

BIBLIOTHECA OTTOMANICA  
II

THE LAST OF THE  
OTTOMAN GRANDEES

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THE LIFE AND THE POLITICAL  
TESTAMENT OF ÂLÎ PAŞA

BY  
FUAT ANDIC & SUPHAN ANDIC



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THE LAST OF THE  
OTTOMAN GRANTDESSES

THE LIFE AND THE POLITICAL  
TESTAMENT OF A SULTAN'S  
DAUGHTER

By  
S. M. H. H. H.

By  
M. H. H. H.

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THE ISIS PRESS  
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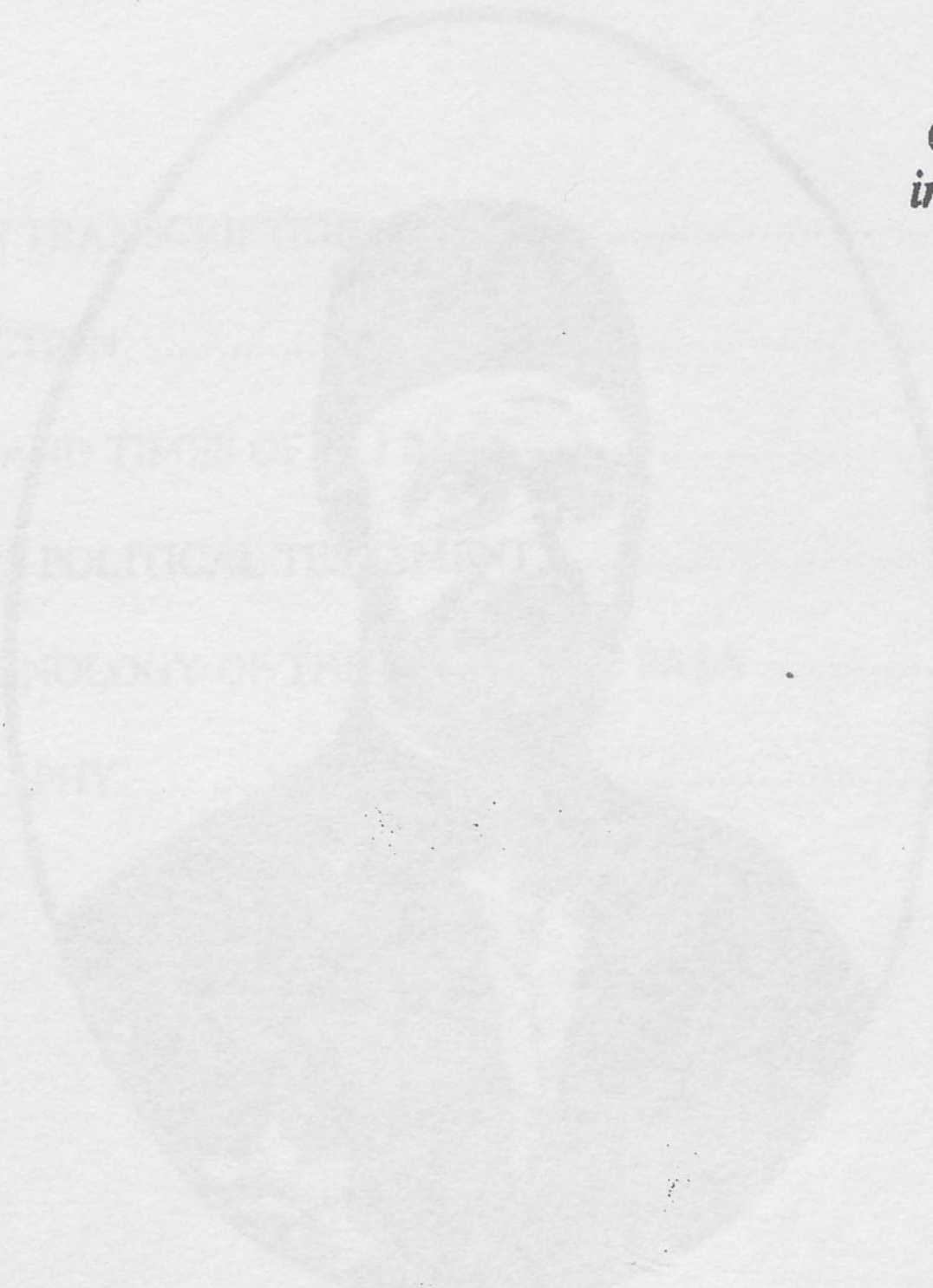
They reside in Washington, D.C.





TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Cemil Meriç  
in memoriam*



NOTES ON TRANSLATION  
INTRODUCTION  
THE LIFE AND TIMES OF CEMIL MERIÇ  
ALL PANA POLITICAL TESTIMONY  
THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DEATH OF CEMIL MERIÇ  
BIBLIOGRAPHY









## TABLE OF CONTENTS

NOTES ON TRANSCRIPTION .....	VIII
INTRODUCTION .....	X
THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ÂLÎ PAŞA .....	1
ÂLÎ PAŞA'S POLITICAL TESTAMENT .....	33
THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF ÂLÎ PAŞA .....	63
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	67





## NOTES ON TRANSCRIPTION

Spelling of Turkish words and names in the text is according to official modern Turkish spelling. Being a phonetic language Turkish is easy to pronounce. The unusual pronunciation of eight letters is noted below:

- Â : long "a", as in bar
- c : like "g" in general
- ç : like "tch" in match
- ğ : soft "gh" like in though
- ı : something between "i" as in will and "u" as in radium
- ş : like "sh" in shall
- ö : like "ea" in heard or "e" in French le
- ü : like "u" in French mûre



## INTRODUCTION

This small book does not pretend to be a painstaking archival historical study. The Ottoman Empire's tumultuous history during the nineteenth century and Âli Paşa's role in its administration and foreign policy have been studied by Turkish and foreign scholars alike. Whatever has been saved and preserved of the Ottoman documents and kept in the archives in Turkey has been combed by İbnülemin Mahmut Kemal İnal whose book contains the definitive monumental biographies of Âli Paşa and the grand vezirs who succeeded him till the last day of the Empire.

The period during which Âli Paşa played a key political role in Ottoman history has also been studied by contemporary observers, foreign and Ottoman alike, and examined by modern historians.<sup>1</sup> This little book brings to the attention of the interested reader a document which summarizes two decades of historical events and the way one of the highest Ottoman statesmen that ever lived has dealt with them. After having served a good part of his life in the highest possible posts of the government, Âli Paşa, shortly before his death, presented to the Sultan a *Political Testament* in which he gave a full account of the events and the difficulties the Empire faced, of his own deeds as grand vezir, and a blueprint of the future course of action that was needed to save the Empire from its doom.

The Testament was presented, we understand, to Sultan Abdülaziz in whose name Âli Paşa governed the Empire and conducted its foreign affairs for over a decade. Abdülaziz wanted to reign supreme. Âli Paşa, whose ideas ran contrary to the absolutism of the monarch's reign, strived to limit his powers. Being a most capable statesman, he was indispensable to the Sultan who admired but did not like him. Certainly neither Abdülaziz nor the grand vezirs who succeeded Âli after his death ever followed the advices and recommendations the Testament contained. If they did not destroy it, they certainly chose to ignore it.

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<sup>1</sup>There are dozens of books published in Turkish as well as in English, French, and German. Three of the most succinct analyses of the period are by Lewis, Davison (1963), and Shaw & Shaw. The most complete Turkish work is by Karal. The reader should also consult *Tanzimat*. See "Bibliography", *supra*, for complete references.



Exactly what happened to the Testament is not known. It was condemned to obscurity until it surfaced in 1910 in France where it was published in French in a literary political journal called *La Revue de Paris*. Whether it was written originally in Turkish and subsequently translated into French is also not known. There are two accessible copies: one is the copy published in Paris in 1910; and the other is a hand written copy, also in French, which is in the Library of the School of Literature of the University of Istanbul, a gift of the French Embassy. Perhaps Âli Paşa did write directly in French. Given his perfect mastery of the language, this is not an impossibility. An anonymous introduction of a page and a half in the version printed in *La Revue de Paris* sheds no light. What is significant, however, is that the whims of historical events have kept a document of such paramount importance in obscurity. It has remained either unknown or was ignored for almost a century.<sup>2</sup>

We came to know of the Testament's existence in Meriç's book. Our curiosity was kindled. This was inevitable. After having worked in the field of development economics as academics and as advisers in many developing countries, the Testament's clear recommendations regarding the necessity of balanced budget, progressive taxation, civil service reform, privatization, and conflict resolution in a multi-ethnic society were to us as valid today as they were valid then. We felt it our duty to bring to light the totality of the Testament in English. We owed this not only to our profession, but also to our cultural heritage. Our translation is that of the text published in *La Revue de Paris*.

The Testament is a political document. In it Âli Paşa provides for posterity an account of all his deeds as a statesman. No doubt, he was a controversial figure. His uprightness and firmness created many enemies within the Government. Young Ottomans<sup>3</sup> saw him as an obstacle to their ambitions

<sup>2</sup>Few historical books in foreign language refer to the Testament, but hardly mention its content. Perhaps the only exception is Davison (1963, pp. 415ff) who briefly discusses its content, but dwells with greater detail on the question of its authenticity. After reviewing several of them, he states: "None of these considerations is sufficient either to prove or to disprove the authenticity of the Testament... My own feeling is that Âli would not have done this sort of thing, but this is again conjecture." According to Davison the language of the Testament in which it was written is also somewhat of a mystery. "Âli could have written in French, but it is more likely that he would have written in Turkish." Mehmet Galip, who authored an article on Âli Paşa's Testament published in *Tarih-i Osmanî Mecmuası*, 1:2 (AH 1329), states that the Testament was published in Turkish in the newspapers (cited in Davison, 1963, p. 416). If the Testament was ever published, that version is certainly lost forever; otherwise Inal would definitely have found it and referred to it in his book. In his 1974 book of historical essays Meriç summarizes the main points of the Testament and expresses the view that there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the document. Akarlı in 1978 provides a translation into Turkish of the French version that had appeared in *La Revue de Paris*. This translation omits from time to time certain sentences contained in the French text; nevertheless, its availability in print in Turkish is a contribution not to be ignored. Akarlı, in the preface to his book, joins Meriç's view that in all probability the Testament is authentic and that it is in complete accord with Âli Paşa's views expressed in several reports he submitted to the Sultan.

<sup>3</sup>A group of young discontent men, some with government jobs, advocating the abolition of the theocratic monarchy and the establishment of a constitutional sultanate. They were organized as a



and attacked mercilessly his deeds and personality. But the Testament is not merely a political account of Âli Paşa's past. It is a guide to be used by those who were to succeed him, one that draws a course of action to preserve and perpetuate the Empire and presents policies for its better governance. In our opinion, it still remains a viable guide for many a developing country. His views on the need for a free press, for example, can still be a lesson for many governments around the world.

We have translated the Testament into English with the hope that it will arouse the interest of the students of Ottoman-Turkish history. We have also provided a short summary of Âli Paşa's life in conjunction with the most important events of his time over which he had considerable influence. The purpose is no more than to put the Testament into its historical context. We do not pretend to be historians, nor is our short essay an original work. Our sources are the well known books given in the bibliography. Those who are fully familiar with Ottoman history can skip the next section and go directly to the Testament where Âli Paşa's wisdom and foresight shines uncontestedly. Âli Paşa, together with Fuad Paşa and Mustafa Reşit Paşa, is the last of the Ottoman Grandees. No other will appear in Turkish history until Atatürk.

Washington, D.C., 1995

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loose group of individualistic intellectuals in 1865 when Fuad Paşa was grand vezir and Âli Paşa foreign minister. They never had a precise systematic program of their own, rather concentrated merely on criticizing the Government's policy. They came into their greatest cohesion in 1867 when they went as far as encouraging the assassination of Âli Paşa and his supporters and possibly depose the Sultan. Some were arrested, some exiled, and others escaped to Europe. The interested reader can find details in Inal, Karal, Davison (1963), Lewis, and Shaw & Shaw.







## THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ÂLÎ PAŞA

On July 1, 1839, at the age of eighteen, Abdülmecit became the thirty-first sultan of the Ottoman Empire. He inherited an empire which for the past century and a half had consistently been losing its puissance. The Empire's frontiers still extended from the shores of the Danube to the Persian Gulf, from Algeria to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina; but it was riddled with internal and external problems. It had experienced renewed Serbian rebellions from 1804 to 1817, a war with Russia that lasted till 1812, Greek revolts from 1815 to 1830, another Russian war in 1828-1829, the threatening approach to Istanbul in 1832 of the military forces of Mehmet Ali, the governor of the province of Egypt, followed by another war in 1839 with the same province. Hence, it was too weak to defend and protect itself on its own; alliances with European Powers were imperative.

The European Powers were divided in their policy towards the Empire. Austria and Russia were aiming to dismember it. England and France, in contrast, did not approve of its demise. The main pillar of their policy was to maintain the balance of power in Europe by preventing Russia from moving south towards the Mediterranean and thereby threatening the routes to British India. Russia's move could only be contained if the status quo vis-a-vis the Ottoman Empire was maintained. The Empire itself was not in a position to conduct an independent foreign policy and needed to take advantage of the European balance of power. It needed the friendship and alliance of France and England for survival, and they were ready to recognize the Empire's territorial boundaries upon assurance of a reorganization and reform.

The great spirit behind the reorganization movement, the *Tanzimat*, was the foreign minister Mustafa Reşit Paşa<sup>4</sup> in whom the young Sultan had great

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<sup>4</sup>Mustafa Reşit Paşa (1800-1858) was in many ways the real architect of the 19th century Ottoman reforms. He was born in Istanbul. His father, whom he lost when he was 10 years old, taught him to read and write. He then attended the mosque school but did not complete a formal education. He entered government employment at an early age, advanced quickly, and in 1832 became the chief secretary to the official in charge of foreign affairs. In 1834 he was appointed ambassador to Paris where he worked on mastering the French language. By 1839 he was able to converse in French with King Louis Philippe without an interpreter. A series of diplomatic appointments followed. He



confidence and who, when ambassador to London and Paris, had studied the government systems of France and England and had a real understanding of European realpolitik. Hence, the proclamation of the Imperial Edict known as *Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayunu* of November 3, 1839, also called *Hatt-ı Şerif*, four months after the young Sultan's accession to the throne. The Edict was penned by Mustafa Reşit Paşa and read by him before the cabinet, the high officials of the government, religious leaders of all faiths, and the ambassadors of the foreign powers. With it the Empire entered a period of radical overhaul.

To put Âli Paşa's life and deeds into their proper perspective, it is imperative to dwell briefly on the principles proclaimed by this first reform edict and the institutional changes it forged. For, when in about 1854 he and his colleagues would begin to form the second generation of reformers and take over the reins of policy making, they would have already experienced the transformations wrought during the previous fifteen years, indeed partially contributed to them, and these changes would have become part of their normal lives, and not totally new as they were for their predecessors.

#### THE IMPERIAL EDICT OF 1839

The *Hatt-ı Hümayun* proclaimed as official such principles as the security of life, honor, and property of all Ottoman subjects; an orderly system of taxation; a regular system of military conscription; fair and public trial of persons accused of crimes; and equality before the law of persons of all religions. This last was perhaps its most remarkable feature. The expectation was that thereby the loyalty of all subjects would be secured, separatist tendencies diminished, and the Empire's territorial integrity preserved.

New institutions needed to be created to implement this policy. The first was to redefine the legislative function of the *Meclis-i Vâlâ-ı Ahkâmı Adliye* (Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinances)<sup>5</sup> more commonly known as the Grand Council of Justice, which was to play a crucial role throughout the period of the *Tanzimat*. The Council was empowered to exercise a supervisory and quasi-legislative function. It was split into two bodies in 1854: one was concerned strictly with legal matters; the other became the *Meclis-i Âli-i Tanzimat* (High Council of Reform), known also as the *Tanzimat Council*, with general responsibility for the whole reform program. Âli Paşa was the first president of the *Tanzimat Council*.

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became foreign minister in 1839, was dismissed in 1841, but returned in 1845. He was appointed grand vezir in 1846, a post which he held six times.

<sup>5</sup>The Council was established in 1838 during the reign of Mahmud II. It went through a series of transformation in the next 30 years and became the first organ of central government to embody the representative principle by including selected individuals from the non-Muslim minorities.



The penal code, borrowed largely from the French, was completed in 1840 (amended in 1850, 1854, and 1857). Mixed tribunals, composed of Muslims and non-Muslims, were set up to deal with commercial cases involving Ottoman subjects and foreigners and criminal cases among citizens of the same nation.<sup>6</sup> Mixed police courts followed thereafter. Christian testimony against Muslims was accepted. The commercial code entered into effect in 1850. In other matters of equality some Christians were admitted to the military medical school after 1839.

The trend to divide the country into smaller *vilâyets* (provinces) and these into further subdivisions continued. *Bâb-ı Âli* (The Sublime Porte)<sup>7</sup> tried to devise a system of central control over the administration of the provinces while providing a certain degree of administrative flexibility by giving to the inhabitants of each locality at least a minimal voice in local government so that administration might be efficient and expeditious. It did this by several methods, but especially by attaching to each provincial governor a *meclis* (council) in which the non-Muslim communities were represented.<sup>8</sup> The system did not work smoothly. Inefficiency and corruption prevailed. Capable governors and officials were few in number. Appointments were frequently the result of intrigue, influence, and bribery rather than of merit. Even able governors did not remain long in one place. Positions were often unsalaried, hence fees were levied on the people. Salaries of some officials were too low to make honesty compatible with a reasonable standard of living. And there was opposition to change from those who stood to lose, and among them were local Christian notables. The Christians also claimed that they were not represented sufficiently in the councils, and their claim was supported by the European Powers.

A regular system of military conscription was established and military service reduced from lifetime to five years. However, in 1843 this new system could be made applicable only to Muslim subjects, since non-Muslims objected to serving in the military when they could be exempted from it by paying the due tax, *cizye* or *haraç*.<sup>9</sup> Only a few Greek sailors were taken into the navy.

<sup>6</sup>Until then the court system consisted of three types of tribunal: (a) religious tribunals dealt with civil cases among Muslims and criminal cases among Muslims and Christians; (b) *millet* (community) tribunals dealt with cases among members of the same community; cases among members of different communities were taken to religious tribunals; and (c) tribunals of capitulatory nations dealt with cases among foreign merchants and diplomatic staff in the respective embassies. (For an explanation of capitulations and capitulatory nations see footnote 22.)

<sup>7</sup>The buildings where the Office of the Grand Vezir, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, and the State Council were located. Figuratively, the Ottoman Government.

<sup>8</sup>The objective of the council was to assist the governor, check on his actions, and supervise broadly the execution of the promises made in the Edict. This administrative system was first implemented in 1845 in Rumeli (the provinces in Europe).

<sup>9</sup>*Haraç* refers to both the land tax and the poll-tax on the state's non-Muslim subjects. The lands of the Ottoman Empire were divided into *öşür* (tithe) land, *haraç* land, and *mirî* (state) land. Tithe land was the land given to the Muslims at the time of the conquest in return for the payment of a



Hence, the implementation of the principle of equality before the law in this area had to be postponed.

The system of *iltizamat* (tax farming), the sale of the concession to collect taxes in a given area to the highest bidder, was abolished in 1840. This system left the finances of the government in the hands and to the whims of a single individual whose main concern was his own self interest; for, the tax farmer recouped from the peasantry the purchase price plus a profit over and above the sum due to state for taxes. This gave rise to injustices. Though in some districts the direct collection of taxes by administrative officials lessened the exactions on the peasantry, this system also became involved in corruption and thus failed to provide sufficient revenue, so that within two years tax farming was reintroduced. The insufficiency of revenue led Mustafa Reşit Paşa to issue in 1842 the first printed paper money in Ottoman history.<sup>10</sup> The old coinage was partially withdrawn from circulation and the *mecidiye* was issued at par with European currencies. With public spending exceeding public revenue and imports exceeding exports, the *mecidiye* soon lost its value. The first bank was set up in 1849 under French and Italian direction.<sup>11</sup> The Crimean War of 1853 aggravated the situation. The first foreign loan was negotiated in 1854 and the second in 1855. Part of the tax revenue was earmarked for its servicing. Inflation, abetted by the Crimean War, soared.

The *Tanzimat* also brought changes in the educational system.<sup>12</sup> The constant defeat of Ottoman armies by European forces and the supremacy of the West in technology accentuated the need to restructure and strengthen the Ottoman institutions. In his 1845 edict Abdülmecit asserted that ignorance in secular and religious matters was the prime obstacle to progress and that the

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tithe. State lands belonged to the state but were cultivated on a temporary basis by the subjects and paid *harac-ı mukasama* (on produce) or *harac-ı muvazzaf* (on the size of the holding) instead of the tithe. *Haraç* land was the land retained by the non-Muslims in return for a proportion levied on its produce. The owner had full property of the land; it could be sold and/or inherited.

In the early period both the *haraç* and the *cizye* (the tax that exempted the non-Muslims from military service) were collected by an official. From the end of the 18th century, collection passed into the hands of the non-Muslim elite (priests, headmen, etc.). With the new citizenship concept of equality of all before the law brought by the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* of 1839, the Western states pressured for the abolition of the *haraç*, and both *haraç* and *cizye* were repealed, but only after the 1856 reforms. *Bedel-i askerî* (payment in lieu of military service) was introduced in their stead. (See Orhonlu).

<sup>10</sup>The first paper currency was in fact issued in 1830 during the reign of Mahmut II under the name of *kaime*. However, these were hand-written interest-bearing "treasury bonds." They were easily counterfeited and soon lost value. The *kaime* of 1842 was printed.

<sup>11</sup>The bank had to be liquidated within two years leaving a huge operations deficit in addition to the loss of the initial investment in the institution.

<sup>12</sup>Previously students were being tutored in religion, ethics, writing, and some mathematics. In the *medreses* (theological schools) courses consisted of grammar, syntax, logic, metaphysics, rhetoric, geometry, and astronomy. There was total absence of history, geography, archaeology, and positive sciences. There were no experiments, critical analyses, and research. Though legally obligatory, attendance in grade school was not universal. The *rüşdiyes* (secondary schools) were not developed. Higher education was simply a mix of eastern and western influences.



establishment of schools to teach scientific and industrial subjects should have the highest priority. This marked the beginning of western style education. An ad hoc committee of seven examined the fundamental problem of providing a more modern, and therefore secular, education than was possible in the grammar schools and theological schools. Among its members were Âli Efendi, senior chancery officer and undersecretary of foreign affairs, and Fuad Efendi, chief dragoman<sup>13</sup> of the *Divan-ı Hümayun* (Imperial Council).<sup>14</sup> The committee submitted its report in 1846 and recommended the creation of a system of education, parallel to the Muslim schools, from primary through secondary grades to university. The *Meclis-i Maarif-i Umumiye* (Council of Public Education) was established<sup>15</sup> to draft the necessary ordinances and plans, and supervise the educational institutions. However, progress was slow on the whole. The university failed to develop and very few secondary schools were started. The *Encümen-i Daniş* (Academy of Learning) was founded in 1850 to prepare textbooks, including translation of foreign works.

#### ÂLİ PAŞA'S ENTRY INTO PUBLIC LIFE

Âli Paşa was only 23 years old and chargé d'affaires at the London embassy when the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* was proclaimed. He was born in Istanbul in 1815 to a family of most humble means. His father was a small shopkeeper and in all probability illiterate. His formal education was limited to the simplest primary schooling where he learned to read and write and completed the reading of the Koran. That was his total formal education. His humble background forced him to forge his future solely on his own, and he took every opportunity to educate himself to his dying day.

At the age of 15 he obtained his first government post in the Secretariat of the Imperial Council. He excelled to such an extent in his duties that, as was customary, a year after his appointment he was given the *nom de plume* Âli, meaning great. His real name was soon forgotten: Mehmet Emin became Âli Efendi. During his employment at the Imperial Council he immersed himself in improving his French. This led to his appointment in 1833 to the Council's *Tercüme Kalemi*. (Translation Bureau)<sup>16</sup> where he was tutored intensively in French for one year.

<sup>13</sup>From the Arabic *terdjuman* (Turkish *tercüman*) meaning translator, interpreter.

<sup>14</sup>*Divan-ı Hümayun* was the enlarged cabinet where matters of state of primary importance were discussed.

<sup>15</sup>It was subsequently incorporated into the Ministry of Education upon the latter's establishment in 1856.

<sup>16</sup>One of the Secretariats of the Imperial Council. The Bureau was established by Mahmud II. Its routine function was to act as interpreter in the audiences of the ambassadors with the Sultan or grand vezir, and translate the legal appeals of foreign citizens. Its work was supplemented by training in French, history, arithmetic, and other subjects.



The interplay between those who had in a sense graduated from the Translation Bureau, the proclamation of the 1839 *Tanzimat*, and the events and reforms that followed is extremely fascinating. The Ottomans conducted their foreign affairs in their own language. Turkish, in fact, was the lingua franca in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. The European embassies in Istanbul communicated with the Sultan's government through dragomans who were usually local Christians. In the eighteenth century the dragomans were selected from a small group of Greek families who lived in the Fener district of Istanbul.<sup>17</sup> However, in 1821, during the Greek revolution, the last Greek dragoman was dismissed and later executed for abusing his post and committing treason against the state. The need to educate the Muslims led to the creation of the Translation Bureau at the Sublime Porte where the young diplomats and dragomans were educated. Had the *Tanzimat* never been promulgated, this Bureau might have remained as one of the many branches of Ottoman bureaucracy. However, while struggling for survival in a world where naked imperialism was aiming to dismember it, the Ottoman Empire needed statesmen who were familiar with Europe, its language, and its affairs. The Empire needed a new elite which could come neither from the army nor from the *ulema*.<sup>18</sup> It could not come from the army, since during the reign of Mahmud II that preceded the *Tanzimat* the centuries-old janissary organization was eradicated and replaced with a new military system. This new and fledgling system was far from being capable of supplying the Government with progressive elements of statesmen caliber. The *ulema*, by definition, was opposed to all changes that involved westernization. Hence the new elite had to come from the Translation Bureau. The architects of the reforms of the Empire that began in 1839 — first Mustafa Reşit Paşa, then Fuad Paşa<sup>19</sup> and Âli Paşa — were all products of the

<sup>17</sup>A quarter southwest of the Golden Horn, also the seat of the Greek Orthodox patriarch.

<sup>18</sup>Experts in Muslim theology and law who provided the nucleus of a rudimentary civil service, especially in the judicial system.

<sup>19</sup>Five times foreign minister and twice grand vezir. He was born in Istanbul in 1815 into a well-to-do and cultured family. His father was the well-known poet Keçecizade İzzet Molla. He graduated from the new medical school which was established in 1827 during the reign of Mahmud II. There he learned French which was to be the key to his future career. In 1834 he entered the army medical corps. He joined the Translation Bureau in 1837 upon the suggestion and insistence of Mustafa Reşit Paşa. He advanced rapidly through the ranks of Ottoman bureaucracy. In 1839 he became dragoman of the Porte, and following a number of appointments as a diplomat abroad and to important offices of the Government, he became foreign minister in Âli Paşa's first cabinet when the latter succeeded Mustafa Reşit Paşa. This marked the first collaboration of the two. He resigned his post in 1853. In 1854 he successfully repressed the Greek insurgents. Subsequently he was appointed to the Tanzimat Council. In 1855 he became foreign minister, again under Âli Paşa. He collaborated in the elaboration of the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* of 1856. He resigned in 1856 under pressure from the British ambassador to the Porte. He became the President of the Tanzimat Council for the second time in 1857, foreign minister once again in 1858, and attended the Paris conference on the principalities the same year. In 1860 he went to Damascus and Lebanon to solve the conflict between the Druzes and Maronites and succeeded in a new administrative statute for Lebanon. In 1861 he first became foreign minister, then grand vezir. As such he dealt with the Empire's financial crisis, negotiated the loan of 1862, succeeded in concluding the Montenegro campaign, and helped secure new constitutions for the Greek, Armenian, and Jewish communities. He resigned in January 1863. In his letter of resignation to the Sultan he pointed out the Empire's financial difficulties and the dangers of Balkan nationalism. He



Translation Bureau. In fact, by the virtue of being an employee of the Bureau, Âli's fate was sealed. For, as much as he was the maker of reforms, the reforms that started within the Translation Bureau also made Âli.

Âli worked in the Bureau for two years. His French, thanks to the training program in the office, had improved considerably. His intelligence, his steadfastness, and now his acceptable French earned him in 1835 the post of second secretary of the embassy in Vienna. During his one and a half year stay in that post he spent a great portion of his time to master French and learn as much as possible about the organization of the Austro-Hungarian empire. He had no interest in attending balls in the Schönbrun palace or concerts in the Esterhazy palace. He was determined to speak French as good as a French diplomat before the end of his tour in Vienna. When he returned to Istanbul with a promotion as dragoman at the *Bâb-ı Hümayun*, his French was near perfect. There he met Fuad Efendi, later Fuad Paşa, who became his colleague, lifelong friend and collaborator.

Mustafa Reşit Paşa was following Âli's professional progress with interest. He had become not only his mentor and protector but a very trusted friend as well. Upon his appointment as ambassador to London in 1838 he took Âli with him as counsellor. That assignment gave Âli the opportunity to study the political structure and the government organization of the British Empire. It also must have occasioned long discussions with Mustafa Reşit Paşa on the alternatives of reform in the Ottoman Empire. The seeds of the 1839 Edict were probably sown in London with Âli contributing to its drafting. When Mustafa Reşit Paşa returned to Istanbul with the rank of foreign minister, he left Âli in London as *chargé d'affaires*, for Âli was the only person he trusted who could explain to the British politicians the importance of the *Tanzimat* and its necessity for the British Empire in preserving the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Thereafter all his efforts were going to be directed to the maintenance of that integrity.

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became the President of the Grand Council of Justice after his resignation and a month thereafter *Serasker* (commander-in-chief and minister of war). Three months later he was again appointed grand vezir and stayed as such for three years which were marked by the 1864 *vilâyet* law, authorization of the construction of the Suez canal, acceptance of the unification of Moldavia and Wallachia, and granting Khedive Ismail's heirs direct succession from father to son. He was dismissed in 1866 when he opposed the Sultan's desire to marry the Khedive's daughter. He became foreign minister once again in 1867, again under Âli Paşa. He deputized Âli Paşa when the latter went to Crete to crush the rebellion. He helped develop the plans for the *Şuray-ı Devlet* (Council of State) and the Imperial Lycée at Galatasary in 1868. In the winter of 1868-69 under medical advice he travelled to Nice for rest and recuperation; he died there on February 12, 1869. (See Inal and Davison, Enc. Isl.) Prior to his death he is supposed to have written a political testament addressed to Sultan Abdülaziz. The *Levant Herald* published it the same year. The controversy of the authenticity of the testament has never ceased (for details see Davison, 1959, and Akarlı, pp. x-xi). Authentic or not, it should be noted that the weight of the testament is on the foreign policy to be followed and the ways and means to maintain ethnic harmony in the Empire.



Âli returned to Istanbul in 1839 and was re-employed as interpreter. Thereafter his ascent in the Ottoman bureaucracy was meteoric. He went back to London in 1840, this time as ambassador and stayed for three and a half years. Upon his return he was appointed member of the Grand Council of Justice. In 1845 he was appointed *Beylikçi* (Senior Chancery Officer)<sup>20</sup> and member of the Ad Hoc Committee on Education. In 1846 he became foreign minister for the first time in the cabinet of Mustafa Reşit Paşa. In 1848 the rank of *Vezir* and the title of *Paşa*<sup>21</sup> were bestowed upon him. He was only 33 and one of the youngest vezirs and paşas in Ottoman history.

During the same year the Sultan dismissed both Mustafa Reşit Paşa and Âli Paşa, but reinstated them four months later. Âli Paşa stayed as foreign minister until 1852 when he succeeded Mustafa Reşit Paşa as grand vezir with his lifelong friend and collaborator Fuad Paşa as foreign minister. He was 37 at the time and reluctant to take on the responsibility of so high a post at such a young age, but acquiesced upon the insistence of the Sultan. His grand vezirate did not last more than two months. He returned to *Bâb-ı Âli* as foreign minister in 1854 in the new cabinet of Mustafa Reşit Paşa at the outbreak of the Crimean War.

During the two year hiatus from *Bâb-ı Âli* he was first appointed *vali* (governor) of İzmir in 1853 from which post he was dismissed the same year. A minor incidence in İzmir brought European power politics into play. A skirmish between the Austrians and Italians which resulted in the death of an Austrian officer and wounding of another was a perfect excuse for the Austrian ambassador to meddle up in the Empire's internal affairs and demand the dismissal of the governor. This was the first bitter personal experience Âli had of perennial interference of European Powers into the Empire's internal affairs. He must have vowed by then to stop or at least to minimize these interferences as long as he was alive and had the power to do so. But he was going to suffer the consequences of the same interference personally once again three years later, when he occupied the highest administrative post of the Empire, that of grand vezir. In 1854 he was appointed governor of Hüdavendigâr (today's Bursa) and assumed, while at this post, the Presidency of the High Council of Tanzimat. He continued to hold this position when he returned to *Bâb-ı Âli* as foreign minister for the third time.

<sup>20</sup> Another Secretariat of the Imperial Council. The *Divan Kalemî* (Central Chancery Office) was headed by the Senior Chancery Officer and responsible for drafting, issuing, and filing copies of all edicts, regulations, decrees and orders other than those concerning finance.

<sup>21</sup> A high rank both in the army and the civil service. Usually vezirs (ministers) were given the rank of paşa.



## THE CRIMEAN WAR AND THE TREATY OF PARIS

The war of 1853 between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, known as the Crimean War, originated from a dispute between France and Russia as to which country was to have the privilege of protecting the Christians in the holy places in Palestine. In 1852 France had secured from the Ottoman Government certain privileges for the Christian churches in the Holy Land. Russia demanded the same privileges for the Orthodox Church. The demand was turned down, and as a reprisal Russia occupied the vassal states of Moldavia and Walachia (today's Romania). Negotiations proved to be futile and the Ottoman Government had no other recourse but to declare war upon Russia. France, not willing to have a competitor in the Holy Land, and Britain, not wanting to have a Russian foothold on the road to India, entered into an alliance with the Ottoman Empire, which Sardinia joined subsequently as an ally of France, and dispatched their fleets to the Black Sea. Their troops joined the Ottoman troops in the Crimea. Austria remained neutral, but sympathetic to the allies, hoping that the end of the war would check Tsarist Russia's designs in southeast Europe. The war remained fairly localized in the Crimean peninsula, but the Russian army occupied the Empire's eastern province of Kars. In 1855 the occupation of Sevastopol by the allied forces and the accession of Tsar Alexander II — who as crown prince had been against the war — to the Russian throne, led to peace negotiations.

In 1855 Âli Paşa, as foreign minister, headed the Ottoman delegation to the preliminary peace conference in Vienna attended by representatives of Austria, England, France, and Russia. Among the articles relating to the establishment of the foundation of future peace negotiations were provisions regarding the rights and privileges of the Empire's Christian population. The allied European Powers could not resist the temptation to extract further concessions from *Bâb-ı Âli*.

Throughout Âli Paşa objected strongly to their intention to secure guarantees for the rights of the Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire. He argued that such guarantees were unnecessary and infringed upon the sovereign rights of the Sultan. He insisted that the right to freedom of religion had always been the policy of the Government; that civil and judicial rights fell under the principle of equality before the law already accepted by the 1839 Edict of Gülhane; and that the re-extension of privileges was, therefore, totally meaningless and could only lead to their use as a pretext to encroach upon the sovereignty of the Empire. Russia maintained that the rights and privileges of non-Muslim Ottoman subjects should be guaranteed by the European Powers. England was of the opinion that there should be full-fledged religious freedom and equality before the law. Finally, France argued that the differences between Muslim and Christian subjects in matters of rights, taxation, military service,





education, and employment in the public service should be repealed with a *ferman* and developed along the guidelines contained in the 1839 *Hatt-ı Hümayun*. The Porte could not accept either the Russian or the English point of view and sided with France. This led to the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* of February 28, 1856, of which Âli Paşa and Fuad Paşa were the architects.

Âli Paşa became grand vezir the same year of the Vienna conference. As grand vezir he was the first Ottoman plenipotentiary at the Paris Peace Congress of 1856. He signed the Paris Treaty that concluded the Crimean War. Accordingly, Russia agreed to return Kars, Moldavia, and Walachia to Ottoman administration; accepted to limit severely its Black Sea naval fleet; and renounced its claim to be the protector of Orthodox Christians. For Âli Paşa the Treaty was as much a vehicle to terminate the Crimean War as a gateway for the Ottoman Empire's entrance to the Concert of Europe. He was totally convinced that this was the only way to guarantee the territorial integrity of the Empire, stave off more active foreign intervention into Ottoman affairs under the pretext of protecting the non-Muslims living within the boundary of the Empire, and keep the initiative in Ottoman hands.

#### THE IMPERIAL EDICT OF 1856

Like the previous Edict of 1839, the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* of 1856 contained the principles of a new organization and the general guidelines for the design of a new program. It confirmed the guarantees and privileges recognized for centuries and promised in the 1839 Edict to all Ottoman subjects without distinction of race, creed or religion. The primordial objective once again was to revitalize the Empire and so to preserve it in a world increasingly ordered by European power and civilization. All aspects of Ottoman life was up for change. Military strength had to be enhanced to meet the challenge of Europe. But this was not possible without economic progress, without improving the educational system, revamping the administration of justice and laws governing modern life, and reorganizing public administration to make it efficient. The finances of the Central Government, the corruption in tax collection, the system of justice administration were all intertwined in efforts to reform.

Projects of reform were undertaken in all these areas. The basic drive was the revitalization of the Empire through domestic reorganization, including the adoption of western ideas and institutions. The Central Government was at the center of the reform process; it provided the initiative, planned and executed all reforms. It could not be otherwise, given the autocratic regime and the nature of the society. Hence reform in the government structure and efficiency of administration was primordial in determining what could be achieved in other areas, such as education for a better qualified bureaucracy and a reform-minded



opinion climate, and economic progress to enhance the standard of living of the population and produce larger government revenue. In turn, reform in these areas was going to determine the efficiency in the public sector.

The Government was at the center of the reform process yet in another sense. Given the multi-ethnic composition of the Empire, it was the Government that held the diverse communities together, not only by commanding their respect and allegiance, but by a workable flexible local government system under central control. Hence changes in provincial administration and in the structure of the non-Muslim communities, aimed not only to enhance administrative efficiency, but also to prevent the breaking away of provinces. In the two decades from 1856 to 1876, the year of the first Ottoman constitution, the Ottoman statesmen worked to create and enforce the concept of *Osmanlılık*, the common identity of being an Ottoman subject irrespective of religion, and started the trend away from the concept of membership in a religious community toward the secular concept of citizenship.

#### FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN THE EMPIRE'S AFFAIRS

With the second Edict in his hand, Âli Paşa signed the Paris Treaty. The Empire was admitted into the Concert of Europe; the European Powers guaranteed the integrity of its territory and were forbidden interference into its internal affairs. But Article 9 that contained the Empire's assurance to improve the living conditions of its subjects was to work ultimately against the Empire, since it facilitated further Europe's intervention in the Edict's execution and implementation.

Such intervention was not new in Ottoman history. It existed for centuries and stemmed from the Empire's liberal policy, at the height of its power, of granting separate and privileged treatment to non-Muslims, whether subjects or foreign residents engaged in trade or diplomatic services. The most important of these privileges were the capitulations,<sup>22</sup> that granted the Christians

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<sup>22</sup>The etymological origin of the word capitulations is not from to capitulate (to surrender) but from the Latin *capitulatus*, past participle of *capitulare*, meaning sections or chapters in an agreement. Originally "capitulations" was translated into Turkish as "imperial contract" that regulated the diplomatic and commercial activity between the Ottoman state and Christendom. They referred, explicitly or implicitly, to the general security of non-Muslims residing and/or doing business in the Ottoman Empire, and their property, including testamentary rights, freedom of worship, burial, dress, repairs to ships, protection of lives and goods from pirates in Ottoman territory, consular jurisdiction, responsibility of the individual and not of the collectivity. They were granted upon application with a promise of friendship, peace and loyalty. The Empire expected from the applicant state political, economic and financial interests in return for the privileges it conceded, such as political alliance, access to scarce goods and raw materials, and collection of customs revenue. The provisions of the contract conceding the privileges overrode, in cases of conflict, the laws and regulations having only local application.



the right to take their legal complaints to the courts of their embassies and be judged in accordance with their own laws. Capitulations also granted economic privileges and gave the foreign states the right to interfere in the affairs of their coreligionists residing in the Empire, and finally ended up in controlling even its domestic trade.

Russia's ultimate aim was to have access to the Mediterranean. Her apparent concern in the well-being of the Christian Ottomans, especially the Orthodox, was in fact directed to arousing their nationalism and separatist interests and thereby dismembering the Empire which stood between Tsarist Russia and the Mediterranean. England possessed a vast colonial empire and was keen on safeguarding the routes of communication to India and to expand an

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Granting of such privileges led to the creation of separate communities officially recognized as *millet*. Groups of foreign merchants resident in an Ottoman city or port would select an individual, commonly known as consul, to represent them in their dealings with the authorities. The consul supervised the affairs of his *millet*; he registered the imported goods, collected the appropriate dues, authorized the departure of ships, and had judicial authority over its members in accordance with his home country's laws and customs. The consul and his servants were immune from interference in their residences, on the road, and in their place of stay overnight. His personal goods were exempt from customs duties.

The first Ottoman capitulations were granted to Genoa in 1352. Numerous others followed during the course of centuries that gradually became instruments of political subordination until they were abolished in 1923 with the Treaty of Lausanne.

Capitulations and their effectiveness varied with political relations. By 1604 the French were granted the protection of Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem and of monks dwelling there. This led to the subsequent French claims to protect all Catholics in the Empire. By 1683 new privileges began to be granted for political assistance. Austria obtained full capitulations in 1718 after the Treaty of Pasarofça (Passarowitz) which were renewed in 1747. Ships were allowed to navigate freely on the Danube but not to enter the Black Sea; consulates could be established wherever desired. By 1774 with the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca the Porte recognized Russia's rights to freedom of navigation in Ottoman waters, including the Black Sea, the Danube, and the Straits. This was to be perhaps the most political of capitulations. For one, since the privileges were granted as a result of a treaty, their unilateral character stemming from an imperial edict was negated. Secondly, the establishment of consulates in sensitive areas like Walachia and Moldavia led to tension. The Porte's capitulatory agreements with Western powers acquired a new character, since they reacted strongly to the opening of the Black Sea to Russian ships.

Europeans exploited the privileges and brought the Empire to a position of economic and political subordination. Previously the Ottoman Empire was powerful enough to prevent abuses; but now the European states were using pressure towards the weakened Ottoman state to maintain and extend the concessions. The abuse consisted of extending the capitulatory rights to the resident subjects of the Porte. By bribing foreign ambassadors and consuls they succeeded in winning privileges for themselves and being appointed as dragomans. The capitulations had given the ambassadors and the consuls the right to employ a certain number of dragomans who now became exempt from the poll tax and other taxes, including their sons and servants. The western nations also obtained various diplomatic immunities for their dragomans. Moreover, they could also extend the privileges to persons who were not their own nationals, so that an Ottoman subject, through the intermediary of a compliant ambassador or consul, could enjoy the privileges accorded to foreigners. Shortly thereafter Muslim merchants trading with India and Persia were also granted the same privileges.

Through the capitulations the European Powers extended their fields of activity and privileges. Important public services, such as shipping and utilities, came to be in the hands of privileged European companies protected by the threat of military and political pressure. This caused public opinion to turn violently hostile to the capitulations. By the outbreak of World War I the Allies had made no promise to abolish them. In 1914 the Sultan proclaimed the abolition of all existing foreign privileges. The capitulatory states protested. The Treaty of Sèvres restored them and the privileges were extended to the other victorious allies. But with the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) the Allies were obliged to accept their complete elimination (see Inalcık).



unobstructed commerce in the Mediterranean. She was seeking access to raw material sources and markets for the finished products of her revolutionizing industry. The preservation of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire suited her purposes well. France was competing with England in the Mediterranean too and was not keen on seeing her trade restricted. She too favored the preservation of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Austria's population was just as multi-ethnic as that of the Ottoman Empire; its empire was also in a declining state. It favored the proposed reorganization of the Empire, but preferred the reform of its domestic institutions and not the movement towards westernization.

The *Hatt-ı Hümayun* of 1839 was designed by Ottoman statesmen with no primary political considerations, though to gain the assurance and trust of the West did play a fundamental role in enumerating its guidelines. In contrast, the Edict of 1856 embodied political considerations on both the Empire's part and that of the European Powers. It also reflected genuine interest in the fundamentals of reform. Âli Paşa firmly believed in individual rights, equality of individuals before the law irrespective of race and religion, and equal access to opportunities. He was of the opinion that elimination of discrimination would unify the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects and eradicate the conflicts between the two; that education along western principles was a must; that the country could not wait for its revitalization until the Muslims reached the same education level as the non-Muslims, hence public opportunities had to be opened to the latter; and that justice should be rendered in equal manner to all. He maintained that the Empire's survival depended as much on sound finances and education as it did on military strength. He saw no contradiction between the adoption of western institutions and Muslim objectives. Equality before the law, reform in education and justice, and westernization were the pillars of his position on reform.

Despite Âli Paşa's persistent efforts to ward them off, the European Powers did not cease to interfere in Ottoman affairs. Article 9 of the Paris Treaty, using reform as a pretext, gave them this opportunity, which not only hampered the reform and rendered it ineffectual, but also on several occasions led to territorial diminution. Âli Paşa resented greatly such interference, though he had to accede to it, since the Empire economically, politically, and militarily was in no position to counter the demands they made in the name of "humanity". In great many instances he sided with France, was critical of British policy, and thereby attracted the hostility of Lord Stratford, the British ambassador to the Porte. In one of his letters he wrote of the ambassador:

... In every matter and everywhere, he exceeds his authority by openly declaring himself to be the guardian and trustee of the central government and even makes decisions relating to the appointment of consuls in the



provinces. Any governor who opposes his wishes can consider himself ruined. The ministers who form the Council of State do not fare any better. It is not the Sultan that appoints or dismisses his ministers... Foreign affairs, domestic affairs, office of the Greek patriarch are all under his control...

Such interference was to apply to him personally: on November 1, 1856, seven months after the Paris Treaty, the British ambassador, who found Âli Paşa too much of a francophile, put pressure upon the Sultan for his dismissal; and Âli Paşa resigned as grand vezir.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, throughout his entire life he tried to make the best of the effects of such interference for the preservation of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire and to use them in the public good of the country.<sup>24</sup> The Edict of 1856 was in fact the product of collaborative negotiations between him and the ambassadors of France and England.

#### EMERGING NATIONALIST TENDENCIES

##### Moldavia and Walachia

During the brief period when he served as foreign minister, Âli Paşa's time was consumed with the issues of the principalities of Moldavia and Walachia which, all but in name, were going to cause a territorial loss for the Ottoman Empire. Another part of the Paris Treaty was again to be chipped away by the Powers who respected the territorial integrity of the Empire only by their words, not by their deeds.

Nationalist tendencies in Moldavia and Walachia had begun in the cultural and educational arena and accelerated subsequently due to foreign influences. Among such influences were the ideas disseminated by the French revolution of 1848 and the articles of the Paris Treaty which had recognized their internal autonomy and given the European Powers the ultimate say in decisions taken by

<sup>23</sup>Until 1853 it was not customary for the ambassadors of foreign countries to have an audience with the Ottoman Sultan on political issues. This custom changed on the eve of and during the Crimean War when Sultan Abdülmecid began to grant audiences to foreign diplomats. The day and hour of the audience were decided by the Porte. The only exception was Lord Stratford, the British ambassador, who could announce his visit as early as one day in advance and be received at the palace at the time he designated. He had become so influential that among the foreign diplomats he was known as the "Sultan without the Crown."

The Empire's alliance with France and England during the Crimean War launched the advisory role of their ambassadors while creating great rivalry between the two. The Sultan appointed the grand vezir according to which country had the greater pressure on him. When, on the eve of the Crimean War, the *medrese* students revolted against the grand vezir Mustafa Reşit Paşa, who supported British policy, Lord Stratford requested an audience with Abdülmecid and advised him to crush the revolt immediately.

<sup>24</sup>He deprecated the principle of secession as vicious to all governments, as he so stated to the American *chargé d'affaires* soon after the American Civil War started.



these provinces and the right to interfere whenever disturbances were to arise. The provinces had thus become merely tributary vassal states of the Empire. The competing self interests of the European Powers were to finally seal the unification of the two.

France, since the access of Napoléon III to the throne, reversed her position vis-à-vis the Ottoman Empire and became anti-Muslim and anti-Orthodox, hence anti-Ottoman Empire and anti-Russia. In fact the French foreign policy changed its tune and began to favor the dismemberment of the Empire. It also aimed at weakening the Austria-Hungarian Empire and preventing Russia from extending her sphere of influence into the West. Hence it favored the unification of Moldavia and Walachia as a single buffer state. England was striving to maintain a balance in Europe for her own national defense, and hence advocated the integrity of the Ottoman Empire and opposed the unification and independence of the provinces. Multi-ethnic Austria feared the consequences of an independent unified Moldavia and Walachia for its own empire, and hence opposed emerging nationalist tendencies and unification. Russia's political interests conflicted with those of England in Asia and with those of Austria in the Balkans; hence she favored unification. The Ottoman point of view was that a buffer state protected by European nations would be an advantage against Russia and would help pay the Empire's war debts by extracting a fixed tribute out of the deal. Yet there was fear that such an event could lead to similar developments in other provinces, such as Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro joining Serbia, and Thessaly and Epirus joining Greece. Although Moldavia and Walachia were merely tributary provinces and although the only sovereignty right the Ottoman Empire had exercised over them since 1830 was the tribute collected annually, the Porte in general did fear the spreading of separatist tendencies to other provinces, and hence was against unification.

In the 1855 Congress of Vienna the Ottoman delegate Âli Paşa had stated that he was not attending the Congress to discuss the dismemberment of the Empire and objected fiercely to the proposal to unify the two provinces. Hence, the compromising articles of the Paris Treaty, and hence the subsequent conflicts among its signatories that finally succeeded in the de facto unification under Ottoman sovereignty in 1861, a constitution agreed upon in 1864 in the Istanbul meeting presided by Âli Paşa, that guaranteed freedom in internal affairs, and the establishment in 1866 of the dynasty of Prince Charles of Hohenzollern who informed the grand vezir Fuat Paşa of his loyalty to the Sultan and his acceptance of the Porte's sovereignty rights over Romania. Throughout his negotiations with Prince Charles, Âli Paşa emphasized time and time again that the principalities were an integral part of the Empire, a principle to which he clung all his life. Nevertheless, the seeds of Romania's subsequent independence had already been sown.



### Montenegro

Âli Paşa argued equally strongly the case of the territorial integrity of the Empire when the status of Montenegro was discussed in the Paris Congress: Montenegro was an integral part of the Ottoman Empire and no consideration could be given to its being otherwise. In an attempt to block the Russian protection of Serbs, the Treaty had ratified Serbia's forming an integral part of the Ottoman Empire and the Powers' responsibility not to engage in any military interference. Yet the independence of Greece in 1830 and the extension of rights and privileges to Moldavia and Walachia constantly instigated movements towards independence and union with Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro in order to form a Great Serbia. In the war that ensued in 1858, Ottoman forces succeeded in defeating the rebels at the expense of great human losses. In a note to the ambassadors of the five European states Âli Paşa complained bitterly about the atrocities committed by Montenegrin forces and the total absence of the mention of such atrocities in the European press. The Porte, cognizant of the injustices resulting from a deficient administration, sent two inspectors to hear the claims of the rebels and take measures accordingly. This action led to intensive intervention by European Powers. The Porte countered that such intervention was inciting the population to further revolt and impeding the Empire's efforts to establish peace and harmony in its provinces. Nevertheless, the Porte had no choice but to accede to such intervention. The result was the December 1858 Conference of Istanbul presided by Âli Paşa where he was forced to cede certain territories to Montenegro. Resistance to Ottoman rule did not end, however. Skirmishes continued between Ottoman forces and the rebels. By 1862 the Empire had to evacuate two fortresses and was left with only the fortress of Belgrade. This last hold was not to last very long either. The Porte's offer, negotiated by Âli Paşa, to evacuate the fortress was put into effect in March 1867.

### ABDÜLAZİZ SUCCEEDS TO THE THRONE

Abdülmeçit died in 1861 after a reign of 22 years. Abdülaziz succeeded to the throne and appointed Âli Paşa grand vezir. The new Sultan was of a totally different character from his predecessor. He enjoyed sports, especially wrestling, was exuberant, gargantuan, free spender, but most important of all he wanted to rule absolutely. Âli Paşa was going to exercise all his power to establish firmly the rule of law and to limit, at the extent possible, the Sultan's autocracy. Abdülaziz had no sympathy for Âli Paşa, but he was not going to be able to do without him. He expressed his displeasure by dismissing him two months later in November 1861 and appointing Fuad Paşa as grand vezir. But not being able to run the government without Âli Paşa the Sultan gave him the portfolio of the foreign ministry which he held until February 1867 when he assumed the grand



vezirate once again, for the fifth and last time in his career. He remained grand vezir until his death in September 1871.

During the reign of Abdülaziz three major crises occurred which acquired international dimensions and provoked the intervention of European Powers into Ottoman affairs. Âli Paşa dedicated his time and attention once again to forestalling the complaints and interventions of European Powers. Yet, he was also absorbed in the internal reform of the Empire and its execution in line with the dictates of the 1839 and 1856 Edicts. Assisted by his lifelong friend and colleague Fuad Paşa, he continued to reform the Government, to improve education and the administration of justice, meet financial crises, and take measures for the economic recovery of the country. It is lamentable, however, that many of the reforms initiated in his time were never carried through to their logical conclusion after his death. Nor did his successors follow up on his ideas and, if they had read it at all, heed the contents of his Testament. Âli Paşa's death in fact signalled that the last of the Ottoman grandees was no more.

#### MORE NATIONALIST TENDENCIES

##### Crete

His major concern upon assuming the grand vezirate in 1867 was the Crete problem; and its solution was one of his greatest achievements in foreign policy combined with restructuring the internal administration of the Empire. The Edict of 1856 had made no substantial changes in the status of Crete as a province. But Greece, which had won its independence from the Empire earlier on, began to provoke the island's Christian inhabitants who were not indifferent to changes that had brought autonomy to the Empire's other provinces. They were demanding reduction in taxes, improvements in their administration and in the justice system, guarantee of individual freedom, and the construction of roads, bridges, schools, and hospitals. The Porte rejected the demands relating to justice and taxation and promised to look into the other issues. The rebellion against the Empire finally broke out on August 23, 1866. Russia was supportive of the rebels. At the time, France was aiming to annex Belgium, and Italy and Prussia were engaged in their own unification; hence they advocated that Crete be unified with Greece. England preferred the integrity of the Ottoman Empire over a greater Greece for fear she might form an alliance with Russia, and hence sided with the Ottoman Empire who moved to crush the rebellion while attempting to justify her move to the European states via diplomatic channels. The Porte, i.e., Âli Paşa, was of the opinion that the reorganization of the administrative structure of the island would appease the rebels and also prevent the potential interference of European Powers.



Âli Paşa left for Crete on October 2, 1867. He asked the island's population to take note of the Sultan's benevolence in recognizing individual rights, to put an end to their ruinous skirmishes, and not to heed the foreign instigation that was causing the conflict. He invited Muslim and Christian notables from all the local communities to meet with him in fifteen days. He designed the new administrative structure along the principles adumbrated in the Edict of 1856, made it public, and set it in place. Fair and balanced representation of Muslims and Christians was the fundamental guideline for all administrative and judicial changes.

The rebels rejected the proposed reorganization. Keen on joining Greece, they demanded that the European Powers inspect the island and a plebiscite be held under their supervision. The Council of Ministers favored to appease the Powers by diplomatic means in order to prevent their intervention. Âli disagreed. He argued that an inspection and a plebiscite would be extremely difficult to carry out, since most of the houses and churches had been ruined by the armed conflict of the past two years and that people were living under very poor circumstances. Hence an inspection could only lead to a decision in favor of unification with Greece. Moreover, two-thirds of the island's population was de facto ruled by bandits, and a plebiscite would reveal nothing less than preference for unification with Greece. This would put the nations that were willing to assist the Empire in negotiating into a difficult position. For, if they were to side with the Empire, they would be acting against the generally accepted principle of nationalism; and if they were to take a stand against the Empire they would be breaking their promise to the Ottoman state. Past history had revealed that they would not opt for the second alternative. These powerful arguments by Âli Paşa against inspection and plebiscite convinced the Porte to categorically reject the rebels' demands.

At the same time that he was setting up the new administrative structure on the island Âli Paşa also had small forces engaged in movements against the bandits. He knew full well that it would be impossible to engage in a widespread guerrilla warfare on a mountainous island like Crete. He declared a general amnesty, made public the new organic statute which recognized a certain degree of autonomy, thereby quelled the rebellion sufficiently, and succeeded in preventing the foreign powers' effective intervention in the matter. He returned to Istanbul in February 1868, sent an 8-day ultimatum to Greece to stop interfering in Crete. At the end of the eighth day the Ottoman fleet blockaded the Greek coast and brought the rebellion to an end. The January 1869 Paris Conference debated the ultimatum and Greece's response to it and informed Greece that the Ottoman state was perfectly justified in its actions. Thereby the last page of the conflict between Greece and the Ottoman Empire was turned. Âli Paşa's organic statute of 1867 was to govern the island for the next thirty years.



Despite the successful quelling of the rebellion, the Ottoman public opinion, especially the Young Ottomans, were very critical of the state of affairs. They complained that now everybody knew how militarily weak the Empire was, that it had lost respect, that lives were lost unnecessarily, that large sums of money were wasted, and that the non-Muslim population was given uncalled for expectations and liberties to the dismay of the Muslim population. And since the Sultan could not be criticized openly, all public criticism was directed against Âli Paşa.

### Egypt

The second major internal issue which could have easily exploded as an international one was the problem of Egypt. Being a proud Ottoman and a zealous defender of the territorial integrity of the Empire, Âli Paşa also had to deal with the Khedive İsmail Paşa of Egypt. Egypt had been a thorny problem within the Empire for a long time. It was a province until 1841 when an imperial edict, guaranteed by Austria, Russia, Prussia, France and England — powers that had helped quell the crisis — changed Egypt's status to a semi-autonomous unit and established the dynasty of Mehmet Ali Paşa. The edict thus acquired an international aspect. Citizenship, capitulations, defense, and laws were common; but Egypt had the freedom to enter into international agreements on economic matters, negotiate foreign loans, raise revenue, and determine its spending in exchange for an annually fixed sum of taxes to be paid to the Empire. The intervention of the European Powers heightened thereafter with their demands to augment the privileges granted under the capitulations, the confrontations between France, England, and the Ottoman Empire in opening the Suez canal for which the Empire had granted the permit on March 19, 1866, and Egypt's negotiation of foreign loans.

The Khedive İsmail Paşa began to take measures to increase the autonomy of Egypt and its sphere of influence. His efforts to make Crete a province of Egypt had fallen on deaf ears. He withdrew his military forces from the island and made a handsome contribution to the queen of Greece in aid of the wounded Crete rebels. He then began to push for a substantial increase in Egypt's military strength and for political representation in foreign countries. He visited France and England, where he was welcomed with great pomp, and invited personally the European royalty to the opening of the Suez canal on August 5, 1869. Angered by the Khedive's actions, Âli Paşa sent a reprimanding letter warning the Khedive that he had gone far beyond his prerogatives; that Egypt was a territory of the Ottoman Empire, hence only the Sultan could issue invitations to the sovereigns of foreign countries; that the Khedive was an official of the Empire and hence had to be accompanied by Ottoman ambassadors on his visits to foreign countries; that Egypt had autonomy only in its internal



administration; and that it was not within the Khedive's prerogatives to enter into new foreign treaties and/or revise existing ones. He accompanied his letter with another to all the Ottoman ambassadors in foreign countries requesting that they clarify to the governments they are accredited to Egypt's status within the structure of the Empire. Not being satisfied with the Khedive's response to his letter, he wrote back instructing him not to increase Egypt's military forces, to forgo the ordering of warships, to inform the Porte of Egypt's budget, not to make any foreign loans unless specifically granted to do so by the Porte, and threatened him with dismissal if he did not heed the instructions. The foreign powers did not consider it appropriate to interfere and the Khedive acceded. The death of Âli Paşa in September 1871 was to change the course of events and thereafter the Khedive was going to succeed, basically through intrigue and bribery, in satisfying his ambitions.

#### RUSSIA AND THE BLACK SEA

The third crisis was the issue of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea. The power balance that the Paris Treaty had wrought and that was maintained at the expense of the Ottoman Empire was not to last very long. The Treaty had given France an influential role in European politics. But her war against Austria in 1859, her defense of the Polish rebels against Russia in 1863, her neutrality in Prussia's conflict with Denmark regarding Schleswig-Holstein in 1864-65 and with Austria in 1866, her defeat in the 1870-71 Franco-Prussian war followed by the demise of her imperial regime and the establishment of the Republic, and finally the German and Italian unification altered the balance completely. Russia was to take advantage of the situation and demand the repeal of the Treaty's Articles 11, 12, and 13 that limited her fleet's movements in the Black Sea. When Napoleon III ceded the victory to Prussia in Sedan, the Russian chancellor Prince Alexander Mikhailovich Gorchakov sent his famous memorandum in November of the same year to the signatories of the Treaty. However, even before the memorandum was delivered to the interested parties, the Russian ambassador to Istanbul had already had a private audience with Âli Paşa where he stated that Russia bore no enmity against the Empire, but that the Treaty had injured his country's honor, which if it were to explode could destroy the entire Treaty. He urged the Porte to consider the view that the repeal of the articles would be in fact in the Empire's interest.

Âli Paşa realized the changes that France's defeat in 1871 had brought into the international arena. The European balance of power was critical for the survival of the Empire and the Franco-Prussian conflict, Italy's unification, and Russia's economic recovery had forged changes in this balance. Hence he did not fully reject the ambassador's stand, rather favored the reopening of a debate of the said articles. He also was aware that in the event of their repeal the sole aim of a



Russian fleet in the Black Sea would be to threaten the Empire. Yet, the presence of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea could favor the Empire in that other foreign powers would think twice before undertaking any attempt to control the Straits. To build warships was in the interest of Russia, but he was not going to accept free passage through the Straits, for this would have meant that the Porte would lose total freedom of movement and become a pawn of the Great Powers.

That he was the signatory of the Treaty to whom the memorandum was delivered last, despite the fact that the Empire was at the center of it all, saddened him. Upon its delivery he said to the Russian envoy: "So, you are declaring war on us." He remarked that he could not respond to the memorandum immediately, since its contents concerned other countries as well. He was, however, pleased that it contained no reference to free passage through the Straits.

The Porte informed Russia that it considered the memorandum a violation of the Paris Treaty. Although England did the same, Âli Paşa was convinced that in case of a war with Russia other European powers would not come to the defense of the Empire. Hence, he left the door open for debate. If the Russian demands were to be accepted, then Russia had to grant certain concessions. Russia accepted a conference in London. It met in January 1871 and revised the articles to allow the merchant marine of all nations in the Black Sea. The Straits were closed to all foreign powers and the Sultan had the prerogative to allow free passage to allied warships only during times of peace.

Âli Paşa was basically a francophile, and he sided more with France than with England in foreign policy. He was saddened by the anti-Turkish stance and sentiment of Napoléon III and of the French public opinion.<sup>25</sup> When he was appointed grand vezir after Mustafa Reşit Paşa's death in 1858 he put his distress in words in a letter to the French ambassador Thouvenel where he expressed in very strong terms his concern in seeing a great emperor pursue a policy that distorts the French view of the Empire and turns the French press and the Empire's Christian subjects against the state; complained bitterly that an unjustified and misinformed press was publishing defamatory material on the Porte and a Muslim nation, inciting hatred and friction among the population and insulting the country's religion; and accused France of resorting to methods used in the era of the Crusades.

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<sup>25</sup>During his conference with queen Victoria of England on the Isle of Wight, Napoléon III is said to have told her that Turks were barbarians, that they should be expelled from Europe, and proposed the partition of the Ottoman Empire among the European Powers.



## THE FISCAL CRISIS

In addition to the potentially explosive domestic situation that carried international consequences, Âli Paşa, as grand vezir and head of his country's Government, also had to grapple with crucial and critical financial and economic problems. Almost all by himself, with the exception of the support of his foreign minister Fuad Paşa, he had to solve the financial crises that the Empire faced and that had become more or less perennial problems. The Ottoman debt, debasement of the currency, the economic recovery and progress of the country, the development of agriculture, building of roads and railroads, and the issue of capitulations all needed immediate attention and solution. An accomplished diplomat and administrator had to become a financial and economic wizard as well.

When confronted with the serious fiscal crisis of 1850, the grand vezir Mustafa Reşit Paşa had recognized that a fiscal reform, however quickly implemented, would not resolve the shortage of revenue. He, therefore, had recommended borrowing from abroad. A French and a British bank were approached and a loan was negotiated for 55 million francs. The loan had to be approved by the Sultan before the securities could be marketed. Yet, a fait accompli was made, and the securities were issued prior to the Sultan's approval. Âli Paşa had argued strongly in favor of the loan. However, upon pressure by the opponents to the loan, the Sultan canceled the contract and even threatened to abdicate if it were not done so.<sup>26</sup> The inability to draw up a proper budget and strike a balance between revenues and expenditures, and the colossal expenditures generated by the Crimean War that followed shortly thereafter had obliged the Ottoman Empire to contract its first foreign loan in 1854. This was to be followed by several others in subsequent years.

Abdülaziz faced an acute financial crisis when he succeeded to the throne in 1861. The origin of the financial crisis was obvious: imbalance between revenues and expenditures and the lack of confidence in the Government's ability to repay its debt. This was aggravated by a trade deficit and backward conditions in agriculture, industry, means of communication and transport. The Crimean War had imposed a heavy financial burden. This was exacerbated by the cost of military campaigns in the provinces. Abdülmecit's lavish palace expenses were only a small portion of the total, and Abdülaziz's promise to cut down his harem was merely a drop in the bucket. Corruption and graft in tax farming were eroding treasury receipts; arable land, legally or illegally, had become largely tax exempt *vakıf* property;<sup>27</sup> and *evkaf*, the administration of the *vakıf* properties,

<sup>26</sup>The cost of this action to the Ottoman treasury was approximately 5 million francs.

<sup>27</sup>An old Islamic institution dedicating land and other revenue producing property to pious purposes.



itself was a drain on the Treasury. Customs revenue was low; under the provisions of the capitulation agreements the import tariff was set by the European nations and could not be raised unilaterally by the Porte. Domestic industry was discouraged by an export duty and an internal tariff on the transportation of goods from place to place within the Empire. The crisis reached such proportions that the value of the *kaim*e fell drastically in December 1861, people refused to accept it, and mobs sacked businesses.

The first task of Fuad Paşa as grand vezir in 1861 was to deal vigorously with the financial crisis of panic proportions that he faced. Three measures were taken to face the deficitary situation; these brought the situation under temporary control. One was to print unnumbered *kaim*e (so that the amount issued would not be revealed) and issue other interest bearing papers. The second was to borrow short-term from the local banks. And the third was to borrow from Europe. All three measures proved ruinous: the *kaim*e was issued in very large quantities and was easily counterfeited; interest rates at the Galata exchange were steep. With the service on European loans added on, funds were insufficient to pay for government services.

Hence, Fuad Paşa's plan to withdraw the *kaim*e from circulation,<sup>28</sup> cut expenses, and raise revenue. A permanent finance council was set up with the participation of members from Austria, France, and England. Some loans that fell due were converted. The financial establishments and a loan was negotiated to retire the *kaim*e.<sup>29</sup> Certain expenses were reduced; some salaries were downsized. The import tariff was raised and the export duty was to be reduced gradually. Indirect taxes were levied on items like tobacco and salt. Stamp taxes were introduced. And the revenue from these taxes were earmarked to service the foreign debt. The credit of the Empire was saved and confidence restored for the moment. However, underlying problems, which were of long-term nature, were not solved, and difficulties were to plague the Empire in the years to follow in working out a rational financial system.

## THE CAPITULATIONS

Âli Paşa had strong views on capitulations. He opposed them adamantly for hindering the normal functioning of the institutions and the Empire's

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<sup>28</sup>One *kaim*e of 100 *kuruş* was exchanged with a piece of gold worth 40 *kuruş* and bonds.

<sup>29</sup>It is interesting to note that through her ambassador the queen of England had let it be known to Abdülaziz that to borrow from abroad to meet the budget deficit would be equivalent to trying to fill a bucket with a hole. The most important thing was to reduce spending, put an order into the finances, and prepare a budget. Only then would one gain the confidence of European investors and raise the creditability of the Empire.



progress. Hence, the 1856 Edict eliminated the distinction between foreign and Ottoman subjects regarding ownership of property, but stipulated at the same time that foreigners could own property in the Empire, provided they paid the same taxes and duties and were governed by the same laws and regulations as any Ottoman subject. This rule, however, was not being practiced, and foreign citizens were acquiring properties in devious ways. Âli Paşa recognized the benefits ownership, use, and exploitation of property by foreigners would, in principle, bring to the country. It would increase foreign investment and expand relations between Turkey and Europe. But he was averse to granting such rights without first revising the capitulations, for economic circumstances had changed both in Europe and in the Empire since the first granting of privileges to foreign subjects. So long as foreign subjects continued to be governed by their own countries' laws and judged by their countries' officials, their ownership of property in Ottoman territory could not be justified. In fact, in the Congress of Paris he had argued that they were giving greater privileges and rights to foreigners and were preventing the execution of justice in the country; and he had proposed their annulment.

In 1862 the signatories to the Paris Treaty requested the discussion of this issue. This led to the Edict of 1867 which reiterated and reinforced the text of the 1856 *Hatt-ı Hümayun* and granted permission to foreign citizens to own real estate in the Empire, so long as they held it on the same basis as any Ottoman subject, i.e., they were governed by Ottoman laws governing ownership of real estate, conformed to local police regulations, submitted to Turkish civil courts, and paid the usual taxes. A protocol accepting this new dispensation was signed by France in 1868 and soon thereafter by the other European Powers. In its last paragraph the protocol recognized the Porte's right to revise the old capitulation treaties.

The aim was to extend to the foreigners the same legal status as Ottoman subjects wherever possible. The press law of 1865 had already recognized them the freedom to publish periodicals in the Empire provided they accepted the jurisdiction of Ottoman officials and courts. Then came the 1869 law of nationality which was another attack on the capitulations. The law did away with the criterion of conversion to Islam as a condition to nationality. It also stated that all persons domiciled in the Ottoman territory were to be considered Ottoman subjects unless they could prove the contrary and that no Ottoman subject could become a citizen of another state without the preliminary consent of the Porte. There followed a commission to inquire into the status of Ottoman subjects who also claimed foreign nationality or protection, and two other commissions for more stringent passport control for both Ottoman and foreign citizens. Âli Paşa's purpose in all this was not to launch a direct attack on capitulations, which was then an impossibility, but to do away with the privileges one by one. Indeed, no massive change in the capitulations occurred



given the strong opposition of the European Powers; a policy of piecemeal change was pursued.

## THE REFORMS

Âli Paşa believed unequivocally that unless the Government itself was subjected to a thorough reform, the educational system overhauled, and the legal system made to respond to the emerging needs of the time, the mere solution of crises in a palliative manner was only going to breed further crises. In a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society, institutions and organizations needed radical change. He could tackle only two or three of them; he had to leave the rest to his successors, as is clearly noted in his Testament.

### Public Administration

The trend towards decentralization of administrative authority continued with the regulations of 1858 that made the governor the local representative of all competent offices of the central government. With the 1861 Ordinance of Lebanon, that he put in place at the end of the armed dissension between the Druses and Maronites, Âli Paşa increased the representation of non-Muslims in provincial governments; in fact, he put a Christian, chosen by and responsible to the Sublime Porte, at the head of the administration of this province. The *Vilâyet* Law of 1864 was the embodiment of the guidelines adumbrated in the Edicts of 1839 and 1856 that had not been fully implemented by then. It was drafted by the grand vezir Fuad Paşa and Mithat Paşa, governor of the province of Nish. It regulated the provincial administration along lines that were to remain effective to the end of the Empire and beyond.

The law represented a mixture of centralization and decentralization. It revised the hierarchy of provinces and their subdivisions. It combined central control with local authority by having the lowest officials selected popularly with all the other channels leading directly to the Sublime Porte. It extended the representative principle to all administrative councils at the top three levels of the hierarchy. It set up a *Meclis-i Umumî* (General Assembly) for each *vilâyet* to advise the governor on matters of public works, taxes, police, agriculture, and commerce. The objective was, as Âli Paşa stated, to increase the people's participation in public affairs and reduce the authoritative control of the Central Government. The governors' powers were widened over police, political affairs, financial affairs, judicial matters, and the execution of laws. The law was implemented in Rumeli. In 1867 Âli Paşa extended its application to all the provinces of the Empire. All his views on administrative reform are incorporated in Crete's organic statute which he drafted the same year. The statute is a living



portrayal of his opinions on how to administer justly a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society and how to resolve conflicts. He was to attain the height of his political career the same year when he was appointed regent during Abdülaziz's forty-four day visit to Europe, the first and only time an Ottoman subject was so appointed.<sup>30</sup>

### Individual Rights

Âli Paşa firmly believed that the fundamental responsibility of the state was to guarantee the rights of the individuals and oversee that these were exercised properly. In his opinion every individual should be free in the practice of his religion, should have equal access to opportunities, should have the right to advance in society according to his abilities, and should be able to participate in his society's affairs through a voting process. He was fully aware of the unequal treatment of Muslims vis-à-vis non-Muslims, the former being favored in some respects and the latter in others. He recognized that even the not so well-to-do non-Muslims were sending their children to Europe for their education and that this was giving them an advantage. But they were unable to utilize this advantage fully, since they were practically totally barred from employment in the Government. He noted that very few non-Muslims were in public offices and in higher ranks, yet they were contributing almost three-fourths of state revenue. To end foreign interference was conceptually simple: eliminate all factors that generate inequality among the segments of population, provide the same facilities to all within the Empire, hence obviate the wish for foreign protection and foreign citizenship. This would fuse the Ottoman subjects, protect the Empire against emerging nationalist sentiments, and maintain its integrity. A non-Muslim, just as much as a Muslim, should feel that he was an Ottoman, look upon the Empire as his own, and call it "My Empire." His opponents granted that the employment of educated non-Muslims in the Government would improve the administrative efficiency, but argued that it would close employment opportunities to Muslims who were not being educated properly and thereby lead to further discontent. His response was that to carry out the functions of the Government with uneducated Muslims was an impossible task, in any case.

### Education

As part of his overall view on equality of individuals and his strategy to preserve the integrity of the Empire, he criticized the futility of theological teachings for the economic, social, technical, and military advancement of the

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<sup>30</sup>This is stated only by Davison (1963).



Empire and urged the establishment of proper institutions for education in appropriate sciences and arts. The absence of such schooling would destine the Empire to its ruin and, in his own words, "even the highest and strongest Chinese walls could not protect it from that fate." He did not believe, as some people did, that the Empire could be revitalized by educating only the Muslims and continuing on the currently existing course until such time when the educated Muslims came to occupy government posts and increased its efficiency. The educational base needed to be broadened by establishing a greater number of schools, the calibre of instruction raised to that of the level of the non-Muslim *millet* schools and closer to the European ones. Hence, more state schools had to be created outside the control of the *ulema*, and these had to have improved curricula and be staffed with higher quality teachers. Also mixed schools for Muslims and non-Muslims would be necessary if the distinction between *millets* were to be obliterated. His 1867 memorandum from Crete made these points quite clearly and strongly. His views on education were complementary to his desire to increase the employment of educated non-Muslims in the Government, which he thought was essential to improve the administration and establish harmony among the population so that foreign interference could be forestalled and the integrity of the Empire preserved.

He participated actively in the reform of the education system. He was a member of the 1845 Ad Hoc Committee that designed the education system from elementary grades up to university. He served on the *Meclis-i Maarif-i Umumiye* (Council on Public Education) when it was set up in 1846. The *Mekteb-i Mülkiye* (School of Public Administration) was set up in 1859 when he was the President of the Tanzimat Council. The objective was to absorb its graduates into the local government and offer refresher courses to provincial officials. Together with Fuad Paşa he worked out in 1867 a plan for the establishment of the Imperial Ottoman Lycée at Galatasaray for boys of all creeds. Its design was borrowed from western schools, with European curriculum and French as the principal language of instruction. The Sultan's 1868 *ferman* led to its materialization. In 1869 the Council of State, in collaboration with the Minister of Education, issued the law to reorganize the state school system that integrated its parts from elementary grades all the way to the university level introducing into it a strong element of *Osmanlılık*. It was difficult to copy western institutions and work with few western-trained teachers. Nevertheless, progress was made: the state had assumed responsibility, modernization was adopted officially, and at least some schools began to improve.

Along similar lines he participated in the movement to simplify the language, make the government documents, literary and scientific works understandable to the people and thereby establish closer contact with them. Such a movement had begun before the Tanzimat era, but strengthened with the Edicts of 1839 and 1856 that aimed at eliminating the differences between the



minorities and fortifying common values among them. The Muslim clerics, whose working language was Arabic, opposed the movement. But such groups were already conversing among themselves and with the Muslim segment of the population in simple Turkish, and the movement gave one more reason to establish separate educational institutions parallel to *medreses* (theological schools).

### Law and Justice

Âli Paşa carried the legal reform further along the lines laid down by his predecessors. The penal and commercial laws and the procedural law for mixed tribunals were codified borrowing from western secular laws. The land code was introduced in 1858. The general intention was to invalidate the earlier agrarian relationships and to extend and confirm progressively the rights of use, possession, and ownership. Forms of land tenure were regularized, the size of the holdings was limited, and titles were registered to make the owners responsible for pertinent taxes in order to prevent the illegal conversion of state-owned land into *mülk* (freehold property) and then into partially tax exempt *vakıf* property. The new laws were applied haphazardly and abused. A new penal code was also introduced in 1858. The commercial tribunals were reorganized and amalgamated with the mixed courts in 1860, the procedural law was codified in 1861, and the commercial law in 1863 for which the French codes provided the basic models.

The deficient system of administering justice was one of the greatest complaints of foreign powers. During his 1867 engagement in Crete to quell the rebellion Âli Paşa had personally observed the absence of laws that applied equally to all subjects. In the memorandum he sent from the island to the Sultan he recommended, among others, that a foreign civil code be adopted and adapted to the Empire's circumstances, and that cases be tried in mixed tribunals in accordance with this civil code. Upon his return from Crete he tried very hard to convince his colleagues of the need for such a civil code. The Minister of Justice Kabuî Paşa, who had accompanied him to Crete, was of the same opinion and propagated the idea among the ministers. The French ambassador to the Porte supported Âli Paşa in his endeavors and provided him with valuable information on the French civil code. Âli Paşa, convinced that equality before the law and *Osmanlılık* would be promoted best by the adoption of one secular law for all creeds within the Empire, commissioned the translation into Turkish of the Arabic version of the civil code already adopted earlier by Egypt. He was cautious, however. He wanted the civil code to be used in mixed courts for cases between Muslims and non-Muslims. He set up a special committee to single out those provisions that were suitable for implementation in the Empire. Opposition to his efforts was great. He attempted to solve the differences in an ad hoc committee chaired by Cevdet Paşa, the president of the Council of



Judicial Ordinances. The committee preferred to remain within the Islamic tradition and decided to postpone the adoption of the French civil code. Instead it drafted the *Mecelle*.<sup>31</sup> Its first section appeared in 1870; and it was completed in 1876 and remained in force until abrogated by the Turkish Republic in 1926.

The Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinances (which was formed once again in 1861 by fusing the Tanzimat Council with the Supreme Council) was reorganized in 1868. In March 1867 Fuad Paşa had broached the idea of a Council of State of both Christians and Muslims. He and Âli Paşa felt that the wide powers given to the governors under the new *vilâyet* law required some machinery for strengthening contact between the *vilâyets* and the capital and a Council of State might just provide that. On March 5, 1868, less than a week after Âli Paşa's return from Crete, the Supreme Council was replaced with two bodies: the *Şuray-ı Devlet* (Council of State) and the *Divan-ı Ahkâm-ı Adliye* (Judicial Council) which became in effect a supreme court of appeal and cassation. The Judicial Council was to attend only to criminal, commercial, and civil cases that arose under the new law. *Şeriat* (Islamic law) cases or those that fell within the jurisdiction of *millet* courts or mixed tribunals were handled separately. The Council of State was to discuss and draft all projects of law and regulations, to act as an administrative court of appeal, and to give advice whenever the Sultan or the ministers so requested. It was organized essentially on the French model with five sections: police, army and navy; finances and *evkaf*; legislation; public works, commerce, and agriculture; and public instruction. In addition it was to discuss the issues contained in memoranda drawn up by provincial general assemblies and thereby provide a check on the powers of the governors.

The two councils were formally inaugurated by the Sultan on May 10, 1868. In his speech the Sultan condemned arbitrary government and endorsed individual liberty within the proper limits of society's welfare. He declared the separation of executive from judicial, religious, and legislative authority and the significance of good administration for prosperity. During Mithat Paşa's presidency, the Council prepared new measures, including the new nationality law, the reorganization of public education, regulations on mining, banking and credit, and the metric system. After his departure the Council was less active and after Âli Paşa's death it was used as a dumping ground for ministers out of office.

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<sup>31</sup>Codification of Islamic jurisprudence governing obligations and contracts.



## THE PASSING OF A GRANDEE

A fragile and physically small man carried all these burdens during his not too long life. He could do so only up to a point. Overexhaustion, constant worries and delicate balancing of relationships took their toll. He fell ill in 1871. At the end of August he retired to his house in Bebek on the shores of Bosphorus. He died on September 6, 1871, at the age of 56. His grand vezirate of over four and a-half years was the longest since 1839 and the third longest in a century of Ottoman history. What reform was carried out bore his and Fuad Paşa's stamp of a collaboration of ten years and of his last three lonely years at the pinnacle of Ottoman administration.

Not much is known about Âli Paşa's personal life. Historians tell us that his intellectual curiosity equipped him with immense encyclopedic knowledge. Physically he was of small stature; mentally he was a giant. He was serious and meticulous. He would not attend a palace audience unless he was fully briefed in the matter to be discussed. He disliked informality, was attentive to protocol and etiquette. He was self-controlled, knew when to be silent, and could listen to the gravest of news without a flicker of facial expression. He was polite but stubborn and demanded unconditional loyalty from his subordinates. He spoke sparingly, had an alert mind, and wanted quick action. In the words of a Frenchman who visited him in 1864: "He was extremely intelligent and possessed a penetrating look. He wrote and spoke excellent French, spoke it slowly but correctly, always choosing the most appropriate words."

He took all his posts extremely seriously. The insignia of a grand vezir was the seal of the Sultan that was kept in a golden sac attached to a thin chain. The vezir's duties began upon the conferral of this seal and ended when it was taken away. The grand vezirs carried it in their pockets and even slept with them tucked into their night shirts. It is rumored that Âli Paşa would take it even to the baths.

He shared the views of Mustafa Reşit Paşa regarding the affairs of the state. He parted ways with him only with respect to foreign policy where he sided with France while Mustafa Reşit Paşa sided with England. He had an acute perception of his goals and prevailed more often than he failed, for he was able to gear his tactics of gradual adaptation of western institutions to his strategy of putting the Ottoman house in order, all in the interest of preserving the integrity of the Empire and thwarting foreign intervention as much as possible.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Those who criticize Âli Paşa, Fuad Paşa, and Mustafa Reşit Paşa for taking sides with France or Britain will have to keep in mind that both internal and external conditions had made *Bâb-ı Âli* a natural ally of these two powers. Internally the *ulema* and the army, overtly or covertly, and sometimes the palace were taking an anti-reform position. Externally, neither Russia nor Austria wanted the reforms to succeed so that the Empire could be dismembered perhaps more easily. The



His vast general knowledge and his mastery of the rules of diplomacy gained him the awe and respect of foreign diplomats. He could discuss theology with ease with bishops, rabbis and *ulema*. The Austrian delegate to the Paris Treaty is known to have stated that in the Paris Conference no delegate could match his caliber. Napoléon III remarked that he would have considered himself lucky if he had a foreign minister like him. Other prominent European diplomats, like Thiers, used to consult him on important political issues. When asked whether he had consulted other diplomats on the conditions of France's surrender to Prussia in 1871, President Thiers is said to have replied: "I have consulted Âli Paşa." Upon receiving the news of Âli Paşa's death Bismarck stated that Europe had lost her most valuable diplomat and instructed his ambassador in Istanbul to purchase his desk set, whatever the cost, to be placed in the Royal Museum in Berlin. The British ambassador stated that he was the only incorruptible statesman of the Ottoman Empire. For Count Cavour, the prime minister of Sardinia, Âli Paşa was superior to all statesmen who negotiated the Paris Treaty.

He was not praised so highly within his own country. His death caused almost no sorrow in the Empire. His only friend Fuad Paşa had passed away three years earlier. During the last three years of his life he was alone and lonely along the walk he wanted to walk and along the path that he wanted the Empire to follow. Sultan Abdülaziz was finally rid of the only person who dared limit his authority, the sultan who while he was alive could not do without him. He was not fond of Âli Paşa, but was averse to deposing him, since he knew his influence in European circles and his astute capability in diplomacy. It is said that when the Sultan complained: "May God rid me of this man," one minister replied: "Why worry, Sire? Simply dismiss him, that is all!" The Sultan is said to have responded angrily: "Get out of here! Don't I know that? But if I were to dismiss him, who am I going to replace such an internationally renowned person with?" When the ex-*Şeyhülislâm*<sup>33</sup> Hasan Hayrullah Efendi criticized Âli Paşa for not yet having succeeded in restoring peace in Crete, the Sultan is said to have responded: "Without him we will have encountered even greater problems." However, when he received the news of his death he is reputed to have said: "Thank God! I am free at last. Now I will reign as I please."

The traditional elite of the Ottoman bureaucracy was also not saddened by the news of his death; for them Âli Paşa was too advanced, too modern, too radical. Also happy were the Young Ottomans, those who had poised all their attacks and insults and personal ridicules from Paris. For them he was the

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British and French interests hinged upon the maintenance of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, hence on the success of the reforms. *Bâb-ı Âli* — virtually the only defender, of the reforms — and zealous of keeping the Empire intact perceived the interests of France and Britain as converging with those of the Empire (Shaw & Shaw, 69-71).

<sup>33</sup>Title given to the highest religious authority.



obstacle to their ambition of instituting constitutional monarchy. Namık Kemal wrote insulting verses on him and Ziya Paşa wrote a poem the most poisonous line of which is: "Do not bury him, but throw his dirty corpse into the gutter."<sup>34</sup>

Certainly, Âli Paşa and Fuad Paşa were not in disagreement with much of what the Young Ottomans maintained, though they did disagree with the manner in which it was stated. They all were advocating borrowing from the West the means with which to oppose the West. Âli Paşa and Fuad Paşa were doing the same as they continued until the end of their lives in their path of piecemeal reform and westernization, all in the process of strengthening the Empire and preserving its integrity.

Âli Paşa held the highest position of honor in the Empire that no man did: regent while Abdülaziz was touring Europe. At the time of his death the inheritance of this most highly decorated of all Ottoman statesmen consisted of 50,000 gold pieces of debt. His house was confiscated by the Government and given to *Bâb-ı Fetva*. His political documents were donated to the military attaché of a foreign embassy by his son-in-law, the future Minister of War Nâzım Paşa. Nothing materially tangible remained to posterity except his writing set which today is in the museum in Berlin. All that is left from Âli Paşa today is his Political Testament.

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<sup>34</sup>Two prominent Young Ottomans. Namık Kemal (1840-1888) came from a distinguished family. His father was the court astronomer and his mother the daughter of a governor. He was educated at home and was taught French, Persian, and Arabic. He entered the civil service at the age of seventeen and was given a position in the Translation Bureau. He fled to Europe in 1867 and remained in exile until 1871. He was imprisoned in 1873 for having written an inflammatory play. He was released in 1876 after the deposition of Abdülaziz and took some part in the preparation of the constitution. Because he displeased Sultan Abdülhamid, he spent the rest of his years in detention or exile. Ziya Paşa (1825-1880) was the son of a clerk in the customs house in Galata. Like Namık Kemal, he entered the civil service at the age of seventeen. Thanks to the influence of Mustafa Reşit Paşa, he was appointed third secretary to the Sultan. It was here that he studied French and began to translate French books into Turkish. It was also here that he took a position against Âli Paşa who, however, succeeded in securing his removal from the palace. In 1867 he too fled to Europe and remained in exile until 1872 when he was authorized to return to Turkey. He was made governor of Syria in 1876 with the rank of vezir and paşa. However, after observing the mismanagement of Âli Paşa's successor, he visited his grave and begged his forgiveness for misunderstanding him and attacking him unjustly.



## THE POLITICAL TESTAMENT

To His Majesty Abdül Aziz, the Emperor of the Ottomans:

Sire,

On the eve of leaving this world and having devoted a major part of our lives to the administration of the affairs of the country, Fuad and I have one last duty to fulfill: to leave to your Majesty a political testament explaining our actions, expressing our thoughts, and describing the state in which we found and are leaving the Empire. We wished to submit to Your Majesty the program Fuad and I deem should be followed. Fuad having succumbed before the task was completed, I hope to do it on my own. I need not elaborate to Your Majesty the efforts we have made and the pains we have taken for 15 long years to attain our aims. It was imperative for the Empire to hold its ground, maintain its position, and not be intimidated or dismembered. The country needed to be revitalized gradually within available means. If we have erred while implementing our plan — which, we are convinced, is the only one admissible under the circumstances — we hope that, considering the difficulties we have faced, our country and, above all, You Sire will forgive us. At the moment the Ottoman Empire, noble heritage of Your illustrious ancestors, is almost intact. When we took over the administration, the Empire was on the verge of near collapse. We firmly believe that we have pursued the most appropriate policies and that the future of the Empire rests upon the acceptance or rejection of these same policies.

The bloody period that ended with Waterloo was followed by many years of peace in Europe. Most of the States organized and fortified themselves, became powerful, and expanded their territorial ambitions. It was not difficult to anticipate the moment when they would engage in either armed conflict or enter into trade treaties or other diplomatic negotiations to expand their influence or to satisfy the ambition of their sovereigns or to find markets for their industries. In either case, Turkey, a little known and hardly exploited virgin country, appeared to be an El Dorado for them. We were lagging behind the intellectual and material progress achieved by our neighbors; only an insignificant portion of our



material resources was being exploited; and industry and trade were languishing. That all European countries lusted after Turkey was no surprise.

However, they were not unified in their attempts. Some were making secret plans to conquer Your Empire. Others, interested only in exploiting our resources, were forming alliances to prevent the realization of such plans. Their single ambition was to seize our land so that their industry and commerce could profit thereby. Those who wanted to grab our territory were hiding their intentions behind statements such as: "We merely want to prevent human suffering, protect our co-religionists, and put an end to their oppression." Others, equally concealing their intentions, were objecting: "This cannot and should not be done, since the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire is essential for Europe's stability." Thus, the interests of the European Powers were antagonistic to one another. This antagonism should have guided the foreign policy of Turkey: we should have exploited the defensive attitude of one bloc and played it against the aggressive bloc that wanted to dismember the Empire.

Meanwhile our nation began to crawl out of its stupor. Innovations were being made; customs began to change; new needs appeared. However, when a civilization is imported and does not evolve gradually from within, people usually acquire more of its vices than of its virtues. Hence, unsalaried local officials, who should have dedicated their energies to the interest of Your subjects, instead abused the privileges of their offices. They mistreated the population in very many ways, while convincing them that the higher authorities were to blame for their suffering. They incited them to revolt, without, however, wanting to free them from their yoke, nor granting them their independence. They led them to their ruin, took advantage of their desperate situation, enriched themselves at their expense, and yet appeared credible before their superiors. Their tactics succeeded. The officials did nothing, some because they were incompetent or lazy or too proud; others sacrificed the interest of the government for their own and divided the spoils among themselves.

These two developments, one external and the other internal, demonstrate the burden and the responsibility that fell upon myself and upon Fuad the day Your Majesty entrusted us with the reins of Your Government. We held them for almost fifteen years.

Our task was difficult and our responsibilities were enormous; we had at our disposal very few resources to improve the situation. Government was, by and large, in incompetent hands. The army was strong in numbers, but badly organized; it hardly existed. There were practically no officers and no supplies and equipment. We did not have the means to train our soldiers at a time when armament and military strategy had become a science far superior to the value of mere courage. We had no fleet, no sailors, no naval officers precisely when an



armada was needed. We lacked the system to communicate rapidly with the provinces of the Empire and be informed in time of the misdeeds of the officials and the intrigues of the agitators. How then could we punish the former and put an end to the latter? At the hard core of the Empire was an unstable and irregular public administration system, with no laws and regulations to define the duties of the officials. Operating on their own without any established procedure, they dodged their responsibilities and did nothing.

We were reduced to impotence. The urgent measures to remedy the situation required the sanction first and foremost of a Great and Magnanimous Sovereign, with superior intelligence, generosity and kindness, and enjoying absolute power. Yet Your Majesty was being misled by the pernicious influences of Your entourage.

Foreign affairs required immediate attention. Our efforts were directed toward attaining the recognition of our right to exist and be admitted to the Concert of Europe.

We succeeded in arousing Europe's interest in our favor and had the satisfaction of getting its sympathy on a number of occasions. As a result, Europe abstained from interfering in our military conflicts with the vassal states of Montenegro and Serbia and in our efforts to quell the revolts in Lebanon and Crete. We became a member of the family of great nations who respect each other's rights.

We did succeed in having Europe recognize our borders and our incontestable rights over the people of Your Empire. In the process we had to make certain concessions to European Powers by consenting to some modifications in favor of Serbia, Montenegro, and Moldavia-Walachia. These apparent concessions consisted of adjustments in minuscule territories, which were costly to hold — such as the Fort of Belgrade, which we actually had not controlled for some time — and some moral satisfaction of little significance. Ever since the end of the era of conquests, Montenegro, Serbia, Moldavia-Walachia, Tunisia, etc., had de facto become merely tributary autonomous vassal states.

Hence, pressured by European Powers, we gave to these states what they already possessed. Their de facto autonomy was legalized under a new form; but we defined our rights irrevocably. Sometimes we gave in reluctantly to Europe's demands in order to avoid heavier sacrifices.

Those who judge by mere appearance will certainly misjudge our conduct. They will declare that we were victims who easily give up and that we were sacrificing Your people and a good part of your territory merely to save



appearances, i.e., we were letting go of the actual prey and keeping only its shadow. In reality, though Europe was trying to fleece us totally, we abandoned merely some strips of land of no value. No province has been ceded to Europe, no border has been encroached upon. Simply compare our losses with those of European sovereigns who lost the jewels of their crowns. In 1866 Austria lost Venice and then its supremacy over Germany. In 1870 France was robbed of its two beautiful provinces. Not to mention all the bloodshed these wars have caused and the monies wasted.

Did we wage war? No! we only engaged in diplomatic battles.

Our administration preoccupied us greatly during our dealings with external problems. We had to know the people's needs and aspirations, be able to anticipate them, consider the intellectual development of the nation, and account for its needs. This was a thankless task, for we had to avoid the trap all Europe, some utopians, and short-viewed diplomats were pushing us into. In their view, we had to introduce into Turkey, immediately and without being prepared, European habits and customs and a European system of government.

We conceded, but with moderation, whenever the demands seemed legitimate. We conceded to what was expedient, but always safeguarded the general interests of Your Empire; these had top priority. Above all we had to look after our Sovereign's interest and reconcile the claims of His power with the concessions the country and Europe demanded. This absolute power recognizes no concession, no infringement of its rights. These are sacred, for they are secular as well as based on divine law. It was painful for us to have it consent to the measures imposed by the circumstances.

Your Majesty had to recognize that people are neither destined to live and work exclusively for the well-being of their Sovereign, nor to endure an intolerable yoke. We took it upon ourselves to defend their cause before Your Majesty. Our efforts were thwarted frequently by those escorting the throne. To overcome this obstacle we tried to have Your Majesty entrust the execution of the various functions of the Palace to competent and respected officials. We selected them from among the most dedicated and we enjoined them to refrain from all unnecessary and frivolous expenditures. They were to avoid flattery and aim to gain Your Majesty's cooperation. The outcome was not always what we intended, simply because counter influences were active on Your Majesty.

We allowed Europe to believe that its advice was being followed and that its demands were being attended to fully and satisfactorily. This was only half true. What Europe was proposing appeared to be very beneficial; but it was so only for Europe. To accept her proposals would have been fatal for us. We could not comply with all. But to declare this openly would have been a blunder. We



had neither the officials nor the army to enforce them. Some others could not be implemented, simply because Europe herself could not come up with specific solutions.

Permit us, Sire, to dwell on our relations with Europe. We warned, especially those who succeeded us, of the significance of this issue which for us was a constant preoccupation: the revitalization of the Empire depends on our external relations, since the events that occur regularly in our provinces originate from abroad. The problem of capitulations needs to be addressed. These oppress us and hinder all our efforts. How are we to get rid of these restrictions that restrain our freedom without communicating with European Powers?

An inspection of the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is very enlightening. It shows that about nine-tenths of our communications with foreign countries actually relate to domestic issues. The slightest bit of interest gives the foreigner, who resides in our territory, and many domestic residents, who are under the guardianship of foreign powers, the right to invoke the regrettable capitulations. This leads to lengthy negotiations and endless exchange of notes. The authorities, from ambassadors down to ushers of chancellors, engage in most futile issues. One is obliged to carefully avoid pampering their vanity and susceptibility and to attend to numerous small interests. Meanwhile the Government must preserve its authority, and this when it is administered by incompetent and unqualified individuals.

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We geared our efforts to strengthening the system of government and its weak administration. We created a new organization. We battled against favoritism with all our might.

Your Majesty's Edict made it clear to the officials that they were not in the service of particular individuals, that they formed part of an administration, and not of a party. We did not dismiss any one except in cases of notorious incompetence. We opposed the firing of a subordinate merely to fill the post with the protégé of an administrative head. We recognized the deplorable consequences of the previous system:

1. Disorganization within various administrative branches and stoppage of work resulting from constant turnover of personnel.

2. Demoralized officials shirking their duties because of uncertainty of their future.



3. The perception of the officials that their remuneration depends on the influence of their protectors. To avoid the misery to which they could be reduced by an intriguing personal enemy, they wasted their time and neglected their work.<sup>35</sup>

We prohibited heads of administration from using their influence in hiring staff who, however qualified, would serve only them. We ourselves set the example. The numerous regulations we prepared are our witnesses. We should not be blamed if most were not implemented. We did not always have competent staff and were forced to appoint individuals who were incapable to understand them.

No, we should not be blamed. The proof of our innocence lies in the fact that a large number of officials, already occupying secondary posts, were interested only in sinecures. Others pertained to professions and trades devoid of any dignity. The main concern of these totally ignorant individuals was to make up for their previous indignity and servility. This they did at the expense of the citizens. Against our wishes, we had to appoint such individuals to the posts of *müdürs*, *kaymakams*, *mutasarrıfs*, etc., posts disdained by those who value their dignity and integrity, since such posts were highly disregarded and poorly remunerated.

We have improved the situation gradually, with difficulty, and unfortunately incompletely. Some truly virtuous officials will perhaps reproach us for not having done enough for them. We accept our fault, especially in matters that relate to the future, and we regret it. Part of the blame, however, lies in our system of government. The system of bureaucracy is deficient. There are no training programs. Any person can intrigue his way into the post of grand vezir without having to climb through the hierarchy or by rising rapidly. With a stroke of good fortune a sleeping secretary can sometimes wake up as grand vezir. Our actions would be viewed more leniently if one considers that we were obliged to mollify the detrimental effects of conceit, a quite common eccentricity even among virtuous individuals. Having attained a certain rank, the single obsession of an official becomes to reach an even higher post and decide the fate of the country, even if he knows that he does not have the required capacity and knowledge. The present state of the country favors this tendency. All ambition, however unfounded, becomes realizable through intrigue, hence a clear danger.

<sup>35</sup>It is interesting to note that in his memorandum of 1872 Ahmet Cevdet Paşa states that sound education was needed for officials; that officials had to be experienced in judging local situations and implementing policy and amply rewarded to remain as civil servants; that the state had to have organigrams of the various administrations, provide precise job descriptions and regulations, and make all the effort to find the right man for the job and not the other way around. Davison (1963), p. 170 referring to Ebülulâ Mardin, *Medenî Hukuk Cephesinden Ahmet Cevdet Paşa (1822-1895)* [Ahmet Cevdet Paşa from the Viewpoint of Civil Law], Istanbul, 1946, pp. 342-348.



We may not succeed, but we should insist on cautioning Your Majesty, kind and indulgent that You are, to resist and reject all intrigue.

We know we are not infallible. We may have erred just as much as anybody else and needed assistance and guidance. But were our critiques reasonably impartial and wise, even though we were unable to understand them? We have never refused to heed advice. When stated sincerely and tactfully, we valued the opinions of those who disagreed with us and we acknowledged them with gratitude. Those who will raise their voice against us after our death will not be interested in our confession, which is quite usual in our country. Those whose vain inexperience and opinions and impudent criticism we have dismissed will not be interested in it either. The former because they did not have the courage then to prove to us their merits and show us where we went wrong; the latter because, knowing their conduct and character, we feared that to accept their opinion would have entailed much too great a responsibility.

These were not the only embarrassments. In many regions of the Empire disputes occurred between the Muslims and the Christians. The appeasement of these disturbances would have been a mere temporary remedy. To quell these disturbances would have required the destruction of the centuries-old antagonism between the conqueror and the conquered. The friction between the ethnic and religious segments of the population of Your Empire had to be dispelled. Conflicts had to be resolved promptly and vigorously to prevent them from spreading to other parts. We had to be prudent in administering justice to legitimate claims. Often we anticipated the needs to prevent offenses against legitimate authority. At the same time we began to decentralize. We divided the Empire into *vilayets*; we set up courts of justice, chambers of commerce, technical councils, and directorates of political affairs in each province. The local administration, postal and cable services, the system of indirect taxation were restructured; lighthouses were built. The reorganization of the Council of State, the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, the Ministries of Education, Trade, Public Works dates from this period. We should add the establishment of institutions, such as the Imperial Lycée at Galatasaray, the Observatory, etc.

The army was subjected to European style discipline. The soldiers' conduct improved in rural and urban areas. During the past fifteen years the officers have reached higher levels of professional competence. A lot still needs to be done; an inspection of the military should reveal the needs. We also would have liked to have introduced inspectors in all administrative services.

The tax base had to be changed. The difficult and burdensome property transfers were made easier thanks to laws approved by Your Majesty.



We have established communications between the provinces within the means available to us. We were obliged to recognize our shortage of engineers and Europe's superiority in this field. It was difficult to remedy our backwardness, since salaries of engineers do not correspond to the unavoidable sacrifices the engineering career entails. Despite the reforms, our services still constrain and paralyze their movement. Nevertheless, the provinces and the capital were provided with several lines of communication, railroads, public transport, streetcars, and many other improvements.

A great number of privileges were abolished. Trade treaties were revised, customs duties were raised, though not as much as industrial interests warranted. In the future the Government should endeavor to encourage the export of our goods and raw materials and impede as much as possible the import of foreign goods. We prepared the ground; it is up to our successors to follow through.

Your Majesty approved the conversion of the *kaime* (paper money) to its gold equivalent and its subsequent withdrawal from circulation. This was indispensable. A radical and drastic remedy was needed. The conversion disclosed the abyss upon which we were standing. We could not have avoided falling into it in any other way. The withdrawal of the *kaime* made us realize the immense quantity of paper money that was in circulation, though its true amount could not be ascertained. At one moment gold was so scarce that one gold lira fetched 300 *kaime* piasters. The conversion restored the credit-worthiness of the Empire. How can one defend oneself against the attacks made on the conversion? Simply by words! How to assert our rights? Simply by diplomatic arguments, such as: "Europe's stability hinges upon the preservation of the Empire." A fragile argument, granted, if not for the moment, then assuredly in case the balance of power in Europe breaks down which would be to our detriment.

We had to strengthen our relations with Europe. Only when their material interests coincided with ours would the integrity of the Empire become a reality and not remain a diplomatic fiction.

By getting the European states interested directly and materially in the preservation and defense of our country, we were acquiring as many partners as necessary for the revitalization of the Empire and the development of its resources. Numerous attempts against Turkey have failed thanks to Europe. Although counter to their own interests, new regulations and legislation that aimed at raising state revenue were approved unanimously and without difficulty by the European states.

From a financial point of view, the conversion could have been achieved under better terms and less onerous conditions for the country, if the matter had been deliberated at length. But the situation was urgent; an immediate remedy



was necessary. Only part of the Empire's revenues was earmarked for the conversion. Such revenues could have been multiplied one hundredfold, if we had a wise and prudent administration. Who is to blame if they did not despite our efforts and hopes? We have endeavored to spend the non-earmarked revenues and the funds borrowed after the conversion on useful expenditures of first priority.

The developments in Rumeli forced us to look into its problems. Industry and trade in these provinces needed assistance. We had to respond to the wishes and demands of the European Powers, since we were part of the Concert of Europe. We had to build railroads<sup>36</sup> without paying attention to the inconveniences of the moment.

The Government could not undertake such an enterprise. Common sense told us that we should take advantage of the experience of other countries. Without engineers and skilled managers we could not adopt the system of public ownership. A review of what it would have cost had we undertaken the technical work would have been enlightening. We had to avoid local investors. Accustomed as they are to reaping exorbitant short-term benefits, would they have accepted our proposals? We were doubtful of their potential in this case.

The construction of our railroads by a European company offered greater assurance. Hence, we proposed to Your Majesty, who was just as much dedicated to the issue, to send Davud Paşa, the Minister of Public Works, to Europe. He was to consult with certain groups of financiers and negotiate with them in the best interest of the nation. After a series of negotiations a plan was presented that offered significant guarantees. Accordingly, the construction of the railroads would be assured and the proceeds of the public loans allocated to this construction alone and not used for any other purpose. Control was to be executed by three interested parties: the builder, the management company, and the state. We were convinced without any doubt that the company holding the

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<sup>36</sup>After the Crimean War European investors began to request privileges to build and operate railroads in the Ottoman Empire. Such privileges were granted, since the 1856 Edict had expressed the intention to use European capital and technical know-how in the development of the country. The privileges of four short lines were granted to English companies: Köstence-Çernavoda; İzmir-Aydın; İzmir-Kasaba; and Varna-Ruşçuk. The granting of privileges to foreign companies was not without opposition. Âli Paşa and Fuat Paşa were of the opinion that foreign capital was needed for the Empire's economic recovery, that foreign investment would have a favorable effect on the European Powers' view of the Empire and would help preserve its integrity, hence it should be attracted. The Porte informed the European Powers that it would receive favorably any proposals they would make in this area. One such proposal was the line that would connect Istanbul to Belgrade, Vienna, and Paris, with sidelines to Dedeağaç, Edirne, and Selânik. Such an enormous project could not be undertaken with public capital. Hence a contract was signed with the Austrian banker Baron Hirsch in 1869. He was given the concession of the line for 99 years, and the Ottoman government guaranteed the payment of agreed upon sums. The privilege granted to Baron Hirsch led to speculations and rivalry among European Powers. The Ottoman government decided that such ventures were much too costly and hence as of 1871, the year of Âli Paşa's death, began to invest in the construction of railroads alongside those operated by foreign companies. However, soon the public railroads were to fall into decay for lack of technical staff and proper maintenance.



concession expected to reap greater benefits than corresponded to risks and expenses. This, however, did not impede us from submitting the plan to the High Sanction of Your Majesty.

If we compare the benefits of the railroads to be built in accordance with the agreement with the cost these imply to the Treasury, it is quite clear that the benefits far outweigh the costs. Our experience with the railroads in Rumeli evidences the unscrupulous behavior of the company holding the concession and its thirst for excessive profit. Obviously the company forgets the saying "he who collects a lot loses badly," and our agent Davud Paşa his petty perspicacity and connivance.

We should not be alarmed if the company holding the concession has given us some surprises on some points, for it was involved in the project in double capacity. For its own interest it had to take great care in fulfilling its obligations. Yet, as builder, holder, and operator of the concession, it offered alluring guarantees. It was building more for its own benefit than for ours, since it was going to be the one to operate the lines it was building. It assumed considerable responsibility by eliminating competing companies. Its plan may have been to quit the business once the economically built lines were turned over to the Government. For, by then it will have enjoyed maximum profits from an easily realized project; thereafter it would be compensated as the operator of the lines; and then it would also reserve for itself the right to transfer the lines to a genuine company of exploitation. Such expectations could have been founded only on either an unforeseen event or on the presumption of our naivety.

Thus, the company started with the easiest segment of the work in order to obtain the highest benefits. Fortunately, we foresaw its ploy and were not caught unawares. It will not emerge from the impasse into which it has entered; we and our successors will do everything possible to keep it there. If I have been slow in unveiling its scheme, that is because the company itself has hastened to prevail upon Europe, following Davud Pasha, who, after an interview during which I was able to prove his naivety and connivance, felt the need for a cure in a foreign spa!

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To lay the foundation of the program the Government of Your Majesty will have to implement, we will trace the general features that are of interest to us within the political situation of Europe.

It is humanly impossible to put a stop to the march of events instigated by the principles of nationalism and socialism. Geographically we are tied to



Europe's fate. In these past years Europe has devoted all its resources to armament. Its industrial and trade relations with Turkey have changed. The peace that reigns has made Russian and American products strongly competitive with ours in the European markets.

Over the past twenty years our disadvantageous position has reversed visibly. Europe has realized that she cannot exploit us as easily as before. We have gained her respect: we have a reputable seat in the Concert of Europe. The West's empathy for their Christian brothers, Your so-called unfortunate subjects, is not stirred up as much. Some isolated and infrequent incidents had appeared to give legitimacy to this empathy. But today Europe is better informed. Repeated inquiries have shown that elite Muslims, as well as the masses, disapprove of these acts of cruelty and oppression. She does not ignore, Sire, that Your Majesty's Government fights rigorously against their instigators.

Our enemies cannot incite our peoples any more to revolt under false promises. They desire to link their own true interests to those of Your Majesty's Government, provided it continues to protect their interests, their rights, and meet their legitimate demands.

But let us be aware: all good features can vanish if measures to raise general prosperity are not implemented with care. Heinous people can no more obtain from Your Majesty's Government rulings that are detrimental to the country. Your Majesty's Government does not act arbitrarily. It knows and asserts its rights, and, fortunately, strives to implement fair measures. It knows the weaknesses, the rights, the power, the customs and even the inclinations of its friends and enemies better than they themselves. Their history, geography, topography, industry, and trade are no secret. The study of the constitutions of foreign countries enables it to anticipate what may happen. The Government, in conformity with the esteemed opinion of Your Majesty and having assured the integrity of Your Empire, advances perhaps slowly but surely on the road to progress.

Henceforth, Sire, our rivals will have to behave towards Your Government in exactly the same way as they do towards their own. If the office of the grand vezir were to be occupied by a person who destroys our achievements, the result will be fatal.

We will not conceal from You, Sire, that after having held for a long time the office You have entrusted us with, it would grieve us to see it occupied by a successor who is devoid of prudence and wisdom, misunderstands our work, and decides to depart from the policy course we have followed. Should that be the case, our rivals will be happy and our successors, despite their best intentions, will lead the Empire to its ruin. Abusing the extreme generosity of Your



Majesty and concealing the real state in which the country finds itself, our rivals will make You undertake expenses which will bankrupt the Treasury. Once the country gets onto this deadly path, the Government will alienate its true friends and devoted servants. It will be impossible to save the respect its power carries. Subversive propaganda will soar and will lead to the disarray of the safety of the country.

Many elements that are fundamental to our revitalization have already been put together. It is Your Majesty's prerogative that our successors abide by them. If Your Majesty's orders are disobeyed, what has been built with much difficulty will be wasted and serve no purpose. We believe it our duty to draw attention to what we consider worthy, so that the task of our successors is eased.

Your Majesty has already been advised of the inconvenience of entrusting the functions of a grand vezir into new hands. The appointment of a new grand vezir should be justified only by the need to strengthen the administration. A program must be submitted to Your Majesty, and the grand vezir, assisted by the ministers in charge of its drawing up and execution, must adhere to it rigorously. Responsibilities will have to be well defined and the spheres of action delineated.

Under the present regime the grand vezir himself has to be involved in detail with all the questions that hinge upon different ministries. He alone assumes all the responsibilities. Granted, he has a council composed of the ministers of Your Majesty. But, unbeknownst to his ministers, the grand vezir can take decisions against the interests of the state and have Your Majesty sanction them without letting Him know whether the council has approved them or not. Sire, human capacity is limited. Your Majesty, therefore, should not entrust to one single individual the great and invaluable interests of His Empire. Your Majesty appreciates very well that this individual can usurp his powers; he is fallible, and his errors and failures can end up falling on Your August Head. It should be assured that the person in whom Your Majesty will place His confidence should occupy this honorable post as long as he follows the path traced by duty and public interest. It is only fair that Your subjects be able to approach Your Majesty or Your grand vezir without facing the risk of being turned away or of their pleas being rejected, unbeknownst to Your Majesty.

Thereby, Sire, You Yourself will appreciate better the state of the country and follow the example of Your Illustrious Ancestors, who, in order to verify the true state of affairs used to mingle incognito among ordinary people. There was a time, Sire, when rulers, believing in their divine rights, were invisible to their people and enveloped themselves in an air of mystery and grandeur. Only their name carried the respect, veneration and awe of the masses. Today people respect their rulers if they maintain contact with those in whose name they exercise authority. This is their best royal guard.



If Your Majesty, the Most Magnanimous of all Sovereigns, holds, by the grace of God, absolute power, it is because God wills it that Your Majesty demonstrate great wisdom. If the person to whom Your Majesty entrusts the power to administer the Empire were to tell You, as once a minister did to Louis XV: "Sire the entire Empire is yours to rule; for it belongs to you, it is your property, and you can do with it as you will," to that Your answer should be: "Louis XV heeded his minister; but no sooner was he entombed in his royal grave, than France, blinded by ire, defiled his grave with the blood of his children."

The entire world knows full well Your Majesty's chivalrous qualities, energy, and spiritual magnanimity. It always remembers Your Majesty's words upon Napoléon III's surrender of his sword to the King of Prussia at Sedan. "What kind of sovereign is this man? Does he not have blood in his veins that he can cut, be it with a pair of scissors, rather than submit himself to such a humiliation?"<sup>37</sup> Your Majesty, if You were to listen to deceitful counsel, You will not be suffering a faint blow to Your Sovereign Dignity, rather You will be destroying Yourself.

Frequently, Sire, Your Majesty must have been disheartened by the conduct of Your entourage. These despicable courtiers, incapable of elevating themselves to the true height of Your Majesty, think of nothing else but to exploit, through flattery, the Prince's pleasures and cause waste for their own benefit. They only desire that Your Majesty remain in Your Palace, where all is pleasure, luxury, and flattery. One would say then, Sire, that Your only possession is the Palace, You, the heir to glorious Sultans who constantly galloped on horseback to extend the borders of their States.

Sire, You should shun the policy of isolation that many a friend, and, I must confess, the most enlightened praise, simply because they misunderstand Your true interests. This policy consists of minimizing the relations between the Empire and its neighbors. "Better to have ten known enemies than one unknown" goes the common saying. It is important that the Government of Your Majesty keep an eye on the events that take place in our neighboring countries. It is essential that Your people not be envious of their people. To succeed we must guard against advice given by neighboring countries in their own interest while not neglecting to study their administrative system and the way it is implemented. One has to know the disposition of these people, learn

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<sup>37</sup>Few months after his dethronement Abdülaziz was found dead in his bedroom with his wrist veins cut with a pair of scissors. Whether this quotation is really in the Testament or has been added subsequently will never be known. The controversy of whether Abdülaziz in fact committed suicide or was murdered, which occupied the historians for some time, also remains unresolved. The last work that argues that Abdülaziz was murdered is the book by Öztuna.



their customs and how they fare under the regime they live. For this purpose we should interact closer with them.

The states that lie far from us derive neither direct nor indirect benefit from pressing us into a crisis. Their relations with us are limited to trade and industry. We should seek and welcome their advice and even their cooperation. However competent and foresighted we might be, quite a few things could escape us. They may have their own interest in mind when they cooperate with us and give us advice. They could nevertheless be helpful, since their interests coincide with ours; hence when they defend their own interests they will be defending ours as well.

Sire, to err is human: we implore Your Majesty's indulgence regarding our policy on the vassal states. We may have been weak in one case: we realized it only after the events took place. We refer to our relations with the Suzerain Court of Moldavia-Walachia in 1856, and the Principality of Serbia and Montenegro after the Sublime Porte ceased to appoint their princes. Relations with Egypt have been neglected since the death of the penultimate viceroy; a similar case is the Regency of Tunisia since the accession of Ahmed Bey, the penultimate regent. All these provinces have been abandoned almost completely. Your Majesty's Government has not entertained any relations with them except through their intermediaries in Constantinople. This was doubly inconvenient: for these principalities were kept informed by their agents about the events that were taking place in the Empire and began to agitate; but then only information advantageous to them was being fed to Your Government.

Events forced the gradual separation of these principalities from the Empire; their population ceased to be Ottoman and became foreign subjects. To them a Muslim has become an intruder. They are astonished, if not angry, to see an Ottoman official even when he is merely travelling through the territory. It would be more helpful to have an official of the Sublime Porte as commissioner of Your Majesty in the courts of the vassal princes. This commissioner would rank higher than all the accredited foreign agents in these courts. His mission would be to form an organization faithful to the Government of Your Majesty. This organization, to be known as the Assembly of the Suzerain Court, would help the princes subdue the opposition which, to be popular, hoists the red flag of socialism. Thereby we would be able to influence these governments and their people in favor of the Empire. Care needs to be taken in the selection of these commissioners. They also need to be allocated ample funds to fulfill their duties. No doubt, this will be an added expense item in the budget of the Treasury, but it will have incalculable benefits that become clear when we compare the magnitude of the allocated funds with that of the expenditures the difficulties in these vassal states entail.



Sire, certain expenditures are inevitable. We have created institutions and we have taken measures that, in the first instance, may appear to be unnecessary or untimely. Upon reflection these will be found to be necessary and indispensable. Their elimination may be suggested to You with the pretext of realizing savings; yet they must remain intact; otherwise, to save a few hundred thousand pounds we would be spending millions. Allow me, Sire, to give as an example the opinion of a so-called knowledgeable individual: "Two sinecures have been instituted when the *vilâyet*s were formed: their elimination would generate sizable savings." This individual is referring to the *mutasarrıflık* (adjunct governorship) and to directors of political affairs. Granted, savings would have been sizeable, but at what cost? Given the immense expanse of some of our provinces, some as large as kingdoms, a governor general cannot possibly carry out all the duties. If asked, I am certain that no conscientious official would respond that all the assigned duties could have been performed by one individual alone. He will point to numerous obstacles, to constant battles against the bickering of their subordinates who are the more boisterous the lower the rank of the official. Need one mention the troubles caused by the consuls of foreign powers? The same so-called knowledgeable individual would add: "The administration of political affairs could have been entrusted to the interpreters who are usually attached to the office of the governors." No person capable of conducting the functions of the director of political affairs of a *vilâyet* and of rendering services comparable to those of a governor would accept the post of an interpreter.

The diverse interests of the minorities could sooner or later lead to the dismemberment of the Empire. The state, through education, can and should seek the ways and means of harmonizing these diverse interests and guide them towards the preservation of the unity of the Empire. People are interested in their own welfare and security; and one's fatherland is where one finds them both.

The Empire of Your Majesty contains minorities grouped as religious communities. These form distinct bodies, each with its own loyalty, language, customs, and aspirations. They have developed in a surprising fashion. They have been granted privileges and immunities that have generated difficulties; these need to be resolved. The Government of Your Majesty should permit each community to be responsible for their purely religious affairs that concern them only. But in other matters it is time to subject them to the same laws as other citizens and not allow them separate constitutions. Privileges that these diverse communities enjoy give rise to unequal burden and responsibilities. This is a great nuisance. Muslim Ottomans are almost entirely employed in the service of the government; non-Muslims are in activities that bring them wealth. This gives them a real and inopportune superiority over Your Muslim subjects.



There is an additional and even stronger cause of inferiority: the blood tax falls only on the Muslims. As a result, the Muslim population is declining at an alarmingly rapid rate and will soon become a small and weakened minority. History is replete with examples of the conquered absorbing the conquerors. A census in two cities one Muslim and the other non-Muslim, will verify the frightful decline of the first and the impressive growth of the latter during the past ten years. The inspection of the *mahlûlat* section of the registries of the *Evkaf* will be an enlightening experience. What else is to be expected if a man is taken from his village in his prime age and is forced to spend seven to ten years in military barracks where he contracts the worst contagious diseases.

Muslims, like non-Muslims, should be engaging in agriculture, trade, industry, and arts. Labor is the only durable capital. Let us work, Sire; work alone will render us healthy. Sire, the time has come to liberate the Muslim population from the levies that oppress them; in contrast exempt non-Muslims are prospering, multiplying, and taking over. Let the non-Muslims enlist as soldiers and officers and serve in the government in proportion to their numbers and not, as is the case today, one for every one hundred thousand. I can hear the objections of many of our politicians: "How! Arm our non-Muslim population and train them so that one day they can turn against us! To appoint them to government posts, is that not tantamount to letting them dominate us?"

Such statements will only perpetuate the state of affairs that inevitably leads to the uprisings of the non-Muslim population of the Empire. The 1857 rebellion in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the uprising in Lebanon, the riots in Crete, the 1868 and 1869 attempts to revolt in Bulgaria should suffice to put an end to such opinions. Those who give such ruinous counsel have not calculated the human and pecuniary cost of these internal events, let alone the damage to our prestige. The cost would have been higher, had we not explored the ways and means of satisfying the legitimate aspirations of these people. These counsellors have not taken into account how powerful people can be when they claim their rights. Subdued today by force, tomorrow they will rise more powerful and more valiant. Every new revolt proves that, and the Muslim population will follow suit.

Sire, we should investigate the causes of all revolts to prevent any turmoil. Those that are instigated by foreign influences or by personal ambitions of local leaders hardly succeed in a country governed wisely. They can be suppressed easily through agreements. Why then do these very same counsellors refuse to recognize that the non-Muslim is willing to fight for his rights whether he has military training and possesses arms or not? With respect to the objection to his employment in the civil service, my answer is: "Stefanovich, Ralli, Tubini, Camondo, Zarifi, are they really subordinates? Do they enjoy less



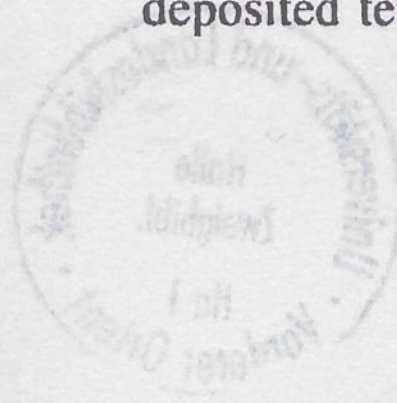
attention than the highest officials? Do not a good number of our officials already bow down before them?"

Sire, our dedicated civil servants deserve special attention and assurance of their present and future. In spite of all our efforts we have not as yet succeeded in giving them this assurance. Our government system makes their position just as miserable as those employed by a poorly run private establishment. The latter are at least protected by law and assured of their remuneration. But is the future of our civil servants assured? Any newcomer into power has the audacity to claim the right to destroy the work of his predecessor and surrounds himself with his own lackeys. As a result, high ranking civil servants as well as the rank and file lose confidence. The high ranking official who gets dismissed can maintain the hope of regaining power; his friends can lend him money, and he can afford to wait for better days. In contrast, the poorly paid lower ranking employee, having sacrificed his best possible years, is condemned to remain in greater misery.

Yes, Sire, a vast majority of civil servants are ill paid. It is sad to say that they are among the most dedicated. Only those that plead and flatter the higher authorities get attention. This is what serving one's country means. The result is that skilled and talented men shun public service and look for more honorable and remunerative means of livelihood. The Government of Your Majesty is then forced to recruit mediocre personnel whose sole aim is to improve their weak pecuniary situation at the expense of the public sector.

We have no doubt, Sire, that, following Your Majesty's orders, the Government is seeking to raise the economic standard and the morale of its personnel. One also has to raise their prestige and the public esteem they command in addition to assuring their fair remuneration and their promotion based on a well-defined civil service code. Public employees should not be shifted constantly from post to post, especially those in the provinces. Anyone who faces the danger of losing his post when he has hardly begun will carry out his duties half-heartedly. Whatever the rank, any employee must assume his share of responsibility and receive his share of remuneration. We beg You, Sire, to bestow distinctions of honor only on those who are dedicated to the service of Your Government. To bestow such distinctions freely to traders, bankers, and other wealthy individuals would create the perception among the loyal civil servants that they are being robbed of their prestige and respect.

More than anywhere else, order and discipline are necessary in the Ministry of Finance. Money is the means to action; this holds for the government as well. It is essential that this Ministry control the collection and spending of the Empire's revenues; it should be the place where revenues are deposited temporarily to be subsequently disbursed. For that purpose we had





advised Your Majesty to institute a budget system. The budget, once determined and approved, the Ministry of Finance should have at its disposal the monies to be allocated to each service. *No other ministry, nobody, not even Your Majesty, under any pretext should have the budget altered or the funds diverted from their initially allocated use.*<sup>38</sup> It is only then that different departments can be justly held accountable for the sums allocated to them.

It is important that Your Majesty, using Your Sovereign Authority, dictate prompt and serious reforms so that each ministry becomes responsible for its actions. Yes, Sire, by and large our efforts to improve the administration have failed. Our failure stems from the mismanagement of our finances and from favoritism that has brought into public affairs people incapable of carrying out their duties, however intelligent and honorable they may have been. It is Your Majesty's prerogative to put an end, once and for all, to the obstacles within the Government and introduce the indispensable principle of accountability without which all progress is retarded and our work inevitably destroyed. At first, reorganization might appear to cause serious problems for the Empire. Nevertheless, insist, Sire, that intelligent, hardworking, competent, and motivated individuals should direct Your Empire's civil service. If treated as they well deserve, the employment of such persons can well reduce the number of civil servants to one-fourth of its current size.

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The revenue problem is crucial to Your Majesty's Government and requires a definite solution. It is only fair that the wealthy, generally the urban population, pay the much larger portion of taxes and levies, so that the burden of the rural population, who is already overburdened by tithes, can be alleviated. The rural population has very limited resources to improve their condition. Their labor is necessary but painful. The townsman, in contrast, can enrich himself rapidly and enjoy an easy and pleasant life. To extract from the poor peasant half of his meager earnings of three to four thousand piasters via direct and indirect taxes is to condemn him to misery. To take from the wealthy and opulent urban dweller half of his income of one hundred thousand piasters would still leave him with sufficient affluence.

Sire, demand from Your Government a more rational and efficient collection system with greater guarantees. A larger number of tax collectors is needed. After careful consideration we have come to believe that the only way is to farm out the collection of tithes, levies, and various taxes to reputable firms. Contracted on a long-term basis, these firms will have the mandate to obtain and

<sup>38</sup>His italics.





transfer to the Government the means with which to enhance public prosperity. Their interest should be identical to that of the Government. The contract terms should be reviewed every five years and the collections fees should be raised in accordance with the growth in public revenues. Carefully selected officials of the Ministry of Finance should monitor the progress of these revenues. A long-term contract will encourage these firms to promote the increase of the taxpayers' resources and prosperity.

A sound moderate approach will sustain the society's well-being. Taxpayers will be encouraged to acquire new resources if they are not pressured and frightened. The collection system we propose is the best for us, especially since we lack competent and honest tax collectors. Know-how and wisdom are just as indispensable as honesty and trust. Moreover, we believe this collection method to be suitable for any government, even for the best administrations staffed with the best and dedicated personnel. However loyal and competent the personnel may be, they cannot serve the interests of the government as well as the personnel of the private sector serves its interests. Civil servants are not remunerated in accordance with the growth in prosperity, hence they have no interest in increasing it. They manage and execute too many functions and are overworked to be able to oversee even a single public service. This is not the case in a well-organized profit-seeking private company whose managers also receive bonuses that rise with profits. And, as shareholders in their companies, the directors have all the interest to see to it that the fruits of the capital invested continue to multiply.

No doubt, the system I am proposing will encounter strong objections under questionable pretexts. Some will say to Your Majesty that these companies will rob us of our assets. Do not pay heed to such unreasonable statements that camouflage ignoble thoughts. Quite the contrary, Sire; these firms will be our safeguard; as our associates they will defend our rights, our land, our well-being, because it is in their interest to do so. They will be the more efficient the more international they are. No steward will aspire to destroy the house it manages, nor will he try to harm his master, unless the masters themselves do not care, are ignorant, squander, and work for their own destruction and ruin. It is then that the steward will try to exploit the situation for his own benefit and conclude the process of ruination. This cannot occur if people look after their own interests and oversee the work of the administrators to whom they entrust the conduct of their affairs. Your Majesty knows full well that we have never been afraid to speak out. We repeat once again: we have a relative shortage of competent and qualified personnel. It is better to acknowledge our weakness and try to rectify it than to leave the Government incapable to face its future obligations.

Bibliothek





The present system is disastrous. We repeat, it is exasperating the taxpayers and drives them to revolt.

Sire, a cadastral system and a well-organized statistical service should accompany the fiscal reforms. We have not succeeded in instituting them; low pay was the main obstacle to hire qualified staff. Central services need to be established under the direction of a specialized individual assisted by experienced sub-directors brought from abroad. Governors should urge the *mutasarrifs*, *kaymakams* and *müdürs* to keep a register of the names of *sancaks*, *kazas*, *müdüriyets*, their towns, boroughs, and villages, and the names of their property-owning native and foreign inhabitants, including those who are temporary residents, their professions, age, etc. This will constitute the civil register of all the inhabitants of the Empire, permanent or temporary, whatever their race, religion, and nationality; it will indicate marriages, births, and deaths.

Simultaneously, the governors should engage special agents to draw up a chart of their *vilâyets*, including the geographical layout, boundaries, area, and population; the name and nature of water resources; the location of towns, villages, even farms; the size of inhabited and cultivated areas; the distances between different centers; paved roads, dikes, causeways; the nature of pastures and arable land; production; mountains, wooded areas, forests, exploited or not; capacity of each property; in short all the information that is useful for cadastre and statistics.

This is a colossal task. But it is indispensable, and the cost is minimal compared to its benefits. All the European countries have such services. France has had it for over forty years to which it has devoted more than 200 million, but is reaping tremendous benefits. One cannot imagine a businessman who does not keep an inventory, books, and a cash register merely to save money. Yet, we are like the businessman who fails to do so.

What has been done in the case of *vakıfs* and other property of the Empire is totally insufficient. The property's decrepit state, the decline in its value, the inability to derive all the benefits from it is evidence enough. The reasons for this disastrous state are manifold. The multiplicity of the variety of properties and the regulations that govern them are a true maze in which one gets lost. And then there are endless transfer formalities when the property is sold or purchased. Imagine the anxiety of a seller or a buyer during the long period these formalities frequently take. The absence of a mortgage law (actually the law exists, but it is beset by so many restrictions that its existence is illusory) forces the property owner, who would like a mortgage loan, to make a fake sale and to pay the fees that correspond to the true sale; but the only guarantee he has is the buyer's declaration that the sale in fact is a mortgage transaction.



No doubt, Your Majesty will not hesitate to decree a radical remedy to this situation. We should not delay reforms. Free property, sanction laws that clarify transactions, make them precise and less burdensome. Then the property owner will have no doubt about his undisputed rights. The practice of co-signing a contract should be abolished. Besides, it has lost all its usefulness ever since Your Majesty graciously granted to all his subjects and foreigners the favor to openly acquire real estate.

Sire, sanction such a law and demand that it be applied rigorously. As a result Your Majesty's Government will no longer need to have recourse to onerous loans to meet the budget deficits. Property revenues alone will suffice to close the gap. The owner will easily find the resources to improve his property and raise its value. The Treasury will always benefit from the establishment of industrial or commercial businesses. The interest rates will fall to 5 or 6 percent at the most. A return of 12 to 15 percent on his investment will allow the individual to pay the interest, repay the debt, and live in comfort and prosper. Currently to borrow is impossible. The interest rates are 20 to 25 percent, and sometimes even 50 percent. If we maintain our present course, the interest rate can rise to 100 or even 200 percent, simply because the current property regime scares the investors away. Who can be certain of not ever needing to borrow? This can occur sooner than expected; then we will be dispossessed of our land which will fall prey to usurers. One should not be surprised if vast lands remain uncultivated and abandoned in the towns and even in the capital. Their owners do not have funds and cannot obtain them.

Sire, the expanse of Your Empire is vast; in comparison the size of its cultivated land area is small. Your Majesty is not ignorant of the European emigration to faraway countries where working conditions are more painful than they are in ours. Those who move to these areas make a good living and also contribute to global prosperity. They demand nothing more than a strip of land on which to settle, work, and take root like a tree. It behooves Your Majesty to offer them a part of Your land which remains incultivated due to shortage of manpower.

Make haste, Sire, to attract these peaceful workers; far from being a danger, they will aid us in our task of reorganization. Under the aegis of wise laws they will melt easily with our native inhabitants. This foreign element is good to emulate and gives rise to prosperity. By protecting their benefits we will have peace and tranquility. Some may say: "We will be absorbed: through capitulations we will be contracting out our dependence to the foreigners." The protocols signed by foreign powers have mostly nullified the significance of capitulations with respect to the foreign property owner residing in the Empire. The remainder can be abolished easily in the future. All that is needed is the resolve to undertake reforms. The German, Swiss, Irish emigrant does not



hesitate to become American in America, Australian in Australia. In our country we have many European officials, industrialists, and tradesmen who are more Ottoman than ourselves. An unjustified defiance prevents us from recognizing this fact. They understand our interests better than we do, and are more patriotic than we are.

The creation of colonies in the Empire are tightly linked to the important problems in agriculture.<sup>39</sup> One cannot do enough in this area. Sire, grant favorable treatment to the cultivator so that he remains attached to his land, becomes aware of his general and particular interests and a support for the state and its political structure. This is of greater interest for our country than for any other, since our land is immense and fertile. Our agriculture is at the mercy of the usurer. The condition of the agricultural population needs to be improved urgently. The repeal of the collection system of the tithe will contribute greatly to it. Laws and regulations against usury should be applied rigorously. These should be complemented with the establishment of agricultural banks. The least onerous way, that also appears to offer the greatest guaranty, is to find abroad qualified people who will settle in Turkey. They should be granted facilities, even subsidies, should their resources turn out to be insufficient. A single farm in each district managed by such a capable individual will yield good result in a very short time.

The results would be even better if Your Majesty were to institute twice a year agricultural and industrial fairs in each *vilâyet*. Prizes would be awarded to the best products and rural equipment. What we are proposing, Sire, is what is

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<sup>39</sup>Agriculture was the primary source of wealth of the Ottoman Empire. It remained unattended for centuries. Its prosperity required the guarantee of land ownership, reasonable taxation of its produce, building of roads and bridges, and providing the cultivator with the necessary information. Yet officially it was not accorded the importance it merited. Âli Paşa's land law of 1858, amended again during his time as grand vezir in 1867, was not meeting the needs; military conscription was creating a labor shortage in the fields; tax farming was squeezing the peasantry; revolts and roaming groups of brigands were robbing the rural population. There were no agricultural credit institutions and no ministry of agriculture to formulate policy and implement it. Although a Ministry of Agriculture was created in 1846, it was annexed to the Ministry of Trade four months later. It then was transformed into an Agricultural Council and abolished a year later. A Ministry of Trade and Agriculture was set up in 1869; three years later it became the Ministry of Trade and Public Works within which an Agricultural Directorate was maintained. The European Powers, interested as they were in exploiting the economic resources of the Empire, advocated the distribution of state lands to the populace, the reorganization of the *vakıf* property, the construction of roads and irrigation systems, the reduction of the tax burden on agriculture, and above all granting the foreigners the right to acquire and cultivate land. Subsequently they obtained this right, provided they were subject to the same rules and regulations as the Ottoman subjects.

There were small indications that the government was slowly but ineffectively moving towards an agricultural policy. Schools of agriculture and forestry were established. Some credit was extended to the cultivator. Cotton cultivation was encouraged by exempting the produce from the tithe for five years and imports of agricultural machinery from custom dues. This latter policy was effective initially, but was short-lived, since with the cessation of the civil war, Europe began to purchase this raw material once again more cheaply from America. In some *vilâyet*s, with the initiatives of their governors, model farms were set up and roads were built. Agricultural fairs were organized; agricultural products were exhibited in foreign countries. But these were isolated efforts and were not sufficient to revitalize the Empire's entire agricultural sector.



being practiced in all European states with excellent results. Setting up schools where only theory is taught is not enough. The only way we can fight against our antiquated methods is through learning by doing. The establishment of model state farms serves no purpose. Those in charge of their management, with few exceptions, will cause them to fail and fall into ruin. The same will occur with all our other state enterprises. It should come as no surprise that the officials who are in charge of their management are indifferent to the well-being of the state and pursue only their self-interest.

Similarly, the Government would gain by encouraging the establishment of private industrial enterprises, especially when locally-owned investments are involved. The aim is not to compete with European states, whose industry, developed with favorable incentives for more than a century, floods the world with its products. Using our raw materials, of which we have an abundance, our industry will be barely competitive with European products. We have to protect ourselves against foreign imports with all the means available to us. Our native industry has been destroyed by the low cost and higher quality of foreign products. To revive it we have to encourage the establishment of numerous factories, introduce European techniques, and familiarize our countrymen with such techniques. The innate intelligence of our population can achieve it in a short time. But Your Government too, Sire, must guide the people in ways where work will lead to their wealth as well as that of the state.

Utopians maintain that the country lacks sufficiently qualified individuals to form in Constantinople an assembly that would assess the condition and the needs of our population. Consequently, it would behoove Your Majesty to appoint intelligent and honest commissioners who would be above reproach. These knowledgeable and experienced commissioners would assess competently what needs to be done. They would be a check on the administration, identify its shortcomings, investigate their causes, and propose remedies. They would concentrate their efforts on the improvement of the difficulties our population faces. They would assess in detail the country's resources, draw the most appropriate conclusions, and come up with a better system of taxes and charges. They would inquire into the relations between Your Majesty's different minority subjects to verify whether they represent a potential source of trouble.

They would also investigate and indicate the people's needs and aspirations so that they do not remain unattended. They would be a source of information for Your Majesty and would respond solely to You. Their remuneration should be sizeable and compatible with their responsibilities so that they would not suffer any pecuniary anxiety.

The commissioners' appointments should be permanent. Any serious misconduct in the execution of their duties should be judged by a Supreme



Court. The investigation, the charge, the defense, and the sentence should be made public. If found guilty, they should lose their post and become liable under the severest of penalties. The appointment of a commissioner in each *vilâyet* would contribute greatly to the reorganization of the Empire.

The freedom of the press<sup>40</sup> is a threat only to those governments that are not willing to correct their deficiencies. Quite the contrary, Sire; such freedom should be welcomed by Your Government that aims for the best. To oppress thought is to force people towards devious ways, which they will find without fail. Oppression only encourages conspiracy and mutiny. It leads to violence and jeopardizes the security of the state. The freedom of the press is a powerful aide for the Government in its fight against evil and in its protection of the good.

Under the present regime the press is but a weak link between the Government and Ottoman subjects, especially those in the provinces who do not know what public interest means. Self-interest is their only concern. To forge this link and to make the Government accessible to Your subjects, we propose that the press and all written work be granted the widest freedom possible. As a result, the press will deal with political issues, will pass judgment on the actions of the Government, and signal the country's needs. This would facilitate the task of the commissioners whose appointment we have proposed. The press could in the meantime act as a substitute for national representation, since it will be read daily and inform the people. If the assembly in charge of debating and overseeing public affairs were to be made up of uninformed provincials or residents of the capital, it could quickly become a lamentably impotent instrument.

One should not act with haste; for the moment one should be satisfied by doing away with the existing impediments to give the press the expansion it merits. Let the Government establish a great newspaper to respond to articles that appear in the local or foreign press, defend the true interests of the Government and of the country, publish the laws, regulations and ordinances, comment upon them, and inform the public of the measures taken by the

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<sup>40</sup>The development of the press has followed a rather arduous path in the Ottoman Empire. Mahmud II was the first Ottoman sultan who appreciated the importance of the newspaper. During his reign a Frenchman was permitted to print a newspaper in French. This was followed by a weekly official gazette in Turkish. An Englishman printed the first private newspaper during Abdülmecid's reign; it was subsidized by the Government. Two additional newspapers in Turkish appeared in 1859; a third appeared in 1860, and a fourth in 1862. This last one was cut off in 1867 when an article it published was deemed subversive of public order. The press law was codified in 1865. Press freedom was not an accepted principle. Prior permit was needed to establish publishing companies and to print books and journals. A signed copy of each issue had to be reviewed by the Government; the publication of anything detrimental to public morals, religion or good customs, domestic order, the Sultan and the ministers was forbidden, so was the importation of periodicals from abroad, whether foreign or in Turkish. Foreigners were free to publish periodicals provided they accepted the jurisdiction of Ottoman officials and courts. Newspapers were to be informative, but not critical of the Government.



Government and their motives. This will disarm hostility. This newspaper should avoid flattery which vexes the public more than truth itself, however harsh it may be. Truth and sincerity should be its motto.

In Your own self-interest and in the interest of the public, we advise Your Majesty to reject definitely to have factories managed by salaried public employees. Imperial factories are very costly and are a heavy burden on private industry which alone has the capability to prosper. It would be better to convert into shares all their assets, buildings, and equipment, and leave their administration and management to private companies. Your Majesty and Your Government would then become shareholders of these companies and Your interests would be represented by the number of shares held. You would be represented on their boards, have the right to control, and receive dividends.

With their equipment put into good use — which we did not know how to do — these establishments would prosper. An examination of their accounts shows that currently their production cost is ten times higher than the value of their output, when one considers interest payments, maintenance, wages and salaries, etc., and the time it takes to manufacture each product. The private companies will furnish Your Majesty the same products at notably more advantageous cost and quality. Savings will be considerable.

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Permit me, Sire to submit to Your Majesty some reflections on the navy. With its geographic location and expanse Turkey borders on the Indian Ocean, the Black Sea, the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, and the Adriatic. The ships of all the European powers sail through these seas. Turkey's role in shipping does not correspond to its position. Far from competing with other powers, the Empire appears to be engaged in surrendering to Europe. This is not to say that Your Majesty's fleet is not sailing proudly in the waters of the Bosphorus; but the superb cruisers, built at high cost in foreign shipyards, are taking the place of a merchant marine that we should be creating instead.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Steamships were being acquired from abroad mainly for war purposes. Any local construction was limited to ship hulls with machinery and equipment being imported from England. And even these were being used for war purposes, while abroad steamships were being used interchangeably for commercial as well as military purposes. In 1844 a boat was assigned to carry cargo and passengers between Istanbul and Gemlik, İzmit, Bandırma, and Tekirdağ and a passenger boat began to operate between Istanbul and outlying areas of the Bosphorus. A second was added in 1850, and subsequently the steamship company *Şirketi Hayriye* was set up. The attempts to set up a second company in 1855 did not succeed for lack of demand for its shares. Hence passenger and cargo service between Ottoman ports and European ports was being rendered by Austrian, French, English, and Russian lines. Abdülaziz was a fan of ironclad warships; hence, all emphasis was put on building a large navy, and the merchant marine continued to be neglected during his reign as well.



These superb ships, moored at the edge of Your Majesty's palace, are a sad sight. What a needless waste of funds! The satisfaction one derives from admiring this fleet is not worth the millions it costs. If it were of some use, we would not regret the expenditure. But this is not the case, much less is it a case of waging war or conquest. We should not take Europe as a model.<sup>42</sup> The great maritime powers have colonies and interests to defend in faraway places. It may be that rivalry among them has driven them to refine the construction of their iron ships. This fever of naval construction may possibly also stem from the desire to assist these countries' metallurgical industry. Previously this fleet was needed to transport troops and material for the protection of their shores. But today the merchant marine, thanks to steam power, is capable of transporting troops during wartime. The currently available means are sufficient to defend and protect the shores. The events during France's last war support our argument. The splendid French fleet merely made a demonstration in the Baltic Sea without achieving any practical result. For a state like ours, a fleet and its maintenance entail totally unnecessary expenditures.

It is for these reasons, Sire, that, after careful consideration of the situation and despite the sacrifices made in 1855 to destroy Russia's naval forces in the Black Sea, we have decided in favor of signing the London Protocol on the re-establishment of the Russian fleet.

Russia already had a sizeable fleet when the annulment of Article VI of the Treaty of Paris was sought. This very same article allowed her to increase it fourfold. The re-establishment of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea, as sought by the Gorchakov<sup>43</sup> memorandum, could only have aimed at satisfying Russia's and her sovereign's self-respect. It merely flattered the whim to build at great cost squadrons that time would destroy faster than cannons. The consequences of its rejection would have been grave. The circumstances and the situation in which France found herself made us suspect a trap: the memorandum may have been formulated with the hidden expectation that it would be rejected. But the interest of the Empire obliged us to accede. Time and events will prove whether we were justified or not.

All these considerations show how useless our fleet is. We recommend to Your Majesty to get rid of it while there is time. It is better to replace it with relatively small but fast steamships that can transport troops and war equipment. During periods of peace they would serve as coast guards, reinforce the merchant marine, and take over the functions of the Ottoman Maritime Company.

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<sup>42</sup>Abdülaziz's enthusiasm for ironclad warships was renewed in 1867 after his visit to Europe in the summer of that year.

<sup>43</sup>The spelling in the French version is Gortchacoff.



Such a fleet should be formed as a joint stock company and managed by a board of principal shareholders one of whom would be its director. Each ship would have a commanding officer; one-third of the crew would consist of navy personnel. The existing assets would be transferred to the new company in exchange for shares. These shares would be the property of Your Majesty. To enable the company to compete with Lloyd of Austria, the Messageries Maritimes and the Khédivié,<sup>44</sup> etc., additional shares would be sold to the public.

Sire, credit is one of the main pillars of the Empire. It would be prudent to attend to it. Up to now our credit has been maintained, because we have the reputation of good faith in fulfilling our obligations. But good faith is not enough for the future. Our credit is at the mercy of the slightest emergency. We must be prepared against all eventualities. The number of credit institutions must be reduced: these monopolize a large segment of the public wealth on which our credit is based; they paralyze the small industry and trade. The securities of these institutions compete in the securities exchange (bourse) with our bonds of 5 percent and our other securities. The manipulations in the securities exchange reduce not only their value but also that of other state funds. These ups and downs cause anxiety and panic among the holders of our paper.

To attend to immediate needs we should contract a large loan, with annual or semi-annual emissions. Its *unique*<sup>45</sup> objective should be to meet the budget deficits that could arise until the measures we are proposing to Your Majesty yield results.

I estimate that in three to four years our revenues would be more than sufficient to meet our expenditures. Such a loan, foreign or domestic, would succeed beyond all expectations. However, if we do not follow the course I am suggesting we could vegetate for some time to come, and the slightest blow to our credit will surely lead to our surrender. Sire, our country's health is in Your hands: nobody will hesitate to follow in Your footsteps. All other remedies to assure our future and retain public confidence will be ineffective and also damage our national credit.

People will object to our proposal regarding the credit institutions. It will be said: "*The country is short of currency in circulation; these institutions are large in number, and competition among them can ensure that it will be provided at low cost.*"<sup>46</sup> The first part of this objection is, alas, very true. Regarding the rest, it is easy to find out to whom and why these institutions lend credit. Where

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<sup>44</sup>Names of foreign ship companies that operated between Ottoman ports, and these ports and foreign ports.

<sup>45</sup>His italics.

<sup>46</sup>His italics.



does this money go? What purpose does it serve? It is destined to speculation in the securities exchange. It cannot be otherwise, for it is only at this exchange that sufficient earnings are made to pay the interests charged by the banks.

There is no need to mention Europe's example where numerous credit institutions do not lead the states to their ruin. I admit, this may be the case for the moment. But the time will come when Europe too will suffer from the large number of such institutions, although they are not the only source of saving. The European states are enjoying a high agricultural, industrial, and commercial prosperity. The dividends of these banks are never higher than the returns of commercial enterprises. Labor is well remunerated, if not as high as a bank. The result is that whoever owns capital invests half of it in an industrial, commercial, or agricultural enterprise which he himself manages (*please note that everybody works in Europe*),<sup>47</sup> invests a quarter in a large company, and deposits the rest in a credit institution. This last quarter is his reserve. One trusts these institutions because they are interested in small returns and not in speculating in the market. European financial institutions are savings banks. They develop and prosper, because they participate in large commercial and industrial enterprises, steamship companies, public work, etc. This, unfortunately, is not the case with us. Our institutions are at the mercy of the slightest emergency; hence, if they collapse, our public funds will bear the consequences.

It would be opportune for Your Majesty to do everything in Your power to stop the establishment of new credit institutions. Their number should increase only as our industry and trade expand. The exception should be institutions that exploit and develop our immense land resources or undertake large public works, such as railroads, highways, canals etc. These are, as in Europe, Land Credit, Agricultural Credit, Real Estate Credit and various construction banks. We should imitate Europe only in things that are useful to us.

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Sire, we have communicated to Your Majesty not only what concerned us deeply, but also some general ideas on measures to implement in the interest of Your Empire. We return for a brief moment to measures relating to administration and foreign policy.

The Government should do everything possible to put its house in order and command the respect, confidence, and allegiance of the people. The well-

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<sup>47</sup>His italics.



being and preservation of the Empire rests on the wisdom of the measures that will be taken. It is extremely important to show Europe that we are on the road to domestic recovery and that the welfare of our citizens is rising. This is necessary to *prevent them from questioning our rights.*<sup>48</sup>

We should return to the provinces the greatest portion of the revenues we derive from them in order to raise their spiritual and material welfare and show them that the state is a benefactor.

Thereby, Your Majesty's Government will have given a useful and orderly course to its foreign policy. Europe will contribute to this course, and no one will be able to argue that we are not on the road to progress. It is only then that the link which unites Turkey to Europe will be fortified. It is only then that the treaties that guarantee our integrity will cease to be illusory.

The fate of the Empire, God willing, is in the hands of Your August Majesty. Only You can make the Empire play the only appropriate role, i.e., that of a state that aspires to maintain a strong and protective stance. To maintain a permanent and sizeable army is superfluous and contrary to many interests. Similarly, the navy too is not sufficiently strong to bar an aggression. To construct fortresses in strategic points of our country is much more practical and would raise our prestige among our people.

Sire, we sincerely hope Your Majesty will accept our counsel favorably. It is dictated by experience. Its sole objective is Your inestimable interests. No member of Your circle can doubt the sincerity of our intentions. We have no self-interest in these matters.

In leaving with God's Will the honorable post Your Majesty, in His High Benevolence, has entrusted us with, we only regret not to be able to continue to offer You, as token of our gratitude, the best fruits of our labor and pain.

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<sup>48</sup>His italics.



THE UNIVERSITY OF SACHSEN-ANHALT

The University of Saxony-Anhalt is a public university with a long tradition of research and teaching. It is one of the leading universities in the region and is committed to providing high-quality education and research.

The university is organized into several faculties and departments, each with its own specific focus. The faculties include the Faculty of Business Administration, the Faculty of Engineering, and the Faculty of Life Sciences.

The University of Saxony-Anhalt is a member of the Association of Universities and Colleges in Saxony-Anhalt (VHS) and is also a member of the Association of Universities and Colleges in Germany (VHE).

The university is committed to providing high-quality education and research. It is also committed to providing a wide range of services to its students, including student support, career guidance, and financial aid.

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## THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF ÂLÎ PAŞA

- 1815 Born Mehmed Emin to a poor shopkeeper. Lost his father at a very early age.
- 1829 Clerk at the Secretariat of *Divan-ı Hümayun* (Imperial Council).
- 1830 Transferred to the *mühimme kalemi*. Given the *nom de plume* Âli because of his exceptional talent.
- 1833 Appointed to the Translation Bureau where he was tutored intensively in French for one year.
- 1835 Second secretary to the embassy in Vienna where he stayed one and a half year.
- 1837 Accompanied Ahmed Fethi Paşa to St. Petersburg. Subsequently second level interpreter at the Imperial Divan.
- 1838 Counsellor to Ambassador Mustafa Reşit Paşa in London.
- 1839 Returned to Istanbul upon Sultan Abdülmecid's accession to the throne. Re-employed as interpreter (Chargé on Mustafa Reşit's return to Istanbul).
- 1840 Ambassador to London for three and a half years.
- 1844 Appointed member of *Meclis-i Valâ-yı Ahkâm-ı Adliye* (Supreme Council of Judicial Ordinances, also known as the Grand Council of Justice).
- 1845 Deputized the foreign minister who had left for Lebanon. Appointed *Beylikçi* (Senior Chancery Officer) in the foreign ministry and member of the Ad Hoc Committee on Education.
- 1846 Foreign minister for the first time. Served on the *Meclis-i Maarif-i Umumiye* (Council on Public Education).
- 1848 Bestowed the titles of *vezir* and *paşa*. Ousted from his post upon Reşit Paşa's dismissal as grand vezir. President of the Grand Council of Justice. Foreign minister for the second time.
- 1850 Awarded the *İmtiyaz* medal. Appointed member of the Academy of Learning (*Encümen-i Daniş*).
- 1852 Awarded the second rank *Mecidi* order, and subsequently the first rank. Appointed grand vezir; dismissed after two months.



- 1853 Governor (*vali*) of the province of İzmir. Dismissed the same year, upon the Austrian ambassador's pressure, due to a conflict between Austrians and Italians.
- 1854 Governor of the province Hüdavendigâr (Bursa). President of the Tanzimat Council. Foreign minister for the third time.
- 1855 As foreign minister headed the delegation to the preliminary peace conference in Vienna during the Crimean War. Subsequently grand vezir for one and a half year.
- 1856 As grand vezir drew up the *Hatt-ı Hümayun* (Imperial Edict) of 1856. Plenipotentiary delegate to the Paris conference. Signed the Treaty of Paris. Dismissed from the grand vezirate upon pressure of the British ambassador. Appointed foreign minister but did not accept. Member of *Meclis-i Vükelâ* (Council of Ministers).
- 1857 Foreign minister for the fifth time.
- 1858 Grand vezir for the third time at the death of Reşit Paşa. Presided the Conference in Istanbul regarding the developments in Montenegro.
- 1859 Dismissed from the grand vezirate for having suggested a cut in excessive palace spending as one remedy for the fiscal crisis that then faced the Empire. Appointed President of the Tanzimat Council. Was instrumental in setting up the *Mekteb-i Mülkiye* (School of public Administration).
- 1860 Deputized the grand vezir during the latter's four and a half month tour of Rumeli. Continued to preside the Tanzimat Council. Deputized the foreign minister during the latter's visit to Damascus to deal with the Druse massacre of the Maronites and pacify Syria.
- 1861 Foreign minister for the sixth time; subsequently grand vezir for the fourth time under Sultan Abdülaziz. Awarded the *Mürassa Osmanî* order. Dismissed from the grand vezirate. Appointed foreign minister for the seventh time and served as such until 1867. Put the ordinance of Lebanon in place that increased the representation of non-Muslims in provincial governments.
- 1864 Presided the meeting in Istanbul regarding the status of Moldavia and Walachia.
- 1867 Appointed grand vezir for the fifth time, when Mehmet Rüştü Paşa resigned fearing that Serbian fortresses would be lost and the Crete rebellion would have disastrous consequences for the Empire. Agreed to the evacuation of the said fortresses. Attained the height of his political power when he was appointed regent during Abdülaziz's forty-four day visit to Europe, the first and only time an Ottoman subject was so appointed. Visited Crete to quell the insurrection, restore peace, put an end to proposals for a European investigation committee, and formulated the island's new *nizamname* (organic



- statute) under which it was governed for the next thirty years. Worked out the plan to establish the Imperial Ottoman Lycée in Galatasaray.
- 1868 Returned to Istanbul. Restructured the Grand Council of Justice by splitting it into the *Şuray-ı Devlet* (Council of State) and the *Divan-ı Ahkâm-ı Adliye* (High Court of Justice) and thereby separated the executive from the judicial.
- 1869 Established the Ministry of Interior. Assumed the foreign ministry portfolio upon Fuad Paşa's death. From this year until his death he tackled the problems created by France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War; opposed Russia's demand to eliminate the Black Sea clauses of the Paris Treaty; restricted the excessive liberties of the Khedive of Egypt.
- 1871 Died in September in his home in Bebek on the Bosphorus.



SECTION TWO: THE LAST YEARS

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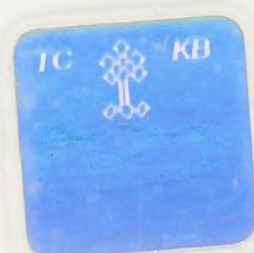






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