Tax Revolts in the Late Ottoman Empire: Conflict, Negotiation, Pacification 1876-1908

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The intellectual content of this dissertation, 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

Tax Revolts in the Late Ottoman Empire: Conflict, Negotiation, Pacification 1876-1908

Mustafa Batman, Doctoral Candidate at the Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University, 2022

Professor Dr Cengiz Kırlı, Dissertation Advisor

This dissertation examines the reactions of the Ottoman society against the new taxes implemented in the beginning of the 20th century and the provincial governors during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II by focusing on the various repertoires of the society. The dissertation analyzes the centralization reforms of the central bureaucracy from Tanzimat to 1908 and traces the reactions of the urban society as the negotiation practices with the state bureaucracy to define the limits of central power in the provinces. Furthermore it analyzes how the dynamics of urban politics were shaped in the Ottoman borderlands during the late Ottoman Empire. Based on Ottoman and British sources this study demonstrates that the fiscal and political centralization of the empire was not a top-down process but a result of the bargaining process between various actors of the empire. This study illustrates this point by focusing on the resistance against the new taxes, the problems caused by social, economic and climate conditions and centralization reforms of the local bureaucracy in Kosovo, Erzurum, Bitlis provinces and the cities around them. In that sense, this study is a contribution to the Ottoman social, cultural and economic history of the Ottoman borderland.

72.000 words

Özet

Geç Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Vergi İsyanları: Çatışma, Müzakere, Uzlaşma 1876-1908

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Bu çalışma Osmanlı kent toplumunun 20. yüzyıl başında uygulamaya konan yeni vergiler ile birlikte Sultan II. Abdülhamid döneminin yerel yönetimlerine karşı reaksiyonlarını incelemektedir. Çalışma, Tanzimat Fermanı'nın ilanından 1908 yılında kadar gerçekleşen merkezileşme reformlarını analiz ederken kent toplumunun bu reformları desteklemek ya da değiştirmek için geliştirdiği farklı repertuarlara odaklanarak, bu pratikleri devletin yerel üzerindeki iktidarının sınırını belirleme ve pazarlık pratikleri olarak tanımlamaktadır. Ayrıca, bu çalışma kent hayatının geç Osmanlı döneminde değişen dinamiklerini açıklamaya çalışmaktadır. Osmanlı ve İngiliz arşiv kaynaklarına dayanarak bu çalışma imparatorluğunun mali ve siyasi merkezileşme çabalarının yukarıdan aşağı şekillenen yapılar olmadığını, kent hayatının aktörleri ile gerçekleşen müzakere politikaları sonucu belirlendiğini idda etmektedir. Tez, bu meseleyi Kosova, Erzurum, Bitlis vilayetleri ve bu vilayetlerin etrafındaki şehirlerde yeni vergiler, sosyal, ekonomik ve iklim kaynaklı şartların neden olduğu problemler ve yerel bürokrasinin merkezileşme adımlarına karşı gerçekleşen direniş hareketlerine odaklanarak örneklendirmektedir. Bu anlamda bu çalışma Osmanlı sınır bölgelerinin sosyal, kültürel ve ekonomik tarihine bir katkı olmayı da amaçlamaktadır.

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To my family

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

BOA	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri (Ottoman Archives for the Ministry)
F.O	Foreign Office (The National Archive of the United Kingdom)
ARF	Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Hay Heghap'okhaganneri Tashnagts'ut'iwn)
CUP	Committee of Union and Progress (İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti)

A Note on Transliteration

All translations in the dissertation are mine, unless stated otherwise. I followed the Ottoman transliteration rules while mentioning the specific documents in the footnotes. However, I did not translate the original sentences to the English in the footnotes. Instead, I chose to mention the original statement from the documents. The dates of archival documents provided in according to

The grammatical mistakes in the consular reports stayed as same as the original document. I did not change the grammar or the words of the original documents even it includes mistakes.

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1

Introduction: Writing the Social History of the Late Ottoman Empire

This study is an attempt to clarify the reactions of the Ottoman society following the announcement of the new taxes during the reign of the Sultan Abdulhamid II. The thesis focuses on the eastern and western Ottoman provinces where the central authority was weak and local powerholders had enough political and economic power to challenge the decision-making process of the Ottoman central bureaucracy. Thus, my aim is to shed light on the motives behind the political participation of the various actors in the eastern and western Ottoman provinces. In other words, this study is about how various actors in the Ottoman borderlands created a political discourse and contentious politics to reject the decisions of the central and local bureaucracies. While creating a narrative on various actors' participation in daily politics, this study will not accept a theorization of the state and society as entirely independent entities. Instead, it will focus on the role of the society in the decision-making processes of the Ottoman central and local bureaucracies. To this end, it will investigate the economic and political role of the ulama, artisans, merchants and the peasants to understand their relationships with the Ottoman bureaucracy. In addition, the study will focus on the time of crisis which the Ottoman populace faced when social, political and economic

problems such as the price inflation, the drought, ethnic conflict and natural disasters came to the fore, to understand how the society identified its daily problems and how it created political movements for forcing the local bureaucracy to find solutions. By researching on those political movements, my study aims to contribute to the social and economic history of the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman Empire experienced a series of incredible societal reactions at the beginning of the 20th century after the announcement of two new taxes: the personal income tax (vergi-i şahsi) and the domestic animal tax (hayvanatı ehliye vergisi). The dissertation will investigate the nuances of those reactions. I will argue that these protests which happened throughout many urban centers were dependent on three major historical trends. These were; first, the imperial center's goal to emphasize its fiscal reform from top to bottom; second, the changing role of artisans, merchants and religious leaders in the provinces' daily politics; third, the economic, social and environmental problems peasants and the urban populace experienced during the time of crises. These historical trends created a new generation who was affected by the revolutionary wave and raised their voices in multiple forms, forged a public opinion to convince the central power to accept their demands in the decision-making process.

More specifically, the dissertation uncovers the reactions of the Muslim population in the Ottoman provinces. In that sense, the opposition of the Muslim populace to the fiscal reforms of Sultan Abdulhamid II also symbolizes the end of Abdulhamid's reign. The reason for this was twofold. First, Muslims and mostly Turkish society that lived under the Abdulhamid II regime did not attempt to criticize the decisions of the Sultan and his bureaucracy in public until the first years of the 20th century. Second, the Sultan's Islamic political discourse did not produce a passive populace that obeyed whatever the regime offered to them. Thus, the reactions of the Muslim and mostly Turkish society of the Empire symbolizes the collapse of the Abdulhamid's

despotic regime despite its reliance on an Islamic discourse. For this reason, the dissertation also argues that the regime of the Sultan Abdulhamid II collapsed before the 1908 Revolution. The collapse took place not because these protests were organized by revolutionaries, as the literature argued, but because they raised the motives of the revolutionaries and brought the social and economic problems of the society to the surface of the political arena. This interpretation rests on Charles Tilly's following influential arguments: "We shall know that a new era has begun not when a new elite holds power or a new constitution appears, but when ordinary people have begun contending for their interests in new ways."[1] Furthermore, after the reactions of the Muslims to the new taxes, the revolutionary opposition movement understood that the regime was not only unpopular among the non-Muslims but that the Muslim and Turkish society also disfavored it. Despite Namık Kemal's statement that "it was the image of thousands of Janissary corpses in the Golden Horne that prevented people from expressing their thoughts after Vaka-i Hayriye"[2] during the mid-19th century, this study proves that the society was not afraid to express its thoughts when its members believed they could convince the central bureaucracy or forced the local bureaucrats to act in accordance with public interests. In the context of late Ottoman history, the new era did not start after the 1908 Revolution; it rather began when the society developed new tools to negotiate with the state for its demands.

While exploring these trends, the dissertation will not focus on how the Muslim society of the provinces proclaimed their opposition to the Sultan. Instead, it will argue that they used a political language which distinguished them not only from the non-Muslims of the regions but also from the revolutionary opposition movements. This political discourse was designed by the Muslim notables, ulama and *mudarrisses* of the regions and provided a shield

1 Charles Tilly, *The Contentious French Four Centuries of Popular Struggle* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1986), 9.

2 Namık Kemal "Usul-u Meşveret Hakkında Mektuplar" in *Hürriyet* September 14, 1868, 6.

for the Ottoman urban society to reject certain centralization reforms that could dislocate their political and economic power in the provinces. The study will denote the problem as the conflict, the creation of conscious, careful political discourse as the negotiation and the solution as the pacification.

This study does not discuss the political history of Abdulhamid II's regime. Instead, it focuses on the mass movements of a specific time in the certain places during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II. Although urban protests and refusals of tax payment were widespread, I will only focus on the Ottoman eastern and western frontier provinces where rather transitional and maintained closer relationships with other states. The study refers these places as borderlands not only because these provinces were on the frontiers of the Empire but also because they symbolize the regions where the state desired to extend its centralization reforms.[3] There are two crucial reasons of focusing the borderland areas. First is the practical reason. Despite there were many tax-related reactions in various parts of the Ottoman Empire, the borderlands provided more archival sources. It was an anomaly because Ottoman borderlands, especially the eastern provinces, were known as the black hole of the Ottoman history and most of the studies mention the lack of documents as it will be seen in chapter 2. However, in the case of tax revolts, the documents of the Ottoman and the British archives provided day-by-day narratives. Second reason was conceptual and directly related with the main argument of the study. Despite there were many tax-related reactions of the society in many urban provinces of the Empire, the reactions that happened in Erzurum and Kosovo were long-lasted. The long-lasting events helped to understand the power relations and state formation in the urban centers of those provinces. Therefore, one could understand the changing dynamics of the Ottoman urban life by focusing on these events because they provided a mirror for the daily

3 For a discussion on the use of terms such as frontier and borderland see: Sabri Ateş, *Osmanlı – İran Sınır Bölgeleri: Bir Sınır Yapmak, 1843-1914* (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2013), 28-31.

lives of the Ottoman society. The provinces of Kosovo, Erzurum and Bitlis, and the cities near these provinces will be examined to understand how the Ottoman borderland society understood the fiscal and political reforms of Sultan Abdulhamid II and how they responded to the changes. It will also show how the Muslim, (mostly Turkish, Kurdish and Albanian) population of the Empire came to define their understanding of the Sultan Abdulhamid II's regime and his centralization reforms.

Despite significant efforts made to write the history of provinces, the populace and the provincial actors for years, the Ottoman historiography still needs more works on the crises of the provinces. Prior to the 19th century, the actors in the urban centers of the provinces were generally the local notables. Furthermore, the works on their relationship with the state and society continue to assume central focus.[4] The urban populace became subjects of history when they achieved to make their voices audible after the state dislocated the local notables in the provinces. However, eliminating the dignitaries did not mean a space was created where the urban populace could act freely, because new actors such as artisans, merchants and religious leaders continued to dominate the new social space. Still, the populace found more ways to communicate with the Imperial center and local powerholders for negotiating their demands in the 19th century by making use of the state's centralization reforms. In that sense, I will argue, the development of public opinion was not directly related with the dislocating of the local notables but related with the

4 Most works on the provinces and the provincial elites had been developed with such a backgrounding. For the well-known examples, see: Ali Yaycıoğlu, *Partners of the Empire: The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016); Necdet Sakaoğlu, *Anadolu Derebeyi Ocaklarından Köse Paşa Hanedanı* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1998); Yuzo Nagata, *Tarihte Ayanlar: Karaosmanoğulları Üzerine Bir İnceleme* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1997). Works of Suraiya Faroqhi and Oktay Özel were among the exceptions. See, for example: Suraiya Faroqhi, Coping with the State: *Political Conflict and Crime in the Ottoman Empire 1550-1720* (İstanbul: The ISIS Press, 1995); Oktay Özel, *The Collapse of Rural Order in Ottoman Anatolia: Amasya 1576-1643* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

centralization reforms of the Ottoman Empire because the infrastructural attempts for centralization provided alternative ways for the urban society in bargaining with the central bureaucracy.

Mass movements are among the foremost phenomena by which one can follow the creation of a public opinion and its evolution over time. The protest meetings that took place in the first years of the 20th century provide the necessary materials. Ottoman historians who wrote about those events identified the reactions of multiple actors as "tax revolts" because those movements happened after the state announced the personal income tax and domestic animal tax. However, Ottoman historiography needs further research on each of those movements to decide if those movements could properly be deemed tax revolts. In this manner, a series of protest wave that encompassed in Kastamonu, Sinop, Mosul, Basra, Erzurum, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, Prizren, İpek, Priştine, Taşlıca, Seniçe, Beirut, and Bayburt, at the beginning of the 20th century cannot be specifically identified as tax revolts because each of them was caused by a plethora of social, economic, cultural, military, environmental and security problems of the provinces. Singular-focus historiography misses the opportunity to produce rich accounts of the provinces by flattening the social movements that embodied multiple dynamics.[5] Hence, regardless of Ottoman archival sources defining those movements as mere protests against taxation, a more comprehensive perspective can help identify the true dynamics of ordinary life in the provinces and their relationship with the Imperial bureaucracy. Even though this dissertation also refers to these protests as tax related reactions, it aims to clarify the rich accounts of the everyday life in those provinces by focusing on the social, cultural and economic factors that led the coalitions of the urban centers to raise their voice against the power-holders.

5 Yonca Köksal made similar critics on the center based Tanzimat studies: See, Yonca Köksal, *The Ottoman Empire in the Tanzimat Era: Provincial Perspectives from Ankara to Edirne*. (London / New York: Routledge, 2019), 3.

This dissertation discusses how the collective actions developed in order to clarify why they happened. In Tilly's words: "Banding together has its own history. As people's grievances, hopes, interests, and opportunities for acting on them change, so do their ways of acting collectively."[6] For this reason, this dissertation aims to investigate the change in the organization of social life, powerholders, interests of urban society, development of collective action, techno-politics of the state, and rituals of the populace. From a historiographical perspective, the ultimate goal is to write the history of the provinces' everyday life in a specific moment shaped by the urban movements. Hence, it is important to clarify how the protests developed in the provinces and how the politics of elites, religious leaders, artisans, and peasants changed over time by explaining the importance of local dynamics in the provinces of the Empire and the resistance of localities to the center's specific policies. Therefore, describing the political movements of multiple actors will provide potential tools to conceptualize an alternative history of the late Ottoman Empire.

§ 1.1 Agency and Tax-Revolts in the Late Ottoman Empire

The power of the Sultan and the role of other actors such as the janissaries, the ulama and the local notables were among the most studied subjects of the Ottoman history. Despite the modernist conceptualization of oriental despotism, which implies that the Sultan is the sole authority in the Empire, the Ottoman historiography clearly defined the institutional role of other actors as the checks and balances system of the Ottoman central bureaucracy.[7] These

6 Tilly, *The Contentious French Four Centuries of Popular Struggle*, 3.

7 For the dominant paradigm about the roles of the various actors in the classical and early modern Ottoman Empire, see: Baki Tezcan, *The Second Ottoman Empire: Political and Social Transformation in the Early Modern World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Rifa'at Ali Aboue El Haj, *1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics* (Leiden: Nederlands Historicsh-Archeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1984); Cemal Kafadar,

efforts also provided a new kind of understanding of Ottoman centralization that started with the reform packages in the 19th century.[8]

However, the relationship between the transformation of the Empire's actors and changes in the local politics in the 19th century is still waiting to enlighten.[9] The scope of the historians who aimed to investigate the continuity of the state's transformation was generally about role of the internal dynamics for the change.[10] On the other hand, another version of Ottoman historiography created a sub-field that examined the bureaucratic transformation but it did not build a dialogue with the early modernity. Instead, this kind of historiography tended to explain the transformation of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century with a focus on the growing centralization process of the state

"Janissaries and Other Riffraff of Ottoman Istanbul: Rebels Without A Cause" in *International Journal of Turkish Studies* volume 13, (2007): 113-134; Hüseyin Yılmaz, "Containing Sultanic Authority: Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire before Modernity" in *The Journal of Ottoman Studies,* volume XIV, (2015): 231-264; Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference, The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 197-262; Aysel Yıldız, *Crisis and Rebellion in the Ottoman Empire, The Downfall of a Sultan in the Age of Revolution*, (London, New York: I.B.Tauris, 2017).

8 It is important to note that, Rifa'at Aboue el Hajj played the role of what Gogol did for the Russian Literature. His works deeply affected many young scholars and those young scholars developed the idea of transformation, centralization and check and balances systems under the coat of el Hajj. See: Rifa'at Aboue el Hajj, *Formation of the Modern State: The Ottoman Empire Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Albany, NY: Suny Press, 1991).

9 There are of course some detailed analyses of local actors and local politics. See; Köksal, *The Ottoman Empire in the Tanzimat Era: Provincial Perspectives from Ankara to Edirne;* Isa Blumi, *Reinstating the Ottomans: Alternative Balkan Modernities, 1800-1912* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Fatma Sel Turhan, *The Ottoman Empire and the Bosnian Uprising: Janissaries, Modernization and Rebellion in the Nineteenth Century* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014); Marinos Sariyannis, "Unseen Rebels: The 'Mob' of Istanbul as a Constituent of Ottoman Revolt, Seventeenth to Early Nineteenth Centuries in *Turkish Historical Review* volume 10, (2019): 155-188.

10 For example, see: Butrus Abu Manneh, "The Islamic Roots of the Gulhane Rescript" in *Die Welt Des Islams* volume 34, issue 2, (1994): 173-203.

bureaucracy.[11] Yet, during the 19th century the reform packages of the Ottoman central bureaucracy transformed the practices of the urban society in the provinces in their bargaining not only with the local bureaucracy but also with each other. Moreover, the development of revolutionary movements during the last quarter of the century made the puzzle about the political participation of the various actors more complex.

This study aims to enlighten the roles of various actors in the Ottoman provinces by focusing on the transformation of political participation and the changes in the resistance practices of the urban society. Hüseyin Yılmaz states that "resistance came to be the most effective weapon in the hands of opposition to achieve political demands or to hold the sultan accountable because there was no legal procedure in sharia law or Ottoman *kanun* to subject the sultan a judicial process" when he analyzes the form of oppositions in the classical and early modern Ottoman Empire.[12] Aysel Yıldız adds that "rebellions or revolutions are direct manifestation of social psychology"[13] and for this reason, the reactions of the urban society can be seen as the participation of the masses to the political arena.

Yet, the narrative that is written above is mostly related with the reactions of the urban actors in the central of the Empire before the Tanzimat. During the long 19th century, nationalist movements and then a revolutionary wave redefined the actors of rebellions. Historians focused the transnational relationship of the agencies after the revolution wave led to collapse the absolute

11 Many works can be seen as examples. See for some examples: İlber Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı* (İstanbul: Hil Yayınları, 1983); Carter Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte 1789-1922* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980); Eric Jan Zurcher, *Turkey, A Modern History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015).

12 Yılmaz, "Containing Sultanic Authority: Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire before Modernity" 240.

13 Yıldız, *Crisis and Rebellion in the Ottoman Empire, The Downfall of a Sultan in the Age of Revolution*, 9.

regimes of Russia, Iran and the Ottoman Empire.[14] In addition, the revolutionary wave also changed the actors of the political arena. Historians, whose goal is to enlighten the roles of the new actors, focused on the opposition parties. While they created thought-provoking works on the role of opposition movements in the late 19th century, they neglected the urban rebellious culture of the Ottoman Empire. In other words, despite those works shed light on the political chaos and the legitimacy crisis during the late Ottoman Empire, they decreased the role of the traditional ways of various actors' political participation as it happened in the early modern era and the early 19th century.[15]

This dissertation aims to close this gap in the literature. Thus, it will try to combine the social movement literature with the traditional bargaining policy of the Ottoman society without underestimating the role of political processes

14 For examples, see: Houri Berberian, *Roving Revolutionaries: Armenians and the Connected Revolutions in the Russian, Iranian and Ottoman Worlds,* (California: University of California Press, 2019); Nader Sohrabi, *Revolution and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Hasip Saygılı, "1905 Rus Devrimi'nin Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Üzerine Etkileri*,"* Unpublished Ph.D dissertation. Istanbul University, Ataturk Ilkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü, 2002.

15 For examples, see: Aykut Kansu, *1908 Devrimi* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1995); M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution. The Young Turks, 1902-1908* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Garabet Moumdjiyan, "Struggling for a Constitutional Regime: Armenian-Young Turk Relations in the Era of Abdulhamid II, 1895-1909," Unpublished Ph.D dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 2012; H. Zafer Kars, *1908 Devrimi'nin Halk Dinamiği,* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1997); Ivar Sector, *The First Russian Revolution. Its Impact on Asia* (Washington: Englewood Cliefs, 1962); A.M. Valuyskiy, "Vosstania v Vostoçnoy Anatolii nakanune mladoturetskoy revolyutsii (Po materialam moskovskix arxivov)," 48-65. There are exceptions: Nadir Özbek, "İkinci Meşrutiyeti Hazırlayan Koşullar, Rumeli'de Vergi Tahsilatı ve Jandarma" in *Toplumsal Tarih* no: 183 (2009); 46-50. Özbek enlightens how the tax collection system in the late Ottoman Empire caused the social conflict between various groups and created a suitable atmosphere for the cooperation of the opposition parties and the society. For another article that underlines the importance of local dynamics in those movements. Gökhan Çetinsaya II. "Abdulhamid'in İç Politikası: Bir Dönemlendirme Denemesi" in *Osmanlı Araştırmaları / The Journal of Ottoman Studies XLVII* (2016): 398.

and frames which led the urban reactions in the Ottoman provinces during the late Ottoman history.

The dynamics of rebellions were much more complex than how the revolutionary organizations conceptualized them. The Ottoman society had stepped on to the stage of history in multiple forms and with various patterns because they negotiated with the powerholders for centuries by creating alliances with each other, using the power of the law, and making use of the customs of their regions.[16] The populace chose to utilize their tribal relationship, religious ties, or the cultural and ethnic identity to wrestle with each other and the powerholders on different occasions. For this reason, crowds in Ottoman history have generally been identified in other studies such as the works on heterodox groups, *Celali* rebels, peasant studies, and revolutionary movements.[17] Apart from those studies, tax-revolts also managed to reserve a place for themselves in the works of economic history. The convergence of

16 Rifa'at Ali Aboue El Haj, *1703 Rebellion and the Structure of Ottoman Politics* is the perfect example of how a coalition in the Ottoman center developed discursive and political strategies to dislocate the Sheik-ul-Islam and the Sultan Mustafa II.

17 For the Celali rebellions, see; Mustafa Akdağ, *Türk Halkının Dirlik ve Düzenlik Kavgası: Celali İsyanları* (İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1995); Suraiya Faroqhi, "Political Tensions in the Anatolian Countryside Around 1600. An Attempt at Interpretation" in *Turkische Mizselen* (Istanbul: Editions Divit Press, 1987), 119-121; Halil İnalcık, "Military and Fiscal Transformation in the Ottoman Empire 1600-1700" *Archivum Ottomanicum,* (1980): 297-298; Sam White, *The Climate of Rebellion in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire*, Studies in Environment and History (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011). For the relationship between the state and society before Tanzimat, see: Dina Rizk Khouri, "Political Relations Between City and State in the Middle East 1700-1850" In *The Urban Social History of the Middle East 1750-1950* ed. by Peter Sluglett (New-York: Syracuse University Press, 2011), 67-104; Sami Zubaida, "Urban Social Movements 1750-1950" in *The Urban Social History of the Middle East 1750-1950* ed. by Peter Sluglett (New-York: Syracuse University Press, 2011), 224-256; Ariel Salzman, *Tocqueville in the Ottoman Empire: Rival Paths to the Modern State* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004), particularly chapter three; Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables," in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East: The Nineteenth Century,* ed. William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 41–68.

economic and social history took these studies a step further. These movements gained more importance in the literature because most of them had economic reasons and caused a social conflict between the Empire's various actors.

Indeed, tax revolts were the easiest way to mobilize different classes against the authority, and for this reason, they were ubiquitous in all parts of the world. The collapse of the Spanish Empire was related with the six unstoppable tax revolts, the Netherlands lost its power after the reactions to too much taxation, the land of French Kingdom was like a hometown for tax rebellions.[18] The revolt of thirteen colonies in the British North America was the most crucial example of the tax-related reactions.[19] Hugh Borton's study, *Peasant Uprisings in Japan of the Tokugawa Period,* describes the peasant uprising against unfair taxes in the 19th century.[20] In 1828, Russia faced noble's tax opposition due to the reaction of the Russian nobility to a progressive tax on the income from landed property.[21] In France, Income Tax Opposition was a well-known debate in the assembly in 1895. The tax ultimately resulted in Leon Bourgeois' dismissal from his office.[22] According to Burg's comprehensive study, during the 19th century, fifty-six tax revolts occurred in different regions of the world. Some of these revolts became well-known because they dislocated the local officials of the regions. Some others' effects were

18 Charles Adams, *For Good and Evil: The Impact of Taxes on the Course of Civilization* (New York: Madison Books, 2001) 279.

19 Ibid., 297.

20 David F. Burg, *A World History of Tax Rebellions: An Encyclopedia of Tax Rebels, Revolts and Riots from Antiquity to the Present,* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 326-328. The *Takeda Rising* in 1811 and *Echigo Rising* in 1812 were the two main revolts and around 15,000 people raised their voices against officials who were taxing the farmers mercilessly. The comprehensive study of David F. Burg includes many details about tax revolts from different geographies.

21 Ibid., 334.

22 Ibid., 376.

limited. Yet, Burg left out the tax revolts in the early 20th century Ottoman Empire.

Since this dissertation has case studies, which are tax-related collective reaction of the society in the Ottoman provinces, it also aims to shed light on the changing taxation practices of the Empire during the late 19th century. The reason of this attempt is not to conceptualize the changing taxation practices of the Ottoman bureaucracy as the only framing process that cause the rebellions rather the goal is to define how the society conceptualized their bargaining practices when they experienced economic crises. John Chalcraft states that many of the rebels identified the motivation behind their protest as being in the interest of the country in the Mount Lebanon. According to him, "it was a transgressive move, aggregating the commoners the right to judge the interest of the country."[23] As Edward P. Thompson's ideas on the moral values about Britain's people, Chalcraft identified on the discourse of the protestors in their bargaining with the state by focusing on the concepts such as comfort, welfare, rights and custom.[24] Joel Beinin criticizes historians who wrote about peasants of the Middle East, including Haim Gerber and Gabriel Baer, because they utilized a Eurocentric perspective by defining peasant movements with reference to Europen norms. He states that, many historians identified the Kisrawan uprising that the rebels proclaimed a republic during their revolt against the tax-farming system known as *iqta* as the exceptional case in the collective movements of the Middle East because of Lebanon's more

23 John Chalcraft, *Popular Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016) 68. Chalcraft's work is an impressive effort that analyzes more than seventy cases by concentrating on the examples of contentious politics from the late 18th centuy up to the Arab Spring. In addition, it includes a brief review of the well-known works on the social movements in the Middle Eastern Studies; Maslaha is an Islamic legal concept that simply defines the act for the public benefits. For details, see: Nada Moumtaz, *God's Property: Islam, Charity and the Modern State* (California: University of California Press, 2021) 196-197.

24 Ibid., 119.

European social formation.[25] Beinin depicts the peasants' efforts as their utilization of the weapons of the weak to create a different perspective on peasants' actions. Both scholars clarify how the society conceptualized the change in taxation practices of the Empire and how they reacted. Most importantly they accepted the crowds as the agents of the history as Beinin argues "the working people who constitute the majority of any society deserve to be historical subjects."[26]

The crowds developed many tactics to show their reaction due to the social, economic and political chaos they experienced during the first years of the 20th century. They were called as tax-revolts because the most important reactions were related with the wealth tax. Taxing the wealth was one of the main symbols of the modern, central states. It was also a clear victory of the liberal understanding of taxation. As Charles Adams stated, "the wealth of a nation can best be measured by its income, not its land because land ignores commerce, money, personal property, income from labor and services."[27] This kind of income tax was designed in the Great Britain during the war against Napoleon. In other words, the war provided efficient tools for the state to centralize its taxation by blocking the popular reactions. Hence, when one defines the "state building process of the 19th century as the increasing the administrative, fiscal and institutional capacity of governments"[28] the role of personal income tax was to help the state to create its form. Moving the tax-collection from the cultivated land to the income, in other words, attempting to transform the tax collection from rural to urban centers had shapen this form. Within this perspective, the story of Ottoman Empire was not different

25 Joel Beinin *Workers and Peasants in the Modern Middle East*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 62.

26 Ibid., 1.

27 Adams, *For Good and Evil: The Impact of Taxes on the Course of Civilization*, 357.

28 Deborah A. Brautigam, "Introduction, taxation and state building in developing countries" in *Taxation and State Building in Developing Countries* (ed) Deborah Brautigam, Odd-Helge Fijeldstad, Mick Moore (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 2.

than many European countries. The attempts to tax the wealth such as *temettuat,* property tax, domestic animal tax or the personal income tax were the results of the fiscal centralization in the 19th century. This fiscal centralization symbolized a new deal between various actors in the Ottoman Empire and the new actors of the provinces developed new tools to defend the traditional rights of the society. These traditional rights were also shaped under the umbrella of the classical fiscal system of the Empire.

In the classical era, the Ottoman Empire collected the most important part of its taxes from the cultivated land and those cultivated lands belonged to the Empire.[29] The Ottoman Empire organized the population by re-settling them to these lands, bestowing certain privileges like tax-exemptions for a limited time period, to create a tax base of subjects who earned their daily stay from the land. As it was called the process of *şenlendirme* which means to enliven again, rendered the land a stable source of tax income had for the state. Hence, one of the most crucial tasks of the Empire was to provide safety to the society that cultivated its land. The taxes claimed by the Empire were mostly traditional. For example, tithe (A'şar) was the main tax revenue of the state from the cultivated land and it was designed as a traditional tax whereby the state collected 10% of the total product for centuries.[30] This fiscal deal between the

29 Ömer Lütfü Barkan. "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Kuruluş Devrinde Toprak Meseleleri I" in *Türkiye'de Toprak Meselesi 1* (İstanbul: Gözlem Yayınları, 1984), 289.

30 Traditional taxes were related with the Islam's most important tax known as "zakat". Although it was created by pre-Islamic Middle Eastern societies, zakat played the role of first social contract between the state bureaucracy and the taxpayers during the first century of Islam. However, it later lost this role because of two changes. First, it was transformed into an agricultural tax because the third Caliph Uthman redefined zakat as a tax to be collected from livestock and crops. Second, it turned into a personal ritual after the long debates between the Muslim jurists. The Middle Eastern empires which were governed in according to Shari'a, however, did not stop collecting zakat. Instead, certain agricultural taxes were redefined as part of zakat. The tithe (A'şar) was such an example. The jurists claimed that A'şar was part of the social contract, by citing the relevant verse of the Qur'an and the hadith of Prophet Muhammad. See: Timur Kuran, "Zakat: Islam's missed opportunity to limit

state and the subjects known as traditionalism depended on a behavior in line with a traditional constitution (*kanun-i kadim).*[31] *Kanun-i kadim* did not only allow the bureaucracy to create a stable fiscal regime but also helped the society to raise their objections at times when the bureaucrats acted in ways that contradicts the deal. The traditional deal was also observed in the concept of circle of justice. It was firstly developed by ancient near eastern city states and firstly attested in the 10th century.[32] Ibn-i Khaldun and Ottoman writer Kınalizade Ali mentioned it as the soul of the social contract. The full version of it is as follows:

> The world is a garden, hedged in by sovereignty
> Sovereignty is lordship, preserved by law
> Law is administration, governed by the king
> The king is a shepherd, supported by the army
> The army are soldiers, fed by money
> Money is revenue, gathered by the people
> The people are servants, subjected by justice
> Justice is happiness, the well-being of the world.

The circle of justice provided the discursive tool to build a legitimate form of tax-collection. It promised to raise the productivity of the peasants by

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predatory taxation" in *Public Choice* (2020) 182: 395-416, 398, 399,403-405. For more information also see, Wael B. Hallaq, *The Impossible State*, *Islam, Politics and Modernity's Moral Predicament* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 311-312; Mehmet Erkal, "Öşür" in *TDV Islam Ansiklopedisi,* (2007), 34: 97-100. The Turkish translation of the verse and hadith quoted from Erkal.

Bakara 267 "Sizin için yerden çıkardıklarımızdan infak edin." Buhari (Zekat, 55) "Toprak mahsullerinden yağmur ve nehir suyu ile sulananlardan onda bir, el emeği sulananlarda yirmide bir zekat vardır."

31 Mehmet Genç states that the classical Ottoman financial doctrine relied on three crucial aspects that were *provisionism*, *traditionalism and fiscalism.* See: Mehmet Genç, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Devlet ve Ekonomi* (İstanbul, Ötüken Yayınları, 2000), 94-96.

32 Linda T. Darling, *A History of Social Justice and Political Power in the Middle East: The Circle of Justice from Mesopotamia to Globalization* (London, New York: Routledge, 2013) 32. I quoted English translation of the Circle of Justice from Darling's passage.

providing safety, securing the society against invasions. The peasants were ready to pay the taxes as long as the bureaucracy acted in accordance with the circle of justice. Yet, the misuse of any of these articles in the circle of justice could also provide a legitimate way for the cultivators to raise their voice against the central power. In such an atmosphere, acting by reference to traditionalism was not only the way of the Sultan and his bureaucracy. The society was also accustomed to live unders the umbrella of traditional rights. For example, Oktay Özel wrote that the peasants of Amasya petitioned the Palace many times in the first half of the 17th century about the tyranny of the local officials during the tax collection. He also rightly argued that, after the crisis and rebellions in the 16th century, the Anatolian society -especially in Amasya- did not consider the governor-generals to be the source of security.[33] Instead, they were seen as the direct threats because they acted against the traditional deal.

The repertoires of the various actors in bargaining with the state changed as the social contract between the central bureaucracy and local actors had changed. The repertoires had been shaped not only with the traditional discourse as Özel, Chalcraft and Beinin stated but also the discourse of Tanzimat was taken by the society. Atilla Aytekin's study on peasant protests in the late Ottoman Empire argues that the concept of "subsistence ethics, a notion of justness and valorizing labor" were the main frames that motivated the protests.[34] He also states that there were common features in peasant revolts across different parts of the Empire. The first reason for common features such as "the well-organized groups, no significant outside support, engaging with the refusal of tax-paying" was a shared moral economy. The second

33 Özel, *The Collapse of Rural Order in Ottoman Anatolia: Amasya 1576-1643*. 155-157.

34 Atilla *E.* Aytekin, "Peasant Protest in the Late Ottoman Empire: Moral Economy, Revolt and the Tanzimat Reforms," in *International Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (IRSH)* 57 (2012): 191-227, 211.

reason was the Tanzimat's effect on the ordinary man; Tanzimat was a manifestation of new taxation reforms, conscription, the concept of equality, and so on.[35] A similar attempt can be seen in Cengiz Kırlı's research: The people of Ottoman Vranje petitioned against the tyranny of Governor Hüseyin Pasha by including the illustrations of the torture as the evidence of sufferings they experienced. While claiming the illegal behaviors of Hüseyin Pasha during the tax collection they aimed to convince the Sultan that they were demanding the proper implementation of 'the new law' that Tanzimat promised for the provinces.[36]

Nationalist and revolutionary movements diversified the tools of society in the second half of the 19th century. The answer of "what constituted rights" was not only identified with the traditional concepts but also the concept of equal citizenship helped the agencies of the provinces while creating their repertoires. The development of new middle class that consisted of

35 Ibid., 227. Also see; Atilla E. Aytekin, *Land, Rural Classes and the Law: Agrarian Conflict and State Regulation in the Ottoman Empire, 1830s-1860s* Unpublished Ph. D Dissertation, Binghamton University, State University of New-York, 2006. Aytekin's dissertation covers same series of documents with Halil Inalcık's well-known study about the NS revolt and Vidin revolt. Aytekin criticizes İnalcık because İnalcık accepted the state bureaucracy as a just locus of rule and blamed the local elites for the revolts. Aytekin, on the other hand, argues that the land regime (gospodarlık) that caused the tension was the real problem. Aytekin, *Land, Rural Classes and the Law: Agrarian Conflict and State Regulation in the Ottoman Empire, 1830s-1860s,* 46-60. See for the main studies on those revolts: Halil İnalcık, "Tanzimat'ın Uygulanması ve Sosyal Tepkiler" in *Tanzimat: Değişim Sürecinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu* ed. by. Halil İnalcık, Mehmet Seyitdanoğlu (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2017), 169-197; Ahmet Uzun, *Tanzimat ve Sosyal Direnişler* (İstanbul: Eren Yayınları, 2002); Coşkun Çakır, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Maliyesi* (İstanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2001).

36 Cengiz Kırlı, "Tyranny Illustrated: From Petition to Rebellion in Ottoman Vranje." in *New Perspectives on Turkey* (2015): 53, 3-36. It is important to underline that, those similarities can be observed in various parts of the world. For example, Stephen P. Frank observes a similar pattern in his research on the Russian peasantry in the 19th century. He states that the law "should be a force for equity and 'true' justice in peasant eyes" by showing the laws mentioned in the petitions of serfs. See: Stephen P. Frank, *Crime, Cultural Conflict and Justice in Rural Russia, 1856-1914* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1999) 93.

merchants, artisans and ulama provided this transformation. This middle class became new representors of the society in the provinces, but they also forced the central bureaucracy to share the power with them. The creation of opposition parties in the late 19th century was also the result of this transformation and international revolutionary wave.

The tax-related reactions of the society during the early 20th century had been developed in this background. The crowds created repertoires to participate political arena and to claim their demands. Historians wrote on those reactions but their focus was generally related with the relationship between the revolutionary movements and the reactions. In other words, the Committee of Union and Progress, The Macedonian Revolutionary Organization, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation covered the main part of the agencies, and the reactions were mostly seen as one of the various tactics of revolutionaries. The ultimate goal in this kind of historiography is to reach the 1908 Revolution and for this reason many works defined the tax-related reactions without conceptualizing the transformation of the local agencies and the change in the tacit agreement between various facts of the society.[37] For example, Aykut Kansu identifies the role of Young-Turks, Garabed Moumdjiyan accepts the Armenian Revolutionary Movement as the real authority, Şükrü Hanioğlu investigates the role of Prince Sebahaddin's branch and Dashnaks in their researches about the tax-revolts in Erzurum.[38] The impact of

37 For the concept of tacit agreement, see: Şerif Mardin "Osmanlı Zımni Sözleşmesi" in *Türk Modernleşmesi Makaleler 4* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1991), 108-123.

38 It is important to underline that despite my criticism about those works, many of those studies aimed to show the importance of the local society against the literature that only focused the role of soldiers in the 1908 Revolution. Thus, most of these works are thought-provoking. My criticism is related with their conceptualization of the local agencies because those works also condemned the crowds to silence unintentionally. See for examples: Aykut Kansu, *1908 Devrimi*; Garabet Moumdjiyan, "Struggling for a Constitutional Regime: Armenian-Young Turk Relations in the Era of Abdulhamid II, 1895-1909,"; M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution. The Young Turks, 1902-1908*, 81-124. For an important critique of Aykut

revolutionary wave led some other scholars to find the effects of Russian Revolution in the Ottoman Empire. Ivan Sector, Yuri Asatoric Petrosyan and Zafer Kars were among the examples.[39] By doing this, they reinforced their belief that Russia was the primary country that exported revolutionary ideas to its neighbors.

The literature on social movements provides a new perspective to understand crowd's mass movements in the late Ottoman Empire. "Social

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Kansu's book, see: Mete Çelik "1908 Devrimi ve Meşrutiyet Nostaljisi" in *Birikim* vol.82 (February 1996): 77-84. Thre are two exceptions: First one was the descriptive work of Muammer Demirel. Despite his sources -especially the memoirs - include errors, his study provides detailed analysis of local actors who were active during the mass protest in Erzurum. See: Muammer Demirel, *İkinci Meşrutiyet Öncesi Erzurum'da Halk Hareketleri (1906-1907)* (Ankara, Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1990). Second, Atilla E. Aytekin, "Tax Revolts During the Tanzimat Period (1839-1876) and Before the Young Turk Revolution (1904-1908): Popular Protest and State Formations in the Late Ottoman Empire and Peasant Protest in the Late Ottoman Empire" in *The Journal of Policy History*, Cambridge University Press, volume 25 No. 3 (2013): 308-333.

39 Ivar Sector, *The First Russian Revolution. Its Impact on Asia*, chapter 4; Yuriş Asatoviç Petrosyan, *Sosyalist açıdan Jön-Türk Hareketi* (İstanbul: Yordam Kitap, 2015); H. Zafer Kars, *1908 Devrimi'nin Halk Dinamiği*. Indeed, the most important source of Petrosyan and Kars was A.M. Valuyskiy who was the first historian to focus on the rising of the Turkish merchant bourgeoisie after the 1894-96 massacres against Armenians. In addition, Valuyskiy had clearly shown the importance of the local actors during the mass protests without underestimating the role of the Russian Revolution of 1905. According to him, although the Russian Revolution affected local actors' ideas, the main problem was the Sultan's tyranny and his despotic attitudes towards the population of the Eastern provinces. See; A.M. Valuyskiy, "Vosstania v Vostoçnoy Anatolii nakanune mladoturetskoy revolyutsii (Po materialam moskovskix arxivov)," 48-65. Zafer Kars's study includes a perfect translation of this article from Russian to Turkish. For an important critique of Kars, see: Cemil Koçak "Zafer Kars'ın Kitabı Vesilesiyle Tarih Çalışmalarında Yöntem Üzerine" in *Toplumsal Tarih* vol. 25 (January 1996): 62-64. There is an exception: Hasip Saygılı argues that it was clear that the mass movements in the Ottoman Empire that occurred between 1905 and 1908 were not related to the Russian revolution. According to him, they were rather the result of the taxation policy, economic problems and governing practices. See: Hasip Saygılı, "1905 Rus Devrimi'nin Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Üzerine Etkileri*,"* Unpublished Ph.D dissertation. Istanbul University, Ataturk Ilkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü, 2002, 195.

movements are one of the principal social forms through which collectivities give voices to their grievances and concerns about the rights, welfare, and well-being of themselves and others by engaging in various types of collective action such as protesting in the streets."[40] While the first generation of social scientists had been working to understand why collectivities created demonstrations next generation who contributed to social movement and contentious politics literature investigated how the collectivities decide to create those forms and in what ways they organized the movement.[41] The existing literature on the tax-revolts were mainly related with the Resource Mobilization Theory. According to this theory, there is always tension between the classes in society. The important thing is a spark to move the crowds. Professional movement organizations had collected data, spread their ideas to society, and created movements.[42] The leaders in Resource Mobilization Theory are political entrepreneurs whose supporters follow them as rational behavior.[43] However, the Resource Mobilization Theory did not accept the ordinary

40 David A. Snow, Sarah Anne Soule, and Hanspeter Kriesi, eds., *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, Blackwell Companions to Sociology (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2004), 3.

41 For a literature review on social movement studies, see: Doğan Çetinkaya, "Tarih ve Kuram Arasında Toplumsal Hareketler," in *Toplumsal Hareketler, Tarih, Teori ve Deneyim* ed. by Doğan Çetinkaya (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2018); İhsan Kurtbaş, *Toplumsal Hareketler Siyasasi: Teori-Oluşum-Dönüşüm* (Ankara: Detay Yayıncılık, 2017). For the examples of the first generation, see: Gustove Le Bon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (New York: Dover Publications, 2001); Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965). For the latter, see: Doug Mc Adam, Sidney Tarrow, Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012); James M. Jasper, *The Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography and Creativity in Social Movements* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002) This work also includes a review of social movement studies.

42 Çetinkaya, "Tarih ve Kuram Arasında Toplumsal Hareketler," 33; Gerald F. Davis, ed., *Social Movements and Organization Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 6.

43 Aldon D. Morris, Suzanne Staggenborg, "Leadership in Social Movement" in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* ed. by David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, Hanspeter Kriesi, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 173.

person as the agent of history. Agency in resource mobilization theory is rather located at the leadership and organizations. Crowds became objects which were controlled by their organizations. In other words, historians did not take the populace's actions and ideas, their role in history and their collective behaviors such as rebelling against the order or protesting the ruler as natural elements of history. Instead, the natural factor is the resources that mobilize crowds against the order. This kind of perspective on history has created teleological historiography. When the leadership attempts to write its history, social protests are taken to be fully conscious movements, planned right from the beginning, acting concertedly to reach its own goals.[44] In such historiography, challenges in history are assumed to be in a striking internal harmony, that incidentally, directly provides answers to historians' inquiries.[45]

The criticism to the existing literature does not deny the role of crowds in the 1908 Revolution. Rather it rejects the political organizations' roles in the creation of tax revolts in the early 20th century. Rosa Luxemburg argues that "just by themselves, mass actions as a disorganizing tactic are a Hangar to absolutism. Not only do they disorganize the ruling system, but they also organize at the same time the political forces which will overthrow absolutism and create a new order."[46] Within this perspective, the repertoires of the masses which were shaped under the centralization reforms of the Empire and were affected both by the traditional rights and revolutionary wave motivated the political forces that achieved to defeat absolutism.

The contentious interaction which helps to examine the role of various agencies in late Ottoman history was also the result of the framing process. "Framing was a collective process of interpretation, attribution and social

44 Peter Burke, *Tarih ve Toplumsal Kuram*, 97.

45 There are also fascinating studies that point directly at the revolutionary crowds as the agents of history. For an example, see; George Rude, *The Crowd in the French Revolution* (United States of America: Oxford University Press, 1959).

46 Paul Frölich, *Rosa Luxemburg* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2010), 99.

construction."[47] The framing process also includes that people feel miserable and aggrieved due to the changes in their lives but at the same time they still believe that creating repertoires to act collectively can reverse the social change.[48] For example, the drought conditions, which caused starvation in the Ottoman East during the early years of the 20th century resulted with completely different picture than the famine conditions of the previous years. The result was the entering of various actors to the contentious politics of the urban life because the new Muslim generation felt aggrieved, but they were also optimistic for a change. They were the group who controls the economic and social life of the cities after the state decreased the power of non-Muslims in the Ottoman East. They filled the bureaucratic positions in the local councils and took profit from the infrastructural attempts of the Empire. Their children had more chance to enter a new school and to fill the new bureaucratic seat. Yet, the price inflation, the ethnic and religious tension, the natural disasters and the changing international context were threats for their earnings. In addition, they were well-informed about the revolutionary movements and looking for the new opportunities. The situation was not different in the Balkan provinces. The Young-Turk movement was even stronger among the new Muslim generation in the Balkans.

More importantly, most of them were well-informed about the rebellion culture for the political participation. This cultural framing included rituals, symbols, slogans, victimizing acts. It was not only created by capturing the streets but also collective actions such as refusal of the certain tax-payment or sending collective petition to the Palace fed this culture. This dissertation examines the cultural attitudes of the society by combining cultural framing process with the Shahab Ahmed's criticism of Clifford Geertz' thick description theory: "I do not imagine that 'to understand culture is to interpret its

47 Mc Adam, Tarrow, Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, 41.

48 Ibid., 17, 41.

symbols' by virtuoso free association, but is rather to engage closely and attentively with the native's statements of self-conceptualization, their languages, lexicons and logics of argumentation."[49] I rely on Ahmad's point while writing on the collectivities repertoires during the time of crisis because that kind of perspective in Ottoman history enlightens the role of rebellion culture in the contentious politics of the various actors. It also provides tools to prove that state of emergency in which the Ottoman society lived during the early 20th century was not the exception but the rule and this rule led the ambivalent position of the new -mostly Muslim- generation of the Ottoman Empire.

§ 1.2 Historicizing Mass Movements

This study will be an attempt to rewrite the historical account of tax-related reactions of the Ottoman populace especially in the eastern provinces of the Empire between 1903 and 1908. Even though some chapters include examples from the Kosovo province, the dissertation mostly focuses on Erzurum, Bitlis, Van, and Diyarbakır at the beginning of the 20th century. The existing literature on these mass meetings was mainly a product of the studies about the Young-Turk Revolution of 1908. Historians, whose studies were criticized above, concentrated on these protests as the motivations for the Young Turks or the movements that were directly organized by the opposition. In this sense, their point was mostly similar to that of Resource Mobilization Theory. However, all of these studies failed to explain the local dynamics of the protests, such as the environmental changes, the ethnic tensions, the state's infrastructural attempts, the rising power of the religious leaders, artisans and merchants, the changing of the tax collection system and the land question in the provinces.

49 Shahab Ahmad, *What is Islam: The Importance of Being Islamic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 249.

Moreover, protests in urban centers did not enter the Ottoman Empire's political agenda in the 20th century. Throughout Ottoman history, the clashes between elites, the army, and the Imperial bureaucracy had occurred in the many provinces of the Empire. Istanbul, as the imperial capital of the Empire, was also the capital of the contentious politics of various actors such as Janissary revolts, guilds' protest meetings and religious leaders' reactions. The clashes between various social forces had been observable until the 19th century. However, with the elimination of the powerholders such as *A'yan* and *Janissary* by Sultan Mahmud II, the repertoire of the local dynamics had changed. While the opposition movements developed secret organizations due to the Imperial bureaucracy's pressure, despite it being the years of reform, the reforms movements in the provinces opened new branches for the provinces' urban coalitions. The coalitions were not of the local powers in the provinces who acted against the Imperial bureaucracy, but the actors who were eager to define the limits of the central authority in the provinces. Hence, they made themselves into the groups with more privileges than others. While they became the natural leaders of society, they also lived under the threat of the populace, as the scapegoats that could be targeted whenever society faced a social and economic problem in their daily life. Under such circumstances, each Ottoman province had developed various repertoires of contention to bargain with the state, as well as with each other in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Those repertoires had some similarities with the repertoire of the social forces who had challenged the powerholders in Istanbul for centuries, the last time in 1808, but it also included differences because each Ottoman provinces had its own socio-cultural background. Thus, those movements were not referred to as the extensions of the reactions of İstanbul's social forces to the provinces. However, it is essential to underline that the movements' repertoire was much more closely related to the Ottoman traditional rhetoric on protests than to a political party's or secret revolutionary organization's opposition to Sultan Abdulhamid II.

In this sense, this study's core aim will be to write the history of the local actors and focus on the ways that the urban people created contentious politics. In other words, this study will focus on the repertoires of contention, which denotes that "people engage in contentious collective action."[50] Instead of analyzing the collective action of the urban population in the Ottoman borderlands as the symptom of the Young Turk opposition, this study tends to accept those movements as the sign of a negotiation politics of the Ottoman society. Analyzing contention politics as the form of negotiation practice in the 20th century is also an attempt to contribute to the works that explain the conflicts between the Sultan, the janissaries, and the ulama in İstanbul, since most of those studies focus on the events that occurred before Tanzimat. The dissertation also discusses the dynamics of provinces after the Empire created an infrastructural power in the borderlands.

My final aim in this study is to explain the existential aspect of everyday life by creating a narrative of a single story and its implications.[51] As Lawrence Stone stated, "Narrative is taken to mean the organization of material in chronologically sequential order and the focusing of the content into a single coherent story, albeit with sub-plots. It, therefore, deals with the particular and specific (events) rather than the collective and statistical."[52] I will follow Stone's schema, but with one difference. I will try to add the tools of economic history such as financial reports and budgets and employ cultural history's tools such as the documents about the daily life of the society that were provided by urban societies, missionaries, consulates, and the local bureaucracy. Thus, the dissertation analyzes the collective events by using statistics while creating a narrative.

50 McAdam, et al, "Dynamics of Contention," 41.

51 Lawrence Stone, "The Revival of Narrative: Reflections on a New Old History," in Past and Present, 85, (1979): 3-24.

52 Ibid., 3-4.

I will keep in mind Ranajit Guha's famous suggestion that historians need a 'code of pacification' to clarify the subjectivity of the ordinary people in the uprising.[53] He argues that the state documents from the time of colonial power were examples of 'counter-insurgency'. Hence, a researcher should read these documents 'against the grain.' Although whether the Ottoman Empire had a colonial perspective or not is still a controversial topic, reading the documents against the grain helps to recognize to create a comprehensive definition of urban movements in the Ottoman eastern and western provinces. Therefore, while I plan to explain the dynamics behind the rising power of local agents, my aim will be to write the symbols, rituals and forms of the dynamics by taking actors of the protests as the history-makers, because "banding together has its own history."[54]

This study discusses these issues in six separate chapters, including the introduction and a conclusion. The introduction aimed to provide a brief survey of the literature on tax revolts and the new directions in Ottoman historiography. It also explains in what ways this study will contribute to the literature on tax related reactions and social movements in the Middle East.

Chapter 2 aims to explain the effects of the first trend mentioned in the beginning of the introduction. The chapter will clarify the changes and the reform packages in governance and taxation practices of the Empire during the long 19th century by focusing on the examples from the eastern and western Ottoman provinces. It will also focus on the existing works on state and society relations and analyze their perspectives. The chapter aims to show the liminalities instead of focusing on the clear-cut examples of who the state and the society were. After explaining the Tanzimat reforms and their implications in the provinces, I use the budgets of the Kosovo province to question the capacity of the state's techno-politics in the provinces which constitute the

53 Ranajit Guha, "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency," in *Subaltern Studies II: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, ed. Ranajit Guha (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983), 27.

54 Tilly, *The Contentious French Four Centuries of Popular Struggle*, 3.

most important purpose of the chapter. I also evaluate the possibility of tax collection through implementation of top-down decisions and without negotiation with the society. The chapter therefore compares the taxpayers' relative eagerness to pay the traditional versus the new taxes. In this manner, I conceptualize the new taxes as the invention of Ottoman bureaucracy without taking the consent of the populace and its representatives, and I take the traditional taxes that were established with the consent of the society to be the custom of the people. Thus, the chapter argues that Ottoman society was well-informed about how to bargain with the state. Even though the people displayed outright reactions against taxation in many districts, the chapter will analyze the overall tax payment behavior as an example of a more nuances politics of contention. In this manner, the chapter will constitute an example of using provincial budgets to write a social history of Ottoman provinces. Despite there was a huge collection of the documents about the tax-related protests in the province of Kosovo, I chose to use provincial budgets to provide quantitative data because I analyzed the qualitative data were used for Erzurum and Bitlis. Instead, I used the examples from the revolts in Kosovo in chapter 5.

Chapter 3 is a case study of a tax-related social movement at the beginning of the 20th century. Thus, it relies on the second trend that was the rising power of the certain actors in the borderlands. It explains how the urban society of Erzurum raised their voice against new taxes and the local bureaucracy, and how they negotiated for their demands. This chapter presents a comprehensive account of an example of the protest waves that occurred throughout the Empire between 1903 and 1908. Another goal of the chapter is to clarify the role of the artisans, merchants and religious leaders in the urban centers, and it focuses on their relationship with the local bureaucracy. It analyzes the protests that took place in Erzurum in 1906 month by month to shed light on the changing dynamics of the urban life. After providing details on Erzurum, the chapter focuses on the protests that happened in March 1906 and October

1906. In addition, it aims to show how the representatives developed strategies to convince the Imperial center about the rightfulness of their movements. The last issue explored in the chapter is how the Imperial center and the local bureaucracy defined those movements. In that section, I discuss the revolutionary movements' chance of success in the eastern provinces. This is also a way of analyzing the possibility of resource mobilization and political process theories in the contentious politics of the Ottoman Eastern frontier. To that end, it conceptualizes the local elites as the people who mobilize the resources, instead of accepting the revolutionary opposition movement as the actors.

Chapter 4 aims to elaborate on the roles of the ecological changes in the mass movements. I discuss the relationship between the urban movements and famine conditions in the Ottoman East during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II by relying on the statistics and archival sources on the food shortages, the drought, and the price inflation. In this manner, the chapter depends on the third trend. The economic and social crisis which the Ottoman populace experienced in the last quarter of the 19th century created a state of emergency for the society. The chapter analyzes those events as the triggering frames that caused the populace to resolve to act against the representatives and the local bureaucracy. Therefore, while chapter three focuses on the role of the artisans, merchants and religious leaders in the mass movements, this chapter directly analyzes the role of the populace in the protest waves. It also aims to clarify the changing dynamics of leadership during the time of crisis. The chapter ends with another case study; the third mass movement that broke out in Erzurum in 1907. After explaining the events of 1907, it also aims to show the state's reaction and the name list of the urban coalition who created three consequential mass movements in two years. For this reason, the case study of chapter 4 plays a follow-up role for the events that are clarified in the previous chapter.

Chapter 5 discusses the dynamics of contention. Thus, it will focus on the time of crisis. It aims to explain the strategic decisions of the society to shed light on how the collective action developed in the borderland. The chapter discusses the petitioning practices, the closing of shops, the creation of mass meetings in the urban centers, and violence against the specific people by citing examples from Kosovo, Erzurum, Diyarbakır and Bitlis provinces. In this manner, it aims to clarify the dynamics of the Ottoman frontier provinces. In the chapter, I argue that all tactics and strategies that is developed by the urban coalitions had been carefully chosen and that the society followed a well-determined path to define the limits of the state in the borderland. Moreover, the chapter conceptualizes those dynamics as the ways to force the Imperial center to make the urban coalitions into the partners of the Empire in the region. Within such a perspective, the chapter aims to contribute to the existing works on provincial society; it shows the role of contentious politics as a way to determine the actors of the urban centers. The chapter ends with another case study. After it focuses on the most important tactics and strategies developed by the society during the movements, it focuses on the mass movement that emerged in Bitlis in 1907. It also aims to discuss how the Imperial center and the foreign representatives identified the reasons for and the actors of the protests.

The dissertation will not focus on the long-term changes in order to analyze these trends. Instead, it will investigate the moments of danger to grasp the memory of multiple actors in the Ottoman provinces.[55] In other words, it will analyze the borderland society's reactions at the beginning of the 20th century to the many fateful crises faced by the Ottoman Empire, when society had to live under extra-ordinary conditions in the provinces. Following Walter Benjamin, this dissertation researches in what ways the crisis affected the

55 Walter Benjamin, "Tarih Kavramı Üzerine" in *Pasajlar* translated by Ahmet Cemal (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2018), 41.

content of the customs and their receivers. I argue that the moment of dangers faced by the society in the provinces was a signal flare for identifying the changing dynamics of Ottoman provinces. The concluding chapter of the dissertation briefly summarizes the findings relying on the examples from the previous chapters.

In this respect, I will re-conceptualize these revolts from the bottom up. Relying on the Ottoman archival documents such as petitions, reports on the Ottoman eastern provinces and Kosovo, financial statistics, the consular reports, the newspapers, biographies and the extant studies, my goal is to find out the voices of the urban society during the mass movements. I believe this will also be a contribution to the studies on the Young Turk Revolution of 1908.

2

Government, Taxes and Actors in the Ottoman Borderlands

§ 2.1 Image and Practice: Government on the Provinces

This chapter investigates the centralizing reforms of the Ottoman Empire after Tanzimat and analyzes in what ways the society in the borderland acted against some of them. Although the narrative of reforms was informed by many provinces -including the eastern provinces of the empire- the case study will be the refusal to pay certain taxes in the Kosovo province. While other chapters will shed light on the different faces of the protests in the eastern parts of the Ottoman Empire, this chapter will focus on how the Ottoman society accepted paying some taxes while consciously rejecting to pay others. My aim is to explain how the administrative and fiscal reforms became the tools of the society for defending the customs.

The established wisdom among social scientists is to argue that different relations between the state and the masses had prevailed in the Empire over the centuries. Modern states formed in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, established immense domination over their subjects via their

infrastructural power. In Weber's words, "the modern state is a compulsory association that organizes domination."

[56] Yet, the attempt to dominate society has not only aimed to secure the coercion of the state; it also increased transitivity within social forces and classes. As Pierre Bourdieu says, nothing is more surprising than "how the minority governs the majority and how minorities give up their demands in the name of majorities."[57] According to him, the real issue is the lack of problematization of the legitimacy of the governments outside of emergency situations.[58] Bourdieu identifies the reason for this absence in the cultural reproduction of the dominant class via the institutions.[59] It implies well-organized modern states wherein the dominant class controls the society, creates policies to maintain its hegemony, and uses the education system to reproduce its elites. In states where the central power was weak, there was always a tension between social forces trying to gain more power to dominate others. Yet, this was not a simple zero-sum game. In this respect, the state is always something more than how Weber defined or Bourdieu classified it. Joel Migdal focuses on the *image* and *practices* to provide a more sophisticated definition of the state. He argues that despite states creating the image of a coherent, controlling organization in a territory, the actual practices of multiple actors neutralize this image, and for this reason, "the state is a contradictory entity that acts against itself."[60]

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56 H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Milss, eds., *From Max Weber*: Essays in Sociology, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 82.

57 Pierre Bourdieu, *Akademik Aklın Eleştirisi Pascalca Düşünme Çabaları* translated by Burcu Yalım (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2019), 211-212.

58 Ibid., 212.

59 Pierre Bourdieu, Jean-Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (London: Sage Publications, 1990), 54.

60 Joel Migdal, *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 17.

Ottoman studies focusing on the governance practices of the state have mainly fallen under the categories of studies that focused on the practices and the studies based on the image.[61]

In other words, instead of analyzing the practice and the image in singular coherent researches, historians tended to examine the state either by analyzing its image or through the practices of the multiple actors within it.[62] Without downplaying the importance of such studies, this chapter will attempt to re-write the narrative on the governance of the empire by focusing on the image and practices of the state together. This will be carried out through examining the eastern provinces, but some statistics from Balkan provinces will also be used. In this line of approach, the province of Erzurum and the province of Kosovo are among the most suitable regions to test how the state's image was organized and how multiple actors' practices neutralized state control in the region.

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61 For well-defined critics of this kind of historiography, see: Meltem Toksöz "Reform ve Yönetim: Devletten Topluma Merkezden Bölgeye Osmanlı Modernleşmesi" in *Tanzimat: Değişim Sürecinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu* edited by Halil İnalcık, Mehmet Seyitdanoğlu (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2017), 211-212; Yonca Köksal, *The Ottoman Empire in the Tanzimat Era: Provincial Perspectives from Ankara to Edirne*, particularly the Introduction.

62 I would like to mention two thought-provoking works on the image of the state and three influential studies on the practices of the state. For the image, see: Selim Deringil, *The Well Protected Domains: Ideology and Legitimation of the Power in the Ottoman Empire 1876-1909* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1999); Heather Ferguson, *Proper Order of Things, Language, Power, and Law in Ottoman Administrative Discourses* Stanford: (Stanford University Press, 2018). For the practices, see: Nadir Özbek, *İmparatorluğun Bedeli: Osmanlı'da Vergi, Siyaset ve Toplumsal Adalet (1839-1908)* (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2015); *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Sosyal Devlet: Siyaset, İktidar ve Meşruiyet 1876-1914* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları 2002). Noemi Levy-Aksu, *Osmanlı İstanbul'unda Asayiş 1879-1909* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2017); Michael E. Meeker, *A Nation of Empire: The Ottoman Legacy of Turkish Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002) For a fascinating example of a study on both the image and practice: Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

As Tolga Cora, Dzonavir Derderian, and Ali Sipahi have convincingly shown, the Ottoman East, which encompassed the area between the southern part of the eastern Black-Sea region and northern side of the province of Mosul, constitutes an epistemic void in late Ottoman historiography. This is because the society of the region, which was in the main free of the state control and which lived under tribal confederations until the mid-19th century, left fewer documents behind for historians to study.[63] However, even in the case of the 19th century, the Ottoman eastern borderland was mainly studied under the researches of ethnic tensions and the history of cities.[64] The provinces' daily dynamics and the urban networks between various classes and ethnic groups have been generally neglected. Despite the lack of studies on the practices of various actors in the region until recent decades, practices that aimed to forge an image of the state such as the creation of the Hamidian Light Cavalries,[65] and infrastructural investments like the Trabzon-Bayezid Road,[66] as well as the efforts of the revolutionaries, land and property questions and how the state reacted to them[67] have been among the best-studied subjects. These

63 Yaşar Tolga Cora, Dzovinar Derderian, Ali Sipahi, *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities, Politics* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 5.

64 The new generation of the Ottoman historians are tended to challenge this understanding by writing well-organized dissertations on the politics, culture and economy of the Ottoman East. It is my contention that some dissertations, written by Yaşar Tolga Cora, Samuel Dolbee, Yener Koç, Ali Sipahi and Uğur Bayraktar, are among a group of thought-provoking works and they need to be mentioned in a special footnote as acknowledgement of their efforts to write on the Ottoman East in a broader context.

65 Fulya Özkan, "A Road in Rebellion, A History on the Move: The Social History of the Trabzon-Bayezid Road and the Formation of the Modern State in the Late Ottoman World," Unpublished Ph.D dissertation in State University of New York at Binghamton, History Department, 2012.

66 Janet Klein, *The Margins in the Ottoman Tribal Zone: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011).

67 Uğur Bayraktar, "Yurtluk Ocaklıks: Land, Politics of Notables and Society in Ottoman Kurdistan 1820-1890," Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation in Ataturk Institute for Modern Turkish History & Centre d'Etudes Turques, Ottomanes, Balkaniques et Centrasiatiques in Boğaziçi University &Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 2015.

works shed light on the background of the Ottoman East in the 19th century and help to create a narrative on the image of the state and the practices of the multiple actors.

§ 2.2 Administrative Reform in Ottoman Provinces 1839-1876

The Tanzimat Edict (1839) was the most crucial milestone in creating a modern image of the state because through it the state did not only declare the intention to transform its fiscal relationship with its subjects but also reconfigured its relationship with the society by reforming its military, bureaucratic, educational, and legal apparatus. Although the Tanzimat period ended when Sultan Abdulhamid II dislocated the power of the Sublime Porte and the reform initiative shifted back to the Palace, the regime continued to develop its influence in the provinces by creating a centralized image in the region.

The reorganizations of the state had started with the edict of Gülhane in 1839. Under the direction of Grand Vizier Mustafa Reşid Pasha, new regulations were implemented. The Sultan declared that he would respect the law,[68] the state's law would apply to all communities of subjects without any privileges given to any religious or ethnic community, and the taxes would be replaced with a new, more appropriate tax.[69] The reform period continued with the declaration of the penal code (1840) that abolished all patronage relations by designating accepting gifts by officials a criminal act, the Reform Decree (1856) that provided equality between all subjects, the land code (1858) that guaranteed individual property and the provincial administration reforms of

68 Selim Deringil, *The Well Protected Domains*, 45.

69 Carter Findley, "Tanzimat" in *Cambridge History of Turkey, Volume IV Turkey in the Modern World* edited by Reşat Kasaba (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 18.

1864 and 1871. The period reached its zenit with the establishment of the first Ottoman central assembly in 1876.[70]

Among a wave of reforms to create a central state image, the conscription began under Mahmud II's reign,[71] the education system was reformed and new schools were erected. All of these reforms were the main symbols of a standardization of a way of living. The reforms were a clear manifestation of a particular line of thought: The Ottoman Empire had limited control over its territory, and the state was poor not because it lacked resources but because of the mismanagement of the provinces. The Empire lacked the infrastructure to govern the land efficiently. Hence, Tanzimat was an attempt to reconquer the state's land by creating a well-designed government with an assembly that was capable of managing the resources from the imperial central by operating infrastructural power.[72] Therefore, the Ottoman Empire created an image through which the Empire attempted to colonize the periphery, "transforming it into a fully governed, fiscally fertile zone"[73] by operating imperial projects such as modern roads and railroads, a telegraph system, institutions for surveillance and education and engaging in codifications to standardize the people's lives. In practice, most of these attempts remained a fantasy of the Imperial capital because the state has lacked the technology for effective

70 For a detailed account of Tanzimat reforms, see: Roderic Davison *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963).

71 Gültekin Yıldız, *Neferin Adı Yok: Zorunlu Askerliğe Geçiş Sürecinde Osmanlı Devleti'nde Siyaset Ordu ve Toplum (1826-1839)* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2009), 139.

72 Eugene Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire, Transjordan 1850-1921,* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 5.; Butrus Abu Manneh, "The Establishment and Dismantling of the Provinces of Syria 1865-1888," in *Problems of the Modern Middle East in the Historical Perspective: Essays in Honor of Albert Hourani,* edited by John Spagnolo (Beirut: Ithaca Press, 1992), 8-9.

73 James Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2009), 10. Timothy Mitchell's *Colonizing Egypt* is the perfect example of how this process was developed in Egypt during the 19th century.

implementation, and the various urban dynamics in the borderlands precluded the state from imposing an infrastructural power structure on society.[74] For example, in the context of the province of Kurdistan, eliminating the Kurdish notables known as *Mir* did not provide full control of the region by the state. Instead, *petty Kurdish Beys*, as Bayraktar called them, became new power-holders who strengthened their role in the urban centers.[75]

It is essential to underline that, the reform period did not start in the same year in all provinces. The Sublime Porte decided to practice reforms in the chosen provinces, which were closer to the center, and later enlarged the scope of reforms to the eastern and western frontiers and certain Arab provinces. The provinces where the reform packages were practiced were referred to as "core regions" (*Dahil-i Tanzimat)*. Different provinces became part of the core regions in different years. For instance, the reform package was promulgated in Erzurum and Diyarbakır provinces in 1845.[76] Among these reforms, the most important attempt was the changing of administrative roles in the provinces with the provincial reforms of 1864 and 1871.

After the provincial reform ushered in the rising power of the state in the Danube Province via the efforts by Midhad Pasha, the Sublime Porte decided to implement the Provincial Reform Law throughout most of the Ottoman

74 This new 'enclosure' of state is an explanation which I borrowed from James C. Scott and I have added to this, Michael Mann's terms known as 'despotic power' and 'infrastructural power' respectively. See, James C Scott. *The Art of Not Being Governed, An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia,* 10-11*;* Michael Mann. "The autonomous power of the state: its origins, mechanism and results" in *European Journal of Sociology,* vol 25 No 2, (1984): pp.185-213.

75 Uğur Bayraktar, "Yurtluk Ocaklıks: Land, Politics of Notables and Society in Ottoman Kurdistan 1820-1890," 180.

76 Cevdet Küçük, "Tanzimat Devrinde Erzurum'un Nüfus Durumu," in *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi no 7-8. (1976-77): 190; Bayraktar, "Yurtluk Ocaklıks: Land, Politcs of Notables and Society in Ottoman Kurdistan 1820-1890," 163, 179. Bayraktar rightly argues that the Tanzimat state became visible in the province of Kurdistan after the 1860s with the establishment of Tanzimat institutions.

provinces. The law was implemented first in Bosnia, Erzurum, and Damascus as the pilot lands on different margins of the Empire and was later implemented in most of the remaining provinces. Jun Akiba and Abdulhamit Kırmızı have shown that, after the implementation of the law in 1867, the provinces were classified either as "normal provinces" where the Provincial Reform Law was set or "privileged provinces" (*eyalet-i mümtaze)* as in the cases of Tunisia, Mount Lebanon and Bosnia where special autonomous administrations were preferred.[77] The law assumed its final form in 1871 with the announcement of *İdare-i Umumiyye-i Vilayet Nizamnamesi.*

Although the state's goal was to control the resources and subjects of its territories, the reform package did not provide a significant change in the status of the state in the borderlands. In theory, the land was divided into provinces *(vilayet)* led by a governor; sub-provinces *(liva/sancak)* that were governed by a *mutasarrıf;* districts *(kaza)* controlled by *a kaymakam;* and villages (*nahiye)* governed by a mudir, while a mukhtar commanded the smallest unit known as *karye*.[78] In practice, the creation of smaller provinces in which the governor ruled in the name of the Sultan resulted in rising conflicts between the urban coalitions and the new governors, because influential people of the region were able to capture local advisory councils.[79] The confrontations

77 Jun Akiba, "Preliminaries to a Comparative History of the Russian and Ottoman Empires: Perspectives from Ottoman Studies," in *Imperiology: From Empirical Knowledge to Discussing the Russian Empire,* ed. Kimitaka Matsuzato (Sappora: Slavic Research Center, 2007), 5; "The Local Councils as the Origin of the Parliamentary System in the Ottoman Empire," in *Development of Parliamentarism in the Modern Islamic World,* edited by Tsugitaka Sato (Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, 2009), 178-179. See also; Abdulhamit Kırmızı *Abdülhamid'in Valileri Osmanlı Vilayet İdaresi 1895-1908* (İstanbul: Klasik Yayınları, 2007), 28.

78 Abdulhamit Kırmızı, *Abdülhamid'in Valileri Osmanlı Vilayet İdaresi 1895-1908,* 31. The final version of administrative reform in the Ottoman East took its final form in line with the reform proposal of Ahmed Şakir Pasha after 1895.

79 Gökhan Çetinsaya, *The Ottoman Administration of Iraq 1890-1908* (London and NewYork: Routledge, 2006), 6; Meltem Toksöz, "Reform ve Yönetim: Devletten Topluma Merkezden Bölgeye Osmanlı Modernleşmesi" in *Tanzimat: Değişim Sürecinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu*,

between various social forces vying to control the power in urban centers had continued during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II on the Ottoman eastern and western provinces.

§ 2.3 Provincial Administration and Power Holders 1876-1908

The Provincial Reform Law was designed during the reign of Sultan Abdulaziz and was implemented in many provinces after 1864, but it was primarily practiced with some revisions during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II. Each of the Ottoman provinces was ruled by a governor appointed by the Imperial center. Governors were instructed to carry out the Empire's laws, they were responsible for maintaining public safety by exercising general supervision over the province, and for administering the police forces and the prisons.[80] A *mektubcu,* who was a principal secretary, provided communication between the province and the center, was also responsible for preparing an official annual. A *defterdar* who was the head of finance had the duty to make a list of capable officials for his bureau; and advisory administration councils whose members were partly elected and partly appointed were other vital bureaucrats in the provinces. The *Alaybeyi,* who commanded the gendarmes and the police forces, was the assistant of the governor but was directly responsible to the Minister of Police. Other posts included Vice-Governors, The Privy Purse, Justice, Land Records, Post and Telegraphs, Public Instruction, Religious Endowments, Customs, the Public Debt Administration

222. Even before the announcement of the Provincial Reform, there was a tension between officials who were sent from the center and the urban coalitions. For a fascinating example, see: Cengiz Kırlı, *Yolsuzluğun İcadı 1840 Ceza Kanunu, İktidar ve Bürokrasi* (İstanbul: Verita Yayınları, 2015).

80 F.O. 414/106 Lieutenant-Colonel Wilson to Mr. Gorschen. Inclosure in No: 270 Report on the Administration of Justice in Anatolia. (June 30, 1880)

and the Tobacco Régie.[81] For instance, according to a survey on the annual of Erzurum that was published in 1900, the governor, Mehmed Rauf Pasha, *the Naib*, Hayreddin Efendi, the vice-governor, İbrahim Selim Soha Efendi who belonged to the Greek Catholic population of the province, *the defterdar*, İbrahim Edhem Bey, and the *Mektubcu,* Ali Rıza Efendi constituted the core of the administration in the province. All of them were also appointed as members of the advisory council of the province. The *Mufti* Elhac Lütfullah Efendi*,* the *Marhasa of Catholics,* Karabet Efendi, and *The Marhasa of Armenian millet*, Zaven Efendi were among the other appointed members of the council. Akif and Ahmed Celil Beys were the elected Muslim members, whereas Artin and Zakar Efendi had been selected as the non-Muslim members of the board.[82]

Governors represented the Sultan in the region, and for this reason, the central bureaucracy showed great effort to assign the most qualified people to be the governors of the provinces. When a governor was appointed to the Ottoman East, he usually chose to take a tour of the province. The goal in this was not only to write reports on the provinces' social and economic conditions but also to understand the power relations for the purpose of providing efficient governance.[83] However, none of the governors achieved to practice the laws in the eastern provinces for longer than five years. Between 1895 and 1908, Erzurum and Bitlis knew five different governors, while six different

81 Çetinsaya, 15; Yakup Karataş, "Sultan II. Abdulhamid Döneminde Erzurum (Sosyal, Ekonomik, İdari ve Demografik Yapı)," Unpublished Ph.D dissertation in History Department of Social Sciences Institute at Ataturk University, 2010, 16-17.

82 Salname-i Vilayet-i Erzurum, 1900, 225. Compared to the members of the year 1897, 3 out of 4 elected members were different. In 1897, the Muslim elected members were Mehmed Derviş and Tevfik Bey and the non-Muslim elected members were Felbos and Artin Efendis. See; Karataş, "Sultan II. Abdulhamid Döneminde Erzurum (Sosyal, Ekonomik, İdari ve Demografik Yapı)" 20.

83 For examples of governor reports, see: BOA. DH.MUİ. 42/52, 7. Teşrinisani 1325 (December 20, 1909).; BOA. Y.MTV.222/116 20, Teşrinievvel 1317 (November 2, 1901).

governors were appointed to Mamuratulaziz and Van. Nine different governors led Diyarbakır, and the province of Mosul held the record because none of the governors achieved to occupy the governor's house for more than three years; it was governed by ten different governors between 1895 and 1908.[84] There were a variety of reasons behind the frequent change of governors. The most crucial problem was the clashes between the local notables, religious leaders, army commanders and the provincial governors.[85] In some cases, natural leaders of districts such as artisans, tribal chiefs, and religious leaders were more influential than Sultan Abdulhamid's governors. One of the most famous examples of this was the powerful chief Musto Katu who proclaimed himself governor, and the people chose to obey him instead of the official governor of the Sultan.[86] The provincial governors who were in the borderlands frequently stated that the regions' climatic conditions caused health problems and that for this reason, they inquired about the possibility of appointment to different province.[87] In most cases, this was just an excuse to conceal the weakness of the governors in the regions; because the central

84 Kırmızı, *Abdülhamid'in Valileri,* 68.

85 For an example of such clashes in the province of Diyarbakır, see: Abdülhamit Kırmızı "Kıbrıslı Halit Bey'in Diyarbakır Valiliği (1896-1902)" in *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Diyarbakır* edited by Bahaeddin Yediyıldız, Kerstin Tomenendal vol. 1, 265-275 (Ankara: Diyarbakır Valiliği Türk Kültürü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 2008)

86 S. Aslıhan Gürbüzel, "Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia (1878-1890)" Unpublished master thesis in Department of History, Bilkent University, Ankara, 2008, 58.

87 Kırmızı, *Abdülhamid'in Valileri,* 57. The most interesting example was the requests of Governor Rauf Pasha of Erzurum. First, he kindly asked his appointment to Hüdavendigar province because of the bad weather conditions has aggravated his rheumatism. When the Palace rejected his request, he asked about the possibility of his appointment to a coastal province. His request was rejected because he knew the local dynamics of Erzurum very well. In his third request, he offered to become General Inspector of *Anadolu Vilayeti Şahanesi* on condition to serve in Erzurum only during summers. For the documents, see: Muammer Demirel, *Sultan İkinci Abdülhamid ile Erzurum Vilayeti Arasındaki Yazışmalar (1894-1904* (İstanbul: Çamlıcam Basım Yayın, 2007), 77-133-167-177- 183.

power was weak in the borderlands.[88] For example, in the province of Monastır a bandit, Bilal Balanza had not refrained from issuing a threat to the governor of Monastır:

> *I am on the Ochridian Mountains, and am not afraid of you; come and attack me if you can: Kemal, you are Governor of the vilayet of Monastır in name only: the real one is myself. You are Governor only in Monastır, while I am Governor throughout the length and breadth of the vilayet.*[89]

Therefore, it was not possible to govern the provinces without acquiring the support of the local powerholders and religious leaders. As Yücel Terzibaşoğlu stated, the provincial councils' actual role went beyond what was defined in the law. In theory, the councils were responsible for recording the land, determining the amount of taxes, deciding how to use the province's income, and solving the land and property problems. In practice, these roles formed a political atmosphere where the artisans, religious leaders and tribal chiefs became key actors in the politics of the provinces because, on the one side, these people worked to protect their benefits, and on the other side, they were responsible for transmitting the demands of the locality to the center.[90] For example, Hamdi Özdiş mentions that an account of the Empire's image written based on the annuals and official reports did not cohere with the local

88 Martin Van Bruinessen states that by the mid-19th century "officially, Kurdistan was from then on ruled directly by Ottoman governors, -in practice, however, direct Ottoman rule was to prove very ineffective indeed. Near the cities, the governors had some power; nowhere did they have authority" See: Martin Van Bruinessen *Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan* (London: Zed Books, 1997), 176. Gürbüzel also underlines the same problems. See, Gürbüzel, "Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia (1878-1890)," 56.

89 The Times, September 12, 1887 "Brigandage in the Turkish Empire" 13.

90 Yücel Terzibaşoğlu, "Eleni Hatun'un Zeytin Bahçeleri: 19. Yüzyılda Anadolu'da Mülkiyet Hakları Nasıl İnşa Edildi?" in *Tarih ve Toplum - Yeni Yaklaşımlar,* volume 4, (2011): 137. Also see; Halil İnalcık, "Tanzimat'ın uygulanması ve sosyal tepkileri," 365; Yener Koç, "Nomadic Pastoral Tribes at the Intersection of the Ottoman, Persian and Russian Empires, (1820s-1890s)," Unpublished Ph.D dissertation in Boğaziçi University, History Department, 2020, 139.

practices. According to him, although the provincial councils were known as merely advisory councils, it had been difficult to choose someone for a seat without the powerholders' consent in the councils.[91] British Consul Lieutenant-Colonel Wilson described the councils as an organ "the members of which sought only to enrich themselves, and advance their own interests and those of their friends."[92]

Faced with such a situation, the governors worked to co-operate with some of the artisans, merchants and tribe leaders, and showed great respect towards religious leaders and the customs of the local populations.[93] For example, Governor-General of Yemen, Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha, banned the production and sale of alcohol throughout the province and ordered the provincial officers to adopt the dress code of the local *ulama*.[94] Without defining the local ulama as the imperial projects' partner by displays of great respect towards them and acceptance of their social status, it was exceedingly difficult to govern a city peacefully. The danger lurking in urban politics, in this context, was the potential cooperation of 'losers' against the people who were in the circle of a governor. In such conditions, the provinces' problem was not only a state-society clash but also the clashes between various actors vying to

91 Hamdi Özdiş, "Taşrada İktidar Mücadelesi: II. Abdulhamid Döneminde Trabzon Vilayetinde Eşraf, Siyaset ve Devlet (1876-1909)," Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation in History Department of Social Science Instıtute at Hacettepe University, 2008, 45.

92 F.O. 414/106 Lieutenant-Colonel Wilson to Mr. Gorschen. Inclosure in No: 270 Report on the Administration of Justice in Anatolia (June 30, 1880)

93 For instance, Meeker argues that most of the bureaucratic seats such as *kaimakam and mubaşir* in the province of Trabzon were under the control of the families known as district chiefs and valley lords. In this manner, local powerholders transformed themselves in Accord with Tanzimat reforms. See: Meeker, *A Nation of Empire: The Ottoman Legacy of Turkish Modernity,* 197. For the clashes between the local powerholders and the provincial governor in Trabzon, see: Meeker, 260. For a similar argument for the case of Eastern Anatolia, see: S. Aslıhan Gürbüzel, "Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia (1878-1890)," 53-54.

94 Thomas Kuehn, *Empire, Islam and the Politics of Difference: Ottoman Rule in Yemen 1849-1919* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 148.

gain more power. Another danger facing the governors of the provinces was the clashes within the state, among the officers who held seats in the provincial bureaucracy. Even though the governors held the highest bureaucratic seat in the provinces, certain other officials such as *defterdar* and *mufti* or the army commander were not under the umbrella of the governor. As Çetinsaya has shown, in the examples of Baghdad, Basra, and Mosul, a *defterdar* was "partly responsible to the Vali but chiefly responsible to the Ministry of Finance in Istanbul."[95] The army commanders in eastern provinces were organized under the commandership of the IV. Army.

On the other hand, the clerics were not only responsible towards Istanbul but were also natural leaders of the society via their links to the Nakshibandiyya Qadiri lodges. The mosques were under the control of religious leaders such as Mufti and Imams, therefore, they had considerable social status. Although Tanzimat reforms succeeded to sweep away a large share of the clergy with the establishment of The Ministry of Justice and The Ministry of Education,[96] the clerics did not lose their social status, because they either succeeded to become officers in the new institutions or they continued to control education and public space via unregistered madrasas and mosques in the urban centers. Sultan Abdulhamid II created new establishments like the Council of Sufi Sheiks *(Meclis-i Meşayih)* to centralize these lodges as the state had also tried with the establishment of the office of Sheik-ul Islam (*Bab-ı Meşihat)*. However, most of the Sufi Sheikhs did not choose to create close ties with the state bureaucracy.[97] As a result, the clerical notables' role in society and politics increased in the 19th century as it happened also in

95 Çetinsaya, *The Ottoman Administration of Iraq 1890-1908,* 16.

96 Nader Sohrabi, *Revolution and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 36.

97 Amit Bein, *Ottoman Ulema, Turkish Republic: Agents of Change and Guardians of Traditions* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 7-9.

Qajar Iran.[98] When the governors did not achieve cooperation with a *defterdar*, a *mufti* or an army commander, a clash was the inevitable result. Two critical examples describe the need for cooperation for peaceful governance in the provinces. When Emin Efendi, the former *defterdar* of the Trabzon province, was appointed to the Erzurum province in 1896, some city merchants protested this appointment during their visit to the governor. According to a well-known notable of the city, Emin Efendi was famous for his corruption in Trabzon. The governor Rauf Pasha sent a telegraph to the Imperial center after listening to the merchants' criticisms and asked about the possibility of sending another officer who was not known by the city's dignitaries because it could prove impossible to govern with a *defterdar* who had notoriety in the urban center.[99] Second, when Rauf Pasha failed to create a good relationship with Commander Mehmed Ali Pasha, he tried to eliminate his power in the urban center by working to banish his commanders. As the governor of Erzurum, Rauf Pasha had many problems with Zeki Pasha, who was the General of the IV. Army,[100] and for this reason, he was well aware of how his position could be in danger if he allowed a military officer to increase his influence in the city. Therefore, he criticized Commander Şevki Pasha, who

98 Unfortunately, the role of the clerics in local politcs in the context of Middle East was not studied well. The Ottoman Empire and Qajar Iran had many similarities in the rising power of the clerics and the changing understanding of the Islamic concepts such as *umma, shura and millet* in the late 18th and long 19th centuries. For Iran, see; Abbas Amanat, "The Age of Usuli Mujtahids" in *Iran A Modern History,* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2017); Said Amir Arjomand, *The Shadow of the God and the Hidden Imam: Religion, Political Order and Societal Change in Shi'ite Iran From the Beginning to 1890* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 229. There is only one exception: Nader Sohrabi, *Revolution and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran*, 20-21.

99 BOA. İ.ML. 18/29, 1. 8 Haziran 1312, (June 21, 1896); BOA. BEO 799/59916 10 Haziran 1312, (June 23, 1896); Demirel, *Sultan İkinci Abdülhamid ile Erzurum Vilayeti Arasındaki Yazışmalar (1894-1904)*, 41.

100 Demirel, *Sultan İkinci Abdülhamid ile Erzurum Vilayeti Arasındaki Yazışmalar (1894-1904)*, 72-73.

was working under Commander Mehmed Ali Pasha, by arguing that Şevki Pasha made speeches against Russians in the urban bazaar.[101] As seen in these examples, the conflict was not only in the state-society relationship but also expressed a fight within the bureaucracy and an inter-class conflict within the petty-bourgeoisie and clerical notables vying for more power.

§ 2.4 Reform in Taxes and Tax-Collection

The early modern era heralded the decrease in the rate of the tax revenues that were sent to the capital due first to the *iltizam* and then the *malikane* system. *Iltizam* was the selling of tax-farming rights with a fixed price for 1-3 years to a person who knew the region. During the 18th century, the *iltizam* system turned into *malikane* in which the people who had the right to collect taxes from the region broadened their rights to collect and control the tax revenues for their lifetime.[102] Intermediaries were not the only reason for the decrease in the tax income that reached to the center. The proliferation of waqf foundations was another cause. Ottoman society used the waqf system to spend the money for the localities, to guarantee who would be the next inheritor of a property, to protect it from the state intervention and to create a social patronage.[103] While the *iltizam* system aimed to increase agricultural production

101 Ibid., 186. "Binbaşı Şevki Efendi'nin çarşı pazarda bir taburla Petersburg'u fethederim, Rusları şöyle tepelerim, böyle ezerim yolunda sözler söyleyen…"

102 K. Kıvanç Karaman, Şevket Pamuk, "Ottoman State Finances in European Perspectives, 1500-1914" in *The Journal of Economic History* vol. 70 /3 (2010), 593-629, 602.

103 Three different types of waqf were created in the Ottoman Empire. These were waqf-ahli/dhurri (family waqf), waqf-khayri (charitable waqf) and waqf-mushterek (mixed waqf). See: Randi Deguilhem, "The Waqf in the City" in the *City in the Islamic World* ed by Salma Khadra Jayyusi, Renata Holod, Anitilia Petruccioli and André Raymond (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 929-956; Timur Kuran, *The Long Divergence, How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 110; Gabriel Baer, "The Waqf as a Prop for the Social System (Sixteenth-Twentieth Centuries) *Islamic Law and Society* vol. 4 No 3 (1997): 264-297; Kayhan Orbay classifies waqfs from different perspective. His

by ordering the *malikane* holder to provide credit for the peasants and to distribute seeds, it did not allow the central government to increase its tax revenues. The tax revenues that were sent to the capital did not increase much from the 16th to the end of the 18th century.[104] However, it is important to note that the decrease in the tax revenues sent to the center did not indicate a decline of the Ottoman Empire. Instead, Ottoman bureaucracy operated a new fiscal system that aimed to amalgamate the various local leaders to the Ottoman politics. This did not simply cause the dislocation of the central power in the provinces but rather led to the Ottomanization of the various political actors in the regions.[105]

When the Ottoman finance would face trouble, the Empire would operate policies such as the debasement of the money, the confiscation of Ayan's properties, borrowing from the local moneylenders, selling the taxable product for life-time and collecting extraordinary (*avarız*) taxes to transfer the surplus to the center.[106] Yet, most of these attempts did not amount to an effective fiscal policy for centralizing Ottoman finance until the late 19th century. Moreover, the obstacles such as difficult terrain, vast distances to the capital, low urbanization rates were the other reasons behind the state's fail to create a new fiscal system.[107]

The most important fiscal reform in the 19th century involved the transformation of the surplus of the provinces to the center. The central

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categorization includes cash waqfs, ordinary waqfs and imperial waqfs. See: Kayhan Orbay, "Imperial Waqfs within the Ottoman Waqf System" in *Endowment Studies* volume 1 (2017): 135-153, 138.

104 Nadir Özbek, *İmparatorluğun Bedeli: Osmanlı'da Vergi, Siyaset ve Toplumsal Adalet (1839-1908)* (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2015), 23.

105 Dina Rizk Khoury, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Devlet ve Taşra Toplumu: Musul 1540-1830* trans. By Ülkün Tansel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1999), 86.

106 For some of these policies such as *Esham* and external borrowing see: Yavuz Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesi'nde Bunalım ve Değişim* (İstanbul: Alan Yayıncılık, 1986), s. 79, 90.

107 Karaman and Pamuk, "Ottoman State Finances in European Perspective, 1500-1914", 59

bureaucracy investigated the basic obstacles faced by Ottoman finance. The problem was the stagnation in the collected taxes that were transferred to the center. As noted, the tax revenues of the central bureaucracy had not increased much from the late 16th century to the late 18th century. During these years, local *çiftlik* holders who controlled the *malikane* seized the surplus of the peasants instead of the central bureaucracy.[108] Hence, the centralization of the fiscal policy of the Empire provided the central bureaucracy a chance to collect a greater share of the collected taxes. As Nadir Özbek rightly noted, the total income of the central treasury increased fivefold between 1841/42 and 1911/12.[109] The statistics of the increasing revenues provided by Karaman and Pamuk also support this argument.[110] Although the aim of the center was to operate an efficient form of tax collection system that increased the tax rate of the urban society rather than the peasants, Tanzimat did not achieve to eliminate the yokes around the peasants' necks. Tanzimat abolished all taxes other than traditional taxes such as *A'şar* and *Ağnam,* as a radical solution and created a new tax that was called as *vergü.* This would be collected according to the wealth of the taxpayers.[111] Moreover, the Tanzimat bureaucrats first created the *Meclis-i Muhasebe-i Maliye* to decide on the new tax system and solve the conflicts that were to emerge during the tax collection. Then

108 Although the Gülhane Decree symbolizes a milestone for the reform period, attempts to eliminate the notables from the tax collection process had begun prior to the decree. For instance, Şevket Pamuk mentions the bureaucratic efforts to discard the Karaosmanoğlu family from tax collection in Western Anatolia in 1813. See: Şevket Pamuk, *Türkiye'nin 200 Yıllık İktisadi Tarihi: Büyüme, Kurumlar ve Bölüşüm* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2017), 129.

109 Nadir Özbek, "Tax Farming in the Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Empire: Institutional Backwardness or the Emergence of Modern Public Finance?" in *Journal of Interdiscciplinary History,* volume *XLIX* no 2 (2018): 219-245, 227.

110 Karaman and Pamuk, "Ottoman State Finances in European Perspective, 1500-1914", 622.

111 Coşkun Çakır, *Tanzimat Dönemi Osmanlı Maliyesi* (İstanbul, Küre Yayınları, 2001), 23.

Ministry of Finance *(Umur-u Maliye Nezareti)* had been established[112] and the first modern and well-organized state budgets were planned to this end during the mid-19th century.[113]

The wealth of the people would be determined after *muhassıls* recorded their cultivated land, properties and the animals. *Muhassıls,* who were the new tax collectors, were sent from the center, and they were also forbidden from claiming the provisions of the community as their needs.[114] They symbolized a new deal between the state and the society because the goal was to challenge the power relations in order to end the misdeeds in tax collection and to decrease the financial autonomy of the local power-holders.[115] Although the system was abolished before the Tanzimat reform managed to encompass the Ottoman borderlands, the Empire's goals survived. The central bureaucrats desired to create a new tax system that covered all men from villages to cities instead of giving privileges to the notables of the provinces. It is important to

112 Yavuz Cezar, *Osmanlı Maliyesi'nde Bunalım ve Değişim Dönemi.* (İstanbul: Alan Yayınları, 1986), 286; Abdüllatif Şener, "Tanzimat ve Osmanlı Maliyesi" in *Hacettepe Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi* vol. 6 no.2. (1990): 49.

113 Abdüllatif Şener, "Osmanlı Bütçeleri ve Bütçe Hakkının Ortaya Çıkışında Cumhuriyet Öncesi Gelişmeler" in *Tanzimat: Değişim Sürecinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu* ed. by Halil İnalcık and Mehmet Seyitdanlıoğlu (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2017), 747.

114 Despite many regulations, Tax-collectors continued to claim the provision of the community as their need. The following passage written by the missionaries of the region is an example from Van province. "The manner of collecting is quite great an outrage as the measure. The collector comes to the village with from one to ten zaptiehs... For days, and perhaps weeks, their horses must be fed and cared for, the sheep or chickens must be killed, even when there is food enough in the whole village to keep its population till harvest." Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (A.B.C.F.M) Unit 5: Item (ABC 16.9.7) Reel 703 Microfilm 386. Van, (December 24, 1905). It is also crucial to note that The Regulation for the Tax-Collectors who were employed in the Vilayet-i Sitte strictly forbid the assistance of *asakir-i zabtiye* during tax collection but many examples includes details about the role of *asakir-i zabtiye* in tax collection.

115 Cengiz Kırlı, *Yolsuzluğun İcadı 1840 Ceza Kanunu, İktidar ve Bürokrasi* (İstanbul: Verita Yayınları, 2015), 32.

underline that, as Nadir Özbek stated, decreasing the financial autonomy of the local power-holders did not include bypassing their joining the tax collection, instead "granting them positions in newly established local assemblies to coordinate the allocation and collection of taxes."[116] Attempts to collect immovable property tax and dividend tax were among such examples.[117] Despite huge expectations of the peasantry that tax collection would expand from the countryside to the cities, these attempts failed until the end of the 19th century.[118] Starting with the last quarter of the 19th century, state officials proposed detail reports to change tax-collection practices of the Empire in the provinces.

The most important change to tax-collection in the eastern provinces was designed after Ahmed Sakir Pasha visited the provinces and prepared a reform package in 1895.[119] When Ahmed Şakir Pasha presented the reform package for the Ottoman eastern provinces in 1896, he proposed to devolve the tax collection of the villages to the peasants who lived there instead of giving the rights to collect taxes to notables of the region. For this reason, he offered to place the tithe (*A'şar)* in a tender village by village tender and provide priorities for the villagers to win tenders.[120] As Tanzimat bureaucrats worked to

116 Özbek, "Tax Farming in the Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Empire: Institutional Backwardness or the Emergence of Modern Public Finance?", 233.

117 Alp Yücel Kaya, Yücel Terzibaşoğlu, "Tahrir'den Kadastro'ya: 1874 İstanbul Emlak Tahriri ve Vergisi 'Kadastro Tabir Olunur Tahrir-i Emlak' in *Tarih ve Toplum: Yeni Yaklaşımlar* 249, 9 (2009): 7-56, 13.

118 Kırlı, *Yolsuzluğun İcadı 1840 Ceza Kanunu, İktidar ve Bürokrasi*, 40.

119 For the power struggles over tax collection, see: Engin Deniz Akarlı, "The Problems of External Pressures, Power Struggles, and Budgetary Deficits in Ottoman Politics under Abdulhamid II (1876-1909): Origins and Solutions," Unpublished Ph.D dissertation in Princeton University, History Department 1976.

120 Nadir Özbek, *İmparatorluğun Bedeli: Osmanlı'da Vergi, Siyaset ve Toplumsal Adalet (1839-1908),* 75*;* Ali Karaca*, Anadolu Islahatı ve Ahmet Şakir Paşa 1838-1899* (İstanbul: Eren Yayınları, 1993), *222. "Aşar iltizam tarikiyle tahsil ve istifa edilecektir.* Toptan ihale-i aşar usulü mülga kalub, yerine karye be karye ahali namına *müzayede kaidesi vaz olunmuştur. Bir karye*

abolish the *iltizam* system, Şakir Pasha aimed to displace the role of *multezims* in the Ottoman East. However, as Nadir Özbek has shown, the percentage of the villages which achieved to eliminate *multezim*s were no higher than 20%.[121] Moreover, removing the *multezim* did not equate to providing justice during tax collection for the Ottoman East. For example, the report of Vice-Consul Heard clarifies the practice in the province of Bitlis in 1907. Heard argued that the *tithe* was formerly collected through *multezims in* the region, but a new *Irade* of the Sultan ordered it to be paid by the villagers themselves. He defines the situation in Muş as follows:

> *At first sight, this appears an admirable measure, as the irregularities of the "multezims" will thus be put a stop to. On examination, how ever, it will be seen that the incidence bears heavily on the majority of villages, where the number of farmers has steadily decreased during the last five years.*[122]

The Vice-Consul supported his arguments by researching on many villages of the province of Bitlis. According to him, while the number of inhabitants decreased year by year, the tithe amount did not decrease at the same level. The examples from the two villages, among many others, clarify the misdeed during the tax collection.

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aşarına talib zuhur etmez veyahut bedel-i layıkını bulmaz ise Aşar nizamnamesi mucibince emaneten idare olunur."

121 Özbek calculates the percentage of the villages which achieved to eliminate the powerholders by researching on approximately 10 thousand villages from 10 different provinces. He adds that the situation in the Ottoman East was not different. See: Özbek, *İmparatorluğun Bedeli,* 80-81.

122 F.O. 424/213 Inclosure in No. 95 Vice-Consul Heard to Sir N. O'Conor. Bitlis (August 16, 1907).

Table 2.4.1 The Village of Arkavank[123]

Year	Houses	Farmers	Tithes (Kurushes)
1903	53	50	12,000
1904	53	50	10,800
1905	10	7	8,700
1906	10	7	6,500
1907	10	6	9,500

Table 2.4.2 The Village of Erishter[124]

Year	Houses	Farmers	Tithes (Kurushes)
1903	60	60	15,000
1904	55	45	13,000
1905	35	30	12,000
1906	25	20	24,000
1907	21	7	19,000

Source: F.O. 424/213 Inclosure in No. 95

There were various reasons for the decreasing number of peasants, such as the raids by some Kurdish tribes and Circassians, the food shortage, a search for new jobs in the urban centers, the activities of Armenian revolutionaries, and emigration to abroad in search of a new life. Among them, the most crucial one was the failure of the Ottoman bureaucracy to solve the land and property questions of the region. The strong opposition of the Kurdish Beys and petty-notables in the region caused the oppression of the peasantry to continue, including Muslims and non-Muslims.

The opposition of the petty-notables to the change in the taxation system was not only related to the attempts to decrease the power of *multezims*. Indeed, during the last quarter of the 19th century, most of the lands were seized by notables, and peasants lost their limited property rights to the cultivated

123 Ibid. Arkavank is the former name of Umurca village of Hasköy in Muş. See: https://nisanyanmap.com/?y=arkavank&lv=&t=&u=1&ua=5

124 Ibid. Erishter is the former name of Eşmepınar village of Hasköy in Muş. See: https://nisanyanmap.com/?y=e%C5%9Fmep%C4%B1nar&lv=&t=&u=1&ua=5

land. For this reason, attempts to dislocate *multezim* were very distant to the historical facts of the region. According to Özbek's research, although the community in Van's province gained the right to collect their taxes, this was not a victory for the small peasantry because most of the cultivated land in the region was under the control of the tribal chiefs.[125] This process of this transformation in property relations lay behind the credit system between the peasants and the petty-notables of the urban centers.

The most common credit relationship between the peasants and the petty-notables, tribal chiefs of the region was called as *Selem*. It was widely used in Islamic *fiqh* to define the sale of a future product with a determined price.[126] When the peasants of the region needed cash to buy seed for their land, pay their taxes, or for their daily stay, they made a contract with the *Beys* and petty-notables, who were mostly merchants of the region. According to the contract known as *selem,* peasants sold their products before the harvest season at a determined price. The crucial point in the contract was the assumption of all risks by the seller.[127] If a peasant who signed a *selem* contract with a merchant did not provide enough product after the harvest season due to the conditions such as drought or a locust invasion, he had to pay the arrears with interest. In such a situation, "selemdarlık was a kind of usuary by which the peasants raise money to pay their taxes by mortgaging their crops or livestock."[128] Under the system, as the consuls observed, a *kile* of wheat was sold for around 30-40 kurushes, even though it would be worth at least 100 kurushes after the harvest. The profit of the purchaser was high enough to ruin peasants who contracted with them. Apart from the *selem* system, the

125 Özbek, *İmparatorluğun Bedeli,* 81.

126 Bilal Aybakan, "Selem" in TDV Islam Ansiklopedisi vol. 36, 402-405.

127 Tevfik Güran, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Zirai Kredi Politikasının Gelişmesi, 1840-1910" in *Uluslararası Midhat Paşa Semineri: Bildiriler ve Tartışmalar,* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1986), 102.

128 F.O. 424/213 Inclosure in No:95 Vice Consul Heard to Sir N.O'Conor. Bitlis (August 16, 1907).

Agricultural Bank also provided loans to the peasants of the Ottoman East. However, small peasants who cultivated the land lived far from the center, and they could not contact the Agricultural Bank whenever they desired. When they did manage to reach the bank, they had to assess the value of the land pledged as security at half the actual amount. In addition, consuls often accused the officers in the bank offices for being corrupt; people who would not process the applications without taking their own shares.[129] Hence, when the tax collectors came to the villages, the peasants were forced to apply to the *selemdars*. In 1907, Vice Council Heard listed thirty-two villages where the lands were in the hands of the *selemdars* most of whom were the notables of Muş.[130] Although the vice-consul of Bitlis mentioned that *selem* was introduced to the region by Circassian immigrants and adopted by local Kurdish Beys,[131] it was common practice not only in the region but also in the many provinces of the Empire even before the arrival of the new immigrants.[132] It

129 Ibid.

130 Ibid.

131 Mehmet Polatel, "Armenians and the Land Question in the Ottoman Empire, 1870-1914," Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation in Ataturk Institute For Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University, 2017, 137.

132 For a well-detailed account of *selem* practices in the Ottoman East, see: Dikran M. Kaligian, "The Agrarian Land Reform and the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire" in *The Armenian Review*, Volume 48 No 3-4 (2003): pp. 25-45. For the examples of the practice of selem in various parts of the Empire, see: Alp Yücel Kaya, "19. Yüzyıl İzmir'inde Tüccarlar ve Esnaflar veya 'Haciağalar', Beyler ve Frenkler" in *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Esnaf ve Ticaret* eds by Fatmagül Demirel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2012) pp.79-105. ; Kenneth M. Cuno, "Salam Contract and the Transformation of the Agricultural Sector in Ottoman Egypt" in *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* Vol. 61, Issue 4, (2006*)*: pp.925-940; Beshara Doumani "The Salam Contract and Urban-Rural Relations in Ottoman Palestine" in *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* Vol. 61, Issue 4, (2006): pp. 901-924*;Beshara Doumani, Rediscovering Palestine: Merchants and Peasants in Jabal Nablus 1700-1900,* chapter 4; Mehtap Özdeğer, Emine Zeytinli, "Ottoman Credit System and Usurers in Agriculture in the Nineteenth Century: Practices of Usury Contracts (Selem) in *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies,* vol. 21, Issue 5 (2019), pp. 549-612; Tevfik Güran "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Zirai Kredi Politikasının Gelişmesi, 1840-1910; Umut Gündoğdu "19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı

provided many advantages for the *selemdars*; because they achieved in keeping peasants permanently indebted and secured their potential incomes. Furthermore, as Atilla Aytekin stated, *selemdar* also used *selem contracts* as an opportunity to discipline the cultivators who had no choice but to obey the rules of them.[133]

Another crucial change to taxation was the introduction of new taxes on personal income and domestic animals. As the Ottoman Empire had been trying to eliminate the powerholders from the tax-collection process for at least a century, it had also been aiming to transform them into taxable subjects of the provinces. Among many such attempts during the Tanzimat period and the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II, the last institutional change was the introduction of these taxes; the Imperial bureaucracy announced that taxes would, from then on, be calculated according to the daily incomes and the number of domestic animals of the communities.

These efforts by the Ministry of Finance had symbolized the continuity in the financial reforms from *temettuat tax* to *personal income tax.* It was also in step with similar efforts in many European countries; many continental powers had introduced income-based taxes starting with the second half of the 19th century. After many attempts, a personal income tax system was permanently established in Great Britain in 1894, in Russia during World War I, and in Prussia in 1891.[134] The Ottoman Empire, first, worked to create a tax system based on the personal incomes of the communities in the selected

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İmparatorluğu'nda Kırsal Borçluluk Bağlamında Emek ve Mülkiyet İlişkilerinin Dönüşümü" Unpublished master thesis in Social Science Institute at Ege University, 2019.

133 Atilla Aytekin "Cultivators, Creditors and the State: Rural Indebtedness in the Nineteenth Century Ottoman Empire" in *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 35:2, (2008), 295.

134 For a well-detailed account of personal income tax in the Ottoman Empire and its European counterparts, see: Nadir Özbek, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Gelir Vergisi: 1903-1907 Tarihli Vergi-i Şahsi Uygulaması" in *Tarih ve Toplum, Yeni Yaklaşımlar* vol. 10 (2010): 43-81.

provinces during the war against Greece in 1897 and decided to create a permanent income tax on August 20, 1903.[135]

The regulation of personal income tax divided all men older than 18 years old in the Ottoman Empire into eight different categories based on their income. According to those categories, 50% percent of the taxpayers who were in the lowest income group needed to pay five kurushes, 20% of the taxpayers were required to pay ten kurushes, 12% were required to pay 20 kurushes, 8% had to pay 40 kurushes, 5% had to pay 60 kurushes, 2% needed to pay 80 kurushes and 2% were required to pay 100 kurushes. The last 1% needed to pay more than others depending on their income. The people at the lowest rung, blind people, the people who were older than 70 years old in the first and second categories, and the men in the military service were exempted from the tax payment.[136] The Empire aimed to collect one and a half million liras a year with the personal income/poll tax.[137]

Table 2.4.3 The Income Tax

Taxpayers	Income Tax (kurushes)	Taxpayers in 1%	Income Tax (kurushes)
50%	5	30%	150
20%	10	20%	200
12%	20	20%	300
8%	40	15%	400
5%	60	10%	500
2%	80	3%	75
2%	100	2%	1000
1%	150 to 1000		

Sources: *Vergi-i Şahsi Hakkında Nizamname, Article 3.*

135 Vergi-i Şahsi Hakkında Nizamname" *Düstur* 1. Tertib, c.7 pp.1064-1067. 7 Ağustos 1319, August 20, 1903.

136 Ibid., article 1-2.

137 F.O.424/205 No:101 Sir N. O. C'onor to the Marquess of Landsdoune (September 10,1903). The council wrote estimated numbers

The amount of the state expected from personal income tax was diminished to 811,500 liras in 1905, 511,500 liras in 1906 and only 150,000 liras for the budget of 1907.[138] The reasons for this decrease in the expected amount were not only the reactions of the population during the tax collections but also the changes in the regulation. The first group, who made up 50% of the total taxpayers, were exempted from the tax with the regulation of 1905. The 1905 regulation also announced that men between 20 and 70 years of age had to pay personal income tax, but the people who lived in the cities and districts while working as peasants, the students, and the religious leaders were exempted from the tax.[139]

The Ministry of Finance designed another tax too and announced it at the same time as the personal income tax. This was called the "domestic animal tax." The Empire aimed to collect taxes from domestic animals such as cows, oxen, horses, camels, and donkeys. Indeed, the Ottoman Empire had a cattle tax known as *ağnam* for centuries. Yet, the domestic animals were counted while the officials worked to collect *ağnam* tax in only some provinces. Most of the provincial administrations had not been succeeding in collecting any tax from the owners of these animals until 1903. For this reason, *ağnam* tax was known as the tax that was collected from sheep owners. According to the new tax regulation, the officers, who were also responsible for collecting *ağnam* tax, would collect ten kurushes for each cow, ox, horse, mare, little horse, camel, and mule. These animals' offspring, which were under two years old, would not be counted for taxation purposes. The owners of donkeys were ordered to pay three kurushes for each donkey as well.[140]

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138 Nadir Özbek, *İmparatorluğun Bedeli*, 120.

139 Vergi-i Şahsi Hakkında Ta'limat" *Düstur* 1. Tertib, c.8 pp.259-263. 6 Temmuz 1321 (July 19, 1905).

140 "Hayvanat-ı Ehliye Rüsumunun İhdasına Dair İrade-i Seniyye" *Düstur* 1. Tertib, c.7 pp.1060-1066. 6 Ağustos 1319 (August 19, 1903); Yakup Akkuş, "Osmanlı Taşra Maliyesinde Reform: Merkez-Taşra Arasındaki İdari-Mali İlişkiler ve Vilayet Bütçeleri (1864-1913),"

The announcement of these taxes created a domino effect of discomfort across the Ottoman society - especially among the urban people due to the economic conditions of the provinces. Society in the provinces of the eastern and western borderlands like Erzurum and Kosovo, as well as the people of Mosul and Basra showed a massive reaction against paying these taxes. The urban population of the cities on the Black-Sea coast where the artisans and merchants integrated themselves to the capitalist market system refused to pay as well. In a short time, the domestic animal tax and personal income tax turned into a symbol of misdeed in the provinces' governance, and the society used the reactions against these taxes as a tool to legitimize their opposition to the local and imperial government. Although Ottoman historiography defined all of these reactions as the tax revolts, the response to these new taxes was in fact only the yearning of society for partnership against a central government that aimed to dislocate them. In this sense, it was also a well-designed response of the petty-bourgeoisie, tribal chiefs, artisans, and peasants which manifested their authority by defining the limits of the state's infrastructural power in their provinces. Therefore, these reactions were not merely tax revolts or agitation of the revolutionaries but a politics of contention by the Ottoman provincial society. It should be underlined that there did not emerge an opposition and reaction against all taxes. The community rejected the new governmental apparatus that had taken decisions without people's consent, by reacting against the new taxes. At the same time, they continued to pay most other taxes that were known as *a'şar* (tithe) and *ağnam* (cattle tax).

The Acting Consul of Erzurum wrote that after only 20 days of the announcement of the domestic animal tax that, "considerable dissatisfaction is evident at the heavy taxation, the tax of 10 piastres per head on cattle and

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Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation in Social Sciences Institute of Economics Department at Istanbul University, 2011. 350; F.O. 424/205 Inclosure 1 in No:1118 Extract from the 'İkdam', (September 24, 1903).

horses falling especially hard on the peasant classes."[141] The consul in Trabzon also stated that "a villager seems willing enough to pay for himself five piastres a year but objects strongly to pay for his cow, horse, or mule 10 piasters a year."[142] Although the consul focused on the heavy taxation falling on the peasants, both of these taxes had also been targeting the urban population of the Empire. Among them, merchants and butchers who were prominent in the cattle trade, petty-notables known as *agniya* of the region, the contractors who provided goods for the army, and artisans and shop-owners mobilized the society of the region by activating their relations, because the taxes aimed to diminish their income. The first reactions occurred in the province of Kosovo and Monastır. The protestors mostly showed their discontent against the domestic animal tax in those regions because most of the population had been earning their living by raising cattle. However, most of the petitions sent from the region also aimed to abolish the military exempt tax and personal income tax. On the other hand, the protestors in the cities of Black Sea region directly focused on the personal income tax. The people of Kastamonu dislocated the governor, the secretary, and the treasurer from their seats. The community of Sinop forced the *mutasarrıf* of the city to leave the city.[143] The most important mass movement that will be analyzed next chapter had been held in Erzurum.

141 F.O.424/205 Inclosure 2 in No:1118 Acting Consul Hampson to Sir N. O'Conor, Erzurum (September 15, 1903).

142 Ibid. Inclosure in No: 144 Consul Longworth to Sir N. O'Conor, Trebizond (October 1, 1903).

143 F.O. 424/210 No:9 Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey, Constantinople (February 13, 1906).

§ 2.5 Difference in Image and Practice: Tax-Collection in Kosovo Province

The society did not only react by capturing the seats of the local bureaucracy and forcing them to leave the provinces.[144] The state did not achieve to create a well-designed tax collection system for the new taxes because the society refused to take the inventory of their property and to pay taxes. The statistics of the Kosovo province prove this situation. The officials in the province of Kosovo and Monastır worked hard to count the domestic animals to achieve efficient taxation. The Imperial center ordered the district governors to send the total amounts collected from their district month by month. For example, the *kaimakam of* Yenipazar stated that the domestic animal tax collected in the region, in a limited time, was 591 kurushes while the *ağnam* was 9,245 kurushes with other taxes, the total amount reached 23,082 kurushes and 15 paras. The *kaimakam* of Orhaniye mentioned that they achieved to collect 2,768 kurushes in the domestic animal taxes. In the Köprülü district, the accumulated amount of *ağnam* reached 10,577 kurushes, whereas the domestic animal tax was 8,528 kurushes for the year. The *kaymakam* added that they also collected 727 kurushes in arrears for the previous year.[145] An annual report and later petitions of the treasurer of Kosovo province indicated the difference between the image and the practice and how the society revealed its dissatisfaction with new taxes.

144 Depite this part of the dissertation aims to use financial statistics, there are many documents to follow the mass movements of people against taxation in Kosovo province. For examples, BOA.TFR.I.KV 154/15380; BOA.TFR.I.KV 155/15460; BOA. TFR.I.KV 156/15583; BOA.TFR.I.ŞKT 75/7450; BOA.TFR.I.ŞKT 75/7466; BOA. Y.MTV 284/121.

145 Almost all districts of the Kosovo Province prepared report on the amounts of collected taxes in 1904. See, BOA.TFR.I.KV. 84/8354, 281, 343-345 16 Mayıs 1320, (May 27, 1904).

The actual tax revenue in the province of Kosovo (except the domestic animal and personal income tax) was 41,917,113 kurushes in 1905.[146] When the amount of the domestic animal tax for 1904 was added, this rose to 43,826,585 kurushes. According to this account, the domestic animal tax amounted into 0,043% of the total actual taxes. The treasurer of Kosovo had prepared a list that showed the actual and expected figures for all revenues in the province for the years of 1905.[147] In the annual, the local bureaucracy calculated the possible amounts for each district in the province, however, as it will be seen, the actual collected amount was very different than the expectations.

The *vilayet* of Skopje was the center of the Kosovo province, and it had ten districts. The taxes of 1905 and 1906 had been collected in those districts without facing a massive backlash against taxation. One of the most important elements in the backgrounds of this success was the infrastructural power of the Empire. Skopje had the advantages compared to other cities of the province because it hosted the most important infrastructural developments such as the schools, military barracks, telegraph lines and trade routes. That is why tax collectors did not face great discontent in the community. However, while the government assumed it could collect *ağnam* and *canavar* taxes with a very little difference from the actual amount, it aimed to collect the hayvanat-*ı ehliye* tax with a minimum 7% difference between the actual and expected

146 Hilmi Bayraktar "Meşrutiyet Dönemi Kosova Vilayeti Mali Verileri Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme" *Muhasebe ve Finans Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi,* sayı. 10 (2016): 80.

147 BOA.TFR.I.KV.84/8390, 3 Mart 1321, (March 16, 1905). The treasurer defined amounts in three different categories as actual (*aslı)* expected to collect (*tahsili)* and difference (*bakaya).* Although *tahsili* means the taxes that were collected I took those numbers as to be 'expected to collect' because of two reasons. First, it was impossible to collect all taxes at the beginning of March because the tax season would only start in March and would continue until the end of August. Second, other reports sent by the treasurer later show the amount of taxes collected in the region and those numbers are quite different than those in this statistic. Most probably, the treasurer had prepared this list before the tax collection started.

amount. Furthermore, the government assumed it could collect the *A'şar* tax with a minimum 15,71% difference between the actual and expected amount, the difference for *emlak and akar* tax was 21,05% and it was 17,85% for the *temettü* tax. Besides, as the province was under international surveillance in those years, the difference between actual and expected military exemption taxes was %17,39 in the *vilayet.*[148]

Table 2.5.1 Selected Taxes in Skopje (1905)

	Ağnam (Small Cattle Tax)			Canavar (Tithe Pig)			Hayvanat-ı Ehliye (Domestic Animal)		
Skopje Vilayet	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference
(Üsküb) Skopje	500.000	450.000	50.000	22.000	17.000	5.000	220.000	200.000	20.000
İştib (Stip)	600.000	600.000	0	20.000	18.000	2.000	200.000	180.000	20.000
Köprülü	540.000	540.000	0	20.000	18.000	2.000	170.000	150.000	20.000
Kratova	400.000	400.000	0	20.000	18.000	2.000	110.000	100.000	10.000
Radovişte	250.000	250.000	0	7.000	7.000	0	70.000	68.000	2.000
Palanka	280.000	280.000	0	22.000	22.000	0	100.000	90.000	10.000
Kumanova	530.000	530.000	0	45.000	45.000	0	200.000	190.000	10.000
Koçana	375.000	375.000	0	20.000	20.000	0	150.000	145.000	5.000
Osmaniye	450.000	450.000	0	24.000	24.000	0	170.000	160.000	10.000
Orhaniye	23.000	18.000	5.000	0	0	0	15.000	12.000	3.000
Total	**3.948.000**	**3.893.000**	**55.000**	**200.000**	**189.000**	**11.000**	**1.405.000**	**1.295.000**	**110.000**
%			**1,39%**			**5,50%**			**7,83%**
	Emlak ve Akar (Property Tax)			**Temettü (Income Tax)**			**A'şar (Tithe)**		
Skopje Vilayet	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference
(Üsküb) Skopje	870.000	700.000	170.000	250.000	170.000	80.000	1.600.000	1.400.000	200.000
İştib (Stip)	560.000	440.000	120.000	140.000	100.000	40.000	2.000.000	1.750.000	250.000
Köprülü	380.000	260.000	120.000	250.000	220.000	30.000	1.700.000	1.400.000	300.000
Kratova	200.000	150.000	50.000	75.000	70.000	5.000	650.000	550.000	100.000
Radovişte	180.000	150.000	30.000	45.000	37.000	8.000	520.000	400.000	120.000
Palanka	220.000	200.000	20.000	85.000	80.000	5.000	480.000	390.000	90.000
Kumanova	500.000	400.000	100.000	70.000	60.000	10.000	2.000.000	1.670.000	330.000
Koçana	380.000	300.000	80.000	100.000	90.000	10.000	130.000	105.000	25.000
Osmaniye	300.000	235.000	65.000	80.000	73.000	7.000	700.000	580.000	120.000
Orhaniye	26.000	20.000	6.000	6.000	4.500	1.500	73.000	60.000	13.000
Total	**3.616.000**	**2.855.000**	**761.000**	**1.101.000**	**904.500**	**196.500**	**9.853.000**	**8.305.000**	**1.548.000**
%			21,05%			17,85%			15,71%

Source: BOA.TFR.I.KV. 84/8390

As seen in the table, the actual amount from *ağnam* was 3,948,000 kurushes, while the tax-collectors aimed to collect 3,893,000 kurushes. The difference was only 55,000 kurushes, equal to 1.39% of the actual amount. Compared to other taxes, it was clear that the tax collectors assumed to create a perfect harmony with the taxpayers. The *Canavar* tax that was collected from the pig-

148 I did not add the statistics for the military exemption revenues because the tables cover the taxes. However, the actual number for military exemption was 8,473,728 kurushes while the expected amount was 6,999,679 kurushes and the difference was 1,474,049 kurushes.

owners had also been aimed to be harmonious. When it came to the *hayvanat-ı ehliye,* however, the tax collectors assumed it would reach only 1,295,000 kurushes out of 1,405,000. That difference was equal to 7.8% of the actual amount. Among the taxes on animal owners, the *hayvanat-ı ehliye* was the most difficult to collect from the animal owners. Furthermore, the tax collectors expected to collect *A'şar* with a 15,71% difference between the actual and expected amount. Although the percentage of difference was higher, the expectation of tax collectors was normal because the total amount of *A'şar* was the highest. On the other hand, the collectors did not expect to collect taxes in a perfect harmony when the cases were the taxes collected from the urban people. The difference for *emlak ve akar* taxes was 761,000 kurushes, equal to 21,05% and it was 196,500 kurushes for *temettü* tax, equal to 17,85%

Table 2.5.2 Selected Taxes in Pristine (1904)

	Ağnam (Small Cattle Tax)			Canavar (Tithe Pig)			Hayvanat-ı Ehliye (Domestic Animal)		
Priştine Vilayet	**Actual**	**Expected**	**Difference**	**Actual**	**Expected**	**Difference**	**Actual**	**Expected**	**Difference**
Priştine	500.000	450.000	50.000	22.000	17.000	5.000	220.000	200.000	20.000
Preşova	415.000	415.000	0	71.000	71.000	0	170.000	140.000	30.000
Gilan	432.000	432.000	0	29.000	29.000	0	135.000	95.000	40.000
Vulçitrin	137.000	137.000	0	2.000	2.000	0	47.000	30.000	17.000
Mitroviçe	68.000	68.000	0	1.000	1.000	0	27.000	17.000	10.000
Yenipazar	110.000	110.000	0	1.000	1.000	0	135.000	100.000	35.000
Total	**1.662.000**	**1.612.000**	**50.000**	**126.000**	**121.000**	**5.000**	**734.000**	**582.000**	**152.000**
%			**3,01%**			**3,97%**			**20,71%**
	Emlak ve Akar Vergisi (Property Tax)			**Temettü (Income Tax)**			**A'şar (Tithe)**		
Priştine Vilayet	**Actual**	**Expected**	**Difference**	**Actual**	**Expected**	**Difference**	**Actual**	**Expected**	**Difference**
Priştine	470.000	375.000	95.000	53.000	43.000	10.000	1.950.000	1.580.000	370.000
Preşova	262.000	200.000	62.000	32.000	26.000	6.000	1.070.000	870.000	200.000
Gilan	312.000	247.000	65.000	14.000	12.000	2.000	1.540.000	1.240.000	300.000
Vulçitrin	183.000	140.000	43.000	7.000	5.000	2.000	1.200.000	1.000.000	200.000
Mitroviçe	117.000	94.000	23.000	26.000	21.000	5.000	330.000	265.000	65.000
Yenipazar	207.000	165.000	42.000	20.000	16.000	4.000	725.000	585.000	140.000
Total	**1.551.000**	**1.221.000**	**330.000**	**152.000**	**123.000**	**29.000**	**6.815.000**	**5.540.000**	**1.275.000**
%			**21,28%**			**19,08%**			**18,71%**

Source: BOA.TFR.I.KV. 84/8390

The vilayet of Prishtine showed a massive reaction to the new taxes. The communities of all districts sent petitions calling for the abolishment of the taxes ans mounted demonstrations. They also did not hesitate to attack tax

collectors and dislocate the local officers.[149] The reactions mostly occurred in Mitroviçe and Yenipazar. However, as it was the case in the vilayet of Skopje, the officials did not anticipate significant differences between the actual and expected amounts of *ağnam* and *canavar*. The discrepancy between the actual and expected taxes did not reach 4%. On the other hand, the officials were well aware of the reactions in the districts, and for this reason, they anticipated huge differences in *hayvanat-ı ehliye* and military exemption revenues. 20% of *hayvanat-ı ehliye* tax and 19% of military exemption were presumed not to be collectable. The percentages were the highest within the province: The officials anticipated leaving 37% of *hayvanat-ı ehliye in* Mitroviçe and 25% of the same in Yenipazar on the table. Furthermore, the expected amount of 467,000 kurushes in 1904 did not reach the desired amount of the previous year which was 531,835 kurushes.[150] On the other hand, the tax collectors did not assume to collect the property tax and *temettü* tax with a minimum difference as it happened in Skopje. The difference between the actual and expected amounts were around *hayvanat-ı ehliye.*

149 BOA.TFR.I.KV. 154/15380, 11 Şubat 1322, (February 14, 1907). The protests in various districts of the province started with the announcement of the new taxes and continued until the abolishment of the taxes, dislocation of the *kaimakams* and treasurers and many other local officers. The document constitutes only one example from Yenipazar and Mitroviçe.

150 BOA.TFR.I.KV. 84/8390, 3 Mart 1321, (March 16, 1905). The most crucial point was that the annual report of the treasurer for the year of 1905 did not include the taxes in the vilayet for 1905. While he had been reporting up-to-date the amounts of 1905 for the other vilayats, he wrote down the amounts of 1904 for Priştine. Furthermore, when he reported *ağnam* and *hayvanat-ı ehliye* for the years of 1905 and 1906 in the selected vilayets of the province he provided the statistics for *ağnam* but he did not provide any record that would prove that the Empire achieved to collect *hayvanat-ı ehliye* in all districts of Priştine for the year of 1905. See, BOA. TFR.I. KV. 148/14762, 22 Teşrinisani 1322, (December 5, 1906).

Table 2.5.3 Selected Taxes in Seniçe (1905)

	Ağnam (Small Cattle)			Canavar (Tithe Pig)			Hayvanat-ı Ehliye (Domestic Animal)		
Seniçe Vilayet	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference
Seniçe	160.447	154.947	5.500	0	0	0	199.293	177.293	22.000
Akva	46.722	46.722	0	0	0	0	45.583	45.583	0
Yenivaroş	52.307	52.307	0	370	370	0	47.073	45.073	2.000
Kolaşin	68.992	61.492	7.500	0	0	0	14.840	8.840	6.000
Total	**328.468**	**315.468**	**13.000**	**370**	**370**	**0**	**306.789**	**276.789**	**30.000**
%			**3,96%**						**9,78%**
	Emlak ve Akar Vergisi (Property Tax)			Temettü (Income Tax)			A'şar (Tithe)		
	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference
Seniçe	134.031	110.031	24.000	13.275	12.275	1.000	603.750	521.750	82.000
Akva	119.272	92.272	27.000	3.482	2.982	500	338.104	268.104	70.000
Yenivaroş	39.929	33.929	6.000	3.457	2.957	500	182.415	142.415	40.000
Kolaşin	45.572	25.572	20.000	0	0	0	101.390	89.390	12.000
Total	**338.804**	**261.804**	**77.000**	**20.214**	**18.214**	**2.000**	**1.225.659**	**1.021.659**	**204.000**
%			**22,73%**			**9,89%**			**16,64%**

Source: BOA.TFR.I.KV. 84/8390

The actual amounts for *hayvanat-ı ehliye* were counted 4,000 kurushes more than in 1903. *Bedel-i askeriye* was estimated 4,335 kurushes higher than in 1903 as well. However, the expected amounts were lower than the actual amounts of the previous years. The tax collectors aimed to get 276,789 kurushes for 1905, whereas the actual amount of 1903 was 302,789 kurushes. Similarly, the expected amount of *bedeli askeriye* was 336,179 kurushes, whereas the actual amount of 1903 was 452,844. In other words, while the actual numbers were rising, the expected amounts decreased due to various problems. Among these problems, the most important one was the reaction of the society to the new taxes.[151]

151 Akkuş, "Osmanlı Taşra Maliyesinde Reform: Merkez-Taşra Arasındaki İdari-Mali İlişkiler ve Vilayet Bütçeleri (1864-1913)," 321.

Table 2.5.4 Selected Taxes in Taşlıca (1905)

	Ağnam (Small Cattle)			Canavar (Tithe Pig)			Hayvanat-ı Ehliye (Domestic Animal)		
Taşlıca Vilayet	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference
Taşlıca	209.435	203.020	6.415	3.090	2.500	590	4.000	4.000	0
Prepol	116.390	116.390	0	1.410	1.310	100	0	0	0
Total	**325.825**	**319.410**	**6.415**	**4.500**	**3.810**	**690**	**4.000**	**4.000**	**0**
%			**1,97%**			**15,33%**			
	Emlak ve Akar Vergisi (Property Tax)			Temettü (Income Tax)			A'şar (Tithe)		
Taşlıca Vilayet	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference
Taşlıca	163.000	140.000	23.000	29.128	25.128	4.000	510.000	480.000	30.000
Prepol	93.000	80.000	13.000	7.335	6.500	835	402.278	385.000	17.278
Total	**256.000**	**220.000**	**36.000**	**36.463**	**31.628**	**4.835**	**912.278**	**865.000**	**47.278**
%			**14,06%**			**13,26%**			**5,18%**

Source: BOA.TFR.I.KV. 84/8390

Table 2.5.5 Selected Taxes in İpek (1905)

	Ağnam (Small Cattle Tax)			Canavar (Tithe Pig)			Hayvanat-ı Ehliye (Domestic Animal)		
İpek Vilayet	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference
İpek	85.000	42.000	43.000	8.000	6.000	2.000	0	0	0
Brana	52.000	47.000	5.000	7.000	5.000	2.000	0	0	0
Gosina	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tergovişte	32.000	28.000	4.000	0	0	0	26.000	19.000	7.000
Yakova	100.000	10.000	90.000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**269.000**	**127.000**	**142.000**	**15.000**	**11.000**	**4.000**	**26.000**	**19.000**	**7.000**
%			**52,79%**			**26,67%**			**26,92%**
	Emlak ve Akar Vergisi (Property Tax)			Temettü (Income Tax)			A'şar (Tithe)		
İpek Vilayet	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference
İpek	160.000	80.000	80.000	12.000	6.000	6.000	840.000	600.000	240.000
Brana	11.500	8.000	3.500	0		0	180.000	130.000	50.000
Gosina	10.000	2.000	8.000	0	0	0	60.000	30.000	30.000
Tergovişte	75.000	35.000	40.000	0	0	0	150.000	110.000	40.000
Yakova	140.000	40.000	100.000	5.000	2.500	2.500	550.000	320.000	230.000
Total	**396.500**	**165.000**	**231.500**	**17.000**	**8.500**	**8.500**	**1.780.000**	**1.190.000**	**590.000**
%			**58,39%**			**50,00%**			**33,15%**

Source: BOA.TFR.I.KV. 84/8390

Table 2.5.6 Selected Taxes in Prizren (1905)

	Ağnam (Small Cattle Tax)			Canavar (Tithe Pig)			Hayvanat-ı Ehliye (Domestic Animal)		
Prizren Vilayet	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference
Prizren	217.179	125.000	92.179	3.200	2.500	700	0	0	0
Kalkandelen	243.145	215.000	28.145	43.150	41.000	2.150	152.437	130.000	22.437
Gostivar	136.813	130.000	6.813	3.250	2.100	1.150	83.862	80.000	3.862
Luma	45.054	10.000	35.054	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**642.191**	**480.000**	**162.191**	**49.600**	**45.600**	**4.000**	**236.299**	**210.000**	**26.299**
%			**25,26%**			**8,06%**			**11,13%**
	Emlak ve Akar Vergisi (Property Tax)			Temettü (Income Tax)			A'şar (Tithe)		
Prizren Vilayet	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference
Prizren	567.894	358.000	209.894	39.797	39.797	0	1.122.313	980.000	142.313
Kalkandelen	456.783	385.000	71.783	20.235	20.235	0	1.329.451	920.000	409.451
Gostivar	169.792	112.000	57.792	0	0	0	617.449	211.000	406.449
Luma	77.777	25.000	52.777	0	0	0	71.570	50.000	21.570
Total	**1.272.246**	**880.000**	**392.246**	**60.032**	**60.032**	**0**	**3.140.783**	**2.161.000**	**979.783**
%			**30,83%**						**31,20%**

Source: BOA.TFR.I.KV. 84/8390

The differences between actual and expected amounts of *ağnam, emlak ve akar and a'şar* taxes were the highest in İpek and Prizrin. The collectors assumed that the state was not capable to collect more than 50% of the most taxes in İpek. The situation was similar in Prizrin. The state officials only assumed to get around 70% of the actual amounts. Furthermore, the districts in Taşlıca and İpek provided evidence of another problem that the tax collector faced in the region. As seen in the table, many districts did not allow the counting for the purpose of new taxes. Hence, the officials did not have the actual and expected amounts for those places. Among the districts of the İpek vilayet, the officials achieved to calculate the amounts only in the İpek district. In light of this, it is possible to argue that the difference between the actual amount and the collected taxes were higher than the official's expectations. The example of Taşlıca attests to this argument. While the actual number for Taşlıca had reached 65,260 kurushes in 1903, the exact number was assumed to be only 4,000 kurushes in 1905.[152] The case of Prizren and Luma were examples unique to the province. Because the total actual and expected numbers for 1903 and 1905 were the same, it was evident that the communities of Luma and Prizren did not allow the tax collectors to do the counting for and collecting of the *hayvanat-ı ehliye* from the very beginning.[153]

152 BOA.TFR.I.KV. 84/8390, 3 Mart 1321, (March 16, 1905).

153 Ibid. The amount for 1903 was 236,005 kurushes.

Table 2.5.7. Selected Taxes in the Province of Kosovo (1905)

	Ağnam (Small Cattle Tax)			Canavar (Tithe Pig)			Hayvanat-ı Ehliye (Domestic Animal)		
Kosova Vilayat	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference
Üsküb	3.948.000	3.893.000	55.000	200.000	189.000	11.000	1.405.000	1.300.000	105.000
Priştine	1.477.000	1.477.000	0	115.000	115.000	0	639.000	467.000	172.000
Seniçe	328.470	315.470	13.000	370	370	0	306.789	276.789	30.000
Taşlıca	325.825	319.410	6.415	4.500	3.810	690	4.000	4.000	0
İpek	269.000	127.000	142.000	15.000	11.000	4.000	26.000	19.000	7.000
Prizren	642.191	480.000	162.191	49.600	45.600	4.000	236.299	210.000	26.299
Total	**6.990.486**	**6.611.880**	**378.606**	**384.470**	**364.780**	**19.690**	**2.617.088**	**2.276.789**	**340.299**
%			**5,42%**			**5,12%**			**13,00%**
	Emlak ve Akar Vergisi (Property Tax)			**Temettü (Income Tax)**			**A'şar (Tithe)**		
Kosova Vilayat	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference	Actual	Expected	Difference
Üsküb	3.616.000	2.855.000	761.000	1.101.000	904.500	196.500	11.023.000	9.250.000	1.773.000
Priştine	1.551.000	1.221.000	330.000	152.000	123.000	29.000	6.815.000	5.540.000	1.275.000
Seniçe	338.804	261.804	77.000	20.215	18.215	2.000	1.225.660	1.021.660	204.000
Taşlıca	256.000	220.000	36.000	36.463	31.628	4.835	912.278	865.000	47.278
İpek	396.500	165.000	231.500	17.000	8.500	8.500	1.780.000	1.190.000	590.000
Prizren	1.272.246	880.000	392.246	60.032	60.032	0	3.140.781	2.161.000	979.781
Total	**7.430.550**	**5.602.804**	**1.827.746**	**1.386.710**	**1.145.875**	**240.835**	**24.896.719**	**20.027.660**	**4.869.059**
%			**24,60%**			**17,37%**			**19,56%**

Source: BOA.TFR.I.KV. 84/8390

Under such circumstances, the government in Kosovo assumed a %13 loss in *hayvanat-ı ehliye,* 24,6% loss in *emlak ve akar* and 17,37% loss in *temettü* taxes. It is important to note that, the difference between actual and expected amounts for *A'şar* was also 19,56%. The officials expected to collect 2,276,789 kurushes for *hayvanat-ı ehliye,* whereas the actual number for 1903 was 2,883,429 kurushes. Yet, the collected taxes for the year offer an alternative reading of all these tables. On October 14, 1906, the treasurer of Monastır, Salonica, and Kosovo revised the actual amounts of *hayvanat-ı ehliye.* They also reported the amount of collected *hayvanat-ı ehliye tax* for 1905. Rıfat Bey, who was the treasurer of Salonica, noted that even though the actual amount was 3,008,421 kurushes, they achieved to collect 933,470 kurushes for the year 1905 and 263,628 kurushes for the liabilities from previous years. The total collected amount was 1,197,098 kurushes, and the deficit reached 1,811,360 kurushes.[154] The treasurer of Kosovo Province, Sabit Bey, revised the actual number from 2,617,088 kurushes as reported in the annual to 2,137,631 kurushes. He reported that the officials achieved to collect 947,560 kurushes for the year and 160,102 kurushes for the liabilities from

154 BOA. TFR.I.UM. 15/1426, 1. 1 Teşrinievvel 1322, (October 14, 1906)

previous years. He also added that the tax collectors succeeded in collecting 61,956 kurushes later. In sum, the total collected amount was 1,169,618, while the deficit was 968,013 kurushes.[155] Zihni Bey, who was the treasurer of Monastır, reported that they succeeded in collecting 761,192 kurushes, whereas the actual amount was 1,718,432 kurushes. Among the collected amount, 204,082 kurushes belonged to the tax of the year, and 57,710 kurushes were collected for the liabilities from previous years.[156]

The reports make it clear that the difference between the actual numbers and the collected amounts reached astronomic levels. While the treasurer had assumed a 13% difference in *hayvanat-ı ehliye* before the tax collection, when the tax collectors finished their job, the difference between the revised actual amount and the collected amount was %45. The discrepancy reached %55 in the Salonica province and 60% in the province of Monastır. It should also be underlined that as in the cases of the military exemption tax and the domestic animal tax, the personal income tax (vergi-i şahsi) also caused great distress in the society, as mentioned. Yet, the annual of the financial department in the province of Kosovo did not provide any statistics about the personal income tax. In addition, the treasurers recalculated the amounts when the central bureaucracy announced certain changes in the domestic animal tax. The Empire declared that a pair of cattle used for agriculture and the animals used for the needs of municipalities would be exempted from taxation.[157]

When the treasurer of Kosovo prepared another list to report the *hayvanat-ı ehliye* and *ağnam* taxes of the province in 1905 and 1906, he did not only revise the actual amount in accordance with the inventory of 1905 but also reported the actual amounts (*tadad olan*) for the years of 1906. It is highly noteworthy that the treasurer reported the amounts for *ağnam* in many districts of the provinces while for the *hayvanat-ı ehliye,* he only mentioned the

155 Ibid., 2.

156 Ibid., 3.

157 BOA. İ.KAN. 3/1322, 17 Kanunuevvel 1320, (December 30, 1904).

districts of Skopje and some others. The tax collectors had failed to determine the taxpayers and the amounts due in districts such as İpek, Yenipazar, Mitroviçe, Luma and Brana, where the people organized demonstrations against not only taxes but also the governance practices of the Empire.

Table 2.5.8. Domestic Animal Tax in Selected Districts (Kurushes)

District	1905 (1321)	1906 (1322)	Difference
Yenivaroş	50,438	47,350	-3088 (-3082)
Kalkandelen	145,347	136,633	-8,741
Yakova?	195,785	183,983	-11802 (-11796)
Preşova	120,061	102,994	-17067 (-20,067)
Akva	41,029	32,753	-8,276 (-8,714)
İştib	181,761	151,743	-30,018
Köprülü	137,781	118,832	-18,949 (-18149)
Kratova	87,593	76,187	-11,406 (-11409)
Radovişta	58,958	56,621	-2,337
Palanka	76,799	66,855	-9944 (-9949)
Koçana	167,077	141,499	-25,584
Kumanova	127,158	116,372	-10,786 (-17,186)
Osmaniye	135,008	108,773	-26,235
Üsküb	178,454	150,098	-28,356
Orhaniye	12,292	10,522	-1,770 (-1772)
Gostivar	82,273	83,615	+1342
Seniçe	148,367	137,132	-11,235
Total	**1,946,181**	**1,721,962**	**224,252**

Source: BOA.TFR.I.KV. 148/14762. 23 Teşrinisani 1322 / December 6, 1906. [158]

158 The differences presented parenthetically in the table, were written by the treasurer. Moreover, the amounts were different than the annual records of the treasurer provided in table 2.1. I accepted the numbers to be revisions of the annual report.

§ 2.6 Conclusion

The relationship between the local intermediaries such as artisans, tribal chiefs and religious leaders of the cities on one side, and the state bureaucracy on the other, had changed in various ways over the long 19th century. The workers and farmers who made up the subaltern sections of the provinces sought the help of the central authority when they faced a threat by artisans and religious leaders, but they also co-operated with these same groups of people when they desired to increase their influence in the cities. The notables of the provinces, on the other hand, endeavored to become the partner of the Empire during the promulgation of reforms, but they also did not hesitate to engage in inter-class conflicts among each other. All actors insisted on defining the limits of the infrastructural power of the state over their daily lives.[159] The actors on the Empire's margins did not simply act against the government's imperial projects. They fought to save their established rights or worked to acquire more power while the state instituted centralist reforms in the provinces. As the administrative reforms opened new spaces for the powerholders of the urban centers to contest in, the fiscal arena came to dominate the politics of provinces as well.

The state's attempts to govern the borderlands can be classified according to three different dimensions. First, the government worked to increase individualization by breaking the tribal bonds; second, it attempted to create commercial ties through developing trade activities and defining the private property with the land code of 1858; and third, the institutionalization in the

159 Among the many examples, for a fascinating one that involved the competition for bureaucratic positions, inter-class conflict, taxation and property problems of the peasants, see: Martha Mundy, Richard Saumarez Smith, *Governing Property, Making the Modern State: Law, Administration and Production in Ottoman Syria* (London-New York: I. B. Tauris, 2007), 80-96.

provinces aimed to make people into loyal subjects of central rule.[160] However, as mentioned, most of these infrastructural attempts had failed in the Ottoman east and west until the late 19th century. In such a position, the margins of the Empire provided many advantages for some of the actors in the provinces. Within a context of limited state authority, customs that were based on the 'Ottoman tacit agreement' became the dominant in ensuring the cooperation of various factions in the cities. Borderlands of the empire became transformed spaces in which various factions fought for their demands, not by rejecting the centralist policies but by defining their limits. Hence, Kosovo's population, for example, did not hesitate to refuse payment of the new taxes and the taxes which were collected from the urban society while they continued to pay some of the other, traditional tax, like *ağnam*. The urban society blocked the counting of their properties, refused to pay property tax, income tax and most importantly the domestic animal tax because all of those taxes were organized without making the actors of the urban as the part of the decision-making process. In that sense, refusing to pay these taxes was not a zero-sum game but a fight over the process of becoming a part of centralization. Also, this was not a political movement organized by the Ottoman revolutionaries. The urban society who was well informed about their traditional rights relied on the customs and found new ways to bargain with the state via the technological developments that occurred after the mid-19th century. For this reason, the centralist policies and new taxes of Abdulhamid II were contradictory elements that acted against each other. While the modern state desired to enlarge its tax collection capacity from rural to urban centers, the urban society used the infrastructural attempts of the state better than rural communities against this move of the bureaucracy. As the most important fiscal attempt of the modern state, taxing the urban society in according to their

160 Eugene Rogan explains these three dimensions in three different chapters. See: Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire Transjordan 1850-1921*.

properties, their domestic animals and their income faced a strong resistance not only while counting the actual amounts but also while the collecting the taxes. Next chapter analyzes how the local actors created a political movement, to complete the picture that emerges from the eastern borderland of the Ottoman Empire.

3

NOTHING TO GIVE OTHER THAN SHIRTS: ERZURUM in 1906

§ 3.1 Erzurum in the Early Years of the Twentieth Century

The new taxes had not been accepted in the province of Erzurum, as was the case in the province of Kosovo. The province's urban populace had faced many social and economic problems during recent years, and they used those problems as the grounds for legitimizing their reaction against the tax payment. With such a background, the city officials worked to solve the problems to provide efficient governance, but the central government failed in the province of Erzurum between 1906 and 1908. During these years, the Empire appeared as a failed state; it did not achieve governing its land without accepting the demands of the urban populace's representatives. Under such circumstances, the officials lived in danger, the governors were forced out of cities, and in some cases, the police officers and some merchants were even killed. What happened in Erzurum between 1906 and 1908 was a striking

example of how collective action in the Ottoman borderlands developed and how the populace defined the limits of the central power.

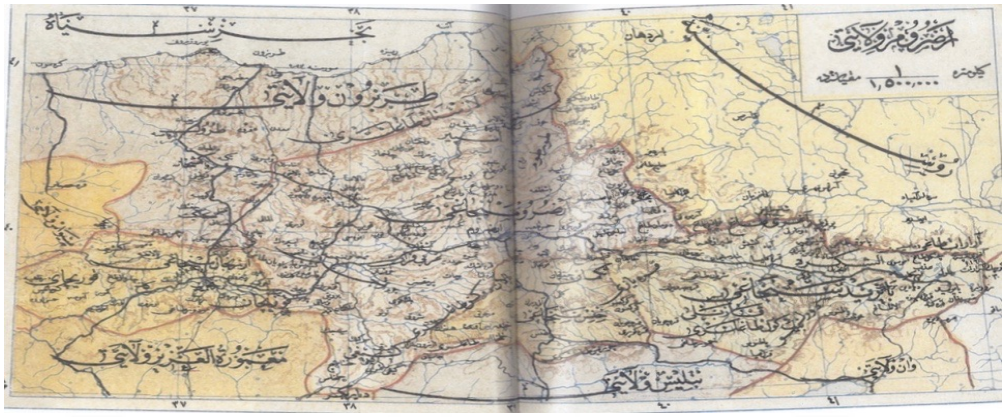


Figure 3.1 *The Map of the Province of Erzurum.* SOURCE: *Osmanlı Atlası, XX. Yüzyıl Başları*, edited by Rahmi Tekin & Yaşar Baş (İstanbul: OSAV, 2003), 76.

The Province of Erzurum was in the east of the Anatolia, neighboring the Province of Trabzon, as well as Russia on the northeast, Iran on the east, Bitlis, Van and Mamurat-ul Aziz on the south and the vilayet of Sivas was on the west. According to the annual of 1900, it had 4 sancaks namely, Erzurum, Erzincan, Bayezid and Hınıs. These four sancaks contained 2,762 villages in the beginning of the 20th century.[161] The population distribution was 442,671 Muslims, 101,119 Armenians, 12,029 Catholics and Protestants and 3,356 Greeks. The total population of the province including other small ethnic and religious groups totaled 558,659 in the province in 1909.[162]

The urban center of the province had more than 40 quarters, 23 mosques and madrasas, 11 churches and monasteries, schools for Muslims and non-

161 Rahmi Tekin, Yaşar Baş, *Osmanlı Atlası, XX. Yüzyıl Başları*, (İstanbul: OSAV 2003), 75.

162 BOA. Y.EE. 33/53, 1. 8 Eylül 1325 (September 21, 1909). According to the Annual of Erzurum in 1900, the population in city center was 40,192. See; Salname-i Vilayet-i Erzurum (SVE), 1900, 270. The French sources stated the total population of the province was 828,120 in 1903. See; Bayram Kodaman "Fransız Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Erzurum-Sivas-Van Vilayetlerinde Ermeni Nüfusu" A.T.A.D 3 no. 6 (1988): 7.

Muslims, 5-6 drapers, 12 mills and fountains, more than 200 storehouses and many shops.[163] According to the map prepared by Fuad Bey in 1904 the city was built within city walls as a typical feudal city. It had eight gates namely İstanbulkapı, Gürcükapı, Harputkapı, Karskapı, Tebrizkapı, Kilise kapı, Yenikapı and Kavakkapı. Five of them were operational in the beginning of the 20th century. The center of the city had two military barracks, namely, Firdevsoğlu and Süvari barracks. *Çifte Minareli Medrese,* the most famous building, was in the center of the city and the marketplace had been erected on the streets around it.

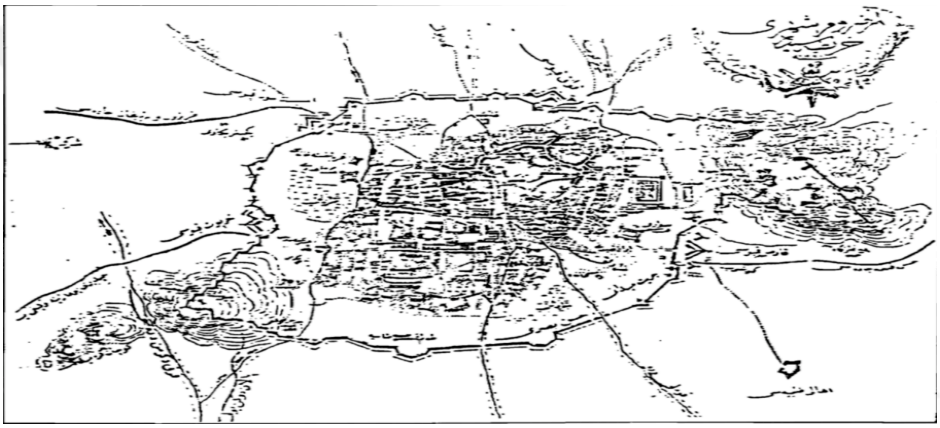


Figure 3.2 Erzurum's Map prepared by Fuad Bey in 1904. SOURCE: Hüseyin Yurtaş ,"Fuat Bey'in Erzurum Haritası" A.Ü *Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi* (2000) no: 15, 61.

Nazım Pasha was appointed to the province in September 1901 as governor with a monthly salary of 22,500 kurushes. He was born on June 25, 1862 and remained in charge until he was dismissed from his seat due to the endless protest meetings of the populace in April 1906.[164] Later, he was chosen as the governor of Diyarbakır, and after a month he was appointed as the Governor

163 Salname-i Vilayet-i Erzurum, 1900, 270. For a detailed analysis of Erzurum based on the temettuat records, see: Haydar Çoruh "Erzurum A Border City of East Anatolia" in *The Ottoman State and Societies in Change: A Study of the Nineteenth Century Temettuat Registers* ed. Hayashi Kayako and Mahir Aydın (London and New York: Routledge: 2004), 173-211.

164 BOA. DH.SAİD. 25/72, 141-142.

of Kastamonu but he was also dismissed from that job and sent to Iraq as the *Heyet-i Islahiye Reisi*. After the 1908 revolution, his new position became the Governor of Yanya but he refused to serve in that position. Then, in the same year, he was appointed as the Minister of Justice. He was killed by the rebels in 1909, during the 31 March revolt.[165]

Erzurum faced an earthquake that caused a considerable damage in the city center in October 1901. 21 people (18 Muslims and 3 Christians) died while 100 houses were destroyed and 400 were rendered unsafe for habitation.[166] The governor was very unlucky; he was working to find a solution for the populace of the urban center who now lived in the tents under conditions of heavy rainfall due to fear of another earthquake. Many public buildings, including the government office, the private residence of the governor, some mosques and churches were also destroyed too. He appointed six technical commissioners to investigate the situation of the people and the private and public houses. He also achieved to collect 7,009 kurushes within a short time as relief money.[167]

The governor's attempts to provide quick solutions to the problems in the city created peace in two years. The British Consul described Nazım Pasha in September 1903 as follows:

> *Nazım Pasha, the Vali of Erzeroum, has undoubtedly gained much in authority and reputation during the past months. It is realized that, under a somewhat hesitating and very quiet manner, he conceals a strong will and firm determination to maintain order; and I think that there can be no doubt of his desire to administer the province in a just and enlightened manner.*[168]

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165 Erkan Cevizlier, Ali Servet Öncü "Erzurum Valisi Mustafa Nazım Bey'in Vilayetteki Çalışmalarına Dair Raporu" in *History Studies, International Journal of History* vol.5, issue 1, pp-71-88. (Jan. 2013): 72.

166 F.O. 424 /202 Inclosure in No:87 Consul Lamb to Sir N. O'Conor. Erzurum, (November 15, 1901).

167 Ibid., Inclosure 2 in No:95 Consul Lamb to Sirn N. O'Conor. (Erzurum, December 1, 1901).

168 F.O. 424/205 Inclosure in No. 139 Quarterly Report Erzurum, (September 30, 1903).

Nazım Pasha had been very successful in coordinating with the foreign representatives, and for this reason, he was favored by British and Russian consuls in their dispatches. For example, the British Vice Consul stated that despite the absolute lack of finances in the province, "the governor with military officers were working day and night with a view to keeping so strict a watch on the income and expenditure of the vilayet."[169] Indeed, the province's expenditure reached 450,000 Liras while the income was only 250,000 Liras, and the consul was nervous because if the central government did not bridge the difference, the provincial government would turn to collecting it from the population in illegal ways.[170]

§ 3.2 Protest Wave on March 1906

The mass protests against the new taxes occurred over such a background. The governor Nazım Pasha believed he had a good reputation and authority in the city and desired to close the gap in the finance through operating the collection of new taxes without effecting an efficient counting first. The central government redefined the personal income tax and the domestic animal tax in 1905 due to the reactions of the society against those taxes. However, Nazım Pasha did not find sufficient time to operate a new inventory and determine the class of taxpayers. Furthermore, there was serious opposition to the new taxes; the populace was simply unwilling to pay. Firstly, at the end of February 1906, a group of people from the Pasinler district sent a petition to the governor inquiring about the possibility of waiving the taxes for 1906.[171]

169 F.O. 424/208 Inclosure in No: 62 Vice Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor. Erzurum, (June 8, 1905).

170 Ibid.

171 Mehmed Nusret, *Tarihçe-i Erzurum Yahud Hemşehrilere Armağan* (İstanbul: Ali Şükrü Matbaası, 1922), 57.

Nazım Pasha contacted the capital on March 2, 1906, and stated that these people were working to gather more people to their cause in the city, but that he quickly assumed to control of the situation.[172] The capital trusted the governor and requested him to control all activities against the collection of taxes. However, the petty-notables of the city had continued to make visits to the governor to find a way to postpone the taxes. Nazım Pasha sent another letter to the Palace on March 11, 1906, arguing that the city's Muslim society was preparing a movement against the tax collection. Some people had obstructed the calculation of the taxes in one or two districts of the city. Upon that, the governor invited the petty-notables of the city to the government and ordered them to stop the opposition against taxation.[173] Although Nazım Pasha argued that many people stopped protesting after his words, a mass movement did occurr when the tax collectors were seen in the districts of Erzurum.

Despite the opposition to the payment of new taxes, the government announced that the collection of taxes was deemed possible and would proceed as usual for Erzurum in a telegraph on March 12, 1906.[174] The first protest broke out when Uzun Osman Efendi, the tax collector, began collecting the personal income tax and domestic animal tax of the city. He began his job in the Lala Pasha district. There is no exact date of when the process started, but according to the archival sources, it happened around the 13th or 14th of March, 1906. While Uzun Osman Efendi had been working to collect the personal income tax, Hasan Ağazade Faruk, who was responsible for providing victuals to the army, asked for the forgiveness of the tax payment.

172 Ibid., 57.

173 BOA, Y.PRK.UM. 78/53, 1. 26 Şubat 1321 (March 11, 1906). "Erzurum'da bu aralık hayvanat-ı ehliye rüsumuyla vergi-i şahsiye dair ahali-i İslamiye beyninde bais-i heyecan … cereyan ettiği hatta 1-2 mahalde vergi-i şahsi defterlerinin talikine muvafakat olunmadığı haber alınarak ulema-yı belde ve mütehayyizan-ı mahalliyeden bazılarına ayrı ayrı nezd-i çakeraneme celb ile.."

174 Demirel, *İkinci Meşrutiyet Öncesi Erzurum'da Halk Hareketleri (1906-1907),* 22.

Nevertheless, Uzun Osman Efendi refused his request and continued tax collection without recounting the income of people. Thus, Hasan Ağazade Faruk co-operated with two other petty-notables of the city, namely Şamlızade Ahmed and Akif Efendi, who disagreed with the governor's activities in the city and they petitioned to the Palace asking for the annulment of the tax for that year.[175]

During the same day, tax collectors had been continuing to collect taxes in the city's other districts. While they were trying to collect these taxes in Hasan Basri, the most populated district of the city,[176] a person named Mologlu Ali requested that the collection of the taxes be delayed. Uzun Osman Efendi rejected his request as well. Afterwards, Mologlu Ali went to other populated and poor districts, namely Kasımpaşa and Mumcu Sufla, and met with two other people who had been refusing to pay these taxes. They were Tahsin Efendi from Kasımpaşa and Küçük Efendi from Mumcu Sufla. They organized a movement against the new taxes, and about 200 people had joined them in a day.[177]

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175 BOA. DH.MKT. 1066/29 Lef 5, 1. 25 Nisan 1322 (May 8, 1906). Barutçuzade Şevki Bey, Mehmed Nusret Bey and Kazım Yurdalan were the people who witnessed the events and wrote it in their works. They stated that the artisans and merchants of the city organized a meeting in an important person's house on that day to decide on their movement against the taxes. However, both of them described different meetings without providing any source. I did not find them reliable and instead relied on the Ottoman archival sources and Consular reports to create a new narrative.

176 According to the temettuat records, Hasan Basri quarter was the most populated district of Erzurum in mid19th century. Ali Paşa, Emin Kurbu and Mumcu Süfla and Yeğen Ağa districts were the other populated districts of the city. See: Çoruh, "A Border City of East Anatolia," 177.

177 Orhan Türkdoğan, "1906-1907 Erzurum Hürriyet Ayaklanması II" in *Türk Kültürü* vol. 256. 499. The number of the protesters was taken from the report of Muş' mutasarrıf. Also see; Demirel, page 23-24; Mehmed Nusret, *Tarihçe-i Erzurum*, 59-60. According to Kazım Yurdalan, 30 people attended to the meeting including the 8 zabtiehs. See: İsmail Eyüpoğlu, *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Bir İttihatçı Kazım Yurdalan (1881/2- 1962)* (Erzurum: Atatürk Üniversitesi, Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnkılap Tarihi Yayınları, 2009), 30.

The first group from the Lala Paşa district signed a cooperation aggrement with the others, and the people of these districts started to assemble in front of the office of the governor.[178] Köroğlu from Gez and Şükrü who worked for Faruk Bey had been organizing the meeting.[179] Those at the head of the protesters were Hasan Ağazade Faruk Efendi, Şevki Efendi, Fazıl Efendi, Güli Bey, Şamlızade Ahmed Efendi, Hacı Akif Efendi, and Hacı Sabri Efendi.[180] All of them were the well-known artisans of the city. According to this committee, if the governor did not accept their request, two men of the Faruk Bey would organize a mass protest meeting in front of the telegram office, and all notables of the city would close their shops during this meeting.[181]

Governor Nazım Pasha aimed to stop the protest by asking for the help of the gendarmerie, but he did not find any support from *Alaybeyi*. Besides, Alemderzade Tevfik, a member of the provincial advisory council, and Abdulhamid Efendi, the chief clerk, convinced Nazım Pasha to dismiss Tevfik, who was the head of the police station, Osman Zeki who was the tax collector and Şerif Efendi who was the mayor. When the populace was informed about the dismissal of these people the protests spread, and later culminated in a rejection to live under the governorship of Nazım Pasha.[182]

178 BOA. DH.MKT.1066/29, 1. 25 Nisan 1322 (May 8, 1906).

179 Türkdoğan, "1906-1907 Erzurum Hürriyet Ayaklanması II," 499.

180 BOA. DH.MKT.1066/29 Lef 5, 1. 25 Nisan 1322 (May 8, 1906). According to the memoir of the Barutçuzade Şevki and Mehmed Nusret's *Tarihçe-i Erzurum*, there were two other people in the committee namely Hacı Mehmed Efendi and Tahsin Bey, and the committee organized a meeting in the house of Hacı Akif Efendi in March 14, 1906. See: Turkdogan, "1906-1907 Erzurum Hürriyet Ayaklanması II," 499, Mehmed Nusret, *Tarihçe-i Erzurum Yahud Hemşehrilere Armağan,* 60.

181 Türkdoğan, "1906-1907 Erzurum Hürriyet Ayaklanması II," 499.

182 According to Russian Consul, Skyrabin, the *Canverir* committee requested the dismissal of the mayor. However, the memoir of Barutçuzade and the report of the British consul argued against this claim by explaining the discomfort of society as born of the dismissal of the mayor. See: Valuyskiy, "Vosstaniya v Vostoçnoy Anatolii nakanune mladoturetskoy revolyutsi" 48-65

The British Consul Shipley sent a report to the center on the 20th of March to explain what had happened during the recent days.[183] Shipley stated that the chief of the Erzurum municipality and the head of the Veterinary Department had links with the protesters;

> *Sir, I have the honour to report to your excellency that the announcement of Shakhsi Verghi is provoking serious torment among the Mussulmans of Erzurum. The latter, I learn, have even gone so far as to sound two or three of the leading local Christians as to the possibility of organizing a mass meeting of Christians and Mussulmans in front of the government building is a protest against the new burden about to be imposed on them. As was, however, to be expected the Christians very prudently declined to give any countenance to a proceeding the consequences of which would be likely to fall chiefly on themselves pointing out instead that a better plan for their musulman friends would be to bring their grievances to the notice of the governor general, Nazim Pasha, by means of a representative deputation. This advice would seem at first to have been adopted by the mussulmans but the latter being apparently not satisfied with their reception by His Excellency insisted on sending a telegram direct to the Palace at Constantinople and in the meantime proceeded on Sunday last by the more open expression of their dissatisfaction by making a demonstration in front of the former's house and by tearing down during the night the placards which had been posted up by the government giving public notice of the imposition of the new tax. The chief of the Erzurum Municipality and the head of the veterinary department would also appear to have come in for a share of their displeasure the former, as far as I can gather, an account of the octroi duties which are felt to be vexatious by the population, the latter owing this connexion [sic] with the tax on cattle.*
>
> *One of the grievances felt by both Musulmans and Christians alike against the new tax might, I cannot help thinking, have been avoided by the exercise of a little care on the part of the government. The particular grievance in question is that the amount to be paid under the new tax has been fixed at four hundred, two hundred and thirty five piastres or in English currency about three pounds thirteen shillings and four pence, one pound sixteen shillings and six pence and five shillings and ten pence sterling respectively according to the category under which each person may be placed and it is generally considered that while, under this method of assessments, the burden of the*

183 F.O. 195/2222 No: 6 83-86, "Poll Tax."

> *incidence will fall heavily on the poor, the sum to be paid by the rich is ludicrously small as compared with the latter's means. There is considerable truth in this contention bearing in mind the state of living to which the poorer class of artisans in this part of the country has been reduced and while the Turkish government may not have at its disposal the machinery necessary to assess each individual according to his ability to pay it is felt that, failing the exemption of the poorer classes altogether, a somewhat more elastic and less arbitrary system should have been devised. But, however this may be, and whether the musulmans presevere in their present opposition or not there can be no doubt that the feeling of... discontent among them produced by this latest addition to the burdens already imposed is so very deep and widely spread as to merit the serious attention of the government*.[184]

It is important to note that, Consul Shipley was focusing on the same problems as the committee which deployed the populace against these taxes. The committee had argued that the tax collector Osman Zeki Efendi had been dismissed because the governor was looking for a scapegoat to conceal his own culpability.[185] Governor Nazım Pasha was aware of most of these problems, but because he claimed that he provided order in the city in his telegraph on the 20th of March, the government in Istanbul did not take an interest in the petitions of the populace and ordered the governor to collect taxes and to investigate the agitators.[186]

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184 Ibid., No: 6 p. 83-86. "Poll Tax" For a shorter version of the letter see; F.O. 424/210 12149 no.20, 17, (March 20, 1906)

185 BOA. DH.MKT.1066/29, Lef 4, 14. 25 Nisan 1322 (May 8, 1906). "refik-i denaeti olan müdde-i umumi Osman Zeki efendi ile kendisinin ısrar-ı denaetini ifşa eder korkusuyla hiç bir güne tahkikat icrasına meydan vermeyip müstantik-i muma ileyhi istifaya mecbur etti."; BOA. Y.A.HUS 501/32, 3-6. 15 Mart 1322 (March 28, 1906). The documents contains the telegrams of the local bureaucrats about the events in Erzurum until 28th of March, 1906. Osman Zeki Efendi also signed the document as the judge on the court of appeals. Most probably, the governor dismissed the tax collector whose name was also Osman Zeki.

186 Demirel, *İkinci Meşrutiyet Öncesi Erzurum'da Halk Hareketleri (1906-1907),* 70. "Vergi-i şahsinin ve hayvanat-ı ehliyye rüsumunun afvı maksadıyla ahaliden ba'zılarının ne suretle isti'tafda bulunduklarına dair Erzurum vilayet-i celilesinden alınan telgraf-name ledel-arz mezu-i ali buyurularak mezkur virgüler (Erzurum vilayetine şifre cevap 7 Mart 322 şahsi

The Sublime Porte also sent a decree to the city to explaining the need for the expected amount of new taxes on the 20th of March 1906.[187] Furthermore, the 7th division of the 4th Army was also alerted about the situation, and Marshal Zeki Pasha, who was the commander of the 4th Army, ordered the 7th division to assist the governor in stopping the protests and organizing gendarmes for tax collection.[188] These efforts pacified the reactions of the city. However, Nazım Pasha misinterpreted the silence in the city. He stated that the efforts taken by civil and military administrators had stopped the movement.[189] Indeed, Nazım Pasha invited twenty influential people of the city, including Mufti Lütfullah Efendi, some *mudarrises,* and petty-notables, including the committee members, to find a way to provide a long-lasted order in the city on the 22nd of March, 1906.[190] While these people had been

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vergi ve hayvanat-ı ehliyye rüsumu) mahallinin muhafaza ve a'da'e karşı müdafaası içün tezyid-i kuvvet-i devlet maksadıyla mürettib olmasıyla bunların afvı hakkında isti'tafda bulunmak hüsn-u hamiyyetle kabil-i te'lif olmadığından ahaliye bu bab da nesayih-i müessire icrasıyla dağıtılmaları esbabının istikmal ve bu iş de ön ayak olanlar hakkında muamele-i kanuniye ifa kılınmak üzere elde edilmelerine i'tina' kılınması"

187 BOA. İ.HUS. 139/102, 1. 7 Mart 1322 (March 20, 1906). "vergiler memleketin muhafaza ve i'danın müdafası için tezib-i kuvvet devlet maksadıyla müretteb olmayla bunların afvı zımmında istitafda bulunmak hüsn hamiyetle kabil-i sa'lif olmadığından ahaliye bu babda nesaih-i müessere icrasıyla"

188 BOA. Y.PRK.ASK. 237/120, 9 Mart 1322 (March 22, 1906). "merzi-i ali-i cenab-ı hilafetpenahiye mugayir ahval tahaddüsüne katiyen meydan ve imkan bırakılmaması esbabının istikmali zımnında mezkur fırka kumandanlığına tebligat"

189 BOA, BEO 2786 / 208909, 1. 7 Mart 1322 (March 20 1906). "İttihaz olunan tedabir ve icra olunan nesaih üzerine laelhamd saye-i kudretlü cenabı padişahide ahali-i İslamiye arasında hiddet eden heyecan mündefi olarak elyevm sukun tam mevcud olunduğu"

190 BOA. DH.MKT. 1066/29, Lef 5, 1. 25 Nisan 1322 (May 8, 1906). Şükrü Hanioğlu, according to the BOA.VGG. 129/208456 document, argued that the meeting between the Governor Nazım Pasha and the committee occured on March, 12 1906. I focused on the report of the Mutasarrıf of Muş and as the first inspector of the event, he wrote that, the meeting occured on 22 March 1906.

discussing the situation with the governor, the populace continued to send petitions against the ill-treatment of the officers and the unjust taxes. The governor asked the representatives to stop the movement, but they refused the requests. In such a situation, Nazım Pasha decided to stop them by forcing them to leave the public spheres. Thus, he ordered the arrest of the committee members by depending on the decree of Sultan. The grocery Hacı Sabri Efendi as a committee member was interned in the governor's office.[191] After this event, the number of protesters raised, and they declare that they would protest in front of the governor's office until Hacı Sabri Efendi was released.[192]

From the 23rd of March onwards, the protestors occupied the telegraph office and sent petitions to the Palace requesting a solution for a week. The petitions were signed by at least 200 people in a day. The language of the petitions was also different than in previous petitions. Protestors did not only criticize the taxes but also began to focus on Governor Nazım Pasha's corruption.[193] The number of protestors increased day by day, reaching around 400-500 people on the 28th of March, a Wednesday.[194] A news piece in the journal –Times- on March 26, 1906, stressed that;

> *In several districts, notably in Albania, Erzerum and Kastamonu, the Musulman population not only refused to pay the new taxes, but*

"…Müfti Efendi ile ulema-ı mahalliye ve eşraf ve mutehayyizan memleketden 20 kadarını mart dokuzuncu günü hükümete bi-l celb tekalif-i mezkurenin meşruiyetini ve vücubu hakkında tafsilat ve izahat vermekle beraber lazıme-i sadakat ve diyanet-i ve icabat ve hamiyet ve ubudiyyet teşrihi ve nesayih-i mukteziyeyi ifa…"

191 Ibid. The name of Hacı Sabri only appears in the memoirs of the Barutçuzade Şevki.

192 Referring to the memoir of Barutçuzade Şevki, Muammer Demirel argued that the governor only invited Hacı Sabri Efendi to discuss the situation. See: Demirel, *İkinci Meşrutiyet Öncesi Erzurum'da Halk Hareketleri (1906-1907),* 23.

193 BOA. BEO.2793/209436, 11. 11 Mart 1322 (March 24 1906). "Allah ve Resulu aşkına müşarun ileyhten görmüş olduğumuz zulüm"

194 Ibid., 1.

clamored for the abolition and insisted on the dismissal of the unpop ular Valis and other officials.[195]

Moreover, the provincial military commander argued in his report to Marshal Zeki Pasha on 27th of March that the city's gendarmes did not command enough force to stop the protests because most of them had stashed away their weapons due to the problems in they payment of their salaries. In addition, the vital point in the report was the definition of the actors in the event. The commander described the protestors, in clear words, as the people who normally obeyed the tax payment rules but who were exhausted due to their mistreatments at the hands of the governor. According to military commanders, Nazım Pasha was the sole reason for the protests because he had planted the seed of hatred in every man of the city. He also added that the new gendarmeries were the relatives of the protestors, and for that reason, it was impossible to stop the crowd via the help of gendarmeries. According to the commander, the quickest solution would be to dismiss the governor as soon as possible.[196]

Munir Pasha, who was the military commander of Erzurum, also argued in his report to Marshal Zeki Pasha that the protestor's real goal was only to dismiss Nazım Pasha. According to him, governor Nazım Pasha had asked for the help of the army on the 24th of the March, but their help was not enough to stop the protestors. They advised the leaders of the protests to stop meeting, but the advice did not change the situation in the city. Furthermore, they failed to arrest the leaders of the protestors.[197]

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195 Times, "Internal Taxes in Turkey", Constanople, (March 26, 1906).

196 BOA. Y.MTV.285/75, 3. 14 Mart 1322. (March 27, 1906). "Ahali-i mahalliyenin her nev'i rüsum-ü tekalife münkad ve fakat vali paşa hazretlerinin muamelesinden bizar bulunduklarından naşi peyderpey tafsilat arz olunan teşebbüsata şuru eyledikleri ve erbab-ı teşebbüsün nasihat ve hatta tehdid ile dahi tasavvur ve kararlarından nükul etmeleri imkansızlığı malum ve muhakkaktır"

197 BOA, Y.PRK.ASK. 238/2, 9-11. 15 Mart 1322 (March 28, 1906).

Against such a background, Marshal Zeki Pasha was convinced by the reports of military officials. As the commander of the 4th Army, he sent a report to Istanbul on the 28th of March to explain how the governor had misled them about the situation in Erzurum. According to Zeki Pasha, the governor had argued that he stopped the chaos in the city via the support of the military power a week ago, but that was not valid. Instead, the protests spread to almost all districts of the city, and the number of protestors reached thousand.[198] Zeki Pasha's report also contained two letters from the protestors. Both letters were written by Tevfik Bey, Ahmed Bey, Hacı Şevket Efendi, and Faruk Bey.[199] These people argued that the number of protestors was around twenty-thousand. In actual fact, the number of people who joined the mass movement never reached twenty thousand, but the petitioners wanted to alert the Palace by exaggerating the numbers.

While the telegraph of Munir Pasha stated that the gendarmeries failed to stop the crowd by talking to the leaders, the protesters' petition included details about what had happened when they had faced the soldiers. The governor, during the previous week, had not managed to find any solution, and therefore, he decided to stop the protest by using military power once the protestors occupied the telegraph office. He first visited the Army Commander Munir Pasha on Saturday, 24th of March, 1906, and requested the help of the military for controlling the protests as mentioned above. Munir Pasha sent a military troop under the leadership of Mustafa Agha. Mustafa Agha was the battalion commander and squadron leader in the IV. Army corps in Erzurum. When Mustafa Agha's troop arrived at the post-office on the 28th of March, 1906, a rumor spread throughout the city. According to the rumor, Mustafa Agha ordered his troops to use firearms without any hesitation

198 Ibid., 1-3.

199 Ibid., 7-9. "Yirmi bin kişiden mütecaviz ahali-i bendeleri"

against the populace of the city.[200] This was not fabricated news because Haydar Bey, who belonged to the 26th regiment, and who was the soldiers' acting commander in front of the post-office, had indeed ordered his soldiers to use their weapons against the crowd with the order of Mustafa Agha.[201] Two people get injured during the clashes with the soldiers.[202] The event was heard in the Palace on the same day via the petition of Müfti Lütfullah Efendi.[203]

According to the memoir of Barutçuzade Şevki Bey, while Mustafa Agha was ordering the crowd to stop their protest, a man whose name was Canbaz Vehbi[204] insulted Mustafa Agha. In the same moment, five people left the crowd, and each travelling to different bazaars of the city and shouting that soldiers had been killing innocent people in front of the post-office. Abdioğlu Mehmed went to Tebrizkapı bazaar, Dede went to Gürcükapı bazaar, Hacı Mustafa went to Gölbaşı bazaar, Hacı Kahramanoğlu Agha went to Erzincankapı bazaar, and Mehmet of the Dere district went to the remaining bazaar.[205] After they informed all the shop owners in the bazaars, the shops were closed, and the social and economic life of the citycame to a halt.[206]

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200 BOA. DH.MKT. 1066/29, Lef 5, 25 Nisan 1322 (May 8, 1906). "müfreze-yi nizamiyenin telgrafhane önüne vusûlüyle ifâ-yı vazifeye mübâdereti 'asâkir-i şâhânenin ahâliyi cerh ve katl etmekde olduğuna dâ'ir şâyi'a devrânını ve bi'n-netice beş on dakika içinde çarşu ve pazardaki mağaza ve dükkânların kapanmasını mûcib olarak"

201 Ibid., 14.

202 Ibid. "ahaliden yaralanan iki kişi (padişahım çok yaşa) bağırıyordu. Onları kanlar içinde çamurlardan kaldıranların (padişahım çok yaşa) sedası göklere çıkıyordu."

203 BOA. Y.PRK.MŞ. 8/33, Lef 2, 1. 15 mart 1322 (March 28, 1906).

204 Cattle traders called as *Canbaz* in the region.

205 Türkdoğan, "1906-1907 Erzurum Hürriyet Ayaklanması II," 501. According to this memoirs, the event occurred 16 Şubat 1320. (March 1, 1905, Monday -sic-). According to the documents in the Ottoman Archive and Foreign Office, it is important to note that, this date was not reliable because firstly the event occurred in the year of 1906 and more importantly March 1, 1905 was not a Monday. It was a Wednesday.

206 BOA. DH.MKT. 1066/29 Lef 5, 1. 25 Nisan 1322 (May 8, 1906). It is important to note that, according to the Russian Consul Skyrbin, soldiers refused to use their guns against the people.

It was a turning point in the development of collective action. The number of protesters reached ten-thousand in one hour. Many people, including the civil officers, had joined the protests in front of the post-office. Moreover, the demand of the committee changed sharply at that point. Until that time, despite most of the committee members being opposed to Nazım Pasha's governorship, the primary demand had been about the postponement of tax collection. The committee firstly asked for the dismissal of Nazım Pasha on the 23rd of March. After that day, they raised their voice louder against the governor. With the support of the thousands of people in the streets outraged by the use of firearms against the populace, the crowd directly targeted the governor's seat by focusing on the fecklessness of the governor and the corruption of the state officials.[207] From that time on, in addition to the requests for the abolishment of taxes, they also mentioned that they would continue their protests until they witnessed a decree which dismissed Governor Nazım Pasha and certain officials, including some district governors.[208] For example, a petition signed by İsmail, Refik, Faruk, Sevket, and Ahmed mentioned that twenty-thousand people joined the movement, and that they would not stop until they see a decree that dismissed the governor would materialize.[209] The telegraph of Mufti Lutfullah, Faruk Bey, Sabri Bey, and their 428 fellows followed this example by explaining the reasons for their gievances regarding Nazım Pasha.[210]

The committee also appointed a person for each bazaar, to control the social and economic life of the city. They also organized a meeting that night in the residence of the Şevki Efendi of the Kasımpaşa district. According to the memoirs of Barutçuzade Şevki, the decision to call for the dismissal of Nazım

207 Ibid., 2.

208 Ibid., Lef 4, 14. ; Türkdoğan, "1906-1907 Erzurum Hürriyet Ayaklanması II," 501.

209 BOA. Y.PRK.MŞ. 0008/33, Lef 4, 1. 15 Mart 1322 (March 28, 1906).

210 BOA. Y.PRK.AZJ. 51/80, 1-3. 15 Mart 1322 (March 28, 1906).

Pasha was reached at that meeting. Güli Bey, one of the committee leaders, made a speech arguing for the dismissal of the Governor. Mehmet Efendi and Türbedar Yusuf, who were not in the core of the committee, disagreed with Güli Bey. Other people, however, accepted his position. Later, the committee learned that all of the petitions sent from the post-office were being observed at the governor's office because the telegraph line was controlled by Nazım Pasha. In a short time, they cut down the telegraph line of the governor's office and began to send their petitions to the Palace directly.[211] This was a well-known tactic that they had learned from the Armenian revolutionaries. From that day on, the urban center came under the committee's control until the 31st of March, 1906. Within these three days, the committee members organized mass meetings, sent petitions to the Palace, and requested the dismissal of the many local officers. The change in the committee's requests is also observed in the British Consul's report. Consul Shipley mentioned the changes as follows:

> I should point out that the agitation was not at the outset directed in any way against Nazım Pasha personally. The first protests, … was made by the Mussulmans on or about the 18th of that month, and was followed up by them by numerous telegrams to the Palace, asking for the remission of the tax complained. As however, no satisfactory an swer would appear to have been vouchsafed to any of these telegrams, the demand for the recall of the Governor-General, coupled with the closing of the shops, was at length on the 28th …. Resorted to by them.[212]

The change in the requests of the committee also excited the Armenian population of the city. From the beginning of the revolt until the end of March, the Armenian community of the city sought to support the protest. However, the Armenian delegate and some Armenian notables of Erzurum had a close relationship with Governor Nazım Pasha, and they did not allow the

211 Türkdoğan, "1906-1907 Erzurum Hürriyet Ayaklanması II," 502.

212 F.O. 424/210 No:7, 34. Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Connor. (April 12, 1906) F.O 195/2210 "Demonstration against Ex-Vali of Erzeroum, Nazım Pasha" (April 12, 1906).

Armenian population to join the protests in the first days. Neverteheless, beginning with the 20th of March, the Armenian revolutionaries worked to secure advantages via this revolt. While the protestors were also looking for the support of their Armenian neighbors, the committee members opposed any collaboration with the Armenian revolutionaries due to the advice of the Müfti, Lütfullah Efendi.

The leaders of the Armenian revolutionaries in the city, Asaduryan Ohannes and Haçatur the moneylender, who had spent the recent years in jail for supporting the Armenian revolutionary movement, met with four other members of Armenian revolutionary movement, whose names were Çilingiryan Asadur, Arkanyan Kalust, Antranik and Arsen, and they had visited Seyfullah Efendi, İmamzade Vefik Efendi, and Şevki Bey to declare their support for the protests in return for the dismissal of the Armenian delegate in the city because the delegate had not allowed them to join the protests.[213] Although the committee did not accept their request, the General prosecuter of the court of appeals, Osman Zeki Efendi, sent a telegraph to the Ministry of Justice and claimed that the committee had close ties to the Armenian revolutionary movement.[214] When the rebels closed all shops and blocked all the main avenues and streets of the city on March 29, 1906, the Armenian committee also prepared a manifesto and posted it up in the Muslim neighborhoods:

> Our Armenian delegate from Erzurum gave his approval for the col lection of the taxes recently levied, stating that our community could pay these (taxes). Our community, however, craves money for bread. We do not recognize this delegate. Never.[215]

213 BOA. DH.MKT 1066/29, Lef 5, 2. 25 Nisan 1322 (May 8, 1906).

214 Demirel, *İkinci Meşrutiyet Öncesi Erzurum'da Halk Hareketleri (1906-1907),* 28.

215 Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution,* 111. BOA. BEO. 2793/209436, Lef 8, 1. 16 Mart 1322 (March 29, 1906).
"Bizim Erzurum'un Ermeni murahhası(marhasası) yeniden ihdas olan vergüler için imza eylemiş bizim millet verebilir (diye). Halbuki bizim millet dahi nan paraya muhtaç ve biz marhasayı kabul etmiyoruz. Ahali." The English translation of the document is quoted from Şükrü Hanioğlu.

During these three days, Governor Nazım Pasha first sent reports to the Palace and stated the activities of the committee in the city. According to him, the local officials had worked hard to stop the protests by discussing with the committee members, ulemas, and Mufti of the city, but they had failed. In the final stage, a document which was signed by all the military and civil officials of the city -including Nazım Pasha- stated that they had not manage to quell the protests.[216] However, according to Mufti Lutfullah Efendi, these officials were the reason for the protest because the urban populace had decided to reject their governorship of the city. Hence, the palace ordered Marshal Zeki Pasha to visit the city. The Palace also advised Nazım Pash to announce to the urban society that until the investigation by Marshal Zeki Pasha was complete, the Palace requested the urban populace to stop their movement and go back to their daily routine.[217] Nazım Pasha responded that the society of the city was not eager to close their shops, and that they were ready to go back to their daily routine, but the committee members had forced them to close their shops.[218]

Faced with that situation, the bureaucrats in Istanbul repeated their first address to the society by announcing that it was impossible to delay tax collection because these new taxes were already being collected in all the

216 BOA. Y.A.HUS 501/32, 3-6. 15 Mart 1322 (March 28, 1906). this document was signed by Governor Nazım Pasha, the commander of central army in Erzurum, Mirliva Akif, the commander of the troops in Erzurum, the judge of the court of appeals Osman Zeki, the head of the financial department, İsmail, the head of commerce Şefik and the *mektubcu* Husnü.

217 BOA. Y.PRK.UM. 78/72 Lef 4, 1. 15 Mart 1322 (March 28, 1906) Her nevi tebadir-i sakine ittihaz ve külliyat ile gönderilen ulema ve müttehayyizan vasıtasıyla nesaih icra edilmiş ise de bir tesiri görülmemiş ve bu gün müfti efendi dahi bu işin buraca tesviyesi kabil olamayacağını ifade eylemiş olub"; F.O. 195/2222 p. 87 "poll tax" "…Sultan announcing that Mushir of Erdzincan had been directed to proceed to Erzurum as a special commisioner…"

218 BOA.Y.PRK.UM.78/72 Lef 6, 1. 16 Mart 1322 (March 29, 1906); Ibid., Lef 5, 1. bir şahsın dükkanı açmağa başlaması üzerine beş-altı şahsın gelerek ..... kapatdırdıklarını görmesi..."

districts of the Empire.[219] The position of the state was the same as its prior position on the 11th of March despite the collective action of the populace having created anarchy in almost all districts of the city.

On the 29th of March, the petty- notables of the city replied to the capital by explaining why they refused to pay the taxes. Interestingly, while almost all documents after the 23rd of the month had also been focusing on the cruelty of Nazım Pasha, in this document, the petty-notables stated that their main goal was to postpone the tax collection for the year. They directly focused on what happened in Erzurum during the recent years and the effect of these events on their daily lives. For instance, Erzurum had faced two great earthquakes that had destroyed the economic life of the city. Besides, they wnt through a Russian invasion and lost about 900 men in the war against Russia. In such a situation, the petty-notables concluded that the only way to pay these taxes would be to give their shirts to the tax collectors.[220]

The petitioning practice was a political game. While many petitions requested the dismissal of the governor, they also continued to demonstrate to the Porte the incapability of the protestors to pay the taxes until Marshal Zeki Pasha arrived in the city. What happened in Erzurum over the previous fifty years was the legitimization of their opposition to new taxes. Moreover, what happened during the tax collection also became a tool to legitimize the protests against the governor and certain local officers. The protestors politically used these facts politically while looking for clues to legitimize their mass movements against the governor and the Palace's bureaucrats.

219 BOA. BEO 2793/ 209436, 1. 15 Mart 1322 (March 28, 1906).

220 BOA. BEO 2787/209018 Lef 2, 1. 16 Mart 1322 (March 30, 1906). "ahali-i Erzurum bendeleri ise vilayet-i şahane-i sairece mukayyes olamayub az bir zaman içinde iki muharebe ile zedelenmiş ve iki defa vukubulan tezelzelat-ı arzıye tesiratıyla iktidar maliyetleri mahvolmuş ve mes'ele-i zailede düşman tarafından zabt edilen istihkamatı ahaliden dokuz yüz nefer şüheda vererek"

The Grand Vizier replied to all of these telegraphs on the 29th of March and reiterated the state's view that it was impossible to annul the taxes on the 29th of March.[221] Nevertheless, he also included the opinion of the state regarding the future of the governor Nazım Pasha. He mentioned that it was impossible to dismiss a governor based only some petitions of the populace without operating an investigation. Nevertheless, because of the severity of the problems between the populace and the governor in the city, the governor would indeed be replaced by another after a certain amount of time.[222]

The bureaucrats in Istanbul sent another telegraph on the 3rd of April that ordered the city's petty-notables and religious leaders to control the populace and stop the protests. According to this telegraph, the state guaranteed them that a group of investigators had been dispatched to Erzurum and that they would investigate the matter. The governor would be dismissed if the investigators found the claims to be justified. On the other hand, the state warned the dissidents by asking the *mufti* and ulama to inform the notables and dignitaries of the town that the shops should be opened and that every man should occupy himself with his own work, cease engaging in rebellious activities against the orders and directions of the government, and become obedient and acquiescent without delay; and that otherwise, it was decided that the state would take strong action against the leaders of the movement.[223]

221 BOA. Y.A.HUS. 501/32 Lef 1, 1. 15 Mart 1322 (March 28,1906) "Erzurum valisi ve fırka ve merkez kumandanları paşalar hazretleriyle meclis idare ve heyeti adliye tarafından varid olan telgrafnamelere lef'en arz ve takdim kılınmak ve karar-ı devlet-i müstezid ve 'umuma aid olan işbu hayvanatı ehliye rusumuyla vergü-yi şahsinin Erzurumca avfı yolunda bir muameleyi istişane'yi icrası kabul olamayacağından"

222 Ibid., Lef 2, 1.

223 BOA. BEO. 2798/209800 Lef 1, 1. 22 Mart 1322 (4 Nisan 1906) "….işin kendi hakikati anlaşılmadıkça şikayet-i mücerrede üzerine bir valinin azl ve ted'ibi caiz olamayacağından…"

Indeed, as mentioned above, Governor Nazım Pasha insisted on the possibility of dispatching Marshal Zeki Pasa to Erzurum as soon as possible. The palace had ordered Zeki Pasha to solve the problem the previous week. According to the governor, although the Palace's advice dampened the will of the protestors, they were still in front of the telegraph office, and there was no other way than sending Zeki Pasha to Erzurum.[224] On the 31st of March, a telegraph was sent from Zeki Pasha to Münir Pasha, who was the commander of the city. According to the report of Mutasarrıf of Muş, the telegraph was concerning the dismissal of governor Nazım Pasha, which was publicized the following day via announcement in the marketplace.[225] There was no mention of a decree to dismiss the Governor, Nazım Pasha, however. Instead, there was only a request by the governor himself asking about the possibility of a change in his position on the 31st of March.[226] Following the announcement on the first day of April, the shops were reopened, but when the committee found out that Governor Nazım Pasha still occupied his seat, all shops were closed again. The British Consul Shipley had observed the situation in the city on the 3rd of April as follows:

> *The delay in the departure of the Mushir and the absence of any offi cial statement from the capital seem to be producing an impression among the Moslems that the authorities do not intend to keep faith with them and the bazaars have again been closed. The attitude of the Moslems towards the Christians is reassuring and friendly as hitherto, and they continue to show great self-restraint and regard for public order, but the situation is anomalous (there is always a risk of compli cations). The position of the Vali is unstable – he has now no author ity; and in the interest of both Moslems and Christians it is most de sirable that definite orders should be sent from Constantinople, either for his dismissal or for the immediate departure of the Mushir. The troops continue to show marked friendliness towards the population.*

224 BOA. Y.PRK.BŞK.76/3, 1. 17 Mart 1322 (March 30, 1906).

225 BOA. DH.MKT. 1066/29, Lef 5, 2. 25 Nisan 1322 (May 8, 1906).

226 BOA. Y.PRK.UM. 78/70, 1. 18 Mart 1322 (March 31, 1906). "Ahval-i mahalliye defaa'tle arz edilmiş olmagla memuriyeti hazire-i cakeranemden afvıma"

The Palace sent an order to Zeki Pasha on the 3rd April 1906. The order briefly clarified the position of the Governor and the situation in the city. Then, Zeki Pasha was ordered to send in troops to provide security in the city.[227] At the same time, Governor Nazım Pasha sent a telegraph to the Palace by arguing that the telegraphs that were sent from Erzurum were not valid because the telegraph office was occupied by the protestors.[228] The protest meetings spread to the districts of Erzurum, such as Hasankale, Bayburt, and Namervan. Similar to Erzurum, shop owners refused to obey the rule of the district governors and closed their shops in Hassankale.[229]

During these days, one of the main concerns of the Palace was the Armenian issue. Due to the problems between the Armenian revolutionaries and the state, the Palace officials feared the possible spread of the revolutionary ideas in the city. Zeki Pasha's telegraph also mentioned that although the Muslim population's problem was with the new taxes, Armenians of Erzurum had been working to take advantage of the situation to spread their revolutionary ideas. Hence, Muslim society would be warned about the political attitudes of Armenians. This concern was the other reason of why Zeki Pasha was ordered to send the troops into the city. If the gendarmes and the police of Erzurum did not achieve to stop the crowd, the troops would quickly assume control of the situation. Moreover, the commander of the army in Erzurum was advised to be careful about using firearms. The army would use firearms only if they were to face an armed conflagration involving the protestors.[230]

227 BOA. BEO.2798/209798 Lef 1, 1. 22 Mart 1322 (April 4, 1906); BOA. Y.PRK.ASK. 238/11 1. 21 Mart 1322 (April 3, 1906).

228 BOA. Y.PRK.UM. 78/73, 22 Mart 1322 (April 4, 1906).

229 BOA. Y.MTV. 285/60, 1. 21 Mart 1322 (April 3, 1906).

230 Ibid., 1.

In brief, on the one hand, thousands of people gathered together around the telegraph office demanding the dismissal of governor Nazım Pasha and postponement of the tax collection. On the other hand, the Armenian revolutionaries had been looking for opportunities for their political movement. Besides, the police and gendarmeries of the city did not achieve to stop the protests. Responding to the chaos in the city and the request of the Nazım Pasha, the Palace sent Zeki Pasha to investigate the events. Zeki Pasha did not manage to visit the city however, because he was engaged in a military operation against the rebels in Dersim. He sent troops to Erzurum to control and investigate the situation instead.

Zeki Pasha's first report following the investigation, was crucial for the decision making process in Istanbul. On the 2nd of April, Zeki Pasha learned that the committee would soon force the Governor to leave the city.[231] According to him, if the protestors succeeded to force a Governor to leave a province, the protests could provide motivation for all opposition movements. Additionally, he understood that most of the police and gendarmeries of the city were dismissed from their offices during the protest, and only military power remained in the city.[232] He concluded that because the protests spread to almost all districts of the city, it was impossible to stop the chaos via military power.

The position taken by Marshall Zeki Pasha did not satisfy the bureaucrats in Istanbul. The Palace argued that because the military officials advised dismissing the governor, the crowd's faith in their righteousness of their cause raised the protests to a whole new level and further motivated the populace of

231 BOA. Y.MTV. 285/75 Lef 2, 1. 20 Mart 1322 (April 2, 1906). "bir takım ahalinin Erzurum'u terke çakerlerini icbar edecekleri anlaşılmış olup bunun ne derece vahim olacağı"

232 BOA. Y. PRK.ASK. 238/11 15 Mart 1322 (March, 28, 1906); BOA.Y. MTV. 285/75 Lef 2, 1. 21 Mart 1322 (April 3, 1906) "tahkikata bakılır ise ortada polis ve jandarma bulunmadığı gibi vali müşir hazretlerine de muhafaza-i sükun ve asayiş emrinde bir gune tedbir ve çare görülemediği ve ortada askerden başka bir kuvvet kalmadığı anlaşılmaktadır."

the city. In other words, the committee felt they had the implicit support of the Army. The Grand Vizier Ferid Pasha sent a telegram to the Interior Ministry on the 3rd of April stating that because the crowd felt the military was on their side, they raised their voice higher with each day. In addition to this, it was impossible to change the governor without conducting an investigation. It was also impossible to delay tax collection. The Palace chose two inspectors as special commissioners who were composed of a State Council Court of Appeals judge, Mustafa Bey, and the former sub-governor of Muş, Hüsni Bey.[233] Until the arrival of two inspectors, Zeki Pasha's man from Erzincan was ordered to go to the city and arrest the protests' leaders.[234]

It is important to note that the central bureaucracy insisted on maintaining his position without any change. The government insisted on seeing the protests as a security problem and worked to handle this problem by counseling the crowd and ordering the commander to arrest the leaders of the protestors. From the beginning of the first telegraph, when it was sent at the beginning of March until the 4th of April, the position of the Palace was stable. However, because the local powerholders demonstrated their failure to stop the protest meetings, the Palace accepted to send inspectors.

Zeki Pasha responded on the 5th of April to the accusation that the military gave implicit support to the protestors, by stating that all orders of the Sultan had been followed carefully. However, Nazım Pasha had jeopardized the daily lives of the people, and the only solution was his dismissal. He also argued that because his advice did not produce any change, his reliability was now questioned by the sixty thousand people of the Erzurum province. He also added the petitions of the populace to his reply. According to those petitions, the shop owners would not open their shops until they saw a decree to dismiss the governor. They stated that if the Sultan were to lay low thousands of lives

233 BOA. BEO. 2798/209799, 21 Mart 1322 (April 3, 1906).

234 BOA. Y. PRK.ASK. 238/17, 22 Mart 1322 (April 4, 1906).

for the governor's grace, there was nothing to do.[235] Mufti Lütfullah Efendi, Abdurrezzak Efendi, and his 23 fellows, and Mehmed Hamid Bey sent another petition on the 4th of April. They clarified one more time what had happened in the previous 20 days and argued that they suffered under the cruelty of Nazım Pasha. According to them, they never thought to threaten the security in the city. They went to the telegraph office because that was the place where the commoners could make the Sultan hear about their situation. The Governor forced them to close their shops and put pressures on the petty-notables of the city by utilizing military power on the 28th of March. Their intention was more innocent than of sheep. They had risked death to save the law, the orders of the Quran, and the glory of the Ottoman Empire. They were sixty thousand people ranging from twenty-five to seventy-five years old, and all of them believed they were innocent. Their shops were closed, and they would not open the bazaar until the dismissal of the governor.[236]

The central government was on the ropes after it did not find support among the military commanders. Under the circumstances, Grand Vizier Ferid Pasha changed his vision and decided to appoint Nazım Pasha to another seat in such a situation. On the 5th of April, Nazım Pasha was swapped with Ata Bey, who was the Governor of Diyarbekir.[237] Nazım Pasha was now appointed as the Governor of Diyarbakır, and Ata Bey was now appointed to Erzurum.[238] Since Nazım Pasha had left the city before the arrival of Ata Bey,

235 BOA.Y.PRK.ASK. 238/18, 2-4. 22 Mart 1322 (April 4, 1906).

236 BOA. Y.PRK.MŞ. 08/38, 1. 22 Mart 1322 (April 4, 1906). "Masumuz. Hasılımız merhamete şayan... Ölürüz de adaletle emr eden Kur'an-ı Kerim'in, Şeriat-ı Ahmediyenin, Devlet Ebed Müdded Osmaniye'nin şan ve şerefini muhafazadan geri durmayız Padişah adaletpenah efendimiz hazretlerinin vekalet-i karyesi namına zulmü 'adet edinen valiyi kabul eylemeyiz"

237 BOA. İ.DH.1444/24, 1. 23 Mart 1322 (April 5, 1906); Demirel, *İkinci Meşrutiyet Öncesi Erzurum'da Halk Hareketleri (1906-1907),* 26. According to the report of the inspector- the governor left the city on the 7th of April.

238 BOA. İ.HUS.140/117 Lef 2, 1. 31 Mart 1322 (April 13, 1906).

Governor-General Şevket Pasha was appointed as acting governor until Ata Bey arrived in the city. Ata Bey did not reached his post until May 1906.[239] Furthermore, with a decree of the Palace, the tax collection was paused for a limited time.[240] The British consul Shipley stated the situation as follows;

> *Vali has been transferred to Diarbekir. Governor-General of latter place appointed here. .... Neşed Pasha action temporarily pending the arrival of General of division from Erzincan. Vali leaving tomorrow morning. Town quiet and business, it is expected, will be resumed tomorrow.*[241]

The dismissal of the governor was a victory for the committee. The next day, they opened all the shops in the bazaar, and social life was normalized.[242] The mufti and his companions also expressed their gratitude to the Palace in their message on the 7th of April.[243] Nevertheless, the celebration of the protestors was cut short for three reasons. First, the committee had been refusing to pay the new taxes, but there was no ultimate change in the Empire's position. Second, although they forced the governor to leave, they were well aware that they would face the same problems when the new governor arrived. Third, two inspectors were on the way to Erzurum. The leaders of the protestors needed to persuade these inspectors about their rightfulness of their cause.

While the inspectors and the new governor were on the way to the city, Şevket Pasha governed the city as acting governor. He informed the Palace that the protestors had opened their shops, but that there were many requests

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239 F.O. 424/210 No:372 p.39

240 Demirel, *İkinci Meşrutiyet Öncesi Erzurum'da Halk Hareketleri*. 27.

241 F.O. 195/2222, 102. "Erzurum Poll Tax" (April 6, 1906) Also see: BOA. Y.A.HUS.501/92, 24 Mart 1322, (April 6, 1906).

242 Ibid., "Poll Tax" "Ex-Vali left this morning. Shops are now open and demonstration at an end." (6 April 1906).

243 BOA. Y.A.HUS. 501/11, 1. 25 Mart 1322 (April 7, 1906). "Vali-i sabıkın oradan kaldırılmış olmasından dolayı atebe-i aliyye-i mülükaneye arz-ı teşekkürat ve kapanmış olan dükkanlar açılarak"

to dismiss certain provincial officers from various districts of Erzurum. He concluded that the movement became a motivation for all the populaces of the districts, and that he would act against the leaders of the movement according to the inspectors' report.[244]

The leaders of the protest meetings understood that the dismissal of Nazım Pasha was not as a big victory as they initially thought. They knew that they were going to be targeted if they did not succeed in convincing the inspectors. However, it is important to note that their movement influenced the British Consulate. The Consul Shipley magnified the protests by framing the meetings as the outspoken freedom of criticism. He also added that, "nor were references wanting to recent events in Russia, while hopes were openly expressed that the financial control established in Macedonia might be extended to Erzurum." He also reinforced the relationship between the Muslims and Christians during the protests by stating that the Muslim population of the city had maintained the public order, and even though there was no cooperation with the Christians, the relationship between these groups had remained positive except for two isolated individual incidents.[245]

Nazım Pasha did not desire to govern Diyarbakır and asked the Palace about the possibility of appointing him to another position. He was appointed as the Governor of Kastamonu after a short time. Yet, his career in Kastamonu did not last long because of the effects of the reports of the investigators on the Porte. A decree stated that although the central government had not dismissed an officeholder by relying on the populace's petitions, the governor Nazım Pasha was nevertheless guilty because he had not understood the significance of the reactions in time and had caused chaos to unfold in Erzurum.

244 BOA. BEO. 2811/210786, 3. 7 Nisan 1322 (April 19, 1907)

245 F.O 424/210 No:7 April 12, 1906 Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor; F.O 195/2222 pp.113-118. "Demonstration against Ex-Vali of Erzurum, Nazım Pasha, closing of shops by Musulmans"

Nazım Pasha rejected all claims against him and asked about the possibility of delaying the decree that dismisses him.[246] However, Nazım Pasha did not succeed in convincing the Porte. His career continued and be held various seats until he was killed during the 31st March revolt.

§ 3.3 Legitimization of the Mass Movement

Until the end of April 1906, the inspectors interrogated the petty-notables, the provincial officials, and religious leaders from Erzurum about what happened during the prior month. The committee came together more than once during this month and developed a strategy to convince the inspectors. As a result of the decision in the meetings, the *ulema* of the city, *muderris, mufti Lütfullah, and the petty-notables* created a report which explained the events and the reasons for the protests from the perspectives of the protestors. The report was signed by Müderris Nurizade Süleyman, Müderris İbrahim Paşa Hamid, Müderris-i gümrük Receb er-Raci, Müderris-i fıkıh Süleyman, Nakibü'l-eşraf Es-seyyid Abdürrezzak Galib, Müftü Lütfullah Vehbi, Müderris Kağızmanlı İsmail Hakkı, Müderris Mehmed and their 1050 fellows.[247]

The report is a very-well, organized text. It is divided into sections, and all sections include a fresh claim about the misdeeds of the government.[248] All claims in all sections cite examples. In this sense, the report clarified how the protestors conceptualized the government and what they expected from it.

In the introduction part, the report announces that the main aim of the report was to explain why the people of Erzurum showed opposition to the domestic animal and personal income taxes. They mentioned what happened in Erzurum during the prior 50 years to clarify their position and argued that

246 BOA. BEO. 2840/212995, 1-2. 19 Mayıs 1322 (June 1, 1906).

247 BOA. DH.MKT. 1066/29, 4. 25 Nisan 1322 (May 8,1906).

248 It is important to note that, the report contains 5 sections but the writers s with jump to section 4 after section 2. Hence the report ends with section 6.

the city went through two great wars against Russia that destroyed the economic and social life of Erzurum. The city lost seventy to eighty thousands of people during these wars. Moreover, the populace was forced to live under famine conditions, fed themselves in a manner befitting animals due to the food shortages. Two great earthquakes also destroyed the houses and shops of the city. Two cholera epidemics caused further destruction that killed thousands of people. The Armenian revolutionary movement launched two great revolts in the city. According to the report, despite the people of Erzurum being forced to live under such conditions that destroyed the populace's social and economic lives, they remained loyal to the Sultan and continued to feed the Imperial Army.[249]

After the introduction, the protestors begin to criticize the Ottoman Government for its attempt to collect the same tax without focusing on the extraordinary conditions of the provinces. They argue that Erzurum's peasants who lived under harsh winter conditions were being forced to pay as much as the peasants of the provinces where good weather conditions guaranteed better harvests.[250] In addition to the bad weather conditions, they also focus on the absence of infrastructure in the city. For instance, because of the lack of roads to the port, and because of the lack of security on the roads, the trade of

249 Ibid., Lef 5,1. ""Hayvanatı ehliye ve vergi-yi şahsi rüsümunun afvı hakkında edilen tazarruatın menba'ı ihtiyacdır. Uzaklardaa nakl-i efkara ihtiyac yok. 50 senelik bir zamanı tahlil etmek kifayet eden bu 50 sene zarfında bu vilayet Rusya'ya karşı edilen iki muharebenin ateşleri içinde yandı. 70-80 bin şehid verdi. Bu vilayet 2 şedid kaht u gulanın tesirat-ı müdhişesiyle mahvolur bir dereceye geldi hayvanat gibi ot otladı. Açlıkdan binlerce adam telef oldu. Bu vilayet ortalığı bulgur gibi kaynatan iki büyük zelzele gördü. Asar-ı harabesi hala yangın yerine benzeyen bu şehr-i sefilin her taşından anlaşılabilir. Bu vilayet Ermenilerin çıkardığı 2 iğtişaş sebebiyle birçok şeyler kaybetti. Ermeni çetelerinin hala taarruzuna maruz bulunuyor. Bu vilayet zuhur eden muharebeler kadar ibraz-ı şiddet eyleyen 2 büyük koleraya cevelangah oldu. Bu vilayet asırlardan beri ordular besledi."

250 Ibid., 1.

the city did not develop to the extent it did in the port cities. Thus, the shop-owners of Erzurum became the local serfs of the European traders or the shop-owners of Istanbul.[251] Citing these issues, they directly criticized Governor Nazım Pasha and the local officers because these people were seen as the reason for their poor conditions.[252] After the authors paint the local bureaucrats as the symbol of corruption in the city, they stated that their main aim is to show the Sultan the situation in which they lived in. To that end they first sent petitions to Governor Nazım Pasha, but he refused to help. Only then did they decide to send petitions to Istanbul.[253]

The protestors also argued that they did not think to mount a protest by closing all the shops and organizing meetings until that direst of times. When Mustafa Agha's troops attacked them with Governor Nazım Pasha's order, only then did they resort to shut down the city's daily life.[254]

The authors of the report asked for their exemption from the looming punishment, due to these issues. They explained what happened in March and why they refused to pay these taxes from their perspective. As a conclusion, they claimed governor Nazım Pasha and his officials were the true reason for the rising protests against the government.[255] Hence, their other demand is also punishment of the governor.

After these explanations, they turned their sights on Nazım Pasha through focusing on the relationship between the governor and other notables, his attitudes towards the religious leaders, the corruption in the government, the

251 Ibid., 2. "intizamsızlığı harablığı hasebiyle bir çok kazalara meydan veren kışı öyle yazı böyle bulunan bir yoldan artık ne beklenebilir günde dört saat ancak kat edebilen öküz arabalarından sürat nokta-i nazarından ticaret ne istifade edebilir."

252 Ibid., 2.

253 Ibid., 3. "gece yarılarında polis ve jandarmalarla ahaliden bazılarını konağına celbedib bu müracaatta devam ederseniz sizi .... ederim asarım keserim gibi sözlerle tehdide başladı."

254 Ibid., 4.

255 Ibid., 4.

corruption in the finance of the government, and the governor's attitude against the court of law's bureaucrats in the city. Most of their claims are not valid, but they try to legitimize their protest with these claims. By doing this, the protestors also aimed to respond to the accusations of some officials directed at them. During the revolt, the local officials worked to persuade the Imperial center by claiming that these protests had been the result of the revolutionary ideas developed within Muslims and Armenians. However, the authors of the report reject having a relationship with the revolutionaries, and as a reply, they criticized these officials by defining them as the revolutionaries.[256]

The first claim against Nazım Pasha is that his support to the Armenian notables and Armenian revolutionaries. They accuse Nazım Pasha because he cooperated with the Armenians and supported the rights of Armenian notables such as Pastırmacıyan Setrak, Ohannes, and Dikran. Matatyan, who was the director of the Sanasaryan Armenian school, and two other teachers of the school, whose names were Onikyan and Apolyon, are defined as the best friends of the governor. Due to the cooperation with Matatyan, the governor is alleged to have a hidden sympathy for the Armenian revolutionary movement in the city. For example, they focused on the toleration of revolutionaries who visited Erzurum's villages as doctors but who actually labored to raise revolutionary ideas in Armenian villages. These revolutionaries were arrested by Hüsnu Bey, who was the mutasarrıf of Muş and the inspector of the events.[257] This was the first attempt of the protestors to persuade the inspector Hüsnü Bey by aiming to demonstrate and underline the difference between him and the governor.

In actuality, Matatyan, as the best friend of the governor, never supported the Armenian Revolutionary Movement. He was among the most famous

256 Ibid., 3. "acaba Vali bir fikr-i ihtilalin menhusu lekeleriyle bu mübarek memleketi lekedar etmek mi istiyordu."

257 Ibid., 3.

Armenians of the city who opposed the activities of the revolutionaries. As the report aimed to prove the relationship between the governor and the revolutionaries, the protestors tended to interpret all relationships between the Armenians and the governor as proof of his support for the Armenian Revolutionaries. Moreover, they also stated that the governor desired a clash between the army and the Armenian villagers, and that for this reason, he forced the soldiers to loot the properties of Armenian villages by not providing food for the army on time.[258] This claim was also not valid, but they managed to define the governor as a person who sympathized with the revolutionary non-Muslims through such examples.

The authors' second claim involves the supposed insult of the governor directed at the *ulama* and *Islam.* According to them, one of the city's well-known *mudarris*, Hacı Süleyman Efendi was removed from his table to secure chairs for the Armenian *Marhasa* during an event. The authors argued that Nazım Pasha did not only insult Süleyman Efendi because of his fatwa against drinking wine and attending balls but also that this was an act against Islam because the hadith said the *ulama* were the representatives of the prophet.[259]

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258 Ibid., 6-7. "Oğullarımızdan karındaşlarımızdan aldığımız mektupları işittiğimiz sözleri yazacak olursak en sengin kalpleri eritecek enva-ı sefalet meydana gelir. Hudud boyunda düşman-ı dine karşı gece gündüz uykusuz kalan, istirahat nedir unutan asakir-i şahaneyi, mücahidin-i İslamı bu hain senelerce aç bıraktı. Ramazan ... çavdar ununda ziyade çamurlu topraklı bulunan ekmeklerle oruç tuttular. Efkarlarına iç yağı ile su ile yapılmış lapa karın açtılar kendi tıynetinde meknuz olan hıyanet kadar onlar da sadakat bulunduğunu ümit etmiyordu. Silah terk etsinler silaha sarılanlar Ermeni köylerine saldırsınlar gibi hülyalara düştü. Niyat-ı hainanesinin meydana gelmediğini gördükçe köpürdü. Bizzat Erzurum'da –Aşağıda arzedilecektir- Asakir-i Şahane hakkında yapmadığı hıyanet kalmadı. Vali-i sabık binlerce askerin hayatına kıymış dehşetli bir canidir."

259 Ibid., 8-9. "...Ermeni marhasası ve rüfekası bir parça geç geldi sandalye dahi güya bulunamaz olduğu için Hacı Süleyman Efendi, o timsal-i ilm ü din ve bazı ulema kaldırttırılarak sandalyeleri marhasa efendi ve rüfekasına verildi. Hacı Süleyman Efendi, bir marhasa ile değişildi: (el-ulema veraset-ül el-enbiya) hadis-i şerifi şirke hürmet etmekle haşa tahkir edildi. Valinin hiç olmazsa bu aleni kabahatin üstünü örtmek için faillerini

They also criticized the Governor because he failed to rebuild certain mosques in the city that were destroyed in the last earthquake, one of the ruins of which became a house for prostitutes. The most important target of criticism was the decision of Nazım Pasha to organize a feast during the first day of *Muharrem*. From the protestors' perspectives, the governor's decision to organize a ball and a feast while they were weeping because of the killing of Husein, who was the grandson of prophet Muhammad, in Kerbela, was a direct attack on Islam. They also added that the governor changed the order of names in the ceremonies. According to them, the governor replaced the seat of *ulama* with non-Muslim *religious* leaders' seats and greeted them before the Muslims.[260]

The third chapter of the report mentions corruption in the provincial government and the municipal council. They focus on the lack of infrastructure. Due to the lack of infrastructure, the water-wells of the city contained foul water. While people of Erzurum were getting sick because of the foul water, the governor was accused of hiring a man to transport clean water from Paşapınarı to his residence. They also claim the governor had been involved in corruption during the building of a new hospital,[261] and that he refused to pay salaries on time. Besides, while the former office had been enough for a governor, he erected a new residence. He also did not allow people to receive

bir parça mesul tutması icab etmez miydi? Yoksa vali şerik-i mefesedetlerine karşı rütbe-i celile-i vezaretten ne türlü istifadeler edileceğinin numunesini göstermek mi istiyordu? Bir belediye çavuşunun alacağı meşru mahsusattan daha noksan mahsusata kanaat ederek elli altmış seneden beri medrese-nişin bulunan, ifa ve ala-yı diyanet için belki dört beş bin alim ve fazıl yetiştirmiş olan Hacı Süleyman Efendiyi şarab-ı hamr aleyhinde idare-i lisan eylediğinden, balolardan anlamadığından, raksetmek bilmediğinden dolayı yad u ağyara karşı hem insaniyet namına olsun bu tahkire hedef etmemeliydi."

260 Ibid., 10.

261 Ibid., 10.

their alimony.[262] Furthermore, the governor favored nepotism and handed out district seats to his men. When these people engaged in graft, the governor fired them and announced his unawareness of the ongoing corruption.[263] They also stated that the governor spent most of his time out of the city, and he was not interested in the problems of society.

The accusations about the governor and some officials continued throughout the report. The authors mentioned that the governor had refused to enforce the law and did not allow the officials to put some criminals in jail.[264] In addition to this, the governor provided bureaucratic positions to some of those people who were known as murderers and criminals. These people became the oppressors of the peasantry in the province.[265]

The *mudarrises* concluded their report with a warning. They believed their movement was righteous because of these issues, which they clarified. Hence, they finished with the sentence: Their protests against the officers would continue until they saw the resolution of their problems.[266]

The report of the protestors and the tour of the inspectors in the city influenced the inspectors, and they began to investigate the accusations about the former governor. On the 13th of May, Husnü Bey, the former *mutasarrıf* of Muş, wrote an inspector's report to the center about the mass movement.

262 Ibid., 10.

263 Ibid., 13. "Baytariye idaresi evamir-i nizamiyeyi mektum tutup usul ve nizama muvafık olmayarak ahaliyi istedikleri gibi soymakta idi artık canı da boğazına çıkan ahali müracaat ettiler vali müracaatın önünü almak için infisalinden birkaç gün evvel rüsumat muhasebecisi Abdülhamid Efendi ile Körükçü oğlu Rıza Efendiyi tahkik ve tetkike memur etti. Bu dairenin yediği içtiği kaçırdığı ... ettiği paralardan sarf-ı nazar hatta hilaf-ı kanun rüsumlar alındığı tebeyyün etti. Vali ne dese ne yapsa beğenirsiniz? "Böyle bir rüsum alındığından haberim yoktu." Dedi, halbuki alanların birisi kendi hademesinden idi. ve o işi dahi kapattı. "Niçin haberin yoktu?" sualine karşı bilmeyiz ki ne cevap verebilecek? Cevabı mı yok. Bir yalan daha söyleyecek."

264 Ibid., 14.

265 Ibid., 15-16.

266 Ibid., 16.

During the investigation, many rumors had spread around the city due to the chaotic atmosphere, but the inspectors did not accept all the rumors as facts behind the protest. Even after they left the city, many people fabricated news about the reason for the movement. For instance, Cennetzade Cemil Bey, as one of the well-known townsmen of the city, argued that Osman Zeki Efendi, who was one of the judges in Van, told him that an essential document of the protestors had reached to him in the Ilıca district. Nevertheless, the inspectors did not get any information from Osman Zeki until they left the city. When the Sublime Porte wanted to see this document, Osman Zeki Efendi rejected the claims and said it was about an unrelated illegal book that was sold in Erzurum.[267]

In their report, the inspectors provided details about the tax collection process in Erzurum. The main point in this issue was similar to that of the protestors. Accepting the protestors' starting point, inspectors claimed that the populace had organized in the Lala Pasha district due to the miscalculation of the real incomes of the people and the collector's attitudes of forcing people to pay more money.[268] In addition, Hasan Ağazade Faruk, Şamlızade Ahmed, and Akif Bey, as the city's dignitaries, had called for opposition against the new taxes. Besides, Hasan Ağazade Faruk was also against the governor because the government had fallen into arrears to Faruk Bey, who was responsible for providing goods to the military in Erzurum. The government had failed to pay back its debt for four years, the value of which was about 15,000 Ottoman Liras.[269]

Inspectors also stated that at the same time, the Hasan Basri district which was the poorest district of the city refused tax payment. The inspectors also accepted that the police and gendarmeries of Erzurum had not worked to resolve the problem because of their salaries were late. Since the governor

267 BOA. BEO. 2829/212168, 1 Ağustos 1322 (August 14, 1906).

268 BOA.DH.MKT. 1066/05, 1. 13 Mayıs 1906 (May 26, 1906).

269 Ibid., 1.

Nazım Pasha did not find any support among the city's security forces, he resorted to dismissing some officials, as stated, to relieve the protests. The report continued referencing the same claims as the protestors, that first the ulama and notables and then the military officials were summoned to the government. Finally, as the protestors had claimed, the inspector also accepted military intervention to be the turning point in the uprising.[270] However, the inspectors differentiated between the notables and ordinary people in the uprising. They argued that while the notables were also working to dismiss the governor, the populace's primary aim was to ensure the delaying of tax payment.

The inspectors also searched for the validity of the claims in the letter of the *mudarrises*. The collected amount from *hayvanat-ı ehliye* tax in the center of Erzurum was 1,316,000 Ottoman kurushes in 1905. However, it was only 291,000 kurushes in 1906. According to them, the reason for the decrease was the weather of the city, as the protestors had claimed. Husni Bey stated that Erzurum was a high-altitude city; 1400-2500 meters above sea level. For this reason, people fed animals in the sheep pens for six-seven months a year. The feed of the beasts of burden were the crops that were already excised as *A'şar*. As opposed to the provinces by the sea, the people did not have weather conditions favorable enough to feed their animals in meadows. Inspectors had accepted the claims of the protestors about the weather conditions by citing these same issues as one of the reasons behind the uprising.[271] Moreover, in the personal income tax, the problem behind the uprising was the corruption of officials. Although a major part of the populace who did not have enough income had been exempted from the personal income tax with the 1905 regulations, the tax collectors forced the people of the poorest districts such as Hasan Basri to pay these taxes. For this reason, the inspector also stated, the

270 Ibid., 1.

271 Ibid., 4.

new governor would be warned about misdeeds in the tax collection process. Since the crowd had been waiting nervously, the new governor was to delay the tax collection.[272]

Lastly, the inspectors compared the province's revenues between 1900 and 1906 to assess the validity of the claims about the corruption of the governor and other officials. Erzurum's revenue was around 297,000 Ottoman liras in 1900, while the revenues did not reach 275,000 Ottoman liras in the following years.[273] In addition to this, although the expenditures were around 195,000 Ottoman liras in these years, the inspector had confirmed that the government expenditure in 1905 was 333,000 Ottoman liras. Husnu Bey claimed that many people received their salaries without showing up to their job because of the nepotism in the Erzurum municipality.[274] The report ended by explaining the leader of the mass movement to be Hasan Ağazade Faruk, who was responsible for providing victuals to the military and the poor conditions of gendarmes and police officers in the province.

§ 3.4 Second Wave in Protest: October 1906

Ata Bey came to Erzurum on the 5th of May Saturday.[275] He promised to provide forgiveness in tax payments depending on the report of the inspectors. However, he did not sign any documents to back his words. After a short time, daily life in Erzurum was normalized. Nevertheless, the tranquility in daily life was not only about the displacement of Nazım Pasha, but also it was about

272 Ibid., 4.

273 Ibid., 3. In 1905, the revenue was around the amount of 1900, but the inspector explains this increase as the result of the rise in the commutation fee.

274 Ibid., 3.

275 F.O 195/2222. No: 11, 163 "Ata Bey new governor of Erzeroum" It is important to note that, according to another document in Foreign Office, the Grand Vizier stated that the new governor of Erzeroum had not yet reached his post on the 29th of May. See: F.O 424/210 No: 372 Sir No. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.

the delay of tax collection. Since the Imperial center did not provide any decree to abolish the collection of these two new taxes, the tranquility was feigned. Consul Shipley explained the situation on the 15th of July as follows:

> *... the town has to all appearance resumed its normal aspect, the situation cannot be considered as altogether satisfactory. The Mussulmans it is true, are now quietly pursuing their usual occupations, nor have I observed any sign whatever of a desire on their part to renew the conflict with the Government. I would, however, venture to point out that the present tranquility is more apparent than real, and is largely discounted by the fact that no attempt is being made by the Government to collect any of the obnoxious special taxes…*[276]

After a while, the Porte advised Ata Bey to organize a tour of the districts of Erzurum to find the reasons for problems and to convince the society to pay the taxes. Consul Shipley stated that Ata Bey did not start his tour until the mid of October due to health problems.[277] However, it was easy to find the leaders of the movement because these petty-notables defined themselves as the city's authority by handing a list that includes the names of the '*personas non grata'* to Ata Bey. The protestors identified these people as the people who co-operated with Nazım Pasha and worked to repress the populace during the protests. These were Şevket Efendi, who was the mayor, Asım Efendi and Akif Efendi, who were in charge of financial affairs, the head inspector Ahmet Efendi, Şevki Efendi, Gani Bey who were the police officers and Laz Ali Efendi.[278] The governor promised to dismiss these people from

276 Ibid., No. 12 Consul Shipley to Sir N. O' Connor "General Situation at Erzeroum"; also, in F.O 424/210 No. 12 (Inclosure in No:57) Erzeroum, (June 15, 1906).

277 F.O 195/222, 317 "Tour of the Vilayet, Vali has not yet made"

278 Turkdogan, "1906-1907 Erzurum Hürriyet Ayaklanması II," 503; Valuyskiy, "Vosstaniya v Vostoçnoy Anatolii nakanune mladoturetskoy revolyutsi," 48-65. According to Valuyskiy, the Russian consulate's report included details about the personas non grata in Erzurum. Canverir decided to meet Ata Bey in Ilıca while he was on the road to Erzurum to request the dismissal of these people. If the governor did not accept Canverir's request, they would not allow him to enter Erzurum. However, the Russian consul argued that, the governor general Şevket Pasha forbade the people of Erzurum to leave the city until Ata Bey arrived at the city center.

their seats, but he did not. Instead of those names, Ata Bey dismissed the head clerk of the tax office and vice-chief of tax collectors and one of the lieutenants of gendarmes for the misdeeds during the recent events.[279]

In June, the tax collector of Erzurum tried to collect the taxes again, but the reaction against the new taxes did not stop. The peasants of Namervan petitioned the Palace asking for forgiveness or a delay in the tax payment. The response came on June 9, 1906. The Palace repeated its argument emphasizing that the taxes had been collected in other provinces. The bureaucrats also defined this petition as a suspicious because no one from the district of Namervan had put their signatures on it.[280] Nevertheless, the governor had no desire to face another protest movement before establishing full authority over the city, so tax collection was delayed for a while.

Moreover, the Ottoman bureaucracy did not forget about the committee and waited for the right time to eject these people from the city. Ata Bey investigated the petty-notables and ulama in the urban center who held positions of influence. He sent a letter to İstanbul on the 3rd of September stating that the leaders of the uprising in March remained in power in the center. Ata Bey proposed the exile of these leaders because they grown accustomed to using the power of rumors to mobilize the society whenever they felt their authority came under threat. He argued that he provided order and peace with the help of military officers and the police, but because had not been any punishment of the people who had mobilized the protests in March, the leaders remained as powerful authorities in the eyes of the populace.

He organized a meeting with Nuri Pasha, who was the military commander of the 7th division, the Regent Hilmi Efendi, Brigadier Neş'et Pasha, and Salim Efendi as the head of the court of appeals to discuss in what ways

279 BOA. DH.MKT 1124/76, 23 Eylül 1322 (October, 7 1906). The names of these people were Şakir Efendi, Mustafa Efendi, and Timur Agha.

280 BOA. BEO. 2846/213417, 1. 27 Mayıs 1322 (June 9, 1906).

the state would respond to those people. Relying on the support of these officials, he decided to arrest ten people and exile all of them from Erzurum. The Mufti of Erzurum was on the list, but the officials asked the center about the possibility of providing a monthly salary to the Mufti as token of respect.[281] After they decided on the action of the provincial government, Ata Bey petitioned to the Sublime Porte on 14 September 1906 for legitimation. According to this telegraph, the member of society who joined the mass movements in March were ignorant. They had decided to join because the petty-notables had forced them to protest. However, the populace woke up to the depravity of those notables once they saw them using coercion in the marketplace and spreading rumors against the government. Thereby, the dignitaries who had organized the movements also earned the hatred of the ordinary people.[282] The committee was still provoking the populace against the government in the urban center.[283] Hence, Ata Bey was expecting for a decree that would allow him to arrest and exile these people. He convinced the Sublime Porte to do so; the Porte requested of Ata Bey to investigate the leaders of the movement. Ata Bey had already made his investigation and replied to the request by denouncing the committee members name by name after two days.[284] According to him, the committee consisted of eleven people. These were *Mufti Lütfullah Efendi, Şeyh Şamlı Hasanağazade Faruk Bey, Çulkıran Akif Agha, Refik Efendi of the Ayaspaşa İmamizade district, Şevket Efendi of the ulama, Pulcu Yusuf, Mevlud of the Mezararkası district, Hacı Sabri of the Hasanbasri district, Tahsin Bey, Butcher Fehim, and Butcher Kurban.*[285]

281 BOA. BEO. 2928/219569, 6-7. 21 Ağustos 1322 (September 3, 1906).

282 Ibid., 5; BOA. DH.ŞFR. 379/29, 1-3; BOA. İ.DH.1448/53, 2 Eylül 1322 (September 15, 1906).

283 Demirel. *İkinci Meşrutiyet Öncesi Erzurum'da Halk Hareketleri (1906-1907)*, 32.

284 BOA. BEO. 2928/219569 ; BOA.İ.DH. 1448/53, 2 Eylül 1322 (September 15, 1906).

285 Önder Göçgün provided further information about the coalition relying on Mehmed Nusret's *Tarihçe-i Erzurum*. In the book, Mehmed Nusret classified the coalition according to the

The names symbolized a coalition of Muslim merchants, artisans, and ulama of the city. Making sense of this coalition is crucial to understand the nature of the power holders for two reasons. First, the butchers and merchants had led the movement in March because the new taxes directly targeted the incomes of those artisans. For instance, butchers had to pay the tax for the animals they had as well as for the profit after they sold the meat of those animals. This amounted to double taxation for the butchers; the animal traders known as *canbaz*. Second, the domestic animal tax aimed to effectively tax the sheep owners known as *celeb*. These butchers were not simply artisans who had a small shop in the bazaar. Instead, they had been operating the entire animal trade in Erzurum. The role of the ulama was complex. Mufti Lütfullah Efendi had taken center stage during the protests. First, Nazım Pasha aimed to use his social influence to stop the movement, but he failed because the Mufti was on the side of the protestors. Moreover, the artisans, merchants, and *mudarrises* accepted the Mufti as the wise man of the city, and they led the movement under his supervision. The failure to form a coalition with the Armenians was the most prominent symbol of this issue. Lütfullah Efendi rejected mounting a combined reaction of Muslims and non-Muslims against the government. The Mufti's career was also critical in the process. He came to Erzurum from the Kosovo's province,[286] where the first protest against the provincial rulers and the new taxes observed. Moreover, the dynamism of

report of police officer Sabri Efendi: The first rank criminals were Mufti Lütfullah, Hacı Akif, Abdi Beyzade, Tahsin Bey, Durak Bey, Hasanağazade Faruk, Kirlizade Yusuf, Hacı Şevket, Hacı Şamizade Şeyh Efendi, Mezararkalı Mevlüd, Seyfullah, Fazıl Bey, Fehmi and Mehmed Efendi; the second rank criminals were Nazım Bey, Dede Bey, Yusuf, Maranci Tevfik, Çeltikoğlu Hacı, Kavutzade Hafız, Hacı Halilefendizade Şevki Bey; the third rank criminals were Hacı Sabri, Malyemezzade İzzet. Although the memoir of Barutçuzade Şevki Bey cited these names as criminals Ottoman and British archival sources did not include the name of all these people. See: Önder Göçgün, II. Meşrutiyet'e Öncülük Eden Bir Hareket: Erzurum İhtilali ve Ona Dair Bazı Belgeler in *Türk Kültürü Araştırmaları*,(1985): 253-281. Also see: M. Nusret, *Tarihçe-i Erzurum Yahud Hemşehrilere Armağan*, 63-64.

286 BOA. Y.A.HUS. 507/12 Lef 5, 2. 12 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 25,1906).

revolutionaries in daily politics had been more visible than in Erzurum. Hence, despite there being no sign showing the relationship between the Young Turk movement and the mass movements in Erzurum, the state officials thought Mufti could have developed a relationship with them during his duty in the province of Kosovo. The coalition of ulama, petty-notables, and artisans was also a reason why the military officials preferred wait and see politics during the protests. This was the coalition of the people who controlled the city's social and economic life, and the military officials refrained from causing the dissolution of daily lives in the city.

On the evening of the 23rd of October 1906, Governor Ata Bey ordered the exiling of the committee's most important members in accordance with the Sultan's order.[287] The head clerk Tahsin Pasha ordered the exile of four people to Sivas, Diyarbakır and Aleppo. The governor was also informed that Mufti Lütfullah would be exiled to Ankara with a 500 kurushes salary. The first targets were Müfti Lütfullah Efendi, Pulcu Yusuf Efendi and Kasımpaşalı Tahsin.[288] They were arrested around 19:00 and expelled from Erzurum. The British Consul Shipley described the event as, "the prisoners being hurried off in a carriage with a small escort of zabtiehs."[289] The investigation was not only concerning these people. All of the eleven people were targeted, and after the exile of the first group, two influential petty notables came next. They were Hacı Akif Efendi and Faruk Bey. However, they resisted the gendarmeries and attempted to organize a meeting against these orders.[290] According to

287 BOA. İ.DH. 1448/53, 5. 7 Eylül 1322 (October 20, 1906).

288 Türkdoğan, "1906-1907 Erzurum Hürriyet Ayaklanması II," 503; BOA. Y.A.HUS. 507/57. 1. 29 Teşrinievvel 1322 (November 11, 1906)

289 F.O. 195/2222, No: 25368/378 Erzurum (October 27. 1906).

290 BOA. Y.A.HUS. 507/57 Lef 3, 1. The British Consul stated that *the arrest of the mufti and his companions was applied about two o'clock in the morning or possibly a little later.* See; F.O. 195/2222 No: 25, 368-378. Erzurum (October 27, 1906). Skyrabin also argued that 5 people were exiled during the event. See: Kars, *1908 Devrimi'nin Halk Dinamiği,* 134. (From Valuyskiy's article.)

Ata Bey's telegraph to Marshal Zeki Pasha, while the police officers were arresting the Mufti, the lieutenant Raif Bey who was the brother of the Mufti, had declared he would do everything in his power to save the Mufti.[291] It was the fifth of Ramadan and people who were on the street heading for the mosque, learned of the event quickly.

While the police officers went to the houses of the petty-notables, the men of Faruk Bey, who were Hacı Hamdi, Kör Ali, and Sabri, clashed with the officers to save Faruk Bey.[292] Shipley also clarified their escape in his report. While one of these two people "escaped by menacing the police with his revolver the other had escaped by barricading his house and refusing to obey the commend to (given to) them."[293] After the spread of the news around the marketplace, a group of people came to the governor's office and attacked the residence, injuring the gendarmeries who were responsible for its protection.[294] The crowd around the governor's office swelled to about 300-400 people within thirty minutes. The gendarmeries who were responsible for protecting the governor's office had been on standby because the governor did not allow the use of firearms against the crowd. The crowd was informed that they would be arrested if they did not leave. Ata Bey also mentioned that people chose to target the governor's office because they thought the Mufti was there. However, when they learned of the exile of the Mufti, they proceeded to the residence of the governor.[295] Since there was no reaction from

291 BOA. İ.HUS. 147/30 Lef 4, 1; BOA. DH.ŞFR 372/26, 11 teşrinievvel 1322 (October 24, 1906).

292 Türkdoğan, "1906-1907 Erzurum Hürriyet Ayaklanması II" 504. Kansu, *1908 Devrimi,* 56. Relying on the news of the Pro Armenia Journal, Aykut Kansu stated that the number of people who were exiled was 60.

293 F.O. 195/2222 No: 25, 368-378 Erzurum (October 27. 1906).

294 BOA. Y.A.HUS. 507/57; BOA. Y.A.RES. 139/53, 1-2. 12 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 25, 1906).

295 BOA. İ.HUS. 147/30 Lef 4, 1. 10 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 23, 1906). According to the memoir of Kazım Yurdalan, Durak Bey, Mezararkalı Mevlüd, Fehim Bey and Halil Bey were

the officers, the populace started to attack the residence, breaking its windows and doors.[296] After a while, two gendarmeries opened fire into the air to disperse the crowd, but they failed because the crowd had already broken through the governor's residence door. The protestors eventually captured both the governor's office and residence. Ten people, who were mostly belonged to the governor's family members, fled to the military post. The crowd proceeded to attack the barracks hoping to capture the governor's family, but the soldiers stopped them. The crowd also looted the governor's house and office.[297] Shipley observed that, "a large crowd of mussulmans assembled in front of the Vali's house, broke down the doors and windows, and forced their way in the Vali himself with his family escaping to a neighboring house."[298]

The movement was a direct reaction to Ata Bey's order to exile the Mufti and his fellows. When the protest began, governor Ata Bey and the city's judge hid in a house near his office, but the crowd found out him and attacked the house. The crowd also attacked the gendarmeries, who worked to protect the governor, and injured some of them. After a while, the governor yielded in order to save a gendarme from the hands of the populace.[299] Ata Bey mentioned that, after the crowd took him, he was beaten by 40 men.[300] His medical reports proved that the contusion on his shoulder was 6 cm wide and he had

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the leaders of the protests in front of governor's residence. See: İsmail Eyüpoğlu, *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Bir İttihatçı Kazım Yurdalan (1881-2-1962),* 32.

296 BOA.Y.A.HUS. 507/53; BOA.Y.A.RES. 139/52 Lef 2, 1-2. 12 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 25, 1906).

297 Ibid.

298 F.O. 195/2222 No: 25, 368-378 Erzurum (October 27, 1906.)

299 BOA.Y.A.HUS. 507/53, 2. 12 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 25, 1906).

300 BOA. İ.HUS. 147/30 Lef 4, 1. "Çakerleri ferik 40 elli kadar erazilin ortasında kaldığından bunlar biraz değnek ile urub bir taş ile de başımdan yaralamış oldukları halde bir izbeye girdim" Barutçuzade stated that a man whose name was Tellal Mustafa attacked the governor.

pus and panicula on his neck due to pounding by an axe. Doctors gave him an incapacity report for 20 days.[301]

Simultaneously, the judge of the city was captured by the crowd and he was injured like the governor. Then, the judge and the governor were imprisoned in the İbrahim Pasha mosque.[302] When the crowd did not stop their movement, the commander of the riflemen ordered his soldiers to open fire into the air, and this attempt dampened the chaos.[303] In addition to this, because the governor was injured, the committee allowed doctors to patch Ata Bey up while he was imprisoned in the mosque.[304] The same day, an Armenian newspaper, Yerkir from Tbilisi reported the events as the uprising in Erzurum. According to Yerkir, the uprising did not end with the incarceration of the governor in the İbrahim Pasha Mosque.[305] Shipley reported "the gates of

301 BOA.Y.PRK.ASK. 242/6 Lef 4, 1. 11 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 24,1906).

302 BOA.Y.A.HUS. 507/53 Lef 3, 1; BOA.Y.A.RES. 139/53 Lef 1-2. The name of the person who attack the governor was mentioned in the memoir of Barutçuzade Şevki Bey. See; Türkdoğan, "1906-1907 Erzurum Hürriyet Ayaklanması II," 504; Consul Shipley argued, the governor was injured *from a stone thrown by somebody whose identity is not known.* See: F.O. 195/2222 No: 25, 368-378 Erzurum /October 27, 1906).

303 Ibid.

304 BOA.Y. MTV. 290/131 Lef 3, 1. "...vali beyin cerhasının tedavisi için etıbbaca ihtimamatı evveliyede bulunulmuştur ledelhamd şimdilik iade-i afiyet etmiş gibi görünüyorsa da henüz cami-i mezkurda mukimdir..."

305 BOA. HR.SYS. 1331/76. The translation of news in Yerkir: "Yerkir reports the details of the new unrest that began in the city of Erzurum. According to the order from Constantinople, the Governor was to capture the instigators of the last strike and send them to Constantinople. The chief of police, together with policemen and gendarmes, managed to capture the mufti and other representatives of the people secretly from the society. The people became indignant, began to gather in masses and demand the extradition of those arrested. Volleys were fired into the crowd, many were wounded. Despite this, the chief of police with his son and one policeman were killed in front of the troops. The mob then attacked the Governor's residence, arrested him and imprisoned him in a mosque, demanding the extradition of their arrested representatives and threatening death if they refused. But without the Governor's order, they were already released. The convoy leading them was followed by a chase, which

the mosque closely watched by the crowd until at sunset the arrival of Mufti with his two companions."[306] Also, another group of people attacked the gendarmes outside the city, hoping to save Mufti Lütfullah Efendi, Pulcu Yusuf and Kasımpaşalı Tahsin. When the crowd attacked the governor's residence, the governor's wife was forced to write a telegraph to the district governor of Aşkale asking the Mufti and his two fellows to be sent back. They also forced Ata Bey to write a petition, but he promised to send the order after they allowed him to return back to his office. He also stated that if the committee planned to kill him, they should know that the Ottoman Government would not leave the province without a governor, and that they would face the consequences of their actions.[307]

The crowd was not affected by his threat and forced him to send an order to the district governor of Aşkale for the return of the Mufti and his companions.[308] Indeed, the event was heard in Aşkale because the governor contacted the district governor while he was in his residence. The governor did not mention about his petition because he desired to use it as a weapon against the crowd, but he failed because the Mufti and two other fellows were released within a short period of time. As Shipley stated, the governor was not allowed to return his office until the arrival of the Mufti and his two fellows. The governor was released when the crowd met Mufti Lutfullah Efendi at the gate of the city.[309]

The uprising immediate target was the governor, but the rebels attacked some police officials and gendarmes as well. The police officers who were responsible for arresting the committee members were targeted. During the

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caught them up after 8 hours of pursuit, skirmished with the soldiers and brought the people back. The Governor was beaten and suffered a head wound. The strike continues.

306 F.O. 195/2222 No: 25, 368-378 Erzurum (October 27, 1906).

307 BOA. Y.A.HUS. 507/53, 12 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 25, 1906).

308 BOA. Y.MTV. 290/131 Lef 2, 1. 12 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 25, 1906).

309 BOA. Y.A.HUS. 507/53.

event, the crowd attacked the Gürcükapı police station and killed the chief of the police, Tevfik Efendi, because the Mufti had been treated with gross indignity by the police officers charged with the duty of arresting him. Shipley stated that, "Mufti had been dragged from his head to the carriage and that a gag had been forced into his mouth. This report, whether true or not, seems to have excited the crowd."[310] A telegraph sent by the commander of Erzincan confirmed the misconduct against the committee during the investigation by stating that the Mufti was manhandled by the police officers, and the doors of houses of the others were chopped up, and police officers entered their bedrooms without any permission.[311] The military officers had blamed the attitudes of the police during the event. Barutçuzade Şevki added the name of the murderers by stating that "Hamal Şamil, Kürt Hasan and Abacı Mehmed killed the chief police Tevfik Efendi." They also killed Tahir Efendi, who was Tevfik's son and also a police officer. He was 25 years old. Both of them were killed in the police station of Gürcükapı, and their bodies were displayed on the streets of the city center. When Tahir's wife saw his husband's dead body, she was also torn and died soon after.

Another policeman on the list, the Second Commissary of the Tebrizkapı police station, Gani Bey, was killed in his police station at 23:30.[312] Kürt Hasan, Bezzaz Şükrü and Kasap Hüseyin (Hasan) killed Gani Bey.[313] The committee had performed the same procedure to the body of Gani Bey, dropping his corpse of at his house. The committee also planned to kill the regimental

310 F.O. 195/2222 No: 25, 368-378 Erzurum (October 27, 1906).

311 BOA. Y.PRK.ASK. 242/6 Lef 4, 1. 11 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 24, 1906).

312 BOA. Y.MTV. 290/131 Lef 4, 1. 11 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 24, 1906).

313 The names of the murderers were taken from the memoirs of Barutçuzade. However, Ottoman archival sources mentions the names of the people who murder someone during the events of 1906 and 1907 as Kürdoğlu Yusuf, Asker Fazıl, Adil, Bezzaz Şükrü, Kürdoğlu Mehmed, Çakmakcı Mehmed, Rıza and Celil. We do not know how many of those people attacked the police officers and how many of them were responsible for the events of 1907.

commander and major of the military, *Alaybeyi,* but they hid in the military office.[314] It is crucial to point out that, the major of the city was the person who ordered his soldiers to attack the crowd in front of the post office in the March uprising. In addition to all of these events, two commissars and a gendarmerie were heavily wounded and a soldier was scotched by the protestors.[315] Some police officers fled the city,[316] and the gendarmerie commander and the lieutenant of the central army sheltered themselves in the barracks.[317] While the crowd was attacking the police stations, the commander of Erzurum, Muharrem Agha, did not try to stop the revolt.[318] Ata Bey confirmed the attitudes of Muharrem Agha. According to Barutcuzade's memoir, one can conclude that Muharrem Agha co-operated with the committee.[319]

At around 01.00, Mufti Lütfullah Efendi and other members of the committee returned to the city. Hundreds of people welcomed them in front of the city gate. It was a celebration for the crowd, and they chanted as 'long live the sultan!' Then, the committee went to the İbrahim Pasha Mosque and released the judge and the governor.[320]

Ata Bey petitioned Istanbul on the 25th of October to explain what had happened after the police officers enforced his order two days prior. He mentioned that, the military commanders had given him a guarantee to provide security in the city before he ordered the exile of these people. They also discussed to exiling these people after Ramadan, but he ultimately decided to act

314 BOA. Y.A.HUS. 507/57 Lef 3, 1. 29 Teşrinievvel 1322 (November 11, 1906).

315 BOA. Y.MTV. 290/131 Lef 4, 1. 11 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 24, 1906).

316 For an example of a police officer who fled Erzurum, see: BOA. ZB. 98/24 16 Kanunuevvel 1322 (December 29, 1906).

317 BOA. Y.PRK.ASK. 242/6, 11 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 24, 1906).

318 BOA. Y.A.HUS. 507/53, 12 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 25, 1906); BOA.Y.A.RES. 139/53

319 Consular Shipley also mentions the name of Muharrem Agha as Muharrem Bey. For Ata Bey's confirmation concerning Muharrem Agha, see: BOA. İ. HUS. 147/30 Lef 4, 1.

320 BOA. Y.MTV. 290/131 Lef 4, 1. 11 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 24, 1906); BOA.Y.A.HUS. 507/53

immediately. Even thoug people had reacted to his order by killing police officers and though he remained in custody in the İbrahimpasha Mosque where was right across the military command center, there was no sign of the military's intention to stop the chaos in the city.[321] Sleepless for 40 hours and hungry for 24 hours, he was nevertheless eager to solve the problem. His suggestion was to declare martial law in Erzurum, arrest all the people who attended the protests and change the position of some of the military officials.[322] Furthermore, he pointed out that all the shops in the bazaar were closed except the bakeries during the events. The protestors tried to force the shopkeepers to keep the shops closed, but nobody listened to them, and all the shops were reopened on the 25th of October. Later, protestors had asked the army to hand them the commander of the gendarmerie, but because of the killing of the police officers, the army commander ordered his soldiers to use firearms if the protestors attacked the barracks. This order brought about security in the city.[323]

Zeki Pasha sent three telegraphs to the imperial capital during these days. He briefly explained what happened in Erzurum during the prior days, and he also suggested some regulations regarding the military offices. Unlike Ata Bey, he mentioned that similar to the uprising in March, the artisans had closed their shops immediately, and the city's economic life was shut down. In addition, the police officers were afraid to go out in the city. Zeki Pasha suggested replacing holders of certain positions in the military commandership to provide security in the city. He suggested replacing the regimental commander, who was the target of the protestors, with the commander of the 28th regiment, Mehmed Bey. Moreover, Zeki Pasha informed the capital that two commanders who were hiding in the military office were transported to

321 BOA. DH.ŞFR. 372/28, 1-6. 11 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 24, 1906).

322 Ibid., 1-6.

323 BOA. DH.ŞFR. 372/29, 1-3. 12 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 25, 1906).

the barracks in Morgof via the order of Ata Bey, and they had thus saved their lives.[324] Ata Bey believed Zeki Pasha's ideas could solve the problem and replaced the regimental commander with Mehmed Bey two days later.[325]

The bureaucrats in Istanbul discussed the events by focusing on the telegraphs which were sent by the governor, the protestors and the military officers. On the 25th of October, the Sublime Porte requested the suspension of the governor and military commander from their offices for the following specific reasons: Ata Bey was found guilty because he wrote articles in newspapers to convince the population instead of working to solve the problems. In other words, although the governor understood the reason for the problems in the city, he did not sufficiently strive to solve them. Therefore, the governor Ata Bey was dismissed from his seat. Ata Bey was expecting such a decree; he had mentioned in his telegraph that it was impossible to provide order in the city under his governorship after recent events.[326] Moreover, the military commander who visited Ata Bey, while he was injured in the İbrahimpasha Mosque was also dismissed from his seat for not ordering his soldiers to stop the protestors.[327] Tahsin Pasha sent the order of the Sultan to dismiss these people from their positions on the 25th of October.[328] In the order, the real reason for the dismissals was announced as the lack of authority caused by the incompetence of these officials. It focused on two problems. The first was the possibility of riot spreading to Armenians which could cause political problems between the government and other countries. The second was the

324 BOA. Y.PRK.ASK. 242/6, 11 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 24, 1906); BOA. İ.HUS. 147/30 10 Teşrinievvel 1322 (November 23, 1906).

325 Ibid.

326 Ibid.

327 BOA. Y.A.HUS 507/12, 12 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 25, 1906). Also see: BOA. İ.DH 147/27. October 25, 1906

328 BOA. İ.HUS. 147/30, 11. 12 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 25, 1906).

possibility of uprising spreading to the other provinces, which could spark a movement of total resistance against the government.[329]

Ata Bey left the city at the end of October. Nuri Bey, who was the Governor of Mamuratu'l-Aziz, was appointed as the new governor of Erzurum on October 29, 1906. Nuri Bey was an experienced governor because he was the former governor of Mosul and Diyarbekir.[330] Since Ata Bey left the city, Brigadier Neş'et Pasha was appointed as acting governor until Nuri Bey arrived.[331] Ahmed Pasha, the Imperial Commissioner of the Russo-Turkish frontier, was also replaced with Munir Pasha who was in command of the Erzurum Garrison.[332] The committee won its second fight against the governor and the bureaucrats. The committee members increased their power in the city, and they would become one of the most influential groups in the city's social, economic, and political life.

§ 3.5 A New Hope for Revolutionaries

> A Little while ago, the inhabitants of Kastamonu removed from office a governor who considered injustice and wrongdoing to be a requirement of rule, and they sent a telegram to Yıldız Palace that said: "We dismissed the governor! Send an honest person in his place!" The inhabitants of Kastamonu are the voice of masses and the cry of truth… The Palace, being compelled to carry out this Sublime Decree (issued)by the public, dismissed the governor immediately. Recently, with a peculiarly unyielding Turkish quest for justice, the inhabitants of Erzurum also forced the return of their banished muftis from exile. After removing the governor from his mansion and jailing him in the mosque, they expelled him (and) brought upon the police their

329 Ibid.

330 F.O. 195/2222 No. 26, 379-381 Consul Shipley's telegram. Erzurum (November 3, 1906).

331 Demirel, *İkinci Meşrutiyet Öncesi Erzurum'da Halk Hareketleri (1906-1907)*, 37.

332 F.O. 195/2222, 361 Consul Shipley's telegram of October 29 "Vali has informed me that Nouri, Governor General of Kharput has been appointed here and that Ahmed Pasha the Imperial Commisioner of Russo-Turkish frontier replaces Munir Pasha in command of Erzurum Garrison"

> (deserved) punishment. This is how justice is gotten. The entire world congratulates the inhabitants of Kastamonu and Erzurum
> Şurayı Ümmet 106, 15 December 1906 "Bir Nümune-i İmtisal"[333]

The dismissal of two governors in six months amplified everyone's interest in Erzurum. The Young Turk Party was among the groups who aimed to understand the dynamics of the events in Erzurum because the opposition of the Muslim-based crowd raised their hopes in their fight to re-open the parliament. Although the Ottoman historiography defines the events as the movements controlled by the political oppositions, the leaders of Young Turks learned of the movement through newspapers. After they did, Bahaeddin Şakir Bey sent a letter to the office of CUP (Committee of Union and Progress) in Lazistan on December 8, 1906, to ask about the possibility of creating an alliance with the protestors. He also mentioned the name of the committee as *Canverir* because the newspapers and Russian consul had defined it as such.

It is crucial to underline that the CUP had absolutely no ties with this committee. As Hanioğlu stated, "Even as late as February 1908, the CPU central committee in Paris was still trying to obtain the names of influential individuals in Erzurum, Van, and Diyarbekir." Since they did not know the local dynamics very well, they congratulated Zeki Pasha for leading the protests in the province.[334] Furthermore, the Revolutionary Federation of Armenians (Tashnaksutiun Organization) also had no idea about the leaders of the movements. As Garabet K. Moumdjiyan mentioned, the local ARF's report about the events in early 1907 mentioned, "we are not sure where these anti-government secret meeting will lead. They have been around for almost a year

333 The Passage is quoted from Nader Sohrabi. See: Nader Sohrabi, Revolution and Constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire and Iran, 85.

334 Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution. The Young Turks, 1902-1908,* 115.

now."[335] Mehmed Rauf Bey, who was the governor of Salonica and one of the former governors of Erzurum, also defined Zeki Pasha as the leader of the protests in his petition to the Palace. According to him, it was impossible to provide order in the city without accepting Zeki Pasha's authority and the reason behind the dismissal of the governors was their inclinations towards trying to create their own authority in the province. As an example, Rauf Bey mentioned that when he was the governor of Erzurum, there was a military commander whose name was Mehmed Bey. He dismissed Mehmed Bey from his seat because Mehmed Bey accepted Zeki Pasha as the only authority and refused to obey his orders. He argued that the return of Mehmed Bey as a regimental commander was a political ploy by Zeki Pasha to establish his control over all officials in the city. He suggested that the Sublime Porte could send Zeki Pasha as the officer of reforms.[336]

Nevertheless, Tahsin Pasha wrote a detailed analysis of the events during the same days and identified the uprising as the idea of the Young-Turk movement. Although he did not explain their roles during the protests, he blamed the people who were in exile in Erzurum. According to him, the people who had gotten fired from *Mekteb-i Tıbbiye* and *Mekteb-i Harbiye* and been exiled to Erzurum engendered the movement.[337] The implication of the claim was twofold: On the one hand, the revolutionary movement had been searching among the leaders of the protests to find possible partners and representatives. On the other hand, the new governor would directly attack them as scapegoats. In such an atmosphere, the petty-notables, artisans, ulama and the populace who benefitted from cooperating with each other increased their influences in the urban center. In other words, the Imperial center's inability to

335 Turk Sharzhumi Norutyunnere (Latest News from the Turkish Movement), Troshag, no. 2 180 (February, 1907): 19-20 Quated from Moumdjiyan, "Struggling for a Constitutional Regime: Armenian-Young Turk Relations in the Era of Abdulhamid II, 1895-1909," 243.

336 BOA. Y.PRK.UM. 79/28, 14 Teşrinisani 1322 (November 27, 1906).

337 BOA. İ.HUS. 147/28, 14 Teşrinievvel 1322 (October 27, 1906).

comprehend the reality provided greater space in the politics of the city for the actors of the protest.

The Sublime Porte also did not accept Rauf Bey's critics as valid and the commander who was suggested by Zeki Pasha was accepted as an eligible person. The Grand Vizier also asked Zeki Pasha to send a list of people who could be eligible to govern Erzurum.[338] In addition, the Sublime Porte decided to exile some officials to Erzincan due to their ineffectiveness during the events. The new governor and new commander of the city would be allowed to declare martial law and exile the Mufti and his companions after they stopped the revolutionaries. For this reason, the Sublime Porte decided to choose a well-known, authoritative person as the new governor of the city. The options were the *mutasarrıf* of Bayezid, the former *mutasarrıf* of Muş and the governor of Van. Husnu Bey, as the former mutasarrıf of Muş, was the most eligible person but he was in Istanbul and the government desired to send someone quickly. The *mutasarrıf* of Bayezid, Ahmed Pasha, was the brother of Marshall Zeki Pasha. He was also a good candidate but because there were many complaints from the Russian consulates about Ahmed Pasha, he was eliminated. Under the circumstances, the Sublime Porte decided to send Tahir Pasha, who was the governor of Van as the acting governor to provide order in the city.[339] However, the decision was then changed, and Nuri Bey, the governor of Mamuratu'l Aziz, was appointed as the new governor.

Although the opposition did not have close ties with the local powerholders of Erzurum, the resistance provided motivation for them. They send *komitadjis* to Erzurum for transforming the reaction into a total resistance against the Imperial Government. The *komitadjis* would work to co-operate with the Mufti and the artisans of the city because the coalition of the ulama, townsmen and merchants was the most powerful party in the city after they

338 Ibid.
339 Ibid.

had forced two governors to leave the city and punished the police officers. While these komitadjis were concentrating on the discomfort between the ordinary people of Erzurum to create a consciousness for a revolutionary resistance movement, they concealed their identities because they desired to avoid a possible investigation. They also aimed to form a relationship with the city through creating fake jobs to would make them partf of the now influential artisan class of the city. The exact date of when the komitadjis arrived in Erzurum for this purpose was not known but the first was Hüseyin Tosun Bey who was a former member of the army.[340] He joined the central committee of Prens Sabahaddin's organization and was tasked with the organization of the opposition movement in Anatolia.[341] He came as an immigrant who had a Russian passport and became a grocer in the city. After a short time, he communicated with Durak Bey and Sıdkı Efendi who were known as the supporters of the opposition movement and requested them to inform him of the protestors' leaders. During those days, Durak Bey was working to find trusty soldiers in the army who had sympathy for the opposition. After they established a small secret branch, they decided to prepare bulletins and manifests to transform the protest wave into a revolutionary

340 BOA. BEO. 3238/242782, 3. 27 Kanunievvel 1322 (January 9, 1907); BOA. Y.A.HUS. 507/20, 2.

341 Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution. The Young Turks, 1902-1908, 116-117*. Indeed, none of the historians provide a clear date for the arrival of Huseyin Tosun Bey. Husamettin Erturk who was the military-based person on the Russian frontier stated in his memoir that he was the first person to arrest Huseyin Tosun while Tosun was trying to enter the city. Yet, Erturk mentioned that the governor was Abdulvahhab Pasha at that time. In addition to that, Orhan Turkdogan stated that Huseyin Tosun Bey joined the first and second Young Turc Congresses in 1902 and 1907 but this is out of question because before the second congress, Tosun was arrested in Erzurum. Furthermore, Kazım Yurdalan argues in his memoir that Tosun used a nickname, that was Ali, and he had visited Erzurum years prior. Barutçuzade Sevki Bey and Mehmed Nusret Bey also mentioned him in connection of the events of 1907. Hence, it is possible to say that Huseyin Tosun Bey came to the Erzurum in spring of 1907 but because he had a Russian passport it was also possible to say that he traveled to Erzurum many times before 1907. See: Orhan Türkdoğan, "Hüseyin Tosun: Bir İhtilalcinin Profili" in *Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları* (1987): 69-83; Moumdjiyan, "Struggling for a Constitutional Regime: Armenian-Young Turk Relations in the Era of Abdulhamid II, 1895-1909," 352.

movement. Some of the religious leaders and artisans also supported their ideas, but in general, their movement became estranged from the resistance of the city's coalition due to their different expectations. They distributed very important manifestos in 1907.[342] One of them was a declaration for the soldiers, and the other addressed the Muslim community of the city.[343] The second one proclaimed the following statement:

> O our brothers in religion! . . . We have appealed to you on many occasions; however, we could not discern even a little bit of your patriotism. Is this what the union of Muslims is all about? If you do not know, ask the *mufti*s and *hoca*s and learn. If our action is in accordance with the decree of God, then you, too, [should] join us. . . . This time, in order to put an end to this maladministration, and to secure that administration through consultation which is prescribed in divine statutes, Muslim practices, and rules derived from the Prophet's own habits and words, we demanded the acceptance of a constitutional regime and formation of a national assembly. . . . If the foreigners once intrude among us and intervene in our affairs, they will undoubtedly work for

342 Quated from Zafer Kars *1908 Devrimi'nin Halk Dinamiği,* 122 "Asker evlatlarımız, biz sizin ana-babalarınız ve kardeşlerinizi. Biz sizin askerlik görevinde iki seneden, olağanüstü durumlarda üç seneden fazla kalmamanızı, bu sürenin sonunda da yedeğe ayrılarak evinize dönüp ailelerinizle birlikte yaşamanızı istiyoruz. Kışlalarınızda her şeyin düzenli olmasını, hastanelerde ilaçsızlıktan, yataksızlıktan ölmemenizi, öldüğünüz zaman da kefensiz gömülmemenizi istiyoruz. İyi yemenizi, içmenizi, giyinmenizi, sınırlarda bir serseri yaşantısı sürmemenizi arzuluyoruz. Her ay maaşınızı düzenli olarak almanızı, kısacası sizin rahatınızı ve mutluluğunuzu arzuluyoruz. Maaş alamadığınız için bizim, yani sizin baba, kardeş ve akrabalarınız olan bizlerin, size para yollamak amacıyla ineğimizi, öküzümüzü ve toprağımızı satmak zorunda kaldığımızı biliyorsunuz. Sizi askerde beslerken biz 8-9 yıl içinde yıkılıyor, iflas ediyoıuz. Yedeğe ayrıldığınızda ise size resmi bonolar veriliyor. Ama tükenmemize rağmen resmi memurlar bu bonoları ödemeyi kabul etmiyorlar. Bizim sizin rahatınızı düşündüğümüz gibi, siz de yeri gelince size, vur' emri verdiklerinde subaylarınıza ve amirlerinize itaat etmeyiniz. Vatanimizin, dinimizin ve şerefimizin kurtulmasını istediğimiz için bize yardımı reddetmeyiniz. Aksi takdirde hakkımızı helal etmeyeceğiz. Biz, girişimlerimizin Allah'ın emrine karşı olmadığına ve Peygamberimizin buna rıza gösterdiğine dair müftü ve hocalardan fetva aldık." Also see: Demirel, *İkinci Meşrutiyet Öncesi Erzurum'da Halk Hareketleri (1906-1907),* 38.

343 Quoted from Zafer Kars *1908 Devrimi'nin Halk Dinamiği* 123. Also see; Demirel, *İkinci Meşrutiyet Öncesi Erzurum'da Halk Hareketleri (1906-1907),* 39. Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution. The Young Turks, 1902-1908*, 120. The English translation of the declaration quated from Hanioğlu

the interests of their own countries.[344]

The opposition parties did not only aim to influence the soldiers and the Muslim population of the city. During the last months of 1907, when another protest wave ended with the dismissal of the new governor, another manifest was published taking advantage of the lack of authority in the city which called on all subjects of the Empire to form a revolutionary movement by announcing *our need is a Constitution, -liberty, justice- a Parliament*.[345]

The Committee of Union and Progress also used those movements as a tool to develop its influence by defining these resistances as uprisings organized by their members who were exiled to those cities in question by the Sultan. Halil Halid's famous article namely *A Pacific Revolution in Turkey*, published in January 1908, defined all the protest waves in the distant

344 Quated from Hanioğlu, 120. Hanioğlu also mentioned about another manifest which was prepared for not only Muslims but also Jews and Christians of the Ottoman society.

345 F.O. 4244/213 Inclosure in No: 136.
An "Appeal" to the Inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire. November 19, 1907. The limited part of the manifest was as follows:
"*Brotherhood in the Ottoman Empire:*
O Mussulmans, Christians, Jews- all of you Ottomans! Our native land, beloved mother of us all, is fast sinking under oppression. Wearied out by the tyranny of an autocratic Government, she stretches out her hands and cries for our help. With gentle voices she cries, "Oh! my dear children be not divided one from the other; do not desert one another; fall not intro discord and strife. Unite and be one," she says; and she repeats her cry. Ottomans, brother in the soil! You are even as a family dwelling in one house; and is it not right to exhort the members of such a household to look to the ordering of their affair and to labor together in unity? It is right! In such case, love of country, humanity, zeal, compel us to devote ourselves to the common weal. Brothers, we cannot help but hear the agony of our land, which cries to Heaven and pierces our hearths like a dagger. Let us hold out the hand of comradeship to one another; let us love one another like brothers, and work together for the happiness of our country. Our Government, as it now is, pays no heed to law, recks nothing of the general condition of the people; and until it is freed we shall see nor happiness, nor wealth, nor peace. Far from it; this Government will make hell for us, will rack us with the cruel tortures, and like a herd under the goad, they will drive us and use us for their own advantage…
O brothers in the soil! You are all children of one land and one State. You are bound to rescue it from the tearful grasp of the tyrant, to order its affairs even as the civilized nations do, and to promote its good. The happiness, safety, freedom of our country, our motherland, our State depend on our working tohether with a single hearth. Our need is a Constitution-Liberty, justice, a Parliament. Shout till you are hoarse, Make your voices heard on all sides and publish it in all the land.

provinces as the resistances "planned entirely by the Young Turkish exiles, of whom each government center in the distant provinces Turkey possesses many."[346] The opposition movement started to offer seats to the coalition instead of sending *komitadjis after 1908* but most of the members who managed to take seats in the Assembly left the Committee of Union and Progress in a short time due to the differences in their political and ideological thoughts.

These attempts did not change the dynamics of the province because the new governor quickly investigated these people and exiled most of them. In addition to this, the coalition of the committee decided neither support nor blocked the opposition movement even though some of them cooperated with the Committee of Union and Progress after the 1908 Revolution. The attempts of Huseyin Tosun Bey and other exiled members of the opposition movement was an opportunity for them because the governor focused on their activities as the Sublime Port had requested and tried to arrest some of them as the scapegoats.

The new governor identified two people who were active in the opposition movement and had joined the protests of March and October. These were Muhiddin and Ali Faik both of whom were dismissed from the army.[347] Hence, he planned to exile them to Erzincan and Hınıs.[348] Muhiddin and Ali Faik were known as the members of the opposition movement but there was not any proof of their role in the events.[349] For instance, Ali Faik sent a petition

346 Halil Halid "A Pacific Revolution in Turkey" in *The Orient Review* 18-29 (January 1908): 27.

347 BOA. DH.MKT. 1093/39, 3-6; BOA. DH.ŞFR. 375/18, 9 Kanunisani 1322 (January 22, 1907); Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution. The Young Turks, 1902-1908*, 112

348 Ibid.

349 Ali Faik who was sent from Salonica, was the regimental order in Kastamonu. He was exiled to Diyarbakır then to Erzincan and then to Erzurum on 5th of April, 1904. See; BOA. İ.AS 50/60, 1-4. He sent a telegraph to the Porte on June 2, 1906 arguing that he was in possession of very valuable knowledge but that he was not in a position to declare it in Erzurum. Hence,

asking about the possibility of leaving Erzurum in June 1906. In addition, there was not any relationship between the Mufti and the petty-notables who were seen as the natural leaders of the city and Muhiddin and Ali Faik. The only so-called proof about their cooperation was Mufti's speech against the government and his former career in the province of Kosovo where the Young Turk movement was very active.[350] As the scapegoats of the events, Muhiddin and Ali Faik were exiled to Erzincan and Hınıs districts.[351] Nuri Bey identified a third person from the military as the leader of the protest and named him in another telegraph that was sent on the 22nd of January, 1907. He argued that, in addition to Ali Faik and Muhiddin, the commander of the 25th regiment, Savfet Bey was responsible for the protests. He asked about the possibility of exiling both of them somewhere outside of the Erzurum Province instead of Hınıs or Erzincan which were the parts of the Erzurum province.[352]

The new governor's tactic secured order in the city. The protest came at the cost of the dismissal of certain military-based people from the center of Erzurum. Yet, they still resided in the periphery of the province despite the governor asking them to be exiled to another province. Indeed, the dismissal of Ali Faik and Muhiddin Efendi did not affect the protests negatively because they did not have any clear role in the leadership of the protest movements. In addition to these people, a townsman, Sıdkı Efendi, who also did not have any role in the events of October and March 1906, was also arrested because he had distributed the revolutionary bulletins in the city.[353] Since Nuri Bey

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he asked to be dispatcheds to another city. See: BOA. BEO. 2863/214664; BOA. BEO. 2864/214772.

350 BOA. DH.MKT. 1093/39; BOA.DH.ŞFR. 375/48 18 Kanunisani 1322 (January 31, 1907)

351 Ibid.; BOA. DH. ŞFR 375/8 8 Kanunisani 1322 (January 21 1907); F.O. 195/2254 no:4 From Consul Shipley to Constantinople (January 28, 1907).

352 BOA. DH.ŞFR. 375/18, 9 Kanunisani 1322 (January 22, 1907); Also see, BOA. Y.PRK.UM. 79/69, 25 Şubat 1322 (March 10, 1907).

353 F.O. 195/2250, 100. From Consul Shipley to Constantinople (March 5, 1907) Skyrabin cited the name as Sıdkı Naci. This was not accurate because Naci Bey was another important

desired to establish peace in the city, while he was asking for the general amnesty for the protestors, he chose Ali Faik and Muhyiddin as objects of ounishment, bot of whom the Grand Vizier and the former governor had argued were active in the protest meetings. He also included the names of the Sıdkı Efendi and Savfet Bey as the revolutionaries. While exiling these people, Nuri Bey had inhibited the creation of a new protest and people who were in the crosshairs of the former governor stayed in the city. This was another show of tolerance by the Ottoman provincial governor, even though there was a threat to exile the protestors to Trablusgarp if the city were to face another protest wave.

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation also followed the same path to try to transform the reaction into an opposition movement of the Armenian districts' opposition against the Armenian Marhasa. During those days, one of the problems within Armenians was the conflict between Armenians and the Armenian delegate (Marhasa) of the Patriarchate in the city. While the Mufti was the leading figure of the protests against the taxes in March, the Armenian Marhasa Zaven Efendi had accepted to pay the taxes in the name of the Armenian community. Thus, both the Armenian populace of the city and the *fedais* of ARF refused to obey him and worked to dislocate him. Since the Muslim community did not accept the coalition request of the Armenian community, the Armenians did not achieve the dismissal of the delegate during the protests of March. Yet, after the second wave of the protests, The ARF aimed to influence the populace in the same way as the CUP. Indeed, ARF was more successful than CUP in cooperating with the Armenian society of the city. In a short time, they targeted the seat of Zaven Efendi through sending petitions to Istanbul against him, and by creating bulletins and manifestos to reject his rule. By the first months of 1907, Zaven Efendi had decided to

person in the opposition movement. Zafer Kars translated Naci as 'Hacı.' See: Kars, 136; see also. F.O. 424/212 Inclosure in No. 40 Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor Erzurum (March 5 1907).

resign. He sent a telegraph to the Patriarchate to describe the situation between him and the Armenian community. According to him, it was impossible to talk in the name of the Armenians in the city because many of them were under the influence of the ARF. Hence, he kindly requested his appointment to Istanbul. He also added that, after his telegraph, he would leave Erzurum and wait in Bayburt for the decision of the Patriarchate and the Sublime Porte. Both the Patriarchate and the Grand Vizier refused his request in February 1907. Yet, since he had been in Erzurum for eight to nine years, he was allowed to come to Istanbul until the situation was normalized.[354]

§ 3.6 Conclusion

1906 was among the most chaotic years in the history of Erzurum. Two governors were dislocated, many officers were forced to leave the city, and some others were killed. The protest wave began in march and did not end until 1908. Although the initial reaction had developed against the taxation, as it happened in the province of Kosovo, Kastamonu, Sinop, Kerbela and Mosul, the urban coalition which consisted of the petty-notables, religious leaders and the populace used the misdeeds in taxation practices as a tool to expose the misdeeds in government and demonstrate their influence in the province.

In that sense, the events of 1906 were examples of clashes between powerholders in the city. The populace mostly chose to act on the side of the natural leaders such as *ulama* and artisans as had happened during the uprisings around Tanzimat, the rebellion of janissaries throughout the 18th century and in the protests that occurred in other provinces. Therefore, the protest wave was another evidence of the system of checks and balances developed by the Ottoman society against the policies of the state. Just as in the Kosovo province, the populace of Erzurum did not refuse to pay *ağnam and a'şar* while

354 BOA. A.MKT.MH. 699/23, 1-10. 10-18 Şubat 1322 (February 25/March 3 1907).

they refused to pay the new taxes. The powerholders did not reject the Ottoman government and its all apparatus but reacted against the governors and certain officials. They never cut the dialogue with the Sublime Porte. Hence, this was a clear negotiation practice of the society, aiming to determine the limits of the state and decide on in what ways the reforms could be implemented in their province. While chapter two aims to show the negotiation practices of the society in Kosovo by focusing on the budgets, taxation practices and the development of collective action for not paying specific taxes, this chapter directly focused on how the collective action developed day by day and how the powerholders fought to make themselves the partner of the Empire by eliminating not only the decisions but also the people that aimed to diminish their influence in the city.

Nevertheless, the protest wave of 1906 has symbolized a clash between various powerholders in the center of a province because the role of the crowd was very limited. Even though the populace became the main force in motion, their voices were not heard due to the negotiation attempts of the powerholders in the name of the city. In such a situation, the populace began to differentiate themselves from the petty-notables and *ulama* in the coalition. They insisted on a general amnesty for themselves because they had killed police officers, injured a governor and attacked the army barracks. They also desired the abolishment of the new taxes, dislocation of some other officers and solutions for the price inflation in the city.

Governor Nuri Bey chose a moderate path to provide order in the city after he realized that the exile of revolutionaries did not diminish the influence of the coalition in the province. He sent a telegraph to the Porte in a month which underlined the cooperation between the tradesmen, merchants and protestors. In the face of this reality, he asked for time to prepare a report.[355] First,

355 BOA. BEO. 2966/222391, 16 Tesrin-i sani 1322 (November 29, 1906); BOA, DH. ŞFR 372/158, 12 Teşrini Sani 1322 (November 25, 1906).

he announced that there would be a new tax regulation. Then he investigated the uprising and wrote his report at the end of 1906. According to Nuri Bey, the people who joined the uprising formed an alliance between them that guaranteed the eruption of another uprising if the government were to investigate these people. Because of this touchy situation, although there were many people who were active in the protest meetings, he was not willing to arrest them. Furthermore, he added that the crowd had closed their shops once again at the end of the year and visited him to ask about the possibility of being pardoned because most of them were afraid of potential punishment. For this reason, Nuri Bey asked for the general amnesty for the protestors by suggesting it be combined with the announcement that if they were to organize another protest, they would be exiled to Trablusgarb. Moreover, the new taxes would be collected after the government finalized the new regulations on the tax rates. The protestors would be obliged to pay taxes and blood money for the killing of the police officers.[356] Furthermore, Nuri Bey and Ahmed Pasha desired the replacement of the gendarmes and a group of soldiers because these people were the relatives of the populace. Zeki Pasha sent another telegraph to Istanbul to confirm the ideas of Nuri Bey.[357] The idea of a general amnesty was not accepted by the Sublime Porte but the tax regulation was.[358] Moreover, Nuri Bey was also closely interested in the families of the police officers who were killed during the last protest. He provided these family members with salaries. The families of Tevfik and Tahir Bey were gifted 2.000 Ottoman kurushes from *atiyye-i seniyye*. In addition, the government gave the children and the wife of Gani Bey 250 Ottoman kurushes as a

356 BOA. DH.MKT. 1093/39, 4. 18 Kanunisani 1322 (January 31, 1907) Also see: BOA. DH. ŞFR 375/8, 9 Kanunisani 1322 (January 21, 1907)

357 BOA.Y.MTV. 294/53 Lef 2, 1. 25 Kanunisani 1322 (February 7, 1907).

358 BOA. Y.MTV. 292/63, 12 Kanunisani 1322 (January 25, 1907).

salary from *muhtacin*. This amount was distributed to the 4 children and the wife of Gani Bey.[359]

Although the idea of a pardon was rejected in the first response of the government, it was accepted after Nuri Bey argued that a general amnesty was the only way to provide order in the city.[360] Amnesty was granted for the events of October 1906 but the decree to exile Mufti and his fellows for the events of March 1906 was still in effect.[361] According to Nuri Bey, although many people desired to send letters of gratitute to the Sultan to show their gratitude after the announcement of the general amnesty,[362] the coalition had been planning to organize another series of protests to abolish the new taxes. The protest was planned as a meeting of all the people of Erzurum, and because the taxes were the spark for the first protests in the beginning of 1906, many people supported the idea. Nuri Bey did not allow this meeting but instead invited three religious leaders and two petty-notables as the representatives to the government. After Nuri Bey discussed the situation with them, he asked the Porte about the possibility of delaying to collection of the domestic animal tax and the possibility of abolishing the personal income tax for the majority of the populace.[363] The British Consul observed the position of the state as follows on the 25th of March:

> The government caved in against popular demands. However, still keeping with the old ways of doing thing, it was masterful enough to represent the changes as something promulgated by the good will of

359 BOA. DH.MKT. 1093/39, 12-15. 11 Kanunisani 1322 (January 25, 1907).

360 BOA. DH ŞFR. 376/87, 17 Şubat 1322 (March 2, 1907) ; BOA. İ.DH.1452/30, 25 Şubat 1322 (March 10, 1907).

361 F.O. 195/2250, 103-105. From Consul Shipley to Constantinople. (March 16, 1907). Shipley argued that 50 people were invited to the Government.

362 Demirel, *İkinci Meşrutiyet Öncesi Erzurum'da Halk Hareketleri (1906-1907)*, 93.

363 BOA. BEO 3012/225854, 8. 3 Mart 1323 (March 16, 1907). Valuyskiy argued that there were mass protest movements during these days, based on Skyrabin's reports. However, neither the Ottoman nor the British consular reports mentioned mass protest like those in the March of 1906.

> the sultan, who hearing the plea of his subjects, instituted reforms. Thus, the sultan states that he would: pardon persons for crimes they committed during last October; pardon those who had been exiled; … order that personal taxes be collected only from the rich. The sultan was under the impression that once his orders were informed to the populace through the local government they would be satisfied. But that was not so. The people dealt with the sultan's reform as something unimportant. They believe that what they have acquired was because of their firm stance. They further believe that what they got should be the right of everybody in the Empire.[364]

The effect of the protests against these taxes in many provinces of the Empire, including Erzurum, ultimately resulted in the Porte having to cancel both of them on the 25th of March 1907.[365] The British Consul explained the victory of the protestors as follows on the 28th of March:

> Authorities announce demission of poll tax (personal income tax) and domestic animal tax. Regulation also withdrawn. Great satisfaction is felt among population.[366]

It was the most significant victory of the Ottoman society during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II. However, neither the exile of revolutionaries nor the announcements of a general amnesty and abolishment of the taxes managed to end the protest wave, because it was not merely a protest but a negotiation practice for the various classes of the Ottoman provinces. Although the populace and the coalition managed to abolish the new taxes, they would soon force the state to take measures during a new crisis. A new series of protests would be their movement when they faced a considerable price inflation and a food shortage in 1907. During the event, most of the petty-notables who thought themselves to be the most powerful actors of the city would flee from the city. Hence, 1907 would prove just as chaotic as 1906 for Erzurum as it will be explained in the next chapter.

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364 F.O. 424/210, 46. (Quated from Moumdjiyan, 244).

365 Kansu, *1908 Devrimi,* 70; F.O. 195/2250 138; Also see: BOA.Y.PRK.UM.79/78, 16 Mart 1322 (March 29, 1907).

366 F.O. 195/2250 138.

4

Famine, Collective Memory and Taxes

> *Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past.*
> – Karl Marx *The 18th Brumaie of Louis Bonaparte*

Despite numerous studies on the natural disasters such as the droughts, famines, and earthquakes that caused the deaths of thousands in the 19th century, Ottoman historians still need to be explained the relationship between the natural disasters and contentious interaction. Natural disasters had created social traumas and collective memories for the societies when their cities infrastructural needs were unmet. This chapter aims to investigate how natural disasters have turned into one of the most important legitimization tools of the populace during the negotiation practices between various actors. It follows Alan Mikhail pointing out that the important thing in

environmental studies is understanding "the dialectical relationship between human beings and environment."[367]

In other words, my goal is to show how the food shortage in the frontier provinces transformed the contentious interaction of the society who aimed to define the limits of the central authority in their daily lives. This process was also a clash within various classes vying to overcome each other to become the new elites of the provinces. This chapter will be "the result of the necessity to view environment and society as mutually constituted in the realm of culture through investigating this process."[368] As Chris Graten has shown, environmental history in this sense became a form of cultural history. When the American consulate, Mr. Young, observed Muslim women's reaction to the earthquake,[369] he also observed a deep-rooted cultural behavior of Anatolian societies; accepting the natural disaster as God's punishment for deeds of cruelty towards innocents. True or not, whether it was an orientalist perspective of a foreigner toward an eastern society or not, we know that these kinds of cultural-religious explanations of natural disasters were widespread in various parts of the world.[370] It illustrates the effects of macro-political events at the micro-level and shows how the various people in the provinces conceptualized natural disasters.

Various regions of the world have experienced great famines that caused the starvation of millions. Jürgen Osterhammel defined starvation as

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367 Alan Mikhail, *Water on Sand: Environmental Histories of the Middle East and North Africa*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 5.

368 Chris Gratien, "The Mountains are Ours. Ecology and Settlement in Late Ottoman and Early Republican Cilica 1856-1956" Unpublished Ph.D dissertation in Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Gerogetown University, Washington DC, 2015, 4.

369 F.O. 424/210, Mr. E.Young to Mr. J.Leishman "During the recent earthquake shock in this vicinity, several Turkish women are known to have cried out "that the earthquake was a punishment sent by God on account of the present plan to massacre all Armenians."

370 For examples from Czarist Russia, France, Italy and England, see: Samuel Kline Cohn Jr. "Cholera Revolts, A Class Struggle We May Not Like" in *Social History* 42:2, 162-180.

something more than a shortage of food and stated that "the distinction between a chronic starvation and acute famine is a high-level of mortality." He argued that starvation is a culturally constructed, and for this reason, many sub-questions should be involved in defining starvation. These are:

> *The quantity of food- that is, the minimum of calories- necessary for people differentiated by age and gender; the quality of nourishment required to ward off dangerous deficiencies; the regularity and dependability of food grown at home or supplied through public distribution or the market; the actual form and level of distribution according to social stratum; the claims and entitlements to food associated with various positions in society; and the famine relief institutions, whether governmental or private-philanthropic, that can be mobilized in an emergency.*[371]

Apart from his definition, it is important to note that climatic changes in a specific part of the world could dramatically decrease the size of populations, destroy the daily lives of the agents who provided the products to the markets, and cause great chaos. One example to this was the effect of the Laki Volcano eruption on the social and economic life of Egypt.[372] Egypt lost one-sixth of its total population, and the drought caused a decrease in the agricultural production via the decline in the water level of the Nile, and diseases resulted in the rise of local elites who took the lands of the poor.[373] It was the late Victorian holocaust, as Mike Davis defined it in his comparative study about the effect of the El Nino Famine in the world.[374] Approximately 30 million victims were affected by the El-Nino Famine in various parts of the world

371 Jürgen Osterhammel *The Transformation of the World: A global History of the Nineteenth Century* translated by Patrick Camiller (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2014), 484.

372 Alan Mikhail, *Under Osman's Tree: The Ottoman Empire, Egypt, and Environmental History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017), 225.

373 Ibid., 226.

374 Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Nino Famines and the Making of the Third World.* (London: Verso, 2000), 8.

when its "labor and products were being dynamically conscripted into a London-centered world economy."[375] Although the Ottoman Empire was not among the empires which were directly affected by El-Nino in contrast to India, China and Brazil, it still experienced the dramatic outcomes of the famine and drought between 1870 and1880 in Anatolia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Ottoman society also became the victims of earthquakes, droughts, and famines in the eastern provinces during the 1880s and in Lebanon during the First World War.[376]

Ottoman historiography has a well-built body of the literature on the effects of natural disasters.[377] The shortcoming is in the cultural history of the traumas experienced by the society. Almost all of the existing studies focus on the moment when people faced the disasters in acute form. However, these problems also created a collective memory that helped communities act quickly when they felt threatened again later. To illustrate this point; the famine in the Volga region produced a long-term change in the social and political life of Tsarist Russia. When the 1891-92 famine caused the loss of approximately 800,000 lives, due to the bad weather conditions, a 'reactionary period' began. This continued with the assassination of Tsar Alexander and continued with social unrest that led to the revolution of 1905.[378] I will argue that although the drought and the food shortages did not cause massive starvation in the Ottoman east during the price inflation of 1906-1908, one of the most crucial elements of people's reaction to the local governors was that they felt the threat of famine which their parents had experienced. In the Ottoman case,

375 Ibid., 9.

376 Yener Bayar, "1873-1875 Orta Anadolu Kıtlığı," Unpublished master thesis in Türkiyat Araştırmaları Instıtute of Marmara University, Istanbul, 2013, 133.

377 One good example: Yaron Ayalon *Natural Disasters in the Ottoman Empire, Plague, Famine and Other Misfortunes* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

378 Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World,* 491. Osterhammel gives a detailed account of natural disasters and famines from various parts of the World in the 19th century. See: 474-506.

this reaction was not a part of a revolutionary movement but an attempt to negotiate their local demands in a contested space between the society and the state. In other words, Ottoman urban people were well informed about how to force the state to take measures quickly. The demand was mainly based on the rejection of a liberal market economy, elimination of certain actors by blaming them as profiteers, taking advantage of the chaos if present, and legitimation of their reactions by a focus on the concept of public benefit.

This chapter will focus directly on the role of the food shortage and drought during the mass movements on the Ottoman eastern borderland in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. I will focus on the petitions, military, and bureaucratic reports, local newspapers, annuals of the provinces, and missionary and consular reports to understand how famine and drought caused a social trauma for the people of the region. Also, I will try to shed light on how societies defended maslaha as a public good against the raison d'etat. From a historiographical perspective, my main goal is to write on the customs and commoners of the Ottoman borderland as Edward P. Thompson has done for British society by focusing on the invention of customs. In that sense, natural disasters that caused dramatic deaths of the thousands were crucial in recalling the collective memory when support from the authorities was not forthcoming. In such instances, the commoners had created their own rituals and hidden transactions to bargain with the state via public opinion. In other words, natural disasters were the real motifs of the commoners employed to do contentious politics. To analyze this hypothesis, I will write on the effect of famine during the mass movements, and I will focus on specific examples from the eastern Ottoman provinces in the late 19th century to illustrate its impact on the commoners' reactions to the state.

§ 4.1 Famine in the Ottoman East

Most of the population of the Ottoman Empire were living in the countryside and villages where the farm crops were the mainstay.[379] As Mike Davis defines it, drought is "the recurrent duel between natural rainfall variability and agriculture's hydraulic defenses"[380] that significantly impacted agricultural societies' culture and economy because people were dependent on the soil. The locusts could destroy the crops,[381] the fall in food availability could cause a famine that causes the led to the deaths of thousands. Death, in such scenarios, was not solely a phenomenon of the countryside. The total destruction could engulf the urban spaces too if provisions normally provided by the countryside would be lacking as well as due to the collapsing of local economies.

The Ottoman population experienced this scenario in the late nineteenth century. According to Yaron Ayalon, "drought beset locations in the empire in seventeen of the forty-two years from 1838 to 1880, and locusts destroyed extensive crops in at least nineteen of the seventy-eight years from 1802 to 1880."[382] The people of central Anatolia faced starvation because of famine between 1873 and 1875; the Bosnian community revolted under the harsh conditions of the drought, the peasants of Vidin only harvested one-fifth of the expected output, the province of Adana lost 90% of total production,[383] and some local notables increased their influence among society in the Ottoman east after the 1880s by eliminating their rivals and taking advantage of

379 Onur İnal, Yavuz Köse, "The Ottoman Environments Revisited" in *Seeds of Power, Explorations in Ottoman Environmental History* ed. By Onur İnal and Yavuz Köse (Cambridgeshire: The White Horse Press, 2019), 2.

380 Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts,* 18.

381 Samuel Dolbee, "The Locust and the Starling: People, Insects and Disease in the Ottoman Jazira and After, 1860-1940," Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation in Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and Department of History, New York University, 2017.

382 Ayalon, *Natural Disasters in the Ottoman Empire*. 199.

383 Güran, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Zirai Kredi Politikasının Gelişmesi, 1840-1910," 131.

the lack of authority. Ottoman authorities investigated the conditions and possible solutions through creating reports and giving orders to local governors. Their attempt was successful concerning the state's infrastructural power but in the borderlands, they failed to solve the problems effectively. Instead, certain actors forced the state to make them into its partners by taking action and drawing the limits of central power, as explained in previous chapters. Famine began rather quietly, but all the events that caused the famine created shock waves in these regions. Due to the different climatic factors affecting the land, however, it is impossible to write a history that accounts for all the Ottomans at the same time. For instance, during the drought of 1906-1908 that profoundly affected Erzurum, the governor of Hudavendigar claimed the agricultural product was good due to the excellent weather conditions.[384] For this reason, I will focus on the Ottoman eastern provinces, including Erzurum, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, and Van.

Missionary Clerk and Missionary Andus described Ottoman East in their dispatch to the center in 1904 as follows: "take a large map of Turkey in Asia and place your thumb upon Mardin, your index finger upon Harpoot, the middle finger upon Erzeroom, the third finger upon Bitlis and the little finger upon Van."[385] They obviously made this description for different reasons, but it was also an illustration of how the social and economic life is interconnected across these cities.

The region lacked the infrastructure for the transportation of the goods. The roads were mostly consisting of narrow pathways on which a tumbrel transported the goods. Some parts of the pathways between the cities were not even suitable for tumbrels, and the goods and people were transported on

384 BOA. DH.MKT. 1194/1, 25 Ağustos 1323 (September 7, 1907) "Hüdavendigar: havalar müsaid gittiğinden sene-i atiye mahsulatında feyz ve bereket memuldür."

385 Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (A.B.C.M.F) Unit 5: ITEM (ABC 16.9.7) Reel 703 (Feb 29 1904).

the back of an animal in those parts of the roads.[386] As an alternative, river transportation was commonly used, but it was impossible to connect the provinces of the East via river transportation. There were two main roads for the trade and transportation network. The first one connected Trabzon to Bayburd, Erzurum, Bayezid and finally Persia. The second route connected Samsun to Nusaybin, following Sivas, Harput and Diyarbakır.[387] The primary cultivation of the region was of cereals. Almost all of the peasants were growing cereals because the cultivated land was very productive.

In Erzurum, 98.87% of the total production consisted of cereals. 60% of the land was used for wheat, 24.35% for barley, 4.85% for rye, 7.3% for millet, 2.14%for rice, and the corn only was produced in 1.35% of this land.[388] 94.80% of the cultivated area in Bitlis, 81.17% of the cultivated area in Diyarbakır, and 95.14% of Van's cultivated land were used to produce cereals.[389] Relying on the statistical information provided by Faik Sabri, it is possible to estimate that the mainstay of the region was the self-production of cereals.[390] As an agrarian society that was very dependent on the soil, a small climatic change could significantly impact daily life. The drought had such an effect on the cultivated area and caused famines. During the years of droughts, the total production from the cultivated land decreased, and the society faced food

386 Karaca, *Anadolu Islahatı ve Ahmet Şakir Paşa (1838-1899),* 79.

387 Fulya Özkan, "The Role of the Trabzon-Erzurum-Bayezid Road in Regional Politics and Ottoman Diplomacy, 1850-1915" in *Cora, Derderian and Sipahi, (ed) The Ottoman East, in the Nineteenth Century: Socieites, Identities and Politics London&NewYork* (I.B. Tauris, 2016), 19-41. Also see, Mehmet Polatel, "Armenians and the Land Question in the Ottoman Empire, 1870-1914," 171.

388 Faik Sabri, *Osmanlı Coğrafya-i İktisadiye.* Dersaadet: Kanaat Matbası, 1331(h) 204.

389 Ibid., 204-205

390 As Mehmet Polatel has shown us by analyzing Faik Sabri's statistics, although the area cultivated for cash-crops was very limited, the region has a significant cash crop production of cotton, sesame seeds, olive and especially tobacco. See Polatel "Armenians and the Land Question in the Ottoman Empire, 1870-1914," 172.

shortages, the state revenues diminished sharply, and the society forced the state to provide extra cereals, to fix the price of wheat and to stop the exporting of the products.

Table 4.1.1. The Distribution of Cultivated Area in Eastern Provinces[391]

	Cereals		Legumes		Cash Crops		Gardens Vineyards		**Total**
Province	**%**	**Km²**	**%**	**Km²**	**%**	**Km²**	**%**	**Km²**	**Km²**
Erzurum	98.99 (98.87)	2,966	0.90 (1.03)	31	0.04 (0.03)	1	0.07	2	3,000
Bitlis	94.63 (94.80)	2,370	0.73 (0.60)	15	1.21 (1.20)	30	3.43 (3.40)	85	2,500
Diyarbakır	81.08 (81.17)	2,435	3.55	105	2.86 (2.67)	80	12.51 (12.67)	380	3,000
Mamuratülaziz	73.58 (73.33)	1,100	2.83 (3.33)	50	9.02 (10)	150	14.56 (13.33)	200	1,500
Van	95.37 (95.14)	666	0.42 (0.43)	3	2.72 (2.86)	20	11.49 (1.57)	11	700
Total	**89 (89.13)**	**9,537**	**1.9 (1.91)**	**204**	**2.7 (2.63)**	**281**	**6.4 (6.34)**	**678**	**10,700**

Source: Faik Sabri, Osmanlı Coğrafya-i İktisadiye (Dersaadet, Kanaat Matbaası 1331), 204.

Wheat was the most important agricultural product in the region. According to the statistics provided by Faik Sabri, the total wheat production of Erzurum was around 10,000,000 kile per year. Diyarbakır produced 7,700,000 kile while Bitlis trailed them, producing 6,500,000 kile of wheat in a year.

391 I quoted the numbers provided by Faik Sabri, but the bracketed numbers in the table is the result of my calculations due to the miscalculations in the original table of Faik Sabri. I accepted the total km² of the cultivated area and areas of each products as accurate and recalculated the percentages of areas in according to this system. For instance, while Faik Sabri calculated that the 98.99% of the total are consisted of cereals, I wrote 98.87% because 2,966 km² is the 98.87% of 3000 km.²

Rice cultivation in the region was very limited. Only the province of Diyarbakır produced 862,000 kiles of rice in a year, which was more than ten times greater than Mamuratulaziz, the second biggest rice producer of the region. Also, Mamuratulaziz was an exception when it coame to corn production in the area. It produced 575,000 kiles of corn in a year while Van, the second biggest corn producer, produced 40.000 kiles.

Table 4.1.2. Total Production of the Cereals in Eastern Provinces

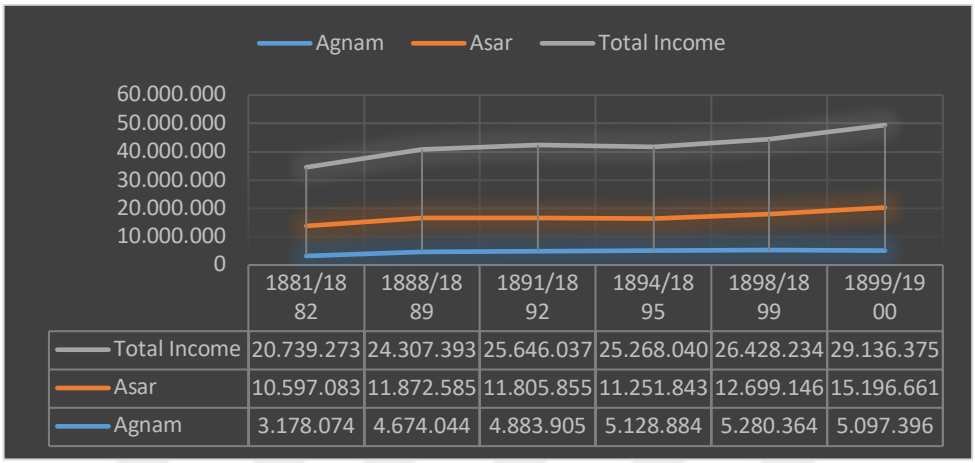
	Wheat	**Barley**	**Rye**	**Millet**	**Corn**	**Rice**	**Total**
Province	**Kile**	**Kile**	**Kile**	**Kile**	**Kile**	**Kile**	**Kile**
Erzurum	10,000,000	5,240,000	1,430,000	600,000	22,000	3,800	17,295,800
Bitlis	6,500,000	2,260,000	450,000	1,500,000	14,000	41,000	10,765,000
Diyarbakır	7,700,000	2,270,000	2,500	1,000,000	6,000	862,000	11,840,500
Mamüret' ül Aziz	3,150,000	1,500,000	110,000	250,000	575,000	80,000	5,665,000
Van	1,350,000	390,000	330,000	145,000	40,000	34,400	2,289,400
Total	**28,700,000**	**11,660,000**	**2,322,500**	**3,495,000**	**657,000**	**1,021,200**	**47.855.700**

Source: Faik Sabri, Osmanlı Coğrafya-i İktisadiye (Dersaadet, Kanaat Matbaası 1331), 205.

Faik Sabri's statistics rely on the estimated numbers from the years 1914-1915. Although the cultivated land for cereals was the most important factor in the provinces' economic and social life, the state did not succeed in collecting sufficients amounts of taxes from the producers. Based on the annuals of the Erzurum Province, it is obvious to argue that the total amount of the taxes did not reach a sufficient level. Although there was an increase in the total

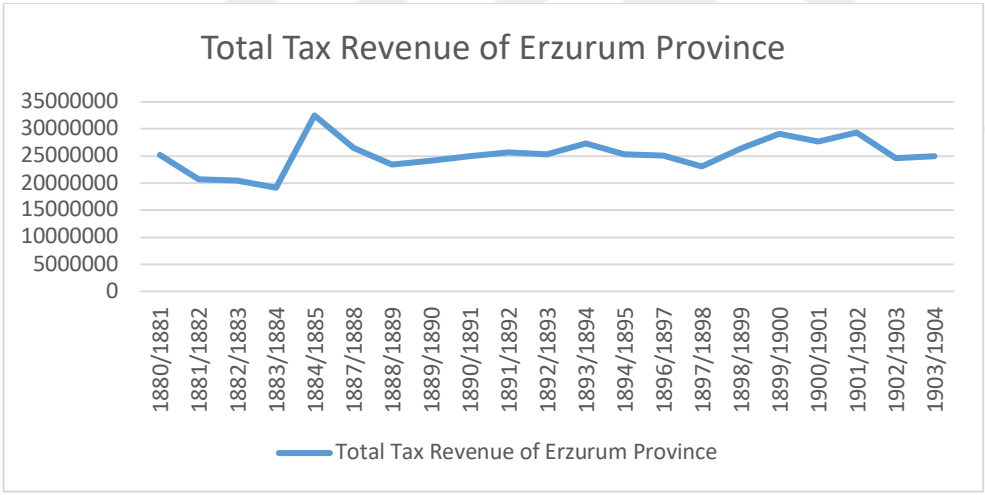
amounts thanks to the development of infrastructural power, the rate of inflation was mostly higher than this nominal rate of increase.

Table 4.1.3. Collected Taxes from the Erzurum Province in Selected Years



	1881/1882	1888/1889	1891/1892	1894/1895	1898/1899	1899/1900
Total Income	20.739.273	24.307.393	25.646.037	25.268.040	26.428.234	29.136.375
Asar	10.597.083	11.872.585	11.805.855	11.251.843	12.699.146	15.196.661
Agnam	3.178.074	4.674.044	4.883.905	5.128.884	5.280.364	5.097.396

Table 4.1.4.Total Tax Revenues of Erzurum Province 1880-1904[392]



Sources: Erzurum Vilayet Salnameleri. 1880-1904

392 The data for both charts is taken from the Annual of the Provinces, and the dissertation written by Yakup Akkuş: See; Yakup Akkuş, "Osmanlı Taşra Maliyesinde Reform." The data of 1894-1895 is quoted from the report of Ahmed Şakir Pasha. Despite the annual of the year expecting 32,677,000 kurushes income, Şakir Pasha argued that there was a mistake because the local officers estimated the amount based on the taxes collected in the year of 1893. See: Ali Karaca, *Anadolu Islahatı ve Ahmet Şakir Paşa (1838-1899)*, 87-89.

The total tax revenues of Erzurum Province did not increase despite the infrastructural attempts of the state. All the endeavors such as constructing the Trabzon-Bayezid Road, opening schools for the education of peasantry and improving of trade, providing seeds to the villagers, and attempting to create state control over the peasantry via the Hamidiye Light Cavalries did not fulfill the ultimate goal: to colonize the periphery, and "transforming it into a fully governed, fiscally fertile zone."[393]

The reason for the decrease in the tax revenues in certain years is made evident by the tax statistics.[394] As seen in the chart, the tax collected in the Erzurum province decreased from 25,241,615 kurushes in 1880 to 19,152,696 kurushes in 1884. One of the most important reasons for this was the drought that affected Erzincan, Refahiye, and İliç and Kemah.[395] *Agnam* tax decreased from 3,789,182 kurushes in 1880 to 3,178,074 kurushes in 1881-1882 and the *A'şar* decreased from 16,534,385 kurushes in 1880 to 10,597,083 kurushes in 1881-1882.[396] The second drought in Erzurum happened in 1889, and the tax revenues of the state diminished again. The drought resulting from a lack of rainfall was compounded by a locust invasion that destroyed the cereals of the peasant. Compared to other regions, the drought in Erzurum was small, but the locust's damage was very high.[397] The most painful famine in the

393 James C Scott. *The Art of Not Being Governed, An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia,* (New Haven: Yale University Press 2009), 10-11. I quoted the italic part of the sentence from Scott.

394 For an analysis of the finance of Erzurum see; Yakup Akkuş Osmanlı Taşra Maliyesinde Reform:Merkez Taşra Arasındak İdari-Mali İlişkiler ve Vilayet Bütçeleri (1864-1913), 529-538.

395 BOA.Y.PRK.AZJ. 8/87; See; Abdulkadir Gül, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kuraklık ve Kıtlık (Erzurum Vilayeti Örneği: 1892-1893 ve 1906-1908 Yılları)" in *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi/ The Journal of International Social Research*, Volume 2/9 Fall 2009

396 BOA. MAD.d-13421

397 Gül, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kuraklık ve Kıtlık (Erzurum Vilayeti Örneği: 1892-1893 ve 1906-1908 Yılları)," 146.

region happened in 1892-1893.[398] According to the investigation in the province, it was recorded that the tax arrears reached huge amounts. Arrears were 3,102,007 kurushes for the *ağnam* tax and 4,508,700 kurushes for *A'şar*.[399] Between 1885 and 1895, the total tax arrears of the province reached 21,642,135 kurushes. Drought, the clashes between Armenian revolutionaries and the state, the emigration of the peasants, and tax collectors' misdeeds were among its major causes.[400]

The region was also famous for its animal traders called '*Celeb'*s. The city had 1,250,000 sheep, and the number of cows and oxes was at least 300,000 in 1899.[401] Most of these celebs carried out the animal trade from Erzurum and Van to Aleppo, from which the animals were distributed to Damascus and Cairo.[402] In the mid-19th century, the animal trade from Erzurum to Aleppo and Cairo became massive amounts due to Egypt's urgent need after an animal disease spread within the sheep in the region.[403] The British Consul at Aleppo stated in 1855 that two hundred thousand sheep from Erzurum were brought into the city. Their total value was ten million piasters.[404] The sheep trade of celebs in Van reached a hundred thousand in the 1900s.[405]

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398 Ibid.

399 Akkuş, "Osmanlı Taşra Maliyesinde Reform: Merkez-Taşra Arasındaki İdari-Mali İlişkiler ve Vilayet Bütçeleri (1864-1913),"530.

400 Ibid., 531.

401 Karaca, *Anadolu Islahatı ve Ahmet Şakir Paşa (1838-1899),* 84-85.

402 Tolga Cora, "Transforming Erzurum/Karin: The Social and Economic History of a Multi-Ethnic Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century," Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at University of Chicago, 2016, 243; Polatel, "Armenians and the Land Question in the Ottoman Empire, 1870-1914," 175

403 Can Nacar, Yonca Köksal "Ali Ağa'nın Koyunları ve Borçları: Erzurum-Şam-Mısır Hattında Hayvan Ticareti" in *Toplumsal Tarih* November (2020):61.

404 Quoted from Cora, "Transforming Erzurum/Karin," ; F.O. 76/1221, Report from Mr. Acting Consul Barker on the Trade of Aleppo with Europe and Turkey for the Year 1855" (1 March 1856).

405 Polatel, Armenians and the Land Question in the Ottoman Empire, 1870-1914, 175.

The good fortunes did not last however, as Tolga Cora has shown us, the sheep trade between İstanbul and Erzurum weakened over the years. In the 1860s, the total number of animals sent from Erzurum to İstanbul was 20,000. Until the mid-1870s, the economic zone was between Erzurum and Aleppo functioned very well. However, the great famine of Anatolia between 1873-1875 disrupted this trade very dramatically. The center of the drought was central Anatolia, with which the eastern Anatolian cities constituted a trade zone. Erzurum was one of the provinces that provided cattle for central Anatolia.[406] It was not a huge amount, but nevertheless, the weakening of trade ties effected some changes in both cities. The mass deaths of sheep in central Anatolia during the famine made a considerable difference in this local trade network.[407] According to Levant Herald, the fall in the number of sheep and goats effectively finished the local trade. The total number of animals in selected villages decreased from 58,000 to 3,735 only in just two years.[408]

The crisis in central Anatolia was solved by the great effort of the government and a change in the weather fortunes. With the coming of the seasonal rain, the improvement of potato production, distribution of seeds for different crops, and distribution of relief money to the peasants, starvation was averted after two years, but the effects of the famine lived on the people's memories. One of the sharpest memory was regarding profiteers who had hidden all the crops in the storehouses before the famine and demanded higher prices for their crop during the extraordinary times. They also worked to sell their crop to the British merchants who were searching for products to send to India because the simultaneous famine in India was one of the worst disasters of the century. Dr. Zitterer, who was sent to central Anatolia by the Ottoman

406 Bayar, "1873-1875 Orta Anadolu Kıtlığı," 19. Bayar gives details about the trade between Erzurum and Ankara provinces.

407 Bayar made a crucial point by showing that the sheep that starved because of the famine were mainly not the property of the poor but of the merchants. See: Ibid., 69.

408 Ibid., 157.

government to research the famine, stated that although the famine had been destroying the social life of the villages for two years, crops were presented in the storehouses of some merchants.

The reason for hoarding crops was to engage in speculation about the prices. Many merchants moved to maximize their profits while people were starving. Moreover, when the government began to distribute crops in the city centers as aid, most merchants got luckier than the people of the villages. As the cities' natural actors, they controlled the distribution of the goods and took most of the crops for themselves. Zittler stated that merchants' activities aggravated the impact of the disaster.[409] The price of corn reached 800 kurushes while it was around 20 kurushes in previous seasons.[410] These kinds of behaviors created tension between the lower classes and the merchants of the cities.

People of the lower classes stole corn from merchants' storehouses, petitioned the government about their actions, asked the government about the possibility of export prohibitions, and directly attacked these people when they could not find any other solution. More importantly, they created sympathies among the new artisan and ulama coalition, who postured as acting for the public good by dislocating the local and mostly non-Muslim merchants. Research on these strategies support Karl Polanyi's ideas on famine he presented in *The Great Transformation*:

> Failure of crops was, of course, part of the picture, but despatch of grain by rail made it possible to send reliefs to the threatened areas; the trouble was that the people were unable to buy the corn at

409 Ibid., 183. Zittler argues that the speculators expected a rise of the corn prices from 20 to 200 kurushes for a kile. Indeed the prices shot even higher than this in across the region. I followed the activities of Zittler from Yener Bayar's thesis.

410 Ibid., 76. Bayar mentions that the daily-wage of a worker was 7.5 kurushes in central Anatolia during the famine years. This was almost the same with the daily wage of a skilled laborer in the Ottoman East.

rocketing prices, which on a free but incompletely organized market were bound to be the reaction to a shortage.[411]

The term "free but incompletely organized market" is a very useful term to understand how a liberal understanding of trade caused the deepening of the food shortage. For this reason, all activities of the lower classes depended on the rejection of the liberal economy whenever they felt the effects of crises -a legacy of the collective memories of 1873-1875.

§ 4.2 The Invention of A Collective Memory

The famine in the eastern provinces dislocated the notables who controlled the trade routes that ran from the Ottoman East to Aleppo and İstanbul. With the Crimean War and the Islahat Edict, the Armenian notables became more prominent in Erzurum. Many Armenian families operated trade routes and created networks in the cities until the war of 1877-1879 with Russia. Between 1854 and 1879 Erzurum transformed from an "elite-dominated society into a broader network of coalition between different groups."[412] The coalition was challenged by non-Muslim artisans and merchants, those "known by the state, experienced leaders, prominent members of the society."[413] Muslim artisans took advantage of another crisis to take over the roles of non-Muslims. First, the famine of central Anatolia created a moment of opportunity by destroying the existing trade routes. Second, the war with Russia resulted in the rising power of Muslim artisans and the ulama. When the second famine occurred due to a lack of human resources, and the traumatic disasters of the earthquakes and epidemic cholera opened a new chapter in the eastern

411 Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 2001), 167; Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts*, 9.

412 Cora, "Transforming Erzurum/Karin," 398.

413 Ibid., 130.

borderland where the Muslim artisans and the religious leaders increased their power by becoming the new local partners of the state.

After the Ottomans' defeat in the 1877-79 war, the Ottoman Empire lost many of its cities, including Erzurum. The Russian army reached Ayastefanos, located 8 km. away from Istanbul. Although the Empire lost Erzurum with the Ayastefanos Agreement, Ottomans retook it back at the Berlin Conference. However, the Berlin Treaty challenged all the actors of the city once again. The sixty-first article stipulated "the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians"[414] which amounted to the internationalization of the Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire.[415]

Abdulhamid's response to the internationalization of the Armenian Question, which transformed the Armenian peasantry into a revolutionary movement, was to create the Hamidiye Light Cavalry in 1890 drawn from selected Kurdish tribes.[416] The purpose was not only to provide border security but also to prevent the development of revolutionary ideas among Armenians. The Cavaliers repressed Armenian peasants, seized their properties, and joined the massacres of Armenians in 1894-1896. Yet, it is important to note the dislocating of the non-Muslim merchants and peasantry had started ten years prior to the state's official response. One of the blind spots in Ottoman historiography is the reaction of the local artisans and ulama coalition of Muslims and even non-Muslims who did not enjoy the rising power of certain actors in the cities. The war and the famine of the 1880s caused by the lack of wheat and by war conditions provided the main legitimization of the

414 Jacob C. Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: A Documentary Record (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1956), 190.

415 Owen Robert Miller, "Back to the Homeland (Tebi Yergir): or, how Peasants became Revolutionaries in Muş" in *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association*, Vol. 4, No.2 (November 2017): pp. 287-308. 288.

416 Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire, Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone,* 4.

actions against these actors. The Armenian revival in the Ottoman East that started with the Crimean War had reached an end with another war; most of them lost their influence in the society while Muslim notables now controlled the new resources. This was the creation of a new, broader network of a coalition between various, mostly Muslim dominated groups.

The famine of the 1880s is crucial to understand this transformation. Compared to the previous famine that affected central Anatolia, the famine in the 1880s was less harsh, but the eastern provinces of the Empire were affected specifically. In addition, due to the workforce shortage, the dramatic results of the war such as emigration and the collapse of the trade relations between the cities, and the severe winter conditions, the food supply in those cities sharply decreased. Although the local bureaucracy took measures rapidly, providing food remained a challenge because of the undevelop infrastructural power of the state in the region. A riot that targeted the provincial council members in the Diyarbakır province in 1880 was a clear result of such problems. The Muslim and non-Muslim community of Diyarbakır petitioned the Imperial center and other influential seats of the city about the reason for the food shortage which they faced:

> To the attention of the Porte, to the attention of Russian, Prussian, British, Italian, French and Austrian Consuls, to the attention of Armenian and Greek Patriarchs, the Chief Rabbinate and the newspaper Masis; All the food including wheat, sheep and our needs of subsistence are seized by the forestallers such as Kazazyan Oseb from Mardin and Çerçiszade Hacı Mehmed. Our people have fallen into misery because of this. People who have cash cannot find provisions. People who do not have cash are in utter destitution. The poor have applied to the Vali Pasha and the council; no reply arrived yet! For God‟s sake, either find a solution to relieve our people or allow for our immigration.[417]

417 BOA. Y.A HUS. 164/122 4 Haziran 1296 (16 June 1880) quoted from Özge Ertem. See: Özge Ertem, “Eating the Last Seed: Famine, Empire, Survival and Order in Ottoman Anatolia in

In her thought-provoking study, Ertem describes the disturbances in Diyarbakır by focusing on the petition mentioned above as "a last attempt (of the society) to attract the attention of authorities to the ongoing devastation caused by high prices and scarcity of bread."[418] As I will explain in the next chapter, the petitioning phase was the first attempt of the people to legitimize their further movement before acting against the 'established rule'. They petitioned and defined certain people as 'criminals' because they decided to act against these profiteers, as had happened in other regions for almost a century. As mentioned in the petition, the community had also sent requests to the governor of the province. In their petition, they blamed the members of the advisory council, who were the contractors for the supply of bread in the city. Therefore, the community asked for the removal of Kazazyan Efendi, Haci Mehmed Efendi, Jerghis Agha, Minassian Ohannes Efendi, and others from the council. The community did not stop at petitioning and attacked Kazazyan Efendi, pelting him with stones and driving him to the *bidayet court.* His house was also attacked, and the bazaar of the city was closed during the events. The riot ended with the eliminating non-permanent members from the advisory council, erasing their contracts of them for the supply of bread to the province, and providing wheat for the people who suffered from the food shortage and price inflation.[419]

A couple of months prior, British consuls and American missionaries of the region had warned their governments about the increasing effects of famine in the area. They had prepared reports for each city of the Ottoman East in which the tension could be observed clearly. The report of an American missionary of Mosul describes the famine in Mosul and towns around it.

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the Late Ninetenth Century," Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation in European University Insititute, 2012, 252.

418 Ibid., 253.

419 F.O. 424/107 Inclosure I in No:18 Acting Vice-Consul Barnham to Major Trotter. Diyarbakır (June 19,1880), 18-22.

He stated that Deyrez Zor lost half of the sheep and three-fourths of the cattle, Nehrwan lost half of the sheep and cattle, Karatepe lost three-fourths of the sheep and seven-eighths of the cattle, Kerkuk lost four-fifths of the sheep and almost all cattle, and Mosul lost four-fifths of both animals. Moreover, 6000 people were living under famine conditions, and the number of deaths from starvation was above 1,300, while it was above 1,500 in Erbil. More than 1,000 people lived under acute famine conditions, and 5 to 15 people were starving every day. The prices of wheat were not very high compared to the 1873-75 famine of central Anatolia. It reached 3.5 piastres in some districts while 8 piastres in other regions. The problem more critical than the price was to find the bread at all.[420]

The situation in the province of Van was similar. A couple of months prior, when the winter conditions sharply decreased food provision in the region, British consuls wrote about the great distress caused by famine. Like in Mosul, society complained about the interception of grains by a group of profiteers before it could reach the public. Hence, surrounding the bakeries became a daily routine of the people of Van.[421] After a couple of months, other reports came out mentioning that 138 people had died due to the famine in Bashkale, one of the central districts of the city.[422] Captain Everett added the starvation of 109 people in the province of Erzurum to the toll in April 1880.[423] In another report, he disclosed the total amount of grain in the province and argued that if the situation did not change, the catastrophe of the upcoming year would be as grave as had occurred in Kayseri in 1872.[424] The tables provided by Captain Everet were prepared for the governor of Erzurum.

420 F.O. 424/106 Inclosure in No:177 Diyarbakır, (April 17, 1880).

421 Ibid., Inclosure 1 in No:13 Captain Clayton to Major Trettor, Van, (November 15, 1879).

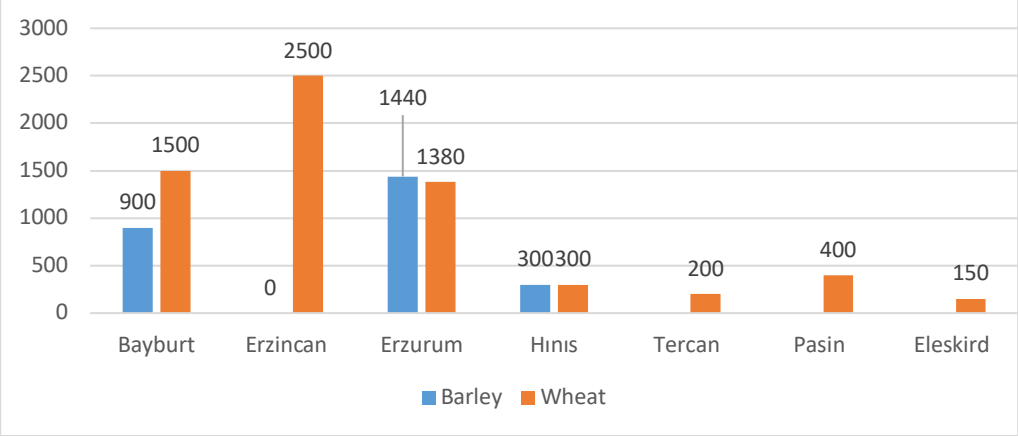
422 Ibid., Inclosure 3 in No:161 Captain Clayton to Major Trettor, Van, (March 17, 1880).

423 Ibid., Inclosure 3 in No:152 Captain Everet to Sir A.H.Layard, Erzeroum, (April 3, 1880).

424 Ibid., Inclosure 2 in No:171 Captain Everet to his Excellency the Governor-General Erzeroum, Erzeroum, (April 16, 1880).

More importantly, İstanbul's order was to distribute 500 *somars* of wheat in Passin plain before the sowing season was to pass. On the last day of April, while Captain Everet was criticizing the governor of Erzurum for not distributing the relief on time, the Governor-General replied that he and the city council were well aware of the catastrophe and that they would make every effort to save people's lives.[425]

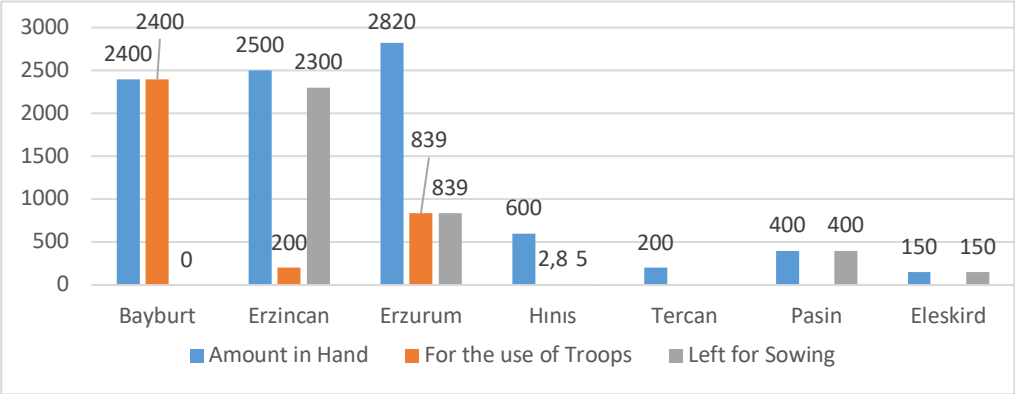
Table 4.2.1.The Amount of Cereal in Erzurum (Somar: Approx. 307 kg)



Source: F.O. 424/106 Captain Everet to his Excellency the Governor-General Erzeroum, Inclosure 2 in No:171 Erzeroum, the 16th of April, 1880.

425 Ibid., Inclosure 1 in no:182 Captain Everet to Major Tretter; Inclosure 2 in no:182 The Governor General of Erzeroum to Captain Everett, Erzeroum, (April 30, 1880).

Table 4.2.2.The Distribution of Cereal in the Region



Source: F.O. 424/106 Captain Everet to his Excellency the Governor-General Erzeroum, Inclosure 2 in No:171 Erzeroum, the 16th of April, 1880.

In such a situation, the life of urban poor in Erzurum was the poverty in the midst of plenty because the urban poor were unable to pay the prices of flour, which had accumulated in the hands of the speculators. For example, according to Harry Lynch, who visited the province in 1898, the one *kile* of the wheat cost 50 kurushes, and for an *okka* of bread, a person needed to pay 2 kurushes. He stated that the daily wage of a skilled laborer was 8 kurushes, whereas hundreds of people were ready to work for 1.5 kurushes a day.[426] For this reason, between 1879 and 1893, the people of Erzurum faced with a food shortage and price inflation. The state officials showed a serious effort to solve the problems caused by the drought. The central government sent 60,000 kiles of wheat as a relief in 1893 through Trabzon port, and paid 300,000 kurushes for the transportation of 10,000 kiles of wheat from Diyarbakır. A year prior, an investigation had concluded that at least 10,000 people were living under conditions of starvation and the central government

426 Harry F. Lynch, Armenia: Travels and Studies II, 218. Quoted from Murat Küçükuğurlu, *Erzurum Belediye Tarihi 1 Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e (1866-1930)* (İstanbul: Dergah Yayınları, 2008), 70.

organized the distribution of 1,000,000 kurushes of relief for these people.[427] The central government also used the storehouses of the military to store the relief material. The plan was to prevent profiteers from hoarding the relief grain using their social and economic networks in the region. However, this attempt did not effect to huge amounts. A petition sent from Erzurum mentioned that the loss in the cereals reached more than 40% of the total amount. Therefore, the Agricultural Bank was ordered to buy 200,000 kiles of wheat to distribute as a relief.[428] Living under the drought conditions had become the daily reality of Erzurum for years. Although the harvest season was unusually good in 1900,[429] Mehmed Rauf Pasha described the situation as some people having to feed themselves with grass due to the food shortage before the harvest season.[430]

The effect of famine was even worse in Diyarbakır than Erzurum. According to British observers, the causes of the catastrophe in the region were seven:

1- *The late war*
2- *The failure of harvest*
3- *The unsettled state of the country and raids of the Kurds*
4- *The call for arrears of taxes hitherto allowed to remain unpaid*
5- *The depreciation of the currency*
6- *The arrival of large bodies of destitute refugees from Lazistan, and Circassians and others from Bulgaria and Roumelia*[431]

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427 Gül, Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kuraklık ve Kıtlık (Erzurum Vilayeti Örneği: 1892-1893 ve 1906-1908 Yılları)," 148. BOA.DH.MKT. 2054/58.

428 Ibid., 149. BOA. DH.MKT 2013/65.

429 F.O. 424/200 Inclosure in No:247 "Report on the Condition of the Vilayet of Erzurum During the Quarter Ended" (September, 30 1900).

430 Muammer Demirel, *Sultan İkinci Abdülhamid ile Erzurum Vilayeti Arasındaki Yazışmalar (1894-1904),* 179. "killet-i mahsulat ve fakr-u ihtiyacat mülabesesiyle bir kısım ahalinin adeta ot yemekle sedirmek derecesine geldikleri halde…"

431 For example, The *Illustrated Missionary News* published an article on the arrival of emigrants in 1879 and argued that more than 60,000 people, who were from lower and upper Adscharia,

7- *The mismanagement of the grain stores by the local authorities*.[432]

The Armenian question had developed within such a background. The state's lack of infrastructural power allowed the development of another coalition which controlled the relief works, and the grain distribution. They also formed a relationship with the religious leaders of the regions. The artisan and ulama coalition became the new central power of these regions. Other powerful actors such as the Kurdish tribes and Circassian immigrants were often blamed for plundering the Armenian villagers after the destructive effects of the famine. One important example was the petition of the peasants from Van province. They contacted the British consul who visited the region about their misery by saying, "we do not wish to go into foreign country; we only ask for a place within the Turkish Empire where we could find security of life, honor, and property."[433] This was only a part of the subaltern's discursive strategy; simultaneously, certain other Armenians signed a secret document to secure Russian support against the looting of their properties in the region.[434]

When the ecological changes came on top international political problems, the outcome became more pronounced. The result was the fight over a piece of bread for a limited daily stay. In such a situation, the changing dynamics of the state provided advantages for the Muslim artisans and the religious leaders. The rising effect of Islamic discourse among the local bureaucracy and the internationalization of the Armenian problem opened the way for the handover of the power in city centers. While the local non-Muslims lost their trade relations and profit-making jobs, Muslim artisans filled the

would be provided with land upon their arrival in the province of Erzurum, Van and Diyarbakır. See: *Illustrated Missionary News* August 1, 1879, 91.

432 F.O. 424/106 No:186 Memorundum by Lord Tenterden on the Distress in Asiatic Turkey.

433 Ibid., Inclosure 2 in No:9 Armenians of Ardamed to Captain Clayton, Van (November 18, 1879).

434 Ibid., Inclosure 2 in No:13 Captain Clayton to Major Trotter, Van (November 22, 1879).

gap. The Armenian uprisings in the regions and the Armenian massacres in 1894-1896 were deeply connected to this change. However, a more fateful result of the famine was the creation of a collective memory; attitudes regarding speculators, the ineffectiveness of the local bureaucracy, the deaths of domestic animals, the war, the uprisings, and the starvation caused by the drought, dramatically changed the character of the next generation. When they felt a similar threat later, they had brought their collective memory to the fore.

§ 4.3 Remember to Forget, Forget to Remember

> *During the eighteen months preceding the July 1908 Revolution, the Ottoman population confronted a series of domestice and interna tional economic crises. The crises began with a severe winter in early 1907 which raised the price of practically every comestible and made "the existence of the laboring class very difficult." By March, 1907, the Istanbul price of meat and staples such as legumes were double normal levels. Firewood was up up 250 per cent over normal and charcoal had as much as tripled in price.*[435]

After the dissolution of traditional actors in the region due to the reasons mentioned above, Muslims became the real actors in the city's social life. However, with the rising of another crisis, society remembered what they experienced in the previous years to create a discursive strategy to defend their social positions and eliminate possible new agencies from arising in the region.

The drought between 1905 and 1908 triggered intolerable inflation in wheat and flour prices. The area affected by the drought was limited.[436] However, the price inflation affected almost all the provinces. Although the total

435 Donald Quataert, "The Economic Climate of the 'Young Turk Revolution' in 1908," in *The Journal of Modern History,* vol. 51, No 3 (September 1979): 1149.

436 BOA. DH.MKT. 1194/01, 6. 25 Ağustos 1323 (September 7, 1907)

amount of flour and wheat sent to İstanbul was higher than the previous year, there was a lack of products in the market. The problem was similar to the earlier famines. The profiteers were not eager to sell their crops due to the rumors about the price inflations and the drought in some cities.[437]

Table 4.3.1. The Amount of Wheat and Flour in Istanbul

1906 (March-August)			1907 (March-August)			Deficit	Surplus		
Wheat		Flour	Wheat		Flour	Wheat	Wheat	Flour	
Kg	Kile	Sack	Kg	Kile	Sack	Kile	Kg	Sack	
0	43,403	16,485	0	10,653	37,137	32,750	0	20,652	Provinces
2,636,1262	0	180,995	4,435,5493	0	276,628	0	1,799,4231	95,633	From Abroad

Source: BOA.DH.MKT.1194 / 01

Although İstanbul's cereal need was provided by importing wheat and flour, the drought conditions caused starvation in the Ottoman East. Even in late 1908, the petition sent from Erzincan mentioned 32 people facing hunger due to famine. That was followed by another petition stating that 7 people had starved, and that peasants had begun to eat animal corpses due to the lack of provisions in Hınıs.[438] Under such conditions, famine and the associated price inflation became part of society's daily agenda in the Ottoman East. Thus, many petitions were sent to the government to ask for help and to criticize the local profiteers. The Ministry of Foreign Office had been researching the prices of wheat and flour in the foreign ports to find a solution for the price inflation.

437 Ibid., 9.

438 Gül, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kuraklık ve Kıtlık (Erzurum Vilayeti Örneği: 1892-1893 ve 1906-1908 Yılları)," 154; BOA. DH.MKT. 2770/102; BOA. DH.MKT. 2738/6.

Table 4.3.2. Wheat and Flour Prices in the Bergos Porte

Wheat (Assumed to be 100 kg)

For Lira	Frank	Santim
57	22	
58	22	35
58,5	22	20
59	22	30
59,5	22	40
60	22	50
61	22	70

Flour (100 kg sack)

1 A. Product	31 Frank	15 Santim
3 A. Product	30 Frank	25 Santim
5 A. Product	28 Frank	50 Santim

Flour (74.400 kg sack)

1 A. Product	23 Frank	20 Santim
3 A. Product	22 Frank	50 Santim
5 A. Product	21 Frank	20 Santim

Source: BOA. DH.MKT. 1194 / 01

More importantly, the problem was not limited to the province of Erzurum. People in the other provinces applied to the local governors for the help of the government as well. For instance, the governor of Trabzon and Sivas asked about the possibility of the delay in the tax payment of the society and the possibility of lending interest-free money to the people in late 1907.[439] According to the British Consul, all prosperity depends on agriculture, and in 1904 the harvest was small and inadequate in Trabzon. For this reason, the

439 BOA. DH.MKT. 1194/01, 61-78-82. 25 Eylül 1323, (October 8, 1907).

province's revenues had decreased by 11 percent in a year.[440] People in Bitlis and Muş petitioned their government for the prohibition of crop exportation, and they worked to control trade routes by attacking caravans that transferred crop from Diyarbakır to Van.[441] The governor of Mamuretü'l Aziz asked about the possibility of sending 600 kiles* of wheat and 500 kiles* of bran for the Çemişgezek district of Dersim and 100 kiles of grain and 50 kiles of bran for just one village of Harput. He sent various petitions in the same week to inform the central government about some other town's needs as well.[442]

The drought and the associated food shortage caused price inflations in 1907, and the peasants of the region were very nervous about their future. As the most obvious result of the food shortage, during the spring of 1907, hundreds of the Armenian villagers from different districts of the province had applied to the Russian consulate to migrate to Russia.[443] The food shortage was not the sole reason for this; the Armenians also blamed the Hamidian Light Cavaliers and the Circassian emigrants who looted their properties as the reason for their concern, but the drought was still the main reason for the chaos in the region.[444] The Russian Consul stated that at least 80,000 people who were from the different districts of the eastern provinces had applied to

440 F.O. 424/208 Inclosure in No: 105 Summary of consular reports on the conditions prevailing in the various Vilayets of the Ottoman Empire. Constantinople, (December 5, 1905).

441 BOA. İ.DH. 1459/24, 1 Teşrinievvel 1323 (October 14, 1907).

442 BOA. DH.MKT. 1238/72, 1-11. 1 Teşrinievvel 1323-12 April 1324 (October 1907- April 1908).

443 During the last months of 1906, the Sultan issued an order to allow Armenians to emigrate to Russia. Until this order, Emigration to United States was legal after an Armenian who wants to leave the country pays all his debts and taxes, and renounces the Ottoman nationality. At the end of the 1906, Armenians were allowed to emigrate to Russia on the same conditions with America.

444 For the documents about these problems that continued until 1910, see: F.O. 195/2250 No:32. 382-385. (June 1907) From Mr. Shipley to the British Consulate in Istanbul; BOA. DH.MKT. 1194 / 01; BOA. DH.MKT. 1219/77, (the documents under BOA. DH.MKT. 1219/77 are concerned with the same issue between 1908 and 1909.)

migrate. At the same time, the governor of Bitlis explained that the number of petitions for immigration was around 100,000. All these problems caused a remarkable decrease in the harvest of the year.[445]

The government refused many of the migration requests because the Armenian peasantry was crucial for providing cereal in the region. Moreover, Nuri Bey and the *Envar-ı Şarkiyye* newspaper defined those applications as product of the relationship between the Russian consulate and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation. According to them, the consul of the Russian Empire motivated the Armenian peasants via the help of revolutionaries to increase Russia's influence in the region. While the Russian consulates were accepting the immigration requests, they were also assisting revolutionaries in spreading their revolutionary bulletins to various parts of the Empire. The government also accused the consulate of helping *komitadjis and fedais* to enter the Empire, as had happened in the case of Hüseyin Tosun.[446]

445 F.O. 424/213 Inclosure I in No:51 Vice-Consul Dickson to Sir N. O'Conor. Bitlis, (July 6 1907). Moumdjiyan argued that the immigration requests were the project of ARF. Although there was evidence of the effect of ARF, the attacks of Hasananlı and Cebranlı tribes on the Armenian peasants were among the more important reasons for emigration. See: BOA. Y.PRK.UM. 79/97, 22 Nisan 1323 (May 5, 1907).

446 BOA. A.) MKT.MHM. 644/11. The document also contains the copies of Envar-ı Şarkiyye Newspaper, and the telegraphs between Nuri Bey and The Ministry of Interior March 1907 and April 1907. In addition to these, Garabed Moumdjiyan argued the famous leader of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation namely Ruben Ter Minasian and Kevork Chavus were the men who encouraged Armenian peasants to the 'terk-i tabiyet' in Bitlis. They got the signs of hundreds of Armenian villagers to request the immigration. Both of the Brtish and Ottoman archival sources also underlined the role of the Kevork Chavus and his fellows. However, it is my contention that, focusing on the role of the revolutionaries could condemn the ordinary Armenian villages to silence. In such a perspective, people cannot raise their voice without the support of revolutionaries against the problems that they faced with in their daily lives. See: Moumdjiyan, "Struggling for a Constitutional Regime: Armenian-Young Turk Relations in the Era of Abdulhamid II, 1895-1909," 332; F.O. 424.215 51. Dickson to O. Conor, Bitlis, (July 6, 1907); BOA. Y.PRK.UM. 2125/47-48.

Despite the conceptualization of the problem as an agitators' movement, the local governors aimed to save people from dying under famine conditions. As the governor of Erzurum, Nuri Bey petitioned to ask for the possibility of the prohibition of crop exportation from Erzurum. Besides, he also requested more cereals from other provinces, such as Sivas, in the autumn of 1907.[447] Indeed, the ban on crop exportation was widespread in the late Ottoman Empire whenever the provinces faced climatic changes or a locust invasion that ruined the year's harvest. Erzurum, for instance, succeeded in prohibiting the exportation of cereal for the year 1906.[448] However, the drought between 1906-1908 was much more destructive than in previous years. Even after Nuri Bey, the new governor of Erzurum, Abdulvahhab Pasha prepared a list of total amounts of crops needed in Bayburt, Kemah, Refahiye, Pülümür, Bayezid, Pasinler, Tercan, Keskim, Hınıs, and Namervan in 1908.[449]

Another significant problem was the lack of infrastructural power in the region. As American missionaries and the British consul in Van and Bitlis had observed, although there was wheat in the country, it was impossible to transport it to the center of Van due to the winter conditions. People had been threatened by famine for years because roads were closed.[450] The local governors decided to distribute money for seeds, and missionaries organized relief campaigns, but neither of them succeeded in finding a straightforward solution to the destructive effect of famine in the provinces.[451] Another issue was the diminishing of the land under cultivation. Due to the actions of the Hamidiye Light Cavalries, political chaos and anarchy were routine, and the

447 Ibid, 38.

448 BOA, İ.DH. 1458/10, 7. 27 Ağustos 1323 (September 9, 1907).

449 BOA.DH.MKT 1219/77, 1-24.

450 F.O. 424/208 No:38 Sir N. O'Conor to Marques of Lansdourne Constantinople (April 18, 1905).

451 F.O. 424/208 No:43 (also see No:45-46) Dr. Raynolds to Women's Armenian Relief Fund Van, (April 3, 1905).

revolutionary movement of Armenians had been organizing the migration requests of the Armenians. The Vice-Consul of Heathcote argued that "the distress among the Armenian peasantry is greater than at any period for years and that many villages will give greatly reduced crops, owing to the impossibility of providing seed corn" in 1905.[452] The missionary accounts supported the argument as follows:

> (Some) *villages in the plains are in a desperately poor condition. Sheikh Yakoob in the Bulanık- one of our stations is a fair sample. There used to be 200 families now reduced to 80-100. (But the taxes are as of old). Fifteen families left last year to go and live among the Kurds. Others plan to do so this year. No crops were sowed the last spring and none this autumn. The population is perhaps 600. The majority of the people have not enough food to last more than a month. The same tale is told wherever I go.*[453]

The urban poor were distressed by the food shortage; they were afraid to live under the conditions of the 1890s that had caused massive starvation. A petition signed by the people of Kuruçay, a district of Erzurum, shows the understanding of the situation in the city. This particular petition was signed by the people of Kuruçay and two people who lived in Istanbul. These were Ahmed, a porter in the Tophane port of Istanbul, and Suleyman, who has a shop in Istanbul. It is possible to say that Ahmed could be responsible for transporting the wheat in the district to Suleiman's shop in Istanbul. Ahmed and Suleyman could also be among the people who had more of an opportunity to reach the central government compared to people in the village. Although the motive behind the petition is not clear, it is obvious the drought disrupted their network, and Ahmed began to criticize other merchants who were hoarding the wheat in their storehouses due to the price inflation. He argued that although they had been working far away from their family to make money and pay their taxes on time for years, the people of their district

452 F.O. 424/208 No:66 Vice-Consul Heathcote to Sir N. O'Conor Bitlis, (June 27, 1905).

453 American Board office of the Treasurer Transfer 194 From H.E. Underwood to W.W. Peet Trees, 55 Erzurum (February 28, 1905).

were desperate for two reasons. First, they did not have enough wheat for their daily stay. Second, if the government were to provide them relief in the form of money or grain, these merchants would seize the product and would refuse to sell.[454] As a solution, he asked the possibility of distributing the wheat already in the storehouses of the profiteers to the people of Kuruçay. The petition had a discursive strategy similar to the petitions of the 1880s' crises; aiming to force the state to be more active in preventing the price inflation in cereals. Nuri Bey would focus on the same idea when seeking for the Porte's help in October 1907.[455] When the city faced the price inflation in cereals after the villagers finished the harvest before October, the ordinary people in the city showed their reaction. This reaction was different from the attempts of Nuri Bey. While the villagers had been continuing to send petitions to Nuri Bey to find a solution for the price inflation and food shortage, many people in the city centers organized another series of protests. As distinct from the previous attempts, the governor was not the direct target. Instead, a group of people who were mainly of the urban poor targeted the merchants among the townsmen. One of these townsmen was a well-known merchant who was not in the coalition, and the urban poor criticized him for being in control of all profiteering activities in the city.

§ 4.4 Defining the Limits of Powerholders: Third Protest Wave in Erzurum in 1907

In 1907, Erzurum became notorious for ejecting two governors and many local officers, including the military commanders and police officers within a single year, as explained in chapter three. The moderate Nuri Bey had been appointed as the new governor after the coalition of ulama and artisans

454 BOA. DH.MKT. 2669/16, 2 Teşrinisani 1322 (November 15, 1906).

455 BOA. DH.MKT. 1194/01, 36. 18 Eylül 1323 (October 1, 1907) "Mazallah-ı teali (1)308'de olduğu gibi kaht-ı azimi vuku'uyla telef-i nüfus-u mucib olmamak için"

dislocated Ata Bey from the government office. Moreover, as the personal income tax and domestic animal tax were abolished, a general amnesty covering the events of 1906 was announced and therefore, the city was quiet.

Since Nuri Bey did not expect a protest movement of the coalition's urban poor, he refused the request for the prohibition of crop exportation without the *Irade* of the Sultan by thundering 'do not meddle in the government's job!' As a governor, he had shown tolerance towards many activities of the city's ulama and artisan coalition and their urban poor supporters. Yet, Nuri Bey's position on this issue was complicated by the fact that one of the most important merchants of the city, Malyemezzade Tevfik, had become a scapegoat for the coalition due to his role in the crop exports. Because of that, he did not choose a side between the coalition and the rest of the city, and decided to wait for the order of the Sublime Porte. Furthermore, he did not presume a movement would be mounted against him or other merchants of the town by the coalition because Malyemezzade Izzet was Tevfik's brother and also one of the prominent members of the coalition. However, the reaction to the food shortage and the price inflation came from the urban poor of the city.

The urban poor took action when the governor refused their request. They prepared another petition, which was signed by *ulama* and townsmen as well, on the 8th of September, 1907, on Sunday. They requested the prohibition of the cereal exportation and determining of the bread price by a committee. At the same time, they decided to act against the profiteers and created a list of their names. Malyemezzade Tevfik Efendi, Ohanyan Kirkor Efendi, Mustafa Efendi, and Balasariyan Ohannes (Haço), the well-known banker of the city, made it to this list. After a day, about 200 people met in the city center between 8:00 and 9:00 to organize a mob action against these people. First, they went to the place of Malyemezzade Tevfik Efendi, but they failed to catch him. Tevfik had found out about the mob earlier than the rest and managed to escape to the military barrack. The crowd did not stop and targeted one of the men of Malyemezzade Tevfik's men instead, an Armenian Protestant

merchant, Ohanyan Kirkor. Kirkor was from the Kığı district, and he was known in the city as the merchant who collected the cereals in order to sell them in other provinces. The community found him in the city center. He was accused of being a profiteer, and his crime was loudly proclaimed to him. The crowd began to lynch him and dragged him to Tebrizkapı. Simultaneously, some people in the group also captured Mustafa Efendi, who was another merchant on their list. He was gravely wounded by the mob but managed to escape with his life after the community left him for dead. Other merchants who learned about the mob mobilizing against them, Balasariyan Ohannes and Nemlizade Sabri fled the city when they heard of the events. Nevertheless, the crowd also had plundered the houses of Balasariyan Ohannes.

During the mob action, many people had joined the crowd, prompting Nuri Bey to inform the army commander. When the army commander of the city, Colonel Mehmed Bey, and the vice-chief of the police went to the city center, the crowd had reached around four thousand people. The urban poor killed Ohanyan Kirkor in front of the eyes of Colonel Mehmed and the vice-chief of the police. According to the British Consul, when Colonel Mehmed saw the scene, he said 'İsh *bitti. Gidelim!*' which means, "The deed is done. Let's go!"[456] During the event, the community also wounded a student because he went against the crowd by crying '*Allah'dan korkmaz mısınız!'* which means 'Do you have no fear of Allah!'. More importantly, as Zeki Pasha stated, during the blood bath, many people warned the mob to cease their activities, but they replied as 'We will do whatever we want against the

456 F.O. 195/2251 No:58 and 59, 223-240 (September 11, 1907); Barutçuzade Şevki's thought were along the lines of the British Consul, implying Colonel Mehmed ordered the murder of Ohanyan Kirkor. See: Göçgün, "II. Meşrutiyet'e Öncülük Eden Bir Hareket: Erzurum İhtilali ve Ona Dair Bazı Belgeler," 275: Türkdoğan, "1906-1907 Erzurum Hürriyet Ayaklanması III 505.

profiteers because we applied to the governor Nuri Bey first.'[457] The British Consul Shipley explained the event in his report:

> Mohamedans and Christians alike vouch for, and condemn, the dis graceful conduct of Colonel Mehmet Bey, Commanding the 28th Regiment – who is also Commandant de la Place (Merkez Commandan)- and who witnessed the murder and is accused by some of having actually given a signal for the final blow. Of the six or seven murderers, it is common, and undisputed gossip in the town that, three are Hammals employed at the Custom House and three are Coldjis in the ser vice of Régie.[458]

Although both the Consular report and the memoir of Barutçuzade stated that Colonel Mehmed ordered the crowd to kill Ohanyan Kirkor, it is also possible that the Turkish words of Colonel Mehmed, which was *"ish bitti, gidelim!"* were misinterpreted, because the sentence can also mean to "it's over, let's go!" According to the Ottoman archival sources, Colonel Mehmed did not give the order for the murder of profiteers with these words. Instead, he stated that it was too late to save Ohanyan Kirkor; the crowd had already killed him. Still, he was criticized for not sending a battalion to stop the crowd.

When the protest started, Nuri Bey had sustained his moderate stance. He informed Abuk Ahmed Pasha, one of the commanders in Erzurum, and waited for the military officials to take action against the crowd. However, before the military commander's attempt, the community passed by three police stations while insulting the profiteers. None of the police officers attempted to stop the crowd. Furthermore, the military commander, Colonel Mehmed, did not order the gendarmeries to reign in the movement. Instead, he went to the city center along with the vice-chief of the police department to reason with the

457 BOA. İ.DH. 1458/10, 1-27. 27 Ağustos 1323-5 Eylül 1323 (September, 1907); See: F.O. 195/2251 No:58 and 59, 223-240. (September 11, 1907).

458 The name of the murderers were Yusuf, Rıza, Celil, Fazıl, Adil, Şükrü, Mehmed and Mehmed. See: BOA. DH.TMIK.M. 270/71, 3. 20 Mayıs 1324 (June 2, 1908).

crowd. The stances of the police officers and the gendarmes were criticized in Nuri Bey's report. He argued that because both were unwilling to stop the chaos, the number of protesters had swollen to four or five thousand. This was also why Ohanyan Kirkor was able to be murdered.[459] The police and gendarmes of Erzurum knew what had happened to the police officers during the events in October 1906. It is possible to say that they were afraid of the crowd because police officers who had attempted to exile the coalition members, were killed in their own stations during the events of the prior year.

Moreover, the security forces and the governor, Nuri Bey, were well-informed about what the former governors experienced when they ordered that the protest wave in the city be brought under control. Hence, after he criticized the stance of the military in the city, he kindly asked for the possibility of his appointment to Kastamonu on the 10th of September, 1907. In other words, he did not desire to experience the destiny of the former governors in Erzurum.[460] The Consul O'Conor described the position of the governor as follows:

> Nouri Bey is an astute Cretan, and – as I have already had the honour to report to your Excellency- his desire is to be transferred from Erzeroum: and, until he can arrange this, I think the first consideration with him is to avoid fiction with all parties and save himself from worry and possible danger by a masterly inactivity.[461]

In his other criticism, Nuri Bey argued that the harvest season had not started yet, and the reason for the panic in the city was the incitement of the urban poor via the rumors. These led to the killing of Ohanyan Kirkor and wounding of others on the list, and they also targeted many merchants and millers of the city. Although there were ten thousand soldiers in the province, the government faced mobs multiple times a year. He added that the most

459 BOA. İ.DH. 1458/10, 4. 28 Ağustos 1323 (September 10, 1907).

460 Ibid., 10. "Kastamonu vilayetine nakl-i memuriyet-i acizaneme delalet-i samiye-i fehimanelerini istirham eylerim. Ferman."

461 F.O. 195 / 2251 no: 58, 225. From O'Connor to the Mr. Wilkie Young (September 11, 1907).

recent event did not directly target the government. Since the soldiers did not attempt to secure order in the city, people creates mob whenever they desire to show their problems. If the government did not manage to fix this problem, neither the ordinary people nor the consulates of the city would be able to live with a feeling of peace. Moreover, according to him, the next step would be a revolt against the Armenians, which would be a cause for foreign power intervention. Therefore, Nuri Bey concluded that a new commander who had the capability to govern the soldiers under the command of Zeki Pasha should be sent to Erzurum.[462]

Zeki Pasha, the most powerful military-based man who was responsible for sending Colonel Mehmed to the city, rejected the claims of Nuri Bey directed at the military forces in the city. He argued that because Nuri Bey gave tolerated the coalition during his reign in the city, its power increased. Although Nuri Bey argued that the committee that had organized the prior two protests in the city had not join last protest,[463] Zeki Pasha was disagreed with him by arguing that governor indulged the coalition.[464] Besides, Zeki Pasha explained what the military commander did during the event step by step to demonstrate the innocence of the security forces in the city. According to him, during the event, the governor sent them a postman to ask for the help of the military and police forces. After that, Colonel Mehmed Bey ordered the military to prepare to defend the governor and his house because the protestors had looted the governor's house during the prior event. He also aimed to protect the consulates, banks, and innocent people by ordering the gendarmes to

462 Ibid., 2. For the all critics of Nuri Bey, also see; BOA. BEO. 3178/238322, (9 Eylül 1323) (September 22, 1907).

463 Ibid., 10. "İşbu şer zümre'i erazil arasında evvelki hadiseden zi-medhal olanlardan kimse olmayub"

464 Ibid., 6. Also see: BOA.Y.MTV. 302/28, 2; BOA.Y.PRK.ASK. 250/89, 4-5; F.O. 195/2251 No: 58 From O'Connor to Mr. Wilkie Young (September 11, 1907).

patrol in the city. Also, he protected Malyemezzade Tevfik Efendi in the Firdevsoğlu barrack.

Zeki Pasha did accept, however, that the city's police and gendarmes did not manage to provide order.[465] According to him, the protestors were the brainless people who had engaged in immoral behaviors in the city.[466] Despite the faults of the security forces, Zeki Pasha claimed that the mob was organized because Nuri Bey failed to take action, despite a piece of information emerging two months prior that pointed to the possibility of such an event.[467] Pasha prepared another detailed report when the *serasker* Rıza Pasha criticized him by arguing that the rebels had been able to increase their power since 1906 because the military officials did not enforce order.[468] In his report, Zeki Pasha also mentioned that both Nazım Pasha and Ata Bey saved their lives with the help of the military. In addition, during the latest event, the military officials had concentrated on stopping the chaos. However, because Nazım Pasha did not attempt to solve the problems of the people in Pasinler, and because Ata Bey had ordered the exile of the influential people in the city, protests were organized by the ordinary people of the city.[469] Thus, according to him, the governor's attitude was the reasons of the movements.

The protestors, during those days, governed the city by oppressing the merchants and townsmen. They stopped targeting people on the death list as a result of pieces of advice given by the *ulama,* but they worked to control the oil trade by menacing the oil traders. Moreover, they inhibited the trade of cereals to Damascus and Aleppo by arguing that if they lost their cereals, the price of cereals would rise to match the price of meat. They also forced the

465 Ibid., 7, 10, 14, 15.

466 Ibid., 8. "yağları dahi buradan ihraç etmemek için teşebbüsat ve müracaatde bulunan beyinsiz bir takım."

467 Ibid., 13.

468 BOA. Y. MTV. 302/79, 3. 6 Eylül 1323 (September 19, 1907).

469 BOA. Y.MTV. 302/152, 2. 15 Eylül 1323 (September 28, 1907)

government to fix the price of the bread at forty to thirty *para* in depending on its kind.[470] According to the British consul, some of the protestors attempted to extract money from certain people. Muhsin Efendi was one of these who was targeted for a shakedown of 25 pounds, but he managed to get out of it by giving 10 pounds.[471] Besides, Zeki Pasha decreased the number of the cavalry and infantry to appease the crowd at the behest of reaction of Nuri Bey.[472]Amounting to a clear victory of the protestors, Nuri Bey sent an order to the district of Pasinler to abolish cereal exportation due to the fear of another bloodbath in the city.[473]

In short, it was obvious that for certain reasons, the civil and military authorities were not acting in unison. However, both of them asserted that they had petitioned İstanbul for instructions, and that they agreed that no steps could be taken until the instructions arrived.[474] The bureaucracy in İstanbul criticized the attitudes of the civil and military authorities during the mob action. According to them, the governor should have announced a state of emergency. Then, he should have ordered the arrest of those responsible for the event, and they should have been sent to the courthouse as soon as possible. Both the governor and the military commander were criticized for labeling each other as the reason for the event. According to the central bureaucracy, that was unacceptable. As a rule of Ottoman governorship, during such events, first of all, the government should take precautions through providing order with the help of gendarmeries and police, but if facing a counter-attack during the arrests of the responsible people, the governor should ask for the help of the army. Hence, Nuri Bey was wrong in the eyes of İstanbul's

470 Ibid., 11, 14. Also see: BOA. BEO. 3144/235764, 2-5; BOA. DH.TMIK. 254/4, 1-4.

471 F.O. 195/2251 No:61 225. From Milkie Young to O'Connor (September 22, 1907).

472 BOA. Y.MTV. 302/79, 2. 5 Eylül 1323 (Septermber 18, 1907).

473 Ibid., 12.

474 F.O. 195/2251 No:59, 240. From O'Connor to the Mr. Wilkie Young (September 15, 1907).

bureaucracy because he had not taken necessary precautions before the events. The military commander was also responsible for the emergence of the mob because he did not organize the military forces as quickly as possible.[475] The bureaucrats also noticed that there was a sign of the ethnic clashes between Armenians and Muslims in Erzurum because both the governor and Zeki Pasha had provided information about the tension between these groups. Hence, İstanbul ordered the city's military and civil bureaucrats to stop the chaos in the city. Nevertheless, it was impossible to provide safety, as the British Consul argued; "the civil authority would seem to be powerless, and the military is in unquestionable sympathy with the bulk of the population."[476]

While the bureaucrats in Istanbul focused on the issue, the head clerk Tahsin Pasha wrote a letter to the Sultan and argued that the government would replace Nuri Bey with an effective governor in a few days.[477] Hence, Nuri Bey was appointed as the governor of Ankara, while Reşad Bey, the governor of Ankara, was planned to be sent to Erzurum on the 3rd of October.[478] Nuri Bey desired to leave the city as soon as possible after the decree, but the government did not allow him to leave Erzurum before the arrival of the new governor.[479] The Sultan changed his mind a week later and chose Abdulvahab Pasha as the new governor of Erzurum.[480]

4.4.1 *Taking Back the Authority. Government in the Scene*

Abdulvahhab Pasha took the governor's seat in October 1907. Unlike the former governor, Nuri Bey, he did not desire to solve the problems by tolerating the committee. Instead, he created a two-stage plan to provide order in the

475 BOA. Y.A.RES. 149/78, 1-3. 1-3 Eylül 1323 (September, 14-16, 1907).
476 F.O. 195/2251 No: 58, 225. From O'Connor to the Mr. Wilkie Young (September 11, 1907).
477 BOA. Y.A.HUS. 515/43, 1. 6 Eylül 1323 (September 19, 1907).
478 BOA. BEO. 3161/237027, 20 Eylül 1323 (October 3, 1907); BOA. BEO 3160 / 236891
479 BOA. BEO. 3161/237034, 22 Eylül 1323 (October 5, 1907); BOA. DH.MKT. 1206/23; BOA. BEO. 3165 /237375.
480 BOA. İ.HUS. 159/15, 1. 29 Eylül 1323 (October 12, 1907).

city. In the first stage, he would declare a state of emergency in the city. Then, he would arrest all the people who were active in the past events with the help of the army. Yet, it was Ramadan when he arrived at Erzurum. Since he was well-informed about what happened to Ata Bey when he attempted to exile the leaders of the coalition during the previous Ramadan, he decided to wait until the end of the month.[481] During Ramadan, he made an investigation to prepare a list of the coalition members.

After the Ramadan feast, Governor-General Abdulvahhab Pasha began his job by ordering the cavalry and infantry troops to patrol the streets. Then, he announced the state of emergency for the province of Erzurum in the second week of November. Following his plan, the police and gendarmes of Erzurum arrested a group of people who were active members of the committee. They first arrested thirty-two men, seven of whom were the murderers of Ohanyan Kirkor. The others were accused of organizing the last protest as well on the 24th of November.[482]

During the investigation, the governor had invited many people to the governor's house to prevent them from joining another protest meeting. In the first wave, there were only two important people; the attorney Seyfullah Efendi and the butcher Fehim Efendi of the committee. Others were mainly related to the urban poor in the committee. A day later, Mezararkalı Mevlüd was the targeted by the police officers. As one of the most important committee members, he resisted the police and gendarmes using a gun. Unlike in the previous events, the soldiers in Erzurum responded to the people who disobeyed the orders. The soldiers surrounded the house of Mezararkalı Mevlüd,

481 BOA. Y. PRK.ASK. 250/89 Indeed, the government asked to wait until the end of the Ramadan.

482 BOA. DH.TMIK. 254/4, 7. 11 Teşrinisani 1323 (November 23, 1907); BOA.YPRK.UM. 80/85; BOA. DH.ŞFR. 390/08, 390/16; BOA. DH.ŞFR. 390/20; BOA. İ.HUS. 160/59, 12 Teşrinisani 1323 (November 24, 1907).

and he was arrested along with his men. Other important members of the committee, such as Faruk Bey, Uzun Osman Efendi, Hacı Akif Agha, Marancı Abdullah, and Malyemezzade İzzet Bey, were also arrested by the security forces on the 25th of November.[483] The governor-general Abdulvahhab Pasha broke the good news to İstanbul by sending another telegram which stated that Hoca Şevket, Durak Bey, Kavutzade Hafız and his three men were also arrested on the same day.[484] Zeki Pasha added four other names, who were Şamlızade Şeyh Ahmed, Tahsin Bey, Cemal, and Güli Ahmed Bey to the list when he gave a detailed report about how the soldiers arrested these people.[485] The British consul verified the names by sending a telegraph that explained the jobs and offenses of the arrested people to the consulate in Istanbul.[486]

Most of the apprehended people were belong to the urban poor, shopkeepers, *ulama* and artisans and all of them were jailed via the efforts of Governor-General Abdulvahhab Pasha and Marshall Zeki Pasha. The expansion of the investigation had started when Huseyin Tosun Bey was arrested due to the

483 BOA. DH.ŞFR. 390/ 09; BOA. DH.ŞFR. 390/20; BOA. DH.TMIK. 254 /4, 6. 12 Teşrinisani 1323 (November 25, 1907).

484 Ibid.; BOA.Y.A.HUS. 516/151, 12 Teşrinisani 1323 (November 25, 1907)

485 BOA. Y.PRK.ASK. 251/105, 13 Teşrinisani 1323 (November, 26, 1907). Kansu, *1908 Devrimi,* 83-84.

486 F.O. 424/213 No:70 Shipley to O'Conor, (December 2, 1907). Among those arrested were "..Seifullah Efendi: A wealthy and leading lawyer of Erzeroum; Hadji Shevket (from the Ulema class): Alleged to have made violent attacks on the Government in the mosque during Ramazan and of inciting the rebellion; Faroukh [Farouk] Bey: Formerly an army contractor who was accused of being implicated in the murder of Kirkor Efendi, the details of which were given by Mr. Young in his dispatch No. 58 of the 11th September last; Dourak Bey: A member of the Erzeroum Municipality; (Uzun) Osman Efendi: Late Mudir of the Agricultural Bank: Accused of want of respect towards the Government; Hadji Akif Efendi: Alleged to have taken a leading part in the movement of last year; Sheikh Ahmed Efendi: A large exporter of sheep and other domestic animals. Accusation against him similar to that against Osman Efendi; Izzet Efendi: Accused of directly instigating murder of Kirkor and of desiring to compass the death of his brother Tewfik Bey, the partner of Krikor. His (Izzet Efendi's) father is said to be the wealthiest man in Erzeroum."

use of a fake passport.[487] Tosun confessed that he had bought a Russian passport for 40 manats, which were equal to 480 Ottoman kurushes, from a Russian citizen named Şeyhoglu Ali in Tbilisi.[488] The government decided to search for the relationship between the committee and Huseyin Tosun. Hence, he stood trial with the committee.[489] However, once the real identity of Tosun was revealed, two problems emerged. First, the Russian consulate worked to get involved in the case because Tosun had a Russian passport. Second, the bureaucrats in Istanbul asked the governor to send Huseyin to Istanbul for another case because Tosun was a well-known revolutionist who worked to abolish the regime. In such a situation, the governor sent Huseyin Tosun to Istanbul. Although the governor failed to shed light on the relationship between the committee and the opposition movement, one example clarifies both sides' position. During the trial in Erzurum, when Mezararkalı Mevlüd saw Huseyin Tosun in a tortured state, he shouted *'Vah zavallılar, sizi de mi dövdüler?'* which means *'poor fellows! did they beat you too?'* Mezararkalı Mevlüd, as one of the leaders of the committee was surprised to see a

487 Almost all of the written sources (except Garabet Moumdjiyan) accepted Huseyin Tosun Bey to be the most influential figure behind these protest movements based on the studies of Barutçuzade Şevki Bey, and Mehmed Nusret Bey and Kazım Yurdalan. However, Huseyin Tosun Bey did not succeeded in leading these movements. He came Erzurum to lead the opposition movements via publishing bulletins and manifestos which he provided the distribution of the bulletins in the spring of 1907. However, the opposition movement was not powerfull in the city because three important names were previously exiled. The Committee was more powerful than Tosun's little movement. Hence, Tosun was not the person who led the committee, rather he was the person who was allowed to work in Erzurum by the Committee because of his initiatives that weakened the local government. For the documents about Huseyin Tosun Bey, see, BOA. BEO.3227/241981; BOA. BEO. 3230/242179; BOA. BEO. 3230/242210; BOA. BEO. 3238/242782 27 Kanunievvel 1323 (January 9, 1908).

488 Ibid., 3.

489 BOA. BEO. 3230/242210, 21 Kanunievvel 1323 (January 3, 1908) "fesede-i saire ile muhakemesi derdest bulunan malum Hüseyin'in…"

revolutionist in the court.[490] Apart from Huseyin Tosun, who was not an active member of the committee, 90 people stood trial due for their crimes, which were the disrupting the order by organizing committees against the Ottoman Government, the incarceration and wounding of Ata Bey through attacking of the former governor's house, forcing the governor to sign a petition, killing the police officers, attacking the house of Nuri Bey to force the government to cancel the domestic animal tax and personal income tax, dragging across the ground and murdering Ohanyan Kirkor, forcing some merchants to give money to the committee, forcing the merchants to close the shops and threatening the civil officials in Erzurum.[491]

According to the court's verdict, 69 people were found guilty, and 19 people were acquitted in February 1908. The criminals were classified in accordance with their involvements in the crimes. 8 people received the death penalty, 18 people received *kalebend* for life-sentence, 11 people received *kalebend* for 15 years, 13 people received *kalebend* for 10 years, 1 person received *kalebend* for 4 years, 1 person received hard labor (*kürek*) for 5 years, 3 people received imprisonment for 3 years, and 12 people received imprisonment for a year.[492]

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490 M. Nusret named Tosun as the person who got arrested during the investigation, Barutçuzade Şevki Bey gave details about the trials although there was a validity problem with his memoir. Ottoman, British and Russian archival sources also mentioned Tosun as a person who were in the trial.

491 BOA. DH.ŞFR. 390/20, 14 Teşrinisani 1323 (November 27, 1907).

492 BOA. Y.A.HUS 518/25, 2. 28 Kanunisani 1323 (February 10, 1908). Although there were 69 people accepted to be criminals, Abdulvahhab Pasha provided the names of 65 criminals in this document. He explains that the criminals whom the court sentenced the death were 6 people. I found two others' name from another document in the Ottoman Archive. See: BOA. DH.TMIK.M. 270/71, 3. However, two people's name are still still missing. The important one is the lack of Mufti Lütfullah Efendi on the list. Most probably, the Mufti lost his life or was appointed to another city. Moreover, the Russian Consulate Skyrabin stated that there were 92 people on trial and 8 people were sentenced to death. 19 people were acquitted. However, the names whom Skyrabin mentioned were different from the names that were

The court's decision resulted in the death of the coalition because the leaders of the committee were sentenced to the *kalebend* for a lifetime. In addition, the people who killed the police officers and the merchant, and wounded the former governor were sentenced to death. The city's population was unsatisfied with the outcome of the court because the most important people of Muslim society in Erzurum were losing their privileges. In addition, the people who were of the *ulama* were also on the list of the court. Hoca Şevket chose to flee the city instead of becoming a life-time *kalebend.* He had written a farewell letter before he left the city.[493] The Governor-General Abdulvahhab Pasha did not succeed in getting the court to complete the trials speedily, because many prisoners claimed that the police officers had tortured them during interrogation. In addition, the crowd of Erzurum and the gendarmes were opposed to the death sentences given to those of the urban poor in the coalition. Hence, while the city's ordinary people were organizing another protest movement in the autumn of 1908, Abdulvahhab Pasha asked the Porte about the possibility of changing his seat as had the former governor. Since the 1908 revolution had opened a new era for the Ottoman society, the government relocated him to the central office.[494]

These people would return to Erzurum via the new government's general amnesty after the declaration of the Second Constitution in 1908. However, they continued to send telegraphs about the torture that they faced during the investigation. According to them, the former Governor-General Abdulvahhab Pasha, the vice-chief of the police officers Celal Efendi, and the commissar

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mentioned in the Ottoman archival sources. In addition to this, although Skyrabin mentioned that Mezararkalı Mevlüd was killed during torture, he was alive and sentenced to life-time kalebend by the result of the court. See, Kars, *1908 Devrimi'nin Halk Dinamiği*, 144; Kansu *1908 Devrimi,* 85-86.

493 BOA. Y.MTV. 308/35, 24 Mart 1324 (April 6, 1908). Kansu, *1908 Devrimi,* 86.

494 BOA. BEO. 3373/252903, 25 Temmuz 1324 (August 7, 1908).

Alaaddin Efendi were responsible for the torture during the investigation.[495] Since the general amnesty included the alleged crimes of these people, the government did not allow the court to open a case about the abuse of bureaucratic power. However, the people had the right to apply the court for personal action.[496]

495 BOA. DH.MKT 2824/85; BOA. DH.MKT 1281/50: BOA. DH.MUI. 41/2, Lef 23. 9 Nisan 1325 (April 22, 1909).

496 BOA. DH.MUİ. 41/2 Lef 23, 4-5. 9 Nisan 1325 (April 22, 1909).

Figure 4.4.1. The List of Urban Coalition in the Court

DEATH PENALTY	LIFE SENTENCE	15 YEARS KALEBEND	10 YEARS KALEBEND	4 YEARS KALEBEND	5 YEARS HARD LABOR	3 YEARS PRISON	1 YEAR PRISON
Kürdoğlu Yusuf	Faruk	Vahab	Hasan (Butcher)	Hüseyin (Circassian)	Haydar Baba	Kürd Abülrezak	İzzet
Fazıl (Soldier)	Seyfullah	Mamil (Porter)	Habib (Porter)			Kelecioğlu Ziya	Marancı Abdullah
Adil	Hoca Şevket	Uzun Hüseyin Çavuş	Tevneoğlu İskender			Hamdi	Şamlioğlu Şeyh Ahmed
Bezzaz Şükrü	Mevlüd	Abuoğlu Mehmed	Germioğlu Behçet				Sabri
Kürdoğlu Mehmed	Hafiz Ali	Mehmed Cabir	Kuşbaz Ömer				Vefik Dede
Çakmakçı Mehmed	Hacı Akif	Bademci Hamid	Kör Halil				Kahraman Hakkı
Riza	Fehim (Butcher)	Alçıcı Recep	Kaluoğlu Fevzi				Mustafa
Celil	Cinninoğlu Hacı	Şevki (Porter)	Meded (Shepherd)				Gül Manu (Butcher)
	Durak	Kürdoğlu Kısa Yusuf	Köse Abdülrezak				Kavalcı Mustafa
	Tahsin	Parmaksız Ahmed	Dellal Hüseyin				Türbedar Ahmed
	Fazıl	Musa (Baker)	Hacı Kamil				Göleli Behlül
	Mehmed		Kahveci Niyazi				Dursun (Butcher)
	Yusuf		Kaya Baba				
	Azrancı Tevfik						
	Hacı Sabri						
	Asker Mehmed						
	Fevzi						
	Terzioğlu Halil						

§ 4.5 Conclusion

The most important result of the natural disaster was the creation of a new generation who was very well informed about the effects of drought, food shortage, and starvation via the oral tradition. As an invention of custom, people knew that their shares of the cake would diminish sharply during a bad season, and they had to defend their shares in the economy of the cities. The lack of wheat caused by a dry season would cause a famine. An earthquake could destroy the social and economic life of ordinary people. What they built over the last fifty years could be demolished in a moment. In such contexts, the society on the borderlands lived under extraordinary rules. When extraordinary conditions became the norm for society, some of the agents sought to maximize their own shares by eliminating others. The result was also the creation of the new agencies as well, which would be able to organize public opinion and act in the name of society.

When the Ottoman revolutionary movements such as the Committee of Union and Progress and Armenian Revolutionary Federation had tried to play this game, they had failed. The result was an increase in the power of the local actors such as the artisans and the religious leaders owing to their two advantages. First, they were local people who were very well informed about the impacts of natural disasters in the frontier regions. For this reason, they were the natural allies of the peasants and urban poor. This alliance did not rule out conflicts within them, however. Second, while the revolutionaries worked to create a conscious society for a structural change to take place in the long dureé, they did not present themselves with their revolutionary identities. Instead, they pretended to be an imam or an artisan and aimed to gain the support of a religious leader. The result was the strengthening of the roles of these groups rather than of revolutionary ideas. Hence, these agents were

able to use their social capital during the natural disasters to prove their leadership in the cities, make themselves the ally of the central authority, and negotiate with the state by mobilizing resources to organize mass movements based on the customs of the provinces.

Once a mob action was organized however, none of the actors could estimate what would happen in the end. During famine conditions, the urban poor within the coalitions had the power to dislocate all the networks. At this point, the negotiation practice with the state changed. People chose to make their daily lives extraordinary, and living under extraordinary conditions became the norm for society, turning the social hierarchy upside down.[497] To turn order on its head also helped the ordinary people to claim agency in the governing of their own city.

What happened in Erzurum in 1907 was very different than the two important mass movements that had occurred in march and october 1906. Although Abdulvahhab Pasha ordered to purge all the actors of the three events, the mob action in 1907 was directly related to the price inflation, the attitudes of profiteers, the food shortage, and the drought. The protests that were analyzed in previous chapters provided inspiration for the society this time around, because they had achieved to dislocate bureaucratic powerholders twice within a year. However, as an agent of the history, the crowd aimed to define the limits of the market economy and the limits of central bureaucracy over their daily lives. They failed in the short dureé, but they won in the long dureé by creating a horizontal centralization and making themselves the Empire's partners in the provinces.

497 For a very well example of this: See; Zeinab Abul-Magd "Rebellion in the time of Cholera: Failed Empire, Unfinished Nation in Egypt, 1840-1920" in *Journal of World History*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (December 2010): 691-719.

5

Dynamics of Contention

> The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the 'state of emergency' in which we live is not the exception but the rule. We must attain to a conception of history that is in keeping with this insight. Then we shall clearly realize that it is our task to bring about a real state of emergency
>
> – Walter Benjamin - *On the Concept of History*.

Protest meetings are generally accepted as the 'weapons of the weak' against the authority because the weak have the power to challenge powerholders in extraordinary periods by upending the bureaucratic hierarchy. People from different ethnic, cultural, and economic backgrounds come together and raise their voices when authorities threaten them. During the protests/riots, the ordinary people can voice various demands and employ different tactics but as the most crucial part of the event, mounting together opens the road for these people to realize their expectations. The Ottoman Empire had faced many social protests at the beginning of the twentieth century after the ordinary people faced the traumatic results of drought, earthquake, famine, revolutionaries' activities, and the heavy taxation in Anatolia and the Balkan peninsula. While the ordinary people were fighting

for their daily bread, the failure of the government to solve the problems resulted in the protests and uprisings of thousands of people in the city centers.

The protests that occurred throughout the Empire between 1906 and 1908 were well-known examples of these kinds of mass movements. My goal is to analyze how urban society in the borderlands of the Ottoman Empire had developed collective action to bargain with the state by focusing on their daily activities during the riots. To present an example of the contention politics, their first attempt was always to negotiate with the local governor and then with the Sultan. Yet, their language against them was very different. While they saw the provincial governors as the symbol of the maligned central government in the region and for this reason did not hesitate to threaten him, they behaved very respectfully towards the Sultan because he was the only ruler who symbolized justice and was capable of making them the partner of the Empire. Their second attempt was to acquire control of the city using three different tactics. Those were, organizing the daily meetings in the city centers, patrolling the city by creating protests meetings; bringing the city's social and economic life to a halt by closing all the shops, transforming sacred places into prisons for local governors; using violence as a tool against the center's representatives through threatening their life, looting their possessions, torching their houses and sometimes patrolling the city with their dead bodies. It is my contention that each of these rituals and symbols should be clarified carefully for two reasons. First, it helps us understand the demands and the culture of Ottoman people in the provinces. Secondly, and more importantly, it is the only way to identify the masses as the real agents in creating a collective action.

The state-society relationship in the Ottoman Empire is a well-studied subject. Historians have analyzed how the states controlled the crowds or how the crowds acted against the Empire's policies in different eras by focusing on the social, economic, and political changes of the specific moments in history.

Some preferred to look from the center, by searching the ideas of the bureaucracy, to analyze how this relationship emerged and developed. In contrast, some others focused on the provinces by accepting the local actors as the history makers, to stress how people dealt with the authority. This study, in this sense, will be one of the examples belonging to the second group. Although there were many thought-provoking works on the Ottoman subjects, historians who studied the late 19th century did not focus sufficiently on the ordinary Ottoman people as the history makers. Instead, Ottoman people became the study subject for historians when they were relevant to agrarian studies, class struggle, or revolutionary movements. In other words, many historians silenced the ordinary people and made them into mere subject material for their meta-narratives. In contrast, this chapter aims to clarify the ways that provincial people spoke.

How did the reaction happen? The provinces' urban society employed certain tactics from a list of various forms and contentious interaction in their daily lives to negotiate with the state, as mentioned in the beginning. They generally turned up the heat in situations where they failed to establish the boundary of the power of the central administration. Although Ottoman civil society in general was accustomed to various tactics, some of these were most commonly employed in attempts in the eastern and western borderlands of the empire during the protest waves in 1904-1908. In this chapter, I will search for the collective practices of the Ottoman provincial communities during the crisis. These practices provided them a way to become active participants in the decision-making process in the provinces. [498]

498 There are many important studies on Ottoman people's participatory politics but among them, Ali Yaycıoğlu's crucial work provides a fresh look at the Ottoman historiography. See: Ali Yaycıoğlu *Partners of the Empire: The Crisis of the Ottoman Order in the Age of Revolutions*.118.

§ 5.1 Petitioning the Sultan

> O, Representatives of the Sublime!
> Our beloved Sultan sent you here to relieve the tears, reinstate the rights of 600,000 people, and mend their wounds. Here, you can find our tears, the proofs of the governor's un-justice acts, and of our injuries… Our outcry will not end until you tend to our wounds.[499]

Petitioning the ruler, is not a practice foreign to the Ottomans. People had been sending various types of requests to the rulers to get what they called 'justice' since the invention of the written forms.[500] Petitioning practices created a way for the ruled to reach the 'just ruler' and gave them an opportunity to voice their daily issue. On the other hand, accepting petitions to hear the commoners' complaints also provided the legitimacy of the ruler over the society. It was a well-defined image making practice of the state for Abdulhamid II to always order his particular officials to collect petitions from the people after Friday prayer sermons.

Moreover, while opening the petition channel to the Palace directly, the Sultan did not only give the people a right to bypass the local governors but also created a way to double-check the attitudes of the actors who had power in the provinces.[501] For this reason, petitioning practices were very common in Ottoman history.[502] In some cases, petition holders had been punished by the authorities, but that was generally seen as an affront to the idea of justice

499 BOA. DH.MKT. 1066/29, 4. 25 April 1322. (May 7, 1906).

500 Ben Bassat *Petitioning the Sultan,* 22. For a good examples of petitioning practices of various groups in different places see: Halil İnalcık, *Osmanlı'da Devlet Hukuk Adalet,* (İstanbul: Eren Yayınları, 2005), 49-57.

501 Lex Heerma van Voss, "Introduction, Petitions in History," *Special Issue of International Review of Social History,* 46, Supplemet 9 (2001): 4-5.

502 As an important example of petitioning practices in the late Ottoman Empire see; Çiğdem Oğuz, *Negotiating the Terms of Mercy: Petitions and Pardon Cases in the Hamidian Era* (İstanbul: Libra Kitapçılık, 2013).

because collecting petitions symbolized listening to the problems of people for the maintenance of the circle of justice. For instance, the grand vizier's order to execute two bakery-owners during a mass movement of shop owners for petitioning the Sultan has been recognized as an unjust order by legal historians because that attempt damaged the circle of justice.[503] To historians, petitions are also the sources that help them include the voice of the subaltern in the center of their study rather than accepting ordinary people as mere objects who were shaped by the policies from the top-down.[504]

However, uncritically accepting petitions as a direct source representing the subaltern's voice cannot be valid without comparing them with other sources. It was not easy to determine who was the real author of any particular text in a society with a high rate of illiteracy.[505] In such a situation, the religious leaders, teachers, and middle-upper class of the community who were capable of reading and writing became the natural leaders of the small societies by providing writing service in a schematic manner. In time, writing petitions became a professional occupation for the people who learned how to read and write. However, most of the supplicants spoke from the bottom up[506] by using the language of the top. For this reason, historians heard the speech of the ruling class while searching for the voices of the subaltern, but by '*reading the documents against the grain'* and adding the analysis of other daily activities to these petitions, we can bring out and hear the true voices of urban society.

503 Engin Deniz Akarlı, "Maslaha: From 'Common Good to 'Raison d'etat' in the Experience of Istanbul Artisans, 1730-1840." in *Hoca, Allame, Puits De Science: Essays in Honor of Kemal Karpat* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 2010), 96.

504 Yiğit Akın, "Reconsidering State, Party and Society in Early Republican Turkey: Politics of Petitioning," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, no.39 (2007): 437.

505 Van Voss, "Introduction, Petitions in History," 8.

506 Andreas Würgler, "Voices from Among the 'Silent Masses': Humble Petitions and Social Conflicts in Early Modern Central Euope" in IRHS 46 (2001): Supplement, 12.

With the development of the telegraph system in the 19th century, while the central government created an infrastructural tool to surveil the provinces, the ordinary people in turn quickly learned how to get their voices heard by the central government. In other words, the technological development intended as means of surveilling the people opened the way for the commoners to bargain with the states' internal colonization. As Ben Bassat stated, the change in time-space also changed the Ottoman society. They were no longer a *reaya* that literally means unspecified mass, but instead, they became *teba'a,* which is basically people identified as the ruled by a ruler.[507] The petitioning practices of sending complaints to the center increased rapidly, although the central bureaucracy had aimed for the opposite. In John Chalcraft's words, the petitioning practices constituted a "sophisticated engagement and negotiation with state practice and discourse."[508] As a result of this infrastructural development, petitioning was accepted as one of the Ottoman society's legal rights of Ottoman society in the first constitution of the Ottoman Empire in 1876.[509]

Furthermore, sending petitions to the Imperial center in the late 19th century did not only imply an engagement and negotiation with the state, but also clarified the power holders in the provinces because the urban elite was also promoting their influences in the city centers by sending petitions. For this

507 Yuval Ben Bassat, "Mass Petitions as A Way to Evaluate 'Public Opinion' in the late nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire? The case of internat strife among Gaza's elite" in *Turkish Historical Review* 4 (2013): 139.

508 John Chalcraft, "Engaging the State: Peasants and Petitions in Egypt on the Eve of Colonial Rule," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* 37 (2005): 304. Despite not being directly related to the petitioning practices, I would like to mention a rather fruitful study of discursive resistance of Ottoman subalterns by formulating complaints: Milen Petrov, "Everyday forms of compliance: Subaltern Commentaries on Ottoman Reform, 1864-1868," in *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* vol. 46, no: 4 (Oct, 2004): 730-759.

509 Article 14 in 1876 Kanun-i Esasi "Tebaa-i Osmaniye'den bir veya bir kaç kişinin gerek şahıslarına ve gerek umuma müteallik olan kavanin ve nizamata muhalif gördükleri bir maddeden dolayı işin merciine arzuhal verdikleri gibi meclis-i umumiye dahi müddei sıfat ile imzalı arzuhal vermeğe ve memurinin ef'alinden iştikâye selâhiyetleri vardır."

reason, the practices of petitioning provided a glimpse into the main forces in the cities, and their ties with the others, their trends, and expectations for the future.[510] In conclusion, As Yuval Ben Bassat wrote, "to a great extent petitioning became a tool in the hands of the urban population to conduct its affairs with the government and negotiate with it, convey messages, and leverage its interests."[511]

The petitions sent from the eastern borderland of the Ottoman Empire during the crisis were examples of such ideological views. Who were sending the petitions? How did they define what they fought for? How did they behave after sending a petition? In what ways, did they gain a right to speak in the name of the population? The answers to these questions shed light on the power relations and the anatomy of a series of protests in the early 20th century.

Petitions were the first method of the Ottoman provincial people for communicating their grievances to the governors. The developing sophisticated engagement with the state always started by sending petitions because the people of the provinces were very conscious of their legitimate limits. This conscious preference did not change even in the time of the crises. For instance, during the mass deportation and killing of Armenians between 1894-1896, the Ottoman Armenian community of the Ottoman East used petitions very actively. For instance, 1250 Armenians from the Kığı district of Erzurum who had been living in Istanbul during the 1894-1896 crisis were expelled from the city. Those people who managed to return Kığı were about 850, and they sent petitions to the governor of Erzurum to get permission to return to

510 The petitions of Bedirhan Bey, who was exiled from Diyarbakır to Edirne, were among the well-known examples of the petitioning practices of urban elites. See: Uğur Bayraktar, "Yurtluk-Ocaklıks: Land, Politics of Notables and Society in Ottoman Kurdistan, 1820-1890," 222-223.

511 Yuval Ben Bassat, "Mass Petitions as A Way to Evaluate 'Public Opinion' in the late nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire? The case of internat strife among Gaza's elite" *140.*

İstanbul or to go to İzmir because the mass violence in their district caused a lack of security and employemnt in the district. As the British Consul argued, 300 of them achieved to get such permission after the petitioning practices.[512] In another examples, the people of Livane fought for their land that was occupied by Russia after the war. The villagers requested of the Sublime Porte by sending petitions to defend their rights because Russian authorities had not been permitting them to access their grassland, claiming the new frontier ran between their houses and their grassland.[513]

Sending a petition was not only the communication method of the ordinary people. All people from all sectors of the bureaucracy and military also used it effectively. One of the most important examples was soldiers' petitions asking for the payment of their salaries.[514] There was also the fascinating petitions of peasants addressed to foreign consulates asking the help of the Refugee Committee during extreme conditions such as famines. In one example, Tahir, as the representatives of Muslims in the Dumanli village of Koyuntepe district in Filibe, asked for the help of Mr. President because they were living under a very miserable conditions, without food and clothes. Twenty-six petitions were sent by Muslims of the various villages of Filibe to the Central Refugee Relief Committee in January 1880, when the clashes between the multiple groups caused massive starvation in the region.[515] In another

512 F.O. 424/196 No 27 Consul Grated to Sir P. Currie Erzeroum (April 7, 1898).

513 BOA. HR. SYS. 1342/93, (February 10.1894).

514 Efrad-ı mustebdele is a term that referred the people who served as a part of the army and returned to their districts. These people sent many petitions to claim their payment or to ask forgiveness for their borrow to the state. They also raised mobs in Beirut, Bayburt, Mosul and the province of Kosovo. As an example of a petition of *efrad-ı mustebdele,* see; BOA. TFR.I KV. 77/7666, 18 Teşrinisani 1322 (December 1, 1906).

515 F.O. 424/95 No:232 Mr. Mitchell to the Marquis of Salisbury (February 6, 1880). One of the 26 examples:
"Inclosue 1 in No. 232. Petition from the Village of Eyriler
Mr. Le President.

example, 9,780 villagers from various villages of Mush petitioned the British Consulate to find an end to the cruelty against them and corruption in the region.[516]

Despite sending a petition to a foreign representative or foreign institutions being common, İstanbul did not look favorably upon such petitioning practices and kinds of attitude implied society had developed its own understanding of who the real power holders were in the region. Petitioning a foreign consulate instead of making demands of the Porte, came to be interpreted as an attempt to stir the chaos. In one example, the people of Trabzon's Of district chose a representative whose name was Saatçi İsmail Kemal to become their voice in their fight with the tax collector Hafız Mesud Efendi in 1893. İsmail Kemal petitioned various ministries demanding they put an end to the oppressive attitudes of Hafız Mesud Efendi. However, when the state bureaucrats investigated the issue, they also decided to exile İsmail Kemal for also sending petitions to the German consular.[517]

Nous Soussignés, habitant Musulmans du village de Eyriler, district de Conoushe relevant du départment de Philippopoli, avons l'honnuur de porter a votre connaissance ce qui suit:-
Nous sommes 230 families composées de 836 personnes, adlutes et enfants.
Toutes nos maisons sont en ruines et nous demeurons sous des hangars et dans des huttes. Nos compatriotes Musulmans se trouvent reduits dans une trés-grande misére a cause du manque de nourriture et de véetements; derniéerement nous avons eu plus de vingt-deux personnes mortes de faim, et vous pouvez vous informer ne notre état en envoyant quelqu'un pour examiner notre situation. Si avant peu nous ne recevouns pas de secours nous mourrons tous.
Nous vous exposons, M. Le Président, notre malheuruse situation, confiant que vous viendres a notre aide. Car autrement deuz ou trois jours nous serons tous perdus.
En attendant vos orders, veuillez. Les representants Musulmans du village Eyriler, Iman, Mouhtar, Rachid, Mahmoud, Hassan, Ali Tchaouch, Mahmoud Hodja, Nassouhoglou Ali,

516 F.O. 424/213 Inclosure in No:95 Vice Consul Heard to Sir N. O'Conor Bitlis. (August 16, 1907).

517 The clash between the tax collector, the district governor and the people in Of was among the well known examples of the taxation problems in the late 19th century. For more information,

A typical petition starts with common praise for the Sultan like most Ottoman archival sources addressed to the Palace. Then it explains the problems of the petitioner and the demands from the ruler. These Petitions were sent to the Sultan despite there are not being any proof that Sultan actually read them. Hence, the writers follow a schema in which they start with the praise, continue with the explanation of the problems and accusation against certain people, and end with requesting a solution from the top. If the document was not an *arz-ı hal* but a *mahzar,* the writers generally chose to explain their demands instead of following a schema. A petition could be written for any purpose, such as for criticizing a district governor,[518] for finding a solution between a company and the merchants in conflict,[519] for threatening the authorities, for forgiveness for the tax payment[520] or for resolving the property dispute cases.[521] If the local governors were deemed able to solve the problems, most of the petitions would be sent to them before the Sultan. In other words, petitions sent to the local governors were the legalized way to of rejecting the governance of the local bureaucracy when the district governors failed to find a peaceful way to solve the daily problems of the petitioners. In one of the examples, the Muslim and non-muslim community of Diyarbakır jointly petitioned the Palace about the attitudes of black marketeers whose names were Kazazyan and Hacı Mehmed. They argued that these people and their fellows collected all the daily stay of the people such as corn and oil. They could not procedure food even when they had money, and the local

see: Nadir Özbek, İmparatorluğun Bedeli Osmanlı'da vergi, siyaset, Toplumsal Adalet p. 107-112..

518 BOA. DH.MKT. 1284-89, 13 Ağustos 1324, (August 26, 1908).

519 BOA. BEO. 3384/ 253731, 12 Kanunisani 1324 (January 25, 1909).

520 BOA. TFR.I.ŞKT. 75/7466, 12 Teşrinisani 1321 (November 25, 1905).

521 BOA. HR.SYS. 1342/93, 29 Kanunisani 1309 (February 10, 1894).

governors had not attempted to solve the problem despite they sent petitions. They kindly requested a solution or permission to migrate from Diyarbakır.[522]

Before the mass protests took place in Erzurum, peasants of Pasinler sent petitions to explain their daily problems that caused a decrease in the harvest of the crop. Then, they kindly asked for the postponement of the tax collection. At the same time, from the northern part of the province, the Mufti of Kiskim (Yusufeli) had been criticizing the corruption and cruelty of their district governor in his petition sent in the name of the people.[523] As an unwritten rule of the petitioning practices, the demands were addressed to the provincial governors prior the Imperial Porte. For this reason, the well-known people of Erzurum's society had also sent a petition to the governor of Erzurum before the tax collection. As argued above, tax collection issue was an arena of contestation where the various agencies demonstrated their influence in the time of the crisis. In this arena, the religious leaders, the artisans, and the mayor of the city played crucial roles because they were the natural representatives of society. On the other side, the governor and other people who had been appointed to the bureaucratic positions represented the state. The society was not only giving consents to the well-known people of the city, but they also played an active role by sending petitions in private capacity and by helping the representatives. It is essential to note however, that the ordinary people of the city were the people who were affected most yet who also won least during these negotiating practices.

Despite what the society gained by petitioning the Sultan being unclear, the representatives had never given up sending petitions during the crisis because petitioning was the legitimate way of showing *maslaha* for the commoners against the state. Thus, the petitioners used flawless and well

522 Özge Ertem, "Fiyatı Alidir!, Diyarbakır'da Kıtlık Yokluk ve Şiddet, 1879-1901" in *Diyarbakır Tebliğleri, Diyarbakır ve Çevresi Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Tarihi Konferansı* ed. by Bülent Doğan, (İstanbul: HDV Yayınları, 2013), 74.

523 BOA. DH.ŞFR. 366/120, 23 Haziran 1322 (July 6, 1906).

organized language against the regime as petitioning practices were the strategic manipulation of the society with respect to the common good. By forming this discourse, the protestors responded to the position of the state apparatus who defined them as *fitne-i fesad* as they in turn described the attitudes of the state bureaucracy or the tax collector as the source of the zulm. In such context, as Heather Ferguson stated, "justice was a hybrid and fluid category"[524] where the various power holders contested to claim their action as the necessary attempt to recreate justice in the face of disorder.

The language of the petitions was determined within this contestation. In the following example, the artisan of Erzurum, Hacı Emin the ulama, Hacı Şevki and Şaban as the representatives of the people, along with 98 others signed a petition wherein they argued for their rejection to pay taxes due to the decrease of their income by focusing on the natural disasters and the war with Russia. At the same time, they insisted that their action would not call into question their loyalty to the Sultan;

> Our city was demolished by two earthquakes that decreased our income sharply, we had also lost 900 people from Erzurum whose people were always ready to sacrifice themselves for the glory of the Ottomans, and their beloved Sultan. We attempted to reject tax payment because we have nothing other than our shirts to pay taxes with. Since we are loyal to the Sultan, we could pay, but then we would have to ask for the subsistence.[525]

The discourse of such petitions symbolized a well-organized conceptualization of society's custom because while the government was blamed for not resolving the problem of the city, the petitioners had never been tried to use offensive language. Instead, they used petitions to legitimize their actions by

524 In her thought-provoking study, Heather Ferguson brought to light how the textual forms and their discourse as an archiving apparatus became the source of the Ottoman Sovereignty. This study conceptualizes the petitioning practices in the same way as Ferguson. See: Heather Ferguson, *Proper Order of Things, Language, Power, and Law in Ottoman Administrative Discourses.*

525 BOA. BEO. 2787/209012, 2. 16 Mart 1322 (March 29, 1906).

depending on the justice and custom of society. This was not the only way. Another way was the use of Islamic discourse. The Mufti of Erzurum stated as follows:

> We never thought to threaten the security in the city. We went to the telegraph office because it was the place where the people could send their request to the Sultan. However, the governor oppressed the people of the city and forced us to close our shops by ordering the use of a deadly force in the form of firearms on the 28th of March. We risked of our lives to protect the law, the orders of the Quran, and the glory of the Ottoman Empire. We are sixty-thousand of people from twenty-five to seventy-five years old, and we all believe that we are innocent.[526]

The Islamic character of their reaction in the petitions was twofold: First, it was a political discourse geared towards Sultan Abdulhamid II's conservative regime. The society of the frontiers knew how they affected the Sultan, its bureaucracy, and public opinion. The references to the Quran and the hadith literature symbolized the weapons of the petitioners in that contested area. Second, the petitioners depended on the concept of *maslaha* as a custom of the society. They conceptualized *maslaha* as a reason to put up a fight for the common good.

Another tactic for framing state actions as disorder (*zulm, gayr-i hakkaniyet,* or *gayr-i ahlak)* was to focus on the relationship between the powerholders and the district governors. The Greek society of the Katrin district in Salonika sent a well-organized petition to the inspector of Rumelia in November 1905. They stated that despite the fact that they had asked for the forgiveness for the tax payment because their income was only sufficient for the subsistence, the district governors had demanded them to pay more than rich people who had *çiftliks* in Katrin.

> The government levied 400 kurushes income tax which was the same amount demanded of us, for Suleyman Efendi who has three *çiftliks,* Tahir Agha, who was the father in law of the *kaimakam* and had three or four ciftliks and many shops in Katrin, Fazıl Bey and another fellow

526 BOA. Y.PRK.ASK. 238/18, 22 Mart 1322 (April 4, 1906).

> who also had a huge amount of income and a number of *çiftliks.* After they requested forgiveness for tax payment, the district governor decreased their amount due from 400 to 70 kurushes. However, our similar request was not accepted by the same authorities. We kindly request to that justice is recovered in respect to the maslaha.[527]

The non-Muslim community of the Empire had also depended on the *maslaha*. The crucial point was that the discourse on maslaha was not fueled by Islamic tradition but by class differences, corruption of the district governors, and the unequal application of law to different classes which became a source of disorder. Through creating that discourse, the Rum society of Katrin proclaimed the bureaucracy and the power holders as the source of the corruption and destruction of *maslaha* as that took place during the reactions against Tanzimat reforms. In that sense, petitioning practice were another crucial element that allowed people to claim defending their customs was for the glory of the Ottoman rule.

Such various discourses in petitions were not only the beginning of the contestation between different actors of the provinces but also symbolized the dynamism of the various actors because the discourse had been determined by the reactions of the other power holders. Hence, petitioning practices cannot be conceptualized as merely a stepping stone towards more advanced forms of negotiating with the state. It was the overture of a repertoire of negotiation, but during the evolution of such negotiations, while the agencies developed this repertoire, they never give up sending petitions because it was the best way to defend their actions in a legitimate manner.

527 BOA. TFR.I.SKT. 75/7450, 1. 9 Teşrinisani 1321 (November 22, 1905).

§ 5.2 Organizing Mass Meetings

> Power springs up whenever people get together and act in concert, but it derives its legitimacy from the initial getting together rather than from any action that then may follow[528]

On the 15th of July 2016, a failed coup attempt took place in Turkey. One of the government's most important reactions to suppress the coup attempt was reviving a certain tradition: using *Imams* to call people to action from minarets against the coup.[529] People were called to the city centers by President Erdoğan. Then, all *Imams* in the country called on people to rally at the city-centers in an Islamic way: First, they recite an Islamic invocation known as *sela,* and then summoned people to the city centers in accordance with the call of the president. It was resource mobilization process for a social movement aiming to suppress the coup attempt. For the majority of society, the more significant trigger for mobilization was the actual symbolic moment in which people decided to defend their rights. Erdoğan's speech and the *sela* became the motivation of conservatives in Turkey to suppress another so-called Islamic coup attempt. During the Gezi movement in 2013, millions had mobilized after watching a group of people's fights to save a park from a government which decided to destroy one of the well-known parks in the city center. For the Arab Spring, the trigger was a moment in which millions of Tunisians watched a peddler self-immolate. Public opinion can be mobilized by such activities as well as by symbolic actions. The most significant element in all these examples was the occupation of the specific places, mainly city centers, by the protestors. As David Harvey pointed out, it was the refilling

528 Hannah Arendt *On Violence* (San Diego, New York, London: HBJ Book 1969), 52.

529 There are many studies that argue the importance of mosques and minarets as well as the ulamas and imams during the social movements in the Middle East. For one example: see; Sami Zubaida, "Urban Social Movements 1750-1950," 236.

of the most significant places of the state authority in the cities, transforming them into political spaces for the common.[530]

The capture of the city centers through mass mobilizations was not a new phenomenon. Like petitioning practices, it was common for the people of various empires. Mass mobilization, in that sense, does not only refer to protests against the authorities. It can be brought about in various ways, such as protests, festivals, celebrations, mourning, etc. These different ways of capturing the city centers bestowed people with new agencies because they could now decide on the roles of the various classes within the society. As Natalie Davis pointed out;

> *The festivals as practices in the Late Middle Ages and early modern Europe involved a double inversion. There was topsy-turvy within the community: men cross-dressed as women and women as men; students cross-dressed as their rabbinical teachers; and parodies were written of Esther and other biblical and talmudic text.*[531]

The protest is only one example of this kind of discursive strategy of the people, who protested in various ways. Some create hidden transcripts such as by playing dumb, performing tasks in a very shoddy way, while others define the street as a contested arena between them and the rivals.[532] Organizing mass movements was one of the most effective forms of contentious politics of Ottoman society during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II. As Natalie Davis has shown, the broader effect of mass meetings was the novel determination of the power during the protest because it provided the upside-down inversion of the social hierarchy in the spaces, as in the festival times

530 James C. Scott, *Tahakküm ve Direniş Sanatları Gizli* Senaryolar, trans. by. Alev Türker, İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 1995), 74-75. David Harvey, Asi *Şehirler: Şehir Hakkından Kentsel Devrime Doğru*, transl. by. Ayşe Deniz Temiz, (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2013), 223.

531 Natalie Zemon Davis "Rabelais among the Censors (1940s, 1540s)" in *Representations,* No.32 *(*Autumn, 1990): 1-32.

532 James M. Jasper, Protest*: A Cultural Introduction to Social Movements* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014), 57-62.

of early modern Europe. Through patrolling the city centers, protestors proved their leading position in the cities. Therefore, demonstrations became the symbols of the extra-ordinary conditions in the Ottoman frontiers. People mobilized themselves under the leadership of district leaders such as Imam and mukhtars.[533]

The difference between societies' behavior in the late 19th century vs the period of 17th to 19th centuries was the importing of negotiation practices to the provinces of the Empire. In other words, what many social scientists studied regarding relations of various dynamics in İstanbul for the early modern and modern period had now extended to the areas distant from the center. Indeed, the cycle of protest was not a new phenomenon for the societies of the distant regions, but the form of the protest became more similar to the reaction of the urbanites in the cities close to the Sublime Porte. Amina Elbendary pointed out that the creation of a demonstration in the urban centers was a mirror to understand the imagination of social order in the eyes of the various actors.[534] It is also important to note that the fight for the traditional rights of the society was also common in medieval times, as Elbendary noted.

A demonstration generally happened as an unorganized, simultaneous initiative of the crowds, but it was transformed into an organized movement in a very short period of time. The catalyst of such a quick changes were not the powers who mobilized the resources but the attendees who knew the power of organized movement and who became eager to act under the leadership of their natural leaders. The demonstrations rarely began as organized, well-prepared movements. In such examples, the state officials managed to stop the

533 Ferdan Ergut "Surveillance and the transformaion of public sphere in the Ottoman Empire" in *METU Studies in Development* 34, (2007): 178. Ergut clarified the roles of the Imams and muktars as "the people who were responsible for organizing the community for maintaining order." However, these people were also responsible to be the voices of the society against the order.

534 Amina Elbendary, *Crowds and Sultans. Urban Protest in Late Medieval Egypt and Syria* (Cairo, New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2015), 157.

disturbances by dislocating the power of the crowd. The Kumkapı demonstration and the Sublime Porte demonstration of the Ottoman Armenians were among such well-known examples. In both cases, the Sublime Porte was well-informed that mass meetings were being organized by the revolutionary powers, and therefore the Sublime Porte was ready to surveil and to suppress the crowds. In another example, the district governor of Yenipazar in the Kosovo province sent a telegraph to inspector Şemsi Pasha to inform that people were gathering in the district center to protest against the personal income tax and domestic animal tax, and the expectation was that they would capture the telegraph office in an hour. The district governor was well aware of the possible outcome of the mass meetings, and for this reason, he was aiming to learn how to deal with this before the possible seizing of the telegraph office.[535] Şemsi Pasha replied quickly by arguing that if the government accepted the demands of the masses, it could serve as a motivation for all the people in the Empire to refuse tax payment.

Nevertheless, in general, the mass meetings or demonstrations were the reactions of the people as they were simultaneously petitioning the Sultan. As a testament to the power of the demonstrations, the Sublime Porte generally learned of the demonstration against the order by the petitions of the protestors themselves. Even in the case of the Yenipazar, the local officers were criticized because they were not aware of the meeting being organized until the bazaar had been shut down and the urban people invited the peasants to the city center.[536]

The triggering causes of demonstrations were various, but in most of the cases, a rumor was enough to mobilize people. The mobilization process would start in the different districts of the cities and would aim to conquer the city-centers. Protestors always sought to show themselves in front of the two

535 BOA. TFR.I.KV. 154/153880, 87. 28 Kanunisani 1322 (February 10, 1907).

536 Ibid., 83. 28 Kanunisani 1322 (February 10, 1907).

important places in the city. These were the telegraph office and the governor's office. The goal was twofold. First, protestors demonstrated their power of control to the urban society and officials through seizing the telegraph office and capturing the space around it. It is important to note that telegraph offices were generally erected in the centers of the cities. Hence, demonstrations happened during the negotiation phase. Second, during these negotiations, the governor's office was always under the pressure of the society because when the people began gathering together around the critical places, it also implied that the hope to solve the problems through negotiating with the urban governors had reached a dead. During most of the demonstrations, the protestors generally chanted as "Long Live the Sultan" as proof of expressing their loyalty to the Sultan while they negotiate for their rights.[537]

The state reaction to the masses depended on the identity of these people. When peasants of Yenipazar had arrived in the city center to join the urban protest, Şemsi Pasha as the inspector of the region wrote, "despite the fact that they were advised to stop the movement if it is up to me, the state should not indulge these people by giving any response"[538] However, when the soldiers who returned from the Yemen campaign to Beirut demonstrated against the government due to delays in the payment of their salaries, the government scrambled to produce said payment.[539] In another example, when the soldiers,

537 Deringil, *The Well Protected Domains*, 22. Selim Deringil rightly pointed out how Abdulhamid II replaced the image of the ruler by standardizing this slogan in public occasions. He also mentions the opposition movement refused to perform this. However, as mentioned in chapter II, Ottoman ordinary society were more informed than the nature of the government when they negotiate for their rights and they always neutralized the image of the state via their practices.

538 BOA. TFR.I.KV. 154/153880, 82. 28 Kanunisani 1322 (February 10, 1907) "Bendegana kalırsa bunlara hiç yüz verilmeyerek müracaatlarının da cevabsız bırakıldığı halde…"

539 The demonstration of "efrad-ı mustebdele" in Beirut was among one of the most crucial protest meetings in last years of the Hamidian regime. For details, see: BOA. Y.PRK.ASK.

known as *efrad-ı mustebdele,* who returned from the campaign joined a protest in front of the governor's office in Bayburd, Rıza Pasha, the commander of the army, advised them to stop their action by dispatching the artisans and notables of the city as intermediaries.[540] Indeed, negotiating with the protestors by sending in notables of the town was among the well-known tactics of the state bureaucracy, but the difference in the state's reaction against an ordinary peasants and soldiers became visible during the remainder of the events. When the crowd of soldiers did not obey the rules and continued to threaten the district governor, the Grand Vizier sent in the battalions under orders to only fire a single shot in the air to end the demonstration.[541]

The urban society of the Ottoman borderlands chose to play a dumb in such a position. Since sending petitions and organizing mass meetings in front of the telegraph offices happened simultaneously, they did not view their movement as a protest against the government. Although Ottoman archival sources called these movements as *iğtişaş* or *nümayiş,* like it was referred in British sources as disturbances, the people who were gathering together in the city centers never formulated their movement as a protest or disturbance. Instead, they argued their aim was only to become audible subjects of the Sultan. For instance, during the mass protest in Yenipazar district of the Kosovo province, Ramazan and Salih from the *ulama*, mayor Mehmed Akif, district mudir Ahmed Hamdi, Abdulcelil and their fellows replied to the accusations about their movement by arguing that their attempt did not amount to a protest against the authority, but it was the only way to reach the Sultan.[542] As mentioned in the "Petitioning the Sultan," the Mufti of Erzurum put forth a similar

223/14; BOA. Y.PRK.ASK. 245/85; BOA. Y.PRK.ASK. 245/89; THE TIMES, Wednesday, September 4, 1907, 6.

540 BOA. BEO. 3156/236654, 9. 18 Eylül 1323 (October 10, 1907) "eşraf ve ayan taraflarından icra kılınan nesaih."

541 BOA. Y.A.HUS. 515/19, 20 Eylül 1320 (October 12, 1907) "üç müfreze-i askeriye tarafından yalnız bir el ateş edilerek cümlesinin dağılması ve sükun ve asayişin iade kılınması."

542 BOA. TFR.I.KV. 154/15380, 79. 29 Kanunisani 1322 (February 11, 1907).

explanation for their movement. Hence, it is important to note that the petitioning phase and mass meetings in the city centers fed into each other. It was a contestation between the local bureaucracy and the urban people over who would become the active agents in these places. The discursive strategies of both parties were determined in such a context. Therefore, the explanation of artisans, the mayor, and ulama of Yenipazar did not convince Şemsi Pasha. He replied that because they captured the city center and closed the shops, it was impossible to accept their movement as a benign attempt to request redress from the top.[543]

Despite the negative reactions of the bureaucracy, the urban coalitions always used mass meetings to threaten the authorities and describe themselves as the real actors of the provinces. In an extreme case, they felt confident enough to refer the movement as a revolution instead of a disturbance. For instance, the people of fourteen villages in the Peşter district had arrived at Seniçe to protest the attitudes of some local officers and rejected the payment of the domestic animal tax in December 1906. The crowd had threatened the authorities by giving a ten day ultimatum. They announced that if the central government did not remove five selected officers from their seats, they would organize another mass meeting.[544] Their movement was referred as a revolution by a person whose code name was Sadık. Sadık described the officials who were the reasons for the mass protest by stating that Şemsi Pasha was the most oppressive person who controlled certain local officers and artisans. Although the petition listed the names of the other people, such as the mayor, it was clear that the report singled out Şemsi Pasha to blame for the people's suffering. As Aysel Yıldız put it, "once a rebellion was under way, state officials were no longer accepted as intermediaries but became scapegoats and

543 Ibid., 63. 1 Şubat 1322 (February 14, 1907).

544 BOA. TFR.I.KV. 146/14570, 12. 12 Eylül 1322 (September 24, 1906).

potential victims."[545] Furthermore, in this context, the revolution did not imply a positive meaning, framed the protests as the last ditch attempt of the society to show their grievances.[546] More importantly, by defining the movement as a revolution due to the attitudes of local military and civil bureaucracy, the people who organized the meetings or their sympathizers were able to inform the Sultan that the hatred against these officers could possibly trigger an actual revolution in the Empire as it would happen in Frizovik with the assassination of Semsi Pasha in front of the telegraph office in June 1908.

§ 5.3 Closing the Shops

When the Kurdish Question became the top agenda item of Turkish daily politics in the 1990s, one of the most characteristic moves of the Kurdish artisans in the region was to close the shops during the conflicts between the various actors of the region. State officials blamed the rebels for oppressing the shopkeepers, for forcing them to shut down the economic life of the city in such situations. In fact, neither the closing of the shops nor the officials' reaction was unique to 1990s of Turkey. As a part of the negotiation practice closing the shops or blocking the roads to the center were among the most common actions taken by the society in various parts of the Ottoman territory. Even under the reign of the Mamluks, merchants would refuse to trade by closing the shops when they negotiated with the state for their rights.[547] The practice

545 Aysel Yıldız, *Crisis and Rebellion in the Ottoman Empire, The Downfall of a Sultan in the Age of Revolution*, (London, New York: I.B.Tauris, 2017), 19.

546 BOA. TFR.I.KV. 146/14570, 65. 1 Teşrinisani 1322 (December 14, 1906) "arz ve beyandan müstağni olduğu üzere bulunduğum Seniçe sancağındaki ihtilalin esbabı ve esbabına müsebbib olanlarından ve teşvikçibaşları arz edeceğim. vallahi ve billahi hiç birisine garezim yokdur." "…şevketmehab efendimiz bizzat rey-i taayyün göreydi Şemsi Paşayı ve Erkanı Harb Feyzi beyi ve damadı Süreyya efendiyi yaveriyle beraber kurşuna dizdirirdi." "…kurşuna dizilecek adem ihsana nail oldu."

547 Elbendary, *Crowds and Sultans: Urban Protest in Late Medieval Egypt and Syria*, 28, 137.

aimed to convince the authorities of the urgency of the situation in which people found themselves. In this respect, grinding the social and economic life of the city to a halt by closing the bazaar was as crucial as petitioning practices and organizing demonstrations.[548]

A bazaar was a place where the city's traditional actors formed a corporate entity. It was erected in the centers, close to the grand mosque or a church of the city, and consisted of many shops, as well as public spaces like coffee-houses, public baths, fountains, and tekkes. Many of these places bore the name of a famous public space like the mosque, fountain, church, etc.[549] Thus, the bazaar of a city was not only a place where people simply went for their shopping needs but also a place where public opinion developed. In other words, it was the place where one might see social forces crystallize as a class in the sense of E.P. Thompson.[550]

Therefore, an attempt to close down the shops created an extraordinary situation for the authorities. The mutasarrıf of Prizren argued that whenever the society was asked to pay, they replied, 'if we accept the terms now, more will be asked tomorrow; however, our society is poor.' Hence, closing down

548 For one of the early examples of this kind of negotitation practice, see: Eunjeong Yi, *Guild Dynamics in Seventeenth Century Istanbul, Fluidity and Leverage,* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004), 213.

549 Cem Behar, *A Neighborhood in Ottoman İstanbul, Fruit Vendors and Civil Servants in the Kasap İlyas Mahalle* (NewYork: State University of New York Press, 2003), 4; Stefanos Yerasimos, "Tanzimat'ın Kent Reformları Üzerine" in *Tanzimat: Değişim Sürecinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu*, 519-520.

550 For a throrougly detailed analysis of the bazaar in an Islamic society, see: Arang Keshavarzian, *Bazaar and State in Iran: The Politics of the Tehran Marketplace* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 39-127. I am not using the concept of public space and public opinion in the way Habermas conceptualized them because unlike Habermas, this study focuses on the particularity of all subjects instead of conceptualizing the contentious politics as a clash between the state and society. For a crucial critique of the use of the concept of public space in Ottoman studies, see: Cengiz Kırlı, *Sultan ve Kamuoyu Osmanlı Modernleşme Sürecinde Havadis Jurnalleri (1840-1844)* (İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2009), 13-45.

the bazaar became a routine whenever the state announced a request.[551] When the shops were closed, the bazaar as a corporate entity began to raise its voice to influence the ordinary people in the city. By halting the social and economic life of a city, the actors who negotiated with the state would create an implicit transaction. The state officials learned the closing of shops when they experienced it as it happened in the case of organizing mass meetings.[552] Although not all the shop owners were ready to close their shops on every occasion, there was no evidence to suggest that some people refused to obey the rules on the bazaar. In this respect, it can be argued that when an emergency situation began to unfold, the actors would become the governors of their cities. For this reason, closing the shops always prompted the state officials to respond. It was more effective than petitioning the ruler and creating demonstrations because closing the bazaar affected almost all people from various sectors in the city.

Shutting down the bazaar of a city had also aimed to disrupt the surveillance practices of the state bureaucracy. As Cengiz Kırlı pointed out, the places where the commoners gathered, such as coffeehouses and public baths, provided information about what the society had thought about the actors, the politics, and the state apparatus. In other words, it was the place where the state had collected information to control and lead the public discourse and to turn the ordinary people into the subjects who were statistically counted.[553] When the bazaar was closed, the state lost its surveillance power over its subjects.

551 BOA. TFR.I.ŞKT. 110/11000, 27 Mart 1323 (April 9, 1907) "Şimdi mumavaffakat eder isek, yarın daha başka şeyler bizden taleb olunur, halbuki ahali fukaradır."

552 BOA. TFR.I.KV. 154/15380, 79. 28 Kanunisani 1322 (February 10, 1907) "…çarşu kapanıncaya kadar memuriyet-i mahalliyenin içtima-i hakkında istihsal-i malumat edememeleri…"

553 Kırlı, *Sultan ve Kamuoyu Osmanlı Modernleşme Sürecinde Havadis Jurnalleri (1840-1844)*, 23-24.

In such situations, the local officers asked for the help of the central government, arguing that authority had fallen through the floor.[554] The point of the local officers' argument was tounderline the potential incapacity of the local actors when they faced an emergency situation, preempting the state officials' kneejerk attempts to use the power of the religious leaders and artisans to stop chaos in the cities. In other words, when the local officers said the authority had fallen through the floor, they were stating that even the actors in the bazaar could fail to control the possible outcomes of the developing events. It was a competition between local intermediaries and the local officials sent from the center to prove each other's ineffectiveness in the city.

Furthermore, the closing of the bazaar was a sign that the actors, who had decided to demonstrate were searching for the support of all classes in the city. When the military commander had ordered to use of firearms against the people who demonstrated in front of the telegraph office in Erzurum, some people had left the crowd and went to various city districts to announce that soldiers had attacked innocent people.[555] The event not only led to the closing of all shops, but it also provided legitimate grounds for the people to follow the protestors, who were holding on to a wait and see tactic until that time. Since he tbazaar was a corporate entity greater than any bureaucracy or social class in a city, the society chose to obey the rules of this entity; it was impossible to live in peace without a well-functioning, efficient market system in a classical Ottoman town. Thus, when the bazaar shut down, almost all people of various ages, sexes, classes, and nationalities decided to act by supporting demonstrations, petitioning practices, or engaging in violence. In this respect, the most crucial outcome of closing the shops was to force the whole society to support a movement. Despite various groups having different goals, they

554 BOA. TFR.I.KV. 154/15380, 16. 12 Şubat 1322 (February 26, 1907) "söz ayağa düştüğünden."

555 BOA. DH.MKT. 1066/29 Lef 5, 2. 25 Nisan 1322 (May 8, 1906).

behaved like a singular entity due to the power of bazaar over their social and economic lives.

The state officials did not hesitate to threaten the society against such activities. When the people of Yenipazar closed their shops, Şemsi Pasha had threatened them with their children if they did not reopen the bazaar.[556] However, threatening the protestors was not the standard practice during the negotiation. In most cases, the officials worked to solve problems by persuading artisans to reopen their shops.[557] The artisans and the religious leaders, as the local intermediaries in this context, became the natural representatives of society, and also they had a chance to be the state's voice in the eyes of the society. The power of the bazaar during a contestaion with the state came from such change. When local intermediaries did not achieve their goals, they refused to play negotiator between the state and the ordinary people. As a result, they took the risk of losing their power because they could be exiled from the city.[558]

As a second reaction, the military officers would be asked to help the civil bureaucracy. The army was generally ordered to patrol the city during the day and night. In most of the cases, the local officers refrained from using the local police and gendarmeries due to their relationship with the city's people. Instead, the governors invited the Ottoman army into the city. Nevertheless, the effect of patrolling the city depended on the capacity of the military power. When Şemsi Pasha rejected all requests and sent two battalions into Yenipazar, the district governor Hilmi Bey stated in his petition that the bazaar had not reopened and the demonstrations were not coming to an end because

556 BOA. TFR.I.KV. 154/15380, 4. 14 Şubat 1322 (February 28, 1907) "…ahaliye dağılmalarını ve dükkanlarını açub işleriyle meşgul bulunmalarını ve aksi takdirde çoluk çocuklarının duçar-ı perişan olacağını şimdiden düşünmelerinin tebliğini…"

557 As an example see, BOA. TFR.I.A. 33/3250, 22 Şubat 1322 (March 7, 1907).

558 BOA. TFR.I.A. 35/3443, 19. 9 Temmuz 1323 (July 22, 1907).

two battalions were not enough to send a strong warning to the people.[559] In another case, the villagers of Peşter, who demonstrated in the center of Seniçe and suppressed the artisans for the closing of all shops, returned to their villages when two battalions were sent from Yenipazar.[560] As Nadir Özbek pointed, despite all attempts to civilize the tax collection during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II, the gendarmeries or even the army were often invited to the cities when the officials felt a threat.[561] However, these kinds of attitudes were far from adequate to the task of creating a peaceful space for Ottoman society. Instead, living under the coercion of despotic power became the people's routine, and the society reacted to the situation by creating its own violence against the state violence. Instead of accepting the ruler's justice through negotiating with him by petitioning, creating demonstrations, and shutting down the social and economic life of the cities, they also created alternative authority after they eliminated their rivals.

§ 5.4 Violence

All politics is the struggle for power, the ultimate kind of power is violence.

George Sorel

In his thought-provoking book, Frantz Fanon states, "when militarist Germany decides to settle its frontier disputes by force, we are not in the least surprised; but when the people of Angola, for example, decide to take up arms, when the Algerian people reject all means which are not violent, these are proof that something has happened or is happening at this very moment."[562] He shows the attitudes of colonized societies as a routine during an

559 BOA. TFR.I.KV. 154/15380, 48. 5 Şubat 1322 (February 19, 1907) "…askerin iki bölük olması gözlerini doldurmadığından halen çarşu açılmadığı gibi köylerden gelen esra dağılmadıktan başka.."

560 BOA. TFR.I.KV. 155/15460, 2. 26 Şubat 1322 (March 11, 1907).

561 Özbek, *İmparatorluğun Bedeli*, 214.

562 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 73.

extraordinary situation. Hannah Arendt's famous article, "On Violence" contains one of the qunitessential passages on the concept of violence. She rightly argues, "no one reacts with rage to an incurable disease or to an earthquake or, for that matter, to social conditions that seem to be unchangeable. Only where there is reason to suspect that conditions could be changed and are not does rage arise"[563] She adds "violence, under certain circumstances, is the only way to set the scales of justice right again."[564] Similarly, Byung Chul Han rightly argues that while the government establishes a continuity by relying on hierarchical relationships, violence destroys these relations.[565] Despite large debates on the nature of violence, these quotes are enough to shed light on the violence during the negotiation practices of the masses.

The concept of violence was analyzed in the context of ethnic tensions, state violence, revolutionary violence, and rebellions in the Ottoman studies. Instead, violence should be understood as a contestation between various forces, including Muslim society, against the state bureaucracy and its collaborators. In this respect, it is important to state that the lack of studies on the clashes between Ottoman Turkish-Muslim society and Ottoman officials within the Ottoman studies brough the conceptualizations of the colonial mind to the surface.[566] Violence was seen as researchable when the powers in

563 Arendt, *On Violence*, 63.

564 Ibid., 64.

565 Byung-Chul Han *Şiddetin Topolojisi* translated by Dilek Zaptçıoğlu (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2016), 72. Apart from this, Han's book is a composition of the critiqs of the works on the concept of violence.

566 This perspective was not only reserved for the concept of violence. Even in the studies on the Ottoman colonial discourse, social scientists neglected to analyze the state discourse targeting the Turkish or Muslim society of the Empire. For example, the works on "Ottoman Orientalism" mainly focused on the Muslim but nonTurkish or non-Muslim subjects of the Empire. Edip Gölbaşı, rightly criticizes the works of Usama Makdisi on Ottoman Orientalism as it implies that Turkish and Muslim subjects were exempt from the power discourse of the Ottoman intellectuals targeting the lifestyles of the others. See: Edip Gölbaşı, "19. Yüzyıl

İstanbul such as the Janissaries decided to depose the Sultan, when non-Muslim or Muslim but non-Turkish subjects of the Empire joined revolutionary violence, when different ethnoreligious groups attacked each other, and when the state decided to brutally suppress a movement.[567] While writing this kind of history, historians tended to conceptualize the Turkish-Muslim society of the Ottoman Empire as a subject that never raised its voice, did not created anarchy, and always remained loyal to the Sultan and its representatives in the region. Even in the case of Muslim oppositions to the Sultan, authors chose specific geographies where the population was mainly non-Turkish. In other words, by changing Fanon's analysis, when a non-Muslim or Muslim but non-Turkish society of the Ottoman Empire had decided to settle up its disputes by violence, we are not in the least surprised because we are accustomed to defining them as the revolutionaries, but when the Muslims of Erzurum, for example, decided to take up arms, when the Muslim society of Prizren rejected all means which are not violent, historians tended to not to see the colonial perspective of Ottoman state over Turco-Muslim subjects. Historians were eager to conceptualize these movements as proof that something extraordinary had happened at that moment or someone, in most cases the revolutionaries, had mobilized them against their state.

Nevertheless, violence became an operational instrument in the hands of the Muslim protestors as well when they decided to contest the local officers, as well as each other. Some of them chose to block the strategic locations,

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Osmanlı Emperyal Siyaseti ve Osmanlı Tarih Yazımında Kolonyal Perspektifler" in *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, vol. 13 (2011): 210.

567 There are numerous works on the concept of these kinds of violence in late Ottoman History. For a fascinating example of a violent event see the edited book; Houssine Alloul, Edhem Elden and Henk de Smaele *To Kill A Sultan: A Transnational History of the Attempt on Abdulhamid II (1905),* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018). Furthermore, the book covers Toygun Altuntaş's article which is among the most impressive accounts of the revolutionary violence.

some others decided to destroy the houses of local officers and loot their possessions. In most of the cases, the scapegoats were killed. When the protestors of Erzurum looted the house of governor Ata Bey and captured him, they kept him in the central mosque of the city after he was beaten because he had ordered the exile of the Mufti and some influential artisans of the city.[568] An attempt to eliminate the powerholders, collect the taxes, or the attitudes of local officers, was reason enough to use violence. On the 23rd of January, 1904, an Albanian crowd from Gjokova demonstrated against the domestic animal tax. They organized a meeting that Ottoman officials referred to as *şenlik* which means a festival, outside of Gjokova.[569] As reported, during the festival, more than 500 people had been planning to destroy officials' houses and to kill certain non-Muslim people of the city. The government reacted to their demonstration by sending one battalion from İpek and two others from Prizren. A cannon was also sent from Skopje, and the inspector Şemsi Pasha commanded the army. When the army arrived at Gjokova, they faced around a thousand people who were ready to join a clash with them. While the clash had been continuing, a group of protestors entered the city and burned down the house of the fiscal director, and they also attempted to burn the houses of two Christian city officials. They finished their work by destroying the telegraph line and a strategic bridge between Prizren and Gjokova. During the clashes, the state officials had been blaming the former district governor and a commander of the army as the people who mobilized the society against the taxation and the local officers.[570] The *mutasarrıf* of Prizren, in another case, claimed that three people came from Priştine to co-operate and lead the

568 Details of the account were given in chapter three.

569 The place of the *şenlik* is "nowhere" outside of the city center as Ozouf Mono argued "*the space* (for festival) *must be invented, sometimes reshaped, both marked out and emptied, figures drawn upon it, ways made through it."* See: Mona Ozouf and Alan Sheridan *Festivals and the French Revolution* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1988), 127.

570 BOA. Y.PRK.ASK. 226/57, 1-2. 10 Kanunisani 1319 (January 23, 1904).

protests and violence in the city.[571] However, the same story was experienced in other districts of Kosovo, such as İpek, Luma, Frizovik, and Prizren, in the following days.[572]

Destroying the house of the fiscal director and looting the possessions of selected people was a practice of using violence as an operational instrument during the bargaining process. The crowd targeted people who were seen as responsible for their problems as well as people who had the power to diminish their influence in the city. In such respect, the fiscal director was the person who could potentially refuse to negotiate for their requests about taxation. He could be seen as the person who was responsible for their poverty. Kosovo was not a unique example. In many cases, such as Bitlis, Erzurum and Basra, the fiscal directors were forced to leave their seats. non-Muslim artisans or city officials were selected as scapegoats in these examples as well.

Ottoman officials would refer to people who joined in the violence as "*serkeş, şer zümre-i erazil, esafil-i nas, müsellah serseri."* Through defining these words, they aimed not only to criminalized the people who bargained with them but also to protect their seats. In other words, they described these people as deplorables who disobeyed the Sultan's rule and caused the disintegration of authority. They were also defined as rebels by nature. For instance, when the society of Yenipazar stated they would leave behind their children and go to the mountains if the government did not accept their requests such as a reform in tax payments and the removal of certain officers, Şemsi Pasha defined them as people who insisted in their treachery due to his governance six years ago.[573] In another case, Zelivko, in the name of Christians, and Edhem, in the name of Muslims of Seniçe, claimed that the cadastral director described them as murderers and gunslingers by nature, in front of the

571 BOA. TFR.I ŞKT. 110/11000, 27 Mart 1323 (April 9, 1907).

572 Ibid.

573 BOA. TFR.I.KV. 154/15380, 16. 12 Şubat 1322 (February 25, 1907).

mutasarrıf when they negotiated with the Imperial center to remove him from his seat.[574] Before acting against selected people, petitioning practices were generally used effectively, as mentioned earlier. While local officers had been defining the protestors as rebels by nature, they were busy sending petitions to negotiate for their demands. In one of these examples, Ahmed Hamdi from *medrese* of Yenipazar, Hamdi, Abdulcelil, Ramazan, Salih, Mehmed Akif, and Mehmed Murad stated that the people of the city asked for the removal of the district governor, the lieutenant, and the tax clerk because those people were responsible for their sufferings. They used the same rhetoric which was to ask for a solution for the sake of their innocent children.[575]

Another rhetoric of the people was the criticism of local official at whose hands they faced violence. Thirty-nine people from different neighborhoods and villages of Yenipazar wrote a petition to the commander of Yenipazar to legitimize their movement against the certain people. They argued that their district governor Hilmi Bey had been working on his personal issues, such as erecting his houses, and that he was keeping Circassian İbrahim, who was removed from the governor's office as a close ally. Also, the lieutenant Dursun Bey co-operated with a group of the murderer and corrupt people in oppressing the society. Hence, they asked the Sublime Porte to send loyal officers.[576] The crucial point in this petition was the definition of the local officials; the

574 BOA. TFR.I.KV. 146/15470, 16-19. 9-11 Eylül 1322 (September 22, 1906) "… bir kaç kişi mutasarrıf paşanın nezdine geldik. Halimize arz etmekde iken tahrirat müdürü müşarünileyh mutasarrıf paşa ve meclis idare huzurunda ben kendi nefsimle kalkmam, millet çıksın da gelsin beni kaldırsın zaten bu millet silahşör ve katildirler deyüb…"

575 Ibid., 22. 12 Şubat 1322 (February 25, 1907) "…merhameten bunca sabi sübyanın beladan muhafazası…"

576 Ibid., 66. In another version of the petition same document were signed by 55 people. See: Ibid., 16. 16 Şubat 1322 (March 1, 1907).

protestors described them as corrupt people who cooperated with *fesad and* murderers.[577]

One of the typical reactions of the state bureaucracy in such a situation was to wait until the protestors had attempted criminal activities. The military officers would be ordered to merely counsel the crowds until they faced violence. When the clash started, the military was advised to use firearms proportinate to the protestors' attempts. This situation was called *mukabele-i bil-misl* (like-for-like) in Ottoman sources and implied the retortion of the violence with state violence.[578] For this reason, the people who disobeyed the rule usually chose to wait until they legitimized their movement. Using a gun could cause the total destruction of their movement. Instead of this, they forced the local officers to accept their demands through creating a mere possibility of violence. In the example of Seniçe, while the local officer was taunting the crowd by saying, 'remove me if you are powerful enough,' the *mutasarrıf* of Seniçe argued it was impossible to stop the crowd with a limited number of gendarmeries. Hence, he asked about the possibility of changing the positions of the fiscal director, cadastral director, and himself to save the glory and honor of the state because the crowd had surrounded the city and overpowered them.[579] However, his request was not accepted because the

577 Hilmi Bey was dismissed after the events. See: BOA. I.DH. 1461/13, 4. 13 Teşrinisani 1323 (December 26, 1907).

578 The practice of retortion known as "*Mukabele-i bil-misl"*(like-for-like) is a concept that was used to define the acts of the states when they acted against eachother during conflicts between them. It was also used in Islamic law as an act to stop chaos in according to Islamic limits of the violence. See: "Mukabele-i Bil-Misl" in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Islam Ansiklopedisi* İstanbul: volume 31, pp 103-107. Artice 15 of the regulations about they duty of police and gendermery also involved about this concept. "15. Madde: …polis memurlarına ve Asakir-i Şahane'ye karşı istimal-i silah edenler hakkında mukabele-i bil-misl kaidesiyle muamele edilecektir." Quoted from Ali Karaca *Anadolu Islahatı ve Ahmet Şakir Paşa (1838-1899),* 101.

579 BOA. TFR.I.KV. 146/15470, 23. 11 Eylül 1322 (September 24, 1906).

central bureaucrats were well aware of the bargaining process that would render criminal the group who used firearms first and legitimize the actions of theother side in eyes of the society.

Despite the well-scripted agenda of both sides during a negotiation phase, protestors did not hesitate to create anarchy in the city by attacking the local officers. In those cases, the goal was to create an extraordinary situation as was the principle behind the hosting of demonstrations and closing down of the bazaars. They attacked the local governors and their fellows directly when the bureaucracy decided to eliminate their power. For instance, the protestors attempted to destroy and loot the notables' houses when their seven friends had been exiled from the city in Yenipazar.[580] In the case of Erzurum, the protestors captured the governor and killed three police officers due to the attempt to exile the Mufti from the city. In Bitlis, the governor was forced to leave the city after the crowd looted his house and killed his guard.[581] The crowds who created chaos to regain their influence in the city won against local officers and their other rivals in the city in all of those examples because they achieved to eliminate the others,[582] ensured the return of their friends who were exiled from the cities[583] and rendered themselves the groups who could cooperate with the central bureaucracy, and govern the city in the name of Sublime Porte through defending the rights of society.

§ 5.5 In Lieu of Conclusion: Bitlis in 1907

On the 22nd of June 1907, on a Saturday morning, an extremely unexpected protest that surprised the local authorities and consulates was held in the

580 BOA. BEO. 31425/235824, 9 Ağustos 1323 (22 August, 1907).

581 Both of the Erzurum and the Bitlis cases are explained with all details in other parts of this dissertation.

582 BOA. I.DH. 1461/13, 4. 13 Teşrinisani 1323 (December 26, 1907).

583 BOA. BEO. 3145/235824, 2. 29 Ağustos 1323 (September 11, 1907).

center of Bitlis. The protest targeted the governor Ferid Pasha. Thousands of people were shouting in the streets and asking for his resignation as soon as possible.[584] It was a shock wave to the local bureaucracy because the day had started in peace. The shop owners opened their shops as usual in the morning, and there was a routine of silence in daily life. Then suddenly, shop owners started to close their shops and people met in the city center as hurriedly as possible. The sheiks of Bitlis, the shop owners, and many ordinary people who were in the agricultural sector set on the road to the city center. They divided into two groups once they reached the city center. The first group captured the telegraph office while the second one went to the barracks of the governor. The Vice-Consul of Britain, Safrastian, observed the situation as follows:

> Sheik Mehmed harangued the mob. At least 5000 men and youths, armed with sticks and knives, and in a few cases with revolvers, proceeded to the wooden baraque of the Vali having already destroyed the young willow planted by Ferid Pasha.
>
> At the sight of the furious mob the guards of the Vali, twenty gendarmes and aides-de-camp escaped at once, leaving thus the Vali completely defenseless. It is said that Ferid Pasha required the protection of regular troops, but Military Commandant Djelal Pasha refused it, arguing that with the few troops he possessed he was to defend the army depots and the barracks.
>
> The mob attacked soon the baraque of the Vali, led by Sheikh Mehmed, of Kadri Sheikh İbrahim, and began to smash down the baraque. A chief of Police of Pera, Armenak Zeki (Armenian Catholic), whom the Vali had brought with himself three years ago was ruthlessly stabbed at the door of the baraque and the corpse thrown under a bridge. Ferid Pasha was then dragged out of the door, under … stones and sticks, very coarsely insulted and tortured at the hands of the violent mob. In the riot which followed, a Moslem was killed (the Vali is accused of this murder by the mob.)
>
> The Vali abandoned himself to the mercy of the sheiks and Djelal Pasha, who had arrived already with some officers and soldiers. In view of madness of the mob the life of the Vali was at stake; a Sheiks is said to

584 F.O. 424/213 No:27 Mr. Safrastian to Consul Shipley. Bitlis (25 June, 1907); BOA. Y. MTV. 299/134, (29 June 1907); Moumdjiyan, "Struggling for a Constitutional Regime: Armenian-Young Turk Relations in the Era of Abdulhamid II, 1895-1909," 333-336.

> have untied his green turban and thrown it on the head of the Vali. From the baraque to the barracks, a distance of 200 yards, the Vali was taken, in the bedroom dress, almost half dead and unable to walk on the arms of officers and followed by the furious mob, which made everything to insult him as much as possible. In the barracks his blood-stained face was washed, the two wounds on the head were attended to, and slightly dislocated left arm cared for.
>
> In ten minutes the baraque was entirely plundered 1000 Liras, obligations, receipts of bank, precious furniture, uniform, provisions, and everything, even the planks of the baraque were carried away-without any quarrel among the mob.
>
> The mob seized then the telegraph office, and telegraphed direct to the Imperial Palace at Constantinople, requesting first removal of Ferid Pasha.[585]

The widespread discontent of the society was a well-known issue, but the protest that targeted the governor's seat was an unexpected event because there were not massive complaints about Ferid Pasha earlier. He was criticized by some officials at the end of 1906, but the people who complained did not provide any evidence for their arguments. The only report that expected a movement against the governor was written by the *mutasarrıf* and the commander of Muş on the 10th of December 1906. They claimed that Ferid Pasha would face a great reaction because of five issues. The first one was the dismissal of influential officials such as district governors, police chiefs, and some gendarmes. Second, the governor was blamed for protecting some officials and well-known people who worked to capture the Armenians' properties. Third, they stated, the governor misinformed the Palace by reporting dead Armenian *Fedai*s as still alive, which caused a motivation for the other revolutionaries. The fourth issue was about the governor's order to send eight battalions from Bitlis to Muş, and the last one was the corruption of the governor by means of misleading the Palace.[586] These claims were signs of the conflicts between the local officials because while they criticized Ferid

585 Ibid.

586 BOA. Y. MTV. 291/115, 1-2. 24 Teşrinisani 1322 (December 17, 1906).

Pasha, the governor worked to prove his outstanding efforts to provide order in the city. There were two important pieces of evidence for these claims in other documents. The first one was the unending effort of the mayor, İbrahim Edhem, to take back his position because Ferid Pasha dismissed and exiled him from Bitlis,[587] and the second one was the complaints of the Beşşar Çeto, who was the leader of the Pencnar tribe. Beşşar argued that the governor had taken his money and had not paid it back.[588] However, all of these complaints did not provoke the ordinary people of Bitlis against the governor. The only attempt made was to close the shops as a warning to the governor in May 1907, but Ferid Pasha solved that problem on the same day of the attempt.[589]

The city's people had been working to solve the problems such as the 'money change' case and the drought during these days. More importantly, during these months, the government made significant progress towards capturing one of the most famous Armenian Revolutionists, Kevork Chavus, who was known as the lion of the mountains in the revolutionary movement because of his efforts against both the gendarmeries and the light cavalries firstly during the Sason uprising in 1894-95 and then, in different places of the Ottoman East. The local army corps, gendarmeries, and zabtiehs made many attempts during these years, but they failed to arrest Kevork. Finally, in the last days of May 1907, the government forces succeeded in seizing Kevork's band in Soluk, a district of Muş, and captured the dead body of Kevork during the clash.[590] Hence, during June, the government in Bitlis was in a state of alert against a possible response of the *Fedais.* No one predicted any Muslim protest movement in such a situation. Ferid Pasha as the governor

587 The struggle of İbrahim Edhem for his seat can be followed in the Ottoman Archival sources. See: BOA. DH.MKT. 1049/53, 19 Nisan 1322 (May 2, 1906).

588 BOA. DH.MKT. 2699/38, 20 Kanunuevvel 1324 (January 2, 1909); BOA.DH.MKT. 2900/61.

589 F.O. 424/212 Inclosure 4 in No:81 Mr. Safrastian to Consul Shipley, Bitlis (May 11, 1907).

590 The capture of the body of Kevork is contested issue because some Ottoman archival sources mentioned that Kevork's corpse was found later in a different place.

of Bitlis, sent a telegraph to the Palace in the second week of June and criticized the attitudes of the consul of Russia because, according to Ferid Pasha, the consul had been working to provoke the Armenians of the city for a while. He stated that because he was loyal to the Sultan, he went to all districts of the city, even the mountains, and worked around the clock to provide order. Also, as he was a good ruler, he had just collected 15,000 kurushes as the taxes of the year from Muslims of the city despite the fact that the Muslim's tax delinquency was 259,000 kurushes, and 4,000 kurushes from non-Muslims while their tax delinquency was 149,000 kurushes. However, the Russian consul in the city had been provoking the Armenians, and while Ferid Pasha criticized him, he also warned the state about the misbehaviors of the consul and their possible results.[591] Interestingly enough, Ferid Pasha's previous telegraph about the problems that Armenians faced was very different in spirit. He argued that even though there was the influence of the revolutionaries, the main reason for the *terk-i tabiet* was the pressure exerted by the Hasananlı and Cebranlı tribes against the Armenians in Bulanık, Malazgirt, and Varto.[592] It seems that Ferid Pasha changed his position after the clashes between the Armenian revolutionaries and the Ottoman soldiers and put the action of the consul and revolutionaries at the forefront instead of blaming the activities of these Kurdish tribes.

During these days, the city's daily agenda was very different. The drought caused a great famine, and the prices of wheat had risen to 16 piastres for a kilo while it was 10 piastres in 1905 and 4 piastres in 1903. Moreover, the cash shortage of the people caused significant discomfort within various classes of the city. The main problem occurred when the government announced the changing of silver money. Ferid Pasha was ordered to change the worn

591 BOA. Y.PRK.BŞK. 77/33, 16. 1 Haziran 1323 (June 14, 1907). The report of the British consul contradicted the amount of money which the governor cited in this document; BOA. DH.TMIK.M. 246/34, 29 Mayıs 1323 (June 11, 1907).

592 BOA. Y. PRK.UM. 79/97, 22 Nisan 1323 (May 5, 1907).

çeyreks -5 kurushes- in people's hands until the first day of March. According to the rule, after that day, all the worn coins would be accepted but only for their weight in silver. According to the vice-consul Safrastian, the Vali did everything not to change these coins by announcing that new coins had not arrived. After the 1st day of March, the governor announced 3.1 piastres would be given for 5 piastres. In addition, many exchange officers cut the money in half and returned it to the owner saying the office did not have any new coins. Most of the shop-owners refused to take these coins. Hence, there was a small amount of money in the bazaar that caused a cash shortage.[593] Governor Ferid Pasha sent a telegram to the Ministry of Interiors and explained that the government worked hard to punish merchants who refused to accept these coins and they announced in all districts of the city what the last day to change the coins, but people did not achieve to carry this out because of the earthquake.[594]

Before the day of the protest, Ferid Pasha invited many people to the government for a session of the prayer for rain. However, the people of Bitlis had already been organizing sessions to pray for rain for three days. They were around the barracks of the governors two days ago, and some of them invited the governor to the rain prayer. The governor appeared bareheaded when he greeted people, which seemed disrespectful and refused to join them. However, as the Vice-Consul stated, he invited many people for the next rain prayer.[595] This issue made apparent that the tension between the governor and the local community was high.

593 F.O. 424 / 213 Inclosure I in No:51 Vice Consul Dickson to Sir N. O'Conor, Bitlis (July 6, 1907).

594 BOA. BEO. 3037/227713, 2. 24 Nisan 1323 (May 7, 1907). The document also contains the letter of the Minister of Interior. See: Ibid., 3.

595 F.O. 424/213 Inclosure I in No:51 Vice Consul Dickson to Sir N. O'Conor, Bitlis. (July 6, 1907); BOA. Y.MTV. 299/134, 3. 16 Haziran 1323 (June 29, 1907).

During the event, Ferid Pasha was confounded and said, "I do not understand anything in this city, call these people, if they refuse to obey me, I will figure that out." The city commander, Celal Pasha, reported these words in his telegraph to the Palace. He also added that, although he summoned all the security forces, he just found ten people to command. The governor was in his barracks in the Hamidiye street of the Köymeydanı district. The barracks was besieged by thousands of men and women who carried sticks in their hands. Celal Pasha had been working to stop the chaos while the protestors bloodied the governor. When Celal Pasha shouted, "the Sultan has no consent for this act", The crowd replied: "we are obedient to the Sultan. Our purpose was to dismiss the governor." Although there were thousands of people behind the leaders who achieved to toss Celal Pasha out of the door, he went the governor out from that barracks and saved him from the hands of the protestors as well, but the protestors continued to attack Ferid Pasha when Celal Pasha transferred him to the government house. The governor was wounded in his head, shoulder and left arm by the rocks and sticks that protestors had used against him. Since the crowd did not leave from in front of the governors' residence, Celal Pasha transferred him to the army barracks of through the back door of the house.[596]

On the night of the mob action, the Armenian population of Bitlis attended the protest by surrounding the house of the Armenian delegate -*Marhasa*- of the city as had happened in Erzurum. Similar to Muslims, a group of Armenians wielded sticks in their hands and began to shout as they refused to obey the *Marhasa.* Celal Pasha went there with his two soldiers to transfer the Armenian delegate. He succeeded to disperse the crowd. However, the Armenian protestors also targeted some of the well-known Armenian people of the city who had good relations with the governor, the next day. Haçik and his

596 Ibid. ; Danyal Tekdal, "1907 Bitlis Depremi ve İsyanında Bir Vali: Ferid Pasha" in *Pamukkale University Journal of Social Sciences Institute* No 27 (May 2017): pp.94-116, 101-103.

friends were taken from their houses, and the crowd beat them black and blue. Celal Pasha stated that there were not any security guards in the city during the first two days of the protests. The governor was not in his seat, the telegraph office was seized by the Muslim protestors who refused to accept any telegraph until they saw the decree of the Sultan dismissing Ferid Pasha,[597] and some of the Armenians who were beaten were hiding in the military's barracks. Two people were killed. On the night of the second day, Celal Pasha achieved to curb the sheiks' power by patrolling the city with the gendarmeries. However, the Sheiks who controlled Bitlis's daily life showed their influence in the city.[598] Furthermore, the protestors had intercepted the caravans of a merchant who transferred cereals to Muş from Diyarbakır. They desired to confiscate the goods because the drought had caused famine in the city. However, when the protestors learned that the goods were transferred for the needs of the army in Muş, they released the merchant and allowed him to transfer his goods.[599]

Indeed, Marshall Zeki Pasha quickly heard of the protest via the telegraphs of Celal Pasha when the crowd attacked the governor's house. He replied by asking these questions on the same day:

> *Is the group who demonstrated in front of the telegraph office a group of rebels, or are there any ulama, sheiks, and the city's dignitaries in this group? If there are any ulama, sheiks, and the city's dignitaries, who are they? Are these complaints of theirs about the governor new or coming from the past? What is the essence of these complaints? Why did you not take the necessary measures to disperse them? Did the police and gendarmeries do anything to disperse the demonstration? Are they also unable to do their jobs? Why did you deliver the public's request instead of stopping them while making the governor unable to do his job? Please answer these questions urgently!* [600]

597 BOA. Y. MTV. 299/102, 2. 11 Haziran 1323 (June 24, 1907).

598 Ibid., 3.

599 Ibid.

600 BOA. Y.MTV. 299/105, 3. 9 Haziran 1323 (June 22, 1907).

Celal Pasha's detailed report that explains what happened during the demonstrations was written after Zeki Pasha asked these questions. However, the Palace bureaucracy was not convinced by Celal Pasha's words because although he succeeded in saving the governor's life and some influential people, he failed to command the security forces during the protest. In addition, the protestors who captured the telegraph office began to negotiate with the Palace bureaucracy by sending their telegraphs in rapid succession.

The first telegraph, which mentioning important news for the Sultan, was sent at 13:40 by Sheik Abdulbaki in the name of the ordinary people.[601] After they called the Sultan to the central telegraph office, the second telegraph arrived at 14:00. This telegraph was sent by Sheik Hacı Mehmed in the name of the populace and stated that they had been loyal to the caliphate for centuries, and that they had not hesitated to give their lives for the Sultan. However, they were tired due to the corruption of the governor and his assistant. In addition, their houses were destroyed by the earthquake, which had occurred two months ago. Moreover, they complained about the immorality of a rise in fornication in the city. For this reason, they claimed that they were afraid to send their children to the school and their wives to the public bath.[602] The third telegraph was sent at 14:30 This time, the telegraph was signed by almost all of the important sheiks of the city in the name of 231 people. They wrote a more detailed telegraph to explain what they experienced after Ferid Pasha began to govern the city. They argued the city was ruined due to the tyranny of Ferid Pasha, and the lack of bread and housing, and for this reason, people started to emigrate. The civil registry could not provide enough forms

601 BOA. Y. PRK.BŞK. 77/33, 12. 9 Haziran 1323 (June 22, 1907) "Atebe-i felek-mertebe-i hazreti tacdarı uzmaya, Bitlis meşaih ve ulema ve mütehayyiranı ile ahali-i umumiyesi bu dakika makine başında mecud olduğumuzdan hakpay-ı hazreti hilafet penahiye gayet mühim bir maruzatımız olmagla vucudu mukaddesi hazreti padişahinin şimdi makina başında bulunmasını istirham eyleriz. Umum ahali namına. Şeyh Abdulbaki.

602 Ibid., 11. 9 Haziran 1323 (June 22 1907); Tekdal, 1907 Bitlis Depremi ve İsyanında Bir Vali: Ferid Pasha," 102-103.

of consent because hundreds of people had applied to emigrate. They also stated that because they needed cereals, the rebels had encircled the city to seize the crops that came from other places. They blamed the governor for not providing new houses for the people whose houses were ruined in the earthquake and showing aggression towards the populace of the city. Moreover, according to them, the governor destroyed many other houses in the city center due to the road work and gained all the people's hatred in the city. Hence, the people of Bitlis asked for his dismissal as soon as possible.[603] This letter would be sent again at 17:00. They also sent another telegraph while another group was looting the house of the governor and argued that the governor opened fire on the crowd and murdered a commissar and another person.[604] Members of the local bureaucracy, such as the mayor and the members of the provincial council justified the crowd's letter by sending another telegraph at the same time.[605]

Zeki Pasha wrote a letter to the ulama and the elites of the city on the 23rd of June in which he argued that the primary duty of the Caliph was to provide order in the Empire. Thus, their movement would be suppressed, and he was very upset. However, he had never heard of any action by them against the caliphate for 22 years. Hence, Zeki Pasha would implore mercy for them if they left from the telegraph office and ended their reaction against the caliphate.[606] Zeki Pasha focused on two points in his letter to the leaders of the protest. He stated that there was a religious fellowship between Turks and

603 Ibid., 14. 9 Haziran 1323 (June 22, 1907). Also see: BOA. Y.A.HUS. 512/46, 4. 9 Haziran 1323 (June 22 1907); Tekdal, "1907 Bitlis Depremi ve İsyanında Bir Vali: Ferid Pasha,"102-103.

604 Ibid., 15. 9 Haziran 1323 (June 22 1907).

605 BOA. Y.A.HUS. 512/46, 3-5. 9 Haziran 1323 (June 22, 1907).

606 BOA. Y.PRK.BŞK. 77/33, 7. 10 Haziran 1323 (June 23 1907).

Kurds, and for this reason, he would not be happy to crush their movement, although the Palace had asked him to provide order via the help of the army.[607]

The leaders of the movement replied to the letter by arguing that the loyalty of the Kurds to the Sultan and the Caliphate was well-known for years among all subjects of the Empire.[608] Also, they would not create any opposition movement against the Palace. However, as they had argued before, their movement was a reaction to the unsecure conditions that they experienced. Although there was an order brought by the Sultan in almost all parts of the Empire, their city was lacked safety and order because of the misdeeds of Ferid Pasha. Hence, they created this movement to ensure their voice reached the Palace.[609]

When the protests were heard by İstanbul, the Seraskier Rıza Pasha was warned about the situation because if the government did not find any solutions to create order in the city, the protests could end up the same as in the Erzurum events, which had led to the dismissal of two governors.[610] Tahsin Pasha also mentioned the same possible problem by focusing on the primary demand of the mob: the resignation of the governor.[611] Rıza Pasha found Celal Pasha to be at fault, although Zeki Pasha asked for his promotion because he attempted to save the governor during the protest.[612] Yet, Rıza Pasha put up Mahmud Pasha, who was the commander of Van as a commander of Bitlis relying on the decision of the advisory commission of the army. Rıza Pasha

607 Ibid.

608 Infact, the Kurdish rebellions which were led by Sheiks were very common in the late Ottoman history. It is my contention that the Sheiks insisted on the local reasons of their movements because they wanted to differentiate their protests from the former rebellions. As an example of a massive riot see; Sabri Ateş, "Şeyh Ubeydullah İsyanı" in *Kürt Tarihi Dergisi* (August-September 2013): 9-15.

609 Ibid.

610 BOA. BEO. 3085/231364, 9 Haziran 1323 (June 22, 1907).

611 BOA. Y.A.HUS. 512/51, 2. 11 Haziran 1323 (June 24, 1907).

612 BOA. Y.MTV. 299/134, 16 Haziran 1323 (June 29, 1907).

also suggested that one battalion and one troop from Van and Muş should be placed under the commandership of Mahmud Pasha.[613] In addition to Rıza Pasha's suggestions, the Sultan gave an order to recall the governor Ferid Pasha and appointed the provincial treasurer, Asım Efendi, as the acting governor.[614] Furthermore, Tahir Pasha, who was the governor of Trabzon, had been ordered to go to Bitlis to carry out an investigation as soon as possible. Tahir Pasha replied to the telegraph by saying he took to the road the next day.[615]

Tahir Pasha was not the only person the Palace wanted to send as the investigator, but he was the first one whom the Palace chose as the initial step to stop the chaos.[616] However, the bureaucrats also explored the possibility of selecting the governors of Sivas, Van, and then Erzurum as the investigators. Yet, because the governor of Erzurum, Nuri Bey, faced the same problems, the governor of Sivas had an illness and the Palace did not want to govern Van without a commander and a governor, Tahir Pasha appeared as the most appropriate person to conduct an investigation.[617]

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613 BOA. Y.MTV 299/89, 1. 12 Haziran 1323 (June 25, 1907); The second letter of Vice-Consul also underlined the same issue. See: F.O. 424/213. Inclosure 2 in No: 31 From Mr. Safrastian to Consul Shipley, (June 25, 1907). "I dare to state that Djelal Pasha (the Commandant) and military authorities in general did not do what they ought to do for the protection of the Vali. It is possible to say that the future inquiry of the case will lay one part of the responsibility on the shoulders of the soldiers or their commandants. All higher officials took refuge in the barracks. I forgot to say that the gendarmerie Major was beaten by the mob and hardly escaped from their hands."

614 BOA. İ.HUS. 155/94 21, Haziran 1323 (July 4, 1907); F.O. 424/213 Inclosure I in no:47 Mr. Safrastian to Consul Shipley (July 2, 1907).

615 BOA. BEO. 3085/231369, 3. 12 Haziran 1323 (June 25, 1907); F.O. 424/213 Inclosure I in no:47 Mr. Safrastian to Consul Shipley (July 2, 1907).

616 BOA. İ.HUS.155/26, 10 Haziran 1323 (June 23, 1907). The Irade prove that, the Palace chose him as inspector before it sends telegrams to ask other governors whether they could go Bitlis.

617 For the documents about the chosing process of Tahir Pasha and elimination of other governors, see: BOA. Y.A.HUS. 512/62, 11 Haziran 1323 (June 24, 1907); BOA. BEO. 3085/231365, 11 Haziran 1323 (June 24, 1907); BOA. Y.MTV 299/105, 11 Haziran 1323

Marshall Zeki Pasha took the order of the Seraskier Rıza Pasha and sent a telegraph to the Mahmud Pasha. However, his call was criticized by the governor of Van because the clash between the soldiers and Armenian *Fedais* had been continuing. The governor did not want to decrease the number of soldiers in the city, but Zeki Pasha requested that they to manage the city with the help of the police and gendarmeries until the government managed to stop the mob in Bitlis.[618] Yet, the news resulted in another bout of chaos in the city. Sheiks of Bitlis called for the support of other Sheikhs in the region against the military. Sheikh Seyyid Ibrahim sent another telegraph in the name of the ulama, petty-notables, and merchants of the city, and argued that they had seized the telegraph office because they did not believe anyone other than the Sultan. Hence, sending the army to Bitlis would change the character of their protest because it could cause chaos in the city.[619] Moreover, the leaders of the protest had informed Celal Pasha that if the battalions enter the city, other Kurdish tribes around the city would come to help their movement.[620] The Vice-Consul Safrastian observed the situation as follows:

> A telegram arrived on the 25th ultimo from Zeki Pasha the Commander of the 4th Army Crops at Erzengan, announcing to the people of Bitlis the Imperial Irade to the effect that, Ferid Pasha, the Vali of Bitlis, has been recalled to Erzengan pending his trial, the defterdar of Bitlis appointed Acting Vali, and that a Commission of Inquiry (Tahir Pasha, of Trebizond, and Ferik Mahmoud Pasha of Van) is being dispatched to Bitlis to investigate the reasons of the rising of the people and their complaints against the Vali.
>
> On the arrival of the tidings, the council of Sheiks ordered the mob to disperse, to reopen the shops, and begin to works. The civil authorities, which were nil for the four preceding days, reappeared in their offices, and soon the conditions took their normal course in the town as before. Ferik Mahmoud Pasha arrived from Van on the 28th

(June 24, 1907); BOA. Y.MTV. 299/102, 12 Haziran 1323 (June 25, 1907); BOA. İ. DH. 1456/21, 19 Haziran 1323 (July 2, 1907).

618 BOA. BEO. 3086/231435, 1-2. 10-11 Haziran 1323 (June 23-24, 1907).

619 BOA. BEO. 3085/231369, 2. 12 Haziran 1323 (June 25, 1907); BOA. DH.TMIK.M. 248/11, 11 Haziran 1323 (June 24, 1906).

620 BOA. Y.MTV. 299/105, 2. 11 Haziran 1323 (June 24, 1907).

> ultimo with one battalion of infantry. Another battalion has arrived since from Mush and five others are reported to be already en route from Erzeroum, Harpoot, and Mosul.
>
> The Sheikhs seem to be quite nervous about events of the nearest future: they are encouraged by the recall of Ferid Pasha, and have received letters of congratulations and sympathy from the people of Siirt, the Chiefs of Modku, the Sheikhs of Khizan who at the same time assure the Mussulmans of Bitlis their moral and material assistance in case of need to the people of Bitlis, and that thousands of armed Kurds are ready to come to their help from every part of the vilayet if the Sheikhs wanted them.[621]

Zeki Pasha found a compromise in such a situation. He argued that soldiers' daily bread could not be provided by Bitlis, which would cause another serious problem in the city. For this reason, he kindly asked the Palace to give orders for cities that send the battalions to pay their salaries and not to allow the soldiers to enter Bitlis. Instead of Bitlis, Zeki Pasha offered that soldiers could wait in Başhan which was two hours away from the city center.[622] The Seraskier accepted his requests, and the troops were quartered in Başhan while their salaries were sent from the central treasury.[623]

Although the army was not allowed to enter the city, sending four battalions of soldiers near Bitlis had dampened the influence of the mob. First, Celal Pasha and then the lieutenant governor Asım Efendi declared that safety and the stability had been restored again in their telegraphs to the Palace. According to them, the mob was finished and the tradesmen had reopened their shops again.[624]

It was clear that both the government forces and the Kurdish tribes did not look forward to raising the tension. The government's attitude against the Kurds was softer than the response of the government in Erzurum or in case

621 F.O. 424/213 Inclosure in No: 47 Mr Safrastian to Consul Shipley, Bitlis, (July 2, 1907).

622 BOA. Y.MTV. 299/106, 3. 12 Haziran 1323 (June 25, 1907).

623 Ibid., 1. 13 Haziran 1323 (June 26, 1907).

624 Ibid., 1-4 13-14 Haziran 1323 (June 26-27, 1907).

of the movement of Armenians. In addition, although the British Vice-Consul of Van, namely Captain Dickson stated, 15,000 Kurds under arms were ready to respond to the movement of soldiers,[625] the control of the Sheiks over the ordinary people was limited, and most of the tradesmen did not desire to be a part of a clash between the Sheiks and the army. The second issue was the recall of the governor by the Palace. The people in the mob won their battle against the governor Ferid Pasha. Like in Erzurum, now the protestors would focus on influencing the inspectors to gain what they desired.

5.5.1 *Legitimizing the Movement: Reports on the Case and State's Response*

The Vice-Consul of Britain in Van, Captain Dickson, was very interested in the events of Bitlis in the last week of June 1907. He went to Bitlis when he heard the protests in the city. He arrived in Bitlis on the night of the 30th of June when the protests ended, and Ferid Pasha left the city. He firstly met with the Russian consul to learn the dynamics of the city. Then he made an investigation in the city. After that, he wrote a report in which he analyzed the social and economic problems of the city that resulted in the elimination of the governor.

In his detailed report, Dickson firstly focused on the conception of the people towards Ferid Pasha by arguing that the governor's rule, or misrule rather has been unpopular among Christians and Muslims alike: "his one aims appears to have been to amass money, and his means were unscrupulous, and in most cases hard on the people."[626] In addition, the governor's attitudes differed according to the ethnic backgrounds of the people. For instance, Dickson argued while the governor "fostered the revolutionary movement among the Armenians by his cruelty, some Kurdish tribes who in paid the Vali to

625 F.O. 424/213 No: 407 Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey (July 4, 1907).

626 F.O. 424/213 Inclosure in No:51 Vice-Consul Dickson to Sir N. O'Conor (July 6, 1907).

allow the course of the law to run past without finding them."[627] Seyyid Ali, who was the latter Sheik of Khizan and who had the power to move 3,000 men within the space of few hours, was an example of this because he paid 800 liras to Ferid Pasha to shield the misdeeds of his men.[628]

According to him, Mehmed Efendi was the tax collector in the city, had collected more than the legal amount, and Ferid Pasha had taken 700 liras as his share from that money.[629] Moreover, Dickson reported that when the earthquakes had destroyed the houses in the previous winter, the governor had received 1,300 liras from the Palace for relief work and reconstruction of the places that were damaged. He constructed a few wooden sheds which valued 40 liras and distributed 300 liras worth of bread. The rest of the money was not distributed for the needs, but he sent a document signed by certain influential people of the town, that purported to show that all funds had been distributed.[630] This point by Dickson point contradicts with the Ottoman documents because the total amoun of the official relief of the state arrived after Ferid Pasha was dislocated from his seat. The Palace sent some money as soon as possible after the earthquake, but the amount was not enough to reconstruct the houses of the poor. Hence, as suggested by the Ministry of Treasury and Interior, Sultan Abdulhamid II sent 2,000 Ottoman liras to a commission in the government of Bitlis, and the commission was charged to distribute the money to the poor for reconstructing their houses.[631] The reaction against Ferid Pasha had appeared because of the insufficient effort of the government to rebuild the houses prior to the protests. Even after Ferid

627 Ibid. No:51.

628 Ibid.

629 F.O. 424/213 Inclosure in No:51 Vice-Consul Dickson to Sir N. O'Conor (July 6, 1907).

630 Ibid.

631 BOA. İ.DH. 1457/39, 1-3. 16 Ağustos 1323 (August 29, 1907).

Pasha's dismissal, the new governor asked for 8,000 additional liras to use in the relief works, but the government sent only 2,000 liras.[632]

The most important point made by Dickson was regarding the price inflation that raised the price of corn three times a year in Bitlis. He argued that while Bitlis produced 24,700 codes of corn, the total production was 256,900 codes in Bulanık, Malazgird, Akhlad, Mush, Kharzan, Siird, and Bohtan. According to him, "all of this surplus might have been brought to Bitlis to lower the price." Yet, the supply of corn in the city was in the hands of a few merchants, who had good relations with the governor. Although Dickson did provide no evidence about the relationship between these merchants and the governor, according to him, if the governor did not nurture such privileging relations with these merchants, he could have worked to decrease the price of the corn.[633] When the effects of price inflation were added to the problem of changing money, the results of earthquakes, and the heavy taxation over the subjects, the Muslims of Bitlis refused to live under his rule.

Dickson also gave many details about the sentiments of the Kurds in the districts. He mentioned that "the general feeling among the Kurds in these districts is unfavorable to the government."[634] According to him, Kurds did not accept any form of government, but this observation was the general feeling of Dickson about the Kurdish tribes. What he gathered from his investigation was that the main reason for the protests was the governor Ferid Pasha. He also differentiated the Kurds who had ties with powerful tribes from poor ones by arguing that while the poor Kurds like Ryah Kurds and Armenians as well were oppressed by the governor and the powerful *Asshirets,* the powerful clans made more money by seizing the properties of the weak and succeeding

632 Ibid., 2. 16 Ağustos 1323 (August 29, 1907).

633 Ibid.

634 Ibid.

to escape the cruelty of the governor.[635] In such a situation, Dickson concluded that, "during the interval between the 22nd and 26th June, there was every chance of the riot spreading to a general revolt of the Kurds in the district against the government. Fortunately, the Palace gave way, and all these growing clouds immediately evaporated, and now the sky is clear."[636]

Dickson's investigation provided a transparent background for the protest, but his claims about the tax collections contradicted Ferid Pasha's arguments. Other observations were mainly the same as what the protestors claimed.[637] However, the Sheiks' role and the agents of the protests were not clear in the reports. For instance, if the powerful tribes oppressed the weak, why did the ordinary people create a mob under their commandership? Moreover, how did the Sheiks become the leaders of the mobs?

Dickson did not provide any clue about how different classes and different ethnic groups acted together, but he wrote a few sentences about the importance of the Sheiks without providing any evidence for their role in the mob. According to him, there were several powerful Kurdish tribes such as Batoun, Shormaklı, Biro, Panjarani and Hiran, whom the government did not have control over them. These tribes were mostly nomadic and well-armed, and they were more religious than Turks. Hence, they had great respect for the Sheiks of the region. That is why Dickson concluded that "Sheiks led the mob, and 'on the 8th of July, after Tahir Pasha arrived, they met together and swore to stand by one another if there were any question of punishment for the revolt."[638] Although Dickson was right about the position of the Sheiks in the region, his argument was weak when it came to explain the leadership of

635 Ibid.

636 Ibid.

637 For an example of a document that contains the same complaints see; BOA. Y.A.HUS. 512/46, 9 Haziran 1323 (June 22, 1907); BOA. Y.MTV. 291/115, 4 Kanunuevvel 1322 (December 17, 1906).

638 Ibid.

the Sheiks in the mob. The religious leaders were mainly the natural leaders of the different classes in various regions of the Empire for diverse reasons, as explained in the previous chapters through the cases of Kosovo and Erzurum.

Under the circumstances, Captain Dickson prepared a list of suggestions for Tahir Pasha. First, he sent the list to the central-consulate in Istanbul to take permission for suggesting each article. According to him, the problem was not only a protest against Ferid Pasha. The city was in complete anarchy, and the state needed to operate a reform package to provide order in the city. He classified his suggestions into four columns. The first column was about the problems between different ethnic groups, and he proposed;

1- Measures for the alleviation of position of Christian villagers
2- Protection of life and property from the Kurds and Circassians
3- Prevention of dispossession of Christians from their land to make room for Muslim immigrants
4- Prevention of Muslims establishing themselves in Christian villages
5- Officials to listen to complaints of the people and of their religious representatives and to give them protection in according to law.
6- Election of strong and honest Kaimakams holding such posts
7- Prohibition of irresponsible Acting Kaimakams holding such posts
8- Prevention of outrages by Kurds after troops have been sent to search for revolutionaries.[639]

All these articles relied on the observations of Dickson when he visited Muş and Jezirah. He was faced with a chaos in which Armenian peasants were oppressed by the Kurdish tribes and Circassian emigrants, and decided to act by proposing a new reform package to provide a new order. His second column was about the economic situation and the tax-system of the city. He proposed;

1- Taxes to be collected according to law.
2- Clearly printed taxpayers receipts to be used.

639 F.O. 424/213 Inclosure I in No:32 Vice-Consul Dickson to Sir N. O'Conor. (Bitlis, July 9, 1907).

3- *Complaints of abuses to be investigated, and if correctly reported culprits to be punished.*
4- *Poor people not to be maltreated and compelled to pay taxes.*
5- *Articles of prime necessity not to be taken.*
6- *Articles given for relief not to be taken.*
7- *Prohibition of making poor people pay by system called 'selef.'*
8- *If villager has not other means of paying, payment to be deferred till after harvest.*
9- *Christian villages to buy their own taxes according to price of last five years.*
10- *Officials to be held responsible for these suggestions being carried out in their districts.*[640]

In his third column, he proposed the punishment of the sixteen officials and brigands mentioned each by name, and in the last part of his proposal, he suggested the returning of women taken by Muslims and restoring goods stolen by Kurds.[641] Sir N. O. C'onor, who was the consul in İstanbul, suggested him omit the articles which were covered by the existing laws. Hence, he kindly asked to omit articles 1, 5, 6, 7 in part I, and articles 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 in part II.[642]

When he visited Tahir Pasha with his Russian colleagues, he presented the list of their suggestions after they omitted the articles that Sir N. O' Conor mentioned,[643] and Tahir Pasha replied "it was the duty of the government to attend to all these points" because their "demands were perfectly just and necessary for the welfare of the vilayet." However, he did not want to give any guarantee because he was not the governor of the city, and he needed to make a tour in the city to understand the reasons behind the protests. Another reason for the tour was the effort to "collect evidences (especially from the

640 Ibid.
641 Ibid.
642 Ibid., Inclosure II in No:32. Sir N. O' Conor to Vice-Consul Dickson (July 11, 1907).
643 Ibid., Inclosure III in No:32. Sir N. O' Conor to Vice-Consul Dickson. (July 13, 1907).

Armenians) of complaints against Ferid Pasha."[644] Dickson observed that Tahir Pasha did not want to govern the city and wished to return to Trabzon as soon as possible.[645] Hence, he was the man "who promises everything but does not perform much." For this reason, Dickson kindly asked the central consulate to press the Porte "insisting on Tahir Pasha putting into action the demands he had presented to him."[646]

Tahir Pasha summarized these requests to İstanbul by stating that the consulates asked him to govern according to law, save the villagers from the cruelty of tax collectors, and remove the Kurds and emigrants from the Armenian villages.[647] In addition to this, after listening to the local elites' criticisms, Tahir Pasha suggested the appointment of a well-known person as the new governor of Bitlis and desired to return to Trabzon.[648] The Palace appointed Tahir Pasha as the new governor of Bitlis, and Ferid Pasha was also appointed as the lieutenant governor of Trabzon.[649]

Tahir Pasha's appointment provided a calm in the city, but he did not find enough time to establish an order according to the requests of the consular and the requests of the Sheiks and merchants during the mob action because the Grand Vizier had appointed him to the commission of the frontier which needed to solve the political problems concerning the frontier between Iran and Ottoman Empire. In such a situation, Sheiks, who operated the mob, became the most influential group in the city. For example, one of the

644 Ibid., Inclosure I, IV in No: 53. Captain Dickson to Sir N. O' Conor. Bitlis, (July 14, 1907).

645 Ibid.

646 Ibid.

647 BOA. BEO. 3100/232477, 8 Temmuz 1323 (July 21, 1907). In the final stage the consulars suggested nine articles which were summarized by Tahir Pasha. See: F.O. 424/213 Inclosure 3 in No:53 Bitlis, (July 13 1907).

648 BOA. İ. HUS. 156/45, 12 Temmuz 1323 (July 25, 1907).

649 BOA. İ. DH. 1457/22, 17 Temmuz 1323 (July 30, 1907) F.O. 424/213 No:53 Sir N. O' Conor to Sir Edward Grey (No:467) (July 31, 1907); F.O. 195/2251 Bitlis (August 15, 1907).

gendarmerie corporals was beaten in the bazaar during these days,[650] and none of the officials attempted to save him because of the fear of another mob under the leadership of the Sheiks.

When the Grand Vizier inquired '*in what way reforms are possible' in* Bitlis, the treasurer forwarded the letter to Tahir Pasha, and he replied he could not give any reply until he returned.[651] Hence, Sheiks and notables had continued to hold secret meetings, and they were accepted as the most effective groups in the city because Tahir Pasha went to the frontier of Iran. Ferid Pasha's dismissal was a victory similar to what the people of managed in Erzurum twice, but the protestors did not achieve to solve any problem. In addition, they were still afraid to be punished in accordance with the law.

Under such a position, the protestors sent a letter to Tahir Pasha. Thirty-five Armenian and Muslim notables and merchants petitioned the governor on the 15th of September 1907:

> *The robbers (eshkiya) of our vilayet who have not met any severe check or punishment from the government, continue their raids and pillaging. They are troubling and ruining the people. These robbers having remained without any punishment or investigation for a great many years, have become very bold, so that several times they have attacked Bitlis, the centre of the vilayet, and carried away the cattle.*
> *They have closed the roads. The city, which cannot be cultivated and which more than all should be supplied with stores of corn and other provisions, does not receive victuals for lack of security. Prices are continually rising. No one can go out of the city, and those who attempt it are robbed. The people are filled with fear and horror for the coming winter.*
> *This year nearly 1,000 families, who are not able to gain their daily bread or make a livelihood have removed themselves to other cities and emigrated to foreign lands and many are preparing to follow their countrymen. The one and only cause of these misfortunes is the carelessness of the officials in their duties and their incapacity in looking after the wants and con-*

650 F.O. 195/2251 From Vice-Consulate of Bitlis (August 15, 1907).

651 F.O. 424/213 Inclosure in No:127 Vice Consul Heard to Sir N. O' Conor. Bitlis (September 30, 1907).

> *dition of the country. For this the city is deprived of security and peace. Murders and quarrels occur in the market. Because we need deeds rather than words, and because the safety and prosperity of the province has been committed to your hand and care by the Sultan, we make bold to beseech you to make an end of this ruinous state of affairs and to take steps towards a practical reformation and to put it into execution rapidly. We await your order.*[652]

Sultan Abdulhamid II sent an order to all departments of Bitlis and asked them to work in coordination to create order and capture the bandits. Besides, instead of Tahir Pasha's request to accept the mutasarrıf of Siird as an acting governor until Tahir Pasha returns, a new person should be chosen because Siird was in political instability.[653]

However, the political stability was lacking not only in Bitlis but also in the cities such as Muş and Siird, because Tahir Pasha acted as the commissioner in the border negotiations, and the province suffered from a lack of authority of the state rule. In other words, after the dismissal of Ferid Pasha, Bitlis fell into the hands of Sheiks and powerful Kurdish tribes.

5.5.2 *Conclusion*

The actors in the Bitlis province used the power of contentious politics effectively to dislocate an unfavored governor. They came upon the scene suddently, followed a well-determined strategy and created a moment of opportunity to demonstrate their influence in the province. The crisis that they experienced before the protest became a tool to legitimize their movement. They followed a schema that involved the petitioning phase, creating mass movements, closing all shops in the bazaar, attacking specific people of the local bureaucracy, looting their possessions and ensuring order for the others

652 Ibid. Bitlis (September 30, 1907).

653 BOA. Y.A.HUS. 515/106, 2-3. 17 Eylül 1323 (September 30, 1907).

in the province. It was a way to create an alternative order and alarming the Imperial center about their situation.

The repertoire of the masses in Bitlis were not different from the reactions of the society on the western frontiers during the times of crisis. Although Bitlis had some specifities such as the leadership of sheiks and the presence of Kurdish tribes, the way they followed to negotiate for their demands was similar to the other reactions that emerged during the last years of Sultan Abdulhamid II. Moreover, the reactions were the result of a deep custom that can even be observed with some nuances, in socieity' reactions during the crisis times today.

The state bureaucracy and the foreign representatives were not eager to conceptualize the movement as the urban politics of society, however. Instead, while the foreign representatives researched the non-Muslims' and non-Turks' role as the evidence of colonial perspective of the Empire towards its Non-Turkish and Non-Muslims population, the state bureaucracy neglected the role of the urban populace and focused on the role of leadership in the events. Zeki Pasha's letter about the events in Bitlis, Şemsi Pasha's defitinion of populace by in Kosovo were among the examples that lay bare the Empire's vantage points. Although they provided significant details on the social life in the urban center and villages of the provinces, the foreign representatives' reports tended to focus on the cruelty of the center, the misdeeds of the local bureaucracy and the oppression that non-Muslim society of the Ottoman East experienced. When the cases are the petitions, most of the examples were in a way similar to Albert Hourani's famous criticism: "The voice of an important part of the population is scarcely heard in them, or heard only in muted, indirect and even distorted form: that of the Muslim town-dwellers and their traditional and "natural leaders, the urban notables."[654] Referring back to Guha, it can be argued that this chapter aimed to read these documents

654 Albert Hourani, "Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables," 44.

against the grain in order to counterbalance the document's counter-insurgency emphasis. Thus, even though the social and economic conditions of Bitlis prepared the events, the strategies of the urban coalition broadcasted the voices of Ottoman urban life, which one can could hear not only in Bitlis but throughout the Empire.

6

Conclusion

This dissertation traced the negotiation practices of the Ottoman society by analyzing tax related reactions and reactions against the governors in the Ottoman provinces during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It revisited the mass movements that occurred in various provinces of the Ottoman Empire and explained them as the bargaining practices and discursive strategies of the various social forces among themselves and in the face of provincial bureaucracy during the reign of Abdulhamid II. Hence, the research focused on the mass movements known as tax revolts, mobs against the governors and the state's capability of tax collection in the late Ottoman history. As a critique of the tax revolts concept, the dissertation aimed to rewrite the history of these movements as a contested space between multi-layered and multi-actoral networks through focusing on the dynamics of the provinces rather than following a unilateral analysis. Moreover, the dissertation followed statistics provided by the local bureaucracy to clarify the decision-making process of the society concerning tax payment as a hidden transcript of the contentious politics.

During the nineteenth century, known as the age of nations and nationalism, the leaders in provincial politics were conceptualized as the people who became the founding fathers of new nation states at the end of the Empire.

This dissertation, however, refused to conceptualize those people who became the leaders because of their attention to the political oppositions to the monarchy while it accepted the rising power of the provincial people. The provincial politics was based on the determination of the limits of central power and the possibility of becoming the partners of the state even during the collapse of an absolute regime. They chose to create nation-states not when the nationalism became the new agenda of the era but when the negotiation practices came to an end. When Hoca Şevket who was one of the leaders in the protests that took place in Erzurum fled, he wrote, "it was a religious duty for a person to search for the polity."[655] He chose to flee when all negotiation practices were shot down by the Imperial center but returned to the city and became the deputy of the Erzurum when the Assembly was opened after the 1908 Revolution. In this manner, the 1908 Revolution was a restoration of the negotiation practices of the society. Thereupon, the Ottoman society showed significant examples of strike waves to achieve their demands after the revolution.[656] Yet, the Committee of Union and Progress decided to follow a new path after the *31 March* Incidents and they blocked the negotiation practices of the society with the state. That was a turning point in the Ottoman Empire because when the fight for the demands, as the established customs, had been shot down, the representatives of the provincial societies became the natural leaders of the new nation-states via the support of the provinces' populace. The Albanian movement during the period when

655 BOA.Y.MTV. 308/35 2. "İdaresini aramak insan için farz-ı ayndır. Beş guruş yevmiye bir âlimin değil bir kahveci çırağının yevmiyesidir. Subhanallah subhanallah ne kader bilakis."

656 For the strike wave after the revolution see; Yavuz Selim Karakışla, "The 1908 Strike Wave in the Ottoman Empire," in *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin,* vol.16 no.2 (September 1992): 153-177. Karakışla argues that the government passed a law aimed at preventing further strikes even before the Parliament opened.

Committee of Union and Progress controlled the Assembly, and the Kurdish Question during the early Republican period were among the best examples.

This dissertation also focused on the success of Tanzimat reforms because it argued that Tanzimat provided new channels for the populace to become new partners of the Empire. Even though most of the seats had been taken by the powerholders in the borderlands, the populace created new strategies to eliminate the powerholders, to cope with the Imperial bureaucracy and to increase their influence in the cities. The changing dynamics in the provinces during the 19th century via the techno-political attempts of the empire provided new opportunities for the people of the borderlands when negotiating for their demands. In this sense, the dissertation discussed the role of contentious politics in urban life instead of focusing on who took the seats in the local bureaucracy because capturing the streets were more crucial than taking the seats in the provincial government office.

When the new powerholders of the Ottoman provinces who a coalition of local influential people and the central power[657] decided to oppress the urban populace, the populace also used the power of protest as a weapon. James Grehan has shown the reactions of the society of Damascus against the *qadi* as the reason for their hunger in the 1740s. He argued that "people had a fairly consistent idea about what was right and wrong, legitimate and abusive, legal and extortionate."[658] As this dissertation argued, the general perspective of the Ottoman populace was similar to the cases Grehan illuminated. However, the populace had more advantages in the 19th and 20th centuries due to their efforts to reach the Imperial center. When they faced a moment of danger, they remembered the tradition of rebellion to find a solution for their

657 Özbek, *İmparatorluğu Bedeli,* 214.

658 James Grehan, "Street Violence and Social Imagination in late-Mamluk and Ottoman Damascus (CA.1500-1800) in *International Journal of Middle East Stuudies* 35 (2003): 215-236, 229.

problems. As Donald Quataert argued, the shortfalls of 1907-1908 did not represent the unique examples because most of the problems the Ottoman society experienced had also occurred before and it was within living memory, as it explained in chapter four.[659] Moreover, the repertoire of the borderland society was not unique. Yet, as Linda Darling has argued, "during the nineteenth century, Middle Eastern political discourse adopted and adapted the terminology of the West but used it to describe the relationships encapsulated in the Circle of Justice."[660] The dissertation discussed these dynamics of the borderlands to clarify the changing dynamics of the provincial urban life and how ideas circulated via the development of collective action. In this manner, tax-related reactions of various actors, the reactions against local bureacrats and the invention of the tradition that the society captured as it flared up during the time of the crisis became the new political checks and balances system of the Ottoman provinces. In other words, the protests marches, refusal of tax payment, occupations of the public buildings such as telegraph and governor offices, violence against local officers, struggle between various classes and religious sects in the provinces of Erzurum, Bitlis, Van and Kosovo provinces were elaborated in this thesis as the examples of how the Ottoman society responded to the changes in the urban life.

As the dissertation argued, the Resource Mobilization Theory and the concept of framing in social movement literature were not only useful concepts to clarify the role of the opposition movements but also provided tools to understand how the local actors mobilized the resources and became the scapegoats (as those who oppress the society) when the political atmosphere changed. Chapters three and four were written from such a perspective. Hence, the dissertation also aimed to contribute to the social movement theories. It also discussed the language of the protestors and the dissertation agrees

659 Donald Quataert, "The Economic Climate of the 'Young Turk Revolution' in 1908," 1161.

660 Darling, *A History of Social Justice and Political Power in the Middle East: The Circle of Justice from Mesopotamia to Globalization*, 181.

with the arguments of Engin Akarlı about the role of Islam as a resource of social solidarity. As Akarlı mentioned, Sultan Abdulhamid II "could not monopolize Islam, try through he did. Others could resort to the same resource to contest the interpretations and methods adopted by the Palace."[661] The use of Islamic discourse against the changes implemented by the Imperial center without negotiating with the society played an invented tradition role on the Ottoman frontiers. The actors in the provinces were well-informed about the rising role of Islam in the politics even though the reform period was labeled as secularist. Hence, they used the Islamic discourse to persuade the Imperial Palace and the local bureaucracy in the provinces about their rightousness. Bedros Der Matossian argues that the use of symbols was a state enterprise during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II and it was given to the public after the revolution. Unlike Matossian, this dissertation tended to conceptualize the use of symbols as an invented tradition that was used effectively both by the Imperial Palace and the provincial urban society during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II.[662]

In brief, the dissertation is an example of a micro-history: it focused on the events in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The specific cases were chosen from the events known as tax revolts but the dissertation conceptualized those movements as the negotiation practices of the Ottoman borderlands. Thus, the dissertation did not only accept those movements as the inspirations for the revolutionaries but also aimed to clarify the cultural background on which the revolutionary collective action depended on. The political oppositions to Sultan Abdulhamid II were the liminalities of the

661 Engin Deniz Akarlı, "The Tangled Ends of an Empire:Ottoman Encounters with the West and Problem of Westernization- an Overview," in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* vol.26, no:3 (2006): 353-366, 362.

662 Bedros Der Matossian, *Parçalanan Devrim Düşleri: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Son Döneminde Hürriyetten Şiddete* translated by Renan Akman (İstanbul: İletişim, 2016), 80. Matossian created this argument referring to Selim Deringil's *The Well-Protected Domains.*

society because while they had been educated in western schools, they also experienced the traditional culture of protest in their provinces. The culture of protest was important in the development of their arguments. The revolutionaries, who had the political agenda of dismissing an authoritarian regime, were also influenced by the traditional coalitions of the provinces. The coalitions insisted on determining the role of the state over their daily lives and forced the Imperial center to make themselves into the partners of the Empire. The struggle for a constitutional monarchy included many similarities to the movements in the provinces. For this reason, the people in the Ottoman borderlands can be defined as defenders of customs because they created another version of the checks and balances system in an authoritarian regime.

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