçarşılı 2000, 13). That is to say, when Cevdet blames Mahmud Nedim Pasha for the Sultan’s dethronement, he totally ignores the role of Sultan Abdülaziz’s own actions.³⁶

³³ Different sources agree on this concealed patronage by Sultan Abdülaziz of Mahmud Nedim Pasha. See: (İnal 1969, 1177-1178); (Mahmud Celaledin 1983, 47-48); (Mehmed Memduh 1990, 58); (Shaw 1977, 156); (Hanioglu 2008, 109).

³⁴ “Âli Paşa’nın vefâtında üç kişi Sadâret’e namzet idik. Mahmud Paşa takaddüm edip Sadaret’e geçti. Lâkin devletin vaz’ını bozdu, tavrını deđiřtirdi. Devleti öyle bir yola götürdü ki, işin nereye varacağını bilmiyorum. Şu kadar ki, bu esnada her kim Sadâret’e gelirse karîbü’l-ahdde rezâlet ile azl olunacağını biliyorum” (*Maruzat*, 217-218).

³⁵ “El-hâsıl, Vak’a-i Azîziyye, sinîn-i adîdeden berü teselsül edip gelen esbâb u mübâdinin bir netice-i elfimesidir. Ve mütesebbibi Mahmud Paşa ise de bi’l-fi’l o cinayete mübâşeret eyleyenler Avni ve rüfekası olduğundan bu cinayet anlara isnad olunmak lâzım gelür” (*Maruzat*, 240).

³⁶ Mahmud Celaledin Pasha (1983) writes, “Sultan Abdülaziz’s arrogance and selfishness had reached such a point that not only his intimate friends but his mother was not able to say a word about the lowdown on the goings-on.

1.5 Cevdet's Adversary: Midhat Pasha

As Cevdet himself indicates, he had a friendship with Midhat Pasha since their childhood (*Tezahir* IV, 84). Because young Cevdet's grandfather was concerned with Cevdet's education and encouraged him to pursue a career in the religious (*ilmiye*) ranks, Cevdet was introduced to the Islamic sciences at a very early age. In 1836 he became a student of Hacı Eşref Effendi, who was the deputy judge (*hakim naibi*) in Lofça (the present-day Lovca). Hacı Eşref Effendi had a son of the same age who was also his pupil (Chambers 1973, 441) and who was later nicknamed Midhat (Midhat Paşa 1997, 19). Therefore, as Chambers (1973) writes, "it was in Lofça when they were in their early teens that the paths of two of the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire's greatest men first crossed, for the two boys called Ahmed were to become famous as Cevdet Pasha and Midhat Pasha" (p. 441).

Until a certain point in time, their relationship seems to have been good. In *Tezahir*, Cevdet talks about how Midhat Pasha, Sirvanizade Rüşdi Pasha, and himself were affiliated with Fuad Pasha and confidentially discussed most of the essential affairs of the state (*Tezahir* IV, 84). Moreover, soon after Cevdet was exiled to Maraş by Mahmud Nedim Pasha in 1872 Midhat Pasha became grand vizier for the first time, and helped bring Cevdet back to İstanbul (*Tezahir* IV, 120; *Maruzat*, 213). Neumann (2000) talks about Cevdet and Midhat Pashas' friendly relationship in 1874, evidenced from letters they sent to each other in which they praise each other's reforms in the provinces (pp. 46-47).

However, regardless of their shared background, Cevdet and Midhat Pashas eventually became fierce opponents of each other. In the end their relationship was so unpleasant that Cevdet served Abdülhamid II during the Yıldız Trials³⁷ against Midhat Pasha and explicitly requested the implementation of Midhat Pasha's death sentence (Uzunçarşılı

Nobody could take a risk of telling a bad word about him. He was bragging about his unlimited power. In his imagination, since he pleased the soldiers by endowing so many gifts and begs by improving their ranks, nobody could dare to attempt an action against him" (pp. 105-106).

³⁷ Upon the order of Abdülhamid II, the Yıldız Trials were held in the Yıldız Palace to judge the participants of the alleged "murder" of Sultan Abdülaziz. It began on June 27, 1881, lasted six sessions within three days and resulted in the punishment of the defendants including Midhat Pasha.

2000, 358). Indeed, in *Maruzat* it is not possible to find a single argument that is positive about Midhat Pasha.

Although what Cevdet writes in *Tezakir* and *Maruzat* mostly overlap, in *Maruzat* there are some offensive expressions about Midhat Pasha. For instance, Cevdet claims that Midhat Pasha was a “bigmouth” (*farfara*) and a “careless” (*savuruk*) creature whose behaviors were harmful for the religion and the state, and who did not think of how things might end (*Maruzat*, 213).³⁸ Additionally, Cevdet seems to be bothered by Midhat Pasha’s bigheaded manners (*Maruzat*, 202) and be proud of his own attitude, which does not require Midhat Pasha’s favor for his own livelihood (*Maruzat*, 213).

Uzunçarşılı (2000) argues that Cevdet was offended by Midhat Pasha, since he was dismissed from the post of Justice Minister during Midhat Pasha’s second grand vizierate and temporarily appointed to the Council of State. Just after that, Sakızlı Ethem Pasha, who was ambassador to Berlin, was appointed to replace Cevdet as the head of the Council of State. Thus, Cevdet was out of work became resentful (p. 143). Furthermore, Cevdet himself writes that throughout the preparation process of the Constitution of 1876 (*Kanun-ı Esasi*), a controversy emerged between him and Midhat Pasha about some of its articles. For that reason, according to Cevdet, Midhat Pasha felt offended by him. After that, when the constitution was being revised in the council of ministers, another dispute took place between them (*Tezakir* IV, 167-168). Although Cevdet does not describe the debate in detail, Mehmed Memduh Pasha (1911) mentions how Cevdet and Mahmud Pashas attacked each other during the revision of the draft; upon an objection by Cevdet, Midhat Pasha derided Cevdet by saying, “your capacity is not enough to understand European law,” to which Cevdet retorted angrily, “a shoe seller uses the French Language better than you do” (p. 7).³⁹

³⁸ “Mahmud Nedim Paşa’nın evzâ’ı nâ-be-câsından küçük-büyük hep dilgîr ü müteneffîr olmakla, Midhat Paşa’nın sadâreti, mûcib-i memnûniyyet-i umûmiyye olmuş ise de, o dahi bir şey’in sonunu saymaz, farfara ve savuruk ve tavr u mişvârî dîn ü devlete muzır bir mahlûk olduğundan makam-ı Sadâret’de çok duramayup evâsıt-ı Şa’bânda azl ile Mütercim Rüşdi Paşa sadr-ı a’zam oldu” (*Maruzat*, 213).

³⁹ “Kanun-ı Esasi’nin müsveddesi tedkik olunurken Adliye Nazırı Cevdet Paşa ibarede birkaç kelimeye muteriz olunca Midhat Paşa ‘Avrupa kanunlarına senin aklın ermez’ istihfâfiyla zebandırız oldukça Cevdet Paşa hiddetten ateş kesilerek ‘fazl u akli temyiz idecek mikyasinız on-on beş Fransızca lugat bilmeye münhasırdır. Bir kunduracı Fransız lisanında senden dürüst tekellüme muktedirdir’ demesiyle meclise sıklet basdı” (Mehmed Memduh 1911, 7).

Although Neumann (2000) argues that it is not known when Cevdet and Midhat Pashas' relationship began to deteriorate (p. 46), Ülken (2017) claims that the idea of a "code of civil law" was the point where the clash between them began (pp. 286-287). Cevdet was known to be an opponent of a constitutional regime (Findley 1980, 225),⁴⁰ whereas Midhat Pasha was endeavoring to promulgate one (Berkes 1998, 226). Cevdet's opposition to the constitution is not limited to the aforementioned squabble, as he reveals his annoyance by highlighting its uselessness (*Tezakir* IV, 168).⁴¹

In both *Maruzat* and *Tezakir*, Cevdet accuses Midhat Pasha of making use of the state's difficult situation for his personal interests. During the grand vizierate of Mahmud Pasha, it was decided to halve the interest on share prices as an attempt to resolve the financial difficulties. However, Cevdet writes, "the following day, Midhat Pasha contacted his exchange broker and sold an immense amount of notes from his own account before the decision was announced. Although he earned a large amount of profit by this means, the Pasha's fame was tarnished" (*Maruzat*, 222-223; *Tezakir* IV, 146). On the other hand, İbnülemin (1955) does not believe Cevdet's claim and asserts that a stealthy action of this kind was against Midhat Pasha's character, as he was not able to conceal anything. He argues that if Midhat Pasha had earned such a large amount of money he would have revealed himself before anyone else did, or that there should be a note to prove such a claim (p. 397).

İbnülemin (1955) criticizes Midhat Pasha for not considering the necessities or results of his actions carefully, and claims that he would do whatever he wanted (p. 395). He further argues that Cevdet's claim about Midhat Pasha's recklessness (*Maruzat*, 213) was correct, since Midhat Pasha did not think about the results of his actions or commands. On the other hand, he admits that Midhat Pasha was undeniably patriotic and diligent. By

⁴⁰ Findley describes Cevdet Pasha as anti-constitutionalist and states, "he could best be described as partisans of reform and legislation under the aegis of a sultanic enlightened despotism. See: (Findley 1980, 225).

⁴¹ "Midhat Paşa ve taraf-gîrâm olan bir gürûh budala Kanûn-ı esâsî ilân olunduğu gibi âlemin muvâzenesi değışerek artık Rusya'nın etvâr-ı tahakküm-kârîsine mahâll kalmaz zann ederlerdi. Bu ise bir hayâl-i şâ'irâne olup bizim hükûmetimizi hâl-i meşrûtiyyete koymamızın Rusya hakkında bir güne te'siri olmadığı cihetle Rusyalu tedârükât-ı harbiyyesini ikmâle bir mertebe daha ziyâde sa'y etmekte idi ve Kanûn-ı esâsî sâyesinde Midhat Paşa kendisini azilden masûn sanıp taraf-ı saltanat'a karşı pek ağır davranır oldu" (*Tezakir* IV, 168).

resisting all kinds of difficulties, he was able to develop the country, improve the administration, and create useful institutions (İnal 1955, 395-396). He also asserts that unlike his services as minister or grand vizier, Midhat Pasha was successful in his governorships (İnal 1955, 400). Midhat Pasha's success in the provinces is discussed in depth in different sources as well. For instance, his governorship in the Danube province was so successful that within three years he suppressed uprisings, built bridges, and sparked political and economic development there (Şentürk 1992, 168- 181; Rızaj 1986, 60-61). Similarly, Midhat Pasha's service in Bagdad was quite successful in terms of public works (Ceylan 2011; 77; Yücel 1986, 175-183), and in Syria he was able to make effective financial and social reforms within 20 months (Saliba 1978, 310-317).

However, Cevdet ignores all of these successful practices. He merely focuses on what he regards as defects and is not able to resist criticizing Midhat Pasha for his actions. For instance, Cevdet blames Midhat Pasha for the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877, writing that since the state possessed neither commanders to command a large army nor limitless cash to buy ammunition and weaponry it was not rational to go to war. Nevertheless, according to Cevdet, Midhat Pasha drummed up public opinion for the war (*Tezakir* IV, 170). Together with Damad Mahmud and Redif Pashas, Midhat Pasha endangered the state by forcing the state to go to war (*Tezakir* IV, 175).

Most of all, in both of the sources Cevdet describes in depth the dethronement of Abdülaziz,⁴² his death, and the court proceedings of the defendants.⁴³ In his descriptions Cevdet reveals his reaction toward Midhat Pasha as well as the others who were involved in this planning, especially Hüseyin Avni and Rüşdi Pashas. Apart from his accounts in *Tezakir* and *Maruzat*, when this issue is examined in detail taking into account the actions of Cevdet, it is seen that Midhat Pasha's arrest, interrogations, and trials for the murder

⁴² Cevdet states that in the beginning he was unable to understand how Midhat and Avni Pashas suddenly began to get along with each other, especially when they had been enemies. He adds that the confidential communications between Nadir Pasha and various ministers were not understood by anyone. However, as seen later, the aim was to plan the dethronement of Abdülaziz. Then, Cevdet continues to talk about their confidential night meetings in mansions to discuss this issue and how they concealed this from Cevdet and other "loyal" people. He also talks about those pashas' fickle manners toward each other when they sensed danger and how they betrayed each other throughout the process. For a detailed description see: (*Maruzat*, 216-217, 229-230; *Tezakir* IV, 123).

⁴³ See: (*Tezakir* IV, 209-214).

of Abdülaziz were the peak points of Cevdet's hostile attitudes toward Midhat Pasha. For instance, Ebul'ula Mardin (1996) notes that in the official reports of the *Mecelle* Community (*Mecelle Cemiyeti mazbatası*), Cevdet slightly changed his original accounts pertaining to the events of the day of Abdülaziz's death. While the original statement implied a suicide, the altered version increased the likelihood of murder, which Mardin interprets an insincere alteration (pp. 258-259). As for the indictment process, in his memoirs *Midhat Pasha* (1997) writes, "this indictment is correct in just two places. One is the *besmele* (invocation) at the start and the other is the date at the end" (p. 211).⁴⁴

Furthermore, when Midhat Pasha took refuge in the French Consulate in İzmir just after his arrest warrant was issued, Cevdet Pasha, who was the Justice Minister at the time, telegraphed Midhat Pasha which, according to Uzunçarşılı (1946), had the effect of assuring Midhat Pasha of his safety (p. 19). Moreover, upon Midhat Pasha's surrender, Cevdet gave a guarantee for fair treatment in another telegraph (Uzunçarşılı 1946, 27-28). In addition to this, upon his arrival to the ferry to depart for İstanbul, Midhat Pasha informed his family about his trust in Cevdet Pasha's justice (Uzunçarşılı 1946, 34). However, Cevdet's response to Midhat Pasha's trust was an explicit request for the execution of Midhat Pasha's death sentence in the Yıldız trials, since Cevdet played his cards to organize the arrangements against Midhat Pasha and made preparations for the trials together with Mahmud Nedim Pasha (Uzunçarşılı 2000, 358) who was minister of internal affairs of the time. It is also interesting that these court proceedings at Yıldız Palace were perhaps the only situation in which Cevdet and Mahmud Nedim Pashas could cooperate. However, this cooperation is not mentioned in either of the sources by Cevdet.

Additionally, Uzunçarşılı (2000) states that Abdülhamid II granted Cevdet Pasha a seaside residence in *Bebek* after the Yıldız trials which Uzunçarşılı regards Cevdet's acceptance as an improper act despite the fact that he was an erudite, virtuous, and meritorious person (p.358). Similarly, Tanpınar (1988) argues that the reason that Cevdet fell into such a bad position during the trial of Midhat Pasha might result from a deficiency in his personality (p. 167). On the other hand, Ortaylı (1986) argues that the reason for this clash of the two pashas was the rivalry which he sees as "the traditional illness of the Ottoman bureaucracy." According to him, at that time the era of the *Tanzimat*'s executive

⁴⁴ "Bu ithamnamenin iki yeri doğrudur. Biri başındaki besmelesi, diğeri sonundaki tarihi" (Midhat Paşa 1997, 211).

and conciliatory grand viziers was gone. Consequently, when intelligent people lost the common ground to work with, they began to tear each other apart, leaving the field to those less talented (p. 76-77).

1.6 Conclusion

To sum up, although Cevdet did not have the chance to occupy the post of grand vizier, he played a pivotal role and was quite active in essential state affairs throughout the *Tanzimat* period and had close contact with the viziers. As a consequence, as can be seen in each part, Cevdet's attitude toward the grand viziers of the era shows variation according to Cevdet's personal relationship with them. While his main collaborators were the triad of Reşid, Fuad, and Âli Pashas, who were also the main leaders of the Sublime Porte, Cevdet felt the closest attachment to Reşid and Fuad Pashas. Thus, he refrains from any harsh expressions when it comes to describing their characters and actions. Particularly, since Reşid Pasha played the most important role in Cevdet's life, Cevdet cannot help displaying a defensive attitude towards his actions.

When it comes to Âli Pasha, Cevdet's statements are quite unsteady, which may point to feelings of hidden rivalry. They were both protégés of Reşid Pasha, but Âli Pasha was ahead of Cevdet in state affairs. Moreover, at certain points, Âli Pasha interfered with Cevdet's actions, which led to Cevdet's resentment. The result was Cevdet's ambivalent and sometimes critical attitude towards him.

Regarding Mahmud Nedim and Midhat Pashas, almost all of Cevdet's statements were negative and severe. Cevdet had a different political view than Mahmud Nedim Pasha, which led to their constant disputes. With regard to Midhat Pasha, Cevdet seems to have also disagreed with him about administrative issues. Moreover, Cevdet's view of the position of the Sultanate differed from that of Midhat Pasha, who was among the participants in Abdülaziz's dethronement. Cevdet never forgave Midhat Pasha for that, and he criticized him severely during the trials at Yıldız Palace. To conclude, what is crucial about all of Cevdet's changing attitudes is to be aware of the fact that he was influenced by his personal experiences in his writings. Therefore, while approaching and analyzing

his sources, it is crucial to take Cevdet's mentality and psychology into consideration to have a critical and more accurate perspective toward the *Tanzimat* era.



2. A CRITICAL APPROACH TOWARDS CEVDET PASHA'S ACCOUNTS OF THE SULTANS, PALACE, AND ECONOMY OF THE TANZIMAT ERA

In *Tezakir* and *Maruzat*, there is a striking difference between Cevdet Pasha's attitude towards the sultans and his attitude towards the grand viziers and other statesman of the period. Cevdet can be quite harsh and critical at some points when writing about various statesmen, who are mentioned in part while discussing the grand viziers. However, when it comes to the sultans, he seems to choose lenient expressions even when he has criticisms about them in particular points. Conspicuously, if Cevdet has objections to any specific issue that appears to have originated from the sultan, he attributes it to the people around the monarch such as his ministers or his daughters and wives.

Therefore, in this chapter Cevdet's notion of "sultanate" will first be taken into consideration to have a better understanding of the reasons behind this attitude. Secondly, since Cevdet attributes major importance to individual sultans, most of the issues he addresses will be analyzed in terms of the ruling periods of each monarch. Rather than locating "the palace and the economy" parts for each sultan under the first two parts, these themes are scrutinized under separate titles, because, when it comes to these two issues, Cevdet's attitude towards these two sultans differs conspicuously: he adopts a more critical approach towards the palace and the situation of the economy throughout Abdülmecid's era, while retreating into silence about Abdülaziz's period. Thus, this division is helpful to have a good grasp of the differences, which then enables us to discuss the possible underlying reasons and psychology behind these attitudes.

Understand Cevdet's mentality and motivations is important for an analytical approach to his writings since otherwise the researcher may risk missing the big picture of the period. Hence the aim of this chapter is to present Cevdet's standpoints vis-à-vis the sultans,

the palace, and the economy of the Tanzimat era, and his rationale, with a critical eye, and to compare these with the present-day evaluations of the period.

2.1 The Concept of the “Sultanate” in Cevdet’s Writings

Cevdet approvingly quotes from Fuad Pasha that “the Sublime Ottoman State is established on four principles with which the state can be ruled and make progress as required. If any of them is missing, then the governance will not be possible. These four principles are: the *millet* (community) of Islam (*millet-i İslâmiyye*), the Turkish state (*devlet-i Türkiyye*), the Ottoman sultans (*salâtîn-i Osmaniyye*), and Istanbul as the capital city (*pâytahtı-ı İstanbul*)” (*Tezakir* I, 85).⁴⁵ As can be seen, the notion of the sultanate is one of the four conditions of the Ottoman State for Cevdet.

Neumann (2000) mentions a written document presented to Sultan Abdulhamid II in 1877/8 in which Cevdet argues that the ruler has legal immunity in all civilized societies. For him, this immunity should be particularly valid for a sultan who is at the same time unquestionably a caliph. Cevdet adopts the understanding that the ruler gains his legitimacy by being an undisputed monarch. Otherwise, the ruler would not be able to occupy his post (p. 126-127).

According to Neumann, in Cevdet’s *Tarih* there is no trace of support for a constitutional arrangement that would limit the sultan's authority. On the contrary, he asserts the incontestable rights of the ruler. The most crucial point for Cevdet is obedience to the orders of the sultan in every corner of the country (Neumann 2000, 126). In other words, Cevdet has a firm understanding of “obedience to those charged with authority” (*Ulü’l emre itaat*), which comes from the Sunni Islamic understanding of politics (Alper 2001, 444). Moreover, Cevdet asserts that “fearing the sultan is a sign of wisdom” (*Maruzat*, 241).⁴⁶

⁴⁵ “Devlet-i aliyye dört esas üzere müesses olup bunlar ile her nasıl istenilir ise idaresi ve ilerlemesi kabil olur ve bunlardan her kaygısı nakıs olur ise idâre kabil olmaz. Dört esas budur. Millet-i islâmiyye, devlet-i türkiyye, salâtîn-i osmaniyye, pâytahtı-ı İstanbul” (*Tezakir* I, 85).

⁴⁶ “Padişahdan korkmak hikmettir. Anadan babadan korkmak hikmettir. Büyüklerden vesâirinden korkmak hikmettir. Ve cümlesinin başı Allah korkusudur” (*Maruzat*, 241).

In his *Tezakir* and *Maruzat*, Cevdet never forgives those who harmed the Sultan's dignity. Notably, the dethronement case of Sultan Abdülaziz is mentioned in a very particular way. Apparently, Cevdet cares greatly about the issue and, hence he reveals his stance and sharply criticizes those who planned and carried out the incident. He describes the environment of the time, "at the beginning, those who caused the Sultan to be dethroned seemed happy and to have a bright future. Those who did not take part in the case were jealous as if they were deprived of something perfect." Cevdet qualifies their attitude as "foolish" because of their jealousy and sadness for not being able to play a role in the conspiracy. From this point, he relates the issue to the general functioning of the world and claims that "it has been experienced that the reputation and dignity of the ones who get involved in such events do not last much and their end is quite bad." For him, this is how the world has been established and how divine justice has shown itself unchanged (*Maruzat*, 254).

In addition to this, Cevdet discusses a practice that illustrates how the Ottomans protected the dignity of the sultan from any situation that would tarnish his image in the eyes of the public. In this practice, the ministers acted as a curtain between the office of the sultan and the people. Whenever something had to be done, the ministers took over those operations that could cause a negative reaction from the public, while operations that were pleasing in the eyes of the people were attributed to the sultans with complimentary expressions. In this respect the ministers and the grand viziers become the targets for the objections of the people, and nobody dared to speak out against the sultan (*Maruzat*, 226; *Tezakir* IV, 151).⁴⁷ Hence, it is crucial to take this understanding into consideration while analyzing Cevdet's accounts of the Tanzimat sultans.

2.2 Main Themes in Abdülmecid's Era

⁴⁷ "Çünkü öteden beri bu Devlet-i aliyye'de hey'et-i vükelâ Mâbeyn-i hümâyûn ile efrâd-ı ahâli beyninde bir perde idi. İcrâât-ı vâkı'adan enzâr-ı enâmda hoş görünen şeyler padişahlara ve nâsın beğenmediği işler vükelaya ve ale'l husûs sadrazamlara azv olunurdu; ve bir aralık efkâr-ı âmmede heyecan görülse hey'et-i vükelâca bir tebeddül icrâsiyle efkâra sükûnet geliverirdi" (*Tezakir* IV, 151).

First it is important to summarize Cevdet's opinion of Sultan Abdülmecid. According to him, Abdülmecid was intelligent, perceptive (*Tezâkir* II, 132; *Tezâkir* I, 23), persevering, and even-tempered (*Tezâkir* I, 23). He had a strong character, and was a fortunate and a compassionate sultan who appreciated merits and values (*Maruzat*, 32). He loathed bloodshed, and for that reason was not inclined toward capital punishment. Reşid Pasha and his protégés Âli and Fuad Pashas also tried to handle the hardships with the power of the pen (*Tezâkir* I, 23; Fatma Aliye 1994, 121).

Other sources corroborate Cevdet by describing Abdülmecid as gentle and merciful, and writing that he gained the love of Europe as well as the love of his peoples (Karal 2007, 98). When he came to the throne, he was welcomed in the country and abroad thanks to his lenient and benevolent character (Engelhardt 1999, 180-181). Ortaylı (2014) describes Abdülmecid as a wonderfully intelligent person who was able to appreciate the brilliant people around him, such as Reşid, Âli, Fuad, and Cevdet Pashas (pp. 48-49). On the other hand, his gentleness and mildness hindered him from getting everything under control and applying the reforms in a stable way (Koçu 2015, 423). He was also influenced by the people around him and acted according to the suggestions of his wives, daughters, and sons-in-law (Küçük 1998b, 261). Although Cevdet implies that this nature of the sultan led to discontent in the country (*Tezâkir* II, 142),⁴⁸ he prefers to attribute negative developments to his ministers, as will be elaborated below.

According to Cevdet, in the first periods of Abdülmecid's reign things went so well that "the Ottoman lands did develop and everyone felt safe and tranquil. Until the Crimean War, particularly between 1844 and 1854, Istanbul was like a part of heaven with inexpressible beauties. The result of the Crimean war was also a victory." After that, for Cevdet, began the period in which the empire and the sultan got into trouble (*Maruzat*, 32; *Tezâkir* II, 142-143). From this point onwards, Cevdet first and foremost occupies himself with the worrisome situation of the economy. He begins with how Abdülmecid resisted borrowing until he could find no other solution, before describing the "detrimental" results of this borrowing. Next Cevdet deals with Abdülmecid's weakness for his

⁴⁸ "Bu hâlât-ı mükeddirenin zuhuru Hâkaan-ı mağfûrun meyl-i tabî'sinden ve ba'z-ı nisvâna mağlûbiyetinden münba'is ipe de anı bu hâle düşüren dahi vükelâsı idi" (*Tezâkir* II, 142).

ladies and the harmful effects of this circumstance on both the sultan himself and the Ottoman state.

2.2.1 External Borrowing

The reign of Sultan Abdülmecid represents a significant point in terms of external borrowing. Although the need for financial resources was acute, the Ottoman State did not lean towards the idea of borrowing immediately. For a while Abdülmecid was able to oppose the plan of a foreign loan, which was brought forward by the British ambassador Stratford Canning several times (Kıray 1995, 27). However, the Ottoman-Russian war, which started in 1854, worsened the state's already chaotic financial situation, and led to the need for an extraordinary budget for warfare. Since the situation was not conducive for finding new sources of income, borrowing became indispensable (Karal 2007, 210). In a real sense, the Ottoman Empire borrowed money for the first time from England in 1854, which provided 2.5 million Ottoman gold pieces to the treasury. After just one year, in 1855, a second debt contract was signed in London, providing 5.65 million in Ottoman gold (Suvla 1999, 270). Then, the act of borrowing turned into a vicious circle for the empire (Kıray 1995, 27).

These substantial developments in the economy caused significant social and political changes within the empire and became some of the main issues that preoccupied the agenda of statesmen. When Cevdet talks about Sultan Abdülmecid and his period in *Tezâkir* and *Maruzat*, economic issues occupy a major place. However, what draws the attention most in Cevdet's statements is that, although there were other significant issues, Cevdet insistently focuses on palace expenditures and the rivalry among statesman as the main problems while ignoring other problems. Moreover, while targeting the palace and its expenses, Cevdet does not direct his criticisms about where the borrowed money was spent at the sultan, but rather at his ministers or the members of his household.

First of all, Cevdet describes how the sultan rejected the idea of borrowing from foreign countries in the very beginning. Particularly, when Fuad Pasha was trying to convince the sultan of the necessity of acquiring gold from France, Abdülmecid's companion Fethi Pasha reminded him that during the time of the sultan's father, Mahmud II, "the empire

fought against Russia twice and had many adversaries, yet did not borrow a penny from outside.” Upon this warning the sultan became sad and ordered Fuad Pasha to annul the debt agreement with France. According to Cevdet’s statement, the sultan was motivated to leave the state to his successor in the same condition as he had taken it over from his predecessor. At that point, the sultan seemed quite determined that Fuad Pasha annul the agreement by paying the compensation fee (*Tezahir* I, 22; Fatma Aliye 1994, 105).

In the following paragraph, Cevdet talks about how Abdülmecid showed a high sensitivity for the protection of the state treasury. To illustrate this sensitivity, he gives an example in which a man was dismissed from his job in the palace and it was proposed that the man be paid 250 piasters salary from the state treasury. However, the sultan rejected the idea and ordered the man’s wage be paid from the Privy purse (*hazine-i hassa*), since the man had been in his service (*Tezahir* I, 22; Fatma Aliye 1994, 106).

After being left with no choice but to borrow, Cevdet writes that Abdülmecid spoke about the issue and said, “I worked hard not to borrow. But the situation forced us to borrow. The payment of the debt is possible with the increase in income. The increase in income is possible with the development of the country by establishing railroads and enterprises... However, the increase in income should not lead to an increase in expenditures. Otherwise, there would be no benefit” (*Maruzat*, 7; *Tezahir* I, 47-48).⁴⁹ Although the sultan seemed determined to turn the situation to his favor in the very beginning, he was quickly overwhelmed with weariness. According to Cevdet, the sultan who resisted borrowing became debilitated both psychically and morally, and thus began to neglect everything, becoming indifferent to the enormous increase of the public debt. However, for Cevdet, the main reason for this change of attitude was his ministers, who with their constant quarrels sickened the sultan (*Tezahir* II, 24).

2.2.2 The Palace Ladies and the *Damads* (Imperial Sons-in-Law)

⁴⁹ “İstikraz olunmamak için pek çok çalıştım. Lakin ahval bizi istikraza mecbur etti. Bunun te’diyesi varidatın artmasıyla olur. Bu dahi imar-ı mülk ile yani her devlette olduğu gibi kumpanyalar teşkil ederek demiryolları yapılmakla olur. Artık kumpanyalara da muvafakat etmeliyiz. Garlar da yapılmalı. Fakat varidat arttı deyu masrafı da arttırmamalı ve illa bir semere hasil olmaz” (*Tezahir* I, 47-48).

Cevdet's main criticism of Abdülmecid is that he was under the influence of the palace ladies (Küçük 1988b, 261). He talks about Abdülmecid's fondness for women, which weakened his body day by day (*Maruzat*, 9). The sultan himself was also aware of this situation and said, "I have been devastated by my wives and my daughters" (*Tezakir* II, 129).⁵⁰ However, he was not able to do anything to prevent their "misbehaviors." For instance, Serfiraz Hanım was known as the woman the sultan loved most and spoiled (Uluçay 2011, 213). According to Cevdet, the sultan was charmed by her (*Tezakir* II, 59; *Tezakir* II, 65; *Tezakir* II, 131) and was therefore incapable of punishing her for any of her misdeeds (*Tezakir* II, 65). Due to her influence over Abdülmecid, nobody was able to say anything to her, and she could roam wherever she wanted. Other women in the palace became jealous of her, and they also began travelling through public spaces and Beyoğlu. Furthermore, their daughters also imitated them. Since this situation violated the prestige of the sultanate, the sultan felt deep distress but was unable to prevent these misdeeds (*Tezakir* II, 131).

An anecdote reported by Cevdet reveals the nature of the relationship between Abdülmecid with Serfiraz Hanım. One time the sultan went to Serfiraz Hanım's room in the Imperial Harem, but she did not open the door. The sultan demanded that she open the door and asked why she was not opening it, to which she replied, "a man like Rıza Pasha has been assigned to teach us good manners, which means that we are indecent. If I am indecent, then I can misbehave like this." Upon hearing this the sultan apologized to her and said, "I had to do this, but you should ignore him for a while" (*Tezakir* II, 59).

Moreover, according to Cevdet, Abdülmecid's attitude towards the palace ladies led to weak treatment of the *damads* (imperial sons-in-law) as well. Cevdet suggests a general annoyance stemming from this situation by quoting a statesman who wrote, "the sultan's character is known. He cannot decide on anything" (*Tezakir* II, 63). During a visit to the Sublime Porte (*Bab-ı Âli*) in 1858 Abdülmecid openly reprimanded the *damads* for doing nothing to prevent the excessive spending and public strolling of the princesses. The following day, the sultan dismissed all the *damads* from their official positions (*Maruzat*, 13). However, he was unable to withstand his deeply upset sister Adile Sultan's heart-

⁵⁰ "Beni karılarım ile kızlarım bitirdi" (*Tezakir* II, 129).

breaking requests and reappointed her husband Damad Mehmed Ali Pasha as Chief Admiral, even though he had rebuked and disgraced him many times in the past (*Maruzat*, 15; *Tezakir* II, 63). Cevdet argues that in other cases like this, the sultan showed favor for other *damad* pashas and appointed them to different positions for the sake of his daughters (*Tezakir* II, 63). For Cevdet, this effectively meant the withdrawal of Abdülmecid from active engagement in economic reforms and policies to restrict spending money, and thus the situation soon reverted to the previous state of affairs (*Maruzat*, 15).

2.3 Main Themes in the Era of Abdülaziz

The scope of Cevdet's accounts is quite limited in the era of Abdülaziz. His reports give no details about either the personality of the sultan or the fiscal situation of the time. Instead he focuses primarily on the dethronement of the sultan. First of all, Cevdet mentions the people's enthusiasm which greeted Abdülaziz's enthronement, writing, "since the situation of the empire at the end of the Abdülmecid's reign led to despair and weariness among people, Sultan Abdülaziz's ascension to the throne was welcomed with gratification. People began to be hopeful about the state's future and their own welfare" (*Tezakir* II, 143).⁵¹ In *Maruzat*, Cevdet relates this situation of despair to public discontent at the exorbitant expenses of the palace ladies. According to him, although the people in general loved Abdülmecid, some of them still wished for the accession of Abdülaziz Efendi's to the throne due to the lavishness of palace spending (*Maruzat*, 27).

On the other hand, Cevdet highlights that "Sultan Abdülaziz inherited an insolvent heritage" (*Tezakir* II, 143).⁵² He reports that at the time of Abdülaziz's accession people faced

⁵¹ "Bu kere cülûs-ı hümayûndan sonra sarayın bakıyye-i düyûnu dahi Mâliye hazînesine devr ü tahmîl edildi. Hazîne bir mertebeye daha ağır yük altında kaldı. İşte Sultan Abdülaziz Han hazretleri devleti bu hâlde buldu. Sanki bir müflis terekeye vaz'-ı yed eylemiş oldu... Saray-i hümayûnun isrâfâtı Hazîneyi hâl-i iflasa götürdü. Bu hal ise cümleye ye's ü fütûr verdi. Binâenaleyh Sultan Abdülaziz Han hazretlerinin cülûsu âmmeye mûcib-i memnûniyyet oldu... Binâenalâ-zâlik devlet'in selâmeti ve milletin saâdeti emrinde halka yeniden ümit kapıları açıldı. Sunûf-ı tebe'anın kalbleri meserretle doldu. Ecnebler bile memnûn ve mübtehic kaldı" (*Tezakir* II, 143).

⁵² "İşte Sultan Abdülaziz Han hazretleri devleti bu hâlde buldu. Sanki bir müflis terekeye vaz'-ı yed eylemiş oldu" (*Tezakir* II, 143).

major economic hardship because of the monetary depreciation. Cevdet quotes Fuad Pasha's statement to the sultan while working on new measures to take the existing fiscal situation under control, "our Lord, you are the heir of the sultanate. However, you are heir to a debtor Turkey" (*Maruzat*, 40).⁵³ Cevdet stresses that the sultan was aware of the situation and writes that when Abdülaziz came to the throne, he said to *Baş-mâbeynci* (Chamberlain) Rıza Pasha, "I cannot mess around with women and boys like my brother (Sultan Abdülmecid). Make me accustomed to working. I want to be busy with munitions, ship equipment, and the organization of soldiers" (*Tezakir* II, 151).

Interestingly, Cevdet does not provide details about the personality of Abdülaziz. In both of the sources, he retreats into silence and does not even relate details about the events during the reign of this monarch. One also realizes that he did not have judgments about this period. His only evident criticism towards Abdülaziz is about the sultan's excessive attachment to military affairs. Cevdet criticizes Abdülaziz for not acting according to the immediate needs of the state. While civil and financial matters needed to be prioritized above other issues, Abdülaziz allocated an enormous amount of money to the needs of the land and naval forces. His particular interest in the construction of warships caused him to overlook the public expectations concerning the recovery of the state's economic credibility. As a result, as Cevdet writes, "the people's enthusiasm and hope that were seen during the enthronement of Abdülaziz turned into despair" (*Tezakir* II, 154-155).⁵⁴

In a different part of *Tezakir*, Cevdet criticizes the same issue (*Tezakir* II, 256) and talks about how the sultan was bothered about not being able to create a military power like that of Europe. However, according to Cevdet, "what the sultan wished depended on time and money. The rehabilitation should begin with civil affairs. The revenues of the treasury should be increased, and then the development of warfare items should be undertaken.

⁵³ "Efendimiz, vâris-i saltanatsınız. Lâkin bir medyûn Türkiyye'ye vâris oldunuz" (*Maruzat*, 40).

⁵⁴ "Padişâh'ın kuvve-i berriyye ve bahriyyeyi ikmâlê hırs ü tehâlküü teşekkür olunacak mevaddan idi. Lâkin evvel umûr-ı mülkiye ve mâliyyeyi ıslah edip de hasıl olacak fazla-i vâridâtı buraya sarf etmek lâzım gelirken işin ortasından başlaması bâdî-i te'essüf olmuştur. Yüzlük altunun yüz seksen bir ve iki raddelerine dayanıp durması ise bâis-i hadşe ve endişe idi. Cülûs-ı hümayunda görülen şevk ve ümmid-i umûmî üzerine umûr-ı mâliyyeye hasr-i nazar olunsaydı devletin îtibâr-i mâlîsi derhal avdet eylerdi. Çi fâide ki sû-i karîn belâsı olarak yanlış yola gidildi ve bu şevk-i umûmî mübeddel-i ye's ü fütûr oldu. Altun yüz doksana çıktı. İşte devletin elden kaçırmış olduğu büyük fırsatlardan biri dahi budur" (*Tezakir* II, 154-155).

Otherwise, it is not logical to increase the number of battleships by borrowing” (*Tezâkir* II, 257).

2.3.1 The “Inexcusable Dethronement” and Death of Abdülaziz

While not mentioning many of the events of the period, Cevdet allocates a great place to the dethronement of Abdülaziz. As mentioned above, Cevdet places a strong emphasis on obedience to those charged with authority, and therefore an attempt of this kind is an inexcusable act for him. Indeed, in his accounts he strictly reprimands those who were involved in the dethronement and takes sides against them. For instance, he describes Hüseyin Avni Pasha as “the head of conspiracy” (*fesâd başı*) (*Tezâkir* IV, 130; *Maruzat*, 218; *Maruzat* 221) and a “deadly enemy” (*hasm-ı cânî*) of the sultan (*Maruzat*, 218), and calls his whole group “traitors” (*hâinler*) (*Tezâkir* IV, 157).

Cevdet describes the dethronement process in depth and talks about his appointment to the province of Ioannina by Hüseyin Avni Pasha. At the time, Cevdet was not informed of the dethronement plans, and the reason he was dispatched from İstanbul was Avni Pasha’s mistrust towards him (*Tezâkir* IV, 131). When the conspiracy took place and was widely known, Cevdet did not know about what was happening and thought that Abdülaziz was dead, though he later learned he had only been removed (*Tezâkir* IV, 155; *Maruzat*, 232). Then he gives details about how badly Abdülaziz and his family were treated after his deposition (*Tezâkir* IV, 156-158).

Six days after the dethronement, the sultan was found dead in his room with cuts on the veins in his wrists (*Tezâkir* IV, 157). Immediately after news of the event was spread, it became a matter of controversy how the sultan had actually died. Cevdet provides three different public opinions about the case: some people accepted the idea of suicide, others were convinced that the sultan had been mercilessly murdered, while some others were indecisive between these two positions (*Tezâkir* IV, 156-157). Cevdet records that even at the funeral those who believed in the suicide were saying “May Allah forgive his sins,” while those who believed in the murder were saying “May Allah forgive him” (*Tezâkir* IV, 213).

Upon the deposition of Abdülaziz Prince Murad succeeded to the throne, however problems in his mental health led to his dethronement after three months. When Abdülhamid II ascended to the throne as his heir, he was immediately faced with a political depression in terms of foreign policy. When this depression was alleviated after five years, he brought forward the issue of Abdülaziz's death (Uzunçarşılı 2000, 124). Hence, in *Tezakir*, Cevdet states that in the middle of 1881 the situation remained vague and suspicious (*Tezakir* IV, 213). In 1881, the case was opened and Abdulhamid placed major importance on the issue (*Tezakir* IV, 209-210).

At the time, Cevdet was serving as Justice Minister and was given the role of making the necessary preparations for the trials of the suspects in the Yıldız trials (Uzunçarşılı 2000, 358). In *Tezakir* he attaches a document that he wrote that had been published in the *Vakit* newspaper about these trials. Interestingly, in this document, which was written before the trials were convened, Cevdet has no doubts about how Abdülaziz died and declares, "it is clear that no doubts should be left about Sultan Abdülaziz's brutal murder by means of the trials which will convene soon. Before the traitors serve their sentences, the sultan's name will be engraved in the hearts of the people as a martyr" (*Tezakir* IV, 213).⁵⁵ Although Cevdet promised Midhat Pasha, who was one of the planners of the deposition, a fair treatment (Uzunçarşılı 1946, 27-28),⁵⁶ he seems to have known the results of the interrogations and the trials even before they took place.

2.3.2 Cevdet's Agenda While Claiming Abdülaziz was Murdered

At this point, an essential question emerges: did Cevdet believe that Abdülaziz was murdered, or did he have an agenda when he claimed that? According to the findings of Ebul'ula Mardin (1996), the original report of the *Mecelle* Community (*Mecelle Cemiyeti mazbatası*), which was written by Cevdet, suggested that the sultan's death was a suicide,

⁵⁵ "Karîben icrâ olunacak muhâkemât-ı aleniyyenin birinci faslında Sultan Abdülaziz Han hazretlerinin sabren ve gâdren katl olunduğu kimesnenin tereddüt ve iştibâhı kalmayacak sûrette âşikâr olacağı cihetle hâinlerin icrây-i cezâlarından evvel elsine-i enâmda müşârün-ileyh hazretlerinin elkaabına şehîd unvânı ilâve olunacağı der-kârdır" (*Tezakir* IV, 213).

⁵⁶ As quoted from Cevdet: "Kemal-i adaletle muamele olunacağından dolayı her veçhile emin olmaları umûr-ı tabiiyyeden ve adalet-i seniyye îcabat-ı âlisindedir" (Uzunçarşılı 1946, 27-28).

but later Cevdet made slight changes to the report to suggest the probability of murder (pp. 258-259). Assuming that these findings are accurate, Cevdet was initially either among those who believed in the possibility of suicide, or at least was ambivalent about it.

Cevdet was a bureaucratic man, and as Neumann rightly points out, he was very sensitive about protecting the dignity of the state administration against the public (Neumann 2000, 201). At the top of this administration there was "the sultan who gains his legitimacy because he is the sultan unobjectionably" (Neumann 2000, 128). Therefore, the dignity of this position necessitates protection as well. Indeed, this is what Cevdet does while talking about both sultans in *Tezakir* and *Maruzat*, as he holds the ministers responsible for things going wrong. This is also why Cevdet criticizes Mahmud Nedim Pasha and regards him as a main actor in both the dethronement and death of Abdülaziz (*Maruzat*, 240), since Mahmud Nedim Pasha as grand vizier did not take responsibility for the difficulties and failures that emerged, but put all the blame on the sultan (*Tezakir* IV, 151).

In the document mentioned earlier published in the newspaper *Vakit*, it is clear from his expressions that Cevdet was concerned with defending the sultan's name to the public, as he emphasized strongly that "the sultan's name will be engraved in the hearts of the people as a martyr" (*Tezakir* IV, 213). Whether Cevdet sincerely believed in the murder or not, he seems to dedicate himself to the protection of the dignity of the position of the sultanate in both his writings and practices throughout the Yıldız trials (Uzunçarşılı 2000, 358). In the trials at Yıldız Palace it was decided that the sultan was murdered, which precluded the expression of an opposite opinion about the case until the second constitutional period (Özcan 2013, 8).

2.4 The Palace and the Economy in Abdülmecid's Era; Cevdet's Main Concerns

As mentioned above, in both sources the economic situation of the empire is one of the issues with which Cevdet is chiefly occupied. However, for the reign of Abdülmecid, his focus is mostly on his objections to the "terrible" extravagance of the palace, the palace ladies, and the construction of new buildings. Cevdet regards these points as the main

reasons for the economic deterioration. Therefore, in this part his accounts will first be identified and then analyzed under different subheadings to answer the question: Are Cevdet's points the real reasons for the financial difficulties of the empire? If not, what were the real reasons for the problems of the economy of that period?

2.4.1 "Horrible" Prodigality

"For a long time, the expenses of the empire were in accordance with its revenues. The officers received their salaries on time and spent them accordingly throughout a month. At the time, there were no western-style houses or seaside residences. The expenditures of the palace were modest. While the princes stayed in their flats, the women of the palace did not go outside. The cost of the palace stable consisted of only forage expenses such as hay, grass, and oats. Whenever a foreign visitor came and needed a horse for transportation, a few harnessed horses were borrowed from the ministers. Hence, there was no payment from the palace treasury for such things. However, ... this situation made a bad impression on people. Therefore, ministers and high state officials bought phaetons and cars. Furthermore, necessary items and perfectly equipped carriages were purchased for the palace according to the needs of the time" (*Maruzat*, 6) (my own translation).

Cevdet considered some changes to be a normal requirement of the time. However, afterwards, the expenses did not remain limited to such needs, but prodigality and debauchery proliferated. Since the empire was accustomed to borrowing, it began to borrow for daily expenses as well (*Maruzat*, 7).

Cevdet attaches major importance to the expenses of the palace and criticizes their lavishness. He draws attention to the rise in the privy purse of the sultan and writes, "while 12,500 purses of gold were allocated for the sultan's private treasury per month, this year, the amount was increased to 20,000 purses of gold." In a different part of *Tezahir*, he touches upon the same issue when he compares the current situation with the time of Mahmud II, in which the total expenditures of the palace did not exceed 1000 purses of gold in a month. However, a gradual increase in spending reached 20,000 purses of gold during the reign of Abdülmeçid (*Tezahir* II, 8). For Cevdet, the sultan's privy purse already had many debts and it was unclear how to pay that much back (*Tezahir* I, 47-48).

Şerif Mardin (1991), on the other hand, argues that the increase in the private treasury from 1000 to 20,000 purses of gold between the 1830s and 1850s cannot solely be related to “prodigality.” Instead it is more likely that the expenses of the Ottoman palace at the time of Mahmud II consisted of pre-capitalist items, which were less diverse or less costly. What necessitated the increase was modernization itself, and its consequent system of consumption (p. 53). What Cevdet missed was the socio-economic change in the empire, which was conditioned by the modernization process.

Another point is that Cevdet, with a conservative understanding, obviously regarded many of the palace expenses as extravagances, yet he still makes neither negative nor positive comments about the sultan’s attitudes. For instance, while on the one hand Abdülmecid says, “Beşiktaş (Dolmabahçe) Palace has become very burdensome and ostentatious, it could have been simpler” (*Maruzat*, 7; *Tezakir* I, 47-48), on the other he becomes quite annoyed when Âli and Fuad Pashas point out the pressing need for economizing when Abdülmecid wants Çırağan Palace to be demolished and rebuilt. These pashas’ remarks about the economic distress of the sultan’s privy purse immediately led to the dismissal of Âli Pasha and the resignation of Fuad Pasha (*Tezakir* II, 31).

In another instance, a commission consisting of ministers sought to negotiate and restore the financial situation, and they prepared a report to present to the sultan. However, Abdülmecid became very uncomfortable with this bureaucratic initiative. Particularly when comments by Kıbrıslı Mehmed Pasha, who was the speaker of Tanzimat Assembly (*Meclis-i Tanzimat*), proposing the suspension of all construction projects related to the sultan’s household and the reduction of the costs of the palace, reached the sultan’s ears, Abdülmecid strongly resented him and said, “the pig should be exiled” (*Tezakir* II, 52; *Maruzat*, 11-12). In these and some other similar instances, Cevdet does not comment on them but contents himself with simply narrating.

2.4.2 Palace Ladies; Leading to “Collapse”

In his accounts, Cevdet constantly criticizes the ladies of the palace for their excessive expenses and accuses them of bankrupting not only the private treasury of the sultan but of the state’s treasury as well (*Tezakir* II, 132). According to him, the ladies who were

hidden in the palace during the reign of Mahmud II had acquired the opportunity to go out and promenade (*Tezakir* II, 3-4). Furthermore, during the reign of Abdülmeçid, the family of the governor of Egypt, Mehmed Ali Pasha, came to İstanbul with large sums of money and spent them abundantly. For Cevdet, these were bad examples for both the ladies of the palace and the ladies of İstanbul (*Tezakir* I, 20). From Cevdet's perspective these developments led to economic and moral corruption.

Cevdet talks repeatedly about the attitudes of the palace ladies, in many instances referring to their "prodigality" and "debauchery." In this respect, his longing for the old days is also felt throughout the texts. For instance, he writes:

"The ladies of the palace began to spend unreasonable amounts of money that they could not manage with their salaries and got caught in a debt trap. Formerly, they were away from everything in their part of the palace. But now, they keep up with the times, have begun to promenade in carriages and have sunk to prodigality and debauchery to be able to seem superior to their counterparts in the city" (*Maruzat*, 7-8).

As a result, they also borrowed money, and within three years the palace had accrued 3 million purses of coin debt (*Maruzat*, 8).

Cevdet also reveals his annoyance with Serfiraz Hanım, who was one of the wives of Abdülmeçid. In different parts of the works Cevdet uses offensive expressions about her. He claims that the sultan was charmed by her, and that she was the main reason for all prodigality and debauchery (*Tezakir* II, 59). In a different part, Cevdet describes her as "enticing" and writes that she did as much harm as possible. According to him, "not only the private treasury of the sultan but the whole treasuries of the world would not be enough for her expenses" (*Tezakir* II, 65).⁵⁷ She wandered around in the bazaars and got into debt. Within a year, the total amount borrowed by the ladies was 288,000 purses of gold, and 125,000 of them were borrowed by Serfiraz Hanım (*Tezakir* II, 3-4).

⁵⁷ "Zat-ı Şahane bu kariya pek ziyade meftun ve mecbur idi. Ol fettanenin dahi etmediği kalmadı. Masarifine Hazine-i hassa değil cihanın hazaini cem' olunsa kifayet etmezdi" (*Tezakir* II, 65).

Abdülmeçid, on the other hand, was not able to say anything to Serfiraz Hanım, or to his other ladies who led to the bankruptcy of the private treasury by “spending money lavishly as if they were competing with each other” (*Tezakir* II, 65).⁵⁸ Moreover, he even paved the way for further spending. For instance, he once obtained, with difficulty, 15,000 purses of gold for the palace employees and gave 5000 purses of it to Serfiraz Hanım, and bestowed upon other women 500 purses each as hush money (*Tezakir* II, 65). Cevdet further claims, referring to Serfiraz Hanım, “the state was showing signs of collapse due to the eagerness of a woman” (*Tezakir* II, 66).⁵⁹

Another point that Cevdet criticizes is the excessive expenditures of the wedding ceremonies of the palace. For instance, he complains that “the dowry of the daughters of the sultan was sent ostentatiously while the salaries of the soldiers who took the dowry away were not paid” (*Tezakir* II, 84-85). In another instance, in one of the ceremonies, “the expenses of the ladies reached 300.000 purses.” Another celebration lasted 12 days, and “the cost of this ostentation was not possible to count.” Cevdet notes that other ceremonies would take place later, which would further increase the debts of the sultan’s treasury (*Tezakir* II, 23).

2.4.3 Construction of New Buildings; a Reason for “Economic Depression”

The last point that Cevdet criticizes and names as the reason for the economic distress is the constructions of new buildings. He claims that:

“Although 20,000 purses were allocated for the expenses of the palace per month, 8,000 purses were earmarked for the constructions of the buildings. The rest was hardly enough for the debts, and there was nothing left to the palace. Before the completion of the Ihlamur mansions, Çırağan Palace was demolished and about to be rebuilt as masonry building. The Küçüksu pavilion was completed a year before, and another one was built in Göksu. In Fındıklı, a house was being constructed for the wives and daughters of Edhem Pasha and Mahmud Pasha. The palace of Adile Sultan was being rebuilt in

⁵⁸ “Zat-ı Şahane kendisini bundan alamayıp bu cihetle sair kadınlar nazarında kendisini müttehim gibi add ederek anlara dahi bir şey diyemiyordu. Anlar dahi birbiriyle inadına yarışır gibi israfta düşüp Hazine-i hassayı iflasa çıkardılar” (*Tezakir* II, 65).

⁵⁹ “...Sefîne-i saltanat ise bir karının hevâsiyle batmak emarelerini göstermekte olduğuna te’essüf etmemek kabil değil idi. Allah ıslâh eyliye” (*Tezakir* II, 66).

Fındıklı, and a winter building was being built again for Fatıma Sultan. Burned neighborhoods in Babü's-sade were rebuilt" (*Tezâkir* II, 36) (my own translation).

Just after these accounts, Cevdet exaggeratedly asserts, "it would not have been enough for the extraordinary expenses of the palace ladies if a state like this (the Ottoman Empire) would have existed" (*Tezâkir* II, 36). In another part, when Cevdet talks about the loss of the state's financial credibility and the signs of bankruptcy, he connects this to the same two issues which are the expenses of the ladies and the construction of twenty different new buildings for the palace (*Tezâkir* II, 51).

2.4.4 An Analysis of Cevdet's Concerns

Other primary sources in addition to Cevdet Pasha's, such as the statements of Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha and Mehmed Memduh, mention how the extravagance of the palace led to economic distress. Celaleddin Pasha argues that borrowed money was not used for the interests of the country and the nation, but was utterly wasted. He points out that the costs of marriage and circumcision feasts, unbelievable improvidences, the debts that were transferred from the sultan's harem to the state treasury, and endowments given to the ministers shook the state's economy to its foundations (Mahmud Celaleddin Paşa 1983, 35). Memduh also talks about how new constructions and decorations, and the costs of various unnecessary items led to economic troubles (Mehmed Memduh 1990, 37).

At this point, it is necessary to ask if these reasons, such as extravagance of the palace, construction of new buildings, and so forth, were enough for the bankruptcy of such an empire? In other words, when looking back from the twenty-first century, do historians see the reign of Abdülmecid in the same way as Cevdet and his contemporaries describe?

First of all, while evaluating the Tanzimat economy and the primary sources about it, it should be noted that neither Cevdet Pasha nor the other prominent people of the time were economists. While observing the main issues of the country, they mentioned the economic situation in a general framework (Önsoy 1994, 257). Moreover, at the time, the importance of "economics" and the relation between economics and political-administrative power were not yet realized (Önsoy 1994, 258-259; Okyar 1994, 250). Okyar (1994)

indicates that even the Tanzimat leaders were not aware of the economic doctrines, such as free trade or protectionism, which were in the foreground of public opinion in Europe in the nineteenth century. Hence, the idea that occupied the minds of Tanzimat leaders was to strengthen the Ottoman Empire politically and administratively and to provide resources for this purpose, rather than economics and economic development (p. 250). Secondly, “the Tanzimat era followed the economic and fiscal crisis of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries” (Quataert, 1992, 211). The state went through a series of wars and internal rebellions between 1760 and 1840 and lost some territories in the Balkans. These long-lasting wars and rebellions depleted both the empire’s monetary and human resources. On the other hand, the increasing costs of the army, the expenses of the bureaucrats who had begun to form a crowded class since the middle of the 19th century, and the reform movements introduced additional taxes on the public (Önsoy 1994, 261). There were also international developments such as the capitalist and industrial revolutions of the West, which also affected the Ottoman economy (Quataert, 1992, 212).

Thirdly, the empire became indebted under unfavorable conditions, since a large amount of money was borrowed with much higher interest rates than other countries. A large part of these funds was used not only for the construction of palaces but also for recurring expenditures, the payment of the salaries of the bureaucracy, and the establishment of a large navy. Almost no sources were allocated for investments that would invigorate the economy and increase fiscal revenues (Pamuk 2007, 230-231). On the other hand, it should also be noted that government spending policies were unsystematic. Moreover, the state had difficulty finding resources for its defense and carrying out the modernization process. Thus, the leaders unavoidably tended towards borrowing, without which the modernization process, keeping up the Crimean War, and the suppression of internal rebellions would not have been possible (Okyar 1994, 251-252).

As Neumann (2000) rightly points out, when looking back from the perspective of *Tezâkir* and *Maruzat*, the situation of the empire seems quite gloomy. Cevdet regards the existing situation as a constant decline. However, he mainly pays attention to scarcity in the state, lavishness, and the inadequacy of bureaucracy, rather than any other issues (p.28). He also mentions that statesmen blame each other for the situation. According to him, bureaucrats found the sultan and the people of the palace guilty because of their expenses. On the other hand, those who opposed the bureaucrats claimed that those who

ruled the government, primarily referring to Âli and Fuad Pashas, were not different from those in the palaces (*Maruzat*, 11). Cevdet himself held the ministers who did not prevent what was going on responsible (*Tezakir* II, 142-143).

However, Okyar (1994) looks at the situation from a different perspective. What he indicates is that when looking at the changes in the nineteenth century Ottoman economy, the reason was not incorrect policies implemented by the statesmen of the time, but the process of modernization that the empire was going through (p.254). Indeed, although the state economy ended in bankruptcy, what needed attention most were the significant socioeconomic and structural changes experienced in the Tanzimat period (Findley 2008, 33).

According to Mardin (1991), Cevdet Pasha draws attention to the “horrible” expenditures of the Tanzimat era due to his point of view, as he was not accustomed to individual lavishness (p.25). While the founders of the Tanzimat, such as Mustafa Reşid Pasha, adopted the military and administrative structure of the West, Western everyday culture was also actively embraced in the empire. Clothing, household goods, the use of money, the style of houses, and interpersonal relations had started to resemble the European style. Conservative Cevdet Pasha, on the other hand, referred to these lifestyle changes as a hindrance of the old Ottoman values (Mardin 1991, 13).

A similar approach can be found in Ortaylı’s accounts. While discussing whether or not the construction of Dolmabahçe Palace at the time was a waste of resources, Ortaylı (2014) argues that there was prodigality in the period of Abdülmecid, but this can be called prodigality according to the understanding of that time because, at the time, Turkish society had a quite modest lifestyle. From today’s perspective, he as well sees these developments as an outcome of the modernization process. For instance, he claims that it is not possible to consider some of the expenditures of the palace, particularly the construction of the new palaces, as a luxury, and he stresses that before the construction of Dolmabahçe the palace of the sultan was not able to meet the needs of the protocol of a modern state (pp. 49-50).

For more sound evaluations of the Tanzimat period, Ortaylı (2014) highlights the need to keep a distance from accounts that describe the era as full of prodigality and moral corruption (p. 50). Indeed, this warning is quite meaningful while examining Cevdet's accounts. If Cevdet's statements in *Tezakir* and *Maruzat* are believed without a critical approach, the state entered into a fiscal and economic crisis mainly because of the prodigality of the palace and also of the rivalry among the statesmen and ministers. However, this kind of evaluation would discredit the Ottoman Empire and would result in overlooking the modernization process and structural change experienced throughout the era.

2.4.5 Main Problems of the Tanzimat Economy from the Perspective of the 21st Century

If Cevdet's points need to be questioned, it is significant to ask why did the economy of the empire have difficulties throughout the Tanzimat era? Quataert (2004) divides the whole Ottoman Economy into four phases, the first of which lasted until 1826. In this period the state applied protectionist policies including monopolies and the use of domestic raw materials. The second phase lasted from 1826 to 1860. In this phase the Ottoman market opened to the outside, and domestic markets were liberated to a degree. In the third phase, from 1860 to 1908, customs were increased and local manufacturers were patronized. The last phase began with the Young Turk Revolution in 1908 and continued through World War I, in which the struggle between supporters of a protectionist "national economy" and free trade continued (p. 888). What is important here is that these processes reflect the long-lasting change in the Ottoman economic mentality. It is clear that the classic mentality gradually began to erode, especially when the empire partially accepted liberalism from the 1830s to 1860s (Quataert 2004, 889).

Throughout the Tanzimat era, which is primarily related to the second phase, the conditions of society and economy began to change with the effect of modernization, and the first signs of economic growth began to be seen (Okyar 1994, 254). Despite the difficulties experienced by the state, trade increased and agriculture improved. In this era the value of export and import products expanded roughly five times. Furthermore, although imported industrial products had a harmful effect on the guilds, Ottoman production kept

up with developments (Findley 2008, 33). Despite its ephemerality there was an explosion in the manufacturing industry such as silk weaving in Bursa, Konya, Diyarbakir, Damascus, and Halep; carpet weaving in Izmir and Konya; candle, glass, paper, and canned food in Istanbul; cotton weaving in Adana; and rug weaving in Bursa, Kastamonu, Damascus, Vidin, Bosnia, Thessaloniki, Aydin, Sivas, and Silistre (Kıray 1995, 157).

When it comes to the specific economic problems of the Tanzimat period, Quataert (1992) elaborates eight points. First, “the shortage of labor for both agriculture and industry” was a crucial problem. Second, the state suffered from territorial losses, since almost all the lands that “were lost were the most densely populated regions and contained the best agricultural lands and the strongest concentrations of industry.” Third, the economic zones in which all kinds of commercial materials flowed freely were lost owing to territorial losses, destroying the trading network. Fourth, “the shortage of skilled labor familiar with mechanized industrial technology and with agricultural improvements remained a serious difficulty.” Fifth, the immigration of people from the lost Ottoman territories and Muslim refugees from Russia led to economic instability. Sixth, “unstable currency mocked efforts to build the economy. The issuance of paper money failed to resolve the problem in the 1840s and during the next decade.” Seventh, “investment capital remained dispersed and generally unavailable for agricultural and industrial development schemes.” Lastly, Quataert sees the growth of the state as a significant problem. The bureaucracy and military grew tremendously, which had different social and economic results. They were now a salaried group of people and “cost a great deal, draining away vast sums potentially available for agriculture and industrial development (pp. 216-218) As can be seen, the Tanzimat economy had more important difficulties than the prodigality of the palace ladies or expenses related to the construction of new buildings and palaces.

2.5 The Palace and the Economy in Abdülaziz’s Era; Cevdet’s Silence

When it comes to the period of Abdülaziz, Cevdet does not mention anything about prodigality or about loans. As stated above, the only criticism directed against Abdülaziz re-

lated to his allocation of a large amount of money to the military forces, such as the construction of warships (*Tezakir* II, 154-155; *Tezakir* II, 256). Even in this criticism Cevdet does not miss the chance to hold other people responsible, just as he does when criticizing Abdülmecid, and argues that “the new members of the sultan’s assembly encouraged the sultan’s great expenses that the treasury could not bear.” Those members justified borrowing by pointing to the period of Abdülmecid, as for them “the profligacy of the ladies during the reign of Abdülmecid led to borrowings.” Hence, it was more necessary to borrow for weapons and to supply other needs of the state that were necessary for the salvation and the security of the empire (*Maruzat*, 54).

Abdülaziz’s reign lasted for fifteen years, and those issues that were criticized by Cevdet in the period of Abdülmecid continued to exist throughout the reign of Abdülaziz. Abdülaziz was not as fond of women as his brother Abdülmecid (Uluçay 2011, 232). Therefore, it is not surprising that there would be no situation like the prominence of the palace ladies to bother Cevdet. However, the “prodigality” that Cevdet frequently referred to during the reign of Abdülmecid was not over in this period (Şehsuvaroğlu 1949, 334-335), and the construction of new buildings and palaces continued (Karal 2003, 347). As mentioned in the related chapter, Abdülmecid wished Çırağan Palace to be demolished and rebuilt as masonry building (*Tezakir* II, 36). The construction of the new palace, which was completely demolished during the reign of Abdülmecid, was postponed due to his death. Its construction began and was completed during the reign of Abdülaziz with a cost of almost 5 million Ottoman gold (Kalfazade 1993, 304-305). Beylerbeyi Palace, and the Çekmece and İzmit hunting mansions were also built in this period. The Valide Pertevniyal Sultan Mosque in Aksaray was completed in 1871 by Abdülaziz's mother, Pertevniyal Vâlide Sultan, and the Câmî-i Kebîr mosque in Kasımpaşa was rebuilt by Abdülaziz after being destroyed in a fire (Küçük 1998a, 182). However, none of these are mentioned by Cevdet even though he criticizes new construction as a reason for economic distress when describing the reign of Abdülmecid (*Tezakir* II, 36).

Moreover, the state increasingly continued to borrow from Galata bankers (Karta 2013, 100)⁶⁰ and Europe, which finally resulted in the announcement of the bankruptcy of the

⁶⁰ “The government which was in financial trouble decided not to borrow any more from the Galata Bankers after the foundation of the Ottoman Bank. However, it maintained its borrowing habits” (Karta 2013, 100).

Ottoman Treasury in 1875 (Çakır 2012, 73). From 1854 until the end of Abdülaziz's reign, in which the bankruptcy announcement was declared, external borrowing agreements took place fifteen times. Only four of them were during the reign of Abdülmecid with a total amount of 15 million pounds sterling. The remaining eleven agreements were made during the reign of Abdülaziz with a total amount of 207 million pounds sterling (Kıray 1995, 205-211). Interestingly, however, Cevdet does not mention these borrowings or their amounts and results.

Additionally, an essential result of the borrowings was that they became a significant determinant in international political relations. In other words, they resulted in the realization of the wishes of the great powers to bring the Ottoman Empire under their influence both economically and politically (Çakır 2012, 72). But, Cevdet also seems to ignore the influence that was gained by the foreign powers over the empire. That being the case, it is crucial to ask: What might explain Cevdet's silence when it comes to the period of Abdülaziz?

2.5.1 An Analysis of Cevdet's Silence for the Reign of Abdülaziz

First of all, Cevdet's manner has to do not only with his accounts of the reign of Abdülaziz, but also with his general approach toward power and the concept of sultanate. Neumann precisely points out that one of the gaps in Cevdet's writings is his lack of interest in the criticism of power. For instance, Neumann states that Cevdet's ignorance of the increasing influence of foreign powers over the Ottoman Empire was due to his concern about consolidating the power of his state (Neumann 2009, 87).

Secondly, if it is paid attention, Cevdet does not criticize the structural transformation of the state during the reign of Abdülmecid, but seems to be bothered by the reflections of Westernization on the social level, particularly in court life. As exemplified in the related part, Cevdet criticizes the women of the palace for their freer manners compared to previous times, and the abandonment of the empire's modest lifestyle (*Maruzat*, 8-7). However, this point alone does not fully explain Cevdet's different attitudes towards Abdülmecid and Abdülaziz, since the traditional modest lifestyle was also abandoned during the reign of Abdülaziz.

Together with the Westernization of court life, the image of Abdülmecid as “Europeanized” (*alafranga*) can be taken into consideration, since Abdülmecid is known to be the first sultan of the Ottoman Empire who was exposed to European culture in his youth to a certain extent. He enjoyed Western music and was able to speak French. There were music masters from Italy, and a small theater and operetta organization in his palace (Kocatürk 1962, 329). However, his admiration for Western civilization led to a reaction against him by conservatives (Koçu 2015, 431), and thus Abdülaziz, who presented an image of not liking European traditions, was regarded as a savior of the empire and as the one who would avoid imitating the West (Küçük 1988a, 179). In this sense, Abdülaziz’s more “native” image might be one of the reasons why Cevdet refrains from directing criticisms against him, since Cevdet may have felt closer to Abdülaziz himself.

Thirdly, when Âli Pasha died, Cevdet remained as the last living member of Reşid Pasha’s team, which meant that Cevdet lost his collaborators in the political arena. This circumstance led him to protect his position through good relations with the palace of Abdülaziz (Neumann 2000, 47). He already had a close relationship with the palace, and he repeatedly mentions Abdülaziz’s compliments and favor for himself and expresses his gratitude towards the sultan (*Maruzat*, 176; *Tezâkir* IV, 83; *Tezâkir* IV, 122.).⁶¹ Furthermore, Cevdet’s close contact with Abdülaziz’s mother Pertevniyal Valide Sultan can easily be seen in different parts of the biographical volume of the *Tezâkir* in which Cevdet attaches various letters he wrote to her,⁶² which indicate their good relationship.

⁶¹ “Sultan Abdülaziz Han hazretleri ol gün sabahleyin kendüsüne giymek için hazırlanmış olan elbisesini gönderdi, giydim. Huzûr-ı hümâyûn’a girdim. Fevka’l-âde iltifât u taltîf-i hümâyûn’a mazhar oldum”(Maruzat, 176); “Sultan Abdelaziz Han hazretleri huzûr-ı hümâyûnlarına celb ile fevka’l-âde taltîf buyurdu ve bir murassa’ mahfaza verdi ...Me’mûriyet-i cedideye devâm etmekte iken hâiz olduğumuz kazaskerlik rütbesi bâ-irâde-i kat’iyye rütbe-i vezârete tahvîl buyuruldu (*Tezâkir* IV, 83); “Li-ecli’t teşekkür Mâbeyn-i hümâyûn’a gidip huzûr-ı hümâyûna çıktığımda Sultan Abdülaziz Han hazretleri fevka’l-âde eser-i teveccüh ve iltifât gösterdi ve muhasses olan şehri otuz bin kuruş ma’âşına on bin kuruş zamm u ilâve buyurdu” (*Tezâkir* IV, 122).

⁶² See: (*Tezâkir* IV, 91-93, 120-123, 132-133, 152).

“Ol esnâda Vâlîde Sultan tarafından hüsn-i teveccüh eseri görmüş olduğum cihetle...” (*Tezâkir* IV, 91); “Hâlbuki ben o fikirde bulunsam anın aleyhinde Vâlîde Sultan vâsitasıyla yâhud diğer ba’z-ı vesâit ila ba’z-ı ilkaâta yol bulabilirdim” (*Tezâkir* IV, 123); “...Suriye vâlîliğinden sahîhen memnûn olarak li-ecli’t-teşekkür Mâbeyn-i hümâyûn’a gittim ve...bu tebeddûlden hâsıl olan memnûniyetimi lisân-ı şükriyyet ile Hünkâr’a arz ettirdim... Ba’dehü Valide dâiresine gidip burasını bi’l-vâsita Vâlîde Sultan hazretlerine dahi tebliğ eyledim ve hemen yol tedârükâtına kıyâm ettim” (*Tezâkir* IV, 152).

Additionally, he was among the figureheads involved in several of the more significant attempts at transforming the state during the later Tanzimat period (Neumann 2005, 118). Hence, although his career began to rise during the reign of Abdülmecid, his most active involvement in political affairs coincides with the reign of Abdülaziz. For instance, he repressed the rebellion in Shkodra within two months, and was given the rank of *qadi'asker* (chief military judge) of Anatolia. He made reforms in Bosnia within a year and a half. Moreover, his achievements led him to earn the rank of the "Ottoman order" (*nişân-ı Osmâni*) of the second degree. He worked as a governor of Aleppo and Ioannina and served as Minister of Justice, Minister of Pious Foundations, and Minister of Education (Halaçoğlu and Aydın 1993, 444). In short, it is also possible that he was satisfied with his closeness with the palace, his participation in government, and the advancement of his career, which resulted in his different attitude towards Abdülaziz and his era.

Lastly, the late Tanzimat period, beginning in 1867, experienced the emergence of a group of intellectuals called the Young Ottomans who "represented a form of political protest for which there had been no precedent in the Ottoman Empire." For the first time, an organized group of the Turkish intelligentsia, who were concerned about the dismemberment of the empire, was voicing extremely articulate criticisms of the government through media of mass communication (Mardin 2000, 3-4). Although the Young Ottomans were far from being in opposition to the monarchy, they saw Abdülaziz as an immature ruler who was intimidated by Âli Pasha. Hence, they were in contact with the nephew of Abdülaziz, heir Prince Murad, and hoped for his enthronement (Mardin 2000, 13-14).

Cevdet, on the other hand, had a strong understanding of obedience to the sultan. Thus, for him the most crucial point was the observance of the orders of the sultan throughout the country (Neumann 2000, 126). To someone with such a mentality, the formation of a group of people who voice their criticisms of the government could not be acceptable. Cevdet considered the Young Ottomans to be the cause of unrest (*Maruzat*, 196-197) and harmful to the state, and believed that the state's essential positions should be protected

against their occupation (*Maruzat*, 52).⁶³ Thus, finally, it is also possible that the emergence of this oppositional group may have caused Cevdet to avoid any criticism against Sultan Abdülaziz and his era.

2.6 Conclusion

As mentioned in the first part of the chapter, for Cevdet the sultan was one of the four principles on which the Sublime Ottoman Empire was based. Cevdet held a firm belief in obedience to the sultan and his orders all around the country, and saw this obedience as a sign of wisdom. This way of thinking led him to consciously protect the dignity of the sultan. Therefore, in his accounts he refrains from directing criticisms against either sultan, instead blaming the people around them, such as their ministers, other statesmen, or palace ladies, and never forgives those who act in opposition to the sultan. For Cevdet, this was a long-lasting tradition of the empire that should not be abandoned. This mentality also manifests itself when Cevdet elaborates on Abdülaziz's dethronement and death as well. For him, the removal of the sultan was an indefensible act carried out by "traitors," and his suspicious death necessitated the vindication of the name and dignity of the sultan.

When it comes to the Tanzimat period as a whole, Cevdet is primarily concerned with the situation of the economy. However, as seen above, he focuses his attention substantially on the "prodigality" of the palace and palace ladies, and the construction of new palaces and buildings. Cevdet regards these overemphasized points as the sole reasons for the dismaying fiscal situation of the empire. However, it has been shown that there were more significant causes of the economic problems which led the empire to crisis throughout the Tanzimat era, such as ongoing structural changes and a modernization process that brought about particular financial difficulties. On the other hand, interestingly, Cevdet rarely mentions the situation of the economy during the reign of Abdülaziz. Although the expenses Cevdet describes as prodigality continued to increase during this era as well, he

⁶³ "...bundan dolayı zuhûr edecek keşâ-keşler ile azl ü nas bir kerri sökün ederse, umûr-ı nâzûke ve mesâlih-i mühimme Jön Türkiler ellerine geçip, bu ise, menâfi'-i devlete muvâfık düşmeyeceğinden..." (*Maruzat*, 52).

retreats into silence, further emphasizing that Cevdet's accounts need to be approached with a critical eye that considers the possible psychology behind them.



3. OUTSIDE THE RULING CIRCLE: CEVDET'S ACCOUNTS OF THE REACTIONS TO THE REFORM MEASURES

The main goal of the Tanzimat and Islahat edicts was to reform the administration and rearrange the Empire with the purpose of sustaining its existence. The reform program of 1839 promulgated a series of measures, according to which laws and regulations would cover the safety of the life, property, and honor of all subjects of the sultan, tax farming would be abolished and a taxation system in harmony with income would be implemented, and military service would be fixed to a predetermined period (Lewis 2010, 150). In other words, the idea of “equality” for all subjects was put on the agenda of the empire.

However, problems with the implementation of the reforms led to discontent among the subjects and a wide range of reactions within the empire. For instance, the decision concerning the abolition of tax farming dragged the state finances into anarchy due to the lack of new organization and qualified personnel. New tax policies led to provocations by dissatisfied privileged groups like Christian *çorbacı*s (provincial Christian notables), *ulemas*, and Muslim *agas*, which resulted in uprisings of Christian peasants in Rumelia and various types of resistance in Anatolia (İnalçık 2006, 130).

Following the Crimean War, the Reform Edict (*Islahat Fermanı*) was proclaimed in 1856, representing a new phase of the Tanzimat period and guaranteeing the full equality of all Ottoman subjects regardless of their religion (Berkes 1998, 152). The edict accepted the principle that non-Muslims were legally equal with Muslims. It substituted the *bedelat-i askeriye*, which was a tax in lieu military service, for the *cizye*, from which the Christians were exempted, and non-Muslims obtained the right of employment in the government. As a consequence, numerous non-Muslims, particularly Armenians and Greeks, attained ministerial posts (Karpas 2001, 77).

In other words, this edict completely changed the hitherto prevalent status of non-Muslims in Ottoman society and made fundamental changes in their legal status, and religious and social life, treating Muslims and non-Muslims totally equally (Gülsoy 1991, 445). Therefore, the declaration produced resentment among the Muslim community and reactions throughout the country.

In this chapter, several of these reactions that are mentioned in *Tezahir* and *Maruzat* will be examined by taking Cevdet's perspective into consideration. The aim of this chapter is to reveal Cevdet's statist attitude toward the opposition directed at the state or the sultan. Rather than the details of the events, it is significant to see how any opposition is described as "mischief" (*fitne*) from a state-centered view. Thus, firstly, the reactions of Muslims and non-Muslims about the Reform Edict of 1856 will be taken into account. Then the Mecca rebellion, the Kuleli incident, and the Syrian uprisings will be analyzed in chronological order.

3.1 Reactions by Muslims and Non-Muslims to the Islahat Edict

The principle that guaranteed the full equality of all Ottoman subjects led to great worry among Muslims. Many people thought that this was a conscious deviation from the rules of Islam. Even the committed reformist Reşid Pasha, who was considered the architect of the Tanzimat reforms, regarded the edict as a violation of the Ottoman Islamic principles of government (Karpas 2001, 77).

According to Cevdet, in general the edict aroused more opposition than enthusiasm. On the one hand, the emphasis on the equality of Muslims and non-Muslims offended the Muslim population (*Tezahir* I, 67). Many of the Muslims complained, "Today, we lost our sacred communal rights which were acquired by the blood of our ancestors. While

the *millet* of Islam was the supreme nation, now we are deprived of such sacred right. This is a day to weep and mourn for Muslims” (*Tezâkir* I, 68).⁶⁴

On the other hand, although other non-Muslims were happy to gain equality with the other subjects, this situation led to discontent among Greeks as well. Previously a hierarchy had existed among the religious communities in the empire, with Greeks just below Muslims, making them superior to the Armenians and Jews. Therefore, this edict also displeased the Greeks, and some of them expressed their feelings by saying, “the state has made us equal with the Jews. We were satisfied with the superiority of the Muslims” (*Tezâkir* I, 68).

Furthermore, Cevdet claims that the public loathed Âli Pasha, because Christians occupied positions in political and foreign affairs in accordance with the Islahat Edict. In fact, it seems that Cevdet was more uneasy with this situation, since he asserts that employing Christians in the financial fields would be better rather than employing them in critical positions of the state (*Maruzat*, 2).⁶⁵

Cevdet himself also seems to have shared the same worries with other Muslims about the edict. As mentioned in the related chapter, Cevdet believed that the Ottoman state was based on four foundational pillars, i.e. “the community of Islam (*millet-i İslâmiyye*), the Turkish state (*devlet-i Türkiyye*), the Ottoman sultans (*salâtîn-i Osmaniyye*), and Istanbul as the capital city (*pâyitahtı-ı İstanbul*)” (*Tezâkir* I, 85).⁶⁶ However, according to him, one of the four pillars, “the *millet* of Islam,” was ruined when the edict debased Muslims

⁶⁴ “Ehl-i islâmdan birçoğu “Âbâ ve ecdadımızın kaniyle kazanılmış olan hukuk-ı mukaddese-i milliyemizi bugün gaib ettik. Millet-i islâmiyye millet-i hâkime iken böyle bir mukaddes haktan mahrum kaldı. Ehl-i islâma bu bir ağlayacak ve matem edecek gündür” deyu söylenmeğe başladılar” (*Tezâkir* I, 68).

⁶⁵ “... Islahat Fermân-ı âlisi iktizâsınca, hıristiyanların da devlet me’mûriyetlerinde istihdâmları lâzime-i hâlden olmuş idi. Lâkin anları, devletin rûhu mesâbesinde olan umûr-ı politikiyye ve hâriciyyede istihdâm etmekden ise, öteden beri me’lûf oldukları umûr-ı mâliyyede istihdâm etmek çok ehven ü evlâ olurdu. İşte millet-i İslâmiyyenin Âli Paşa hakkında buğz u adâvetlerine başlıca bir sebep budur” (*Maruzat*, 2).

⁶⁶ “Devlet-i aliyye dört esas üzere müesses olup bunlar ile her nasıl istenilir ise idaresi ve ilerlemesi kabil olur ve bunlardan her kaygısı nakıs olur ise idâre kabil olmaz. Dört esas budur. Millet-i islâmiyye, devlet-i türkiyye, salâtîn-i osmaniyye, pâyitahtı-ı İstanbul” (*Tezâkir* I, 85).

into the level of non-Muslims. Hence, he asserts that this stipulation of equality shook the state to its foundations (*Tezâkir* I, 85).⁶⁷

On the other hand, it is also interesting to see that while there is no trace of Cevdet's support of the Islahat reforms, and while he believes in its harms to the state, he does not excuse those who rebelled against the state owing to their displeasure with the edict. This is because he has a strong belief in "obedience" to the monarch and a statist view which leads him to regard any insubordinate attempt by the subjects towards both the sultan and the state as "mischief" (*fesad*). This attitude can be notably observed in cases like the Mecca Rebellion, the Kuleli incident, and the Syrian Uprising, all of which constituted reactions to the Tanzimat and Islahat reforms.

3.2 The Mecca Rebellion of 1855

The Mecca rebellion was an opposition movement of the Meccan *ulama* against the center due to the implementation of the order to ban the slave trade as part of the reforms. According to Toledano (1994), public displeasure about the European presence in the trade life of Jeddah already existed, and when news of the measures taken by the government against the enslavement and trade of Circassians and Georgians reached the Hejaz, it evoked the feeling that the prohibition of the African slave trade was inevitable, since there were already restrictions on the African trade (p. 110-111).

In the Hejaz region, the slave trade was a profitable business. Moreover, since Islam permitted slavery, an initiative for its prohibition could have an inflammatory effect. People already attributed the reform movements to the pressure of European powers and blamed the government for the British and French presence in Jeddah (Toledano 1994, 113). Thus, such an atmosphere gave rise to the easy provocation of the people after a rumor of an impending ban. In *Tezâkir* Cevdet elaborates on this movement, which he describes

⁶⁷ "Fakat bu kadar yüzyıllardan beri millet-i hâkime olan ehl-i islâm teba'a-i gayr-i müsleme ile müsavat-ı tamme hâline tenezzül ettikte acebâ dört esastan biri hedm edilmiş olmadı mı" (*Tezâkir* I, 85).

as “sedition” (*fitne*) (*Tezakir* I, 102), in such great detail that it takes up fifty pages.⁶⁸ Therefore, the case will briefly be summarized as Cevdet narrates, and then Cevdet’s state-centered attitude toward it will be elaborated.

According to Cevdet, “in order to get along with the European states who considered it necessary to ban the slave trade, the Ottoman state decided to ban the black slave trade” (*Tezakir* I, 102). The state gave an order to the governors and *mutasarrıfs* about the issue, upon which a group of the leading merchants in Jeddah wrote a letter to the Meccan *ulama* in 1855, referring to the impropriety of this ban. These merchants complained about the decision to implement the articles of the Tanzimat Edict and mentioned that according to these articles the slave trade would no longer be possible, while “infidels” could marry Muslim women, women could wear any kind of attire they wished, and no one could interfere with their choices. They claimed that these and a few other similar allegations were against Islam, and that for this reason they aimed to reach the *imam* to call for reconsideration (*Tezakir* I, 102-103).

When the letter reached Mecca, the *Emir* of Mecca, Abdulmuttalib Effendi, the *ulama*, and other notables resorted to rebellion. To Cevdet, this was the point where sedition began. Abdulmuttalib met Sheikh Cemâl Effendi, who was the leader of the Meccan *ulama*, and told him that the Turks were apostates but were disguising it for the time being. He added that his group would seize the government, which was their right, by using the prohibition of the slave trade as an excuse (*Tezakir* I, 103). Thereafter, Abdulmuttalib and his group secretly planned the rebellion (*Tezakir* I, 104).

The rebellion began when Cemâl Effendi issued a fatwa accusing the Turks of apostasy due to the aforementioned articles of the edict. He argued that these articles were against Shari’a, and thus that it was *halal* to kill the Turks and enslave their children. It was also necessary to fight against them and their followers as they were deserving of hell (*Tezakir* I, 112). After this fatwa clashes and attacks broke out, resulting in hundreds of deaths. This situation could only be soothed through the efforts of Şerif Mansur Effendi, who

⁶⁸ In the entire Tezkire No.12, Cevdet discusses the Mecca Rebellion in depth. According to Toledano (1994) Cevdet Pasha gives the most detailed account of this case (p. 110).

was one of the relatives of Abdulmuttalib and loyal to the Ottoman state (*Tezakir* I, 112-118.).

Cevdet's narrative of the rebellion is significant in the sense that it again confirms his statist approach and his reaction towards any revolts against the state. Cevdet calls this opposition movement as *fitne*. To him, before being involved in this opposition Sheikh Cemâl Effendi was "the leader of the ulema" (*reis 'ül ulema*), however after taking part in it he became "the leader of the people of sedition and mischief" (*reis-i ehl-i fitne ve fesad*) (*Tezakir* I, 111).

Cevdet deemed it necessary to share the official letter send by *Shaykh al-islam* Arif Effendi to the *qadı*, *mufti*, and scholars of Mecca in order to respond to the rebels. In the letter, Arif Effendi quotes various verses from the Quran and hadiths, and claims that the sultan is the *imam* of all Muslims (*Tezakir* I, 136-137), and thus Muslims are obliged to obey the sultan. Because of this, to rise against the sultan and the Ottoman state amounts to sedition and mischief (*Tezakir* I, 136-138). This letter also vocalizes Cevdet's point of view about the case.

Another striking point is Cevdet's stress on the legitimacy of the Ottoman Empire. While concluding the event at the end, he notes that:

"In this century, the Ottoman state remains as the sole protector of the religion of Islam on the globe. The Abbasid caliph also handed over the caliphate to Yavuz Sultan Selim and his grandchildren in the presence of numerous Muslims. Therefore, there is no doubt that those who oppose the legitimate caliphate of the Ottoman dynasty are rebellious (*âsi*) and abominable (*bâğî*)" (*Tezakir* I, 149).⁶⁹

In Cevdet's mind, there was no other choice but to call the opponents rebellious and abominable. Additionally, the emphasis on the inheritance of the caliphate from the Abbasids discloses Cevdet's concern, confirming Toledano's (1994) claim that "in order to remain the heir of the Sunni state and the caliphate, the control of the Hejaz was vital to

⁶⁹ "Bu asırda ise küre-i arz üzerinde din-i islâmın hâmi'si olan yalnız bir Devlet-i Osmaniyye kalmıştır. Halife-i Abbâsî dahi nice müslimin mahzarında Yavuz Sultan Selim'e ve a'kaabı'na emanet-i hilâfeti terk ve teslim etmişidi. Binâenaleyh hanedan-ı Osmanî'nin hilâfetleri meşru' olarak muhalefet edenlerin âsi ve bâğî olduğunda şüphe yoktur" (*Tezakir* I, 149).

the empire” (p. 110). As a discerning statesman Cevdet was certainly aware of this vitality. Indeed, when the Ottoman government abolished the African slave trade in general, the Hejaz province was initially excluded because the center was aware of the sensitivity of the region to the issue after the rebellion of 1855 (Erdem 1996, 86).

3.3 The Kuleli Incident of 1859

Cevdet very briefly talks about the Kuleli incident, which was a conspiracy in 1859 caused by extensive discontent with and objection to both the proclamation of the Islahat Edict of 1856 and the various diplomatic concessions made to the Western powers. The moving spirit was Sheikh Süleymaniyeli Ahmad Effendi (*Tezâkir* II, 82), who was a *madrasah* teacher. Sheikh Ahmad highlighted that he considered the Reform Edicts of 1839 and 1856 as a breach of Muslim law, since these documents acknowledged equal rights to Muslims and non-Muslims (Davison 1963, 101). Numerous *ulema*, *madrasah* students, intellectuals, army officers (Berkes 2017, 272), and low-ranking bureaucrats were involved in this conspiracy with the aim of getting rid of Abdülmecid and his ministers (Hanioglu 2008, 110). However, the conspiracy was revealed to the government by an army officer, and subsequently the conspirators were arrested (*Tezâkir* II, 83). Cevdet exhibits a statist approach towards this case as well and calls this group of conspirators “a society of mischief” (*cem’iyyet-i fesâdiyye*) (*Tezâkir* II, 83). His manner towards the conspirators implies that to him, there can be no excuse for getting involved in a rebellion against the state or any attempt that would harm the sultan’s dignity.

Cevdet also notes an interesting event, which implies that he may have regretted the impossibility of sentencing the conspirators to death by law. He states that when it came to punishing the conspirators, there was no article in the penal code regarding the punishments of those who assassinate the sultan, so their penalty was limited to confinement in a fortress or forced labor. When Âli and Fuad Pashas asked Cevdet if there was an article to execute the conspirators, Cevdet reminded them of an earlier conversation between himself and Şevket Pasha,⁷⁰ which had taken place during the preparation of the penal

⁷⁰ Şevket Pasha was a member of Tanzimat Assembly (*Meclis-i Tanzimat*).

code (*Tezakir* II, 83). Cevdet noted that French penal codes do sentence those culprits who attempt to assassinate a sovereign with capital punishment, and that the project of the Ottoman penal code was in fact planned in line with the French code. However, when Cevdet had read the draft law to the committee, Şevket Pasha had opposed it by arguing, “No one should imagine the possibility of the assassination of the sultan. It would not be appropriate to write it in the code and declare it.”⁷¹ Cevdet continues that due to Şevket Pasha’s objection, articles related to the sultan were excluded, which following the Kuleli incident led to the regret of Âli and Fuad Pashas, who had been present in the committee, for having listened to Şevket Pasha (*Tezakir* II, 83).

When Cevdet mentions Âli and Fuad Pashas’ regret, he in fact implies that Şevket Pasha had been wrong for objecting to including such an article in the code. As can be seen, instead of trying to understand the psychology and motivation behind the reaction of the conspirators who were uneasy about the social effects of the reform movement, Cevdet’s statist view leads him to adopt a merciless attitude towards them. As might be expected, this kind of an attitude was not unique to this case. Neumann (2000) states that in his *Tarih-i Cevdet* as well it is not possible to come across any passages in which Cevdet shows tolerance toward those who protest against policies implemented by the sultan. He never approves the active participation in a rebellion against the center (p. 97).

As another point, according to Mardin (2017), this event preoccupied the minds of the Ottoman reformists for a long time (p. 100). However, Cevdet seems to be engaged only in the issue of their punishment and disregards the motivation and ideology of such a mixed group, which included the generation of young intellectuals (Berkes 2017, 273). Most probably, the swift suppression of the event caused no concern for Cevdet and led him to occupied with their penalty.

3.4 The Syrian Uprising of 1860

⁷¹ “Bu bahsi okuduğumda Meclis-i Tanzimat ezâsından merhum Şevket Paşa “Padişah hakkında sù’-i kasd kimsenin hatırına gelmemelidir. Bunu kanuna yazıp ilân etmek münâsib olmaz” demekle kanunda hükümdârâna mahsus olan maddeler tayy-ettirilmiş idi” (*Tezakir* II, 83).

The steps taken toward administrative modernization and centralization to ensure a lasting stability for the empire could not prevent its progressive disintegration after 1856. Although several regions, provinces, and principalities stayed within the borders of the Ottoman state, they gradually loosened their connections with the center. Uprisings in Lebanon and Damascus were among the cases that indicated this gradual dissolution by paving the way for foreign intervention (Hanioglu 2008, 85). In Mount Lebanon, skirmishes between the Druze and Maronites were followed by attacks on Christians in Damascus (Akarlı 1993, 30), resulting in more than five thousand casualties among the Christians (Zürcher 2003, 86).

Lebanon had a religiously mixed population and experienced the emergence of one of the most urgent crises of the early Tanzimat era. The first severe conflict between Christian Maronites and the Druze⁷² happened in 1841 following the evacuation of the Egyptian troops. The promises of the Tanzimat edict about the official impartiality toward Muslims and non-Muslims were perceived by Europeans as a right to intervene on behalf of the Christians, who revolted against their Druze overlords. In 1842 the French, British, Russian, Austrian, and Prussian ambassadors to Istanbul met with the Ottoman foreign minister to find an acceptable remedy to the problems of Mount Lebanon. The decision of the parties involved was on the separation of the “Christian” and “Druze” districts as north and south due to the irreconcilability of the Druze and Maronite positions (Akarlı 1993, 27-28).

However, this arrangement proved an ineffective solution for the mountain’s problems. The communal separation created a new kind of consciousness among the subjects and resulted in new rebellions (Akarlı 1993, 28-29). In 1859, villagers from the Maronite northern area, stressing their understanding of the Tanzimat, demanded “equality and the abolition of elite privilege” vis-à-vis the Druze. The uprising spread to the other districts and the conflict turned into a full-scale communal war, which created new animosities.

⁷² “Maronite Christians, a historical Eastern church long united with Rome, were especially numerous in the northern part of the Lebanon range and also lived in the Druze-controlled south. The Druzes, by origin an Islamic splinter sect, were found in the southern part of the Lebanon range and other parts of southwestern Syria” (Findley 2010, 79).

In 1860, the Druze won a victory, even murdering Muslim elites who collaborated with Christian rebels (Findley 2010, 79-80).

In 1860, news of the events and a stream of rumors spread to Damascus (Fawaz 1994, 78) and led to a deterioration of relations between Damascene Muslims and Christians. Due to the effects of reforms and the socioeconomic changes of various communities, the atmosphere in Damascus as well was already ripe for a possible clash. As Leila Fawaz (1994) states, the declaration of equality among all subjects, the imposition of conscription on Muslims and the remission of non-Muslims from it, and the expanding gap in wealth between the Christians, who were growing rich, and the Muslims, had built up tension among the religious communities in Damascus (p. 100).

The spread and distortion of the news of the war in Lebanon in every quarter and corner of the city increased the violence, and people became worried that there would be trouble in Damascus as well (Fawaz 1994, 81). According to Fawaz (1994), many people tried to take measures to neutralize the hostilities. For instance, Emir Abd al-Qadir (1808-1883), who was the Algerian hero who had put up a resistance to the French conquest of Algeria between 1830 and 1847, made the rounds of the ulema, Muslim notables, and the leaders of different quarters to be able to preclude violence. He also tried every diplomatic means to get the situation under control. However, the governor Ahmed Pasha was the one individual who had the power to change the course of events but, he took only a few preventive measures. Moreover, not only him, but other officers in charge failed to realize the “ugly mood” in Damascus on the eve of the riots (pp. 82-83).

Although Cevdet does not give details about the conflict between Maronites and Druze, he talks about the uprising that broke out in Damascus. However, what he mentions is not the background of the case, but how it was suppressed by Fuad Pasha. According to Cevdet, “due to the Islahat edict the Syrian Christians became spoiled, leading to the enmity between them and the Muslim people” (*Maruzat*, 22-23).⁷³ When Fuad Pasha was assigned to get the conflict between Maronites and Druze under control, and hence went

⁷³ “İslâhat Fermânı hükmünce Suriye Hristiyanları şımarıp ehl-i islâm ile aralarında zuhûr eden husûmetden nâşî...” (*Maruzat* 22-23).

to Syria,⁷⁴ a rebellion broke out in Damascus. Muslims attacked Christians, killing them and plundering their neighborhoods. Therefore, Fuad Pasha had to proceed to Damascus to suppress the uprising. However, the situation was critical and Fuad Pasha found himself in a position to order his Muslim troops to attack local Muslim people. Thus, before heading to Damascus, Fuad Pasha gave a speech to his army in order to have their thoughts and actions under control:

“Friends, the inhabitants (*ahali*) of these regions have contradicted the sultan’s will by causing sedition (*fitne*) and massacres. I have been appointed by our sultan to be a commander with you to bring peace and security to this area and to punish the sins of the group because of their cruel acts... A soldier is the hand of the sultan. The sultan’s hand is justice. He strikes at the oppressor. He cares for the oppressed. Let us consider all our citizens to be the same and demonstrate our sultan’s justice and the worth and value of his soldier to everybody.” (*Tezakir* II, 110)⁷⁵

After giving this speech, Fuad Pasha reached Damascus with the available soldiers and entered the city by force. He executed several hundred Muslims, including the governor of Damascus Ahmed Pasha, and exiled many of the notables (*Tezakir* II, 110; *Maruzat*, 23).

Cevdet’s state-centered approach to this event reveals itself in a different way from the previous cases. For such an issue, that ended quite severely, he does not question the genuine reasons behind, or the brutal results of Fuad Pasha’s actions. According to Usama Makdisi (2000), Cevdet is among those historians who glosses over “the problematic nature of Ottoman rule in the periphery of the empire” when it comes to the Syrian issue. Moreover, he is also among those who “justifies Fuad Pasha’s brutal restoration of order in Syria” (p. 168).

⁷⁴ At the time, Syria was the name of the region including today’s Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine.

⁷⁵ “Arkadaşlar; Buraların ahâlisi Pâdişâh’ımızın rızâsının hilafına olarak bi fitne çıkarıp cidâl ü kîtâle sebep olmuş ve bir takım harekât-ı gaddârâneye cesâret etmiş olduklarından kabahatlileri te’dib etmek ve memleketin âsâyîş ve istirâhatini yerine getirmek için Padişah’ımız Efendimiz sizinle berâber beni memur eyledi... Asker Padişah’ın elidir. Padişah’ın eli adâlettir. Zâlimi vurur. Mazlûmu tutar. Hep vatandaşlarımızı bir bilip Padişah’ımızın adâleti ve askerinin kadr ü kıymetini ne olduğunu herkese gösterelim” (*Tezakir* II, 110).

Indeed, Cevdet declares that Fuad Pasha “disciplined” the leading soldiers who failed to fulfill their task. Together with them, governor Ahmed Pasha was also executed by shooting (*Tezakir* II, 111). Instead of pitying him, Cevdet even implies that Ahmed Pasha received his due with this execution (*Tezakir* II, 112). It is quite likely that Cevdet was aware of the fact that Fuad Pasha did not only “discipline” those who were put to death, but also the masses of Syria in order to reaffirm the absolute sovereignty of the sultan in the Ottoman periphery (Makdisi 2000, 147).

3.5 An Analysis of Cevdet’s Statist Attitude

Cevdet was a bureaucratic statesman whose concern was to protect and promote the survival of his state and the sultan. Therefore, he cared greatly about the security of the empire in all three cases examined in this chapter. One of the results of this stance was to see, interpret, and record the events from a state-centered angle. While dealing with these three cases, Cevdet makes the reader feel this statist attitude very strongly. He gives the impression that he looks down on the people from the center. Therefore, to him, people are not reliable subjects, and it is not legitimate for them to voice their opinions. This point also explains why Cevdet was against a constitutional regime and the Young Ottomans, who represented a form of political protest by voicing articulate criticisms of the government, since Cevdet was against the participation of the subjects in politics. Because of this, he did not hesitate to label their actions “mischief” and “sedition” without considering their background motivations.

At this point, Cevdet cannot be dissociated from the state ideology. Since the official ideology of the empire will be examined in detail in the fifth chapter of the thesis, it will be very briefly mentioned here to be able to give meaning to Cevdet’s attitudes. As İnalçık (1978) states, in the eyes of the Ottoman statesmen the values that needed to be protected by the monarch were social order and security under justice (p. 43). “Justice” was a key concept in the way they viewed society, since this notion represented stability and harmony more than anything else, which was achieved only by statecraft which kept every community and individual in society in his realm (within his borders), without intruding on the others’ rights (İnalçık 1978, 42) From this point of view, any change in the social

order had unfavorable implications. Therefore, Ottoman writers immediately labeled any social or religious opposition *fitne* (Zürcher 2003, 29).

It is clear that Cevdet's attitude toward the reactions to reform measures justified this understanding. Cevdet adopts a conservative and traditional political outlook and describes the Mecca Rebellion and the Kuleli incident as *fitne* without any hesitation. To him, those who planned an opposition movement or were involved in it were nothing else but "rebellious" or "abominable," without any exception. Although Cevdet did not label the inhabitants of Syria as such immediately, Fuad Pasha does not omit to define their movement as *fitne*. At this point, Cevdet served the state ideology in a different way; by justifying Fuad Pasha's brutal actions.



4. CEVDET'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE TANZIMAT-ERA OTTOMAN SOCIETY IN THE CONTEXT OF REFORMS

Throughout the Tanzimat era, reforms in almost all units of the state brought about a change in social life. Despite the fact that Cevdet was one of the prominent figures who assisted the state in the application of the reforms, he criticized the social effects of this process. However, while criticizing, his main focus mostly pertained to the Westernization of lifestyles and the increase in “extravagance” which could be observed in the big cities such as İstanbul and İzmir. Since Cevdet had spent most of his life in İstanbul, his accounts of Tanzimat society in *Tezahir* and *Maruzat* are mostly about İstanbul society.

When Cevdet was sent to Bosnia and Çukurova as a state official, he had a chance to get into contact with different strata of the local society. Both of Cevdet's missions were part of the state's centralization policies in accordance with the reform movements. In Bosnia, Cevdet aimed to rehabilitate the relationship between the state and the Bosnians (Gölen 2013, 202). In the Çukurova region, the comprehensive program that was followed throughout the operations was designed to strengthen the ties between the state and the nomadic tribes of the region (Kasaba 2012, 20). From the perspective of the central government, strong ties with the periphery meant the solution of the existing problems.

Cevdet, with a state-centered view toward society, had taken the responsibility to fulfill the demands of the center in both of these missions. Since the demand was to see more obedient subjects, Cevdet got in contact with the leaders and the local people in these regions. However, there seems to be a difference in Cevdet's attitude toward the people of these two separate regions, as Cevdet tends to be more conciliatory in Bosnia when compared with his manners in Çukurova.

In this chapter, first Cevdet's points about Istanbul society will be taken into consideration. Then, his attitude toward the society of Bosnia and Çukurova will be examined and compared. It is also important to state that Cevdet's Bosnia and Kozan missions are wide-ranging enough to be the topic of a separate thesis. However, since the aim of this chapter is to analyze how Cevdet saw and interpreted the society of the Tanzimat era in the context of reforms, the focus will be limited to a few points regarding these regions.

4.1 The Social Situation in İstanbul

Although there had already been consumption of Western goods in Ottoman Istanbul in the previous centuries, its volume was limited. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, especially after the introduction of free trade in 1838 and the reduction of import tariffs, the economy of the empire was exposed to a fast expansion of European imports (Exertzoglou 2003, 79-80). Moreover, the advent of steamships during the same century facilitated the arrival of these imports to Ottoman port cities (Gökçek 1996, 40). Together with these developments, the increasing influence of the West in political, economic, and social terms resulted in the extensive use of Western commodities. Consequently, the consumption habits of the society in port cities such as Beirut (Issawi 1988, 164-165), İstanbul, and İzmir were reshaped, and a new pattern of lifestyles emerged (Exertzoglou 2003, 79-80).

However, the development of new lifestyles and consumption patterns led to the harsh reactions of various groups (Exertzoglou 2003, 82). In many of the existing literature of the Tanzimat era, these changes are called "*alafrangalaşmak*" (Westernization), and are regarded as "moral corruption." For Cevdet as well, the Westernization of social life represents immorality. What Cevdet opposes is essentially the adaptation of Western ways of life and its resultant effect on consumption, which Cevdet calls "lavishness."

For this reason, when talking about social life in İstanbul, Cevdet is mostly critical about the economic and moral transformations, with a focus on the rise of "horrible extravagance" and the abandonment of old socio-economic habits. Interestingly, he attempts to

explain these changes by merely concentrating on how the arrival of Europeans and Egyptians to İstanbul “negatively” influenced the society. First of all, it is important to look at Cevdet’s descriptions in *Tezakir*:

“Shopping in Istanbul increased, and shopkeepers became rich. Many pashas, gentlemen, and ladies from the Mehmed Ali Pasha dynasty came to Istanbul and spent a lot of money. In this way, they became a model for profligate people in Istanbul... The Egyptian ladies were interested in European-style (*alafranga*) dresses and expensive jewelry. The women of İstanbul, including the palace ladies, imitated them. Most Egyptians bought houses, waterside residences, and various properties for high prices. Therefore, real estate prices have increased in İstanbul. A deceptive fortune has emerged... However, the import-export balance was broken. Large amounts of money went to Europe continuously. But the officers did not consider the end of this situation, because they were already getting their salaries at the beginning of the month. Tradesmen and merchants also gained high amounts due to the high number of purchases. In summer evenings, the Bosphorus and recreation areas was completely full of people. Everyone stayed away from grief and sadness. İstanbul was like heaven. Especially when the *Şirket-i Hayriyye* ferries started to work throughout the Bosphorus, the value of the seaside residences remarkably increased” (*Tezakir* I, 20-21) (my own translation).

Cevdet mentions the same issue in *Maruzat* as well and argues that those who came from Egypt debased the morality of the inhabitants of İstanbul and caused great damage to the state and the community (*Maruzat*, 7-8). Additionally, he talks about the effect of European soldiers in İstanbul:

“When the French and British soldiers came to İstanbul during the Crimean War, they spent money like water. Hence, shopkeepers in İstanbul made a pile of money. At the time, the wedding and circumcision ceremonies of the palace also helped storekeepers and jewelers earn extraordinary amounts of money. As a result, these classes of people also got used to living their lives like dignitaries and began to rent seaside residences throughout the Bosphorus... Therefore, it was almost impossible to find a place to rent in the Bosphorus” (*Maruzat*, 8) (my own translation).

Furthermore, the rising popularity of Western products of clothing created new fashions in textiles, which led some tailors to follow the European dressmakers (Exertzoglou 2003, 80). Cevdet’s daughter Fatma Aliye (1994) mentions that the interest in Western-style

attire created new trends that affected women, including the palace ladies (p. 101). Together with this trend, women began to wear silk *feraces*⁷⁶ and transparent veils. According to Cevdet, this situation was a “moral corruption” and a “violation of Islamic values” that caused discomfort among the Muslim population. He asserts that this annoyance reached such a point that Âli Pasha had to make a declaration to warn the women to dress properly (*Tezakir* II, 87).

Moreover, Cevdet is also critical of the adoption of European-style home furnishings. In this period, people from the upper classes began to import furniture from France. Shortly afterwards, furniture craftsmen in İstanbul began to produce Western style furniture, such as chairs and tables, to meet this demand (Faroqhi 2005, 288). However, Cevdet believes that these furnishings are costly. Formerly, Ottomans had used cushions, which were easy for carrying. However, according to Cevdet, when people began to use sofas and chairs like Westerners the costs increased, since those sofas and chairs were easily broken when people moved them to their winter or summer houses, necessitating costly repairs. Another example is about dining sets. Cevdet notes that embracing Western-style dining sets did not result in the disuse of old ones, and thus he believes that trying to attain both kinds of sets also increased expenses (*Maruzat*, 10).

4.1.1 An Analysis of Cevdet’s Limited Focus

Considering these depictions, it is significant to analyze Cevdet’s point of view when he looks at the society. First of all, what is noteworthy is that when Cevdet talks about İstanbul society, it is difficult to come across issues related to ordinary people’s lives in his accounts. The picture he depicts is mostly related to the İstanbul elite, of which he is also a member. Considering the growth of İstanbul's population from 400,000 in 1840 to around 900,000 in 1890 (Findley 2008, 35), the question of “how many of these people could experience the life that Cevdet depicts” comes to mind.

⁷⁶ *Ferace* is a long, full coat worn by Turkish women at the time.

Secondly, as mentioned above, these kinds of criticisms and reactions were not unique to Cevdet. Şerif Mardin (1991) asserts that in many traditional sources written in the Tanzimat era, it is common to regard “consumption” as immorality (p. 48). For instance, Ahmed Midhat Efendi’s novel, *Felâatun Bey ile Râkım Efendi*, written in 1876, is regarded as the first novel that deals with the problematic “*alafranga*” type. According to Berna Moran (1998), the main contrast in the novel is built on frugality and diligence versus prodigality and laziness (p. 28). Therefore, Cevdet’s descriptions related to İstanbul society shows how the first appearance of Western lifestyles and their consequential consumption in the empire shocked many Ottomans (Mardin 1991, 49).

Lastly, it is a fact that, throughout the Tanzimat era, the adoption of the military and administrative structure of the West brought about a change in social terms, in that people from the upper and middle classes began to embrace the daily culture of the West in the big cities. European styles of clothing, imported household goods, the spending of major sums, and Western-style houses (Mardin 1991, 15) transformed the traditional habits of society. However, social transformation was not limited to these. As İlber Ortaylı (1983) rightly points out, the new life-style that began in İstanbul and in the large port cities cannot be reduced only to the adaptation of European-style furniture and table manners or to the change in consumption habits (pp. 179-181). Intellectuals of the time believed that Western civilization was not only advanced in industry and technique, but also in education and literature (Moran 1998, 6).

Thus, educational reforms were implemented and the rate of literacy increased. While the *madrasas* continued to produce the old type of intellectuals, the state opened new educational institutions. Except for the Council’s Translation Bureau (*Tercüme Odası*), up until the 1830s all educational institutions established by the state were only military schools (Somel 2015, 43). Starting from 1839, the government began to establish the first civilian public schools to be able to train a cadre of civil servants for the new administrative structure which was being formed at the time (Somel 2015, 35).

After 1856, which represented a turning point in the history of education in the empire, a series of educational reforms were carried out. For instance, the Ministry of Education was established (Somel 2015, 66) as a bureaucratic institution independent from the *ulama* (Somel 2015, 71). In 1859, the *Mekteb-i Mülkiye-i Şâhâne* (Faculty of Political

Science) was opened to educate young officers in various fields such as law, economics, history, statistics, etc. The Mekteb-i Sultânî (the present-day Galatasaray High School) was opened in 1868 for Muslim and non-Muslim students to study together (Somel 2015, 77-78). In 1869, the Ministry of Education decided to establish the *rüşdiyes* (junior high school) for girls in İstanbul. In 1870, the *Darülmualimat* (Women Teachers' Training School) was opened to meet the need for women teachers for the girls' *rüşdiyes* (Somel 2015, 84-85). These institutions offered secular education, and thus raised a new type of intellectual.

Communication opportunities had increased and the modernist intelligentsia had the chance to be heard through the emerging print media (Findley 2008, 35). Novels, as a new genre, entered Ottoman literature as translations and imitations of Western novels (Moran 1998, 6). Muslim women also experienced similar changes as young women and girls began to access secular public education thanks to the aforementioned girls' *rüşdiyes* and *Darülmualimat*. Women from modest backgrounds were increasingly learning Western languages (Akşit 2013, 136).

Upper class women began to be more visible in public space (Ortaylı 1983, 179). In fact, Cevdet's well-educated daughters Fatma Aliye and Emine Semiye were concrete examples of this. His older daughter Fatma Aliye (1862-1924) was an intellectual who won fame as writer and poet⁷⁷ (Aykut 2018, 183-187; Cihan 2007, 45). She was in touch with the intellectuals of the time, and hosted eminent foreign ladies who came to visit İstanbul and the wives of ambassadors in her house (Ortaylı 1983, 174). Emine Semiye (1864-1944) was a teacher who wrote various articles and books on education and women (Cihan 2007, 45).

Cevdet, on the other hand, related the visibility of women in social life solely to the decrease of pederasty in society and the increase in the number of womanizers and romantic affections between people of the opposite sex (*Maruzat*, 9).⁷⁸ However, the integration of women into social life had a much more significant outcome. The socio-cultural change

⁷⁷ For details of Fatma Aliye's works, consult to: (Aykut 2018, 182-187).

⁷⁸ "Zen-dostlar çoğalup mahbûblar azaldı... Sultan Ahmed-i Sâlis zamânından berü mu'tâd olan Kâğıdhâne seyri ziyâde rağbet buldu. Gerek orada gerek Bâyezid meydânında arabalara işâretlerle mu'âşaka usûlü hayli meydân aldı" (*Maruzat*, 9).

brought by the Tanzimat era was a golden period that prepared new roles for women, at least for the upper and middle classes (Ortaylı 1983, 182). In other words, the changes in social life led by modernization were not merely about the issues that Cevdet points out, but had more complex results for society.

4.2 Cevdet's Inspectorship in Bosnia

As a result of the conquests of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans, a major part of the people in Bosnia and Herzegovina became Muslims, and played the role of a strategic fulcrum of the Ottoman regime in the Balkans. (Gölen 2010, 43). Being a border region, the state attached importance to Bosnia, which resulted in the increasing power and influence of these local Muslims in the region. In particular, the need to defend the frontiers led to the establishment of military farms called *kapudanlık* and the increasing influence of the local Muslim *begs*. These *begs* formed a new noble class by capturing the land around them with the military power they held. (Gölen 2010, 53).

Furthermore, other Muslims of different ethnicities had come to Bosnia as janissaries, civil servants, or refugees from the Hungarian territories which were lost to Habsburg control. Because many of them, especially the janissaries, were trained warriors, the central government experienced great trouble in imposing its requests on the provincial government. In the eighteenth century, Bosnian military elements often came into conflict with the central government. This situation was to go on until the middle of the nineteenth century. Despite the presence of Muslim control over Bosnia, the Sublime Porte could not trust the region for support against the neighboring Christian powers (Jelavich 1995, 348).

When Mahmud II decided to abolish the Janissary corps, the resistance of the Bosnians was harsh, since this was contrary to the privileged status of the local *ayans* and endangered the position of the Bosnian military class. The Muslim landholders and the military united and resisted Ottoman central, which led to uprisings (Turhan 2013, 105-114). Furthermore, when the Tanzimat edict reached Bosnia, Bosnian Muslims began to oppose the state, since implementation of the edict meant they would lose their privileges vis-à-

vis the non-Muslims, and Muslim domination over the Christian Serbs and Croats would terminate. In particular, the articles about the, military service, and, most importantly, the equality of all subjects disturbed them considerably. In other words, the proclamation of the edict escalated tensions between the state and the Bosnians (Gölen 2009, 465).

The local Muslim leaders opposed the above-mentioned centralizing measures and the wishes of the central government for the full application of the Tanzimat reforms in Bosnia, which led to a major rebellion against the center in 1849 that lasted for three years. (Jelavich 1995, 349). To suppress the rebellion, the Ottoman government sent one of its most efficient governors, Ömer Pasha Latas, to Bosnia. Within a year, in 1851, Ömer Pasha thoroughly crushed the rebellion and sent many of the *begs* into exile in Anatolia (Noel 1996, 124). These Muslim *begs* were defeated in such a way that they could never regain their former strength (Gölen 2009, 479).

In 1863, the state appointed Cevdet to Bosnia as an inspector with broad authority to eliminate a series of problems and rehabilitate the relationship between the center and the Bosnians. One of his main tasks was to solve the recruitment (*Maruzat*, 80). Although there are various issues concerning Cevdet's inspectorship in Bosnia, in the scope of this chapter the focus will be on his attitude toward the local society while he was trying to solve the problem of recruitment.

4.2.1 The Resolution of the Recruitment Problem thanks to Cevdet's Social Analyses

Sultan Mahmud II had abolished the janissary corps, which was heavily politicized in time, with a decree on 17 June 1826, and a new military organization, the *Asâkir-i Mansûre-i Muhammediye* (the Victorious Soldiers of Muhammad), was established (Heinzelmann 2009, 39). Two months afterwards, separate edicts were sent to Bosnia for the abolition of the jannisaries and the establishment of the *Asâkir-i Mansure* there. However, this situation caused uprisings that spread throughout the province, because the Bosnians did not want the application of these edicts. They rejected the decree completely and declared that they did not want to do military service outside the borders of Bosnia and would not wear new uniforms (Gölen 2010, 61-62).

Although the rebellions were suppressed, the issue of recruiting soldiers continued to be a problem for the state up until Cevdet Pasha's inspectorship, because this was one of the main reasons for the revolts of Muslim *begs* in Bosnia (Gölen 2010, 117). For this reason, one of the center's expectations from Cevdet's Bosnian inspectorship was to solve this problem (*Maruzat*, 80).

In Sarajevo, Cevdet took a close interest in this issue. He noticed that the state had run around in circles for many years in Bosnia, because to him the government officers who were in charge of the region had not analyzed the actual reasons behind the problem of recruitment. Thus, to solve the problem thoroughly, he observed society very closely and tried to understand the roots of this situation. For example, he aimed to figure out the reasons why Bosnians were afraid of military service. He discovered that since they had never left their hometown, they were anxious to be sent to distant regions such as Arabia or Kurdistan (*Maruzat*, 81).

Furthermore, he understood that the first thing to do was to convince the notables of the provinces in Bosnia, because the Bosnians held them in high esteem. Then, he noticed that religious leaders and *hodjas* also had a strong influence on the people. Moreover, he noticed that boys who were to perform their military duty were influenced by their girlfriends (*Maruzat*, 81-84).

Cevdet's close observations of Bosnian society enabled him to solve the problem in a short time. For instance, he encouraged the *imams* to preach sermons about the significance of fighters in Islam (*Maruzat*, 85).⁷⁹ As an incentive, had the uniforms of the soldiers designed in green, as he noticed that the Bosnians were fond of that color. The people, especially young girls, liked these green uniforms very much and they wanted to see their boyfriends in them. In addition to this, he ordered that green gowns be given as presents to the *imams* and *hodjas* of the Hüsrev Bey Mosque, which is the foremost

⁷⁹ "Hüsrev Bey Câmi'-i şerîfnde va'z eden ve tefsîr okutan hoca efendiler, mücâhidîn ve mürâbitînin fezâiline dâir halka va'z u nasîhat eyleyerek "Şüphesiz ki Allah, kendi yolunda, birbirine kenetlenmiş bir bina gibi, saf bağlayarak çarpışanları sever" âyet-i kesmesini tefsîr ile Boşnakları askerliğe teşvîk ve ta'lîmin fezâilini beyân etmekde oldukları hâlde..." (*Maruzat*, 85).

mosque in Sarajevo (*Maruzat*, 85-86). All of these things played a role in encouraging boys to serve in the army.

Furthermore, Cevdet met with Bosnian notables and they exchanged ideas. As a result of these twenty-four-day negotiations, they made decisions by paying attention to the local people's sensitive expectations. Consequently, this problem, which the state had not been able to solve for forty years, was solved (*Tezâkir* III, 38-39; *Maruzat* 84-91).

Although the problem was solved and a committee was created to determine how many soldiers would be recruited to the army from Sarajevo, Cevdet admitted that he was afraid that there might still be a rebellion when it came time to implement it. To guard against this possibility, he encouraged the Bosnians by giving speeches. In one speech, for instance, Cevdet talked about the history of the Bosnians, their untainted moral values, and their positive features. He also stressed that he was upset because although many great personalities had emerged among the Bosnians in the past, they had fallen behind in recent times (*Maruzat*, 95-96). Two days later, in another speech, Cevdet said to people, "I do not need to talk about the courage and heroism of the Bosnians. History is the witness of it. This is something known and accepted by all. Their missing side is only in drills" (*Maruzat*, 97).⁸⁰ As Cevdet reports, the Bosnians became enthusiastic about recruitment after listening to these speeches and they volunteered willingly to enroll in the military (*Maruzat*, 98).

Although other actions of this kind by Cevdet can be enumerated, the above-mentioned example is enough to understand his attitude toward Bosnian society. As can be seen, Cevdet displayed a tendency to be conciliatory toward society to be able to solve the recruitment problem. He appears to have handled the problems of Bosnians tactfully by observing their sensitivities. This point is significant when compared with Cevdet's attitude toward the people in the Çukurova region. Therefore, it is useful to examine Cevdet's Çukurova mission and then compare the similarities and differences of his attitude toward the societies of these two separate geographies.

⁸⁰ "Boşnakların şecâatlerinden bahse hâcet göremem, târihler buna şahiddir. Ve her yerde ma'lûm u müsellemler olan mevâddandır. Anların noksânı, yalnız ta'lîmdedir" (*Maruzat*, 97).

4.3 Cevdet's Mission to the Çukurova Region

In the middle of the nineteenth century the central government was unable to control the Çukurova region and the surrounding mountains. The nomads and the highlanders of the region neither paid their taxes nor served in the Ottoman army. It was reported that since the state was not able to collect taxes, the Adana Province owed ten million piasters to the state treasury in 1852. In the entire region, banditry was widespread. When the Turkmen tribes moved between the coastal plains and the summer pastures of Uzunyayla, which were in fact located in the southern parts of Sivas Province, they took everything they could seize by force along the way. Armed gangs occupied strategic points on the road so that when passengers were travelling to Mecca for the pilgrimage, they were robbed in Payas (in present-day Hatay), at the pass of Mount Gavur. To put it simply, the entire region was in turmoil and anarchy (Dumont 1981, 370).

In 1865, the government took action for the pacification and sedentarization of Çukurova. For this, a very large task force with a military unit under the command of Derviş and Cevdet Pashas was assembled and sent to Çukurova. (Orhonlu 1978, 115). According to Hakan Erdem (2017), it is not surprising that this expedition was related to the debate concerning those who were eligible to be recruited for military service. As Cevdet reports that although the *Islahat* Edict required the recruitment of non-Muslims to the army, the implementation process of this provision had not been entirely decided and hence had not yet been put into practice. As the number of young people in the military had decreased and the government had fallen short of finding people to recruit, this issue came up again in the council of ministers (*havass-ı vükelâ*) under the chairmanship of Fuad Pasha (*Maruzat*, 113).

When Cevdet was asked about his ideas in the council, he listed many objections to the idea of mixing Muslims and non-Muslims within the same military unit.⁸¹ Instead, he offered a different solution to overcome the deficit of soldiers. This was to take the Kozan, Mount Gavur (the present-day Amanos Mountains), Mount Kürd, Mount Akça, and Der-sim regions under military control to be able to recruit soldiers and to unburden those

⁸¹ For details of his objections, see: (*Maruzat*, 113-115).

who were obedient to the state. Cevdet gave the example of Bosnia, where he had been able to form two regiments in his previous task (*Maruzat*, 115). As a result, in the council, it was decided to send Cevdet to the Kozan region, for which a special fighting force called the *Fırka-i Islâhiyye* (Division of Reform) was formed (*Maruzat*, 116). In other words, the main aim of Cevdet's mission was the pacification of the Çukurova region to be able to recruit soldiers. In the second place, the goal was to collect taxes regularly, to end banditry in order to secure local transportation, and to settle the nomadic tribes in the region (Dumont 1981, 370-371). In particular for Cevdet, the goal was to delay the participation of non-Muslims in military service as long as possible (Erdem 2017).

Just as in his mission in Bosnia, Cevdet had a chance to make contact with local people and observe their lifestyles and social habits closely. However, it can be said that Cevdet's statist attitude toward the local people of this region resulted in the adoption of a harsher attitude. In particular, when compared with his Bosnia inspectorship, Cevdet's reconciliatory manners were felt less in the Çukurova region.

4.3.1 Cevdet's Attitude Toward the Nomadic People of Çukurova

The *Fırka-i Islahiye* reached İskenderun in 1865 and started sedentarization and reform projects in Mounts Gavur and Kurd (Halaçoğlu 1973, 8). Large part of the tribes in these regions were settled in newly established towns and villages. Then the *Fırka* went to the Kozan and Çukurova regions (Halaçoğlu 1973, 11-12), and followed the same path in operations. According to Yusuf Halaçoğlu (1973), the rise in the level of living standards of the settled tribes encouraged the other nomadic tribes to settle. Nevertheless, some tribes left the region due to the mistakes made by the *Fırka-i Islahiye* during this reform operation (Halaçoğlu 1973, 3). Although Halaçoğlu implies that there were mistakes, he does not mention what they were.

When Cevdet's state-centered view of these nomadic people is taken into consideration, one might get the sense of what was wrong about the way the operations were carried out. For instance, it can be said that if the matter was about benefits for the state, Cevdet was not concerned about which practices would be painful for the local society. Cevdet mentions that all of the tribes were forbidden to go to the highlands in Kozan, since they were

destroying places on the migration routes and plundering people's properties. (*Maruzat*, 147). When the leader of a tribe, Kara Kahya, set out to go to the Uzunyayla plateau with his tribe in the summer period, he was ordered to be shot by a battalion. His tribe was sent back and a large number of their animals were confiscated (*Maruzat*, 148).

Although the tribes were allocated land for cultivation (Halaçođlu 1996, 36), the abrupt settlement project was a bitter experience for them. As Sina Akşin (1997) points out, although Cevdet describes the sudden ban of summer and winter migrations of those tribes as a practice without any drawbacks, from the perspective of those people it was quite painful. They had been migrating because they were occupied with animal husbandry, and therefore they did not know how to cultivate and irrigate the land. This sudden ban of migration led these nomadic tribes to suffer and made it difficult for them to adapt a new life (pp. 119-120).

Looking at Cevdet's arguments, he puts forward some reasons to justify these brutal operations in *Tezakir*, listing some of the "defects" of the Kozanođulları family. For instance, he argues that:

"The rule of the Kozanođulları was an absolute and a tyrannical one and was not bound by any condition. The *aghas* did whatever they wanted. They executed those men with whom they were angry... Although the people of Kozan are religious and good people, they have remained quite ignorant... The Kozanođulları were getting married to more than four women. For example, Ömer Ağa-zade Ahmed Ağa married nine women..." (*Tezakir* III, 112).⁸²

As this quotation indicates, Cevdet's emphasis on the "uncivilized" condition of the nomadic tribes can be felt throughout his accounts. For instance, in a few parts Cevdet mentions that the people of the tribes did not know what money was⁸³ or how to sell their products.⁸⁴ Cevdet appears to be proud of have taught them about money and how to sell

⁸² "Kozan-ođullarının hükümet-i mutlaka-i mütegalibe olup hiç bir şart u kayd ile mukayyed deđil idi. Ağalar akıllarına geleni yaparlar idi ve ziyâde gazap-nâk oldukları âdemi îdâm ediverirler idi... Kozan ahâlîsi mütediyyin ve sâlih âdemler ise de pek ziyade cehâlet içinde kalmış idiler... Kozanođulları dörtten ziyâde karı alıp hattâ Ömer Ağa-zâde Ahmed Ağa dokuza kadar karı tezevvüc etmiş idi" (*Tezakir* III, 112).

⁸³ See: (*Maruzat*, 149, 154); (*Tezakir* III, 161).

⁸⁴ See: (*Maruzat*, 144); (*Tezakir* III, 154-155, 160).

their products. He writes, “even the children who had not seen money realized the worth of it” (*Maruzat*, 149).

Another point that reveals Cevdet’s state-centered manner concerns Yusuf *Agha*, who was one of the *aghas* in eastern Kozan. Cevdet describes this man as an “intriguer” (*des-sâs*) who was the head of multiple armed tribes (*Maruzat*, 157). This man surrendered to the army (*Maruzat*, 162). Since one of the ways to ensure the permanence of the operation was to transfer the tribal leaders out of their regions and to put them on monthly salaries (Halaçoğlu 1996, 35), after his surrender Yusuf *Agha* and his family were transferred to Sivas at his request (*Maruzat*, 164). However, according to Cevdet’s reports, Yusuf *Agha* was still connected to the vagrants of Kozan, and during an outbreak of cholera he began to rebel. Not long after that, he was arrested (*Maruzat*, 168-169). After his arrest he tried to escape but he was shot and killed by sentries. What is striking is that Cevdet writes of his death that “he got what he deserved” (*Maruzat*, 171).⁸⁵

This kind of remark reveals Cevdet’s standpoint vis-à-vis the people of Kozan. Since Cevdet’s mission was to discipline the region for the sake of the state, he was not hesitant to take harsh measures even if they were painful for the local people. That is to say, while working on the solution to the recruitment problem in Bosna and Kozan, although both missions were for the sake of the state, Cevdet’s attitude toward these two separate societies is different. At this point, it is important to examine the possible reasons behind Cevdet’s differing attitudes.

4.4 A Comparison of Cevdet’s Attitudes toward the Society of Bosnia and Çukurova

Cevdet was sent to Bosnia on an official mission that gave him the authority to change the course of events. His aim was to repair the relationship between the Bosnians and the

⁸⁵ “Müte’âkıben Yusuf Ağa, yine geceleyin firâr sadedinde bulunduğu cihetle, karagol tarafından kurşun ile urulup i’ dâm edilmiş olduğu haberi geldi. Müstahakkımı bulmuş olduğu cihetle, “ne olmuş, nasıl urulmuş” deyu tafsilâtını soran olmadı” (*Maruzat*, 171).

state (Gölen 2013, 202). Therefore, what was significant for Cevdet was to understand the reasons behind the resistance of the Bosnians to military conscription. To accomplish his mission successfully, he took a close look at the society and observed the social factors that created disturbances for the state. In other words, he followed a path that would lead him to reconcile with the local people. All these reasons might have helped him to exhibit a broader approach toward the Bosnians.

Moreover, Cevdet was aware of the geo-strategic significance of Bosnia. From his notes, it is clear that a special importance was attached to the border regions. As it was reported to Cevdet, some of the Austrian officers along the border of the *sanjak* of Biške (the present-day Bihać, Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina) were trying to dissuade Bosnian soldiers from accepting military service by arguing, “you assent to enroll in the military. However, the Ottoman State is in financial difficulty and cannot give you your stipends.” The Bosnian soldiers responded to such arguments that “serving for money is not proper according to our religion. We perform our duty for our religion and state. Our leaders in the province approve of our military service. The *muftis* of the four districts have delivered a *fatwa*. We cannot go back.” After citing these reports, Cevdet notes that the military arrangement on the borderlines was the most critical issue. Hence, when he received word of this conversation between Bosnian and Austrian soldiers, he trusted that other Bosnians would not show any hesitation if the soldiers on the border zones were indeed so determined (*Maruzat*, 94).

If this reported conversation was indeed true, this would be another indication of the accuracy of Cevdet’s observations. As Cevdet reports, the notables and the spiritual leaders of the Bosnian districts were influential on the local people. Thus, as mentioned, the first thing Cevdet did was to convince the notables, and then to encourage the *hodjas* and *imams* to help solve the problem, since he realized that the Bosnians displayed an utmost loyalty to religion (*Maruzat*, 84).⁸⁶

When it comes to Çukurova, the significance of the region was different in the sense that it was located geographically at the center of the empire and did not form an international

⁸⁶ “Boşnakların ahvâlini nazar-ı tefûşden geçirdiğimde gördüm ki, mütedeyyin âdemler oldukları cihetle ulemânın nesâyihî anlara te’sîr ediyor” (*Maruzat*, 84).

border like Bosnia. If the state could not control the region, it would not lead to an intervention of foreign powers as easily as in Bosnia, but would remain mainly an internal problem. This is probably one of the main reasons for Cevdet's harsher policies in Çukurova. If he had not adopted a conciliatory attitude in Bosnia, the results would have been more serious and detrimental for the sovereignty of the state, but this risk was not as high in Çukurova.

Furthermore, Cevdet was originally from Lofça (the present-day Lovec), Bulgaria. Therefore, he was probably familiar with the socio-cultural understandings of Balkan culture and geography. On the other hand, he was a stranger to the Çukurova region, in particular to the nomadic lifestyle of the Turkomans. Therefore, his implication of the "uncivilized" situation of the unsettled people is felt throughout his accounts regarding Çukurova. Although Cevdet regards the Bosnians as people who needed to be "educated" and "disciplined" (*Maruzat*, 84),⁸⁷ from his perspective, this "education" seemed even more necessary for the nomads of Çukurova.

Finally, the state's bad relationship with the nomads for the previous one and a half centuries may have had an influence on Cevdet. Although in earlier periods the state had not undertaken an extensive policy of sedentarization (Kasaba 2009, 29), by the end of the seventeenth century achieving a more settled rural life had become a concern for the government to increase and exercise its authority (Faroqhi 2005, 15; Kasaba 2009, 54) Thus comprehensive orders to settle the nomads were issued at the beginning of the eighteenth century. However, tribal members always opposed registration and settlement, as these were mostly followed by further pressure to pay taxes and do military service. Since that time their resistance had turned into the frequent organization of movements to fight against the Ottoman forces (Kasaba 2009, 79-80) Consequently, the nomads had long posed a problem for the central government, a fact that may have had an unfavorable effect on Cevdet's attitudes towards them.

⁸⁷ "...Boşnakları oldukça terbiye ve hâllerini ıslâh ve Memâlik-i mahrûse'nin bir güzel bahçesi olan Bosna kıtasını i' mâr etmek emeline düşmüş idim" (*Maruzat*, 82).

4.5 Conclusion

To sum up, although Cevdet was one of the main actors of the Tanzimat era and served the state while applying reform projects, he did not welcome the social effects of the process. Therefore, for İstanbul society, Cevdet's accounts are limited to his criticisms about the social effects of the Westernization process and its resultant influence on consumption habits. When it comes to his Bosnia and Çukurova missions, he dealt with each society with a statist understanding. Although his aim was not different in its essence for both tasks, his attitude towards the two societies differs. It can be said that the center's traditionally lenient approach to the Bosnians due to the geo-strategic importance of the region can also be seen in Cevdet's manners, in that Cevdet tried to act according to the sensitive expectations of the Bosnians. Similarly, his harsher attitude toward the nomads of Çukurova may also be related to the influence of the state's unfavorable relationship with the nomads.

5. CEVDET PASHA IN THE BIG PICTURE OF THE OTTOMAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

“Fearing the sultan is a sign of wisdom (*hikmet*). Fearing the mother and father is a sign of wisdom. Fearing the elders and so on is a sign of wisdom. Above all, there is fear of God (Maruzat, 241).”⁸⁸

The above-mentioned quotation could be considered as a quintessence of Cevdet Pasha’s ideological standing. This strong patriarchal understanding is felt throughout *Tezakir* and *Maruzat* while dealing with Cevdet’s attitude towards the sultans and society. In this respect, Cevdet’s statements cannot be considered separate from the official ideology of the Ottoman Empire. In his famous *Ahlâk-ı Alâî* (“Sublime Ethics”), Ottoman scholar Kınalızade Ali Efendi (d. 1572) argues that it is the need of every human being to be tutored and shown the right path so that he may not go astray. Within the framework of the household, the father as the leader of communal life has to organize the affairs of the household and lead them through affection and rigidity, promise and threat, clemency and severity in order that everyone precludes depravity and struggles for virtues (Kurz 2012, 107).

When it came to the governmental level, for Kınalızade Ali Efendi and his contemporaries, “sultanate” was the only form of government to meet the need for social organization to avert the chaos. Functioning as religious and military leader, the sultan was the cornerstone of the entire Ottoman system and saw himself as the leader who guides his herd on the “straight path” (Yılmaz 2018, 152). Performing his will, his servants, played the pivotal role to provide welfare for even the lowliest subjects through protection and justice.

⁸⁸ “Padişahdan korkmak hikmettir. Anadan babadan korkmak hikmettir. Büyüklerden vesâirinden korkmak hikmettir. Ve cümlesinin başı Allah korkusudur” (Maruzat, 241).

Until the age of the nationalism in the nineteenth century, the empire maintained the legitimate government of all its subjects consisting of Muslims and non-Muslims (Kunt 1995, 27).

In this very brief chapter, the roots of Cevdet's notion of the "state," "sultan," and "subjects," as analyzed in the previous chapters, will be tried to be understood by considering the prevailing state ideology from the beginning of the formation of the Ottoman Empire. Since, this issue is wide enough to be a topic of a separate thesis and necessitates a much more elaborate research on Cevdet's sources as well as his *Tezahir* and *Maruzat*, it would not be possible to mention all aspects of the roots of Cevdet's point of view towards these concepts or of the formation of the Ottoman state ideology. Therefore, firstly the development of the state ideology will concisely be mentioned and then, Cevdet's outlook will briefly be analyzed with regard to this ideology. Then, the caliphate as a means of legitimation of the state power from Cevdet's perspective will be taken into account. As the last point, contemporary discussions and developments in the Ottoman political thought will be examined by taking the Young Ottoman movement into consideration to be able to see the counter positions to Cevdet's authoritarian understanding.

5.1 Development of the Ottoman State Ideology

The emirates, emerging after the disintegration of the Seljuks in Anatolia, were under the cultural and political influence of both Iran and the Mamluk lands of Egypt and Syria. Invasion of the Timurids enlarged the range of this cultural exchange by adding it the Timurid Empire and many Central Asian cities (Sariyannis 2019, 44). Hence, the Ottoman Principality as one of these emirates, was not born into a cultural vacuum. The concept of state and the logic that formed the actions of the Ottoman rulers was to a great degree effected by ancient Turkish traditions of the state and Indo-Persian theories of rule and administration (Kurz 2012, 99).

During the foundation period, statesman and ulama from neighboring emirates began to enter Ottoman intellectual life and had an effect on the ongoing transformation of the

Ottoman court from a tribal emirate to a kingdom. For their understanding of “government,” which is inherited and used by the Ottomans, there were two basic models. One was described in Nizam al-Mulk’s *Siyâsetnâme* (Book of Government) which concentrates on practical aspects of kingship, the administration of the army, tax collection, and so on, with special stress on the significance of “justice” (Sariyannis 2019, 44-45)

The other one was the works of al-Ghazali (d. 1111), in particular his *Ihyâ al- ‘ulûm* (The revival of knowledge) which presents a more Islamic understanding of kingship. Al-Ghazali also highlighted “justice” as the fundamental kingly virtue, but also stressed the necessity of “obedience” of the subjects that “even an oppressive ruler must be obeyed for the sake of avoiding civil strife” (Sariyannis 2019, 45-46) In fact, most Muslim jurists and theologians believed that the responsibility of an Islamic ruler was to exercise power to protect security and peace within his empire. In return, he was owed “unconditional obedience” which has its roots in Sunni Islam. Ibn Hanbal (d. 855) who was the leader of one of the four Sunni Law Schools, for instance, asserted the duty of absolute obedience unless the ruler was apostate. For Ibn Hanbal, even the rule of a tyrant is valid if he is successful and he must be obeyed (Black 2011, 84).

When it comes to the concept of “justice,” although, its place within the political thought gradually waned during the eighteenth century (Sariyannis 2019, 441), for the majority of the Ottoman centuries, it was regarded as the key aspect of the rulership. The monarchical domination was regarded as the guard of justice (Black 2011, 204) and repeated by many Ottoman scholars in different centuries. According to Tursun Beg, who was the Ottoman statesman and historian of the late fifteenth century and whose viewpoints also formed the essence of the Ottoman political philosophy, every society has to have a sovereign with absolute power. This sovereign must have the authority of issuing ordinances and laws other than religious law to maintain the social order and security under justice (İnalçık 1978, 43).

Despite varying definitions of the notion of “justice,” from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, its prevailing meaning was to put things in the places where they belong. This concept represented stability and harmony more than anything else (İnalçık 1978, 42) and was a must for what was conceived of as “world order.” For realization of this, every “class” or “estate” should be maintained in its place and know its limit (*hadd*) (Sariyannis

2019, 449) since, the harmony and unity in a state was achieved solely by maintenance of a hierarchical society and art of governing through keeping each person in his/her proper place as determined by his/her skills (İnalçık 1978, 42).

Since the guard of justice necessitated monarchical domination, this theoretical absolutism turned into a reality by founding a sort of administration that concentrated the power in the sultan's person (İnalçık 1978, 43). In fact, the Ottoman state was a clan dynasty in the beginning, by the mid-fifteenth century, the dynastic regime gradually transformed into a "patrimonial" state and hence, the relationship between the lord and vassal evolved into a patriarchal one between master (sultan) and slave (*kul*) (Tezcan 2012, 82). In this process, tribal characteristics paved the way for the equalization of state and ruler, and the power became the personal property of the ruling sultan. The sultan's authority was based on the prevalent conviction that "the only way to realise [justice] was ... by means of an omnipotent ruler independent from all external influences, deciding and acting in absolute freedom, responsible only before God for his actions" (Black 2011, 204).

In the writings of various Ottoman scholars on the Ottoman kingship, there was no question whether or not the reigning sultan was deserving his position by virtue. Although they enumerated the virtues of individual Ottoman rulers, they did not consider them as necessity for rulership. Since the sultanate was seen as a grace from God, personal merit was not regarded as a condition for legitimacy. According to Kınalızade, for example, the "rulership" was a gift from God (Yılmaz 2018, 164).

5.2 Cevdet's Traditional Outlook

When Cevdet's approach in *Tezakir* and *Maruzat* is closely analyzed, the effects of this traditional understanding of the long-lived Ottoman state can easily be seen on his interpretations and descriptions. Cevdet was in fact a scholar who got *madrasah* education, but also a high-level administrator and politician in modern sense owing to his experiences in the state affairs (Neumann 2000, 37). In Chambers' (1973) words, he was "the only man to have made the move from the rank of *kazasker* (military judge) to the rank

of vezir” in the history of the Ottoman Empire and remained fundamentally the “transitional figure” who had studied in both the *madrrasah* and the circle of Reşid Pasha (p. 464). Consequently, Cevdet represents an interesting case that according to Neumann (2009), he was both the heir of the concept of much older rulership and a member of the authoritarian and pragmatic Sublime Porte (p. 87) which performed as the real center of the government throughout the Tanzimat period. This is may be why it was possible for a personality like that of Cevdet to fall victim to political polarization in the early republican periods of Turkey (Neumann 2000, 10) and to be described as “a curious mixture of the progressive and the conservative” (Bowen 1986, 286).

Throughout the thesis, it was seen that Cevdet sustains the above-mentioned traditional view of the Ottoman Empire towards the rulership. According to him, the ruler has legal immunity in all civilized societies. In particular, for a monarch who is at the same time a caliph, this immunity should be unquestionable. For him, the ruler gains his legitimacy by being an uncontested monarch. Otherwise, he would not be able to occupy his post (Neumann 2000, 126-127). Cevdet was loyal to traditional absolutist place of the sultan in the government. Thus, he approves neither of a constitutional arrangement that would limit the monarch’s authority nor any opposition against the sultan. According to him, each individual should know his limit (*hadd*) and obey to his leader unconditionally. To repeat, for Cevdet, fearing the sultan, parents, and elders was a sign of wisdom.

5.3 Caliphate as a Tool for Legitimization of Power

According to Cevdet, the greatness of the Ottoman Empire comes from its unification of the caliphate and the sultanate (*Tarih-i Cevdet* I, 29; Kuran 1986, 9). His stress on the immunity of particularly a sultan-caliph is also mentioned above. Cevdet lays an emphasis on the “caliphate” as an element for legitimization of the Ottoman monarch. If Cevdet’s remarks is remembered when he was talking about the Mecca rebellion of 1855, he was asserting that:

“In this century, the Ottoman state remains as the sole protector of the religion of Islam on the globe. The Abbasid caliph also handed over the caliphate to

Yavuz Sultan Selim and his grandchildren in the presence of numerous Muslims. Therefore, there is no doubt that those who oppose the legitimate caliphate of the Ottoman dynasty are rebellious (*âsi*) and abominable (*bâğî*)” (*Tezâkir I*, 149).⁸⁹

İnalçık (2016) on the other hand, states that the issue of caliphate was in fact a complicated issue, since, upon Selim I’s conquest of Egypt in 1517, Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil did not officially hand over the caliphate to Selim I with a ceremony in the presence of people. In reality, there is no contemporary report of Selim I’s obtaining or asserting to obtain the caliphate from al-Mutawakkil. Instead, Selim I created a new legitimizing title for himself: “servitor of the two Holy Sanctuaries” Mecca and Madina (p. 203-204). Although the Ottoman sultans was seen as the most legitimate heirs to the caliphate when the Abbasid caliphate gradually disappeared (Aydın 2017, 24), according to İnalçık, the legend was created much later in the eighteenth century in order to support weakening political power (İnalçık 2016, 203).

İnalçık’s argument means that when the power of the rulership was declining toward the nineteenth century because of internal and external reasons, the “caliphate” became a tool to sustain the sultan’s place in the center of the government. What attracts the attention is that Cevdet also uses it as an instrument when necessary for the maintenance of the traditional view of the rulership. When “incontestability” of the monarch is at stake, he puts an emphasis on the sultan’s title of the “caliph” to legitimize his reign and also to point out the necessity of obedience, since from his perspective as well, any disobedience of the subjects would destroy the social order and endanger the states continuity.

5.4 Contemporary Counter Positions to Cevdet’s Authoritarian Understanding

To position Cevdet’s ideology, statism, and patriarchal notion of authority, it is essential to consider the contemporary discussions and counter position to Cevdet’s authoritarian

⁸⁹ “Bu asırda ise küre-i arz üzerinde din-i islâmın hâmfisi olan yalnız bir Devlet-i Osmaniyye kalmıştır. Halife-i Abbâsî dahi nice müslimin mahzarında Yavuz Sultan Selim’e ve a’kaabı’na emanet-i hilâfeti terk ve teslim etmişidi. Binâenaleyh hanedan-ı Osmanî’nin hilâfetleri meşru’ olarak muhalefet edenlerin âsi ve bâğî olduğunda şüphe yoktur” (*Tezâkir I*, 149).

understanding in the Ottoman Empire. This is important because after the second half of the nineteenth century, the traditional perspective toward the authority began to be challenged. As mentioned above, the traditional outlook never accepted displacement of the monarch or disobedience of the subjects, and aimed to protect and promote the “obedience.” As seen in this study, Cevdet adopted a similar traditional understanding toward the authority. However, during Cevdet’s period, together with the modernization process, the understanding and the patterns of “authority” and “opposition” was changing in parallel with the quest for new political systems (Kara 2017, 187).

During the late Tanzimat period, in the years 1867-1878, a group of Turkish intellectuals came into prominence (Mardin 2000, 3). This group, namely Young Ottomans, united owing to their common knowledge of European civilization and had concerns at the dismemberment of the empire. They decided to make a move against what they regarded to be catastrophic policies followed by the Ottoman Government (Mardin 2000, 10-11). They represented “a form of political protest for which there had been no precedent in the Ottoman Empire” through voicing their criticisms by making use of the media of mass communication (Mardin 2000, 4).

The Young Ottomans explicated their political ideas through their writings. They relied on the vocabulary of Islamic political theory to a great degree and based their demands on the *Shariah* (Türküne 1994, 114). They used the words “justice” (*adalet*), “contract of investiture” (*biat*), “consensus of the community” (*icma ‘-ı ümmet*), and “consultation” (*meşveret*) (Mardin 2000, 81). However, although these concepts belong to classical Islamic terminology, the Young Ottomans used them with new meanings by synthesizing them with modern political understanding (Türküne 1994, 102). According to İsmail Kara (2017), for instance, in the Islamic thought these concepts did not refer to political systems but were used for the discussions of morality. However, the Young Ottomans strove to derive political meanings from these concepts. They used consultation, contract of investiture or council (*şûra*) to refer to the concepts such as national assembly, checks and balances, and limiting the sultan's authority (p. 39).

This group also began to challenge the understanding of “obedience to almost any authority” which has its roots in Sunni Islam. Ali Suavi, for example, defended the right of “civil disobedience” and called the people for action. Contrary to the Sunni tradition, he

defended the right to rebel against the “tyrant” (Türköne 1994, 124). However, Ali Suavi, Namık Kemal, and their collaborators’ criticisms to the “tyranny” were rarely directed at the sultan’s person and never against the institution of the monarchy (Mardin 2000, 108) because of the unsuitability of the Sunni and Ottoman political traditions (Türköne 1994, 124) Hence, their target became the Porte, particularly Âli and Fuad Pashas (Mardin 2000, 108).

The Young Ottomans believed in the necessity of a constitutional and representative government (Mardin 2000, 80) with a goal to put an end to the preponderant impact of the Sublime Porte (Mardin 2000, 13). In their writings in *Muhbir* newspaper, that was the first official media organ of the Young Ottomans in Europe, the Young Ottomans explicitly demanded an assembly (Türköne 1994, 107) since, they believed in the necessity of the “people's sovereignty.” As quoted by Türköne (1994), Namık Kemal states in one of his writings in *Hürriyet* newspaper that “just as the individual possesses his own power (*iktidar*) naturally, when they come together... the public has the right of their sovereignty in every community (*ümmet*)”⁹⁰ (p. 116).

What was also new was that the Young Ottomans created an environment wherein discussions revolved around notions such as “liberty” and “fatherland” which became prevalent and increased momentum during the Hamidian period despite heavy censorship. Through their courageous nature, their actions represented an example (Mardin 2000, 80) and paved the way for subsequent intellectual and political oppositions to Abdülhamid II, such as the opposition of the Young Turks, by providing them an ideological basis (Ülken 2017, 119).

In such an atmosphere, Cevdet’s outlook was quite conservative⁹¹ and strictly loyal to the traditional understanding of the authority. Therefore, he considered the Young Ottomans, whose thoughts represented the genesis of most of the modern concepts in the Ottoman context (Kara 2017, 24), as the cause of unrest (*Maruzat*, 196-197). Cevdet believed that

⁹⁰ “Ferdin kendi iktidarına tasarruf-ı tabiiyesi gibi kuvve-i müctemil dahi bittabi efradın mecmuuna ait olduğu için her ümmette hakk-ı hakimiyet umumundur” (Türköne 1994, 116).

⁹¹ For a detailed discussion of Cevdet’s conservatism, consult to: (Noyan 2018).

they were harmful to the state and hence, the state's significant positions should be protected against their occupation (*Maruzat*, 52).⁹² However, what Cevdet was advocating was no longer be on the agenda of the political actors coming after Cevdet. Within almost thirty years after Cevdet's death, there was left neither the sultanate nor the caliphate. The entire political system of the empire was changed and Turkish Republic was founded in 1923.

To sum up, as seen in this study, although Cevdet served the state throughout its transformation period and was actively involved in the implementation of numerous reforms, he maintained the traditional official understanding of authority which in fact was on the wane throughout the nineteenth century. In this respect, he displayed a conservative stance and positioned himself against those who questioned or took reactions to the traditional understanding such as the Young Ottomans, or those who rebelled against the state and sultan because of their discontent with the developments. In this sense, Cevdet represented an interesting case by being the heir of the concept of much older authority which in fact began to be challenged during his time.

⁹² "...bundan dolayı zuhûr edecek keşâ-keşler ile azl ü nas bir kerri sökün ederse, umûr-ı nâzüke ve mesâlih-i mühimme Jön Türkîler ellerine geçip, bu ise, menâfi'-i devlete muvâfık düşmeyeceğinden..." (*Maruzat*, 52).

CONCLUSION

After the 1940s, an interest in Cevdet, whose identity did not attract much attention immediately after his death, increased among the conservatives of the time. Since the tendency was to regard the nineteenth century intellectuals in a partisan manner during these years, Cevdet became a symbol for conservatives and was represented as “defender of islam” or “faithful but also progressive.” Although academically more reliable works have been conducted in the following decades, and Cevdet considered from different perspectives, there has been a common understanding of “incontestability” of Cevdet’s accounts. Only a few of the recent works, such as Neumann’s studies, could go beyond this understanding. However, as this study aimed to illustrate, Cevdet’s sources need to be studied with a critical eye to be able to produce academically more reliable studies.

This study is a modest attempt to go beyond the understanding of Cevdet’s “incontestability” and challenge the repeated “reliability” and “impartiality” of his works to be able to reassess their dependability as primary sources of the Tanzimat era. For this, *Tezakir* and *Maruzat* were taken into account through questioning Cevdet’s purpose of writing these sources, the influence of his personal relationships on his accounts, his perspective while interpreting the events, and the themes he was often dealing with. Thematic focus of this research has been on Cevdet’s attitude toward the Tanzimat era’s grand viziers, sultans, palace, economy, and society as well as people’s reactions to reform movements.

Cevdet was a highly complex statesman, and played a crucial role in the application of reforms in the administrative, judiciary, intellectual, and educational spheres. His political outlook was centered on “the state.” Therefore, his point of view was shaped by a pragmatist statist understanding for reinforcing the power and continuity of the empire. Moreover, he regarded the notion of “sultan” as a pivotal factor of the Ottoman state, and

supported reforms under the protection of the sultan. That's why, he had a strong understanding of "obedience to monarch" and never approved the participation of "the subjects" in politics. According to him, any opposition against the state or the sultan was "mischief" (*fitne*) and those who opposed any of the two were rebellious (*âsi*) and abominable (*bâğî*).

Cevdet's monarchist and state-centered outlook is felt throughout both of the sources when he describes and interprets the events. Therefore, in the study, this point is paid a special attention in order to illustrate its influence on Cevdet's accounts with concrete examples. As another point, since Cevdet was writing about a period in which he was actively involved, his personal relationship with the people had an effect on his writings. This situation resulted in open partiality of his accounts. While trying to justify or excuse the acts of the ones he was attached, he did not hesitate to use harsh expressions about whom he had conflict of interests or personal disputes.

While composing both sources, the intend of Cevdet was not their publication. *Tezâkir* was a compilation of his notes that he took while serving as chronicler. He reconsidered the events of his time according to his personal outlook, and compiled these notes to be sent to his successor Lütü Effendi. *Maruzat* was written upon the direct order of Abdülhamid II to inform him about the periods of the sultan's father Abdülmecid and uncle Abdülaziz. Therefore, at some points, there was a difference between the language used in the sources. For instance, when Cevdet was talking about the statesmen of the time, sultans or palace, he was more careful about his word choices in *Maruzat*. Depending on the sources, the emphasis on some specific issues were also different. For example, Abdülaziz's dethronement and death was mentioned in a more detailed way in *Maruzat*. These kinds of differences were paid attention throughout the thesis to be able to understand Cevdet's agenda.

In the first chapter, Cevdet's accounts about the five most mentioned grand viziers—Reşid, Fuad, Âli, Mahmud Nedim, and Midhat Pashas— were tackled to reveal Cevdet's partiality. It was seen that there is an obvious variation in Cevdet's attitudes toward each of these grand viziers, since Cevdet was affected by his personal relationship with them. While Cevdet's main collaborators were the triad of Reşid, Fuad, and Âli Pashas, Cevdet felt the closest attachment to Reşid and Fuad Pashas. This situation led Cevdet to adopt a

lenient attitude toward Reşid and Fuad Pashas while displaying ambivalent and sometimes critical manners toward Âli Pasha. When it came to Mahmud Nedim and Midhat Pashas, almost all of Cevdet's statements were negative and severe. The chapter aimed to figure out the possible reasons behind Cevdet's changing attitudes toward each of these grand viziers and illustrate the subjectivity of Cevdet's accounts.

In the second chapter, Cevdet's attitude toward the two sultans of the era—Abdülmeçid and Abdülaziz—and the situation of the palace and economy during their reigns has been scrutinized. The objective of the chapter was to understand Cevdet's notion of "sultanate" in order to contextualize Cevdet's accounts of these sultans and their reigns. Since, Cevdet firmly believed that "sultan" was one of the four foundational pillars of the Ottoman state, he refrained from criticizing the sultans to protect their dignity. This was also why he elaborated on Abdülaziz's dethronement and death, as he aimed to vindicate the name and dignity of the sultan. In the second place, Cevdet's primary concerns about the situation of the economy of the Tanzimat era were considered. During Abdülmeçid's period, Cevdet's main focus was on the "extravagance" of the palace and palace ladies which he saw as the main reason for the deterioration of the economy. The study has indicated that there were more significant reasons to worsen the economic situation and lead the empire to crisis than what Cevdet stressed. On the other hand, although the expenses Cevdet defines as "prodigality" continued to increase during Abdülaziz's era, Cevdet did not mention them and retreated into silence about the period. In the chapter, the possible reasons behind Cevdet's changing attitude toward the two sultans have been also analyzed.

The third chapter aimed to illustrate Cevdet's state-centered view while describing and interpreting the oppositional movements of the people of different strata and diverse regions of the empire. Tanzimat reforms brought about rapid changes in almost all spheres of life which often resulted in discontent of the people and led to uprisings. As the chapter reveals, Cevdet on the other hand, adopted a conservative and traditional political stand, and never approved of any opposition against the state or sultan. Therefore, he labeled these kinds of oppositions "mischief" (*fitne*). To reveal Cevdet's attitude, this chapter firstly examined reactions by Muslims and non-Muslims to the Islahat edict. Secondly, his harsh manner towards the ones who got involved in the Mecca rebellion of 1855, which was caused due to the prohibition of the slave trade, was considered. In the third

place, his accounts of the Kuleli incident, which was a conspiracy caused by extensive discontent with the proclamation and the consequences of the Islahat Edict, have been analyzed. Lastly, Cevdet's descriptions of the Syrian uprising, which was severely suppressed by the state, were taken into consideration to be able to indicate how Cevdet tried to protect the state's dignity.

The fourth chapter tackled with Cevdet's manner toward the society of the Tanzimat period. In this context, his reports about İstanbul society, in which he had spent most of his life, and societies of Bosnia and the Çukurova region, to where he was sent as a state official, were analyzed. For İstanbul society, although there were more significant changes in people's lives led by modernization, Cevdet only focused on the rise of "horrible lavishness" and the abandonment of old socio-economic habits. This chapter also reveals that although Cevdet's main purpose was not different when it came to his missions in Bosnia and Çukurova, his attitude towards the two societies differed from each other. Cevdet's responsibility was to rehabilitate the relationship with the local people and central government to be able to solve the existing problems. However, Cevdet adopted a lenient approach to the Bosnians and a harsher one to nomads of Çukurova. The chapter attempted to figure out the possible reasons behind Cevdet's changing attitudes towards the people of these two regions.

The last chapter briefly examined the Ottoman political thought to understand Cevdet's traditional and conservative outlook on rulership. The chapter illustrated that Cevdet's advocacy of the patrimonial absolute monarchy was in fact the state's official ideology that was maintained strictly until the eighteenth century. In this regard, Cevdet was an interesting case for representing the transitional period in his personality; On the one hand, he played a crucial role throughout the Tanzimat period while implementing the reform projects of the government, but on the other, he was striving to protect the much older notions of authority which were fading gradually away since the eighteenth century.

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