

The Ottoman Tribal School:  
Surveillance and the Students' Lives in the School

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## Approvals

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The intellectual content of this thesis, which has been written by me and for which I take full responsibility, is my own, original work, and it has not been previously or concurrently submitted elsewhere for any other examination or degree of higher education. The sources of all paraphrased and quoted materials, concepts, and ideas are fully cited, and the admissible contributions and assistance of others with respect to the conception of the work as well as to linguistic expression are explicitly acknowledged herein.



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## Abstract

The Ottoman Tribal School: Surveillance and the Students' Lives

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for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University, 2020

Professor Asım Karaömerlioğlu, Thesis Advisor

This thesis, on the Ottoman tribal school, investigates the surveillance and the students' lives in the school. It shows how Abdulhamid II and his officers established mechanisms in order to control the students. The work focuses on which strategies and tools were used by the sultan and his governors to supervise the sons of tribes in the Ottoman tribal school. This thesis also shows how the students' lives were in the school. It considers on the students' experiences, problems, and their reactions against the school administration through sample events. Most of the primary sources used in this work are documents of the Ottoman Archives. This thesis aimed to develop an anthropological perspective to the Ottoman tribal school.

34,000 words

## Özet

Osmanlı Aşiret Mektebi: Denetim ve Öğrenci Hayatı

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Profesör Asım Karaömerlioğlu, Tez Danışmanı

Osmanlı Aşiret Mektebi'ni konu alan bu tez, okuldaki denetim mekanizmalarını ve öğrenci hayatını ele alıyor. Bu çalışma, II. Abdülhamid ve memurlarının öğrencileri kontrol etmek amacı ile nasıl mekanizmalar kurduğunu gösteriyor. Öğrencileri denetim altına alabilmek için yöneticiler tarafından kullanılan stratejiler ve araçlar bu tezin odak noktalarından birini oluşturuyor. Bu tez ayrıca Osmanlı Aşiret Mektebi'nde nasıl bir öğrenci hayatı olduğunu gösteriyor. Okulda yaşanmış örnek olaylar üzerinden, öğrencilerin yaşamları, sorunları ve okul yönetiminin üzerlerinde kurduğu kontrol mekanizmalarına karşı tepkileri bu tezin bir diğer odak noktasıdır. Bu tezde kullanılan birincil kaynakları Osmanlı Arşiv belgeleri oluşturuyor. Bu tez Osmanlı Aşiret Mektebi'ne antropolojik bir yaklaşım geliştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

34.000 kelime







Anneme



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## Introduction

The Ottoman tribal school was opened in Istanbul in October 1892 for the education of sons of leading Arab tribes. However, Kurdish and Albanian students were accepted to the school in the later years. It was a five year boarding school, and admitted sons of powerful Muslim tribes between twelve and sixteen years old.<sup>1</sup> The school was placed in Esmâ Sultan Yalısı (Waterside of Esmâ Sultan) in Kabataş district of Istanbul. Its curriculum was a combination of the middle and preparatory high schools of the empire. Through five years, classical Arabic and Ottoman Turkish, three years of French, and two years of Persian were taught. Islamic sciences, geography, history, arithmetic were other lessons.<sup>2</sup>

The Ottoman tribal school was a multi-faceted project of Abdulhamid II towards sons of leading Muslim tribes of the empire. The school was a strategy of the sultan that have been expressed as “grab bag” method by Selim Deringil.<sup>3</sup> This school had many aims. Firstly, the sultan targeted to train sons of

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1 Eugene Rogan, “Asiret Mektebi: Abdulhamid II’s School for Tribes,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 28, no. 1 (1996): 83.

2 Ibid.

3 Selim Deringil, “They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery”: The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 45, no.2 (2003): 312.

Arab, Kurd, and Albanian tribes in the empire. After they had completed education, they could be an Ottoman governor for their homelands. Secondly; if these sons were empire officers instead of being a sheikh or agha in their tribal districts, they could bring the existence of the central Ottoman government to their regions. Eugene Rogan argues that this was an attempt in order to change the government mechanisms of tribal groups that were considered as autonomous, outside the influence of the central government.<sup>4</sup> These are the general approaches to the Ottoman tribal school in the literature. However, archival records reveal that there was also the issue of surveillance on the students. In this thesis, one of my arguments is that the sultan and his governors established some surveillance mechanisms on the students.

This thesis sheds light on the discipline mechanisms of the Ottoman ruler on the sons of tribes in the school. However, this issue constituted a general pattern in many Ottoman schools, there are not many records in the archive that show the continuous efforts to discipline and surveillance on the students as in the Ottoman tribal school. Archival documents show that the students of the Ottoman tribal school were subjected to several discipline mechanisms in many different parts of their daily lives by the Ottoman governors. To be able to see the reactions of the students against the control mechanisms, and to reveal the students' experiences and problems in the school, the students' live is the other focusing point of the thesis. As based on methodology of anthropology, this work considers on traumatic cases that the sons of tribes experienced in the school. Thus, I will develop a new perspective to the literature by interpreting the school through the lens of daily lives.

Michel Foucault argued that old political systems that gained power from its magnificent public shows increasingly transformed to an invisible shape that using new government tactics.<sup>5</sup> In other words, new governmental devices were replaced that was used by different state agents in the place for the emperor that personalized power.<sup>6</sup> He also claimed that the modern power aimed everybody to keep under its surveillance through 19th century.<sup>7</sup> Thus,

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4 Rogan, "Asiret Mektebi: Abdulhamid II's School for Tribes," 83.

5 Michel Foucault, *Hapishanenin Doğuşu*, İstanbul: İmge Kitabevi, 2015.

6 Ibid, 35.

7 Ibid, 40.



modern power individualized, recorded, dignitized, and dominated the child by school, the patient by the hospital, the madman by the madhouse, the military army, and by encircling the criminal with the prison.<sup>8</sup> When every person is registered somewhere, everyone will be kept under control, and will be kept under discipline.

Eugene Rogan provides an account of how the Ottoman empire reconstructed itself during the last decades of the empire by using new archival material from Ottoman, Arabic, and European sources.<sup>9</sup> He examines the idea of frontier as a geographical and cultural concept, and sheds light on the process of state formation.<sup>10</sup>

In the second half of the 19th century, Abdulhamid II paid attention to Muslim tribes that were living in distant regions of the empire. Engin Akarlı interprets this case in the framework of Pan-Islamist ideology of the sultan.<sup>11</sup> As it will be discussed in the Chapter 2, Muslim population of the Ottoman empire was in majority by the effects of loss of non-Muslim population. Arab, Kurd, and Albanian tribes drew attention of the sultan because they constituted a significant rate of the population. In order to achieve Islamic unity that was seen as necessary for well-being of the empire, Abdulhamid II and his advisors tried to bring these tribes under the control of the central Ottoman administration.

Existed literature argues that tribes were generally conceived as problematical objects by the Ottoman officers. Deringil summarizes reasons of it as that they were savage people that were living in distant regions of the empire; and governing them was difficult.<sup>12</sup> He claims that the Ottoman rulers developed different strategies to deal with the tribes of the empire.<sup>13</sup> In the Hamidian period; while they were considered tribes as savage and ignorant

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8 Ibid, 45.

9 Eugene Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan, 1850-1921*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

10 Ibid, 8.

11 Engin Akarlı, "Abdulhamid II's Attempt to Integrate Arabs into the Ottoman System," in *Pal-estine in the Late Ottoman Period*, ed. David Kushner (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), 75.

12 Deringil, "They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery," 315.

13 Ibid, 318.

groups that should be brought under the control of the central administration, Abdulhamid II was also represented as a paternal figure who could civilize them.<sup>14</sup>

Scholars have been argued that schooling was a significant policy of the Ottoman empire. Through the period of Tanzimat, the Ottoman education system was tried to modernize. Necdet Sakaoğlu summarizes the changing patterns of the Ottoman schooling as that the schools was re-formulated in order to raise students as Ottoman governors that the new bureaucratic system necessitated.<sup>15</sup> Besides, they tried to re-organize and develop military and vocational high schools. Some schools in the area of medicine, pharmacy, agriculture, industry, security, government, and religious services were opened and also started the attempts in the way of establishment universities.

There are limited studies on the Ottoman tribal school. The first name who revealed a general study on the school is Eugene Rogan. As it will be seen in Chapter 2, he examines the school through the perspective of institutional history, and reveals some basic data related to it.<sup>16</sup> Rogan interprets the school as a social engineering project of Abdulhamid II in order to change the government mechanisms of the tribes. His study approaches the school from a state-centered perspective.

Another name who focuses on the Ottoman tribal school is Alişan Akpınar. He examines the school through the relationship between the Ottoman empire and the tribes.<sup>17</sup> Like the main tendency in the literature, he claims that the school was a result of increased attention of the sultan towards the Muslim tribes.<sup>18</sup> As Rogan, Akpınar mainly gives attention to the aims of the sultan by the school project.

This thesis mainly inspired from the anthropology. One of the definitions of anthropology is studying lives in detail. In this thesis, I focus on the students' lives, experiences, problems, and etc.. through the lens of anthropology,

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14 Ibid, 320.

15 Necdet Sakaoğlu, *Osmanlı Eğitim Tarihi*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1993), 46.

16 Rogan, "Asiret Mektebi: Abdulhamid II's School for Tribes," 84.

17 Alişan Akpınar, "Aşiret Mektebi," (Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1996), 25.

18 Ibid, 26.

especially state anthropology. There are significant studies on the state anthropology literature. Works of Philip Abrams, Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta, and Berna Yazıcı have been informative for my research. Abrams criticized that academic researchers considered the state as a given entity and attributed a material existence to it by focusing on the state concept in order to examine political and historical events.<sup>19</sup>

Recent study of Nadir Özbek looking at historical terms through the personal relations of different historical agents, for which he benefits from an anthropological approach in the sense of grasping more of the detail in peoples' lives.<sup>20</sup> This article prepares the methodological and intellectual base of this thesis. Özbek shows the importance of studying the Ottoman history without the abstraction of the term of the state, and Abdulhamid II. He reveals the way to escape the abstraction of the state as a distinct entity apart from the society; and also, he mentions the importance of looking at historical terms through the personal relations of different historical agents.

As for the primary sources used in this thesis, Ottoman archival documents are the most widely used sources. The present research benefits from distinctive collections of the Presidency Ottoman Archive. To find out the students' case in the Ottoman tribal school, the collection of Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (MF. MKT.) and Dahiliye Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (DH. MKT.) were intensively used. The collection of Dahiliye Nezareti is a comprehensive source which includes the reports of the governors in terms of the Ottoman tribal school. Maarif Nezareti is a collection in that I have reached reports in terms of the students' cases in the Ottoman tribal school. Yıldız collection is a special part of the Ottoman archive that includes documents of the Hamidian era. To reveal the governors' attempts towards the surveillance on the students, the collection of Yıldız Perakende Maarif Nezareti Maruzatı (Y. PRK. MF.), Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Zabtiye Nezareti (Y. PRK.. ZB.) have contributed greatly. To discover some students' petitions from the Ottoman tribal school, I benefited from the collection of Yıldız Sadaret Hususi (Y. A.. HUS.)

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19 Philip Abrams, "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State," *Historical Sociology* 1, no.1 (1977): 59-60.

20 Nadir Özbek, "İstisna Hali, Devletsiz, Abdulhamidsiz Osmanlı Türkiye Tarihi Yazmanın İmkanları," *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 301 (2019): 46-53.

In addition to the introduction and conclusion parts, the present study consists of three substantive chapters. Chapter 2 presents a literature survey to understand the historical background for the relationship between the Ottoman empire and tribes in the second half of the 19th century. This chapter also gives a survey of anthropological studies that I mainly inspired. Chapter 3 is based on the discipline mechanisms which were established on the students of the Ottoman tribal school. Chapter 4 presents the students' life in the school.

In Chapter 2, I examine the changing patterns of the relation between the Ottoman empire and tribes through the Tanzimat era. In Chapter 3, I try to understand how the students were taken under the discipline of the Ottoman empire in the Ottoman tribal school. The control mechanisms on the students belonged to two agents. The first one was Abdulhamid II. It will be seen that the sultan became highly interested in the case of the students at the Ottoman tribal school. However, it was more than a paternal approach. To be able to gain their loyalty to himself, Abdulhamid II wanted take the students under discipline by different strategies. Reading Mevlid-i Şerif<sup>21</sup>, giving feasts, and speeches to the students for the name of the sultan in the school were such ideological attempts that were put into practice to discipline them. The other agents of the control on the students were the empire officers and bureaucratic institutions. The school directory, teachers, gendarmeries and two important names of the time, Zeki Pasha, who was the governor of Tophane district, and Ali Nazima, who was the management of the school, were significant ones. Besides, the *Mekatib-i Askeriyye-yi Şahane Nezareti* was the most significant bureaucratic institution which had control over the students. In Chapter 3, I will present some examples of these discipline mechanisms from the inside of the students' life in the school.

In Chapter 4, I reveal the students' life in the Ottoman tribal school. Their experiences, problems, and reactions are the focus points of this chapter. Chapter 4 presents some sample events from the lives of the students and opens a window from the inside of the school. In brief, this chapter tries to find an answer to how life in the school was. I mainly focus on the students'

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21 An ancient Islamic poet.

## THE OTTOMAN TRIBAL SCHOOL

matters and their reactions because I try to develop a new perspective on the Ottoman tribal school as much as possible trying to develop a point of view that reflects the daily experience of living in the school.





## The State and the Tribes in the 19th Century in the Ottoman Empire

This thesis is on the Ottoman tribal school which is considered as one of the significant schooling projects of Abdulhamid II towards tribal groups in the empire. Larger context of my literature survey like, a slowly globalizing world where nation states had emerged in the more modern geographies so nationalist movements were multiplying and the old empires were aware or partly aware that they needed to move towards modern governing structures and more homogeneous populations. To understand aims of the sultan by the Ottoman tribal school, it is necessary to focus on the relations between the empire and the tribes. In this chapter, I would like to present a historical background for the policies of the Ottoman empire towards tribes in the late 19th century. The centralization politic of the Ottoman empire which started in the late Ottoman period affected many areas, especially resulted in some changes in the governmental structure of the tribes. In this process, the Ottoman rulers tried to change centuries-long tribal formations. Through the Tanzimat era in the way of centralization, one of the aims of the Ottoman governors was being able to establish control on the population, particularly in the distant regions, and provide loyal citizens to the rulers. However, when the policies were started to be implemented it was understood that tribes constituted an obstacle for them. Ottoman rulers started to conceive the tribes in the remote regions as a threat because they were the local agents that

emerged as a result of traditional formations of the centuries. Therefore, this case made a change in the structure of the tribes difficult.

Eugene Rogan presents an intriguing and nuanced picture in terms of frontier societies' experiences of incorporation into the modern state.<sup>1</sup> Rogan's main idea is that the modern state was introduced into its frontiers by the Ottoman rulers in the 19th century.<sup>2</sup> Rogan was laying the groundwork for the redefinition of the country as a political entity. He argues that the indigenous populations' relationships were transformed by the Ottoman governors that aimed to create new forms of identities, generally as loyal Ottomans.<sup>3</sup>

By Rogan's perspective, in the Hamidian era, the Ottoman governors had to adopt different policies to bring these groups under the control of the sultan. One of them was the attempts to integrate local leaders into the central administration as an Ottoman governor. The sultan tried to make a structural change for tribes. The Ottoman tribal school was a significant schooling project of the sultan. His objective was to train the tribal chiefs as an Ottoman officer for their regions. In this way, they became an empire's governor instead of being a sheik or agha. In this chapter, I will try to give the historical background of the relationship between the Ottoman empire and its tribes through the changing government patterns of the rulers towards tribal populations starting from the period of Tanzimat.

Gülseren Duman examines the reflections of the 19th century administrative, fiscal, and social changes in tribal regions through the period of Tanzimat.<sup>4</sup> Duman argues that collaboration with local powerholders was crucial to govern and maintain the order and security in tribally populated regions.<sup>5</sup> She draws attention to the importance of negotiations between several powerholders in the region. By mainly focusing on implementation of Tanzimat reforms in settings of tribal regions, she demonstrates how the intermediaries

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1 Rogan, *Frontiers of the State*, 45.

2 Ibid, 52.

3 Ibid, 60.

4 Gülseren Duman, "Governing a Frontier Sancak in the Ottoman Empire: Notables, Tribes, and Peasants of Muş (1820s-1870s)," (Doktora Tezi, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 2018).

5 Ibid, 15.



role, local knowledge, and experience of local powers were significant to fulfillment of reforms.<sup>6</sup>

As Duman argues, one of the aims of the Tanzimat rulers was to break the power of local leaders.<sup>7</sup> They tried to replace the central Ottoman officers with tribal leaders. In this way, the tribal sheiks were going to be eliminated by the officers appointed by Istanbul. However, they failed to succeed because such empire agents lacked enough information like local knowledge, governing traditions, or language to be able to rule the regions and impose on the local population.

In the second half of the 19th-century, administration of tribal regions gained importance for the central Ottoman government. Arab, Kurd, and Albanian tribes constituted a significant part of the Muslim population of the empire. In this conjuncture, Pan-Islamism which aimed to unify all Muslim subjects under the Ottoman empire, gained importance for Abdulhamid II. Within the framework of the Pan-Islamist policy of Abdulhamid II, the establishment of an effective rule on the leading Muslim tribes, and their commitment to the empire became a vital issue for the sultan. As Eugene Rogan claims, this school aimed to both bring these tribes under the authority of the sultan and integrate sons of the leading tribes into the circle of the central Ottoman administration. In other words, the sultan tried to get tribal groups under his direct rule by training them as an Ottoman governor.

In the literature which focuses on the tribes in the Ottoman empire, studies generally have been on the issue of governance. The main focal point of this literature has been how the Ottoman rulers imposed the tribes to sustain an effective administration on them. Scholars also focus on the politic and economic aspects of the tribal groups such as government mechanisms and taxation. However, there are almost no studies that consider the daily lives of the tribal people in this literature. While there are a lot of studies, for example that focus on the daily lives of Armenian and Greek children in big cities of the Ottoman empire in the literature on minorities, there are not any studies

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6 Ibid, 126.

7 Ibid, 80.

like that on the Arab and Kurdish ones in the literature on minorities or history of East Anatolia.

Scholars have argued that the Ottoman rulers were suspicious of the tribes in the empire. Tribes had been generally problematical groups for the Ottoman governors because they lived in distant regions of the empire which were troublesome to rule, and they had their politic, social, and cultural settings which were difficult to understand by an Ottoman governor who came from Istanbul to the regions. Existing studies generally indicated that the Ottoman officers regarded the tribes as ignorant, savage, and uncivilized people. Eugene Rogan takes to hand these dealings as cultural critiques which were toward to give a legitimate the sultan's efforts on the tribal people.<sup>8</sup> He argued that defining tribes as "ignorant" gives a reference to the absence of religious observance and using "wildness" tries to indicate their nomadic features.<sup>9</sup> Rogan notes that these definitions reflected the priorities of the period. Ottoman officers saw the tribes as ignorant to be able to give a reference to the sultan's role as the caliph who rescues them from the darkness of it; additionally, they defined the tribes as wild people in order to be able to emphasize their savage aspects. At this point, they tried to reflect the efforts of the central Ottoman government in the way of centralization as attempts towards change their nomadic habits to keep them from wildness.

Some historians argue that by the failure of such attempts towards tribes in order to break the power of their local leaders, the central Ottoman government tried to change its government strategies to be able to impose government mechanisms of the central Ottoman administration on tribes. The Pan-Islamism ideology of Abdulhamid II especially became important on that. The sultan approached the leading tribes of the empire within the aim of Islamic unity, and he tried to reflect himself as a supreme ruler over their tribal leaders by using his title as caliph. The sultan tried to pull them into the circle of the central Ottoman administration. At this point, Abdulhamid II aimed to train the sons of the leading Muslim tribes in the empire as an Ottoman governor.

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8 Eugene Rogan, "Asiret Mektebi: Abdulhamid II's School for Tribes," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 28, no. 1 (1996): 83-107.

9 Ibid.

The sultan saw it as a favorable way to establish an effective administration on the tribes, and also integrate them into the central government.

Firstly, I will focus on the relationship between the tribes and the Ottoman government through the concerns of the central government in terms of the tax collection from them, and ensuring an effective rule on them. Then, I will try to reflect changing approaches towards tribal people by the "borrowed colonialism" concept of Selim Deringil. Secondly, I will consider conjunctures of the Hamidian era which made Muslim tribes remarkable for the central Ottoman government to see changing dynamics of the relation between the Ottoman Empire and tribes in the rule of Abdulhamid II. Thirdly, I will try to show these changing government mechanisms of sultan Abdulhamid II with the purpose of integrating Muslim tribes to the central Ottoman administration. Then, I will consider the Hamidian educational policy as a significant device for his aims in that way.

As I indicated, one of the aims of this thesis is focusing on daily lives of the sons of Arab, Kurd, and Albanian tribes to reach their problems and reactions against changing attitudes of the central government towards themselves. However, the literature on this is very limited, and there are very few scholarly studies which have told the daily lives of Arab and Kurdish children in the Ottoman schools. Because my aim is to develop an anthropological insight through lenses of the daily lives in this thesis, I will show a sample study which is about the daily lives of Armenian children in Istanbul from the literature. Lastly, before entering the main chapters of the thesis, I will present the studies which specifically focus on the Ottoman Tribal School.

In the first section, to understand the approaches of the central Ottoman administration towards the tribes, studies of Gökhan Çetinsaya and Hakan Özoğlu present a good base. However, they tend not to focus directly on the tribes themselves, but rather on related topics which are the administration of distant provinces of the empire. While Çetinsaya considers the tax collection from these distant regions, Özoğlu tries to draw a framework about the attempts of the central Ottoman government to establish an influential rule on these regions. The second debate on the issue of the tribes in the Ottoman empire shaped around defining the approaches of the Ottomans as colonialism towards tribal people. In this debate, Selim Deringil has developed a new

insight within the concept of “borrowed colonialism” in the literature. In the following parts, I will try to examine the attitudes of the Ottoman governors towards tribal groups in the empire through the debates of these three significant works.

There are extended studies on the topic of the relationship between the central Ottoman government and its tribes in the 18th and 19th centuries; here two approaches seem to dominate. Firstly, there is the geographical distance between the central administration and the tribes. This case constituted a problem in two aspects; one of them is tax collection concerns of the Ottoman governors, and the second one was enabling an effective central administration on these regions. Gökhan Çetinsaya argues that the main concern of the Ottoman government was collecting taxes regularly from distant provinces of the empire before the period of the Tanzimat. Çetinsaya draws a picture that shows us a mutual cooperation between the Ottoman officers who were sent by the central government to the distant regions of the empire and the local leaders of there. He emphasized that local leaders of such places were effective in terms of getting taxes from the local population.<sup>10</sup>

Çetinsaya indicates that this case was sustained up to the reign of Mahmud II. “Not until the reign of Sultan Mahmud II (1808–39) did the central government set out to restore its authority over the provinces, and to produce a reformed and centralized system of provincial administration.”<sup>11</sup> He argues that by the Tanzimat reforms, the Ottoman governors tried to change overall organization in the distant regions of the empire to create a system for a direct tax collection from tribes. These attempts were aimed to break the power of local notables on the local population because of the aims of the Ottoman administration for the centralization of the empire. In this way, the Ottoman central government tried to enhance the role of empire officers in the regions; however, as Çetinsaya argues, Tanzimat governors failed to be successful in breaking the effects of local leaders due to lacking local knowledge to penetrate the regions.

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10 Gökhan Çetinsaya, *Ottoman Administration of Iraq*, (New York: Routledge, 2006).

11 Ibid, 5.

Hakan Özoğlu draws a more complex picture in terms of governing distant provinces than Çetinsaya. Like Çetinsaya, Özoğlu also focuses on the role of local notables about administration of remote regions of the empire. He argues that “although some military forces were appointed from the center and led by the governor (vali) of a given province, religious leaders and the traditional notables were the leaders of local forces”.<sup>12</sup>

Özoğlu draws attention to the fact that the centralizing policy which was initiated by Mahmud II failed to be successful due to the effective administration of the local tribal leaders on the population. As Özoğlu indicates, these sheiks or aghas knew the regions very well, and they were easily penetrating the local population.<sup>13</sup> However, like Çetinsaya, Özoğlu also claims that empire officers lacked local knowledge to be able to establish an effective administration on the region. As Yonca Köksal argues, to be able to provide an influential administration, empire governors had to know local dynamics of there. Köksal summarizes these local domains as knowing the mutual reasoning of local leaders and having information in terms of the effects and power of tribal leaders on the local population.<sup>14</sup> By emphasizing such points as Köksal, Özoğlu argues that these officers lacked such data about those regions, thus they were forced to depend on the local leaders in everyday administration, resulting in the continuation of their power or authority. So, he concludes that the attempts of the Tanzimat rulers in order to establish a direct administration on the tribes failed to be successful. While claiming it, Çetinsaya and Özoğlu evaluated the results and reasons of this from the viewpoint of the Ottoman rulers, they do not give enough attention to inner tribal settings which caused failed to successful of these attempts.

In 2003, Selim Deringil develops a new insight to explain approaches of the Ottoman governors towards the tribes. He has elaborated on a significant paradigm through the concept of "borrowed colonialism" and "grab bag" met-

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12 Hakan Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 384.

13 Ibid.

14 Yonca Köksal, “Sosyal Kontrol Sistemleri: 19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda.’ *Stratejiler, Sorunsallar Paradigm*”, Eds Ferdan Ergut, Aysen Uysal, (Ankara: Dipnot Yayınları: 2007), 117.

aphor. While Çetinsaya and Özoğlu explain the attitudes of the central administration towards tribes within the aims of the empire to enforce centralization, Deringil interprets the approaches of the Ottoman rulers against the tribal groups in the framework of its project for modernity. Whereas Çetinsaya and Özoğlu focus on more technical aspects of government like tax collection, Deringil attracts attention to the “civilizing mission mentality” of the late Ottomans to be able to reflect their provincial administration.<sup>15</sup>

Deringil defines colonialism “as power and enforcement of rule over people who do not want you there in the first place.”<sup>16</sup> Deringil notes that “the Ottoman elite conflated the ideas of modernity and colonialism and applied the latter as a means of survival against an increasingly hostile world.”<sup>17</sup> However, he embraces a different type of colonialism in his study which he calls “borrowed colonialism”. Deringil explains it as “a whole grab bag of concepts, methods and tools of statecraft, prejudices, and practices that had been filtered down the ages.”<sup>18</sup> He argues that in the second half of the 19th century, approaches of the Ottoman governors towards tribal groups in the empire can be explained under the framework of this concept.

Deringil argues that “in the nineteenth century the Ottoman elite adopted the mindset of their enemies, the arch-imperialists, and came to conceive of its periphery as a colonial setting.”<sup>19</sup> He also indicates that the Ottoman governors tried to imitate Western colonial empires, and they pushed the periphery, especially its Arab peninsula into a colonial status.<sup>20</sup> He explains that for the Ottoman governors colonialism means that a civilized empire sends officers to regions where people live in nomadism and savagery, and they developed these areas, then integrates them to the market for its goods.<sup>21</sup> Deringil notes that the attitudes of the Ottoman rulers can be seen as the White Man’s

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15 Deringil, “They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery”, 312.

16 Ibid, 317.

17 Ibid, 312.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid, 311.

20 Ibid, 312.

21 Ibid.

Burden who wears a fez: “these people who are savages and heretics can only be saved by an invitation into the True Faith.”<sup>22</sup>

As I stated at the beginning, Deringil indicates that the Ottoman governors approached the tribal people as groups who live in a state of nomadism and savagery. For them what had to be done was to include them into the circle of civilization, or the Ottoman rulers had to bring civilization and progress to the tribes. Bringing new economic advantages, road construction, incorporating such regions to the market, and modern schooling projects for the regions were significant endeavor of the Ottoman governors in order to civilize tribes. However, in the argument of Deringil, it is seen that the efforts of the Ottoman rulers in order to civilize the tribes were not one-sided. In other words, these efforts aimed to both gain the hearts and minds of the tribal people and bring them under the authority of Abdulhamid II. As Deringil indicates, we can mention two faces of the civilizing mission of the Ottoman rulers. As we shall see in the case of the school, however, the famous “grab bag” methods of the Ottoman Empire meant that administrative approaches were not entirely positive or friendly but could be coercive as well.

As I stated, the relation between the Ottoman empire and tribes was not stable, but dynamic. In this section, the changing patterns in this relation will be touched. Scholars have argued that through the 19th and 20th centuries, one of the factors that shaped the approaches of the Ottoman governors towards the tribes was nationalism waves in the empire and ideology of Abdulhamid II in an attempt to ensure Islamic unity. In the second half of the 19th century, nationalist movements constituted a threat to the well-being of the empire. The sultan was suspicious about waves of nationalism that could spread to his Arab, Kurd, and Albanian subjects, who were significant Muslim populations of the empire. Against such a case, he tried to unify these Muslim populations of the empire under the umbrella of Islam. In this section, I will examine the effects of these two important discourses as nationalism and Pan-Islamism in terms of changing attitudes towards the tribes in the reign of Abdulhamid II.

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22 Ibid.

The issues of nationalism and as a remedy to prevent nationalist movements Pan-Islamism are the main themes in the works of Stephen Duguid and Engin Akarlı. While Duguid developed an analysis of the Pan-Islamist ideology of Abdulhamid II, Akarlı's study gives the details of the Hamidian policy by considering the Arab subjects of the empire. Below, I will try to draw a picture of the 20th Ottoman empire and its changing approach towards the Muslim tribes through the effects of nationalism and Pan-Islamism attempts via these studies.

Stephen Duguid emphasizes that the era of Abdulhamid II was different in many ways from the years that preceded it. He notes that to survive the empire, Abdulhamid II had to protect the rest of the subjects in the empire, especially tribes in distant provinces. He discusses that such tribes were significant for the sultan because they were Muslim groups that belonged to different ethnic origins, and they were living in strategic regions that were under the threat of Britain and Russia. Duguid emphasizes that Abdulhamid II was highly worried that Arab, Kurd, and Albanian tribes could be influenced by the nationalist discourse of these powers, and they could get some separatist movements from the empire. For Duguid, to be able to prevent that case, the tribes should be brought under the control of the central Ottoman government.

Like Özoğlu, Duguid also draws attention to the importance of tribal leaders in the aim of the sultan to integrate tribal groups to the central Ottoman government.<sup>23</sup> Duguid emphasizes that to enhance the authority of the sultan on the tribes, sheiks or aghas of these tribal groups firstly should be incorporated into the Ottoman administration. In the framework of the Duguid's arguments, it seems that the training of tribal people as Ottoman governors for the administration of their regions can be an effective way to provide the integration of the tribes to the empire. So, Duguid interprets the attempts of Abdulhamid II towards tribes like the Ottoman tribal school as a social engineering project, aiming to change its dynamics and incorporate them to the central Ottoman government.

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23 Stephen Duguid, "The Politics of Unity: Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia," *Middle Eastern Studies* 9, no.2 (1973): 139-155.



Engin Akarlı draws a more specific framework than Duguid in terms of the changing attitudes towards the empire's tribes due to the nationalism fear in the 20th-century. Akarlı discusses the ideology of Abdulhamid II in a more special context, and he examines the main approaches of the Ottoman government towards the Arab subject in the framework of Pan-Islamism. Akarlı argues that in the Hamidian era, to compensate for the territorial losses, and to protect the empire's lands, Ottoman governors paid attention to leading Arab tribes in the Eastern region. He notes that "it was only natural that he would pay due attention to winning the hearts of the Arabs, who were the 'noble people' (kavm-i necib) in Islamic tradition and had come to constitute, since the last war the second largest element of the population after the Turks."<sup>24</sup> As Akarlı indicates, Islam created a significant bond among the Ottoman Empire and the Arab tribes. Like Duguid, Akarlı discusses that "to create a viable basis of social unity against the separatist movement due to nationalistic discourse in the period, Abdulhamid II started to strongly emphasize the Islamic bond among the Arab subjects of the empire."<sup>25</sup>

Duguid and Akarlı draw attention to the fact that the Ottoman governors could not have full autonomy on the tribal groups. This case started to constitute a big problem for the Ottoman governors in the 19th century. Abdulhamid II tended to change the relationship among between the empire and its tribes, and he tried to establish vey form a close relationship with Muslim tribes of the empire under the discourse of Pan-Islamism. As Akarlı notes, "These tribal regions were strategically important for Abdulhamid II because he saw that these places were isolated areas, and the tribes were never under the complete control of the empire."<sup>26</sup> It seems that such a case could make easy the attempts of foreign powers to trigger nationalist movements on the Arab and Kurd subjects of the empire in those regions. He suggests that threat of nationalist waves became effective in changing the attitudes of the Ottoman governors towards Muslim tribes in the 19th and 20th centuries.

In the following parts, I consider the changing government mechanisms of Abdulhamid II towards tribes. Scholars argue that due to these motivations

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24 Akarlı, "Abdulhamid II's Attempt to Integrate Arabs into the Ottoman System," 75.

25 Ibid, 80.

26 Ibid, 85.

that I have considered above, the Ottoman governors adopted different government mechanisms to lead the tribes in the empire. Scholars have argued that the Ottoman rulers started to change their administration devices towards the Muslim tribes of the empire in the 19th century due to changing conjunctures of the world. This issue has been considered by different researchers; however, the study of Selim Deringil is significant one in which Deringil examines the changing government patterns of the Ottoman empire by the notion of “invention of tradition”. In this section, I will try to understand the dynamics of changing administration patterns of the Ottoman empire towards its tribes through the perspectives of his study.

Selim Deringil emphasizes that the Ottoman rulers from the period of the Tanzimat tried to modernize the governance mechanisms of the empire. For Deringil, the main reason behind such efforts for modernization is that they wanted to impose that they were a great power like the others. However, Deringil points out the difference of the Ottoman modernization, and he argues that due to the changing conjectures of the 19th century, as I have explained above like nationalisms, wars, territorial losses of the Ottoman empire, increasing impacts of the foreign powers in the Ottoman lands, Ottoman governors decided to regulate and modernize the governance mechanisms of the empire towards its subjects. In other words, they tried to modernize themselves within the framework of necessities of the ages like modern schools, new administrative laws, and new regulations in the Ottoman society.

Deringil calls Ottoman modernization as “invention of tradition”, and he defines it as “the same adaptation of old motifs for new usages.”<sup>27</sup> Deringil mainly focuses on the Hamidian era, and he discusses that to be able to impose his hegemony on Muslim subjects of the empire, Abdulhamid II and his advisors used highly Islamic motifs to signify the existence of Abdulhamid II as a supreme Islamic leader on them. By the “invention of tradition” concept, Deringil aims to show that these attempts of Abdulhamid II did not only involve Islamic motifs, but they also had a modern face through efforts for standardization and uniformity. He explains these arguments by giving an example of

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27 Selim Deringil, “The Invention of Tradition as Public Image in the Late Ottoman Empire”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 35, No.1 (1993): 35.

the Ottoman coat of arms. He argues that “The central themes of the Ottoman coat of arms revolved around the continuity of the old and the new, the traditional and the modern; yet, it was an invented tradition stemming from the need the Ottomans felt to emphasize that they were a great power like all the others.”<sup>28</sup> Deringil argues that the Ottoman modernization was using ancient materials to build invented traditions of a novel type for new and modern purposes.<sup>29</sup>

Just before discussing Hamidian educational policy, focusing on the Ottoman educational history through the Tanzimat era, when main changes emerged is necessary. The Ottoman educational history literature is a very rich area. There are extensive sources in this literature. One of the significant studies on the Ottoman educational history was made by Necdet Sakaoğlu in the year of 1991.<sup>30</sup> In his work, Sakaoğlu presented the history of the Ottoman schools as from the 14th century. Then, studies have started to be specific in 2000s. Such names as Selçuk Akşin Somel, Benjamin Fortna, and Emine Evered paid attention to the Ottoman education in specific periods like Hamidian or Young Turk era in their studies.

In this section, I reveal the Ottoman educational history through the Tanzimat period, which main changes emerged in this era. Sakaoğlu claimed that the Ottoman educational institutions which came into existence throughout the 14th and 16th centuries and were called as traditional had not undergone a serious change until the beginning of the 19th century.<sup>31</sup> He argued that at that time, by the effects of accelerating changes, and many factors which were integrated into the schooling system, the classic- traditional side of the Ottoman education was tried to be altered.<sup>32</sup> Apart from the old particularities of the system, the Ottoman governors added the western type norms, and values, rational, methodological, and secular approaches to the training program of the empire. Thus, the Ottoman educational system was reshaped and turned

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28 Ibid, 38.

29 Ibid, 40.

30 Necdet Sakaoğlu, *Osmanlı Eğitim Tarihi* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1991).

31 Ibid, 45.

32 Ibid, 47.

into a system which was supported by old and new types of schooling at the beginning of the 19th century.

As Sakaoğlu argued, before the period of Tanzimat, military schools had an important place in the schooling system of the Ottoman empire.<sup>33</sup> In the period after Tanzimat, secondary schools that trained qualified students for the high military schools were established. Besides, to train staff who were going to be appointed to administrative positions and also to supply experts who were going to work in different areas of expertise which emerged through the changing social structure, civil-vocational schools were founded.

Scholars argue that the Ottoman bureaucracy started to develop by the reforms of Tanzimat. The number of officers who were made to work in the central administration had increased, and the necessity for the educational institutions which trained such personnel emerged. Sakaoğlu showed that the Tanzimat rulers, to be able to provide staff who were going to be given responsibility in the bureaucracy and governing of rural areas, extended the Ottoman junior high schools (*rüştiye*).<sup>34</sup> Besides, they tried to re-organize and develop military and vocational high schools. Some schools in the area of medicine, pharmacy, agriculture, industry, security, government, and religious services were opened and also started the attempts to establish universities.

Selçuk Akşin Somel, Benjamin Fortna, and Emine Evered have carried out significant studies to examine the Hamidian educational policies. Firstly, Somel's work gives a general framework of the Ottoman educational policy during the rule of Abdulhamid II by focusing on the distant provinces of the empire to see the implementation of the Hamidian educational policy. Secondly, we will examine the work of Fortna in which he discusses the Hamidian education through the issue of educational modernization. Lastly, Evered's study presents the efforts of the Ottoman governors to prevent missionary activities of foreign powers in the educational arena. These studies are significant to give us an insight to study the Hamidian educational policy before we consider the Ottoman tribal school.

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33 Ibid , 50.

34 Ibid, 62.

Selçuk A. Somel examines the primary education in the provinces of the Ottoman Empire during the rule of Sultan Abdulhamid II. He argues that in the reign of Abdulhamid II, the central Ottoman government gave significant importance to the building of the Ottoman schools in places such as Bosnia, Crete, and Damascus.<sup>35</sup> He focuses on difficulties that the Ottoman governors had in the school building process. Akşin emphasizes them as financial difficulties that the Ottoman empire did not have enough budget to be able to finance these new schools in the empire. He tells us that in such a case the Ottoman governors tried to increase the taxes to supply those schools. However, in that case, he shows us the discontent of the population due to increasing taxes for defraying the expenses of those new schools.

Somel notes that another problem in the educational policies of the Hamidian era is that the empire lacked trained personnel who could teach in these western type schools. So, in this case, teachers of old system of schooling continued to give lessons in the new system. From this point, Akşin's argument has a similar approach to Deringil's "invention of tradition" concept towards Ottoman modernization. Akşin tried to show the existence of old and new concepts together in the aims of Ottoman governors toward to modernize its educational institutions by such examples. Somel mainly argues that the educational policy of Abdulhamid II proved to be a failure since the structural factors such as weakness of finances, inability to formulate an ideological synthesis of Islamism and modernism were seen as the main obstacle of this educational reforms of the Hamidian era.

Fortna evaluates education in the reign of Abdulhamid II through the concept of modernization in the Ottoman empire. At this point, Somel and Fortna have a similar approach to the issue of modernization in the schooling within the framework of Deringil's argument which indicates Ottoman modernization as the invention of tradition. As Deringil, Fortna argues that the Ottoman government was more concerned with adopting western methods for their own sake.<sup>36</sup> In other words, Fortna emphasizes that the Ottoman rulers had

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35 Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010), 245.

36 Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 200.

attitudes to combine the modernization and Ottomans ideology, which means that Abdulhamid II tried to bring the Muslim subjects of the empire under his rule. Fortna argues that to be able to achieve that aim the sultan used modern methods in the educational arena. He shows the increasing reliance of the Hamidian government on new style schools to impose the Ottomans ideology. For example, placing the sultan's monographies on new school buildings to be able to connect them with the central government and ultimate authority of Abdulhamid II.

Emine Evered examines politics and applications of modern schooling agendas in the provinces of the Ottoman Empire from the late Tanzimat until the Young Turk revolution. She has significant approaches to the Hamidian educational policy. She argues that the late Ottoman education cannot be understood just as enforcement of official policies upon a mass.<sup>37</sup> However, she argues that there was a process of local adaptation, negotiations, agreements, and oppositions that shape the educational policies of the empire. She tries to give a new insight from the mutual aspect in terms of educational policies that were implemented by the Ottoman governors towards its subjects. She tries to show that the Ottoman educational policy was not accepted easily by its subjects. There happened some contradictions in those areas. "For example, the local educational settings could not be easily changed by the Ottoman governors in some regions like Syria."<sup>38</sup> Especially, the effect of Ulema in the educational arena could not be broken by western-minded Ottoman teachers. Evered tries to show the mutual relationship between the empire's aims and the reactions of the local population in terms of educational policy.

Another significant emphasis of Evered is on the issue of missionary activities of foreign powers in terms of the school building in the Ottoman lands. She shows the missionary activities of foreign powers in Syria, Aleppo, and Damascus. It can be also seen that there were British interests in the Persian Gulf and Italian educational and imperial ambitions in Tripoli.<sup>39</sup> Evered argues that the Ottoman government had significant efforts to control and restrict

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37 Emine Önhan Evered, *Empire and Education under the Ottomans: Policies, Reforms, and Resistances from the Tanzimat to the Young Turks*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 226.

38 Evered, *Empire and Education under the Ottomans*, 230.

39 Ibid, 235.

those foreign aims, and she indicates that by such aims the Ottoman governors developed a wide-ranging school network to raise loyal Ottomans. Her study provides a new insight to be able to see the Ottoman struggle with great powers in educational issues for regions such as Syria, Iraq, and Libya.

Just before considering the studies in terms of the Ottoman tribal school in the literature, focusing on some missing parts related to Arab and Kurdish subjects of the empire in the literature can be necessary. As I have emphasized below, one of the deficit points in the Ottoman educational history literature or at the literature which is on the Arab and Kurdish populations of the empire is that there are almost no studies that give information about the daily or social life of Arab or Kurdish children. Some studies are about the daily life of Armenian or Greek children in Ottoman cities; however, there are not any studies in that kind on the Arab or Kurdish subjects of the empire. As I have noted before, the existing literature does not have such works on this issue, so to be able to give a perspective from the eyes of the empire's subjects, which will be different from the studies which I have considered above mainly emphasizing the government's viewpoint, I will present a sample study from the daily life of an Armenian man in Istanbul.

Hogap Mintzuri was an Armenian who was born in Erzincan in 1886. He came to Istanbul in 1897 and continued his education there. He completed his elementary education in Galata, then went on to study at Robert College. He was interested in writing activities, and he was keeping some notes related to daily lives in several districts of Istanbul like Beşiktaş, Ortaköy, Galata, and Rumeli Hisarı. Some of his writings were published in the newspaper of Marmara in the year of 1970s. Then, they have been compiled and published as a book in 1984. In the book which has been published with the title "*Değer ur yes yeğer em*" (The places in where I have lived).<sup>40</sup> This study gives significant insights to understand the social and daily life in Istanbul of the Hamidian reign.<sup>41</sup>

I prefer to focus on the narratives of Mintzuri on the district of Beşiktaş because the author also summarizes his memories related to the students of

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40 This book was translated to the Turkish by Silva Kuyumcuyan, and between the years of 1993 and 2012 it was published with the name of "İstanbul Anıları".

41 Hagop Mintzuri, *İstanbul Anıları 1987-1940* (İstanbul: Aras Yayınları, 2018).

the Ottoman tribal school in a small part. It is also significant to constitute daily life concept in Beşiktaş who students of the Ottoman tribal school were living, for this thesis. The main theme in his narratives about Beşiktaş is Fridays, and the Friday divine service parade of the sultan Abdulhamid II. Another significant point highlighted in his memories is related to the perception of Mintzuri in terms of the social life of people. These are summarized as the clothing of the public, or some places in which they went for entertainment. Nevertheless, his memories about Beşiktaş most significantly focuses on the students studying at the Ottoman tribal school.

Just before considering the narratives of Mintzuri in the district of Beşiktaş, touching up his memories related to his school life can be useful to be able to see what an Armenian student had experienced. He indicates that he completed his elementary school education in Armıdan which the village of Erzincan.<sup>42</sup> He took education in an Armenian school there, and he emphasizes when he came to Istanbul, he has known better French than the students in the school which was in Istanbul.<sup>43</sup> He also expresses that education and books were free of charge, and they were supplied by the church.<sup>44</sup>

Mintzuri stresses that in the Armenian school Turkish meant Ottoman Turkish.<sup>45</sup> He indicates that students were taught to write petitions, bills, and some other formal writings. He mentions that he sometimes could help some artisans in Beşiktaş write their petitions.<sup>46</sup> It seems that he was good at reading and writing in Ottoman Turkish.

Mintzuri attaches great importance to the memories which were related to Friday's divine service parade of the sultan Abdulhamid II. He notes that on Friday, all the shops were closed, and people emptied the streets, and everybody went to watch the Friday prayer of the sultan. He mentions that people

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42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid, 28.

46 Ibid, 30.



whom he saw every day in front of coffeehouses or some artisans did not appear in their place.<sup>47</sup> It is understood that it was considered as a magnificent show of the sultan towards its subjects, and Mintzuri emphasized that Turkish, Arab, Albanian, Armenian, Greek, Laz, Jewish, Circassian and Kurdish people, aligned in the square of Sinan Pasha Mosque in Beşiktaş. The aim was watching the sultan, leaving him from his special four in hand, entering the mosque, leaving there, and watching the salute his soldiers.<sup>48</sup> It would seem that the moments when the sultan became apparent to his subjects were significant for him. He also mentions that Fridays were strange because the daily life in Beşiktaş almost came to a stopping point on this day by coming of the sultan.<sup>49</sup> He also notes that this was an event like a festival in Beşiktaş every Friday, and Sinan Pasha mosque was so crowded that the even the believers who came there to perform salaah could not find a place to sit.<sup>50</sup>

The other significant thing within the daily lives of the people was “*Surre Alayı*”.<sup>51</sup> In his records, this event was told as five camels come to the pier of Beşiktaş, and everyone was kept by a cameleer. Some burdens were in the shape of a small square on the animals. Top of these gifts was wrapped by valuable carpets, and they were packed by white, red, and golden color ribbons.<sup>52</sup> He also emphasizes that on this day there was a thought that these camels were crying. Mintzuri says that “I have not seen crying of camels.”<sup>53</sup> Such a memory can be seen as the interest of an Armenian child to see and give a meaning to some religious activities of the sultan in Istanbul. It is also seen that such moments which included the religious attempts of the sultan had a significant place also in the daily lives of non-Muslim subjects in the empire.

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47 Ibid, 30-31.

48 Ibid, 66.

49 Ibid, 31-37.

50 Ibid, 67.

51 Surre means that the sultan was sending some gifts for the sheriffs who were coming from the lineage of Muhammad in Ramadan.

52 Mintzuri, *Istanbul Anıları*, 68.

53 Ibid.

The other remarkable narrative of Mintzuri was related to the life in Beşiktaş in the period of the autocracy of Abdulhamid II. Firstly, he gives some details related to the clothing of people in this era. He emphasizes that the European type of clothing was not widespread at that time.<sup>54</sup> However, he also emphasizes that as an Armenian child coming to Istanbul in old clothes was perceived to be something to be ashamed.<sup>55</sup> He says that when he started school in Istanbul, his father clothed him in a new dress.<sup>56</sup>

Secondly, he mentions the perception of an Armenian young man related to entertainment life in Istanbul. He emphasized that when he was young, he did not know the other districts of the city. One day his friends took away him to Bomonti (Şişli, İstanbul) to drink something.<sup>57</sup> He expresses his memories related to this day in these words: ‘We entered a small garden, and some glasses were filled by beer.’ He supposed that it was pure honey. He continues that “I had taken a sip and left the glass because it was so bitter that I spat it.”<sup>58</sup> He mentions the insistence of his friends on his drinking the beer, and his anger towards his friends. He said that “I won’t drink it, why would I drink it?” They answered him “drink it, it will be energy for you”, and he reacts as “my energy is full, and I do not need to drink it.”<sup>59</sup>

This narrative of Muntziri is significant for me because it could present the viewpoint and reactions of an Armenian young in terms of entertainment places in the city. As we will see in the next parts, the Ottoman governors made a special effort to keep away the Arab, Kurd, and Albanian students from such places in Istanbul. They thought that such things will be destructive for the moral well-being of the students; however, we cannot reach any perception of the students related to such activities in Istanbul. This memory of Mintzuri can give a sample case in order to give an idea about the perception of Armenian young related to such entertainment places in Istanbul.

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54 Ibid, 54.

55 Ibid, 43-45.

56 Ibid, 45.

57 Ibid, 40.

58 Ibid.

59 Ibid.

The most significant point from the narratives of Mintzuri is the small passage which gives some impressions depicting the students of the Ottoman tribal school.<sup>60</sup> He refers to the students as that:

In Beşiktaş, people were walking about up to the evening. The majority of the crowd was youths. These were the students of the tribal school. Their school was in Kabataş, in the opposite of the pier today. On the collar of their olive drab color uniform, the writing of ‘the Ottoman tribal school’ was wrought. They were brunette, even very brunette. They were sons of Arab pashas, tribal chieftains, or sheiks in the eastern provinces of the empire. They were brought there to learn Ottoman Turkish and take Ottoman education in Istanbul. They were speaking Arabic or Kurdish when they were walking in the street.<sup>61</sup>

His shorth story telling his observations on the students is significant to be able to understand what the people observed them in Istanbul. This is an important passage which can give an impression related to the students from the city.

One of the significant attempts of Abdulhamid II in the educational arena was the Ottoman tribal school. There are limited studies that focus on the school in the literature. Two significant works belong to Eugene Rogan and Alişan Akpınar. While Rogan examines the school in the frame of the relation between the Ottoman Empire and the tribes, Akpınar evaluates the school as an outcome of the Hamidian ideology toward to provide Islamic unity in the empire. These two works have been influential to reach some basic data and develop insights to study the school.

Eugene Rogan deals with the tribal school project of Abdulhamid II in the framework Ottoman empire’s relationship with the tribes of the empire. He summarizes the general approach of the Ottoman governors to the tribal groups as we have seen in the argument of Çetinsaya and Özoğlu. He indicates that the Ottoman rulers approached the tribes with suspicious because they generally conceived these tribal groups as an obstacle for collecting taxes, and

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60 Ibid, 71.

61 Ibid.

in general as a threat to the economic well-being of the empire.<sup>62</sup> From the perspective of the Ottoman rulers, these tribal groups hampered to collect taxes of empire officers in the regions.

The significant aspect of the study of Rogan is that he criticizes such approaches in the literature. He thinks that “evaluating the tribes as groups which were obstacles just for the economic well-being of the Ottoman government can prevent us from understanding the real features of the tribes which became a main threat for the Ottoman empire.”<sup>63</sup> Rogan reveals that these tribes in the Ottoman empire were not powerless groups, and they were in a position in which they can be an opponent for the central Ottoman government. He continues that these tribes had both economic and political power. For example, these tribal leaders could collect some taxes in the name of “*khuwa*” which means brotherly protection taxes between themselves.<sup>64</sup> Rogan tries to reveal that tribal groups as social and political organizations had the feeling of loyalty towards their tribal leaders, rules of administration, and a justice system. He reminds us that these are the features that can be attributed to a state formation, so he continues that these tribal groups can act as a state organization in their regions. Due to their own economic, politic, and social domains; the Ottoman governors conceived those tribal organizations as a threat for the central Ottoman government.

Rogan argues that the main aim of the Ottoman rulers was that they first changed such domains of tribes in the empire. In the Hamidian era, they tried to achieve this by gaining their loyalty to the sultan. He argues that Abdulhamid II imposed on tribal people the feeling of loyalty for himself rather than their tribal leaders. He emphasizes that the Ottoman tribal school project should be evaluated by considering that aim.<sup>65</sup> Rogan notes that the school should be examined in the frame of the aims of Abdulhamid II and his governors to ensure the loyalty of leading tribes to the sultan. Rogan studies the school in the framework of changing policies of the sultan towards the tribes with the aim of getting their commitment for himself.

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62 Rogan, “Asiret Mektebi: Abdulhamid II’s School for Tribes,” 83.

63 Ibid, 84.

64 Ibid.

65 Ibid, 85.

One of the significant aspects of the study of Rogan is that he mentions students' life at the school in a small paragraph. He argues that the school administrators aimed that "student behaviors would have to conform to Ottoman standards, outlined in a series of regulations which the staff was enjoined to uphold to the letter of the law."<sup>66</sup> He continues that to do so, they had to keep the students isolated from Istanbul and its society and corrupting effects of the city.<sup>67</sup> For this reason, such notions like discipline and the quality of the students' life became important issues for the school administrators. Rogan mainly emphasizes that to be able to train loyal Ottomans from these sons of the tribes, the Ottoman governors had to protect them from the destructive effects of the city life.

Alişan Akpınar studies the school through the Pan-Islamism attempts of the reign of Abdulhamid II. It seems that Akpınar continues a classical perspective as we have seen in Akarlı's work. Like Akarlı, Akpınar argues that the main aim of Abdulhamid II and his advisors were to achieve the Islamic unity between different ethnic groups in the empire. Akpınar evaluates Arab, Kurd, and Albanian tribes in a strategic position in the ideology of the sultan. Their attachment to the central Ottoman government was valid for the well-being of the empire. He indicates that the ideology of the sultan and his governors, which desired to promote a unity based on Islam between leading Muslim tribes and the empire became a determinant factor in shaping the approaches of the Ottoman administrators towards tribal groups.<sup>68</sup>

Akpınar argues that the Ottoman tribal school was a signifier of the attributes of the Hamidian era towards the leading tribes in the empire. He emphasizes that to prevent the Arabs, Kurds, and Albanian tribes from leaving the empire as a result of the nationalist discourse and the influence of foreign powers on these tribes, Abdulhamid II aimed to integrate them into the central Ottoman government by means of education. At this point, the members of those tribes who were trained in the school could be a loyal Ottoman governor for their homelands. However, Akpınar considers this strategy of the sultan as unsuccessful. He argues that in 1892 was late to stop those tribes from leaving

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66 Ibid, 92.

67 Ibid, 94.

68 Akpınar, "Aşiret Mektebi," 25.

the empire because he thinks that nationalist discourses, which were put forward by the impacts of foreign powers like British, France, and Russia on these tribal groups had already emerged before this year.<sup>69</sup> We see the school as a failed project of Abdulhamid II in the work of Akpınar.

Studies of Rogan and Akpınar presents us important data in terms of the school, and enable us to find out the aims of Abdulhamid II and his advisors by implementing such a schooling project. However, these studies approach the school within the framework of the Ottoman institutional history. We do not get enough information related to what happens in the school. The social and daily life of the students in Istanbul, their reactions against the control of the Ottoman governors on them, their experiences and difficulties what the students experienced in the school, or their perception in terms of such a school are still dark spots in the literature.

This study, looking into the policies which were implemented by the Ottoman empire towards tribes, is mainly inspired by anthropology literature, and it allows us to develop a new perspective to the issue. In the literature of the Ottoman educational history, specifically the literature on Abdulhamid II, the Ottoman tribal school has been mainly considered through the institutional history perspectives. As I have emphasized above, some basic data related to the school like its founding date, place, students, or curriculum can be accessible thanks to these studies. They generally note that the school was a result of the Pan-Islamist policy of Abdulhamid II, who intended to rule Muslim tribes of the empire to integrate them into the central Ottoman administration. However, existed studies do not give enough consideration to strategies or tools of the sultan which he used for this aim and to be able to gain the loyalty of the sons of tribes in the school. This should not be forgotten that in this way the policy of Abdulhamid II towards tribes became twofold. Abdulhamid II basically conducted a twofold policy regarding the students. On one hand, he used his personal image, as known affectionate paternal figure, on the other hand, he employed a thorough surveillance mechanism so that he could keep the students under control. In the literature up to the now, scholars have paid attention to the paternal figure of the sultan towards the

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69 Ibid, 72-73.

tribes; however, they do not give enough consideration to what he tried to do in while bringing the students under his supervision.

In the literature which I have explained below, another missing point is that scholars generally examined the school as only an institution for education. However, the school had also a social space in that many Arab, Kurdish, and Albanian students lived. In school, they experienced some conflicts between each other or the governors of the school. They were reacting against some control mechanisms of the sultan upon them. Besides, these students came from distant regions to Istanbul, and they had to adapt a new life there. Some of them easily achieved it, whereas others did not want to stay in Istanbul and continue the school due to several reasons. So, they attempted to turn to their homelands making some excuses such as illness. I argue that to develop a perspective on the school from the inside of the students' lives, these points need to be examined.

Anthropology constitutes a significant research area and methodology for this work in order to develop a new perspective to the Ottoman tribal school through the daily live experiences of the students. To gain this viewpoint, anthropological studies that I will present below, prepare a methodological base. Anthropology is a significant guide in order to find out daily live experiences and traumas of the sons of the tribes who tried to adapt a new life in Istanbul.

These issues like governance, symbols of the ruler, daily life interactions of people with the government mechanisms are the points which are generally studied in the Anthropology literature. Therefore, I want to make a summary of the main anthropological approaches in this chapter. The literature on the state anthropology will be guide to be able to attribute a meaning to the attempts of Abdulhamid II and his advisors towards the students. Tribe anthropology will give recent approaches and some re-definitions of the notion of the tribe and the state. Through the anthropological approach to these concepts, the division between the terms 'state' and 'tribe', and also the reasons for some conflicts among them will be clear.

Firstly, I will consider the state anthropology literature by means of the studies of Philip Abrams, Berna Yazıcı, Aradhana Sharma, and Akhil Gupta, Veene Das and Deborah Poole, and the recent article of Nadir Özbek. While Berna Yazıcı draws a general path to discover the significant studies in the area

of state anthropology literature, Abrahams criticizes the approach of historians and politicians which gave attention to the state concept as a distinctive entity. Sharma, Gupta, Das, and Poole had remarkable names who try to find the traces of the state concept in the daily life of people, which attribute it a separate existence over the society. In his anthropological study, Özbek handles the attempts of the Hamidian government to indicate and legitimize its existence on the public through the issue of gift relation. Besides, in his recent article, he has a significant study which looks for the ways to study the reign of Abdulhamid II without focusing on the state concept and abstraction of the sultan in the Ottoman historiography.

Secondly, I will draw attention to the tribe anthropology through the study of Philip Khoury and Josep Kostiner. In these collected essays, scholars focus on the concept of tribe and state, and they try to bring re-definitions for them. They mainly consider the division between the tribe and the state concepts in the Middle East context and try to explain the division through the changing patterns in the 20th century.

Thirdly, I will focus on the study of Yonca Köksal to be able to develop a sociological perspective on the issue. Köksal is focusing on the relationship between the local power holders and the central Ottoman administration; besides, she tries to give a sociological insight into the issue. She considers the strategies which were used by the Ottoman rulers towards the local groups in the empire in order to bring them under the control. Her study also will be significant to define the term of control.

One of the scholars who criticized the consideration of academic studies on the state as a given, and single entity was Philip Abrams. Abrams conduct many kinds of research on the sociology of the state. He problematizes the difficulties of studying the state.<sup>70</sup> He argued that the state does not have a real entity as scholars attribute it. He defined the notion of the state as "It is itself the mask which prevents our seeing political practice as it is."<sup>71</sup> Abrams argued that scholars create difficulties for themselves in supposing that they have to study the state as a distinct entity, function, or relation above the society.<sup>72</sup> For

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70 Abrams, "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State," 59.

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid, 60.



him, the concept which is called the state consisted of some political practices, and the state is a mask behind them.

Abrams argues that the main problem is studying the state as a distinctive and abstract entity over the society itself because this case creates a remarkably elusive object of analysis.<sup>73</sup> For Abrams what has been studied in the academic studies should be political socialization, class, interests, political culture, and some social movements inherited these political practices. He notes that scholars should focus on the internal and external relations of political and governmental institutions, and their practices to be able to escape the mask of the state; however, he did not present a radical thought in that way. He sustained his argument as follows:

In his Preface to *African Political Systems*, A.R. Radcliffe-Brown proposed that the idea of the state should be eliminated from the social analysis. He found it a source of mystification and argued that the concepts of government and politics were all that was needed for an adequate conceptual grasp of the political. My suggestion is not as radical as that. I am proposing only that we should abandon the state as a material object of study whether concrete or abstract while continuing to take the idea of the state extremely seriously. The internal and external relations of political and governmental institutions (the state-system) can be studied effectively without postulating the reality of the state. So, in particular, can their involvements with economic interests in an overall complex of domination and subjection.<sup>74</sup>

Berna Yazıcı makes a good summary of the studies in the area of state anthropology in her recent article.<sup>75</sup> She argues that the issue of rulership became the main agenda in all social disciplines by the rise of studies of history from below.<sup>76</sup> Researchers who focused on society, have started to problematize the

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73 Ibid, 61.

74 Ibid, 75.

75 Berna Yazıcı, "Devlet(in) Antropolojisi", in *Kültür Denen Şey*, Ed. Ayfer Candan Bartu and Cenk Özbay, İstanbul: Metis, 2018, 51-81.

76 Ibid, 52.

state concept as a distinct entity above the society, and they have searched what the concept of the state refers to. YAZICI notes that the approach in the academic studies which took the notion of the state as a totalitarian, autonomous, single object, and considering it as a distinctive entity from the society has started to be problematized.<sup>77</sup> She also notes that such studies argue that this kind of perception of the notion of the state constitutes an obstacle to understanding the nature of hegemony and its implementation.<sup>78</sup>

YAZICI claims that these studies are focusing on the building process of the state concept instead of approaching it as a given and single object.<sup>79</sup> In other words, scholars argue that the state concept was composed of strategies of different rulers, several bureaucratic foundations, and their practices. She also indicates that such a new approach has directed the analytical looking to the daily and basic ones in the life of the people because scholars do not mention the state as a single power dynamic anymore in the social life.<sup>80</sup> Instead, they turned their attention to the bureaucratic institutions and their modern practices in the daily life. For example, she mentions some legal documents, passports, or some state agents who signified the existence of some bureaucratic mechanisms on the citizens. As YAZICI argues, thanks to such a perspective, the academic studies which have emphasized the role of the policy of different rulers, and the place of the bureaucratic foundations, and their daily life implementations have gained importance in the literature.

Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta are significant researchers who have focused on the analysis of the state concept in their anthropological study.<sup>81</sup> Their analysis is organized around two themes. The first one is creating some representations which belong to the notion of the state and their circulation within the society, and the second one is the daily institutional practices of the state bureaucracies. These are two remarkable discussions which have directed the recent studies in this area.

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77 Ibid, 60.

78 Ibid, 72.

79 Ibid, 54.

80 Ibid, 63.

81 *The Anthropology of the State*, edited by Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006).

Sharma and Gupta argue that the state remarked itself at the life of the society through the some symbols which refer to it. As I have mentioned, passports are one of the significant representations of the concept of the state which indicates the existence of authority above the society. Besides, some routine institutional practices of the bureaucratic foundations have a role to mark such a distinct power on the people such as gendarmeries or police officers. They are the objects who create a perception of a government mechanism in the daily life of people. The main aim of Sharma and Gupta is focusing on the bureaucratic practices, representation which indicate the existence of the notion of the state as a distinct entity and also, they have considered some moments when a governance mechanism has emerged on the society through such symbols.

Sharma and Gupta argue that both creating the symbols which belong to the concept of the state, and bureaucratic practices of the government institutions are important to show how people recognize the state concept in their social and daily life.<sup>82</sup> Through the context of "recognizing and experiencing the state", perception and imagination of people who are both inside and outside of the government, and how citizens conceive the state, and how the notion of the state has emerged itself in their daily life have constituted the major focus points in their study.

The collected study of Veena Das and Deborah Poole is a significant one, which contributes to the argument of Sharma and Gupta. Scholars want to look at how politics and practices of the government in the distant regions or margins shape the perception of the people towards the state concept.<sup>83</sup> The local groups are defined as people in the margin in their study, and the main attention of them is on what the margin is. Talal Asad defines the margin as "the places where state law and order continually have to be re-established."<sup>84</sup> Practices of the state concept to formulate its existence through the aims to

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82 Ibid, 11.

83 *Anthropology in the Margins of the State*, edited by Veena Das and Deborah Poole (Oxford: School of American Research Press, 2004).

84 Ibid, 279.

ensure law and order on the margins have been remarkable because the margin is mainly recognized the position as manifesting both such efforts of the government to control.

Das and Poole argue that it is a better way to think about the constitution and workings of the state concept, especially from an anthropological viewpoint, by considering its margins rather than its center. They note that distant regions which are defined as margins in the study are generally places where sovereign power is located. To be able to bring under the control of the central government, rulers tried to establish the power on these sides.

Asad indicates that to bring hegemony over people in these regions, rulers tried to sustain their practices towards law discipline.<sup>85</sup> Just as Sharma and Gupta do, he focuses on some symbolic attempts of the center to achieve that discipline. He also argues that they are interaction points of the ordinary people with the state concept; for example, identification cards or passports are such items which show the regulatory power of the state concept on the people who lived in the margins.

In his anthropological study, Nadir Özbek has a supplementary discussion with the perspective of Sharma, Gupta, Das, and Poole. In the article, Özbek examines the attempts of Abdulhamid II to emphasize his existence and gain legitimacy on his subjects.<sup>86</sup> He mainly considers the issue of gift relationship. Özbek examines the reciprocal gift connection in a broader and historical context. For him, imperial gifts were intended to deliver a political message to a wider public. He argues that the gift exchange did not only concern the receiver of the gift, but the act of giving was also aimed at a wider social and political spectrum.<sup>87</sup> Özbek mainly considers the supply side of a gift in his

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85 Ibid.

86 Nadir Özbek, "Imperial Gifts and Sultanic Legitimation During the Reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II, 1876-1909," In *Poverty and Charity in the Middle Eastern Contexts* edited by Mine Ener, Amy Singer, and Michael Bonner, 203-20 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003.)

87 Ibid, 206.

study. He argues that the Hamidian conception of the rule that gift relationship plays a crucial political role in his manifestation and its popular legitimization.

Nadir Özbek argues that the Hamidian political system tried to gain greater influence on politics. He emphasizes that to be able to impose his power and influence on the Muslim communities of the empire, Abdulhamid II needed to establish a more extensive relation through the world of symbols to remind the Muslim subjects of the empire.<sup>88</sup> For Özbek, the gift relationship was one of the important symbols. “The reciprocity of the gift relation between the sultan and its subjects- that is the sultan’s concern for his subjects and the subject’s expected loyalty to and love for the sultan is crucial here.”<sup>89</sup> He emphasizes that the strategy, however, was based not only on the principle of reciprocity. The overall attempt in the gift concept was intended to cultivate the necessary popular support from the Muslim subjects of the empire. Abdulhamid II and his advisors saw this practice as a way to provide his strength and authority on Muslim subjects.

Nadir Özbek brings a new and significant approach to the Ottoman historiography in his recent study.<sup>90</sup> Like Abrams, Özbek argues that the conceiving the notion of the state as a distinct entity from and above the society constituted a problem in academic studies. In his article, he specifically focuses on the Hamidian reign; besides, he notes that not only the state concept but also abstraction of Abdulhamid II can restrict the possibilities to study this period.<sup>91</sup>

Özbek argues that historical studies should get rid of such abstractions on Abdulhamid II and the state concept, and such a case can be possible by examining historical events within the framework of mutual relations and positions of some historical actors in the daily life.<sup>92</sup> In other words, he tries to eject narratives which bases on the abstraction of Abdulhamid II as an only

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88 Ibid.

89 Ibid.

90 Nadir Özbek, “İstisna Hali, Devletsiz, Abdülhamidsiz Osmanlı Türkiye Tarihi Yazmanın İmkanları,” *Toplumsal Tarih*, no. 301 (2019): 46-53.

91 Ibid, 46.

92 Ibid, 47.

effective figure of the period and eliminate the concept, which masks agency of some other agents who could be effective in shaping historical moments. So, Özbek emphasizes the necessity of looking into the daily life relations between historical actors to be able to escape such abstractions.

Özbek argues that scholars do not criticize the concept of the state by using it in their studies. He finds it as problematic that researchers have accepted the concept of the state as a given entity, and they attributed to it a foundational existence which is overall social and political relations. He thinks that the focus point of scholars should be mutual relations between politics and social actors in daily life rather than the concept of the state because the real politics of the period takes shape within the reciprocal relationship between different historical agents.<sup>93</sup> He also adds that the traces of these intercourses between them can be found not in the big discourses which attribute the main agency to Abdulhamid II, but also through what happened in the daily life of people.<sup>94</sup> These topics have constituted the significant criticism of Özbek concerning the existing literature.

One of the focusing points of this work is the relation between the “state” and the “tribe”. Anthropologists working in the Middle East have been concerned with theorizing tribe in the context of its relationship with the state concept for at least a decade. They speak to the historians and political scientists from the insight of the tribe in the tribe and the notion of the state division. In the literature, the aforementioned historians and political scientists, on the other hand, tend to use tribe unproblematically and focus on some powerful confederacies that were sometimes integrated and other times challenged the state concept. In the collected study of Philip Khoury and Josep Kostiners, scholars try to deal with the history and theory of tribe and relations of state concept.<sup>95</sup>

They argue that the study of the relation between the notion of tribe and state is a popular subject; however, this is a problematic area due to definitions

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93 Ibid, 52.

94 Ibid, 53.

95 *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, edited by Philip Khoury and Joseph Kostiner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990)

that are attributed to these concepts. Anthropologists in this study firstly focus on what concept of the tribe and the state mean. Richard Tapper answers this question as "a tribe is a state of mind."<sup>96</sup> Tapper argues that "tribe and state constitute two opposed modes of thought that form a single system, a formulation which resembles the dialectic and demands a synthesis which is not forthcoming."<sup>97</sup>

The scholars try to reach the meaning of the state concept in the Middle East context, and they generally note that the state concept has emerged as a very different proposition from earlier versions. They argue that the notion of state in this century took a different shape, and it became a concept which consults different strategies to be able to survive in the conditions of the reign. The scholars in this study also draw attention to the attempts of the state concept through the centralization process. As Köksal, Tapper argues, in the 20th century, the existence of powerful tribal confederacies started to constitute a problem for the governments who tried to build a central rule. As I have emphasized, tribes generally meant unfavorable entities for the rulers because they became the formations that were difficult to reach, govern, and take under control. Tapper tried to show that in the Middle East in order to create a central government, tribal entities constituted the main problem for them.<sup>98</sup> Scholars have considered it as the main point which causes the division among the concept of the tribe and the state in the Middle East.

Through the separation between the tribe and the state concept, the other scholars in the book sustained their search to find out the definition of the state. One of them is Paul Dresch who focuses on Libya.<sup>99</sup> He tries to link his historical works to the theoretical discussions. Dresch asks that to find out what the concept of state and tribe mean, "should we make of pre-modern

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96 Ibid, 56.

97 Ibid ,57.

98 Ibid , 60.

99 Ibid , 270.

Yemeni state history?"<sup>100</sup> Dresch answers, "in all seriousness that what we intuitively recognize as state-like in such settings as this is formations with a unified political history of their own devising."<sup>101</sup>

To be able to understand the attempts of Abdulhamid II towards the tribes with the aim of bringing them under his control, consideration of what the term "control" means is seen as necessary. Yonca Köksal gives a sociological definition for it.<sup>102</sup> Just before mentioning her definition, examining Köksal's study by its general framework is significant to develop a sociological perspective on the issue. Köksal argues that through the 18th century, local powers that have been expressed by their ethnic, religious, or tribal identity have started to constitute a problem for the central government.<sup>103</sup> She notes that the policy of the governments has been decided within the concern of such a case, and central administrators started to determine their policy through the interaction with these local powers. For this reason, she rejects the examination of the state concept as a distinct entity above the society or some other power domains within the society and prefers to consider the relations between the central governments and the other local power holders.

Köksal argues that due to the concern of the central governments towards regional authorities, they started to follow the policy to integrate these local groups to the central administration; however, as she indicates, this did not become an easy task for them. To be able to achieve it, rulers had to keep local power holders under control. She defines the notion of control as a process who defines the paths of the rulers which they used to reach their aims and reasonings.<sup>104</sup> The mechanisms of the central government in order to control local groups like tribes use different and various methods, and the control is a versatile concept. She also notes that control is not a sudden and unexpected thing for these regional actors; on the contrary, mutual interactions between

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100 Ibid , 274.

101 Ibid.

102 Köksal, "Sosyal Kontrol Sistemleri", 110.

103 İbid, 111.

104 Ibid, 117.



the local and the central powers create the control, and it can be advantageous for two sides.<sup>105</sup>

Köksal argues that the control mechanisms of the central governments have been decided by not only its policy but also the reactions of these local groups towards such surveillance mechanisms.<sup>106</sup> She indicates that attempts of rulers who do not consider the local dynamics of tribes are obliged to be unsuccessful because the achievement of this kind of government policies is possible by considering the local knowledge and practices. To sustain its power on the local groups' rulers necessitated empire officers who knew the local settings. As Köksal argues, for this reason, local powers were rendered as loyal officers by integrating them into the structure of the central administration.<sup>107</sup> As will be seen in the case of the Ottoman tribal school, such a policy of the government could be for the advantage of the two sides. While Abdulhamid II brought these leading tribes under his control, local powers could gain a position in the administration of the empire for themselves. It can be said that the success of such a policy is discussable; however, Köksal evaluates this kind of policy of the sultan aiming to integrate the tribes to the central administration as a successful attempt in the short run.

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105 Ibid, 118.

106 Ibid, 119.

107 Ibid, 123.



## Discipline Mechanisms on the Students

In 1892, a new school was opened by the order of Abdulhamid II. This school was called as Imperial School for tribes (*Aşiret-i Mekteb-i Humayün*). It was founded for the education of twelve- and sixteen-years-old sons of some leading Arab tribes in the Ottoman empire. However, children of some Kurd and Albanian tribes were also accepted to the school in the later years. It was a five-year educational institution. The curriculum of the school was essentially a combination of the middle and preparatory high schools, presenting the equivalent of seven years' coursework in five. Throughout the five years, it was thought that the students mastered classical Arabic and Ottoman Turkish and also, they were expected to learn French in three and Persian in two years.<sup>1</sup> Islamic sciences like Koran, fqiḥ, '*ilmihal*'<sup>2</sup> were some of the important courses in the curriculum. Geography, history, and arithmetic were also other lessons that were given in the school. In the final year, more technical training in preparation for advanced study in the civil or military academies started to be given.

Sons of Arab, Kurd and Albanian tribes who were trained in this school could become an Ottoman governor in their homeland. As I have emphasized, Eugene Rogan is one of the significant names who focused on the school in

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1 Rogan, "Asiret Mektebi: Abdulhamid II's School for Tribes," 83.

2 It means a concise manual of Islamic faith, worship, and ethics.

his article. His study presents a general research on the school, and he emphasizes the importance of this school in the Hamidian ideology. Rogan argues that by such a school project, Abdulhamid II aimed to integrate some important Muslim tribes to the central administration of the empire. In other words, he aimed his purpose was to replace central Ottoman government mechanisms with traditional local governance methods in the regions of leading Muslim tribes because consolidation of them to the Ottoman administration system had started to be conceived as a significant issue for the well-being of the empire in the 19th century.

The experience of the Balkan crises, and the treaty of Berlin in which the Ottoman empire lost an important part of its population and lands caused to increase the interest of Abdulhamid II for its Arab and Kurdish subjects. He tried to prevent further defections of some ethnic groups by the imposition of identities from above.<sup>3</sup> Ottoman patriotism or Ottomanism, and the Hamidian ideology in order to create a Pan-Islamic bond were such identities. However, Eugene Rogan argues these ideologies would not be attractive for tribal leaders who conceived their community as separated from the central Ottoman government.<sup>4</sup> “The Ottoman tribal school experiment can thus be seen as an instrument to advance the state-sanctioned supranational identities of Ottomanism and Pan-Islamism among the marginal communities inhabiting the frontiers of its Arab and Anatolian provinces.”<sup>5</sup>

By the school, it was essentially aimed that the sons of significant tribes in the empire could be educated, and they could obtain government offices. By gaining a position in the Ottoman administrative system, they could be integrated into the central government instead of their tribal governance. In other words, in place of being a local tribal chief, they could be an Ottoman officer in their regions.

The place of the school was also significant. It was opened in Istanbul, Beşiktaş. This was an important feature that made the school a unique foundation because it was the first and only school that was founded in Istanbul for the education of tribes. Some other schools were established to train the

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3 Rogan, "Asiret Mektebi: Abdulhamid II's School for Tribes," 83.

4 Ibid, 85.

5 Ibid.

tribes, and many of them were located in their homelands. However, to take education in the Ottoman tribal school, students came to Istanbul from their regions. The school started to give education at a building in Kabataş, today the place of Kabataş Industrial high school. Then, it was moved to Esmâ Sultan Yalısı (Waterside of Esmâ Sultan) in Beşiktaş. The school was almost next to Yıldız Palace. It could be an important factor for that Abdulhamid II could establish supervision on the students and, sustain his relation to them by such closeness.

Scholars have generally interpreted the school as a social engineering project which aimed an allegiance between the Ottoman empire and the most alienated segment of its society, the empire's tribes. As it is known, the tribes were populated in the important parts of the Ottoman empire. Some of them could have political and military forces in their regions. Khoury and Kostiner describe how tribes had their own social, cultural, and political domains in their regions which could show some differences from the central Ottoman administration in terms of the life styles and governing traditions.<sup>6</sup> It can be also said these tribal formations had a semi-autonomy structure in their regions. The relationship between the Ottoman empire and tribes was based on a mutual agreement between them in terms of governing of their regions. For example, many tribes selected their leaders themselves, and this leader was presented to the approval of the central Ottoman administration. However, in the 19th century due to the conjecture of the time which I have tried to explain below, this relationship between the leading Muslim tribes and the Ottoman empire changed. Some efforts to provide the loyalty and integration of them to the central Ottoman government were realized, and one of them was the Ottoman tribal school.

To achieve the aims of the school, Abdulhamid II and his advisors intended to create a similar body between the Ottoman empire and its tribes. To make real these purposes, the sultan and his governors got to keep the students under the control. I will argue the school had a unique surveillance mecha-

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6 *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, edited by Philip Khoury and Joseph Kostiner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

nism that differentiated it from the other schools in the Ottoman empire. Archival records reveal that unlike with other empire schools, it will be seen that particularly Abdulhamid II and some bureaucratic agents tried to establish a close relation to the sons of tribes in the school. It can be a personal attachment of the sultan to the leading Muslim tribes in the empire. In this thesis, however, I will claim that such a close relationship could be towards establishing supervision on the students. This case is still a dark point in the literature, so I am going to consider surveillance mechanisms of the sultan and his governors which they tried to constitute on the students to bring them under the sultan's authority.

I will examine these control mechanisms that aimed to discipline the students in three parts. It seems that the significant supervision on the students belonged to Abdulhamid II. The sultan indeed had supervision not only on the Ottoman tribal school but, in some other schools in the empire. However, it can be seen that this school constituted a significant place in the ideology of Abdulhamid II towards the tribes. There were some political aims of Abdulhamid II, who sought to achieve the unification as an alienated segment of the society to the Ottoman empire, and to attain this goal, he used some strategies to bring the tribal sons under his authority.

Secondly, the other mechanisms toward to discipline the students belonged to some different officers of the Ottoman administration. They emerged in many times as representatives of power of the sultan towards the students. It seems that the school governors like Ali Nazima, and *Tophane Müşiri* Zeki Pasha (General of Tophane) had significant surveillance on the students in many issues. I will try to present these control mechanisms under the title of bureaucratic control. I will also try to show not only the supervision of bureaucratic actors but also control of some bureaucratic institutions on the sons of tribes in this school.

Thirdly, I will present some cases which can exemplify the surveillance of these different agents on the daily life of the students. I claim that such instances can be vital to discern the control of these actors on the daily lives of the students in the Ottoman tribal school.

### § 3.1 Supervision of Abdulhamid II on the Students

It was argued that the Hamidian period was markedly different from the previous years which preceded it. This is distinctive in terms of Abdulhamid II that the aspects of the Ottoman administration like the almost whole policy of reforms were consistently regulated by a higher need for unity between the Muslim population and the Ottoman empire. In the framework of this Pan-Islamist ideology of the sultan, Muslim tribes in the empire constituted a significant role. Especially, with the influence of nationalist movements, many non-Muslim populations were lost, and coherence of Muslim groups in such an environment was conceived as necessary for the future of the empire. To compensate for such territorial and population losses, Hamidian policy turned its attention to the tribes that had evaded an effective control up to that time. Engin Akarlı argues that the interest of Abdulhamid II towards the Arab subjects in the empire was a significant part of his attempts to be able to bring this subject under the control of the central Ottoman government.<sup>7</sup> As it can be seen, the interest of Abdulhamid II to enhance the collaboration between the Muslim tribes and the Ottoman empire was not restricted to Arabs; however, some Kurd and Albanian tribes became a part of the Hamidian policy.

Providing educational opportunities to such Muslim tribal groups in the distant regions became a significant tool in the Hamidian policy. It was thought that by creating some educational institutions to train the members of the tribes, the inclusion of them in the Ottoman administration system could be possible. Akarlı evaluates the envioning members of tribes to the Ottoman bureaucracy as a conspicuous element in the Hamidian strategy to create a social basis for the integration of these Muslim tribes to the Ottoman administration system.<sup>8</sup>

I argue that the Ottoman tribal school represented a significant aspect of the policy of Abdulhamid II towards Muslim tribes in the empire. The sultan aimed at such a school project that the sons of tribes could become an Ottoman governor in their region instead of being a sheik or agha. “The graduates

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7 Akarlı, “Abdulhamid II’s Attempt to Integrate Arabs into the Ottoman System,” 75.

8 Ibid, 76.

were expected to rejoin their tribes and to serve as teachers or officials in the area.”<sup>9</sup> It was thought that in this way, replacing the modernizing governance mechanisms of the central Ottoman empire by the traditional local governance mechanisms that had been in place for generations could be achieved.

To achieve the purposes in terms of gaining the loyalty of sons of Muslim tribes in the school, Abdulhamid II tried to reinforce the relationship with the students throughout their education years. It can be said that in order to exert authority on the children of tribes and to be able to ensure their loyalty to himself, the sultan used some ideological instruments. It can be seen that these were generally Islamic symbols to enhance the adhesion of the members of tribes to him in the framework of Islamic values. Reading of the Koran and *Mevlid-i Şerif*<sup>10</sup> in the school for the name of Abdulhamid II to emphasize the Islamic bond between the tribes and the Ottoman empire has constituted one of the significant examples of this issue. Sending compliments of the sultan to the students, giving a feast in some days for the students, and speeches that were given to them by governors of the sultan became other significant tools to emphasize the existence and authority of the sultan on the sons of tribes in the school.

I claim that the first control mechanism on the students was Abdulhamid II himself. His aim to create a close relationship with the sons of tribes could be seen in many areas. One of them was sending the sultan’s compliments to them.<sup>11</sup> By this compliment, Abdulhamid II was praised towards the sons of tribes in the school. Such a representation of the sultan was indeed a highly common thing also in other Ottoman schools. However, I assert that these expressions should be thought in the framework of the relationships between the Ottoman Empire and the tribes. It should be noticed that the main aim of the sultan was to provide a full loyalty of members of the tribes to himself and to hand their integration to the Ottoman administrative system. In that way, Abdulhamid II had to be represented as supreme power over their tribal leader to the sons of tribes in this school.

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9 Ibid.

10 An ancient Islamic poet.

11 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Dahiliye Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (DH. MKT.) 2007/72, 12 Rebiü'l-Evvel 1310 (4 October 1892).



Then, like he praised the sultan, there was a passage in which the Ottoman tribal school was mentioned in this compliment of the sultan to the students. Like a prize to Abdulhamid II, the school was also honored. The school was being shown as a big grace of the sultan for the children of the tribes. It was emphasized that they were exclusive as students because every child of the tribes could not receive education in this school. It was highly stressed that at the end of the education in such a school, these students could be involved in the Ottoman administrative system, and the future of these children could become under the condescension of the sultan. It was also strongly emphasized that they were included in *cami-i şerif* (Great Mosque) under the patronage of Abdulhamid II. It means they could become a part of the big Islamic community under the patronage of the sultan. The idea of reading *Mevlid-i Şerif* for the name of the sultan was also mentioned in this compliment.

The thought of reading *Mevlid-i Şerif* became a current issue of the directors of the school in the year of 1895, and they wanted reading of *Mevlid-i Şerif* for the name of Abdulhamid II at the school. Their wish was revealed by Zeki Pasha who was *müşir* of Tophane, and it was indicated that the students did not yet present their thanks to the sultan for his favor. According to the director of the school and Zeki Pasha reading of *Mevlid-i Şerif* for the name of Abdulhamid II was a necessary thing to show the thankfulness of the students to the sultan.

The sultan and his governors had some common attitudes towards the students. For example, as in conveying compliments of the sultan to the students, the compassion (*atıfet-i seniyye*) of Abdulhamid II was a point which was strongly emphasized in the record which belonged to Zeki Pasha. Selim Deringil argues, some feelings like charitableness, honor, and affection were some of the important symbols of the sultan that were shown to his subjects.<sup>12</sup> By Zeki Pasha, the school was emphasized as a sign of the sympathy of Abdulhamid II for the children of tribes in the empire.

It can be seen that not only the sultan but also some other empire agents like the director of the school had some efforts to enhance the supervision of

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12 Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire 1876-1909* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1998), 35.

the sultan on the students. Their emphasis was also on the kindness and compassion of Abdulhamid II for the children of tribes in the school. There was a strong emphasis and repetition on some words like *eltaf* (favor) and *atıfet-i seniyye* (affection) of the sultan as Deringil points.<sup>13</sup> In such a case the manager of the school and Zeki Pasha were the significant agents who symbolized the manner and ideology of the sultan to the students. They mainly expressed the necessity of making an Islamic ceremony for the name of Abdulhamid II in the school. On this point, Deringil emphasizes that such religious rituals like reading *Mevlid-i Şerif* became one of the religious symbols of Abdulhamid II which he used to enhance his rule on the Muslim subjects of the empire.<sup>14</sup> The insistence of the governors to read *Mevlid-i Şerif* at the school in the name of the sultan to give the students' thankfulness to him could be an attempt to emphasize Abdulhamid II's existence, power and also his good attitudes towards the sons of tribes in the school.

The other efforts to depict Abdulhamid II as a supreme power on the sons of tribes were speeches that were given by the school directors and some students in the name of Abdulhamid II.<sup>15</sup> They were delivered in a feast that was made for the honor of the sultan in 1894. It was a significant case that not only the directors were speaking addressed the students and other guests in this feast, but also some of the students gave a speech there.

The main theme of the speech given by several directors was exactly the same. At the beginning of the feast, the director of the school, Şükrü Pasha, delivered a speech. These were the themes that were frequently used and reminded to the children of the tribes. The school was highly praised for the students. Şükrü Pasha wanted to present the school as a blessing of the sultan to train the tribes, and generally stress the importance of education. Schooling was also shown to be something which was designed for the children of tribes in the way of getting involved them to the civilization by such a foundation:

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13 Ibid, 36.

14 Ibid.

15 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Yıldız Parekende Evrakı Maarif Kalemi (Y.. PRK..MF) 3/25, 25 Zi'l-ka' de 1311 (30 May 1894).

This school was founded as the result of attempts of our sultan in terms of education. The issue of schooling is approached as an important and valuable point by the sultan. Our ruler always appreciated the necessity for education in the empire. The Ottoman tribal school is the grace of the sultan for the training and civilizing of children of the tribes.<sup>16</sup>

As it can be seen, the school was generally emphasized as a blessing of civilization for the children of tribes, and the first condition of that was stated as obeying the sultan. This was also shown as a necessity of the religion:

Dear students of the Ottoman tribal school! Work for the acquiescence of the sultan. Obeying to the sultan and learning of science are the necessities of our religion. Such students certainly will be successful in this school. However, students who do not behave in that way won't be able to be prospering in this school.<sup>17</sup>

It can be seen that these themes were generally used to re-strengthen the effect and hegemony of the sultan on the students, and they could be influential tools in gaining the commitment of the students to Abdulhamid II.

It is known that after 1878, a big part of the non-Muslim population left the Ottoman empire. Scholars have argued that in such an environment, Abdulhamid II thought that there were no obstacles to follow a Pan-Islamic ideology for the well-being of the empire, and he tried to constitute an Islamic unity as a caliph of the Muslim world. Deringil reveals that the caliphate was a frequently used symbol of the sultan towards his Muslim subject to gain their loyalty to himself.<sup>18</sup> In these speeches, Abdulhamid II was mainly stressed as the caliph of the universe (*cihan-ı halife*) towards the children of tribes at the school. The best example of such themes like goodness, affection, and caliphate of the sultan can be seen in the speech of Ali Nazima, who was the director of the Ottoman tribal school:

You are educated under the respect of caliph of all Muslim world in the Ottoman tribal school that is what big happiness for the children of

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16 COA. Y... PRK... MF. 3/25, 25 Zi'l-ka' de 1311 (30 May 1894).

17 COA. Y... PRK... MF. 3/25, 25 Zi'l-ka' de 1311 (30 May 1894).

18 Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains*, 40.

tribes. That is an attempt of our ruler which made humans more human. Our sultan has made a bid for knowledge and education which can tell the requirements of humanity to the children of tribes by the Ottoman tribal school. This is also a necessity of our religion. Our great caliph provides us that. Our sultan designed it for providing education. Our exalted sultan also procures every need of the children of tribes in the Ottoman tribal school. Let's obey our great caliph<sup>19</sup>

Ali Nazima tried to show education and humanity as a big grace of the caliph Abdulhamid II for the tribes who had lived in savage and ignorance until that time. Continuation of his speech attempted to consolidate the paternal figure of the sultan on the students:

You gain the grace of our ruler in the Ottoman tribal school. The sultan is interested in your every kind of need for education in the school. We should thank our God for that we attain good fortune of the grace of our exalted sultan in this school.<sup>20</sup>

As it is seen, another striking point in Ali Nazima's speech was that the education cost of the children of tribes was under the control and responsibility of the sultan, not under their fathers in the tribes:

It has been known that tribes in the empire met the expense of their children for education themselves. These tribes strived for learning of their children in their region. However, the children of the tribes are now educated by the charity of our sultan in the Ottoman tribal school. Our ruler also honored you.<sup>21</sup>

In the speeches of the other empire agents like the district governor Ahmed and the director's assistant, the importance of being a faithful subject to the sultan, the symbol of the caliphate, and the conservation of Abdulhamid II on the students were re-emphasized themes. As the aforementioned works reveal, these children were coming from big and important tribes in the empire.

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19 COA. Y.. PRK... MF. 3/25, 25 Zi'l-ka' de 1311 (30 May 1894).

20 COA. Y.. PRK... MF. 3/25, 25 Zi'l-ka' de 1311 (30 May 1894).

21 COA. Y.. PRK... MF. 3/25, 25 Zi'l-ka' de 1311 (30 May 1894).

These tribes had their own administrative, social, and political mechanisms, and these students were born into the system of tribes. It cannot be easy that in the place of their sheiks or aghas of their tribes, they directly obey to the sultan. So, interpreting such statements by the students and effects on them should also be thought.

Another significant aspect about the feast was that there were some speeches which were given by the students of the school. It could be interesting that from the expressions of these students they seemed to like that they had almost the same attributes in the way which the sultan and some empire agents tried to impose them. The speech of a student of the Ottoman tribal school named İzzet included some remarkable points in that sense:

Our almighty ruler founded such a school to get rid of us from ignorance by education. We take our lot from civilization thanks to the Ottoman tribal school. The sultan did favor for us. Our needs in the school are provided by the sultan every day. Each one of us is thankful to the sultan.<sup>22</sup>

The fact that a student stresses exactly the same points as governors in his speech is interesting. The school was founded in 1892, and an earlier year like in 1894, adopting children of tribes to the ideology of the sultan could be strange. Since the adaptation of the students to the idea of loyalty to the sultan in only two years is not plausible, it is likely that these speech texts were created by the school administration.

Another significant and common motif in the students' speeches was the expression of 'Long Live the Sultan' (*Padişahımız Çok Yaşa*). The rest of the speech of student İzzet was that as follows:

Dear Friends! We should work hard. We have to study and learn to thank the sultan for his grace. We have to be deserve such a favor of the ruler. Exalted sultan rescued of our future. So, we always should

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22 COA. Y.. PRK... MF. 3/25, 25 Zi'l-ka' de 1311 (30 May 1894).

pray for the sultan. Let's perform our holy devotion for the sultan all together: Long Live the Sultan<sup>23</sup>

As Deringil points out, the expression of 'Long Live the Sultan' was a widespread tradition in different cultures.<sup>24</sup> He emphasized that in such a concept and its repetition there was an aim to focus on loyalty to the sultan. In many other speeches of the students in the feast, this expression was highly repetitive. Stressing this expression by the students of the Ottoman tribal school can be thought as another strategy to enhance domination of the sultan on the students.

### § 3.2 The Bureaucratic Control on the Students

The other control mechanism on the students can be defined as bureaucratic control. In some moments in the students' lives; for example, when they went to their homelands to visit their parents, or when they were sick, some empire officers sustained their supervision on the students. It can be said that such an effort of the governors to control the students could be an extension of the surveillance of the sultan considering the fact that reports which were written related to the students' cases were sent to the sultan by the empire officers. As I have emphasized, such agents like the director of the school were also a representative of the ideology of the sultan in the school; however, not only empire officers but also some other bureaucratic foundations had a control mechanism on the students.

The first apparent empire agent in the lives of the students was the gendarmerie. As it was known, the gendarmerie was a paramilitary police organization that was established by bureaucrats of the Tanzimat era. Then, this force gains a more uniform and centralized character to provide the empire's internal security organization.<sup>25</sup> Nadir Özbek argues that through the gendarmerie institution, the 19th-century bureaucrats tried to extend their authority to the

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23 COA. Y. PRK... MF. 3/25, 25 Zi'l-ka' de 1311 (30 May 1894).

24 Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains*, 40.

25 Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains*, 48.

provinces which, at that time was described as alienated under Ottoman sovereignty.<sup>26</sup> By such a paramilitary police force, bureaucrats of the Ottoman Empire tried to enhance their effect on the daily lives of society. It is also seen that the gendarmerie institution became a significant extent of bureaucratic control in distant regions of the empire.

Throughout the first year of the students in the school, gendarmerie appeared as a significant figure in their lives. Before the sons of tribes came to Istanbul to be trained in the school, it was decided to appoint a gendarmerie for each student.<sup>27</sup> While these children were coming to Istanbul, these forces accompanied them. The figure of the gendarmerie was an apparent agent through the daily life of the students; for example, they were traveling in the districts of Istanbul with a gendarmerie who accompanied them. As we will see in Chapter 4, when they visited some places like Beyoğlu and Beşiktaş on their free days, it emerged as an effective figure as an agent of the empire with the students.

The other representative of bureaucratic control on the students can be seen in the cases of students' illness. Before mentioning the reports in these cases, reasons of students' illness should be focused. It will be seen that the students frequently claimed that they were sick. We can assume that some could be from different motivations. Firstly, these illness could be sign a lack of adaptation as a physical reaction to the air or food. Secondly, it could derived from some psychological reasons such as being away from family or hometown. Thirdly, it could be a pure excuse to leave the school. Whatever the reasons, the supervision of some bureaucratic foundations mainly appeared in these cases. There were some doctor's reports which indicated the illness of students and some permission reports in which it was written that the students could be cured on condition that they return to their hometown. One of the reports belonged to the student named Mehmed from Tripoli.

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26 Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains*, 48.

27 *Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (MF.MKT.) 554/29, 8 Muharrem 1319 (8 April 1901).*

Firstly, there is a doctor report which explained the case and the illness of Mehmed:<sup>28</sup>

Mehmed Effendi is one of the students studying at the Ottoman tribal school. He comes from Tripoli. He is a third-year student in the school. Mehmed Effendi has dealt with an illness since he started education in the school. We have tried to treat him for many times. However, we could not be successful treating Mehmed Effendi. In the next ten days, his illness relapsed. His body and face swelled, and he was sent to the hospital again.<sup>29</sup>

In the continuation of the report, the doctor of the school mentioned the deterioration of the illness of Mehmed, and he was presenting the idea of returning of Mehmed to his homeland to change of air for one year:

The illness has also emerged in the mouth of Mehmed Effendi. His case is excessively bad. We are afraid that his illness will become worse. It will be positively affect the treatment of the illness of Mehmed Effendi if he is sent to his homeland for changing the air.<sup>30</sup>

It can be understood that the school directory needed examination of other doctors in terms of the illness of Mehmed Effendi. There was another report which included the approval of multiple doctors from the *Mekteb-i Tibbiye* (Imperial Medical High School). The decision of the school's doctor was sent to the committee which consisted of the doctors of *Mekteb-i Tibbiye* for their examination. The investigation of the committee came to the same conclusion as the school's doctor. They approved sending Mehmed to his hometown. The third bureaucratic step was sending these reports to the *Mekatib-i Askeriyye-yi Şahane* (Ottoman Military High School). After sending these reports, they waited for a reply from the *Mekatib-i Askeriyye-yi Şahane* waited.

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28 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (MF. MKT.) 445/58, 16 Zi'l- Hicce 1316 ( 27 April 1899).

29 COA. MF. MKT. 445/58, 16 Zi'l- Hicce 1316 ( 27 April 1899).

30 COA. MF. MKT. 445/58, 16 Zi'l- Hicce 1316 ( 27 April 1899).



The same administrative steps could be seen in the case of student Ali.<sup>31</sup> The doctor of the school decided to send back Ali to his homeland for a while. Then, this decision was sent for the consent of doctors of *Mekteb-i Tibbiye* and then, asking to *Mekatib-i Askeriyye-yi Şahane*. After receiving a reply, the decision was sent to the approval of the sultan. It seems that this was a common procedure in such cases. The existence of multiple administrative mechanisms on the students could be a good example to see the bureaucratic control on them, and also it could show the prevalence of some different surveillance and decision mechanisms on them.

Another signifier of the bureaucratic attempts in order to discipline the students was the attempts to record those who went to their homes and traveled around İstanbul.<sup>32</sup> These included some detailed information related to places where these students went and the time they got back to school:

Some of the Ottoman tribal school students went to the districts of Tophane and Mahmud Pasha at 6 O'clock on Friday. They returned to school at 23.30 O'clock. In addition to that, two other students who went to their hometowns last Thursday have returned to the school today.<sup>33</sup>

Not only students who traveled around İstanbul, but also students who went to their homelands were recorded. When the students departed from the school to visit their parents during the holidays, the government of the school requested information from their provinces informing the school as to whether they arrived or not. For example, in the case of the student who went to Aleppo to visit their homeland, the government of the school asked for reports to make sure that the student reached his family.<sup>34</sup>

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- 31 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemî (MF. MKT.) 445/59, 16 Zi'l- Hicce 1316 ( 27 April 1899).
- 32 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Yıldız Parekende Evrakı Zabtiye Nezareti (Y. PRK. ZB.) 34/1, 18 Zi'l-ka' de 1311 (23 May 1894).
- 33 COA. Y. PRK. ZB. 34/1, 18 Zi'l-ka' de 1311 (23 May 1894).
- 34 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemî (MF. MKT.) 186/94, 2 Cemaziye'l-Evvel 1311 (11 November 1893).

It appears that the control on the students was not restricted in the districts of İstanbul, but also these students were under the supervision of the empire officers in their homelands. An interesting case experienced by the student named Fendi could be another signifier of the bureaucratic control on the children of tribes in this school.<sup>35</sup> Fendi used to come Amara to visit his homeland during the holiday. As I mentioned earlier such visits were monitored by the governors and some related foundations to the school. Fendi wanted to visit his mother; however, his mother was staying in a different area. It was a significant point that Fendi had to get permission from the school administration to go to the village where his mother was staying.

The multiple administrative steps in order to get permission to visit his mother in a different area emerged in the case of Fendi. Firstly, a person who was mentioned as commander (*Kumandan*) of the student in the region of Amara notified the wish of Fendi to the *Maarif Nezareti* (Ministry of Education). The existence of person who was called the commander of the student was remarkable. It could show that these students were under the control of another empire officer in their homelands, and also the control of the central Ottoman government on the students continued while they were staying in their homelands on holidays. It also seems that such empire agents were responsible for the students when they were in their regions. For example in the case of Fendi, his desire to visit his mother in a different region was firstly stated by the commander of Fendi to the *Maarif Nezareti*. Then, the wish of the student was expressed to *Mekatib-i Askeriyye-yi Şahane Nezareti* by the *Maarif Nezareti*:

Fendi Effendi, who is one of the students of the Ottoman tribal school has been staying in his homeland, Amara. His commander in the region informed us that Fendi Effendi wants to take permission to visit his mother in a different province, Hayza.<sup>36</sup>

Then *Maarif Nezareti* informed that they conveyed the wish of Fendi to *Mekatib-i Askeriyye-yi Şahane Nezareti*. It seems that the last bureaucratic

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35 COA. MF.MKT. 382/50, 2 Cemaziye'l-Evvel 1311 (11 November 1893).

36 COA. MF.MKT. 382/50, 2 Cemaziye'l-Evvel 1311 (11 November 1893).

foundation which had made a decision related to the students' case before the sultan approval was the *Mekatib-i Askeriyye-yi Şahane Nezareti*. The foundation indicated Fendi Effendi was allowed to visit his mother in Hayza region.<sup>37</sup> Seemingly, the wish of Fendi to visit his mother in the district of Hayza was accepted; on condition that his visit to his homeland would be under the control of the governor of Amara.<sup>38</sup>

It can be said that the situation of the student Fendi was one of the good examples of the surveillance on the students. His case has revealed the existence and control of different empire officers and some bureaucratic foundations which were responsible for students. It has also shown extensive administrative steps in the issues which were related to the students. It is remarkably seen that supervision on the students by these official mechanisms was not restricted to the districts of Istanbul, but also the surveillance on these students was carried out in some distant regions like their homelands. This could constitute an important case in order to emphasize the degree of control on them.

### § 3.3 From the Inside of the Lives of the Students

As I have shown, some events could exemplify the control of several administrative agents on the life of the students in the school. Indeed, such attempts in order to supervise the students were realized in other Ottoman schools as well. However, there are not extensive records that show us such efforts were made in other Ottoman schools. On the other hand, various records can indicate the far-reaching surveillance on the students of the Ottoman tribal school. In that way, this school represented a unique example with such control mechanisms on the students. Focusing on some sample cases from the lives of the students in the school can make it easy to understand these surveillance mechanisms on them. Controlling on the students' letters, the close investigation on the books which were bought for the school, ban on some places where the

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37 COA. MF.MKT. 382/50, 2 Cemaziye'l-Evvel 1311 (11 November 1893).

38 COA. MF.MKT. 382/50, 2 Cemaziye'l-Evvel 1311 (11 November 1893).

students visited, and the government's precision on the school uniform has represented remarkable instances.

Directory of the school had some endeavors to take the students' letters under control. There is a significant record that can exemplify controlling on the letter of a student in the school has been revealed.<sup>39</sup> The student in the name of Carallah wanted to send a letter to his tribe, *Durzi Hilal Etraş*. He wrote his letter but before the letter was sent, it had been examined by the school administration. The result of the investigation of the letter indicated that the letter had no detrimental things, and thus it could be sent.

Such cases appeared as a widespread practice of the governors in an attempt to keep the students under control in other Ottoman schools. However, these were not intensively kept under the record in other Ottoman schools, on the contrary of the Ottoman tribal school. In addition, when the aim of Abdulhamid II is considered, such a control of the school administration on the students of the Ottoman tribal school what they were writing to their relatives could constitute a significant issue for the sultan and his governors. Such letters could open a way for the central Ottoman administration to intervene in the relation between the students and their families. Being informed of what they thought and wrote to their tribes could become an advantage for the Ottoman governors to get involved in the interaction between tribal members.

The other supervision of the school administration was on the books and booklets which were read by the students. It was indicated that a sample part from the books and booklets which were bought for the students had to be sent for the examination of the directory of the school.<sup>40</sup> It constituted a general case that was experienced in other Ottoman schools; however, it represented a significant point in the case of the Ottoman tribal school. As I have explained, Abdulhamid II had some concerns about the Muslim tribes of the empire which could get involved in separatist movements due to the effects of nationalism waves. As I stated in Chapter 2, through the second half of the 19th century, nationalistic thoughts started to appear in the Ottoman empire,

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39 Cumhuriyet Arşivi, Dahiliye Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (DH. MKT.) 2299/68, 23 Rebiü'l-Evvel 1317 (1 August 1899).

40 Cumhuriyet Arşivi, Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (MF. MKT.) 704/25, 18 Safer 1321 (16 May 1903).

and the Ottoman government experienced the detrimental effects of nationalism by revolts of different ethnic groups. By the independence of such ethnic groups in the empire, the sultan considered his Pan-Islamic ideology by the rest of the Muslim majority, and their loyalty to the sultan became a valid issue for the future of the empire. Muslim tribes constituted a significant place in this ideology; for this reason, Abdulhamid II had to protect the members of powerful Muslim tribes at the school from the spreading ideas of nationalism. Such a case can be an important reason for control on the books by the school government in those years.

One of the points which were taken under control by the school directory was the places where the students visited. Some events have shown us that the students were forbidden to go to some places in Istanbul. The directory of the school banned from visiting Beyoğlu and the coffeehouses there.<sup>41</sup> Ali Nazima wrote a report on this issue, and he sent it directly to the sultan. Ali Nazima demanded that traveling of the students in the district of Beyoğlu had to be forbidden.

Ali Nazima said that there were some reasons which necessitated such a ban. Firstly, he told that some students were going to coffeehouses in Beyoğlu, and it was noticed by the school administration. The families of these students were informed about the situation. Ali Nazima was continuing the report by pointing out that such a case was not a common thing at the school. Students had gone to the coffeehouses in Beyoğlu by the incentive of the student in the name of Mustafa. He took away another student named Seyyid to a coffeehouse in Beyoğlu, and this was stated to the directory of the school. Then, it was realized that not only Seyyid but also some other students were taken away to this coffeehouse by Mustafa. To be able to constitute a warning for the students, Mustafa was dismissed from the school; besides, Seyyid and other students who had gone to the coffeehouse were punished. Ali Nazima strongly emphasized that visiting the students to coffeehouses in Beyoğlu had to be forbidden.

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41 Cumhuriyet Başbakanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (MF. MKT.) 195/97, 6 Şaban 1311 (12 February 1894).

The school governors could have several reasons for such a forbiddance. Eugene Rogan defines these attempts as necessary in the way of gaining their loyalty to the Ottoman government.<sup>42</sup> He claims that the students' behavior had to conform to the Ottoman standards in morality; for this reason, the governors set many regulations which the school staff enjoined to uphold the letter of the law. As Rogan asserts, to achieve it they tried to keep the students isolated from the Istanbul society and the corrupting influences of the city.<sup>43</sup> These children came from different regions to İstanbul; besides, it was the first time arrival of some students to Istanbul. The governors had to protect these children from the inappropriate places for their moral well-being in the city. Rogan argues that such efforts of the school administration had particular importance if the assumption holds that the school was an attempt to provide loyalty to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>44</sup>

The directory of the school has a significant decision related to the children who had been dismissed from the school. It was indicated that these children could not get in the dress which belonged to the Ottoman tribal school, and the staff what was necessary to carry out this policy.<sup>45</sup> It can be claimed that the school was portrayed as a unique institution with its staff, students, and dress for the children of the important tribes in the empire.

As has been argued in the collected study of Sharma and Gupta, some symbols represent the existence of a ruler in the daily life of people.<sup>46</sup> For example, a gendarmerie in his uniform symbolized the power of Abdulhamid II because the root of his control and effect on the people as an empire officer was the sultan himself. Such a case could remind people of the actuality of the power of a ruler on them.

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42 Rogan, "Asiret Mektebi: Abdulhamid II's School for Tribes," 90.

43 Rogan, "Asiret Mektebi: Abdulhamid II's School for Tribes," 90.

44 Rogan, "Asiret Mektebi: Abdulhamid II's School for Tribes," 90.

45 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemî (MF. MKT.) 454/18, 18 Safer 1317 (28 June 1899).

46 *The Anthropology of the State*, edited by Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 29.

The same effect could be tried to be created on the children of tribes by the school uniform. As I have shown, the tribal groups had some differences from life in the Ottoman center, and one of them was their clothes. Alişan Akpınar shows in his work that these children were in different apparel when they came to school for the first time.<sup>47</sup> They were photographed in their traditional clothes.<sup>48</sup> Then, another photograph that belonged to the same students showed that they had a different appearance in the uniform of the school.<sup>49</sup> Some of the students were also presented in their uniforms as an empire officer.

In the first photograph, these children were indicated as people who were living in ignorance and wildness. Then, in the second photograph, it could be tried to symbolize that they started to benefit from the blessing of civilization thanks to the school. So, the dress of the school became a signifier of the civilizing of tribes' children who were beforehand in savage and nomadism. In this way, the Ottoman governors could reveal the power of the sultan in the way of civilizing the tribal groups who were seen as ignorant, wild, and uncivilized; besides, these uniforms could be a way to symbolize the power and existence of the sultan on the tribes.

### § 3.4 Conclusion

As I have tried to show, there were different surveillance mechanisms on the students which belonged to several actors. They could be categorized as the supervision of Abdulhamid II, control of his officers, and some bureaucratic institutions like *Mekatib-i Askeriyye-yi Şahane Nezareti* on the sons of tribes in the school. Besides, I have attempted to present some cases from the lives of the students which could exemplify the surveillance of such actors on them.

It can be seen that the most apparent surveillance on the students belonged to Abdulhamid II. The incorporation of the members of the tribes into the Ottoman administration became a vital aim for the sultan, so he had to gain

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47 Alişan Akpınar, "Aşiret Mektebi," (Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1996), 99.

48 Alişan Akpınar, "Aşiret Mektebi," (Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1996), 99.

49 Alişan Akpınar, "Aşiret Mektebi," (Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İstanbul Üniversitesi, 1996), 98.

the support and loyalty of some important Muslim tribes to himself. For Abdulhamid II, the school was a way to raise loyal governors for the empire within the tribes. To do so, he tried to establish a control mechanism in order to discipline the students in several ways and became interested in the daily lives of the students as we have seen.

The other control mechanisms on the students can be defined as the bureaucratic actors and foundations. As it has been seen, they had large supervision on the daily lives of the sons of tribes in the school. Such agents tried to emphasize the importance of loyalty to the sultan, and they also became an influential mechanism to make some restrictions in the students' social and daily life.

The supervision on the students appeared in many different areas; for this reason, I have tried to exemplify them by some sample cases within the lives of the students at the school. Control on the students' letters, students' obligation to get permission to travel to other places when they were in their hometowns, following the hours at which the students went to the school and got back could represent some significant ones that can exemplify the control and discipline the students. I argue that focusing on these mechanisms on the sons of the tribes is a remarkable issue because it constitutes a significant step to understanding what children of tribes experienced at the school.



## A Window Which Opens to the Students' Lives

It can be argued that the Ottoman tribal school was a unique educational institution of the empire. As it has been discussed in the previous chapter, there were many discipline mechanisms on the students. General research in the Presidency Ottoman Archive can show that almost every activity of the students in their daily lives, from what they ate in the school to the places where they went, was kept under the record by the school government. It seems that apart from its political importance and aims, the school can be examined through the window of social life and students' experiences. By its location, living conditions, and control mechanisms on the students, the school presented a new life for many sons of tribes who had grown up in a different socio-cultural environment. However, the issue of students' life in the school is a point which has not been deeply researched in the literature so far. In this chapter, what the students experienced in the school will be scrutinized because focusing on events in the daily life of the students constitutes a necessary step in order to understand the effects of the surveillance on them.

The students' life in the school will be examined in five parts. Firstly, the remarkable issue was that some students could not adapt to the school life, and they wanted to return to their homelands. Archival records show us that the case of Abdüsselam Effendi provides a closer perspective towards the non-adapted students of the school; secondly, his matter will be focused on as a

case study. It will be seen that such students had a triggering effect on increasing the school government's control over them. Thirdly, the students' reactions towards this rise in the surveillance of the school directory will be focused. So many records reveal that the students experienced illness while they were staying in the school; fourthly, they will be examined as a damaging factor for the students' lives. Lastly, certain events in the school life like students' fights, and their provocative letters will be considered.

Archival records have highlighted that one of the difficulties in the students' life was the issue of adapting to the school. Şazeli Efendi and Ali Efendi constituted two instances for such students. While Şazeli Efendi was demanding to return to his homeland from the school government, Ali Effendi was conceived as homesick. Students who could not adapt wanted to return to his homeland; and, they wrote petitions to the school directory in which they emphasized their wish. One of them was the student named Şazeli Effendi.<sup>1</sup> He expressed in his petition that he could not get used to the school, and he demanded to go back to his homeland.<sup>2</sup>

It is possible that the petition of Şazeli Efendi made the school directory angry because the reply to it was not as Şazeli Effendi hoped. The response of the school directory which was written by Recai Effendi who was the deputy manager of the school constitutes a good example for the control of the school administration on the students.

In the case of Şazeli Efendi, it appears that the main concern of the school directory was reaching a decision that would discourage the other students from making similar demands. By its decision, the school government wanted to show that the students could not return to their homeland when they wanted. Recai Effendi thought that if Şazeli Effendi was to be sent to his homeland, other students would make the same claim.<sup>3</sup> For this reason, he emphasized that the school directory had to be careful in taking the decision related to Şazeli Efendi.<sup>4</sup>

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- 1 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Yıldız Mütenevvi Evrakı (Y..MTV.) 70/14, 4 Rebiülahir 1310 (26 October 1892).
  - 2 COA. Y.. MTV. 70/14, 4 Rebiülahir 1310 (26 October 1892).
  - 3 COA. Y.. MTV. 70/14, 4 Rebiülahir 1310 (26 October 1892).
  - 4 COA. Y.. MTV. 70/14, 4 Rebiülahir 1310 (26 October 1892).

The way that the directory responded to the Şazeli Efendi's case attempted to prevent it from constituting a sample for the other students in the school. The school governors declared that he could not be sent to his homeland. They emphasized that Şazeli Efendi was claiming in his petition that he could not adapt to the conditions of the Ottoman tribal school. Recai Effendi emphasized that if Şazeli Effendi could not do so, he could be transferred to another school in İstanbul, where he can adjust to more easily in Istanbul. By the decision of the school directory, he was registered to Ottoman Imperial High School (*Mekteb-i Mülkiye*).

Recai Effendi argued that the reason for such demands of the students was that they did not know the importance of education.<sup>5</sup> In other words, they could not understand the value of schooling.<sup>6</sup> He expressed that these students had to understand the significance of training in such a school, and they had to get accustomed to the school.<sup>7</sup> Attempts to keep such students under the control of the school government have also appeared in the report of Recai Effendi. He said:

On their days off, some officers should be assigned for the students. They walk the accompaniment of these officers. Furthermore, students should be followed by such agents even during the break times at school. In mornings and evenings, these officers should be with the students who wished to leave the school.<sup>8</sup>

In the report, it would appear as a significant point that Recai Effendi argued that Şazeli Effendi could not get used to the school life because he was under the influence of some people outside of the school.<sup>9</sup> For this reason, people whom the students met, places where they visited had to be kept under the

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5 COA. Y.. MTV. 70/14, 4 Rebiülahir 1310 (26 October 1892).

6 COA. Y.. MTV. 70/14, 4 Rebiülahir 1310 (26 October 1892).

7 COA. Y.. MTV. 70/14, 4 Rebiülahir 1310 (26 October 1892).

8 COA. Y.. MTV. 70/14, 4 Rebiülahir 1310 (26 October 1892).

9 COA. Y.. MTV. 70/14, 4 Rebiülahir 1310 (26 October 1892).

control of the school administration to preserve the students from such unpleasant influences.<sup>10</sup> He argued that these students had to be protected from moral corruption in the city.<sup>11</sup>

The instance of Şazeli Efendi revealed that the main concern of the school directory was the loyalty and moral well-being of these students.<sup>12</sup> So as to prevent such demands of the students, the school governors decided that the surveillance on the students had to be increased; and soon after that, the students' activities in the school were kept under closer control of the school directory. Even the shuttling of the students to their homelands was restricted; and they were expected to be accustomed to the life in the school in this way.

The other significant problem in the students' life at the school appeared to be homesickness. At that point, one of the records has highlighted the matter of Ali Efendi from Van.<sup>13</sup> In the report of the school's doctor, it was indicated that Ali Efendi came down with a longing for his homeland. It was sent to the school directory to inform them of the illness of the student. The doctor told the case of Ali Efendi to the school directory as:

Ali Effendi from Van, who is the student of the Ottoman tribal school in number 359 came to school from the Seyyid tribe in Van. Ali effendi has caught an illness which makes him miss his hometown very much. His illness became worse day by day, and he cannot sustain his education at the school. So, he should go to his homeland for a change of air for one year. On the first days, he fainted once or twice a week. However, these days he is almost fainting every day, and it continues for hours.<sup>14</sup>

It seems that the school government was suspicious about the illness of Ali Effendi, and it was decided that he could be sent to his homeland for a change

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10 COA. Y. MTV. 70/14, 4 Rebiülahir 1310 (26 October 1892).

11 COA. Y. MTV. 70/14, 4 Rebiülahir 1310 (26 October 1892).

12 COA. Y. MTV. 70/14, 4 Rebiülahir 1310 (26 October 1892).

13 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (MF. MKT.) 854/17, 6 Rebiü'l-Evvel 1323 (11 May 1905).

14 COA. MF. MKT. 854/17, 6 Rebiü'l-Evvel 1323 (11 May 1905).

of air for a while. This was also expressed that the expenses of Ali Effendi to go to his region was paid from the budget of the school:

The Ottoman tribal school student Ali Effendi from Van should be sent to his homeland so that he could recover from his illness. He cannot stay at the school to continue his education under these circumstances. However, he needs 500 kurus to go to his homeland. It is decided that the amount should be paid from the budget of the Ottoman tribal school.<sup>15</sup>

The school directory and some other Ottoman officers tried to make provisions against for returning the students to their homelands, as in the case of Şazeli Effendi. Archival records show us that especially in the first years of the school, there were many students who wanted to return their homelands. In such cases, the school administration tried to give the message to such students that they could not leave from the school easily. Even if the school directory in some extraordinary matters let students to get out the school, they were not sent out Istanbul. In a worst possibility, non-adapted students were transferred to another Ottoman school in Istanbul. It seems as a significant strategy towards to keep the sons of tribes under the umbrella of the Ottoman government in Istanbul.

Abdüselam Effendi constituted a good sample for the case which has been explained above. He was one of the students who experienced adoption problems to the school. It appears that his matter represented some differences from the other students in the school. Abdüselam Effendi was a 20 years old student. He came from Tripoli to train in the Ottoman tribal school; however, he had wife and children in their region. It is understood that this case created a main obstacle for him to sustain education.

The school governors claimed that Abdüselam Effendi could not be accustomed to the school life, and they emphasized that he had some attributes which were opposite to morals and nurture for the other students at the school:

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15 COA. MF. MKT. 854/17, 6 Rebiü'l-Evvel 1323 (11 May 1905).

The student of the Ottoman tribal school Abdüsselam Effendi from Tripoli had some behaviors which were not appropriate for morals at the school. He has continued to behave in this way since he came to the school. He absconded from the school; however, he was forgiven by the school administration. He returned to the school, but he keeps displaying bad behavior.<sup>16</sup>

The school director Ali Nazima argued that if Abdüsselam Effendi continued to stay at the school, his manner would negatively affect the nurture of the students. As has been emphasized in the previous chapter, the first concern of the governors was protecting the students from moral corruption. To do so, Ali Nazima offered that Abdüsselam Effendi would not stay in the school anymore.<sup>17</sup> Ali Nazima thought that in addition to the presence of Abdüsselam Effendi at the school as well as a bad example for moral well-being of other students, he also became an obstacle to ensure the loyalty of other students.

The case of Abdüsselam Effendi revealed that certain concerns of the school directory regarding the prevention of bad samples from occurring continued to exist. In this case, two concerns of the school governors about the students' lives emerged. Firstly, any factors that could constitute a bad effect on the nurture and moral of the students were to be immediately eliminated by them. Secondly; by doing so, they tried to make the students realize that they could not leave the school easily. The decision of the directory indicated that these two concerns of the school administration became a determinant factor of the students' lives. As far as the case of Abdüsselam Effendi was concerned, it was concluded that he would be transferred to another Ottoman school in Istanbul.

There was a petition which was written by grand vizier Ekrem to the *Maarif Nezareti* concerning the case of Abdüsselam Effendi. It included detailed information:<sup>18</sup>

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16 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Yıldız Sarayı Maruzat Evrakı (Y. A... HUS.) 270/26, 4 Şaban 1310 (21 February 1893).

17 COA. Y. A... HUS. 270/26, 4 Şaban 1310 (21 February 1893).

18 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (MF. MKT) 16/85, 11 Şaban 1310 (28 February 1893).

The student who came from Tripoli for the Ottoman tribal school was named Abdüsselam Effendi, and he was 20 years old. He has continued to behave in a way that ruins the morals and nurture of the other students at the school. The government of the Ottoman tribal school made the same attempts to correct these bad behaviors of him; however, they could not be successful. Such behaviors will be dangerous for other students at the school.<sup>19</sup>

The grand vizier Ekrem also informed about other events which were experienced in the school due to Abdüsselam Effendi:

Abdüsselam Effendi had some meaningless behaviors on Monday evening, and he caused rumble at the school. Encouraged by him, some students took leave from the garden at midnight. The government of the school denounced the case to the police of Beşiktaş. Abdüsselam Effendi and other students were caught by the police. For Abdüsselam Effendi to enter the Ottoman tribal school would be hazardous for other students at the school.<sup>20</sup>

The second concern of the school government about the students has appeared in the statements of Ali Nazima and the grand vizier Ekrem. Both of them emphasized that it was not acceptable for Abdüsselam Effendi to stay in the school due to his bad attitudes; however, they were concerned that sending Abdüsselam Effendi directly to his homeland could be a worse example for the other students. In his report, the grand vizier Ekrem strongly emphasized that these students were homesick, and they searched an opportunity to go to their homelands.<sup>21</sup> In such a case; if Abdüsselam Effendi was sent to his homeland as a result of a decision by the administration, it would be misinterpreted by the other students. The governors were suspicious that the students could act in the same way as Abdüsselam Effendi did in order to be sent to their homelands. The governors proposed as a solution that Abdüsselam Effendi should

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19 COA. MF. MKT. 16/85, 11 Şaban 1310 ( 28 February 1893).

20 COA. MF. MKT. 16/85, 11 Şaban 1310 ( 28 February 1893).

21 COA. MF. MKT. 16/85, 11 Şaban 1310 ( 28 February 1893).

be sent to his homeland after he was held in one of the military schools for five or six months.<sup>22</sup>

It was declared that Abdüsselam Effendi would continue to be trained in *Mekteb-i Harbiye* for five or six months.<sup>23</sup> However, it looks like the problems with him did not finish. In another petition of the school director Ali Nazima to the *Umum-u Mekatibi-i Askeriye-yi Şahane Nezareti*, he argued that Abdüsselam Effendi was still in contact with the students of the Ottoman tribal school:

One of the Ottoman tribal school students, Abdüsselam Effendi who will be sent to his homeland after he has stayed in *Mekteb-i Harbiye* is singly walking around Beşiktaş in the morning and at night. He is also in contact with some Ottoman tribal students. Just as he did in the times when he was staying at the Ottoman tribal school, he is encouraging some students to misbehave. To prevent his contact with the Ottoman tribal school students, Abdüsselam Effendi should be kept out of Beşiktaş.<sup>24</sup>

Abdüsselam Effendi was sent to his homeland after he had stayed in *Mekteb-i Harbiye* for six months.<sup>25</sup> This case presents two significant insights in terms of the students of the Ottoman tribal school. Firstly, it seems that the school included not only 12-16 years old children of tribes; but also there was a 20 years old and even married student in the school. Secondly, it is seen that the concern of the Ottoman governors about incidents that might take place and jeopardize students' moral education became the most crucial factor in determining the conditions at the school.

Archival records highlight that the students had some opposite attempts towards increasing control of the school government. As has been seen, the matters of Şazeli and Abdüsselam Effendi caused to increase the surveillance of the governors in terms of getting out of the school. Certain records reveal

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22 COA. MF. MKT. 16/85, 11 Şaban 1310 ( 28 February 1893).

23 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (MF. MKT.) 166/4, 5 Şevval 1310 (22 April 1893).

24 COA. MF. MKT. 166/4, 5 Şevval 1310 (22 April 1893).

25 COA. MF. MKT. 166/4, 5 Şevval 1310 (22 April 1893).



that the strict control of the school administration on the students' visits to their homelands caused students to escape from the school to go to their families. These students were arrested in their regions by gendarmeries due to the fact that they did not have the permission document issued by the school allowing them to go to their homelands. These instances are significant as they reveal the students' attempts against the Ottoman governors' control on them.

A report which was written by Ali Nazima has been revealed that two students of the Ottoman tribal school named Ali-Ed Duruki and Mehmed bin Milad, were arrested in their homeland.<sup>26</sup> Ali Nazima informed that they were the second-year students who came from Humus to receive education in the school. He emphasized that the school administration decided to postpone giving permission to the students wanting to go to their homelands for a while.<sup>27</sup> As the reason for such a decision, the school administration stated that the students' exams were continuing.<sup>28</sup> Ali Nazima emphasized that these two students disrespected the school administration, and they escaped from the school.<sup>29</sup> This case stated was reported to their region immediately, and one week later, they were caught by gendarmeries in Humus. Lastly, he indicated that these students were brought to the school to resume their education. However, it was concluded that the school administration canceled permission for them to visit their homelands for two years.

One of the students arrested by gendarmeries was Yahya b. Ahmed Efendi. The school directory reported that the student Yahya was sent to his homeland, Sana to visit their family during the holiday. The commander of Sana reported to the school governors that the student Yahya had to arrive at the region; however, he was arrested by the gendarmerie in a different district of their homeland one week later.<sup>30</sup> The commander explained the event as:

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26 Cumhuriyet Arşivi, Dahiliye Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (DH. MKT.) 2261/91, 20 Cemaziyelah 1317 (26 October 1899).

27 COA. DH. MKT. 2261/91, 20 Cemaziyelah 1317 (26 October 1899).

28 COA. DH. MKT. 2261/91, 20 Cemaziyelah 1317 (26 October 1899).

29 COA. DH. MKT. 2261/91, 20 Cemaziyelah 1317 (26 October 1899).

30 COA. DH. MKT. 2261/91, 20 Cemaziyelah 1317 (26 October 1899).

In a different district of Sana, gendarmeries saw the student of the Ottoman Tribal school Yahya b. Ahmed Effendi and they asked for his permission report to pass that region. It is understood that Yahya b. Ahmed Effendi does not have the permission of the directory of the Ottoman tribal school to pass another area, so the gendarmerie had to arrest the student.<sup>31</sup>

The school directory decided that the student Yahya came to the school and continue his education; however, his permission to visit his homeland was canceled for one year.<sup>32</sup> These events reveal that supervision of the school administration on the students was not restricted to Istanbul, but their control mechanisms continued to work in the homelands of the students as well. The case of these students displays not only opposite reactions of the students against the control of the school administration on them, but also it proves that the restrictions which were implemented by the school administration made the students' lives difficult. By such limitations on the students' visit to their regions, the administrators aimed to enable students to get accustomed to school life; however, it appears that instead of adjusting to the school environment, students tried to get rid of the governors' control. As a result, the students attempted to escape from the school.

Students' reactions against the control of the school administration on them were not restricted to those events; however, the school administration argued in a report that the students did not attend classes to be able to take permission to go to their homelands.<sup>33</sup> In his petition which he wrote to the *Maarif Nezareti* (Ministry of Education), Ali Nazima complained that the students were not attending the classes. He emphasized that the students presented as a reason for the case that they wanted to get permission from the school directory to visit their homelands.<sup>34</sup> It would seem that this case was

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31 COA. DH. MKT. 2261/91, 20 Cemaziyelah 1317 (26 October 1899).

32 COA. DH. MKT. 2261/91, 20 Cemaziyelah 1317 (26 October 1899).

33 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Yıldız Perekende Evrakı (Y. PRK. MF.) 2/74, 26 Şevval 1310 (13 May 1893).

34 COA. Y. PRK. MF. 2/74, 26 Şevval 1310 (13 May 1893).

perceived as a significant attempt insomuch that the *Maarif Nezareti* sent two officers to the school to investigate the case:

Today, it has been reported by the director of the Ottoman tribal school that the students do not participate in classes to be able to take permission to go to their homelands. To investigate the case, two officers are going to be sent to the school. They will understand what happened at the school, and they also will report us.<sup>35</sup>

After the two officers had reached the school, Ali Nazima wrote a new petition to the *Maarif Nezareti* in which he told what had happened recently in terms of the students' case as a result of the intervention. Ali Nazima firstly said that Hasib Effendi and Azmi Beg who were responsible to investigate the events had reached the school two days ago.<sup>36</sup> He also argued that the school administration did not have any attitudes towards the students that would arouse such a reaction. Ali Nazima explained that the school directory was going to permit the students soon; however, they had to be delayed due to the exam period of the school.<sup>37</sup> He told as:

Due to the exam for the Koran lesson students who took the permission to go to their homeland could not be allowed to leave. After coming of the two officers, they continued not to attend classes. They also went out to the garden, and by closing the gate of the garden they did not allow any of the teachers to enter the garden. These students could not be convinced to get out of the garden, they even started to bowl and scream at the garden. The noise made by the students made the sultan at the palace feel uncomfortable, and he wondered what was happening at the school. Then, he sent a man to case find out about the incident. Two officers who were sent from *Maarif Nezareti* did not dare to approach the students in the garden. They tried to advise some students who could understand. Azmi Bey smacked some of the students

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35 COA. Y.. PRK. MF.. 2/74, 26 Şevval 1310 (13 May 1893).

36 COA. Y.. PRK. MF.. 2/74, 26 Şevval 1310 (13 May 1893).

37 COA. Y.. PRK. MF.. 2/74, 26 Şevval 1310 (13 May 1893).

in the end. Consequently, few of them accepted to enter the school. However, many students continued to stay in the garden.<sup>38</sup>

The investigation reports of the officers reveal significant points regarding the students. Azmi Bey told his observation that some students were old and married; and also, they had children in their homelands.<sup>39</sup> Azmi Beg claimed that these students desired to visit their families, so they did not want to continue to attend the classes at the school.<sup>40</sup> He also argued that the school government should be suspicious about permitting these students because they would not return to the school again after they came together with their families.<sup>41</sup>

It would appear that such students were now deemed as problematic cases for the continuation of education in the school. In the report of Ali Nazima as an answer to the investigation of Azmi Beg, he emphasized that:

Such students do not know yet what nurture, morals, and civilization is. For this reason, they cannot learn what obedience is, and such a case originated as a result of this. Under these conditions, if the permission will be given to these students now, their comeback to the school to continue to education would be uncertain in the future.<sup>42</sup>

It can be understood from the statements of Azmi Beg that not only Abdüselam Effendi, but also the school included some other students who had wife and children in their homelands. This was one of the factors which made their life at the school hard. The approach of the school director to these students is also significant. Ali Nazima saw as the reason for such students' reactions against the school government that these students lacked morals and nurture, and they did not know what civilization was yet.<sup>43</sup> It reveals that the discourse of the Ottoman governors towards the tribal groups which indicated them as ignorant and savage people reconstructed itself through the students' matters

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38 COA. Y. PRK. MF. 2/74, 26 Şevval 1310 (13 May 1893).

39 COA. Y. PRK. MF. 2/74, 26 Şevval 1310 (13 May 1893).

40 COA. Y. PRK. MF. 2/74, 26 Şevval 1310 (13 May 1893).

41 COA. Y. PRK. MF. 2/74, 26 Şevval 1310 (13 May 1893).

42 COA. Y. PRK. MF. 2/74, 26 Şevval 1310 (13 May 1893).

43 COA. Y. PRK. MF. 2/74, 26 Şevval 1310 (13 May 1893).

in the school. Almost every student's problem was conceived to be resulting from the savage side of these tribal people by the Ottoman governors.

Certain events have shown that the students got involved in some opposite attempts towards the control of the school directory by the encouragement of the other students in the school. However, records reveal that they were provoked not only by their friends at the school; but also by the employees of the school. A record that belonged to the school directory argued that the school doctor Yusuf Zeki Bey encouraged the students to dislike meals and dresses of the school.<sup>44</sup> Ali Nazima and some other teachers of the school informed the *Maarif Nezareti* that some of the students started to dislike the meals served by the school and the dresses of themselves which were given by the school directory.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, they began disobeying the administration of the school.<sup>46</sup> Ali Nazima also remarked that the school administration started to look for the reasons which would account for such behaviors of the students.<sup>47</sup> Ali Nazima told the essence of matter as:

We have reached this result at the end of our research for the officer who encouraged the students to dislike meals and dresses of the school and found that the students met the doctor Yusuf Zeki Bey in different places of the school. In these encounters, Yusuf Zeki Bey said something to the students related to their clothes which was given by the school administration. He argued that their uniforms were produced from the fabric of sacks. He also propagated some students while they were staying at the hospital for the treatment of their illness with the same arguments. We learned that he had insistentlly said to the students that their clothes were produced from the fabric of sacks by showing their attire on their ridge.<sup>48</sup>

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44 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Yıldız Mütenevvi Evrakı (Y. MTV.) 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).

45 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).

46 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).

47 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).

48 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).

Ali Nazima expressed that the school doctor Yusuf Zeki Beg also propagated the students to disobey and escapade.<sup>49</sup> He also emphasized that certain students were not affected by statements of the doctor.<sup>50</sup> Ali Nazima claimed that these students answered responded to the doctor by telling him that they obeyed the sultan.<sup>51</sup> However, it can be understood that many students gave credence to the arguments of the doctor Yusuf Zeki Bey at the school.<sup>52</sup> Such students started to get their meals and attires from outside of the school.<sup>53</sup> The school government identified them as people who could not distinguish between what was good and what was bad themselves.<sup>54</sup> The report continued as:

We are almost sure these students were propagated by the Ottoman tribal school doctor Yusuf Zeki Bey. The case is seriously being considered by us. We also want to indicate that the damage that Yusuf Zeki Bey gives, is greater than the benefits he provides. He does not come to school regularly. In the times when he comes to the school, he generally influences the students of the Ottoman tribal school negatively.<sup>55</sup>

The school directory demanded the deposal of Yusuf Zeki Beg from his duty in the school.<sup>56</sup> Ali Nazima also remarked that captain Sadık Beg should be appointed as the new doctor of the school. The record included signatures of the teachers named Ahmed, Zeki, Mustafa, and the assistant director Mehmed.<sup>57</sup> It is obvious that they were the thoughts of not only Ali Nazima but also the teachers of the school who had the same opinions with the director.

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- 49 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).  
 50 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).  
 51 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).  
 52 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).  
 53 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).  
 54 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).  
 55 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).  
 56 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).  
 57 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).

The decision of the *Maarif Nezareti* was in the same way which the school's administration wished. The report of *Maarif Nezareti* declared that Yusuf Zeki Bey was to be dismissed from his duty in the school, and captain Sadık Bey would be assigned as the new doctor of the school.<sup>58</sup> It was decided that Sadık Bey would come to the school in the mornings for a while.<sup>59</sup> If he became successful in his duty, he would be a chief-doctor of the school.<sup>60</sup> This instance demonstrates that the attempts in the students' life to provoke them to disobey the sultan were perceived as a serious matter, and the school administration wanted to eliminate it immediately.

Many records that belonged to the school directory have shown that the students were experiencing some health problems due to the physical conditions of Istanbul.<sup>61</sup> It was emphasized that many students could not get used to the air of Istanbul, so they had some health problems at the school. This case was understood as an important obstacle for students to continue their education. The school director argued that some students fainted in lessons, and it was also remarked that this was a serious problem that had to be solved immediately.<sup>62</sup> In the record which was written by *Maarif Nezareti* (Ministry of Education) the matter of the students was be offering:

It has been reported that some students could not get accustomed to the air of Istanbul, and there are some Ottoman tribal school students who get ill for this reason. The school directory reported to us that it is a serious problem that must be solved immediately. It is decided related to this case a doctor should exist in the Ottoman tribal school. This doctor will be responsible for the physical examination of the students. The students who cannot get used to the air of Istanbul and faint in the lessons should be examined by the doctor in every morning and

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58 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).

59 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).

60 COA. Y. MTV. 77/19, 8 Şevval 1310 (25 April 1893).

61 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (MF. MKT.) 15/119, 15 Rebiü'l-Evvel 1310 (7 October 1892).

62 COA. MF. MKT. 15/119, 15 Rebiü'l-Evvel 1310 (7 October 1892).

every evening. We reported this decision to the *Umum-u Mekatib-i Askeriye-yi Nezareti* (Head Directory of Military Schools).<sup>63</sup>

It can be argued that the students did not only experience longing for their homelands but also they had some health problems due to the different physical conditions of Istanbul. It can be argued that two sample events can reveal the scene behind the good side of the school which was told by the governors in the former chapter. As has been seen in the speeches of the administrators in the feast, it was told that the school was a big blessing for the students in the way of civilization; and it has been seen that the main concern of the school directory in terms of the students was training them as a loyal Ottoman governor for their regions. However, these cases show us that before such points, there were some other daily problems of the students which necessitated the consideration of the school administration.

Such health problems of the students due to the physical conditions of Istanbul started to intensify after 1892. The location of the school was seen as a triggering factor for the illness of the students, and in a record that belonged to the year of 1893, it was remarked that the building of the school had to be moved to another place in Beşiktaş.<sup>64</sup> Grand vizier Abdülkerim stated that the place of the school had to be changed because the conditions of the school building were not appropriate for the students.<sup>65</sup> It was expressed that the school could continue the education in a different area because some students got sick due to damp in this building, in Kabataş.<sup>66</sup> For these reasons, in 1894, the school was moved to *Esmâ Sultan Yalısı* (Esmâ Sultan Waterside) in Beşiktaş. This event has been one of the signifiers of the students' difficulties in their daily life which was experienced due to the physical conditions of the school throughout the first years of them.

Such problems naturally became an obstacle for the training of these students in the school; especially, their health matters were significant ones. Up

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63 COA. MF. MKT. 15/119, 15 Rebiü'l-Evvel 1310 (7 October 1892).

64 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Yıldız Sadaret Hususi (Y. A... HUS.) 281/80, 27 Rebiü'l-Evvel 1311 (8 October 1893).

65 COA. Y. A... HUS. 281/80, 27 Rebiü'l-Evvel 1311 (8 October 1893).

66 COA. Y. A... HUS. 281/80, 27 Rebiü'l-Evvel 1311 (8 October 1893).



to now, the difficulties experienced by the students arising from being unable to adjust to the school have been presented so far. However, some of the students had different enigmas like epilepsy, and their cases became a concern for the school directory. With regard to these students, it was decided that they could not continue their education in the school, as in the case of the student Mehmed Ali Effendi.

A record reveals that in the school, there was a student named Mehmed Ali Effendi who had epilepsy.<sup>67</sup> In the report of the school doctor stated that he got some epilepsy attacks in the school; and, although he was treated in the school and some hospitals in Istanbul, he could not recover. On the contrary, his epilepsy attacks showed an increase in the school.<sup>68</sup> For this reason, the doctor suggested that he could be sent to his homeland for the changing of air.<sup>69</sup> So as not to worsen his disease Mehmed Ali Effendi was sent to his region Van, as the last decision. One year later, Mehmed Ali Effendi wrote a petition to the school directory, and he demanded to return to the school to continue his education:

I am one of the students of the Ottoman tribal school. I have been selected for the school from the province of Van. I am a fourth-year student in the school. One year ago, I was sent to my homeland due to my illness. I have received treatment in a hospital in Van for 40 days. I have taken a rest in my home. I am now better, and I want to return to school to continue my education in Istanbul.<sup>70</sup>

It appears that Mehmed Ali Effendi could adapt to the school and wanted to return there to sustain his education despite his illness. However, the response which came from the school doctor was not as Mehmed Ali Effendi wished:

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67 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi (MF. MKT.) 935/74, 22 Rebiü'l- Ahir 1324 (15 June 1906).

68 COA. MF. MKT. 935/74, 22 Rebiü'l- Ahir 1324 (15 June 1906).

69 COA. MF. MKT. 935/74, 22 Rebiü'l- Ahir 1324 (15 June 1906).

70 COA. MF. MKT. 935/74, 22 Rebiü'l- Ahir 1324 (15 June 1906).

If the Ottoman tribal school student Mehmed Ali Effendi returned to the school, his illness would relapse again. This definitely can be a dangerous case for his well-being. So, for Mehmed Ali Effendi to stay in his homeland for one or two years would be more appropriate for his health if the *Maarif Nezareti* approves this view related to the case of Mehmed Ali Effendi.<sup>71</sup>

Another decision for the petition of Mehmed Ali Effendi belonged to the *Mekatib-i Askeriye-yi Şahane Nezareti*. It is emphasized that:

The Ottoman tribal school student Mehmed Ali Effendi who is in the number of 359 and a fourth-year student of the school is trying to recover from epilepsy. He faints one or two times a day at school. He wakes up all bruised at the end of these epilepsy attacks. He has been sent to his region for a change of air as the treatment of his case one year ago. He now wants to return to school for his graduation. However, as the doctor of the Ottoman tribal school has indicated in his report when Mehmed Ali Effendi came back to the school, his case would be worse in Istanbul. So, it is more appropriate for him that he should stay in his homeland for one or two more years.<sup>72</sup>

One year after this report of the *Mekatib-i Askeriye-yi Şahane*, it was re-emphasized by the same foundation that Mehmed Ali Effendi should stay in his region due to his illness, and he could not come back to the school again.<sup>73</sup> It seems that his case was considered an obstacle to the continuation of his education at the school. Thus, he was disenrolled.

These students came from different physical, social, cultural, and political settings. Firstly, certain environmental differences in Istanbul obstructed the process of adaptation of the students to a new life in the school. Besides, some students as in the example of Mehmed Ali Effendi had some permanent disease which was considered to be an obstacle for education in the school. Then, these children could not find the social and cultural environment at the school

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71 COA. MF. MKT. 935/74, 22 Rebiü'l- Ahir 1324 (15 June 1906).

72 COA. MF. MKT. 935/74, 22 Rebiü'l- Ahir 1324 (15 June 1906).

73 COA. MF. MKT. 935/74, 22 Rebiü'l- Ahir 1324 (15 June 1906).

in Istanbul which they were accustomed to in their homelands, and it could cause some psychological problems like in the matter of Ali Effendi. As has been seen in the case of Abdüsselam Effendi, some of the students were at the age of 20s, and they had wife and children in their homelands. These points constituted significant factors that made the daily life of many students in the school difficult.

There were certain records which have shown us that some students were involved in fighting with each other, and even some bloody events took place in the school among students. Besides, some students got involved in political issues and, they also played a provocative role in some ethnic attacks of the period.

As has been shown in the previous chapter, there was the control of the school administration on the students' letters. This was a general case which could be seen in many Ottoman schools; however, only in the Ottoman tribal school such controls on the letters were recorded, and it was conveyed to other institutions to inform them. Surveillance of the school directory on the students' letters could be seen as necessary due to several reasons. Firstly, the school administration could want to know what these students wrote to their tribes, and this could be a good strategy to know what the students thought and shared with their relatives. It has appeared that another reason for such supervision of the school administration on the students' letters could be prevention of certain conflicts between different ethnic groups. The school included students from significant ethnic elements of the empire like Arab, Kurd, and Albanian subjects. Especially, the Kurdish population was under the attention of the Ottoman government due to their conflict with other significant population of the era, Armenians. The records have shown us that some letters that were sent by the Kurdish students of the school to Erzurum and Van provinces included statements that were to the detriment of Armenians in the regions.<sup>74</sup>

The year 1895 witnessed bloody events between the Kurdish and Armenian populations in the Eastern provinces of the empire. This year, the Kurdish

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74 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Yıldız Parekende Evrakı Zaptiye Nezareti Maruzatı (Y.. PRK. ZB...) 16/66, 3 Cemaziyelev 1313 (1 November 1895).

population attacked Armenian villages in the regions of Erciř and Adilcevaz. The school directory argued that some students' letters which were conveyed to Erzurum and Van provinces involved agitator statements, and even it was claimed that they caused the Kurdish attacks towards Armenians.<sup>75</sup> As a result of the investigation of Van police commissioner on the issue, it was noticed that some letters which were to detriment of Armenians were delivered from Istanbul by the Ottoman tribal school students.<sup>76</sup> These letters provoked the Kurdish population in the regions and caused attacks to Armenian villages.<sup>77</sup> Van police commissioner warned the school directory that they had to be more careful in terms of the students' letters which were sent by Kurdish students to their regions.<sup>78</sup>

This case constituted a significant example of what the students were interested in the school. Instead of the attempts of the school administration and some other officers to isolate the students from the political conflicts and social environment of the period, they sometimes failed in the missions. Besides, this record can open a window that shows us whether the students became interested in certain events that took place in their homelands or not while they were staying at the school. Through the case, it appears that some of the students were affected by the political and social conflicts in their regions, or that they even had a provocative role in these events by their letters from Istanbul. Such student interventions might have increased in the surveillance of the school administration on the students in the next years.

Members of the tribes in the school had problems not only with the school administration but also with one another. Sons of different tribes lived together for years in the Ottoman tribal school. There are not enough records to learn many more things in terms of the relations between the sons of these tribes in the school. However, there was a case that showed that a fight took

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75 COA. Y.. PRK. ZB... 16/66, 3 Cemaziyelev 1313 (1 November 1895).

76 COA. Y.. PRK. ZB... 16/66, 3 Cemaziyelev 1313 (1 November 1895).

77 COA. Y.. PRK. ZB... 16/66, 3 Cemaziyelev 1313 (1 November 1895).

78 COA. Y.. PRK. ZB... 16/66, 3 Cemaziyelev 1313 (1 November 1895).

place between the Arab and Kurdish students of the school.<sup>79</sup> In the record, it was told that some Arab and Kurdish students bickered in the school at five o'clock.<sup>80</sup> With the growth of this quarrel, four Kurdish and six Arab students started to throw stones and shoes to each other.<sup>81</sup> These students stayed in all bruised up.<sup>82</sup> The event was denounced to the *Maarif Nezareti* by the school directory. A corporal team was sent to the school to soothe the case between these Arab and Kurdish students.<sup>83</sup> The *Maarif Nezareti* firstly specified that there was no incentive from outside for these students who fought each other in the school.<sup>84</sup> The event was placated by the intervention of the soldiers and police; and, it was stated by the *Maarif Nezareti* that the students who had fought each other one hour ago were now silently sitting in their class.<sup>85</sup> After the wounds of the students had been treated, the soldiers and police at the school were sent because the school governors argued that it was not necessary for them to stay at the school.<sup>86</sup> These students were calm, and they were busy with their lessons according to the statements of *Maarif Nazırı* Serhaddin.<sup>87</sup>

The interpretation of *Maarif Nazırı* Serhaddin related to the case of the students was significant. He expressed that the administration of the school should pay attention to the nurture and morals of the children of tribes in the school.<sup>88</sup> However, he expressed that such events showed that the school administration could not be successful in this mission.<sup>89</sup> He offered that to prevent such an incident from happening again, four or five gendarmeries could

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79 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Yıldız Mütenevvi Evrakı (Y...MTV.) 114/80, 11 Şaban 1312 (7 February 1895).

80 COA. Y... MTV. 11 Şaban 1312 (7 February 1895).

81 COA. Y... MTV. 11 Şaban 1312 (7 February 1895).

82 COA. Y... MTV. 11 Şaban 1312 (7 February 1895).

83 COA. Y... MTV. 11 Şaban 1312 (7 February 1895).

84 COA. Y... MTV. 11 Şaban 1312 (7 February 1895).

85 COA. Y... MTV. 11 Şaban 1312 (7 February 1895).

86 COA. Y... MTV. 11 Şaban 1312 (7 February 1895).

87 COA. Y... MTV. 11 Şaban 1312 (7 February 1895).

88 COA. Y... MTV. 11 Şaban 1312 (7 February 1895).

89 COA. Y... MTV. 11 Şaban 1312 (7 February 1895).

stay in the school for a while.<sup>90</sup> It was also remarked that the causes of the fight will be searched by the *Maarif Nezareti*.<sup>91</sup>

The origin of the event not known, and there are no other documents reflecting the information about the fight. However, this one record gives some information in terms of the students' life at the school. It can be seen that the police and gendarmeries were continuing to be significant agents in the life of the students in such matters as has been seen in the prior chapter. It also appears that some events to break the order and tranquility happened in the students' daily lives at the school.

Archival records have displayed that certain events that took place in the Ottoman tribal school were published in some foreign newspapers. In 1903, a French newspaper argued that a terrible event was experienced between the students in the school, and as a result of it, four officers of the school got injured.<sup>92</sup> The *Hariciye Nezareti* of the Ottoman Empire published a contradiction for the news which claimed that the incident took place among students:

Some newspapers in France published news about the Ottoman tribal school. They argued that an incident occurred between the students of the Ottoman tribal school. It is also argued that four officers of the school have been injured by these students. In the news, it is also emphasized that the order and tranquility in the school have been broken by the attempts of such students. We want to announce that such a case did not happen in the Ottoman tribal school between the students.<sup>93</sup>

The French newspaper was not the only one that claimed about the event; however, a German newspaper in the name of *Kölnische Zeitung* also published that a terrible incident occurred in the school.<sup>94</sup> Distinctive foreign

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90 COA. Y... MTV. 11 Şaban 1312 (7 February 1895).

91 COA. Y... MTV. 11 Şaban 1312 (7 February 1895).

92 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Hariciye Nezareti Siyasi Kısmı Belgeleri (HR. SYS.) 198/19, 18 Rebiü'l- Evvel 1321 (14 June 1903).

93 COA. HR. SYS. 198/19, 18 Rebiü'l- Evvel 1321 (14 June 1903).

94 Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi, Hariciye Nezareti Siyasi Kısmı Belgeleri (HR. SYS.) 198/23, 27 Rebiü'l-Evvel 1321 (23 June 1903).

newspapers insistently kept writing about the case. German newspaper *Kölnische Zeitung* told in its news:

An incident happened in the Ottoman tribal school last night. Some soldiers were sent to intervene in the case at the school by Yıldız Palace. However, these soldiers wounded 40 students of the Ottoman tribal school, and they also killed some of them. Then, it was seen that some injured students were moved from the school by ships at night.<sup>95</sup>

One day later, the *Hariciye Nezareti* wrote another contradiction for the news of *Kölnische Zeitung*:

Yesterday, the newspaper of Germany in the name of *Kölnische Zeitung* published news which indicated taking place a fight in the Ottoman tribal school. It is also argued that the soldiers who came to the school to intervene in the event wounded some students of the Ottoman tribal school. This newspaper did not get any information related to the case by us to be able to publish such a case. However, the news is completely a lie. Such an event did not happen in the Ottoman tribal school. Every member of the tribes at the Ottoman tribal school is still in security and tranquility by us.<sup>96</sup>

This news was published both in French and German newspapers in the same month. There have not been any other documents that highlight the essence, reasons, and results of this event. Besides, it is not known whether the case had happened or not. However, the news of these two newspapers can show that certain events in the students' life at the school could receive coverage in the foreign press.

The students experienced many different things in their daily lives at school. These events constituted a crucial significance because they revealed the problematic cases of the students in the school. They also can provide an insight into the students' life. Through such students' matters, it can be argued

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95 COA. HR. SYS. 198/23, 27 Rebiü'l-Evvel 1321 (23 June 1903).

96 COA. HR. SYS. 198/23, 27 Rebiü'l-Evvel 1321 (23 June 1903).

that the education was not provided without problems in the school. Consequently, it is an important point to realize that behind the appearance of the school which was projected as the home of science and civilization for the children of the tribes, there were many slices of terrible events that were experienced by the students in the school.





## Conclusion

In this thesis, I answer the question of how the students' lives were in the Ottoman tribal school. While concentrating on this question, the discipline mechanisms on the students were revealed in this thesis. In doing so, I approach the life in the school not from a state-centric perspective, but by attributing agency to the students in the school. From this perspective, the students' experiences, problems, and reactions against the government were addressed. The Ottoman tribal school was generally emphasized as a blessing of the sultan to benefit the sons of tribes from civilization and humanity. The Ottoman governors mainly asserted that the school was a big fortune for the children of tribes who were living in savagery. However, many records in the Ottoman archive show that the main aim was not only to train the tribes. The Ottoman government also tried to create and utilize some control mechanisms on the students to gain their loyalty to Abdulhamid II as the supreme ruler over their tribal leaders. As a result, these attempts toward to discipline and control the students made their life in the school difficult as demonstrated in this study.

One of the important contribution of this thesis to the literature is developing an anthropological perspective to the Ottoman tribal school. Based on the inspiration from anthropology, this thesis focuses on the daily live experiences of the sons of tribes in the Ottoman tribal school. In this work, through

sample events, I try to reveal the problems and traumas of the students who seek to adapt a new life in Istanbul.

In 1892, the Ottoman tribal school was founded by the order of Abdulhamid II to train children of Arab tribes in Istanbul. Then, sons of Kurdish and Albanian tribes were also accepted to the school. The sultan and his governors wanted to take the students under their close control. The main aim in this attempt was to gain the loyalty of the sons of leading Muslim tribes to Abdulhamid II as a great leader. To do so, some mechanisms to supervise the students were established. To emphasize the existence of the sultan as a supreme Islamic ruler on the students, some Islamic ceremonies were organized for the name of the sultan in the school. The governors continuously gave speeches to the students demanding them to obey the sultan. I interpret such attempts through the eyes of the anthropological studies. Not only Abdulhamid II, but also the students were under the surveillance of some empire officers like the agent of the gendarmerie. Through the time they were sent to Istanbul to be trained in the school, a gendarmerie accompanied each student. Apart from this, bureaucratic institutions had an important control on the students' life in the Ottoman tribal school. Permission to visit their homelands on holiday was under the control of the institution of *Mekatib-i Askeriyye-yi Şahane Nezareti*. The medical condition of the students was under the supervision of this institution as well.

The reflections of the discipline have been seen in the students' life in many sample cases. Students' letters, books which were read by them, places where they visited were under the close control of the school directory and the Ottoman governors. These cases have exemplified that the moral well-being of these students was the main focus of the Ottoman rulers. Some students' experiences have proved that not only in the school but also several discipline mechanisms on the students was sustained while they were staying in their homelands on holidays. As demonstrated, due to the control of the school directory on them the students experienced many difficulties in their lives

According to the archival documents, it can be clearly stated that the daily life of the students in the school was highly problematic. The most important sample was that many students could not adapt to the school due to several

reasons. As has been seen in the case of the student Abdüsselam Effendi, students' stay at the school was not approved because they had wife and children in their homeland. Wishes of some students to return to their homelands caused the governors to increase their surveillance on them. Their visits to their regions was highly restricted, and it caused students to rebel against the school directory. It is also proved that there were many obstacles to education in the students' life. Some of them experienced health matters due to the climatic conditions of Istanbul. Maybe, the most interesting point is that the students continued to be interested in some socio-political events of the period in spite of the attempts of the school government to prevent the students from the bad effects of these cases. As it has been revealed, some letters from the students of the Ottoman tribal school to the Van region argued as the cause of Kurdish attacks against the Armenian villagers in the area. By these examples, I attempted to prove that in the Ottoman tribal school, the main consideration point of the students was not the education, as declared by the Ottoman governors. On the contrary, they had many problems in their daily life which interrupted the training.

Examining discipline and control mechanisms on the sons of Muslim tribes shows the efforts of the Hamidian period that made to carry on the paternalist and personal aspect of his rule. In the big picture, through the ideology of Pan-Islamism and the threat of nationalism the policy of Abdulhamid II started to influence to many aspects of his subject's lives. In that strategy, some institutions were used as an instrument to impose the figure of Abdulhamid II as a supreme ruler on Muslim groups of the empire. Analyzing of discipline mechanisms on the students of the Ottoman tribal school demonstrates that the power of the rule is not an only penetrated thing; but also, it has some functions. In the sample of the Ottoman tribal school, the main aim of the Hamidian power with its strategies, tools, and agents was to grow loyal citizens within the leading Muslim tribes of the empire. As I showed in the 4th Chapter, this power that was mainly intended had some effects and changes in the lives of tribal members in the Ottoman tribal school. To conclude, the power of the rule is mainly motivated and functions not only in politic scene; but also the concept of power has significant dimensions through the daily lives.

## Appendix A POA., Y. PRK. ZB., 16/66

### Zaptiye Nezareti

Erzurum ve Van cihetlerindeki aşâir rüesâsına Ermeniler aleyhine Dersaâdetden mechûl imzalarla mektub gönderildiği iş'ar-ı vaka'dan müstebân olub postahanece ve zabtiyece tahkikat icrasıyla mezkur mektublar kimler tarafından gönderildiğinin anlaşılması ve ba'de-mâ dikkat olunması mukteza-yı irâde-i seniyye-i hazret-i padişahiden olarak posta ve telgraf nezâret-i behiyyesine icra-yı teblîgât edildiği ve nezaretce de ber-mantuk-ı emr ü ferman-ı hümâyun tedkikât ve tekîdat icrasıyla istihsâl olunacak ma'lumatın bildirilmesi 10 Teşrinievvel 311 tarihli ve 360 numarolu tezkere-i samiyede iş'ar olunmuş ve buraca derhal icab edenlere ta'lîmat-ı lâzime verildiği gibi Van ve Erzurum vilayetleri polis komiserliklerine şifre ile icra-yı tebligat edilmiş idi bu kere Van vilayeti polis komiserliğinden cevaben alınan şifreli telgrafnâmede sûret-i mahsusa ve hafiyede icra kılınan tahkikata göre yakın vakitlerde aşâir rüesâsına öyle mektublar gelmeyib ancak tahmînen 4-5 mâh mukaddem Dersaâdetdeki aşiret mektebi şâkirdânı vasıtasıyla aşâir rüesâsına Ermeniler aleyhine tahriki hâvi mektublar gelmiş ve ol vakit bir guna fenalık zuhûruna meydan bulamamış iselerde şu birkaç gün zarfında Van'ın Erciş ve Adilcevaz kazaları hududunda bulunan Ekrâd Ermeni köylerine ta'arruza ve birtakım gasb u gârete kıyâmları mezkûr mektublardan münba'is olmak melhûz idüğü ve tahkikatdan geri durulmadığı işar olunmuş ve sûret-i hâl cevâben taraf-ı sâmi-i sadâretpenâhiye yazılmış olmağla ol babda emr ü ferman hazret-i men lehü'l-emrindir.

Fi 20 teşrinievvel 311 (1 Kasım 1895)

Zabtiye Nâzırı

Ali Paşa

Bugün saat 5 raddelerinde aşiret mektebinde Kürd ile Arab talebe beyninde zuhur eden ufak bir münakaşa biraz mudârebeyi intac ederek dört Kürd altı Arab şâkird taş ve kundura ve yumruk ilcâatından olarak cüz'ice yüz ve el ve başlarında yara ve bere hâsıl olduğu mekteb müdiriyeti tarafından bâ-jurnal taraf-ı çâkernâme ihbâr olunması üzerine derhal mekteb-i mezkûra azîmet olundu mektebe muvâsalat-ı acizânemde civarda bulunan askeri karakol-hânesiyle polis merkezi taraflarından ihtiyâten celb olunmuş bir onbaşı takımı görüldü ve tahkîk-i keyfiyete müsâraat olunduk da salifü'l-arz mudârebe suret-i adiyede aralıkda vuku' bulmakda olan ufak tefek münâkaşat kabilinden olarak zuhur ettiği ve hâric ve dâhilden bir teşvik eser olmadığı anlaşılmış ve talebenin kemal-i sükûnetle dersanelerde bulunduğu ve yarık ve çizik ve bere nev'inden olan cüzvî-i yaralarda müdâvat edildiği görülmüş olduğundan ve bu halde asker ve polisin durdurulmasına lüzum olmadığından mahallerine iâde kılınmıştır talebe meyanında şimdiki halde ber-vech-i ma'ruz bir guna husûmet ve galeyan mevcut olmayıp bil'âkis cümlesi saye-i muvaffakiyet-vaye-i hazret-i hilâfetpenâhîde sükunet ve dersi ve vazifeleriyle meşguliyet halinde bulunmuşlardır mâmâfih tahkîkât ve isticvâbât-ı vakıaya nazaran bu ve emsali vukuat Hamalı Mehmed Şebli ve Zor'lu Ramazan ve Halebli Nevaf ve ber-Hasbi efendiler sebebiyet vermekte ve terbiyelerine mektebce pek çok ihtimam ediliyor ise de müttehid olamamakda olduğundan bunların hakkında olunacak muamele ile vaka-yı mezkurenin ta'mikâtı neticesi başkaca arz olunacağı ve tedkîkâta devam edilmekte bulunduğu ve her ne kadar zikr olunan polis ve onbaşı takımı mahallerine iade olunmuş ise de ihtiyâte riâyeten bu gece ve yatın gece dört ve beş jandarmanın mektebde bulundurulması Beşiktaş muhafızlığına bildirilmiş olduğu muhât-ı ilm-ı âlî buyuruldukda ol babda emr ü ferman hazret-i men lehül-emrindir.

Fi 26 Kanunusani 310 (7 Şubat 1895)

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