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IMPERIAL CENTER AND LOCAL GROUPS: TANZIMAT REFORMS IN THE PROVINCES OF EDİRNE AND ANKARA

Yonca Köksal*

The Tanzimat reform period, initiated with the Gülhane edict of 1839 and continuing up until the Ottoman-Russian war of 1876, was an important stage in the reorganization of the provincial administration of the Ottoman Empire. In order to increase state control, the modernizing and centralizing Tanzimat reforms addressed several areas of administration including the formation of a central bureaucracy, regulation of tax collection, and the pursuit of social and economic development in the Ottoman provinces.

The Tanzimat period has usually been interpreted as a top down reform process planned at the center and forcibly applied in the provinces. However, there is a growing literature that approaches the reforms as outcomes negotiated between the state and local groups (Sahara, 1998; Rogan, 1999), and this paper contributes to that literature by emphasizing their negotiated character. The reforms were not implemented as planned at the center, but changed in the process of application at the local level, with the final result depending on negotiations and bargaining between the imperial center and local groups, especially the local elite.

In comparing the process of reform implementation with local responses to this process in the provinces of Ankara and Edirne, this paper makes three important arguments. First, it emphasizes regional variation in the reform policies as well as in their ultimate effectiveness in increasing centralization and sustaining social and economic development. Scholars have explained this regional variation in terms of center periphery relations, contrasting reforms in the core lands with reforms in the periphery. In the heartland of the Ottoman Empire, the Balkans and Anatolia, it is argued, the reforms were relatively more effective in centralizing the administration owing to the formation of a new bureaucracy (Davison, 1963). In the periphery,

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including Eastern Anatolia and Arab lands such as Syria, Palestine and Lebanon, reforms produced gradual centralization, and local authorities continued to hold considerable power in the local administration (Hourani, 1968; Akarlı, 1993). Comparison of the reforms in Edirne and Ankara will show, however, that there was variation in how reforms were applied even in the core regions of the Ottoman Empire, and that this variation was closely related to the responses of local groups to the reforms.

The emphasis on regional variation brings us to the second point of the paper: while there was constant bargaining, negotiation, cooperation, and conflict between the imperial center and local elites throughout the Tanzimat period, the outcome of reform efforts was largely dependent on state-local group relations. The way the local elite interacted with one another and with the Ottoman state thus greatly influenced the effectiveness of the reforms. My third point is that, depending on its relations with the local level, the Ottoman state showed an ingenious capacity to learn from local responses and redefine its reform policies accordingly throughout the Tanzimat period. Thus the reforms were not a strict application of centrally planned policies, rather, they evolved as a process in which the Ottoman state blended old administrative practices with new procedures and learned from the local level in devising new policies.

Regional variance and the impact of state-local group relations on reform outcomes was exemplified in the provinces of Edirne and Ankara. Both these provinces were in the core lands of the empire and the same reform policies, that is, recentralization combined with social and economic development plans, were employed in both locations. Yet, reform outcomes differed widely between the two provinces, and this difference was closely related to different interaction patterns between the imperial center and local groups.

From 1839 to 1876 the province of Edirne enjoyed a strong revival as both local residents and the Ottoman state benefited from the reforms. The economy flourished as a result of incremental reforms in agriculture and trade organizations, and infrastructural improvements such as new transportation and communications networks and public buildings (Balkanlı, 1986; Akpınar, 1998; Balta, 1999). Moreover, the Ottoman state was able to double its taxation revenue and create an administrative hierarchy among the local government cadres.

In contrast, the outcome of reforms was less impressive in the province of Ankara, where the areas of centralization of local administration and tax revenue showed limited success. While the local administration was gradually centralized, the local elite still managed to fill many official posts in the new bureaucracy. Available statistics also show that the increase in tax revenue from Ankara was slow compared to that from Edirne. The first regular budget of the Ottoman empire that listed all expenses and earnings was published in 1279 (1863-64), and this budget documents tax revenue for both provinces: 106,727,579 *guruş* for Edirne and 31,401,118 *guruş* for Ankara (Şener, 1990). The next available figure for Edirne was for the year of 1871, and this show 130,331,655 *guruş*,¹ while the next available tax statistics for Ankara were from 1884, and the figure then was still only 41,864,248 *guruş*.²

The most visible difference brought about by the reforms was in the area of public works: by the end of the Tanzimat period, Edirne had a well developed infrastructure, including railroad and telegraph lines, and new schools and public buildings such as municipal buildings, clock towers, hospitals, and orphanages.³ In Ankara, infrastructure remained incomplete. Roads and bridges were not repaired, and railroads came to the city only in the late 1890s. While forty-four new schools were established mainly with local funds in the city of Edirne in 1839-1878 (Balta 1998), in the same time period there were constant requests for the repair and construction of schools and roads in Ankara, but in the absence of local funds the demands remained unmet. Local residents continuously complained about deficiencies in the local infrastructure; the lack of regular transportation and irrigation networks, the shortage of public buildings, and declining economic and agricultural activity were constant problems (Ortaylı, 1994; Kuban, 1994; Çadırcı, 1997).

This difference in reform outcome between Ankara and Edirne was related to differences in the level of economic development, composition of the local population, and the geopolitical situation of the two provinces. These characteristic differences influenced local relations, that is, the way the local elite interacted with other local actors and with the state; at the same time, local relations and ruling strategies were also independently influential on reform outcomes.

1 1870 Provincial Yearbook of Edirne (Edirne Vilayet Salnamesi).

2 1884 Provincial Yearbook of Ankara (Ankara Vilayet Salnamesi).

3 BOA (Prime Ministry Archives), İrade Suray-ı Devlet 649, 1286/1869.

In Ankara, economic underdevelopment limited trade relations among local actors, and the local elite did not have many opportunities to form alliances and coalitions with one another. A few notable families were influential in the local administration, but in the absence of coalition formation among local actors, there was no local support for the development projects. Edirne, in contrast, was characterized by a competitive elite obliged to form coalitions in order to survive intense economic competition. These coalitions were mainly based on economic interests, and they were temporary; that is, they generally dissolved after serving the specific economic transaction. Yet they also provided a basis for local cooperation on behalf of the state's development projects. Disregarding ethnic and religious origins, residents utilized existing coalitions to support local campaigns and maintain contributions to public works such as those mentioned above.

In the following pages I will first describe the socio-economic conditions that proved conducive to the emergence of local support for the reforms in Edirne, as well as conditions contributing to the absence of this support in Ankara, via an analysis of secondary sources. Then I will demonstrate the impact of local relations and economic conditions on the reforms using archival documents for the period 1839-1876 located at the Prime Ministry Archives in Istanbul. The focus in this section will be on public works and taxation, two important areas of reform. Finally, I will show how the Ottoman center incorporated local responses and adapted its policies in relation to the local administrations of both provinces.

The Province of Edirne

19th century Edirne was located in a part of Eastern Thrace close to the independent Greek state and bordering on the Danube province (the Tuna *vilayeti*, roughly covering contemporary Bulgaria), and was home to a Christian majority over which the Great powers claimed protection rights. This province extended over large fertile plains watered by three forks of the Danube: the Maritsa, the Arda, and the Tunja. The former province of Edirne covered what is now parts of Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey. In Ottoman times its borders extended from Filibe (Plovdiv) and the Black Sea port of Burgas (Bergos in contemporary Bulgaria) in the north, to Gelibolu (Galipoli) in the south. Gümülcüne (Komotini) in contemporary Greece and Tekfurdağı

(Tekirdağ/Rodosto) in Turkey, respectively, marked the western and eastern borders of the province.⁴

Edirne was located on the major roads that connected Istanbul to the Balkan lands of the empire. Thus, it was militarily important as a starting point for Ottoman expeditions into the Balkans. It was also located on the Via Egnatia, the ancient trade route connecting Asia Minor and Europe. Through the ports of Tekfurdağı and Enez, goods from Asian cities reached Edirne and continued on to Eastern and Central European cities such as Salonica, Budapest and Vienna. Even as early as the 14th century products from India and China such as spices, clothing, and leather were available in the city, while trade in manufactured goods was the main economic activity in the region (Zachariadou, 1996).

As a result of the development of trade and commercial agriculture, two local groups gained influence in the 19th century: Muslim landholders and non-Muslim (mainly Greek and Jewish) merchants and traders, who together occupied the upper niches of the bourgeoisie. The landlords were mainly Muslims, having earned rights over land as fief-grants in earlier centuries or through tax collection (McGowan, 1981; Güran, 1998). Although landlords were Muslims, the majority of the population in Edirne was non-Muslim including Greek, Bulgarian, Jewish and Armenian communities.⁵ The non-Muslim communities took advantage of their religious affiliations and familiarity with European languages to advance their trade connections with European merchants, thus becoming the local middlemen for trade between the Ottoman Empire and Europe. Throughout the 19th century, non-Muslim traders gained power and became a challenge to the traditional authority of religious leaders and *çorbacı*s (non-Muslim tax collectors and/or notables who played a mediating role in relations between the state and local *millets*). Several examples of the new elite's challenges to the rule of the old elite may be found in the Ottoman archives.⁶

4 BOA, Edirne Vilayet Salnamesi, 1878.

5 A 1831 Census recorded 145,898 (42.6%) Muslims and 196,520 (57.4%) non-Muslims in the province of Edirne. This figure became 57,921 (31.9%) for Muslims and 122,412 (67.6%) for non-Muslims in the 1870-71 Census. 1831 Census results are given in Panzac (1996). 1870-71 Census figures were published in the Yearbooks of the Province of Edirne (Edirne Vilayet Salnamesi) (1870, 1872). Balta (1998) also published census figures from the Provincial Yearbook for the district of Edirne for 1887-88.

6 A recorded example of this sort of challenge was the formation of a Bulgarian church in Filibe (Plovdiv) which led to a confrontation between the new elite of merchants and the old religious leaders (*metropolid*). BOA, Ayn. Def. 441, 1273.N.23/1856.

With increasing economic development and the rise of landlords and non-Muslim merchants, the *millet* system gradually began to change: members of different communities interacted with each other more often, maintaining trade ties and even forming partnerships. These coalitions and frequent interactions also brought conflict and tensions among different *millets*.⁷ Scholarly studies show that the *millets* became better organized as financial support from the new bourgeoisie contributed to the construction of new schools and the formation of literary and aid societies (Balta, 1998; Bali, 1998). Memoirs left by some residents of the province confirm that the cities, especially Edirne and Filibe, became cosmopolitan settings bringing people from various religious and ethnic background together in public places such as cafes and literary clubs (Balkanlı, 1986; Peremeci, 1939).

Another important feature of the local elite structure in 19th century Edirne was the scarcity of powerful notables belonging to local dynasties. Landlords held tax collection privileges in several towns and villages, but their power never accumulated sufficiently for them to assume autonomous leader positions.⁸ Local notables, the *ayans* from dynasties such as the Dağdevirenzades and Tepedelenlis who had controlled the local administration, had been eliminated long before the Tanzimat, during Mahmud II's centralizing reforms (Çataltepe, 1997; Armağan, 1998; Emecen, 1998). Middle range local intermediaries such as tax collectors and local council members were numerous during the Tanzimat. Although in competition with one another for economic advantages, they also formed coalitions and partnerships to enhance their commercial positions and taxation privileges. The section below on public works and taxation will present some examples of coalition formation from archival documents.

During the Tanzimat the Ottoman state followed an integrationist policy in Edirne, meaning that it directly intervened in the areas of interrelations and public life at the local level. Reasons for this integrationist policy include the central location of this province in the Balkans and its majority non-Muslim population, and the desire to

7 Cases of ethnic tension among *millets* reported from several provincial districts including Tekfurdağı, Filibe and Kızanlık are on record in the archives. BOA, Ayn. Dft. 445, p.129-130, 1276.C.2/1860; BOA, Ayn. Dft. 451, 1279.H.1/1863; and BOA, Ayn. Dft. 820, 1287.S.31/1871.

8 Examples of these local intermediaries, such as Hacı Ahmed Ağa and Mustafa Cezar, will be presented in the section on taxation.

prove to the European powers that it was capable of administering non-Muslim populations. The state thus provided new schools, new police organizations, modern bureaucracy, public buildings, and agricultural and economic development plans for the province.

The prosperity of the local elite enabled it to supplement these state projects with monetary and labor contributions, for which its members were able to organize quickly in times of need. Although intense economic competition created some tensions among them, their ability to form trade coalitions across religious and ethnic boundaries helped generate local support for reform policies whose advantages were understood, thus inspiring cooperation. Examples of this cooperation will be given in the section of public works and taxation as mentioned above, but first economic conditions and local relations in the 19th century province of Ankara will be described in the following section.

The Province of Ankara

The 19th century province of Ankara is located in Central Anatolia, sharing borders with the provinces of Konya, Sivas, Kastamonu and Hudavendigar.⁹ During the Tanzimat the French *département* system was adapted, which divided local administration into provinces hierarchically organized into sub-units: districts, sub-districts, and villages. This province thus included the district of Ankara (the central district of the province), as well as those of Bozok, Çorum, Kayseri, Kangırı, Kırşehir and Yozgad.¹⁰ The province was located in a secure region of Central Anatolia, and the majority of its population was Muslim with Armenian, Greek, and Jewish minorities.¹¹

In contrast to Edirne's economic development, the province of Ankara's economy showed a rapid decline. An important textile pro-

9 The Yearbook of the Province of Ankara (1290/1873; 1325/1907).

10 These districts changed frequently during the Tanzimat. The district of Kırşehir appears under the administration of the province in late 1870s while the district of Bozok was incorporated into the district of Yozgad after 1864. The district of Koçhisar was also incorporated into the province in 1882.

11 The 1880 Census showed 642,785 (81.7%) Muslims and 58,224 (8.3%) non-Muslims in the province of Ankara. In the city of Ankara where non-Muslim groups were more likely to reside, there were 12,216 (54%) Muslims and 10,370 (46%) non-Muslims in 1830. For 1848, the figures were 12,780 (54.5%) Muslims and 10,692 (45.5%) non-Muslims. For 1830 census results, see Özdemir (1998). Galanti (1951) published 1848 figures.

duction center in the 17th and 18th centuries, Ankara lost its significance after the Ottoman market was opened to cheap British textiles (Özdemir, 1998).

Economic underdevelopment combined with unfavorable climatic conditions to hinder the emergence of commercial agriculture; throughout the Tanzimat period droughts spurred migration to other cities in Western Anatolia. Population decline was thus a factor impeding industrial and economic development (Kuneralp, 1997). The lack of a regular transportation network capable of bringing grains from the region to the world market also impeded the emergence of wealthy landlords and merchants.¹² As reported in the memoirs of local residents, there was a small merchant and trade community in Ankara, but it was a closed community of non-Muslim, mainly Armenian and Greek merchants (Kasparian, 1968).

Ankara's economic backwardness contributed to a continuation of the traditional local social structure. In contrast to Edirne, where the old *millet* structure was gradually transformed into one of frequent inter-communal interactions among well organized religious and ethnic groups, the *millets* of Ankara did not form close relations with one another. They interacted in the economic activities of daily life but remained separate in their social lives. This social segregation of communities was confirmed in European travel literature from the 19th century (Mordtmann, 1925; Akpınar, 1998), while Avram Galanti's history of Ankara (1951), using both Ottoman and Jewish community documents, also detects the relative weakness of inter-communal relations.

An analysis of collective petitions from the Prime Ministry Archives further elucidates this weakness of relations between communities.¹³ Collective petitions are those signed by ten or more local residents on various issues of local administration and sent to the imperial center. They cover such topics as complaints about taxation or state officials, voluntary contributions to public works, and content or discontent with the administration. Each petition records the name, occupation, and seal of its signatories. A large number of such petitions signed by

¹² The railroad connecting the cities of Istanbul and Ankara was built in 1890, but it stopped at the city itself. In the absence of roads connecting other towns and cities to that of Ankara, the railroad did not help much in the transportation of crops from surrounding villages (Ortaylı, 2000).

¹³ Collective petitions may be found in the İrade, Amedi Mektubi Kalebi and Amedi Mektubi Umum Vilayat catalogues in the Prime Ministry Archives, Istanbul.

residents from different religious and ethnic backgrounds demonstrates both the frequency of contacts among these different communities and their ability to make common claims in the name of the locality regardless of ethnic and religious differences.

Fifty-seven collective petitions bearing the signature of 10 or more local residents may be found in the Ottoman provincial registries for the province of Ankara. Muslims and non-Muslims put their signatures together on 42% of all such petitions. We find the same number (57) of collective petitions in the archives from the province of Edirne, but a full 95% of these were signed by Muslim and non-Muslim residents. In Edirne, then, residents were able to organize collective petitioning in spite of ethnic and religious boundaries. The prevalent pattern in Ankara was separate petitioning from the various ethnic and religious communities, yet more evidence of the limited capacity for collective action of the kind bringing members of different *millets* together for the public good.

Economic backwardness in Ankara thus hampered the emergence of a new elite group in the form of merchants and traders, and the local administration remained in the hands of existing local intermediaries, generally members of notable families. Local families, especially the Cabbarzades, were the main brokers of relations between the imperial center and local groups. The members of this family held official posts such as governorship and tax collection privileges as well as securing local council memberships.¹⁴ Lesser families such as the Zennecizades and Mollazades provided limited supervision in their localities through local council membership and administration positions, tax collection rights, and leadership roles in the settlement of nomadic tribes in the province.¹⁵

The Ottoman state did not consider these local intermediaries as a challenge to their rule. Even the preeminent family of the region, the Cabbarzades, had been loyal to the Ottoman state since Selim III's attempts to form a new army (Özkaya, 1994), and local intermediaries continued to occupy state offices during the Tanzimat. There were no

¹⁴ For example, of the nine members of the newly founded council of the town of Kangırı in 1847, three bore the name "Cabbarzade" (Cabbarzade Latif Mustafa, Cabbarzade Sadeddin, and Cabbarzade Mehmed Ali) (BOA, A.MKT. 95/69, 1271.10.9/1854).

¹⁵ The Zennecizades were the old *ayan* family of 18th century Kayseri. They secured local council memberships during the Tanzimat (Özkaya, 1994).

threats to Ottoman rule in this secure region of Central Anatolia except for certain rebellious tribes to which the Ottoman state applied stricter settlement policies to bring them under central rule. Rather, the preferred ruling strategy was extractive: the center collected as much revenue as possible without directly intervening in local relations. Attempts to reorganize local leadership structure (by eliminating old intermediaries) were limited, as was the state's investment in social and economic development projects.

In Ankara, old notable families remaining in control of the local administration, in addition to the lack of coalitions among the *millet*s in support of reform projects, combined to create a structure that did not facilitate the application of reforms in the form of development projects supported by indigenous initiatives. In the next section I will show how these different structures facilitated or impeded specific state reforms in Ankara and Edirne.

The Impact of Local Relations on Reform Success: Public Works and Taxation

Several cases from the Ottoman archives illustrate how local coalitions facilitated reform efforts in Edirne as well as how the lack of local support prevented the implementation of reforms in Ankara. I will present examples from two major areas of the Tanzimat reforms, both interesting as measures of centralization: public works and tax collection. The area of public works reveals the cooperative aspect of reforms since residents frequently made requests for improvements in local infrastructure such as communication and transportation networks, the latter crucial for transporting crops to distant markets, and public buildings such as municipal offices, hospitals, schools and orphanages, all of which were generally well received by local populations for the services they provided.

Yet the issue of public works was also implicated in a dynamic of increasing state control: with new roads and telegraph lines, the imperial center was gaining greater access to remote areas and thus more information about local realities. At the same time, public buildings displayed the presence of the state at the local level, municipal buildings and clock towers being among the more visible signs of the state in the local landscape. Schools and hospitals built by the state provided community service, but in return, centralized this service at the

imperial center. The centralization of community services was obviously a potential source of contention between the imperial center and local groups resistant to the centralization of these services, yet contention was not generally the final outcome of these interactions. The gains for local groups and the central state often enough coincided, with a number of reform policies proving to be of mutual benefit to both.

In contrast to public works, for which local support and cooperation is more likely, taxation reveals the contentious character of state reforms. Increasing state revenue through taxation meant more cuts from the income of local residents, which was naturally more likely to meet the resistance of local groups. However, some local groups, such as tax collectors, benefited from tax increases. Tax collection, in fact, was the least centralized area of the Tanzimat administration. Local tax collectors, having paid a prearranged amount to collect taxes from local residents according to the traditional system, continued to work during the Tanzimat because centrally appointed tax collectors failed to collect significantly more tax revenue.

The issue of tax collection in Edirne and Ankara created much contention between the imperial center and local groups. In both provinces local intermediaries continued to control tax collection, but in Edirne tax collection yielded greater returns when tax collection companies, bringing several tax collectors together within a single company, emerged towards the end of the period. In a few areas, such as rice cultivation, tax collection was left to agricultural cooperatives. A new development of the Tanzimat era, cooperatives were yet another example of the extent of local elite cooperation.

As a rule, local support in the form of both monetary contributions and labor was an important resource enabling completion of the public works projects in the province of Edirne. Some public building projects were implemented through public campaigns, as local councils took on the role of organizing them in support of the Ottoman state's social and economic development plans. Local residents contributed because they needed roads to reach world markets and public buildings such as hospitals and schools to better serve their community, and increasing centralization of the local administration was a natural result of this process. On the other hand, the decentralization of certain public works, especially the schools opened by the *millet*s independent of state supervision, nurtured an increasing self-awareness of these

groups, and this development advanced simultaneously with the state centralization process being felt in other areas of life in Edirne.

Residents of Ankara needed new roads and public buildings as much as the residents of Edirne, but they did not form local initiatives, partly because of the limited economic activity and industry and the relative poverty of this province compared to that of Edirne, as mentioned above. A certain number of prosperous notable families, such as the Cabbarzades of Ankara, contributed to the public good by constructing mosques and inns and by creating endowments (*vakf*) before and after the Tanzimat (Özkaya, 1994). Yet their contributions were not sufficient to generate collective local initiatives for the support of development projects in the absence of cooperation and support among local actors for such projects. In the following pages the varying levels of local cooperation and their differential impacts on reform success will be illustrated with several examples from the areas of public works and taxation.

Public Works

A comparison of proceedings from the annual provincial council meetings from Edirne and Ankara for the 1865-9 period shows how local contributions facilitated reform success. Annual provincial councils were an innovation of the Provincial Law of 1864. Councils at every level of administration (from city to town and village level) existed since the beginning of the Tanzimat, and were responsible for administrative matters such as tax collection, appointment of *müdürs* (managing directors or mayors) to smaller towns, and the construction and repair of buildings and roads.

The 1864 Provincial Law had reorganized the diffuse structure of administrative units, each with its own council reporting to the provincial governor, by making the local councils more centralized. Each town (*kaza*) now sent two representatives to the provincial capital where the annual provincial councils were held. These representatives reported their demands on a broad range of issues such as agricultural policies, taxation, public works, and the misconduct of state officials. The records of these demands were sent to the *Meclis-i Vala* in Istanbul, from where they were reported to the relevant ministries. The central government took these demands seriously, and the ministerial investigation of each demand was also recorded as a separate

defter (dossier) in the Ottoman archives. The demands of local groups together with the responses from the center as reported in the archives provide a valuable source for studying the negotiations on reform policies between the state and local levels. Comparison of the Edirne and Ankara provincial council meetings also reveals important differences in the nature of local demands and the degree of local support for the reforms in both provinces.

The proceedings of the Ankara councils contrast with those of Edirne. Edirne council proceedings reveal local cooperation, mainly in the form of contribution collections for development projects. While the factors of relatively less wealth and the lack of collective initiatives in support of development projects in Ankara have been noted above, documents also suggest that Ankara residents assumed that development projects would be funded entirely by the state.

A quick look at the decisions of Ankara's annual council meeting of 1869 shows this lack of local initiative. The proceedings note proposals for the construction of a hospital and an orphanage and the repair of a pump, all of which were to be accomplished through the contributions of wealthy residents. However, the council rejected the proposal as too expensive. It was decided that wealthy residents would undertake only the orphanage and pump repair, and residents would not be coerced into making monetary contributions. Hospital construction was left to the municipality, and for this the mayor was allowed to collect funds from the cultivation of fallow lands. However, the mayor objected that there were not enough empty plots for cultivation, and the funds could only be raised by levying a temporary tax: two kilos of wheat from each landowner.¹⁶ This case shows that even the local elite was unwilling (and likely unable) to contribute to public projects.

Among the council's other decisions was a proposal for the creation of "*memleket sandıkları*" (savings banks funded from the contributions of local residents, used for providing credits and loans to the needy). However, this was a late development in response to a state ruling requiring the formation of local banks in each province. In the Balkan provinces including Edirne local banks had been established five to ten years earlier (Davison, 1963).

The 1869 Ankara council also mentioned the need for railroads, but local contributions would not be forthcoming for this as residents were

¹⁶ BOA, Ayn. Dft. 805, 1286.S.15/1869.

already paying for in-town road construction.¹⁷ There was limited local support for the construction of the telegraph network; for example, some residents of Ayaş willingly donated wood and labor for building a telegraph line. The Ottoman state generally provided most of the funding for the construction of telegraph lines, while a foreign construction company completed the railroad from Istanbul to Ankara after 1890 (Ortaylı, 1994).

Public works activity was at times contentious in the Ankara region, as the expansion of state control met the resistance of tribal groups. When the state sought to extend telegraph lines to regions inhabited by semi-nomadic tribes, tribe members, aware that communication networks were a way of increasing state control, cut wires and otherwise attempted to prevent the construction of telegraph lines, in addition to robbing postal carriers.¹⁸

In contrast to the results of the Ankara meeting, above, Edirne provincial council meetings evidence a spirit of cooperation and a willingness to support public projects. Meeting records show that residents willingly contributed money and labor for the projects and organized public campaigns to build several public buildings.

The 1868 annual Edirne council discussed the construction of a hospital, an orphanage, and military barracks on vacant state land close to the old palace. This was a major undertaking since it included the simultaneous construction of several buildings. Although the state approved their construction, it could not afford to fund them all; military barracks were given priority for security reasons. Local inhabitants undertook responsibility for the hospital and orphanage, the governor also contributing to this campaign by selling stones left over from the repair of the old palace.¹⁹ Since construction of public buildings was largely carried out by Edirne inhabitants, annual provincial council meetings became important places to raise funds for public campaigns among wealthy members of the community.²⁰

Numerous documents related to road construction may be found in the Ottoman archives. In the province of Edirne local inhabitants,

17 BOA, Ayn. Dft. 805, 1286.S.15/1869 and BOA, Ayn. Dft. 805, 1288.C.18/1871.

18 For example, some members of the Afşar and Rışvanlı tribes robbed postal carriers in Ankara, BOA, A.MKT, 153/44, 1264/1847.

19 BOA, Ir. MVL 25885, 1285/1868.

20 BOA, Ir. Sr.D. 487, 1284.S.2/1867.

councils, and governors wrote to the center to obtain road construction permits, and local residents willingly undertook their funding. For example, the residents of the town of Tekfurdağı (alternatively Tekirdağ or Rodosto) collected money and began constructing roads to their town. Tekfurdağı's town council then wrote to the center complaining of engineers who took local money and left without completing the job—leaving the road unfinished at an hour's distance from the town. The state responded by ordering that the engineers be tried in court.²¹ The state generally encouraged local offers for construction except for first and second category roads (major arteries with higher security priority).

Even though the state was desperately short of construction project funds, it declined the Edirne council's request to locally finance a major road from the town of Filibe to Hasköy. The traders and merchants of Hasköy's grand bazaar were permitted to pay for streets and roads within the town, but since the Filibe-Hasköy road was important for security reasons it remained the state's responsibility.²² This example shows that in these new realms of contention over state and local areas of responsibility, the Ottoman state increased its visibility by controlling major construction projects.

The boundary between state and local areas of responsibility for the transportation network was not easy to draw. Roads were crucial to the state for both security reasons and the timely conveyance of taxes to the center, and also important to locals for transporting their products to the markets. Most villages and towns were eager to expand their road networks, and most residents of Edirne province were willing to help pay for road, bridge, and port construction. A rich merchant of Şarköy, a port town in the Marmara Sea, represented his town at the annual provincial council meeting in 1869. In the name of local residents, he requested that the ferryboat that transported goods and people from Istanbul to Izmir stop in Şarköy. Should the company not benefit financially from this additional ferry stop, Şakir Bey personally guaranteed a contribution of 5000 *guruş* every year to supplement the company's earnings.²³ Expanding trade and the developing economy necessitated a well-developed transportation network, and Edirne inhabitants were willing to pay for it.

21 BOA, Ayn.D. 824, 1289.M.3/1872.

22 BOA, Ayn.D. 457, 1282.E.21/1865.

23 BOA, Ir. Sr.D. 649, 1286/1869.

In contrast, in the province of Ankara negotiations over roads between the imperial center and localities were mainly limited to the inhabitants' attempts to upgrade the status of third and fourth category roads to second category, since this was a way to receive financial help from the state by claiming that the roads to their towns and villages were crucial for security concerns. When they failed in this request they claimed that they needed extra funds because of famine, and that without new roads to reach the markets they were unable to survive poor harvest seasons. The state was quite careful in handling these complaints since economic hardship could lead to mass discontent and possible rebellion. The state sent investigators from the center to research the strategic importance of these roads, and the decision to finance them was explained to local officials and provincial councils in detail.²⁴

Both support and resistance to the centralization of public works were evident at the local level, as exemplified in the case of schooling. Although the state strove to amalgamate higher education by creating mixed enrollment schools for Ottoman subjects from different religious and ethnic backgrounds, schooling, especially primary education, for the most part remained in the hands of the *millets*. Each community created and managed its own schools, hospitals and aid societies, funded by its own bourgeoisie.²⁵ This decentralized school system had a dual impact: one was that residents became literate in Ottoman, as well as in foreign languages in order to trade with European merchants; the other was that the non-Muslim schools inspired nationalist ideologies within their communities. Thus, the empowerment of non-Muslim communities created challenges for state rule under given conditions, those being the Russian War, external pressure from the European states, and increasing connections with European capitals. Taken together, these conditions did not leave much chance for the success of the Ottoman citizenship project.

Taxation

Taxation was another measure of gradually centralized state control. Traditionally, taxes were collected in kind by local tax collectors

²⁴ For example, a bridge repair in the district of Kayseri was approved after a careful investigation. BOA, İrade Dahiliye 39434, 1284/1867.

²⁵ For example, the Greek community collected money and repaired their community school in Uzuncaabad Hasköy, in the province of Edirne. BOA, A. MKT., 200/54, 1265/1848.

who bid a certain amount for the right to do so. This system continued during the Tanzimat. A brief experiment (1839-1841) with centrally-appointed tax collectors (*muhassıl*) failed when they proved unable to deal with the complexities of local tax collection. Registries and censuses recording individuals' wealth and income were inadequate, and in the absence of a regular transportation network it was very difficult to transport taxes in kind (e.g., grains) to the imperial center. Thus, local tax collectors resumed their activities without delay in 1841.

Tax collection created tensions among local residents, tax collectors, and the state in both Edirne and Ankara. The new regulations coincided with an increase in taxes contrary to local residents' expectations. In Ankara, several complaints were registered regarding irregularities in tax collection. Complaints generally referred to misuses of power by governors and tax collectors; in one example, an investigation found the governor of the town of Akköprü guilty of collecting taxes for himself, and he was exiled to another town in the province of Ankara.²⁶

Another case involved complaints brought against a certain Hacı Seyyid Ağa, a local council member and important notable in the town administration of Kangırı. He enjoyed good relations with the newly appointed local governor, Şakir Bey, and assisted him in the difficult task of collecting taxes from the quasi-settled Yeniil tribe in 1858. However, complaints surfaced about misuse of power, mainly that he and the new governor were overtaxing. They were also accused of being involved in the slave trade by selling gypsy children as servants for wealthy households. The state limited their control over the Yeniil tribe by transferring the tribal administration to another locality,²⁷ but Hacı Seyyid remained unarrested. In 1867, a commissioner sent from the center reported that the residents of Kangırı were polarized and divided into two camps. Hacı Seyyid was a central player in this divisiveness and had been active in organizing his supporters.²⁸

Several cases of contention over tax collection came to light in Edirne as well, in addition to confusion about who was responsible for this task: residents of the town of Vize complained that the town governor abused his power by attempting to collect taxes from residents.²⁹ Apparently, residents and the governor differed over whether or not tax collection was included among the governor's duties.

²⁶ BOA, Ayn. Dft. 420, 1267.M.19/1850.

²⁷ BOA, Ayn. Dft., n. 441, 1274.M.30/1857.

²⁸ BOA, İrade Suray-ı Devlet, 425, 1284. M.29/1867.

²⁹ BOA, Ayn. Dft. 385, 1261/1845.

A major difference between Edirne and Ankara in the area of tax collection was the ability of Edirne tax collectors to form coalitions to increase their profits. Tax collectors controlled several towns and villages by allying with one another and subleasing their collection rights. An example of maximizing state and local positions was that of Hacı Ahmed Ağa of Edirne. Hacı Ahmed was a member of the local Edirne council and the founder of a tax collection company in Edirne. He served as tax collector for the city of Edirne and the towns of Kırkkilise and Pınar Hisar. He was also the collector of animal taxes in the town of Sultanyeri and held tax collection rights on tobacco in the district of Edirne. He subleased these tax collection rights to local, mostly non-Muslim tax collectors. Since the 18th century it had been common practice for wealthy tax collectors who won tax auctions in the central city to sublease them to local collectors. However, this practice of holding multiple positions caused some problems too. When a dispute broke out between Hacı Ahmed Ağa and Greek merchants over the sum to be levied on tobacco, the Greek consulate in Edirne complained about him to Istanbul. The issue became an international one, and Hacı Ahmed Ağa was forced to resign from the local council.³⁰

Another interesting example of multiple position-holding was that of Mustafa Cezzar of Edirne. He was both a local council member and a tax collector in several towns, including the wealthy towns of Havsa (where he owned several landholdings [*çiftlik*]), Dimetoka, Kızılağaç and Kırkkilise.³¹ He even held tax collection rights in the district of Ankara, rights which he subleased to local tax collectors.³² He used his local council membership to auction tax farming rights to himself, then increased his control over local politics by subleasing these rights to local collectors. One tax collector in Kırkkilise, a certain Yorgaki, asked for Cezzar's help in subleasing his own tax farming to local collectors.³³

Mustafa Cezzar's use of influence did not go uncontested. Subleasing led to the double taxation of peasants, and local residents consequently complained to the center. Especially when Cezzar Bey tried to extend his control over the town of Havsa, where he had large

30 BOA, Cevdet Dahiliye, 16651, 1274.N.15/1857.

31 BOA Ayn. Dft. 434, p. 8, 1270.Ha.24/1853, Ayn. Dft. 448, 1277.Ha.4/1860, and Ayn.Dft. 820, 1287.R.27/1870.

32 BOA, Ayn. Dft. 808, p. 1, 1283.M.87/1866.

33 BOA, Ayn. Dft. 434, 1270.Ha.24/1853.

landholdings, locals requested help from the state, which ordered an investigation.³⁴ The cases of both Hacı Ahmed Ağa and Cezzar Bey attest to the frequent interactions between the Muslim and non-Muslim elite regarding tax collection.

The geographical expansion of Hacı Ahmed Ağa and Mustafa Cezzar's taxation privileges was impressive. No such actor in Ankara, even members of the Cabbarzade family, was able to extend control to so many remote towns by this means. For example, a member of the Cabbarzade family, Cabbarzade Veli Ağa, together with his partner, appears as a tax collector for the town of Kangırı in 1852.³⁵ Yet the alliances of the Cabbarzade family were spatially limited to the county of Yozgad and neighboring Kangırı. While I was unable to locate any documents about tax collector alliances in more distant towns, documents on tax collectors in Edirne forming alliances with collectors in remote towns of the province were numerous in the archives.

Another example of competition and coalition building was documented in the case of Enis Efendi, İzzet Bey, and Hasan Bey of Filibe (now Plovdiv, then a district in the province of Edirne). Enis Efendi and İzzet Bey were the wealthiest individuals in Filibe.³⁶ They owned rice paddies, and were part of the religious bureaucracy (*müderri*s). Hasan Bey was from a local family, a member of the Filibe council, and also a rice cultivator. Although his wealth was not as great as that of Enis or İzzet, he was still among the wealthier residents of the region. Enis Efendi and Hasan Bey cooperated to secure state monetary aid (*iane akçesi*) for the support of rice cultivation. Although the local council was supposed to be responsible for distributing this aid

34 BOA, Ayn. Dft. 821, p. 8, 1290. Ha.24/1873.

35 BOA, Ayn. Dft. 435, 1268.R.16/1852.

36 Property registers of Filibe (Filibe TemettuUat Defteri 1260-61[1844-45]) report İzzet Bey and Enis Efendi as the wealthiest individuals in town: a member of the religious clergy (*müderri*s-i *kiramdan*) and a resident of the Hacı Ömer neighborhood, Enis Efendi owned 12 shares of rice paddies. His total revenue from rice was 717,255 *guruş* for the years of 1844 and 1845. He also owned three other landholdings (*çiftlik*s) in the villages of Permene, Çeşnigar and Elvebler. His net worth (after taxes) was 306,521 *guruş*. His neighbor, İzzet Bey, who resided on the same street, belonged to the same religious clergy (*müderri*s-i *kiramdan*). Like Enis Efendi, he owned rice paddies. He had more shares (32) in rice cultivation than Enis Efendi, but his biannual revenue was less than that of his neighbor at 517,725 *guruş* for the years of 1844 and 1845. In addition to rice fields, he owned a *çiftlik* in the village of Ahlat, merchandise in the villages of Ragmos, Kebir Canyon and Çoruklu, and a mill in the village of Ayranuk. His total income in 1845 was 494,621 *guruş*.

tural production, its residents did not have to leave their land to supply labor elsewhere in rice cultivation. Rather, other labor-rich towns could provide a temporary work force.

The company would be advantageous for rice cultivators as well. They would be able to buy rice seed more cheaply through the company, and the common budget would provide a safety net in times of hardship. New tax legislation also meant that rates would also likely decrease from 1/3 to 1/10 on the total production. Although we do not know if this company actually came to existence, the state approved and supported the idea of a collective company.⁴⁴ In fact the concept, much less the practical institution, of the agricultural cooperative was very new in the Ottoman economy, yet as a way of organizing production it once again exemplified local cooperation.

Archival documents reveal that coalition building among local residents from Edirne—even in the context of fierce competition for economic gain—produced increased state revenue through tax collection.⁴⁵ In the areas of both public works and taxation these documents hint that closer relations among local residents created more opportunities for coalition formation, which in turn facilitated state reforms. While the existing literature generally describes a top-down reform implementation without much local cooperation, the examples given here support the view that continuous negotiations between the state and local groups accompanied and gave shape to the process of reform development and implementation, and that certain local structures (close relations among groups within a competitive elite capable of forming coalitions) in fact facilitated the reform process.

The above section has challenged the generally accepted view of the Tanzimat reforms as a top-down process of change by examining events from the perspective of local groups. Local actors, especially the Muslim and non-Muslim elite, took active roles in the shaping, implementation and responses to reform policies, often bargaining with the state on behalf of the public good. The next section focuses on the state and argues that the Ottoman state took local responses into account,

44 BOA. Ayn Dft. 442, p. 134-135, 1274.R.27/1857.

45 A detailed study of the patterns of coalition formation among the local elite has been carried out using quantitative social network analysis (Köksal, 2002). Blockmodeling analysis has shown that the elite groups expanded their coalitions spatially by forming alliances with the elites in other provincial towns of Edirne whereas coalition formation was rare in Ankara.

and attempted to incorporate the local elite into the reform project, modifying and redefining its policies accordingly.

The Learning Process of the State

The Tanzimat reforms were planned in the center but modified in the process of application in the provinces. Tanzimat statesmen had a certain vision for the administration of the empire, but this vision confronted economic limitations at the local level: first of all, there were not enough resources to carry out state projects such as construction of transportation and communication networks and providing for economic and industrial development.

Another important limitation was cultural. Culture here does not only refer to ideas and beliefs but also to ruling practices that emerged from day-to-day interactions. Culture is not a static category. Rather, it is constantly being produced through daily practice (White, 1992). The old ruling practices had resulted in an administrative paradigm which challenged efforts at introducing new ruling practices in the Empire. Instead of breaking with these inherited strategies, the Ottoman state attempted to utilize them in the recentralization of the empire. The old ruling strategy was to negotiate with local intermediaries in mediating relations between the state and local groups. The Tanzimat administration thus employed old intermediaries such as the *ayan*, religious leaders, and tax collectors as the carriers of reforms in provinces. These actors were given official positions in the new bureaucracy and appointed or elected as members to local councils (Ortaylı, 1983; 2000). This choice was imposed by limited state resources: in the absence of a well-trained bureaucracy, local intermediaries filled the gap in the provincial administration. Instead of eliminating local notables by force, which the Ottoman state could not afford, it incorporated notables and employed them in the new bureaucracy.

More importantly, however, this choice turned out to be an ingenious ruling strategy. It enabled the state to evolve within the old strategies while benefiting from the feedback it received from local groups. As the state stayed with strategies it was most familiar with by continuing to use local intermediaries in the process of state centralization, decentralized elements became the components of a centralizing administration during the Tanzimat. Using decentralized elements in this way could have led to instability and the failure of the

centralization process, but failure was not the outcome (Rueschemeyer and Evans, 1985). In the Ottoman example, for a limited time period (that of the Tanzimat) the use of decentralized elements produced positive results in the reform process.

An example of taking local responses into account was the incorporation of local intermediaries into the state administration, as for example, in the early years of the Tanzimat, the appointment of local governors from among notable families. This process went hand in hand with the centralization of the provincial administration. The administrative divisions within each province remained the same, from province (*vilayet*) to districts (*sancak*), towns or sub-districts (*kaza*), small towns (*nahiye*) and villages (*karye*). However, the hierarchical order of these administrative divisions was strengthened. Prior to the reforms, even small towns and villages communicated directly with the imperial center without contacting the towns or even the provinces to which they belonged. With the reforms, the state systematized communication for a more effective administration in which information traveled in an orderly and hierarchical fashion. Through several decrees, the center prohibited the direct communication of small units with the center regarding administrative and legal issues; henceforth they would first have to contact provincial governors (*vali*).⁴⁶

The state appointed provincial governors from among high ranking state officials; district (*sancak*) governors, or *kaymakams* were appointed from the center as well. Appointment from the center decreased at the lower levels of bureaucracy. Districts also had *müdürs*, governors one level below the *kaymakam*, who were selected from among local residents. Town-level directors (*kaza müdürleri*) were appointed by the provincial governor. It was decreed that provincial governors would choose *müdürs* from among local inhabitants, in accordance with the guiding wisdom that inhabitants familiar with local practices would be more help to the state administration.⁴⁷ In addition to these cultural factors, local appointments had economic dimensions as well: in the same decree, it was mentioned that local appointments would cost less since the government would save on both transportation (from Istanbul to the city of the appointment) and housing expenses.

In fact, the appointment of officials of local origins was a common

46 BOA, Ayn. Dft. 460, 1278.S.2/1862.

47 BOA, Ayn. Dft. 379, 1259.R.4/1843.

practice in the medium sized and smaller towns of the Ankara and Edirne provinces. Several appointment decrees from throughout the Tanzimat period may be found in the archives, and a quantitative analysis shows that in the middle and lower levels of bureaucracy (town and small town directors) the proportion of local-origin officials was considerable: in Ankara, 84.88% of town directors (73 in number) were of local origin. In Edirne the number was relatively lower: 31.76% or a total of 58 directors were mentioned as local residents. In contrast, at the higher levels of the bureaucracy (provincial and district governors), officials of non-local origin were preferred: in Ankara, the proportion was 48% (12 officials) and in Edirne this figure was 61.54% (8 officials).⁴⁹

Members of local families were appointed as local governors in many districts around Edirne and Ankara. One example of this was the Kavanoszade family of Filibe, a prominent family in the region since the 18th century. An ancestor had served as governor of Rumelia (the Balkan lands of the Ottoman Empire), and his descendants controlled rice cultivation in Filibe and became governors in the town, in addition to securing the governorships of the towns of Kızanlık and Pazarçık. Some members of the family were merchants who cultivated rice paddies and traded with European merchants.⁵⁰

Another example of incorporating local elements was the Cabbarzade family from the province of Ankara. The Cabbarzades were a powerful *ayan* family who ruled in the province before the Tanzimat reforms, powerful enough to have been one of the four families to sign the *Sened-i Ittifak* reducing the power of landlords in favor of Sultan Mahmud II (Özkaya, 1994). Throughout the Tanzimat, the Cabbarzades continued to secure important positions in the local administration. Members of the family were appointed as governors of the Yozgad district.⁵¹ Other members of the family served as tax col-

48 BOA, Ayn. Dft. 379, 1259.R.4 (1843).

49 The data were collected from the Ayniyat Defteri registers from 1839 to 1876. Ayniyat Defteris regularly recorded the appointment of governors from the province down to district and town level. They include the previous post of the official and indicate whether the person was of local origin and whether he belonged to a local dynasty (*hanedan*).

50 For example, a Russian merchant complained to the state that Kavanoszade Ahmed Bey owed him a debt related to a commercial rice transaction, BOA, A.MKT. 214/9, 1265/1848.

51 BOA, A.MKT.UM, 19/3, 8.7.1266/1849.

lectors (*mültezim*), received new posts in the local bureaucracy, and became members of the newly founded councils.⁵² Thus we see that while the state was financially obliged to incorporate local intermediaries into the new provincial administration as part of its reorganization program, in doing so it was also able to gain their loyalty and benefit from their local knowledge.

This practice of appointing local residents as governors to lower administrative levels in the early years of the Tanzimat decreased in later years, and in 1862 the appointment of local inhabitants as *müdürs* was prohibited, while *müdürs* were increasingly put on the regular payroll.⁵³ These changes came about partly because of the need to regulate taxation by limiting alliances between town governors and tax collectors, and partly because of the increasing number of qualified candidates graduating from newly founded schools.

However, even after the Provincial Law of 1864 several governors of local origin continued on in the administration thanks to the deputy (*vekalet*) system. When a center-appointed governor was dismissed, a local resident was appointed temporarily until a new governor was sent from the center. In most cases, these deputy governors ruled for extended periods since, from the state's point of view, any new state appointment would entail extra transportation expenses; moreover, it was easier to discharge and therefore control deputies than it was to control permanent appointments.⁵⁴ Locals were also happy with deputy governors since it meant a familiar person in office.

Another initiative displaying the state's willingness to take local responses into account was the formation of the *İmar Meclisleri* (Reconstruction Councils) ordered by the Sultan in 1845-46.⁵⁶ These

52 BOA, Ayn. Dft. 463; 464, 1280-81/1863-64); İrade MVL. 18483, 1275.H.4/1858.

53 BOA, Ayn. Dft. 449, 1278.R.20/1862) and Ayn. Dft. 459, 1278.N.1/1861.

54 For example, the governor of the town of Babay-ı Atik (in Edirne) was dismissed following complaints from local residents and a new governor, İsmail Ağa, was appointed as the deputy governor. His salary was added to local taxes with the consent of residents. BOA, Ayn. Dft. 425, 1268.S.25/1851.

55 For example, the governor of the town of Babay-ı Atik (in Edirne) was dismissed after the complaints of local residents, and a new governor, İsmail Ağa, was appointed as the deputy governor. His salary was added to local taxes with the consent of residents. BOA, Ayn. Dft. 425, 1268.S.25 (1851).

56 Similar to the local councils formed at every level of provincial administration, these councils brought state officials and local representatives together. In provinces with no previous local councils such as some districts in Ankara, the

councils included both state officials and local representatives, and their goal was to implement development projects. The center appointed officials to travel among the provinces and supervise these councils, attend their meetings, and write reports to the center about each district (Ortaylı, 1983). These officials organized councils or attended to the meetings of existing councils, where they learned about the local dynamics and problems in the provinces and sent detailed reports to Istanbul. In addition to these reporters, commissioners were sent to investigate the progress of reform implementation in Anatolia and Rumelia. High ranking officials (with the title of vizier), these commissioners also sent detailed reports about the provinces, some of which were publicized in the official newspaper (*Takvim-i Vekayi*) in order to influence public opinion in support of the reforms.⁵⁷

In one report, *İmar* officials summarized the socio-economic conditions of Ankara in 1846. They reported the need to improve Ankara's textile industry by improving the quality of mohair produced in the region. For this purpose, it was requested that high quality Spanish sheep be sent to the towns of the province.⁵⁸ Another report about the town of Bala in the district of Ankara describes local life there: residents produced grains, specifically wheat and barley. There were 29 primary schools in the town and its villages, and nine of them needed repair. The town residents requested 3 to 5 thousand Spanish sheep to improve their mohair production.⁵⁹

A number of other reports provide detailed information about local politics and daily life in the province. In one, *İmar* officials complained about the *naibs* (religious judges). They accused the judges of allying with governors and not ruling properly. The officials even complained about the lack of proper prayer rituals in mosques and the improper attire of Muslim females. Thus the reports of *İmar* officials provided valuable insights about local politics, permitting closer scrutiny of these issues by the state. The state utilized this knowledge in forming new policies. For example, the demands for Spanish sheep were taken

İmar Meclisleri set an example by promoting the formation of such councils. In localities with prior experience of local councils such as many districts of Edirne, *İmar* officials simply attended the regular local council meetings. BOA, A.MKT.UM. 3/85, 1266/1849.

57 The reports of the Anatolian Commissioner in Kocaeli and Canik were published in *Takvim-i Vekayi*, v. 715 (1280.Z.13) and v. 716 (1280.Z.20)/1864.

58 BOA, Ayn. Dft. 397, 1262.S.7/1846.

59 BOA, A.MKT. 26/57, 1261.7.29/1845.

seriously and villages in Ankara were provided with sheep which, while not producing immediate improvement, resulted in a better quality of mohair and textiles by the late 1890s (Özdemir, 1986).

While it was unable to centralize the tax system due to a lack of trained personnel, the state used knowledge collected at the local level, including the feedback of the *İmar* officials, for making improvements in the administration. For example, the reports of *İmar* officials uncovered taxation problems; accordingly, the state revised its tax policies. With the center encouraging the appointment of *müdürs* (town directors) from among local inhabitants in the earlier stages of the reforms, retired tax collectors or their relatives managed to secure town directorships. Between them, town directors and tax collectors controlled taxation. When tax collectors could not collect the sums expected of them, town directors and councils would intervene to assist them in this task. Most tax collectors were already members of provincial councils, so alliances among the governor, council members, and tax collector were common throughout the Tanzimat period.

State archives contain numerous complaints from local residents about taxation and misuse of administrative power, as town directors tended to use their authority to auction tax collection rights to themselves. During the Tanzimat period, taxation auctions were ordered to be held first at the local level, in towns and villages, under the supervision of directors and local councils, and then in Istanbul. This measure was aimed at reducing the power of big tax farmers, who usually lived in cities and thus would not be able to attend all local level auctions. The outside supervision of directors and local councils described above was also designed to reduce the chances of local notables dominating the auctions.

However, most local governors were former tax collectors or somehow linked to one of them, and large tax farmers were able to win auctions by increasing their representation at the auctions by forming companies bringing several tax farmers together. Local governors and council members also benefited from auctions by securing tax-farming rights for themselves. A decree from the center complained that most tax farms were auctioned in the form of large tracts of land, thus necessitating large amounts of money; that only companies, local governors, or other state officials were able to enter auctions because of these large land area designations. Consequently it was ordered that the auctions' lots be divided into smaller parcels so that ordinary citi-

zens would have a chance to enter them. State officials, on the other hand, were prohibited from bidding at any auction; this act was punishable since winning an auction normally involved the use of state funds.⁶⁰ The prohibition of the appointment of local residents as town governors and attempts at putting governors (*müdürs*) on the state pay roll were also consequences of the new tax regulations. Thus, the state actively sought feedback from the local level through officials sent to observe local administration, and used this information to refashion its reform policies for more effective implementation.

Conclusion

Local groups in the provinces of Edirne and Ankara actively responded to the Tanzimat reforms, which were implemented through negotiation, cooperation, and conflict with local groups. In this highly negotiated environment, local responses and existing local relations influenced the reform outcome. Moreover, the state displayed a learning capacity as it actively engaged with local responses and redefined its policies accordingly.

These findings encourage us to revise our assumptions regarding the tension between the imperial center and local groups in the Ottoman empire. Far from opposing Ottoman state and society as two distinct entities engaged in a zero-sum game, the cases presented in this paper reveal a mutual transformation of both the center and local groups through negotiations.⁶¹ Both conflict and cooperation vis-à-vis state reforms are detectable at the local level, and when local actors were able to cooperate with each other as in the case of Edirne, the reforms brought social and economic development and increasing state centralization. In Ankara, by contrast, when the local elite was unable to organize support for development projects, reforms did not result in significant improvement. The state also learned from its relations with local groups. It was capable of refashioning its policies, as it did in response to varying levels of tribal cooperation or resistance in the ongoing efforts at tribe settlement. The Ottoman state blended old and new practices and learned from their combination in applying reforms. Although these findings offer examples from the provinces of Edirne

⁶⁰ BOA, Ayn. Def. 435, 1271.Ha.25/1854.

⁶¹ For the details of the state-in-society approach see Migdal, Kohli and Shue (1994).

and Ankara only, they illustrate the active engagement of the imperial center and the local level in the implementation of state reforms in the hinterlands of the empire.

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REVIEW ARTICLE

STATE AND EDUCATION IN THE LATE OTTOMAN EMPIRE*

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

Selçuk Akşin Somel. 2001. *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy and Discipline*. Leiden: Brill.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the Ottoman state elite initiated numerous reforms motivated by various modernization projects that irretrievably altered the empire's political, social, and cultural configuration in unprecedented ways. The loss of military, economic, and political power vis-à-vis European states both within and outside the Ottoman lands motivated Ottoman bureaucrats to devise innumerable projects meant to restore their empire to its previous strength. The Ottoman elite had come to believe that one of the most important secrets to Western imperial dominance was its system of scientific knowledge production and that knowledge's dissemination through a centralized educational system. Thus, changing the education system and refashioning it in Western style became one of the major cures prescribed for the declining imperial power, and resulted in the constitution of a ministry of education, the formulation of new types of schools, the introduction of uniforms, desks, classroom equipment and new school buildings, and the simultaneous centralization and standardization of the curricula.

The questions of how educational reforms were implemented, what they sought to produce, and what their ultimate consequences were have inspired a substantial scholarly literature. Until the mid 1980s, this body of literature was dominated by narratives that adopted the tenets of modernization theory, implicitly assumed a diffusionist

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