

ERDAL ÇİFTÇİ

FRAGILE ALLIANCES IN THE OTTOMAN EAST

Bilkent University 2018

FRAGILE ALLIANCES IN THE OTTOMAN EAST: THE
HEYDERAN TRIBE AND THE EMPIRE, 1820-1929

A Ph.D. Dissertation

by

ERDAL ÇİFTÇİ

Department of History
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University
Ankara
April 2018

To Fatma and Şeyma

FRAGILE ALLIANCES IN THE OTTOMAN EAST: THE
HEYDERAN TRIBE AND THE EMPIRE, 1820 - 1929

The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
of
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University

by
ERDAL ÇİFTÇİ

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HISTORY

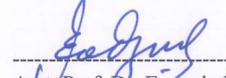
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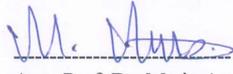
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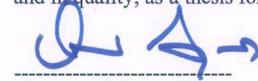
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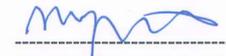
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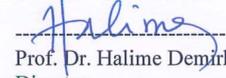
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Asst. Prof. Dr. Metin Yüksel
Examining Committee Member

Approval of the Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences



Prof. Dr. Halime Demirkan
Director

ABSTRACT

FRAGILE ALLIANCES IN THE OTTOMAN EAST: THE HEYDERAN TRIBE AND THE EMPIRE, 1820 - 1929

Çiftçi, Erdal
Ph.D., Department of History
Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Oktay Özel

April 2018

This dissertation discusses how tribal agency impacted the eastern margins of the empire in terms of tribe-empire relations during the nineteenth century. The Heyderan, a confederative form of tribal social organization, acts as a case study, used to explore and analyze how local, provincial and imperial agencies confronted the real political situation. This study follows the transformation of the Ottoman East from a de-centralized to a centralized structure, until the emergence of the modern nation-state. During the long nineteenth century, this study argues that the tribes and the empire were separate agencies, and that the two bargained in order to expand their power at the expense of the other. As a separate imagined community, the Heyderan were not passive and dependant subjects, but rather, enacted their own political and economic agendas under a separate tribal collective identity. Relations between local and imperial agencies were dynamic and fragile, but tribe and empire often supported each other and became allies who benefited from shared missions. Therefore, politics in the Ottoman East did not develop through a top-down implementation of the imperial agenda, but rather in combination with the bottom-up responses and agency of the local Kurdish tribes. Finally, rather than completing this

study in July of 1908 with the collapse of the last Ottoman Sultan, this thesis concludes by analyzing the changes in the region until 1929, when the tribe lost its political-military power, and paramount Heyderan tribal leader, Hüseyin Pasha, due to the emergence of the modern nation-state.

Keywords: Borderland, Frontier, Heyderan Tribe, Ottoman East, Ottoman Empire.

ÖZET

OSMANLI DOĞUSUNDA KIRILGAN İTTİFAKLAR: HEYDERAN AŞİRETİ VE İMPARATORLUK, 1820 - 1929

Çiftçi, Erdal
Doktora, Tarih Bölümü
Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Oktay Özel

Nisan 2018

Bu doktora tezi bir aşiretin on dokuzuncu yüzyıl boyunca aşiret-impatorluk ilişkileri bağlamında impatorluğun doğu sınırında nasıl bir role sahip olduğunu incelemektedir. Heyderan Aşireti ile ilgili yazılmış olan bu mikro tarih çalışması yerel, bölgesel ve impatorluk temsiliyetlerinin bölgenin reel politiğindeki ilişkilerini analiz etmektedir. Osmanlı Doğusu'nun adem-i merkeziyetçi yapısından daha merkeziyetçi bir sisteme evrildiği ve modern ulus-devletin inşasına değin geçen süre konu edilmektedir. İmpatorluğun en uzun yüzyılında aşiretin ve impatorluğun farklı temsiliyetlere sahip olduğunu ve iki tarafın da kendi çıkarları doğrultusunda bir diğeri ile uzlaşma çabasında bulunduğunu tartışmaktadır. Kendine münhasır bir hayali cemaat olan Heyderan pasif ve dışa bağımlı olmanın tersine, kolektif aşiret kimliği ile kendi politik ve ekonomik hedeflerini inşa etmiş bir sosyal organizasyondur. Yerel ve impatorluk temsiliyetlerinin ilişkileri her ne kadar dinamik ve kırılğan olsa da, aşiret ve impatorluk çoğunlukla birbirini destekleyen ve paylaşılmış hedefleri olan müttefiklerdir. Bu sebeple Osmanlı Doğusu'nun yerel politiği yalnızca yukarıdan uygulanan hedeflenmiş yaptırımlardan ziyade aşiretlerin tabandan verdiği tepkilerin imtizacının sonucudur. Her ne kadar bu çalışma kapsam

olarak son güçlü Osmanlı sultanının ve Heyderan'ın paralel olarak güçlerini kaybettikleri 1908 Temmuz'u ile sınırlı olsa da aşiretin politik- askeri gücünün sona erdiği süreç olan 1929 yılına kadarki dönemi de kısaca ele almakta ve modern ulus-devlet inşasının bir sonucu olarak aşiretin son güçlü ve karizmatik lideri Hüseyin Paşa'nın uğradığı suikast sonrası hayatını kaybetmesi ile sonlanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Heyderan Aşireti, Serhad, Sınır, Osmanlı Doğusu, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project is not only the product of my own research and writing, but also of the many who have provided me with support, advice and significant contributions, including my professors, my colleagues, and my family. Firstly, I am indebted to Dr. Oktay Özel for accepting my application before I had fully realized both my project and path for the future. His contributions to this dissertation were of the greatest value, and I am very thankful for his patience, kindness and guidance. During the first two years of my study at Bilkent University, Professor Halil İbrahim İnalçık, the doyen of Ottoman History, became my advisor and I was honored by his interest, suggestions and broad experience. Despite his advanced age, he never stopped working and exploring Ottoman History, and his life-experience and kindness will always remain in my memory. Dr. Metin Atmaca's contribution was particularly important for the development of my research, as his expertise concerning the Ottoman East guided my approach to the region's history. Dr. Evgeni Radushev's suggestions regarding additions and omissions to some sections further improved this study. The opportunity to attend Dr. Özer Ergenç's Ottoman paleography and Paul Latimer's methodology and feudalism courses, further helped to improve my Ottoman reading ability and aided in the development and learning of methodological approaches regarding this particular field study. Special thanks must be given to Dr. Janet Klein, who introduced me to the field during my study at

University of Akron, Ohio. Her work concerning the Hamidian Light Cavalry Regiments, as well as her courses that I was able to attend, allowed me to better compare and contrast the dynamics of the Ottoman East with other parts of the Empire and other foreign states as well. Dr. Tracey Jean Boisseau's historiography course at the University of Akron played a significant role in shaping my knowledge of the variety of historiographical methods in the field of history. Dr. Shelley Baranowski's courses on German History further helped me to understand the creation of modern nation-states in Europe. Sabri Ateş is the first person who suggested that I tackle the task of analyzing and studying the role of the Heyderan tribe during the nineteenth century. I am also thankful to him for his suggestions and his encouragement, when I expressed doubts that this direction would produce a sufficient amount of material adequate for a Ph.D. dissertation.

Also, I must mention some of my colleagues who shared with me both important documents and ideas regarding my thesis. Dr. Mehmet Rezan Ekinçi, who wrote a thesis concerning the Milli Tribe during the nineteenth century, shared his ideas and examples regarding this other tribe, which allowed me to compare and contrast the similarities and dissimilarities between these separate tribes in the Ottoman East.

Like Dr. Ekinçi, Hakan Kaya, who also works on the Bayezid Province, also shared important documents with me, which completed an important puzzle that I had been working to solve. My colleague, Dr. Veysel Gürhan, also shared his ideas and suggested me to how to use and approach eighteenth century Ottoman documents.

Remzi Coşkun, who is one of our students at Mardin Artuklu University, transliterated a Kurdish folk song for me and I appreciate his contribution. Feridun Süphandağ, who is the grandson of Hüseyin Pasha of the Heyderan, shared important comments with me on the oral history of tribe and the region. He spent an important

amount of time sharing his thoughts with me, and I thank him for the patience he exerted at my many, many questions. Most of this dissertation was edited by Agata Anna Chmiel and I am very thankful for her suggestions regarding how to accurately reflect my ideas in English.

I cannot pass over without mentioning the support of my family for the duration of this project. I do not believe that I could have prepared such a dissertation if I had not received my parents' devotion throughout my life. When I confronted some financial obstacles during my studies, they always encouraged me to further develop my abilities and studies, and were always a positive support system that I could not do without. My wife, Şeyma, also provided me with unwavering support during this period, and patiently encouraged my studies, although sometimes I could not allocate time for her. My brothers, Erol and Ersan, closely followed up my studies and I thank them for their continued interest in my work and progress.

Finally, to the hardworking archivists and personnel at the Prime Minister's Archives in Istanbul and Ankara, who kindly responded to my document requests. I am very thankful to them for allowing me to obtain some Ottoman documents, which made my discussion extensive in details. Without these sources, I believe that my study would become incomplete. Overall, I want to thank all of my professors, friends, colleagues, my family members, and any others, whom I have failed to mention their contribution to this dissertation.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.DVNS.MHM.d.:	<i>Mühimme Defterleri</i>
A.MKT. MHM.:	<i>Sadaret Mektubi Kalemi Mühimme Kalemi</i>
A.MKT. UM.:	<i>Sadaret Mektubi Kalemi Umum Vilayet</i>
A.MKT.:	<i>Sadaret Mektubi Kalemi Evrakı</i>
AE.SABH.:	<i>Ali Emiri Abdülhamid I</i>
BCA:	<i>Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivi</i>
BEO:	<i>Babıali Evrak Odası Evrakı</i>
BOA:	<i>Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi</i>
C.DH.:	<i>Cevdet Dahiliye</i>
C.ML.:	<i>Cevdet Maliye</i>
DH. MUİ.:	<i>Dahiliye Muhaberat-ı Umumiye İdaresi Evrakı</i>
DH.D.:	<i>Dahiliye Nezareti Defterleri</i>
DH.EUM.EMN.:	<i>Dahiliye Emniyet-i Umumiye Emniyet Şubesi Evrakı</i>
DH.EUM.KLH.:	<i>Dahiliye Emniyet-i Umumiye Kalem-i Hususi</i>
DH.H.:	<i>Dahiliye Nezareti Hukuk Evrakı</i>
DH.KMS:	<i>Dahiliye Nezareti Dahiliye Kalem-i Mahsus Evrakı</i>
DH.MB.HPS.M.:	<i>Dahiliye Nezareti Mebani-i Emiriye Hapishaneler Müdüriyeti Müteferrik Evrakı</i>
DH.MKT.:	<i>Dahiliye Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi</i>
DH.MUİ.:	<i>Dahiliye Muhaberat-ı Umumiye İdaresi Evrakı</i>
DH.ŞFR.:	<i>Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Evrakı</i>
DH.TMIK. M.:	<i>Dahiliye Nezareti Tesri-i Muuamelat</i>
DH.TMIK.:	<i>Dahiliye Nezareti Tesri-i Muuamelat ve Islahat Komisyonu</i>
DİA:	<i>Diyanet İslam Ansiklopedisi</i>
FO:	<i>Foreign Office</i>
HAT:	<i>Hatt-ı Hümayun</i>
HR.MKT.:	<i>Hariciye Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi Evrakı</i>
HR.SYS.:	<i>Hariciye Nezareti Siyasi</i>
HR.TO.:	<i>Hariciye Nezareti Tercüme Odası Evrakı</i>
İ.DH.:	<i>İrade Dahiliye</i>
İ.HR.:	<i>İrade Hariciye</i>
İ.MSM:	<i>İrade Mesail-i Mühimme</i>
İ.MVL.:	<i>İrade Meclis-i Vala</i>
İ.TAL.:	<i>İrade Taltifat</i>
MF.MKT.:	<i>Mektubi Kalemi</i>
MV:	<i>Meclis-i Vükela Mazbataları</i>

MVL:	<i>Meclis-i Vala</i>
ŞD.:	<i>Şuray-ı Devlet Evrakı</i>
TD:	<i>Tahrir Devleti</i>
TKA:	<i>Tapu ve Kadastro Kuyud-u Kadime Arşivi</i>
TTK:	<i>Türk Tarih Kurumu</i>
Y.A.HUS.:	<i>Yıldız Sadaret Hususi Maruzat Evrakı</i>
Y.EE.:	<i>Yıldız Esas Evrakı</i>
Y.HUS.:	<i>Yıldız Sadaret Hususi Maruzat Evrakı</i>
Y.MTV.:	<i>Yıldız Mütenevvi Maruzat Evrakı</i>
Y.PRK.ASK.:	<i>Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Askeri Maruzat</i>
Y.PRK.BŞK.:	<i>Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Başkitabet Dairesi Maruzatı</i>
Y.PRK.DH.,	<i>Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Dahiliye Nezareti Maruzatı</i>
Y.PRK.MYD.:	<i>Yıldız Perakende Evrakı, Evrak-ı Yaveran ve Maiyyet-i</i>
	<i>Seniyye Erkan-ı Harbiye Dairesi</i>
Y.PRK.UM.:	<i>Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Umumi</i>

NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION

Throughout the dissertation, some names are used in English forms. By saying Sharaf Khan, Khoyti, Khoybun, Khoi, they refer to *Şeref Han (Xan)*, *Hoyti (Xoyti)* and *Hoybun (Xoybun)*, *Hoy (Xoy)*. The names of Heyderan chiefs are preferred to be used in Turkish as how it was written in Ottoman sources such as Hüseyin and Emin. The name of Hacı Temir Pasha was mostly recorded in Ottoman source differently as Hacı Timur Pasha. Therefore, I preferred to use the former original real version as I learnt from the locals. Although other researchers refer the tribe as “Haydaran”, since the locals call the tribal members as Heyderi or Heyderan, I preferred to use the latter form, Heyderan. The region called as Abgay, Abaga, or Abigay is used in form of Ebeğ since the region is currently referred in latter form. Also, agha is used throughout the dissertation both with “chief” to indicate the local and imperial usage of the name especially for the pre-Hamidian era when the tribal chiefs did not become tribal pasha.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is a micro-historical monographic study which seeks to explore tribe-empire interactions in the northern margins of the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands during the nineteenth century. As one of the most powerful nomadic pastoral tribal agents of the region, the Heyderan people have been chosen as a subject of discussion for this study. Being a marchland tribe in the Ottoman-Iranian frontier region, the Heyderan is a useful example for investigating the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and a tribe of the Ottoman East during the political, economic and social developments of the long nineteenth century.

The Heyderan tribe was made up of separate clans and sub-clans with a ruling centralized chieftain family. Comprised of separate class compositions of prestigious *Torin* leadership, clan chiefs, white-beard elders, stewards (*kahya/xulam*), and other ordinary tribal men/women, the Heyderan was a confederative tribe mainly located in the rural parts of the Muş, Bayezid and Van provinces of the Ottoman Empire, and the Maku and Khoi regions of the Iranian Empire. The intra- and inter-tribal

relationships between the two territories are also discussed in this study. Though this thesis does not deny that there was a powerful imperial centre and tribal periphery, it also demonstrates that there were further centers in the eastern periphery of the empire. Local hereditary sanjaks in Muş and Bayezid became the administrative centers for the Heyderan chiefs, and the hereditary rulers had hegemonic control over the tribes until the mid-nineteenth century. At the top level, Erzurum became another centre of the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands since the governor-general of the Vilayet of Erzurum had the highest representative power over the region. Under these separate and manifold centers of the periphery, it is clear that the separate Heyderan *Torin* chiefs represented the main centre for the wandering tribal members of the Heyderan tribe. Thus, it was a moveable centre which sometimes stayed on the Ottoman side of the border, and sometimes on the Iranian side, based on the political and environmental needs of the tribes.

However, the Heyderan tribe was not the only powerful tribal agent of its own territories. In fact, the region hosted many other confederative tribes, such as the Zilan, Hasenan, Sipkan and Celali tribes. There is no need to focus on those tribes in this discussion since their roles and activities do not bring a different dimension to the discourse. Nevertheless, it is important to consider the Heyderan's relationship with the other tribes; therefore, centering a specific tribal agent becomes more concrete and realistic in terms of analyzing the dynamics of the region.

This study primarily focuses on the Ottoman side of the marchlands, since the Heyderan's relationship with the Iranian Qajar State also did not reveal any different outcomes in the preliminary discussions for the research. In addition, at some level, the Ottoman sources also help to enlighten the Iranian side, where the Heyderan

tribes did defect in some periods. Therefore, this thesis is limited to the Ottoman side of the marchlands in which the Heyderan people lived during the nineteenth century.

The present study indicates that tribes were not passive subjects and they had separate collective tribal identities and their own imagined tribal nation which separated them from the other Ottoman, Iranian or different tribal subjects. Under the centralized ruling family, the separate clans and sub-clans of the Heyderan tribe created their own myth, in which they all came from the same ancestral background, which increased the solidarity of tribal identity among Heyderan members. This was the main power of the tribe that helped establish powerful tribal agency in the imperial frontiers. Undoubtedly, being distant from the easy interference of centralized imperial power helped the tribe pursue its own power in the area. Manipulating one empire against another by defecting between the imperial boundaries protected the power of the tribes located in the Ottoman-Iranian borders during the nineteenth century. Tribes had their own political and economic agendas and they designed their acts for pragmatic purposes. When these purposes conflicted with the state agendas, the tribes and their activities were considered lawless, but if they had shared purposes, both sides supported each other. Therefore, tribe and empire will appear as separate bargaining sides and separate agencies, each tried to exploit another's power to practice their own agendas.

1.1 Historiography

Some Ottomanists conducted selective essentialist analyses of Ottoman documentation which show the tribe- empire relations as essentially conflictual. In this way, tribes were simply presented primarily as bandits and backward people who did not progress in civilizational terms because of their nomadic and violent living

style. Such approaches also indicate that the Ottoman centre and its agenda were appropriated as the single, monolithic and utmost truth for the tribes to follow.¹

Under such a state-centric approach, the tribes naturally appeared as the source of a problem which had to be modernized by the central authority. However, although tribal chiefs sometimes formed their own policies based on their pragmatic political, economic and military aims and often employed unjustified violence against local populace, and mostly village communities, most of their activities were informed by the needs of the tribes to access vital living resources. On the one hand, horizontal transhumance was carried out by the tribe members because of their political or economic agendas, but on the other hand, the wintering lowlands of the Iranian side and the summer pastures of Ottoman territories forced the tribes to defect across the imperial boundaries. Therefore, although the trans-frontier crossings of tribes were problematic for state policies, they were necessary to tribal needs.

As this thesis discusses, the border politics enacted by the tribes– manipulating one empire against another and defecting between the two sides – were the by-product of imperial policies. Each empire considered it necessary to keep the majority of the tribal populations on their side of the border. Tribes were a significant aspect of wealth in the imperial margins and they also empowered the demographic, economic and military functions of the empires. Losing a tribal ally meant creating a tribal enemy supported by another rival empire. Therefore, the tribes were mostly supported by the empires and were seen as the key elements of their own rural

¹ For one of the best examples depicting the lawless tribal activities and the tribes as bandits, see Süleyman Demirci and Fehminaz Çabuk, “Celali Kürt Eşkiası: Bayezid Sancağı ve Osmanlı-Rus-Iran Sınır Boylarında Celali Kürt Aşireti’nin Eşkiasılık Faaliyetleri (1857-1909)” *History Studies*, 6:6 (2014), p. 71-97. See this article for how the history of Ottoman East was politicized: Uğur Bahadır Bayraktar and Yaşar Tolga Cora, ““Sorunlar” Gölgesinde Tanzimat Döneminde Kürtlerin ve Ermenilerin Tarihi” *Kebikeç*, issue: 42 (2016), p. 7-48. Regarding top-down essentialist approach to the Ottoman Empire’s settlement policy see: Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *XVIII. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun İskân Siyaseti ve Aşiretlerin Yerleştirilmesi* (Ankara: TTK, 1998).

frontiers until the creation of the modern nation- states. This dissertation provides numerous examples of the Heyderan people regarding this type of relationship between the tribe and empire. Rather than being only conflictual, co-existence between imperial and tribal powers was much more dominant. Therefore, tribes were not marginalized and isolated agents but dynamic participants in the empires' frontier politics.

Influenced by the powerful discourses of archival resources, Ottoman studies did not consider any anthropological studies made on tribes. Therefore, tribes have generally been presented as tyrannical and lawless, rather than agents that helped to shape the historical past. However, anthropological studies have demonstrated more successful tribe-empire relations than Ottoman historians. Anthropologists have observed tribal living styles, thinking and structures not through written sources only but by spending time with the groups they researched. Researchers such as Fredrick Barth, Richard Tapper, Lois Beck, Gene R. Garthwaite, and Philip Carl Salzman produced important insights on the Iranian tribes during the 1960s and 1970s.² Their studies showed that there were many types of living style and organization among the tribes and it was almost impossible to make generalizations regarding a single type of tribal structure, thinking or living style. As Beck argued, every single tribe should be studied in a specific time space and territory in order to obtain more reliable information.³ Confirming what Beck suggested, this dissertation avoids over-

² Fredrik Barth, *Nomads of South Persia: The Basseri Tribe of the Khamseh Confederacy* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1961). Richard Tapper, *Frontier Nomads of Iran: A Political and social history of the Shahsevan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Lois Beck, *The Qashqa'i of Iran* (New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1986). Gene R. Garthwaite, *Khans and Shahs: A History of the Bakhtiari Tribe in Iran* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009). Philip Carl Salzman, 'Tribal Chiefs as Middlemen: The Politics of Encapsulation in the Middle East', *Anthropological Quarterly* 2 (1979).

³ Lois Beck, 'Tribes and the State in Nineteenth-and Twentieth-Century Iran', *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, eds. Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner (Oxford: University of California, 1990).

generalizations about tribes and tribal structures. Rather, some information gathered regarding the Heyderan tribe is used as a framework for understanding a specific tribal case in the Ottoman Empire's eastern frontiers. Therefore, this study does not seek to generalize the outcomes reached regarding the Heyderan to the other tribes of the Ottoman Empire, although undoubtedly the tribes engaged in very similar activities.

The difficulty regarding the implementation of anthropological insights into historical studies is that historians cannot fully use the theories without looking to archival resources, or their assumptions remain merely hypotheses. For example, it is not possible to discuss whether the Heyderan tribe was organized as a segmentary lineage system because there is no data to confirm the intra-tribal organization of the Heyderan people during the nineteenth century. Since the Heyderan tribe was mostly nomadic until the mid-nineteenth century, there is no official record of the tribe's behaviors. As a moveable tribal subject, the only official sources exist from instances when Heyderan members created some problems for the state, local population, and other tribes. Therefore, writing exhaustively on a nomadic tribe requires an extra-effort to extract some data from the limited amount of archival sources. Oral historical sources or travelogues can only be complementary to historical research on tribes, as this study reveals once more. However, these sources become much more meaningful when analyzed in consideration of anthropological literature.

This study does not seek to define what "tribe" means or how it was created. However, determining the role of the tribe as an independent agent in the politics of imperial borderlands is prioritized. For this purpose, a monographic study is a useful approach for exploring the importance of a specific tribe's role. Although some

studies have been conducted on provincial centers in the Ottoman East, since the tribes mostly lived in rural areas they were not fully integrated into the studies and once again were largely excluded from the historical inquiry. However, as this discussion questions, the main military force of the local hereditary rulers throughout the nineteenth century were those rural tribes. Although the financial sources of the hereditary rulers of Bayezid and Muş mostly depended on the annually paid taxes by settled subjects, tribes were the main military forces and allies of both the hereditary rulers and provincial governors in Van and Erzurum. Imperial military units did not appear as powerful forces until the early twentieth century when the new ethnic nation states began to appear. In particular, the “jellyfish tribes” that made trans-frontier crossings were the only military agents that could be used by the empires to protect their own frontier territories. Therefore, this thesis also discusses how the peripheral character of the region influenced the relationships of the tribes with the manifold actors of the region and empire.

One anthropologist, Martin Van Bruinessen, became the doyen of Kurdish studies after his doctoral study was published in the 1970s.⁴ Different from the aforementioned researchers, he did not study a specific tribe, but rather made an ethnographic work on Kurdish society as a whole and used this to produce historical analyses. Therefore, his suggestions regarding tribal analyses were weaker compared to the other researchers. For example, in his discussion of some Kurdish hereditary rulers, Bruinessen paid very limited attention to the roles of tribes because he had conducted limited historical researches on them. However, he later wrote on Simko Şikak and at some level made important contributions regarding the role of tribes in

⁴ Martin Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State* (London: Zed Books, 1992).

the peripheries of empires.⁵ Similarly, other researchers, such as Jwaideh, Lazarev, McDowall, and Özoğlu approached the history of the Ottoman East from a generalized perspective. Although it is undeniable that their contributions to the field were important, their approaches simplified the roles of tribes in the Ottoman East. Indeed, a scarcity of studies on the Ottoman East paved the way for these generalized approaches, and many researchers have admitted that monographic studies are required for in depth explorations of the region's dynamics.⁶

The northern Ottoman-Iranian frontiers hosted many powerful tribes during the nineteenth century. None of the tribes from this time were studied, and were not chosen as the subjects of research. When Mark Sykes visited the region in the early twentieth century, he referred to those tribes as “the masters of the country” who had been powerful long before the Ottoman central government captured the region.⁷ This indicates that the region's historiography is at its infancy, awaiting its own research, particularly historical studies on tribes. Heckmann and Beşikçi undertook predominantly sociological-anthropological studies and approached their subjects not from the perspective of historians.⁸ Though the Kurdish hereditary emirates were higher level structures than the tribes, the Emirates of Bitlis, Bayezid and Muş have

⁵ Martin Van Bruinessen, ‘A Kurdish Warlord on the Turkish-Persian Frontier in the Early Twentieth Century: Isma’il Agha Simko’ *Iran and the First World War: Battleground of the Great Powers*, ed. Touraj Atabaki (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006), p. 69-93. Martin Van Bruinessen, ‘Kurds, states and tribes’ *Tribes and Power: Nationalism and Ethnicity in the Middle East*, eds. Faleh A. Jabar and Hosham Dawod (London: Saqi, 2002), p. 165-183.

⁶ Joost Jongerden, ‘Elite Encounters of A Violent Kind: Milli İbrahim Paşa, Ziya Gökalp and Political Struggle in Diyarbekir at the Turn of the 20th Century’, *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbekir, 1870-1915*, ed. Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij (Leiden: Brill, 2012). Jelle Verheij, ‘Diyarbekir and the Armenian Crises of 1895’, *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbekir, 1870-1915*, ed. Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

⁷ Mark Sykes, “The Kurdish Tribes of the Ottoman Empire,” *the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 38 (Jul.- Dec., 1908), p. 475.

⁸ Lale Yalçın-Heckmann, *Kürtlerde Aşiret ve Akrabalık İlişkileri* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2006). İsmail Beşikçi, *Doğu'da Değişim ve Yapısal Sorunlar Göçebe Alikan Aşireti* (İstanbul: İsmail Beşikçi Vakfı Yayınları, 2014).

not yet been studied in depth.⁹ However, some studies have thematically touched upon the tribes and analyzed them at limited levels. One such historian was Janet Klein, who wrote on Abdülhamid II's institution created under the name of the Hamidian tribal regiments.¹⁰

In her thesis, Klein allocated a chapter to one of the leaders of the Heyderan, Hüseyin Pasha. Although she developed a powerful analysis of the tribe- empire relations, Klein has employed only French and British sources.¹¹ Therefore, in her study, the Heyderan people appear once more as merely tyrannical and lawless, trying to increase their power by ill-treating non-tribal subjects. Though her portrayal holds a certain degree of truth, and her approach helped to understand the construction of a tribal institution which represent a new era regarding tribe- empire relations, Klein does not offer an analysis as to how the Hamidian era was shaped by the course of events of the previous period of Tanzimat. Some researchers even think that the Hamidian era was the first episode in which tribal agents were transformed into state apparatus. However, this imperial agenda had already been created during the Tanzimat era and the Hamidian government merely extended this policy to regular

⁹ Metin Atmaca's study on the Baban Emirate can be considered a good example for other researchers who plan to work on other emirates in the region: Metin Atmaca, 'Politics of Alliance and Rivalry on the Ottoman-Iranian Frontier: The Babans (1850-1851)' (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg, 2013). Some researchers have written on the Emirates of Cizre and Müküs but these studies need development: Fatih Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler Bağlamında Bedirhan Bey Olayı" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Ankara University, Ankara, 2010). Hakan's book was important but it is mostly descriptive and limited to the translation of Ottoman documents: Sinan Hakan, *Müküs Kürt Mirleri Tarihi ve Han Mahmud* (İstanbul: Peri, 2002).

¹⁰ Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).

¹¹ It is necessary to mention that rather than Klein's own choice, it was the limited accessibility of the the Ottoman archives in late 1990s that caused some researchers to limit their studies relying on the British, French or Russian sources.

tribe members, as will be discussed in the fourth to sixth chapters of this study.¹²

Therefore, *longue durée* as an approach to tribal studies is more helpful for reaching more reliable results.

Tibet Abak made a similar contribution to Klein. He used Russian sources in his research and argued that the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) government returned to Hamidian policies after 1911.¹³ Although his outcomes were confirmed, his approach does not elaborate the separate and varied dynamics of the region since the Russian sources were not supported with the other Ottoman and oral sources. In both studies, banditry was justly seen as an integral aspect of traditional tribal nature, however, they did not fully elaborate on the exact details for how these brigandage and arbitrary use of violence were technically perpetrated. Also, they could not realize that, as Soyudođan rightly demonstrates, brigandage activities were also part of power struggles and inter-tribal state-like collective conflicts.¹⁴

Therefore, together with being part of tribal daily nature especially against the vulnerable agriculturalists, “tribal banditry” occurred because of the cultural, economic, and political codes designated by the rival imagined collective identities of tribes. Therefore, Klein’s and Abak’s approaches may not necessarily help to establish a complete representation of the tribal organizations. In which case, researchers should use, compare, and contrast both Ottoman and European sources, especially if their subjects are related to the late-nineteenth century Ottoman history.

Otherwise, all studies might become victims to the discourse of powerful state

¹² Edip Gölbaşı, “Hamidiye Alayları: Bir Deđerlendirme”, *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım* eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015), p. 164-175.

¹³ Tibet Abak, “İttihat ve Terakki’nin Kritik Seçimi: Kürt Politikasında Hamidiye Siyasetine Dönüş ve Kör Hüseyin Paşa Olayı (1910-1911)”, *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015).

¹⁴ Muhsin Soyudođan, “Discourse, Identity and Tribal Banditry: A Case Study on Ottoman Ayntab”, *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, 17:1-2 (2011), p. 65-93.

sources since information was undoubtedly shaped by the politics of the empires and local actors.

Though he did not focus on tribes in his discussion, Sabri Ateş made an important contribution to the history of the Ottoman East in his thesis written on the demarcation of the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands.¹⁵ Since Ateş successfully used Ottoman, Persian, and European sources, his chronological approach helps determine how the creation of boundaries influenced the life of borderland tribes. Ateş' study contributed to the theory that the transformation of the status of the Ottoman frontier into a borderland during the mid-nineteenth century influenced tribal life and the region's diverse dynamics. The fourth chapter of this study demonstrates that after the demarcation of the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands during the Tanzimat era, the Heyderan was influenced by these new changes when their horizontal transhumance was limited to vertical transhumance.

Similar in scope and approach to this thesis but different in terms of topic and themes, Arash Khazeni's book *Tribes and Empire on the Margins of Nineteenth-Century Iran* focused on a borderland tribe, the Bakhtiari, and thus resembles this study.¹⁶ However, since the region where the Bakhtiari lived became an arena of conflict between the Iran and British Empire because of gas resources, Khazeni's thematic discussion was somewhat different from this research. Despite the fact that the place where the Heyderan tribe lived had no underground resources, their region was partly connected with the Iranian-Ottoman trade roads from Bayezid to Erzurum

¹⁵ Sabri Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands: Making A Boundary* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

¹⁶ Arash Khazeni, *Tribes and Empire on the Margins of Nineteenth Century Iran* (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 2009).

and from Khoi to Van. Therefore, Khazeni's book is an important case study for this research.

As some anthropologists have discussed, there are some problems regarding the usage of words such as tribe, clan, etc. For those researchers, vernacular words do not have exact counterparts in the English language.¹⁷ Since this study is not an anthropology thesis, it does not discuss the meanings of tribe, clans, branch, or state. As anthropologists have concluded, no single type of definition can be made over all tribes through over-generalization. Therefore, this study simply uses "tribe" when referring to the Heyderan people's collective identity, which is equal to the vernacular words of *aşiret* and *îl*. Current members of the tribe still refer to their tribal collective identity as *eşîr* or *îl*, which can be equated to the word "tribe" in English. However, since the Heyderan was a confederative tribe and consisted of many other clans and sub-clans, in order to be consistent and not complicate understanding of the cases, the sub-branches are referred to as "clans" in this research, although those clans have also sometimes been referred to as "tribe". Indeed, the sub-branches were sometimes referred as "tribe" [*aşiret*] or "clan" [*oymak*]; therefore, in this thesis, those sub-branches are highlighted as "clans" or "sub-clans" of the Heyderan tribe.

In addition, none of the available resources have clarified how clans and sub-clans were divided and controlled by the central ruling family chiefs of Heyderan. It is clear to me that the clans had their own chiefs, but those chiefs were mostly loyal to the chiefs of the *Torin* family, whose members sometimes acted separately from one another. It is not clear whether the clans or sub-clans acted together or separately

¹⁷ Richard Tapper, "Anthropologists, Historians, and Tribespeople on Tribe and State Formation in the Middle East", *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, eds. Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner (Oxford: University of California, 1990), p. 48-73.

under the higher authoritative hegemonic power of the *Torin* chiefs. Therefore, since it has not been possible to ascertain which chiefs ruled which clans or sub-clans, the separate groups of the Heyderan people are referred to as “branches” in this dissertation.

Since the Heyderan people lived in the marchlands between the Ottoman and Iranian Empires, the boundary between the two sides was unclear and fragile until the mid-nineteenth century. Using the approach of Adelman and Aron, I refer to this boundary as “frontier”, since semi-independent hereditary rulers controlled these unclear territories on behalf of the imperial centre,¹⁸ and the fluidity of the imperial margins was referred to as “frontier”. However, when both empires increased their control over their borders and appointed their own salaried governors after the elimination of the hereditary rulers, the Ottoman-Iranian boundary escalated into a more controlled territory thanks to the demarcation of the imperial borders. After this period, more direct control and defined territories existed in the Ottoman-Iranian boundary, though the border was not yet clearly demarcated. Therefore, this paper refers to this mid-nineteenth century shift in the imperial boundary as “borderland” rather than “frontier”, since the latter means a much more fuzzy and fluid boundary than the former. This thesis does not focus on how the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands became bordered lands, since this process was a by-product of the creation of ethnic-nation states. The status of Ottoman-Iranian boundaries became clear-cut bordered lands after the collapse of the imperial Ottoman and Qajar Empires, because the clear-cut bordered-lands did not align with the expansionist policies of the two

¹⁸ Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron, “From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and Peoples in between in North American History”, *The American Historical Review*, 104: 3 (June 1999), p. 814-841.

empires. Therefore, the words “frontier” and “borderland” are mostly used in this dissertation rather than the term “border”.

1.2 Outline

This dissertation necessitated discussing the themes followed in chronological orders; otherwise it is not possible to explore the main dynamics. We will see how a tribe of Ottoman East confronted major transitions from empire to modern nation-state. Not only top-down policies of Ottoman Empire necessarily but also bottom-up tribal responses will be discussed through out this dissertation. The next chapter presents a discussion of the early ages of the Heyderan tribe based on the available sources. Where the Heyderan first appeared, how its leadership was held, and where the tribe was originally located are investigated. In addition, some nineteenth century sources were used to determine the tribes’ perceptions of their own ancient pasts. Following this chapter, the role of tribe is discussed in relation to three different overlapping categories before the pre-Tanzimat era in 1820s: inter-tribal, inter-provincial, and inter-state relations. As one of the borderland tribes, the influence of Heyderan chiefs on Ottoman-Iranian relations is also discussed, and how the military, economic, and demographic significance of the tribe shaped state approaches to frontier politics is analyzed. Also, since there were various centers in the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontiers, this study investigates the relationship of the Heyderan tribe with the provincial/hereditary rulers who were the main local power holders in the region until the mid-nineteenth century. Furthermore, this chapter explores how inter-tribal conflicts were shaped by the region’s local politics.

In the fourth chapter, I will discuss how the Tanzimat era transformed the administrative structure of the eastern Ottoman provinces, including how tribes were influenced by the elimination of hereditary rulers. The military expeditions of the Ottoman imperial army/and its local allies; and the diplomacy of the governor-general of Erzurum are also considered. Since the living spaces of the Heyderan tribe were mostly in the Van and Erzurum provinces, the discussion focuses on the hereditary rulers Muş and Bayezid. In the second part of this chapter, different themes, such as settlement policies, salaried chiefs, and the self-orientalization of Heyderan by Ottoman officials are analyzed. This chapter will question whether the imperial policies could establish an Ottoman nationalism among its tribal subjects in the eastern margins of the empire. As most studies have not focused on how tribes were influenced by the new Tanzimat rules, this research examines how tribal structures shifted to more atomized and partitioned structures, especially after the demarcation of imperial boundaries.

In the fifth and sixth chapters, the Hamidian age is investigated through an analysis of the creation of Hamidian tribal regiments, which was a peripheral practice of Hamidian Islamism in the Ottoman East. Titles, decorations, salaries, banners of tribal regiments were some of the symbols that Abdülhamid employed to Kurdish chiefs to legitimize his imperial policies in the Ottoman East as the chapter will discuss. Since the Heyderan tribe joined the institution with nine regiments and its chiefs became central figures of the region, this research discusses at what level and in what way Islamic Ottoman nationalism brought major changes to the local politics. The continuities and discontinuities from Tanzimat era are referred to from both tribal and state perspectives; as well as how local power conflicts and privileged chiefs re-transformed the region into a new state of disorder. Together with the

dethronement of the last powerful Ottoman Sultan, Abdulhamid II, the last chapter investigates how the political and military power of Heyderan's tribal solidarity was threatened after the new CUP elites came to power in 1908. This concludes with the Heyderan's confrontation of the new ethnic-nationalist agenda of the CUP and early Kemalist era. This chronological discussion reveals how tribal power fluctuated in different times and territorial spaces. Then a presentation of top-down imperial policies and their bottom-up tribal responses demonstrates that co-existence and alliances between the agents of empire and the tribe were often fragile and dynamic in time and space.

1.3 Sources

There are limited archival records on the Ottoman tribes available, because the Heyderan tribe was nomadic tribe and hardly recorded in historical resources. Indeed, members of Heyderan tribe do not appear in the documents for some years, as if they did not exist. However, compared to the Persian or European archival records, the Ottoman documents can present important information if more detailed studies are conducted on them. Some petitions of tribal people will be also used in this study. In the first chapter, some land registry and *mühimme* records are used to understand the early history of the Heyderan tribe. When Ottoman resources were weak, such as for the second quarter of the nineteenth century, some European travelogues were used. Kemal Süphandağ's two books that he transliterated from archival records written on the Heyderan tribe from the Ottoman to the current Turkish context are also useful.¹⁹ Since he is an expert on the local history and a member of a Heyderan ruling elite family, his combination of some oral historical

¹⁹ Kemal Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası: Hamidiye Alayları* (İstanbul: Komal, 2006). Kemal Süphandağ, *Hamidiye Alayları, Ağrı Kürt Direnişi ve Zilan Katliamı* (İstanbul: Peri, 2012).

information with archival records has made his research useful for this study. However, his works were not academically written and he sometimes transliterated the Ottoman sources incorrectly. In addition, we can see some selectiveness and biases in Süphandağ's writings especially on Hüseyin Pasha's activities against the peasantry and other tribal members.

In the sixth chapter, the Ottoman sources are compared and contrasted with the British consular reports in order to analyze the authenticity of the information recorded in both documents. Reading between the lines of separate documents and comparing them will reveal that the Ottoman and British sources employed biases inside the state documents. Some British, American, and French newspapers are also used to determine how the activities of the Heyderan chiefs became a subject of global discussion during the Hamidian era. In the last chapter, records taken from the Turkish Republican Archive and some Turkish newspapers of the period are used to demonstrate the elimination of the Heyderan's ruling chieftainship and their collective political and military solidarity. Furthermore, some yearbooks, military reports, and chronicles are referenced during the study. Lastly, since the tribal tradition possesses its own culture and memory regarding its historical past, I also conducted interviews with some members of the Heyderan tribe.²⁰ This oral historical information is presented and compared in this chapter with the information recorded in the written documents. As the researchers have been selectively granted access to the archive of the Turkish Ministry of National Defence [*Savunma Bakanlığı Arşivi*], other researchers may benefit from the chance to use possibly

²⁰ Feridun Süphandağ, Interview by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal Interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017. Feridun Süphandağ is the grandson of Hüseyin Pasha of Heyderan and the son of Nadir Bey. He resides in Ankara and he is in his sixties. He is one of the descendants of the Heyderan's *Torin* leading cadre. Seraceddin Koç, Interview by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal Interview, Mardin, October 25, 2017. Seraceddin Koç is a member of Heyderan tribe who resides in Mardin and he is in his fifties. He is not a descendant of Heyderan's leading chiefs.

existing resource on the recruitment of tribal members during the war years in the nineteenth century for further studies. Furthermore, I have had no chance to find or use Persian archival sources and chronicles, and therefore, later studies might try to use those sources to bring additional dimension to the discussion of this dissertation.

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY AGE: HISTORY OF HEYDERAN AND THEIR RELOCATION ON THE NORTHERN OTTOMAN-IRANIAN FRONTIER

Most historians socially construct and eliminate tribal agencies from the pages of history, in particular since it is not easy to investigate the voiceless and faceless tribes. Written sources, especially the Ottoman archival material, do not properly allow us to follow the complete history of a tribe although there are many documents concerning tribes. The main factor why researchers find it difficult to follow the history of a tribe is related to the fact that tribes move around. Although researchers might find some livestock tax records of tribes, the data on tribes are more ambiguous compared to the settled populations, especially in the borderlands regions. Most of the time, the Ottoman government could not collect taxes from these tribe (*haric-ez-defter*) or they refused to pay it, and in this way, unrecorded

tribal populations are difficult to study.¹ However, this does not mean that there is no documentation at all about tribes and that it is impossible to see them as an agency.

The Heyderan were one of the powerful tribal agents that lived in the northern section of Lake Van region from Malazgirt to the Iranian regions of Khoi and Maku during the nineteenth century. Their living space was part of the imperial borderlands of the Ottoman and Iranian Empires and therefore, the Heyderan can be called a marchland tribe too. Some records indicate that the Heyderan were mostly nomadic or semi-nomadic until the last quarter of the nineteenth century.² The Heyderan was depicted as one of the most powerful tribal agents in the region during the nineteenth century.³ Although we have some important historical records for the position of the Heyderan in the nineteenth century, the previous periods of the Heyderan tribe are unclear and few documents are available that could enlighten the history of the tribe. This is also significant in itself since, when we investigate the previous periods of the Heyderan, its tribal identity appears under another tribal confederacy.

The Heyderan and their history, indicate that tribes were subjected to tribal integration and dissolution. This section argues that the Heyderan was a sub-tribe of another tribal confederation, Zilan, during the sixteenth century and that their original living space was around Meyyafarikin (Silvan), Diyarbekir, before their permanent relocation in the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontiers. Since we have very

¹ Moltke describes in 1838 that until the second quarter of the nineteenth century, taxation and recruiting were the most important two deficiencies of the central government in the Ottoman East. Helmut Von Moltke, *Türkiye Mektupları* (Ankara: Remzi, 1969), p. 195-197.

² Ernest Chantre, "De Beyrouth A Tiflis" *Le Tour De Monde Nouveau Journal Des Voyages*, Paris:1889, p. 290-296.

³ Mark Sykes, "The Kurdish Tribes of the Ottoman Empire" *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. 38 (Jul.-Dec., 1908), p. 478. For Sykes Heyderanlı was around twenty thousand tents and the largest tribe in the region from Muş to Iranian city Urmiye.

limited resources for study, only some hints found in the lines of documents can give us some information regarding the Heyderan. In this section, I try to investigate an unknown blurred time-span of the history of the tribe, which is also no longer remembered by the current members of the Heyderan tribe.

2.1 The Name of Heyderan and Its Extensity

The name of the Heyderan tribe appears in the Ottoman records in Arabic scripts as *حیدران*, *حیدرانلو* or *حیدری*. Haydar is an Arabic name and a nickname of Ali Ibn Ebu Talib, the nephew of Prophet Muhammed. The name in Arabic means male head lion and it indicates courage, power and heroism.⁴ The name itself and suffixes used *ان* and *ی* means “the people, descendants of Haydar”. While the former suffix makes the name a plural form, the latter was the singular however both can be used for addressing members of Heyderan. The Ottoman documents mostly call the tribe as *حیدرانلو* or *حیدرانلی* which have the Turkish suffixes of *لو* and *لی*. The Arabic written form of tribe’s name was Latinized by the archival personnel as Haydaran/Haydaranlu/Haydari. However, current tribal members and people living in the region pronounce the name of tribe as Heyderan or Heyderi. Therefore, I prefer to refer to the tribe as Heyderan since the locals currently use this pronunciation. Persian documents in the Ottoman archives mostly referred the tribe as *حیدرانلو* and the numbers of available Iranian documents are very few compared to the Ottoman archival records. European travelers and consuls visited the Heyderan region referred the tribe as Haideran, Haidaran, or Haideranlu in their reports and travelogues. Most of these Ottoman, Iranian and European sources were written

⁴ “Haydar” *DIA* 1998, vol.17, p. 24.

during the nineteenth century when the tribe was a powerful agent in the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands.

Origin of the tribe's name is unknown to the members of tribe; and sources are also silent on this question. Even during the early nineteenth century when the tribe became a subject of imperial discussions between Ottomans and Iranians, their elderly people could not give specific information on the name of Heyder. An Iranian researcher Mir Asadollah Mousavi Makuei asserts that the name of Heyderan tribe received its name from Haydar-i Karrar, Eli Abu Talib, but he does not prove his claims.⁵ So, whether a person or not, the source for the name of Heyderan can no longer be established. However, Mela Mahmudê Bayezidî, who was a scholar lived in Bayezid city during nineteenth century, suggested that tribes mostly received their names from their ancestors. While he was making this suggestion, Bayezidî gives his example over Heyderan tribe since he was living in the same region with the tribe: "For example Heyder was the name of a person. The offshoots of Heyder received their names from him, and over time, they became a tribe".⁶

We cannot substantiate whether Bayezidî's explanation of the name of the tribe is correct but his contribution is important since he had lived in the same region where the members of Heyderan had lived. Bayezidî's suggestion cannot be confirmed by further evidence but it represents the perception of the identity of the Heyderan tribe during the nineteenth century. Whether Heyder was a real person or a fictional character, was not important in the eyes of the members of the tribe and the name of

⁵ Mir Asadollah Mousavi Makuei, *Tarikh-i Maku (History of Maku)* (Tehran: Bistoin Publ., 1997), p. 79-80.

⁶ Mela Mahmude Bayezidi, *Adat u Rûsumatnamee Ekrâdiye* (İstanbul: Nubihar, 2012), p. 38: "Heyder, mesela nave yeki buye. Herçi ji ewladed wi Heyderizede buyine nisbet bi bal wi daye Heyderi".

Heyderan itself was more functional as an upper collective tribal identity among the sub-tribes of Heyderan Tribal Confederacy in the nineteenth century. This also might indicate that the Heyderan members probably had collective myth on shared ancestry.

The name of Haydar was a popular one especially in the Iranian territories since it was an epithet of Ali Ibn Abu Talib. Since Safavids adopted the Twelver Shi'ism as their official *mazhab* in the sixteenth century, we might suggest that the name, Haydar, became more popular in Islamic territories. We can see this popularity in the Ottoman records where we find many names derived from Haydar. Haydarlu, Haydaranlu, Haydarkanlu were some version of the names used as tribe, clan, and village names.⁷ There was another Heyderan tribe in Nazımiye-Dersim region whose members adhered to one of the Shia Islam, Alawism, during the nineteenth century.⁸ Although some people believe that there was a tie between the two Heyderan tribes, I could not find any documents to confirm this assumption and the only link between the two is the similarity between their names. In Tarsus and Maraş, there were also some tribes called Haydarlu and to them the same applies.⁹ For the popularity of the name's usage we can point to the strophes of the Kurdish poet, Ahmed-i Khani, in a requiem for the *mîr* of Bayezid, Muhammed Beg, in his *Medhiye u Mersiye*:

“Triumphal arch and portico of spectacles, pavilions and castles of Haybers, these are the signs of Heyderan, where is the Sultan of the frontier?”¹⁰ In his requiem, Ahmed-i Khani describes the state power of Iran by referring to the castle of Hayber.

⁷ Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Anadolu'da Aşiretler, Cemaatler, Oymaklar (1453-1650)* (Ankara: Togan, 2011).

⁸ *Fihrist'ul Aşair* (Ankara: 06 Mil Yz A 9166), p. 49.

⁹ Halaçoğlu, *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Ebdullah M. Varlı, *Diwan u Gobideye Ahmed-e Xani Yed Mayin* (İstanbul: Sipan, 2004), p. 189. “*Taq u Rewaq u menzeran, kosk u kelat u Xeyberan, wan cumle nişan Heyderan, ka Padişah Serhedan?*”.

Heyderan used here meant Iranians since Heyder was the epithet of Ali Ibn Abu Talib and he was the conqueror of Castle of Hayber. This poem indicates that the name of Heyderan was a popular one in the region where the Heyderan tribe was living. However, I could not find any concrete evidence to relate Heyderan tribe's identity to the Iranian Shia culture and when we consider that the present-day Heyderan tribe adheres to the Sunni Shafi'i sect, the only possibility for why Heyderan used this name seems to have been the popularity of the name or a real/fictional character of leadership in the past.

Evliya Çelebi who visited the Bidlis region during mid-seventeenth century mentions the Heyderi tribe which had allied with the powerful Rojki Tribe of Bidlis region against the alliance of Hakkari, Erciş, and Malazgirt tribes.¹¹ Although no details were provided by him, it seems that the Rojki and Heyderi tribes declared war against other Kurdish tribes and there was an inter-tribal war in the region. The current members of Heyderan tribe mostly refer to themselves as Heyderi and the locals mostly refer to this tribe with the same name. Although there were many versions of Heyderan in the documents such as Heyderlu, Heyderkanlu, etc., the name of Heyderi was only used for the tribe of Heyderan that we investigate.

2.2 Leadership of Heyderan Tribe: The House of *Torin Mala Şero*

During the nineteenth century, there was not a paramount single leader among the different branches of Heyderan tribe but a centralized leadership controlled sections of the Heyderan tribe. The chiefs from the *Mala Şero* (The House of Şerafeddin)

¹¹ Evliya Çelebi, *Günümüz Türkçesiyle Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, 2010), vol. 4-book 1, p. 312-313.

ruled and controlled the clans or sub-clans of Heyderan tribe.¹² An Ottoman document reveals that Şero (Şerafeddin) was actually Şerif Muhammed Bey who was one the leaders of the Heyderan tribe in Erzurum region in 1770.¹³ According to the document Şerif Muhammed Bey and his brother raided another tribe, Şikak, and killed fifteen of their men and looted twenty sheep and horses. The oldest known tribal person belonging to the ruling family of Heyderan is Şerif Muhammed and there is no earlier reference by the tribal members on their ancestral backgrounds. Şerif Muhammed's descendants became the ruling elite family of Heyderan's branches although there were some clans who had separate ruling elites such as the Ademan tribe in the Diyadin region. However, the Ademi leadership was subjected to Mala Şero¹⁴ (*Torin* family) until the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁵

The House (*Mal*) of Şerafeddin appears as *primus inter pares* among the chiefs of Heyderan's different clans and the family was called *Torin/Torun* by the locals.¹⁶ In 1804, an Ottoman document mentions that Mahmud Pasha, *mîr* of Bayezid, looted

¹² Check these sources for separate branches of Heyderan and details on leader cadre of the Heyderan, the *Torin* family: Kemal Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası: Hamidiye Alayları* (İstanbul: Komal, 2006). Mehmed Hurşid Paşa, *Seyahatname-i Hudud* (İstanbul: Simurg, 1997), tr. Alaattin Eser, p. 263. Derviş Paşa, *Tahdid-i Hudud-u İraniye* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1870), p. 154-156. Dr. Friç, *Kürdler: Tarihi ve İçtimai Tedkikat* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt, 2014), p. 13. *Aşiretler Raporu* (İstanbul: Kaynak, 1998), p.45-56, 341-349.

¹³ BOA, C.DH. 19/930- (1770): “*Eyâlet-i Erzurum'da konar-göçer tâifesinden Haydaranlı cemaatinden Şerif Muhammed Bey ve karındaşı kendi hallerinde olmayıp bâger-i hak on beş nefer adamlarımızı katl ve yirmi re's koyun, ve atlarımızı alıb*”.

¹⁴ *Mal* or *Malbat* were the lowest level tribal stratification among the Kurdish tribe and it can be regarded as a nucleus inside the tribe depended on descent relationship. *Taiife, il, qebile* (clan), *eşir* (*aşiret*- tribe) were used for reference to the tribe or its sub-tribes. Bayezidî, *Adat u Rüsumatnamee Ekrâdiye*, p. 37-39.

¹⁵ Mehmed Hurşid Paşa, *Seyahatname-i Hudud*, p. 263. Derviş Paşa, *Tahdid-i Hudud*, p. 155.

¹⁶ Nikitin, based on an Armenian writer, Mirahorian, argues that the class of elite *Torun* chiefs controlled both the nomadic peasants and sedentarized cultivators and the Kurds consisted of noble aristocrat class (*Torun*), these chiefs' armed men (*xolam*) and cultivators (*reaya*): Bazil Nikitin, *Kürtler: Sosyolojik ve Tarihi İnceleme* (İstanbul: Deng, 2002), p. 219.

the goods of Heyderan's *Torin* family.¹⁷ We notice this superior identity of the ruling elite of the House of Şero in another document where one of the chiefs of the Heyderan, Heyder Ağa, wrote his name at the top of the document sometimes as leader of tribes or leader of tribe (*reis-i aşâir/reis-i aşiret*).¹⁸

Table 1. Seals and fingerprints stamped on a petition of Heyderan chiefs in 1848.¹⁹

Heyder Agha leader of tribes (<i>reis-i aşâir</i>) (seal)	Ali Agha Brother of Heyder Agha (seal)	Ömer Agha One of Clan Chiefs (<i>oymak ağalarından</i>) (seal)	Ahmed Agha One of Clan Chiefs (<i>oymak ağalarından</i>) (seal)	Clan Chief (<i>oymak ağası</i>) (seal)	Clan Chief (<i>oymak ağası</i>) (seal)	Clan Chief (<i>oymak ağası</i>) (seal)
Clan Chief (<i>oymak ağası</i>) (seal)	Clan Chief (<i>oymak ağası</i>) (finger print)	Steward Hasan (<i>Kahya</i>) (fingerprint)	Steward Hasan (<i>Kahya</i>) (fingerprint)	Clan Chief (<i>oymak ağası</i>) (seal)	Clan Chief (<i>oymak ağası</i>) (seal)	Clan Chief (<i>oymak ağası</i>) (seal)
Clan Chief (<i>oymak ağası</i>) (seal)	(fingerprint)	Steward İsmail (<i>Kahya</i>) (fingerprint)	Clan Chief (<i>oymak ağası</i>) (seal)	Steward of Clan (<i>kahya-i oymak</i>) (seal)

Süleyman Sabri Paşa made an important comment that “if a chief family is not *Torin*, they cannot be seen as noble and they are regarded as subservient to the *Torin* family”.²⁰ Rohat Alakom contributed to the discussion about the attribution and usage of the name among the tribes who lived in the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands. He suggests that *Torin* was not a name of a tribe or clan but it was an attribute of the ruling prestigious aristocratic elite family who controlled other sub-

¹⁷ BOA, C.DH. 24/1196-(1804).

¹⁸ There were 19 seals of separate chiefs of Heyderan and their leaders, Heyder Agha, wrote his title as “*reis-i aşâir* (leader of tribes)” or “*reis-i aşiret* (leader of tribe)”: BOA, İ.MSM 52/1345A- (1848).

¹⁹ Compare this table to Appendix D to see how the titles of chiefs transformed during the Tanzimat era within ten years. BOA, İ.MSM 52/1345A- (1848).

²⁰ Süleyman Sabri Paşa, *Van Tarihi ve Kürtler Hakkında Tetebbuat* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Ebuziya, 1928), p.52: “*Aşiretler arasında Torun olmayan ağalar asil ad edilmezler Torun ailesinin hizmetkarları telakki olunurlar.*”

clans of a tribe.²¹ Not only the Heyderan but also the Cibran, Zilan and Sipkan tribes had *Torin* elite families who controlled their own sub-tribes.²² The name itself indicates for locals that the ruling elite family has a noble descent *tov-rind* (noble seed) in Kurdish.²³ Although Heyderan's ruling elite family, Mala Şero, lost power in the region after the Republic of Turkey was created, they are still currently referred to as *Torin* family because of their prestigious background. This classification shows that the tribal customs created their own social stratification among their own members and that it is still kept in collective memories by the locals.

Although we see *Torin* leadership among the tribes of northern Ottoman-Iranian borderland, some other tribes also used the name of *Torin/Torun* in order to indicate the existence of an elite class inside the tribe. Cengiz Orhonlu found out that

beyond the family of a hereditary emirate, there were groups of *Torun* families who had created an aristocracy together with the rulers of the nomadic movable tribes [...] since this attribution was significant among the movable tribes, some members of clans asserted themselves as *torun* or *kethüda*.²⁴

Orhonlu also adds that *torun* and *kethüda* were the titles that tribal chiefs used in order to impose their leadership as an upper class against the members of tribes. Some other Ottoman records also state that there was an aristocratic class structure among the leadership of tribes as the document describes: "this is an order (*hüküm*) to all Turcoman, *Yörükân* (Turkish nomads) and *begs* of tribes and clans, all *mîrs* of

²¹ Rohat Alakom, *Torin: Aristokraten Serhede* (İstanbul: Avesta, 2009).

²² For Sabri Pasha, Heyderan and Cibran ruling elite families were *Torin*: Süleyman Sabri Paşa, *Van Tarihi*, p. 43-44. Alakom, *ibid*.

²³ Alakom, *ibid*, p.22. It is necessary to state that Turcoman tribes also had *Torun* leading chiefs which is not only limited to the Kurdish tribes.

²⁴ Cengiz Orhonlu, *Osmanlı imparatorluğunda aşiretlerin iskan teşebbüsü 1691-1696* (İstanbul: İstanbul Uni.Edebiyat Fk, 1963), p. 14.

tribes, *kethüdas* and *toruns* and elders and prestigious people”.²⁵ Although researchers have mostly described the layers of social stratifications among the tribal chiefs, the title of *Torin/Torun* leadership was hardly considered and as it will be seen in this dissertation, the Heyderan was mostly controlled by the prestigious chiefs of *Torin* during the nineteenth century.

Only a few documents about Heyderan’s pre-nineteenth century periods have come down to us and there are time gaps between the documents. The earliest extant document about the Heyderan belongs to the mid-sixteenth century. It is found in a tax register. According to this *defter* prepared in 1540, Heyderan was a clan (*oymak*) of Zilan tribe in Meyyafarikin (Silvan) with thirty-one tents.²⁶ In another document belonging to the eighteenth century, Heyderan was the name of a village in the Bismil region under the rule of the Diyarbakır Voivode.²⁷ I could not find any other documents, written in this period, which give details on the history of Heyderan. However, these two and especially the former will help us to complete a puzzle below on the history of Heyderan tribe. The Heyderan was a small clan in the sixteenth century under Zilan tribe and until the late nineteenth century, it turned into a tribal confederacy in the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderland as it will be elaborated below.

Although we have very limited documentation regarding the early history of the Heyderan tribe for the pre-nineteenth century periods, is there any chance to find some clues on the historical background of the tribe? Although I found the details of

²⁵ Yahya Koç, “149 numaralı Mühimme Defteri (1155-1156/1742-1743)” (MA Thesis, İstanbul University, 2011), p. 169.

²⁶ BOA, TD 200, p. 455.

²⁷ Özlem Başarır, “18. Yüzyılda Malikane Uygulaması ve Diyarbekir Voyvodalığı” (Ph.D. Thesis: Ankara University, 2009), p. 237.

the tax register of 1540 on the Heyderan, I am not the first to search the Ottoman tax registry archives in order to find some information regarding the history of Heyderan. The background and the early history of Heyderan tribe became an important question that needed to be answered by the Ottoman governors during the years of 1820-1823 when the Ottomans and Iranians were in war. The Heyderan tribe became a subject of inter-imperial conflicts between these two states and some Ottoman governors and hereditary *mîrs* strove to find an answer to the question: who were the Heyderan and where were their original living spaces?

2.3 “Ottoman” or “Iranian” Tribe?

Muhammed Agha’s cadet Kasım Agha of Heyderan migrated to the Ottoman side with one thousand Heyderan tents in 1820, leaving the rule of Abbas Mirza, crown prince of Qajar Iran and governor of Azerbaijan, in Khoi and pledged his loyalty to the Ottoman Sultan.²⁸ Kasım’s defection and taking refuge to the Ottoman side caused an issue of debate between the two empires. Both sides defended their own argument that Heyderan tribe was an “Ottoman” or “Iranian” tribe. In order to defend their own argument, the governor of Erzurum, El Hac Hafız Ali Pasha, requested the officials of the imperial registry office (*Defterhâne-i Âmire*) to find out the historical background of Heyderan Tribe and where their original living spaces were. After the investigation completed in the Ottoman archives, these information was shared with the governor of Erzurum:

In a registry book [1752-1753] Cemaat-i Haydarlu under the tribe of Karanlı with 110 male population in Maraş was noted in a postscript. Beyond this information, no data was found out about this Haydarlu regarding their migration and settlement in Muş and other places [...] whether this Haydarlu stayed in Maraş after registry or they went to Rakka then Muş is unknown.

²⁸ Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Tarih-i Cevdet* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Osmaniye, 1893), vol. 11, p. 4-5.

The question of governor of Erzurum: “whether this Haydari tribe was Haydarlu and if they are, in which way and when this tribe was settled in Muş?” could not be answered from the registry archives. Though this information was reached in the imperial registry office, no information was found out about their migration and settlement in Muş region. Since it was not clearly and explicitly demonstrate that the tribe in Maraş was the same as the one in Muş, an investigation at the local level shall be carried out by asking the experts on the tribes (*erbâb-ı vukûf*). Any information reached at local level shall be shared and the center must be informed.²⁹

According to the document, the governor of Erzurum, El Hac Hafız Ali Pasha, asked the central government having a research in the imperial registry office regarding the history of the Heyderan in order to defend the idea against the Iranian state that Heyderan was originally and historically an Ottoman tribe. Officials in Istanbul only found a document stating that a tribe named Heyderlu was living in Maraş during the mid-eighteenth century. However, they could not proclaim the relation between Heyderlu in Maraş with the Heyderan tribe in Muş. The same document describes that the historical background of the Zilan, Sepki and Hakkari tribes was well known but no information was found about the Heyderan apart from a resemblance between the two tribe’s names. The only chance to defend the Heyderan's status as an Ottoman tribe against the Iranian officials was an investigation among the locals. The central government and the governor of Erzurum hoped to find some evidence from oral witnesses on the history of Heyderan tribe. The Haydarlu tribe recorded in Maraş in mid-eighteenth century might be the descendants of Yusuf Hacılu-Haydarlu tribe, which were part of the Maraş *Yörüks* according to the tax registry of 1563.³⁰ That is to say, no connection was found out between the Heyderlu of Maraş and the Heyderan, which defected to Muş from the Iranian Khoi region in 1820 under the leadership of Kasım Agha. As mentioned above, Heyder was a popular name in the

²⁹ BOA, HAT 1264/48943- (1819).

³⁰ Halaçoğlu, *Anadolu'da Aşiretler*, p. 2439, TKA, TD 101, p. 31.

Islamic territories and there were plenty of tribes that derived their name from Heyder as we can see in the examples of Heyderlu in Maraş.³¹

The Ottoman registry officials could not answer the questions of where the original living places of the Heyderan tribe were and this is also a meaningful outcome in itself. The only possibility for why there was limited information on Heyderan's history might be related to the fact that the Heyderan was not a crowded and large tribe before the nineteenth century. Otherwise, officials in the registry office could have found concrete data on Heyderan as they noted that they reached on Zilan, Sipkan and Hakkari tribes. Therefore, the tax register of 1540 which mentions Heyderan as a small clan of Zilan with thirty-one tents might be well correct. The archival officials probably could not find the details of tax registry of 1540 among many *defters* in the imperial registry office in a limited time period.

The request of the governor of Erzurum to make an investigation in the registry office also shows an important custom in imperial bureaucracy between the Ottomans and Iranians that the oldest documentation was the most legitimate one to support their claims.³² Therefore, any data supported by documentations could have been used against the Iranians as discursive power in defending that Heyderan was an "Ottoman" tribe. For the Ottomans, the history of Heyderan and their oldest living spaces did not mean anything but was only an instrument to keep the tribe on their side. However, the lack of documents on the history of Heyderan might have weakened the argument of the Ottomans and therefore, the central government had

³¹ To give another example, Haydarlu of Budaklu Tribe in Tarsus recorded in the years of 1543 and 1572 can be regarded as the same as in Haydarlu of Maraş: Halaçoğlu, *Anadolu'da Aşiretler*, p. 405-406, 2184.

³² Also, during the mid-nineteenth century when the two state officials were gathered to demarcate their borders under the supervisors of the British and Russian representatives, Ottoman and Iranian attendees strived to submit their oldest sources to defend their own arguments on borderal lands and borderlanders.

recourse to the last alternative of having an investigation at the local level. That the locals and elderly people of Heyderan tribe might have given satisfying and substantial information was in the eyes of central government regarded as a last chance.

On the other hand, the Iranian officials also defended their own position and for them, the Heyderan were an “Iranian” tribe. They emphasized that defection of tribes from one to another was part of the nature of tribes and the Heyderan had been an Iranian tribe since two hundred years.³³ This was also a decisive argument and Iranians did not want to leave the tribe to the Ottomans although the Heyderan leaders, Kasim and Muhammed Agha, wanted to stay in the Ottoman territories. However, there was an important clue in the argument of the Iranians that according to their discourse the Heyderan had been living in the Iranian territories since around 1620s.³⁴ As mentioned earlier, the oldest document concerning the Heyderan that we found belongs to the mid-sixteenth century and according to this document the tribe was a clan under the rule of the Zilan tribe in Meyyafarikin (Silvan), Diyarbekir region. We can relate this information to the argument of the Iranians that for them Heyderan “appears” to be an Iranian tribe since 1620s.

As I will elaborate below, there was a relocation of tribes toward the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands, which began after the mid-sixteenth century. Although I could not find clear cut evidence in documents, which describes when exactly the Heyderan migrated from Meyyafarikin to the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderland, the suggestion of Iranian officials seems correct. The Heyderan’s oldest living space

³³ BOA, HAT 4/108- (1820): “*Haydaranlu ili ki ikiyüz seneden beri İran iletidir*”.

³⁴ When we consider that these discussions were made in 1820, we can suggest that the Iranians referred to 1620s by mentioning the Heyderan had been an Iranian tribe since two hundred years.

of Meyyafarikin, migration of the tribes toward the northern Ottoman eastern provinces after the mid-sixteenth century, and the Iranian argument that Heyderan had been an Iranian tribe for at least two-hundred years do not contradict each other and all seem affirmative and confirmative information that Heyderan migrated from Meyyafarikin to the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands between the mid-sixteenth and the mid-seventieth centuries. Before discussing this in details below, we need to look at the Ottoman investigation carried out on Heyderan's history at the local level in Muş.

2.4 Local Research on the Identity of Heyderan

We are lucky that the Ottoman central government did carry out an investigation at the local level and in this way; we learn the collective identity perception of Heyderan members during the 1820s. Selim Pasha, the *mutasarrıf* of Muş, was assigned to ask the elderly members of the Heyderan tribe for their historical backgrounds since Selim Pasha was the local *mîr* who paved the way for the Heyderan's defection to the Ottoman lands. According to what Selim Pasha received from the elders of tribe, members of the Heyderan had been living in Muş and Malazgirt regions before they immigrated to the Iranian lands when Selim's father Murad Pasha was in rule in Muş in 1810s. For him, the Heyderan were originally from Meyyafarikin, Diyarbekir region and their taxes had been sent to the Hijaz cities of Mekka and Medina (*Haremeyn-i Şerefeyn*).³⁵ For the document, the Heyderan tribe had possessed properties and lands in Meyyafarikin region until recently and as for the elderly members of tribe; they were part of the Şikak tribe. This information is important if we wish to learn how the members of Heyderan

³⁵ BOA, HAT 1/18K- (1820).

conceptualized their own identities. Although it was an *ancient identity*, some of the members of Heyderan pointed out that they had allied with the Şikak tribe, which was another powerful but dispersed tribe in the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands during the nineteenth century. Another confirming evidence can be found here that the Heyderan emigrated from Meyyafarikin region according to the perception of tribal members during the 1820s. This oral historical source on the Heyderan's background became an official discourse that could be used against the Iranians. Making the Heyderan a sub-tribe of the Şikak tribe could not have strengthen the Ottomanness of Heyderan since some Şikak members were also living in the Iranian lands.³⁶ Therefore, Selim Pasha's suggestion concerning Şikak seems to have come from the locals and was not his own creation. However, there is unclear and contradictory information about the relations between the Heyderan and the Şikak. Some contemporary researchers immediately accepted this information without questioning and they argue that the Heyderan were a sub-tribe of the Şikak.³⁷

Based on the identity perception of the Heyderan members during the 1820s, the Heyderan tribe had been part of the Şikak tribe and no details were given on the relations between the two and when exactly this alliance ended if it had existed. Notwithstanding the alliance between these two tribes, there is a lack of documents to indicate that the Heyderan were part of the Şikak tribe. Although some accessible Ottoman records were reached regarding the relations between these two tribes, these documents only mention that they attacked each other. In a document written in 1770, the Şikak tribe was subjected to Diyarbekir Province while the Heyderan were

³⁶ Simko Şikak was the best examples for their existence in the Iranian side. Şikak tribe was living between Lake Van and Lake Urmia during the 19th century: W. Spottiswoode, "Sketch of the Tribes of Northern Kurdistan" *Transaction of the Ethnological Society of London* (1863), p. 245.

³⁷ Sıtkı Uluerler, "XIX. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Osmanlı-Iran Siyasi İlişkileri (1774-1848)", (Ph.D. Thesis, Fırat University, 2009), p. 271. Uluerler misspells the name of Şikak as Şefkati tribe.

subsidiary to Erzurum Province and Şerif Muhammed of the Heyderan attacked and killed fifteen men of the Şikak and looted twenty of their sheep and horses.³⁸ Six years later in 1776, another Ottoman record mentions that both tribes plundered the villages of Van province but we do not know whether they had allied or not when the attacks were carried out.³⁹ Based on these two documents, we cannot reveal that the Heyderan and the Şikak had been allies during the late eighteenth century. However, Varlı mentions an Ottoman document, which for him described that there was an alliance between the two tribes: “Heyderi, which is from the Şikak tribe, part of *Haremeyn-i Şerefeyn*, and Sepki and Berazi and Ekrâd-ı Sâire”.⁴⁰ Although we could not access this document, according to what Varlı argues, the Heyderan and Şikak tribes had allied during the eighteenth century. This relation might have been a temporary alliance between the Heyderan and Şikak tribes since separate sections of a tribe sometimes made an alliance with another tribe.⁴¹ Although these two had possibly organized an alliance during the eighteenth century, the above mentioned document shows that the Heyderan and Şikak were not always in friendly terms with each other in the 1820s.⁴² Also historically the Şikak tribe was geographically and in identity a different tribe from the Heyderan as it will be detailed below since the Heyderan was in fact a Suleymani tribe while the Şikak was not.

³⁸ BOA, C.DH. 19/930- (1770).

³⁹ BOA, AE.SABH.I 185/12339- (1776).

⁴⁰ Ebdullah M. Varlı, *Diwan u Jinewari ya Ahmed e Xani* (İstanbul: Sipan, 2004), p. 353. I could not reach this document since Varlı did not properly cite the document.

⁴¹ For example, Bedri Agha of Heyderan was allied with the Zilan tribe in Iran in 1822, while Kasım Agha of Heyderan in Muş did not: BOA, HAT 811/37227- (1822): “*Zilanlıya tâbi olan Haydaranlı aşiretinden Bedri Ağa*”

⁴² BOA, HAT 761/35993- (1820).

There were numerous documents on the Şikak tribe compared to the significantly less numbers of documents relating to the Heyderan. According to the sixteenth century tax registers, the tribe of Şikak or Şikaklu had been living predominantly in the Hasankeyf region.⁴³ However, some members of the Şikak dispersed to Hınıs, Kilis, Erzurum, Antep, and Malatya.⁴⁴ The *Şerefname*, written by the *mîr* of Bidlis Sharaf Khan in 1597, confirms that the Şikak tribe was under the rule of the Eyyubi Meliks of Hasankeyf together with twelve other tribes.⁴⁵ In the second quarter of the seventieth century, the Şikak had a chiefdom (*mîr-i aşiretlik*), and their chief was recognized by the Ottomans as an administrative structure subjected to the Van governors.⁴⁶ An elaborate investigation regarding the Şikak tribe will be left for another research, and for our discussion, it is possible to suggest that the alliance between the Heyderan and Şikak might have been a temporary one and no more detailed information was found that they had shared the same historic identity. The governor of Van province confirms this suggestion that during the 1820s when Kasım Agha defected to the Ottoman lands in Muş, their settlement in Erciş and Adilcevaz was seen as dangerous since for him the villages of these two regions were the winter quarters of the Şikak tribe and the two tribes were in rivalry.⁴⁷

Considering the Ottoman archival evidence that the Heyderan were part of the Zilan tribe in Meyyafarikin during the sixteenth century, Selim Pasha's argument confirms the tax registry of 1540 that the Heyderan was originally from the Meyyafarikin

⁴³ Halaçoğlu, *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Halaçoğlu, *Ibid.* 294 Numaralı Hınıs Mufassal Tahrir Defteri (963/1556) (Ankara: BOA, 2000), p. 16, 35.

⁴⁵ Şeref Han, *Şerefname: Kürt Tarihi*, (İstanbul: Nubihar, 2003), p. 196.

⁴⁶ Orhan Kılıç, "Van Eyaleti'ne Bağlı Sancaklar ve İdari Statüleri (1558-1740)" in *the Journal of Ottoman Studies*, vol. 21, İstanbul, p. 198.

⁴⁷ BOA, HAT 761/35993- (1820).

region. Selim Pasha's suggestion that the Heyderan's being a branch of Şikak possibly shows a temporary alliance between the two tribes. After the migration of the Heyderan toward the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands, the Heyderan probably had allied with the branches of the Şikak tribe who had also been living in Erzurum and Van provinces. However, we cannot say that their relation and identities were ancient and relied on older periods on the basis of available archival resources. In order to elaborate our discussion, let us take the other reference, the Heyderan's ancient collective identity of being one of the Suleymani tribes.

2.5 Was Heyderan a Suleymani Tribe?

Lois Beck describes that "intertribal mobility was a common pattern and was part of the process of tribal formation and dissolution".⁴⁸ Intertribal movements were part of the nature of tribes especially in the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands.⁴⁹ The Heyderan possibly allied with the Şikak during the eighteenth century but when we go back to the sixteenth century, Heyderan appears as a clan of the Suleymani Tribes in the Meyyafarikin region. According to this tax registry, the leader of the Heyderan tribe appears as a person named Suleymani Abbas.⁵⁰ The name "Suleymani" indicates that the tribe was part of the Suleymani Kurds. Another important document which

⁴⁸ Lois Beck, "Tribes and the State in Nineteenth-and Twentieth-Century Iran," in *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, eds. Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner (Oxford: Uni.of California, 1990), p.191.

⁴⁹ Currently, there is a small clan of Pinyaniş whose members believe they are part of the Celali Tribe in Bayezid city although Pinyaniş tribe is one of two biggest tribes in Hakkâri region. As it was mentioned above, Bedri Agha of Heyderan tribe, the uncle of Kasım Agha, was subjected Zilan Tribe in Iran while Kasım and his brother Muhammed Agha did not ally with Zilan tribe in Ottoman lands in 1820s. Hevidi tribe was one of the eight biggest Suleymani tribes during the sixteenth century for Sharaf Khan; however, this tribe becomes a small clan of Heyderan during the twentieth century: *Aşiretler Raporu*, p. 55.

⁵⁰ BOA, TD 200, p. 455.

supports that the Heyderan were a Suleymani tribe was written by the *mîr* of Bayezid, İshak Pasha's son, Mahmud Pasha. He wrote to the central government in 1809 that the Heyderan tribe attacked his villages and therefore he requested exemption from paying his annual taxes. While Mahmud Pasha informs the Porte about these problems, he refers to the Heyderan tribe as "Suleymani Heyderan Tribe".⁵¹ Again in 1820, Mahmud Pasha's son, Behlül Pasha, also describes Kasım Agha of the Heyderan as "Tribes of Silivani, the agha of the Heyderan tribe, Kasım Agha".⁵² The *Mutasarrıfs* of Bayezid, Mahmud and his son Behlül Pasha were ruling Bayezid region as hereditary rulers under the semi-autonomous administrative structure of *yurtluk/ocaklık* and they had the same historical backgrounds as the Heyderan tribe since they were also a Suleymani tribe.⁵³ Varlı points out that the Bayezid province was ruled by the Besyan, Pazuki, Mahmudi and Dünbuli tribes after the third quarter of the sixteenth century.⁵⁴ Katip Çelebi also mentions in his *Cihannüma* that Bayezid's *mîrs* were from the Besyan Tribe and that the Iranians hesitated to attack them during the seventieth century:

Bayezid is the frontier to the Iranians. Diyadin and Hamur fortresses was ruled by Bayezid. Behlül Bey took the rule of *liva* (sub-province) as *ocaklık* (estate) for himself. They are from the Kurds of Besyan tribe. Since they are so valiant, Iranians abstain from them.⁵⁵

⁵¹ BOA, C.ML. 562/23066- (1809).

⁵² BOA, HAT 825/37413H- (1820).

⁵³ Erdal Çiftçi, "Migration, memory and mytification" *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 54, issue 2 (2018), p. 270-288.

⁵⁴ Varlı, *Diwan u Jinewari*, p. 317: "Le bi purani serweri di deste hoza Bazoki u Besyani u Mahmudi u Dünbuli da buye". Mahmudi Emirate's center was in Hoşab (Güzelsu) while Dünbulis mostly stayed in Khoi under the Iranian leadership.

⁵⁵ Katip Çelebi, *Cihannüma* (İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2010), p. 514.

Another researcher, Mehdi Aqasi also mentions that Mahmud's son, Behlül was the ruler of Bayezid and he was referred to as being from Silvan (Meyyafarikin).⁵⁶ Varlı elaborates on the topic and gives some more concrete examples that the rulers of Bayezid were from Besyan tribe.⁵⁷ The Heyderan tribe was described as part of the Suleymani tribe by the rulers of Bayezid, who were also historically a Suleymani tribe of Besyan, although the leadership of the Besyan tribe turned into an emirate in Bayezid province.

In short, Selim Pasha of Muş did not describe the Suleymani background of the Heyderan; however, the *mîrs* of Bayezid saw the Heyderan as a Suleymani Tribe. There is an important implicit detail in this information. Both the Heyderan and Behlül Pasha were referred to as *Silivani* which actually derives its name from the Suleymani Tribes. Minorski and Kırzıoğlu tell us that Silvan, another name of Meyyafarikin, took its name from Suleymani Kurds.⁵⁸ Another Ottoman record also refers to the tribes of the Zilan, Heyderan, Sepki, Cemedanlı ve Celali as *Silvanlı* tribes during the 1820s.⁵⁹ Above sources reveal that the most powerful northern Ottoman-Iranian tribes were actually from Silvan (Meyyafarikin) and the Heyderan was one of those tribes.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Mehdi Aqasi, *Tarih-i Xoy*. Tebriz 1350-(1930), p. 250: “بهلول پاشای سلیوان حاکم بایزید” - Behlül Pasha of Silvan the ruler of Bayezid”.

⁵⁷ Varlı, *Diwan u Jinewari*, p. 353: Varlı referred to “BOA, C DH. (1 Ramazan 1190-1776)” without exact catalogue number. “Speaking to the Pasha of Erzurum Yeğen Ali Pasha and my Besyani servant Ishak Pasha of Bayezid”.

⁵⁸ Vladimir Minorsky, “Meyyafarikin” in *İA*, vol. 8, İstanbul 1980, p. 200. For Kırzıoğlu the name of Silvan came from the tribe of Zilan: M. Fahrettin Kırzıoğlu, *Dağıstan-Aras-Dicle-Altay ve Türkistan Türk Boylarından Kürtler* (Ankara: Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1984), p. 33.

⁵⁹ BOA, HAT 811/37227- (1822).

⁶⁰ Garo Sasoni also adds that the Bayezid province was consisted of the migrated tribes during the seventeenth century: Garo Sasoni, *Kürt Ulusal Hareketleri ve Onbeşinci Yüzyıldan Günümüze Ermeni Kürt İlişkileri* (İstanbul: Med, 1992), p. 104-105.

According to the *Şerefname*, the historic importance of the Suleymani Tribes goes back to the time of the Marwanids and there were eight Suleymani Tribes living in the Meyyafarikin (Silvan) and Kulb regions.⁶¹ For Sharaf Khan, these tribes were the Zilan, Besyan, Bociyan, Banuki, Hevidi, Dîlhiran, Zıkziyan and Berazi tribes. Some of these tribes appear in the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁶² We are able to confirm these details by checking the Ottoman tax registers (*Tahrir Defterleri*), which tell us that most of these tribes were indeed in the regions of Meyyafarikin and Kulb during the sixteenth century.⁶³ The Heyderan tribe was not a numerous and powerful tribe during the sixteenth century; therefore, it is quite typical that the Heyderan's name was not mentioned by Sharaf Khan. As it was described above, the Heyderan only appears in the tax register of 1540 with thirty-one tents under the leadership of Veli Kethüda and Suleymani Abbas being an *oymak* of the Suleymani Zilan tribe.⁶⁴ However, we should keep in mind that since the Heyderan was a nomadic tribe, there might also have been unrecorded members of the tribe. What Sharaf Khan mentions about the Suleymani tribe is important since it helps us to understand that Meyyafarikin and Kulb regions were associated with Suleymani Kurds during the sixteenth century and also, he mentions that these tribes were relocated in the northern Ottoman eastern provinces during the mid-sixteenth century.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Şeref Han, *Şerefname*, p. 302.

⁶² During the nineteenth century, most of the Zilan tribe appears in northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands. Dîlhiran tribe also appears in Erzurum during the twentieth century: *Aşiretler Raporu*, p. 126. Banuki tribe also appears under the Celali tribe in Bayezid during the mid-nineteenth century: Derviş Paşa, *Tahdid-i Hudud*, p. 161-162.

⁶³ Halaçoğlu, *Ibid.* Only Berazi tribe appears in Urfa region especially during the nineteenth century.

⁶⁴ BOA, TD 200, p. 455.

⁶⁵ Şeref Han, *Şerefname*, p. 301-310.

We encounter some names derived from Heyderan or similar names in the Diyarbekir region during the sixteenth century. According to the tax registry of 1518, a village named Haydarkan in the Diyarbakır region, which was ruled by a person named Muhammed Suleymani, was held by the family for a long period.⁶⁶ In the city center of Diyarbekir, some persons named Heyderanlu were living in different Muslim neighborhoods and Nezi Heyderanlu was one of those persons.⁶⁷ In some villages of Diyarbekir, people named Heyderlu were living, such as Satılmış Heyderlu and Gunduk Heyderlu in the villages of Salarlu and Dirahni.⁶⁸ However these names were not written as Heyderanlu but Heyderlu and no connection was found between Heyderan tribe and these people named Heyderlu. Although we could not relate the name Heyderlu to the Heyderan tribe, some persons named Heyderanlu dwelling in the city center of Diyarbekir might be members of the Heyderan tribe who left their tribal life and settled in the city.

Let us return to the information that Selim Pasha received from Heyderan's elderly members, the tribe was subject of (*reaya* of) *Haremeyn-i Şerefeyn*.⁶⁹ This reference meant that the collected customary tributes from Heyderan were allocated to the Muslim's Holy cities in Hejaz, Mecca and Medina. Although the Heyderan tribe was not mentioned in the tax register of 1568, Selim Pasha's information might be correct since there was a village named Heyder Kethüda under the control of the Zilan tribe and it was noted as "Haremeyan" [i.e. whose tax revenues belonged to the pious

⁶⁶ Mehdi İlhan, *Amid (Diyabakır): 1518 Detailed Register*, (Ankara: TTK, 2000), p. 401.

⁶⁷ Mehdi İlhan, *Amid*, p.38-47.

⁶⁸ Mehdi İlhan, *Amid*, p. 227, 349, 365-367.

⁶⁹ BOA, HAT 1/18G- (1820).

endowment of *Haremeyn-i Şerefeyn Evkâfi*].⁷⁰ Their taxes were possibly kept for the *Haremeyn-i Şerefeyn* and Selim Pasha seems correct on the Heyderan tribe.

The tax register of 1540, in which the Heyderan were mentioned, also recorded the tribes of Zilan, Besyan and Bociyan together with them; and in the tax register of 1568 all three Suleymani tribes were noted under the Diyarbekir Province's Savur District under the name of Berazi village.⁷¹ As it was mentioned above, Berazi was one of those eight Suleymani tribes and their name was used as an administrative unit which includes all other three biggest ones among the Suleymani tribes: Zilan, Besyan and Bociyan. One should also keep in mind that during the eighteenth century, Berazi district (*kaza*) of Diyarbakır province had a village named Heyderan in Bismil.⁷² This can also be seen as a confirming another detail that there was a link between the Suleymani tribes and Heyderan. Based on our reference we do not know where the village received its name from but some members of the Heyderan tribe possibly had remained in this village. As Ziya Gökalp emphasizes, when tribes of the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands left Meyyafarikin, some members remained in Diyarbekir region and during the World War I some of those tribes were hosted by the descendants of those in Diyarbekir region.⁷³

Sharaf Khan provides a crucial detail that some Suleymani tribes had migrated to the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands after the wars began between the two empires but he does not specify which war it was.⁷⁴ In return for protecting the Ottoman

⁷⁰ TKA, TD 168, p. 359. Halaçoğlu, *Ibid*, p. 2488.

⁷¹ Halaçoğlu, *Ibid*.

⁷² Özlem Başarır, "18. Yüzyılda Malikane Uygulaması", p. 237.

⁷³ Ziya Gökalp, *Kürt Aşiretleri Hakkında Sosyolojik Tetkikler* (İstanbul: Kaynak, 2011), p. 36.

⁷⁴ Sharaf Khan probably meant the Ottoman-Iranian wars of 1578-1590.

eastern frontiers, tribal chiefs were given the titles of *sancak begi* or *alay begi*, and Suleymani Besyan chiefs led the other Suleymani tribes in Bayezid province.⁷⁵ Some Ottoman records show that the Suleymani and other tribes remained in their summer quarters during the third quarter of sixteenth century and they were accustomed to the regions of Erzurum, Muş and Bayezid before they made this region their own permanent residence: “Since their names mentioned tribes (Besyan and Zilan) were located in the fortresses of Bidlis, Muş, Kefendur, Ahlat, Erciş and Adilcevaz, their assigned taxes cannot be paid by the non-migrated ones in Diyarbekir region”.⁷⁶ Gökalp and Celadet Bedirhan also were in conscious that there were explicit migrations toward the northern Ottoman Kurdistan and this movement created a terminology of *Gavestî* and *Gamirî*, which meant that “the people whose oxes exhausted of or dead, and therefore, they did not return to their original living spaces from the highland pastures”.⁷⁷ At this point, we can suggest that some members of Heyderan were part of this movement. As mentioned earlier, the alliance between the Heyderan and Iranian Empire began around 1620s and this emphasis actually confirms our suggestion that Heyderan also moved during those years which we could not specifically know.⁷⁸

We know from Ali Emiri’s comments that during the late nineteenth century some leaders of Heyderan tribe knew that their ancestral living space was Meyyafarikin. Ali Emiri was a specialist on archival records and he was interested in historical

⁷⁵ Şeref Han, *Şerefname*, p. 308.

⁷⁶ *91 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri* (H. 1056/M.1646-1647), (İstanbul: Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2015) p. 235- 236.

⁷⁷ Gökalp, *Kürt Aşiretleri*, p. 36. Bedirhan also describes the terminology of *Gawesti* tribes: Herekol Azizan (Celadet Ali Bedirhan), “Mil u Zil: Bir u Esasen Eşiren Kurdan” in *Ronahi: Supplement Illustre De La Revue Kurde Hawar* (issue 11/ 1 Feb. 1943), p. 12-14.

⁷⁸ BOA, HAT 4/108- (1820).

research. When he was assigned to Erzurum, he made contact with Hamidian tribal brigadier Hüseyin Pasha of the Heyderan tribe. Hüseyin Pasha was the most powerful of all Heyderan chiefs in the upper Lake Van region and shared with Ali Emiri that his forefathers migrated from Meyyafarikin to the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderland at a time they did not know.⁷⁹ When their ancestors left their living places, they brought an old book with them written on the history of Meyyafarikin region. This book was held by the scholar Molla Resul who was close to Hüseyin who was quartering in Iranian lands according to Emiri's words. We do not know which book Emiri refers to but it might be the *Tarih-i Meyyafarikin* written by İbn'ul Ezrak. Hüseyin Pasha's comments on their historic living space also confirm that Heyderan was a part of Suleymani tribe in the Meyyafarikin region. As we noted above, Mahmud/Behlül Pasha and other sources described the Heyderan as a Suleymani/Silivani tribe and therefore, we can confirm that the tax registry of 1540 seems correct on the Heyderan's being a Suleymani tribe in Meyyafarikin region.

Although Kasım agha of the Heyderan defected to Ottoman lands in 1820, his uncle, Bedri agha, was subjected to Iranian Shah in the same period. We know from a document that Bedri agha allied with the Zilan tribe in Iranian lands and were referred both as Silivani tribes.⁸⁰ This alliance may be seen as a reflection of the historic relation between the Heyderan and the Zilan, but also as a reflection of a temporary alliance.

In sum, though there are few documents which help us to enlighten the history of Heyderan tribe, the above mentioned details complete a puzzle that the Heyderan were historically part of the Suleymani tribes, who had an effective power in

⁷⁹ Ali Emiri, *Osmanlı Vilâyât-ı Şarkiyesi*, İstanbul, 1337 (1918), p. 53.

⁸⁰ BOA, HAT 811/37227- (1822).

Meyyafarikin (Silvan) region from fourteenth to sixteenth centuries as I will elaborate below. We have also found an important fact of the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands and its creation during the late sixteenth century: the relocation of the Suleymani tribes, which made the region of northern Ottoman-Iranian frontier more Kurdish populated area over time because of the flow of Kurdish tribal population from the southern regions.

2.6 Suleymani *Mîrs*, Tribes and Their Relocation on the Northern Ottoman-Iranian Frontiers

During the fifteenth century the Ottoman central government supported the relocation of nomadic subjects to the Balkans or even accomplished it by force. Although historians discuss how the Ottomans consolidated its conquests in the Balkans through the relocation of the nomads, they hardly mention how it was practiced in the conquered lands of Ottoman-Iranian frontiers during the sixteenth century.⁸¹ As we can see in the relocation of the Suleymani tribes on the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontier during the third quarter of the sixteenth century, the central government seems to have applied similar strategies. This relocation created a buffer zone between the two empires that consisted of tribes. Aziz Efendi refers to the words of the Ottoman Sultan, Süleyman I, for how it was conceptualized from the imperial center: “God made Kurdistan act in the protection of my imperial kingdom

⁸¹ Halil İnalcık, “Ottoman methods of Conquest” *Studia Islamica*, No: 2 (1954), p. 122. Some researchers mentioned briefly on migration of Silvani Suleymani tribes though: Tessa Hoffman - Gerayer Koutcharian, “The History of Armenian-Kurdish Relations in the Ottoman Empire.” *Armenian Review*, vol. 39, no. 4-156 (Winter-1986). p. 4.

like a strong barrier and an iron fortress against the sedition of the demon gog of Persia”.⁸²

Süleyman I’s words show that the tribes played a security role in the minds of central government in a frontier zone to protect the imperial boundaries from the Iranian Empire. Evliya Çelebi made a similar comment on the role of tribes during the seventeenth century: “If six thousand Kurdish tribes and clans of these mountains between the Iraq-i Arab and Ottoman lands did not become a steady barrier, it would be very easy for the Iranians to invade the Ottoman territories”.⁸³

We know that the Ottoman central government made an alliance with the Kurdish local hereditary *mîrs* in order to build a security zone between the Ottomans and the Safavids.⁸⁴ İdris-i Bidlisi carried an intermediary role between the central government and those Kurdish *mîrs* during the second quarter of the sixteenth century. Researchers have mostly referred to the relations between the Sultan and the Kurdish *mîrs* but not to the relations with the tribes. At this point, we can assert that tribes were also supported by the central government. We should look at the comments that British Major Trotter made on this relationship:

Edrisi (İdris-i Bidlisi) forced a great part of the nomad Kurds, “who then, as now, preyed to a great extent upon the peaceable agricultural population and villages,” to emigrate to the rich pastoral country in the neighbourhood of Erzeroum and Erivan. The Kurds thus transported were at the same time assured perpetual immunity from taxation conditionally on their acting as a militia for the protection of the Turkish frontier [...] In the reign of Monarchs

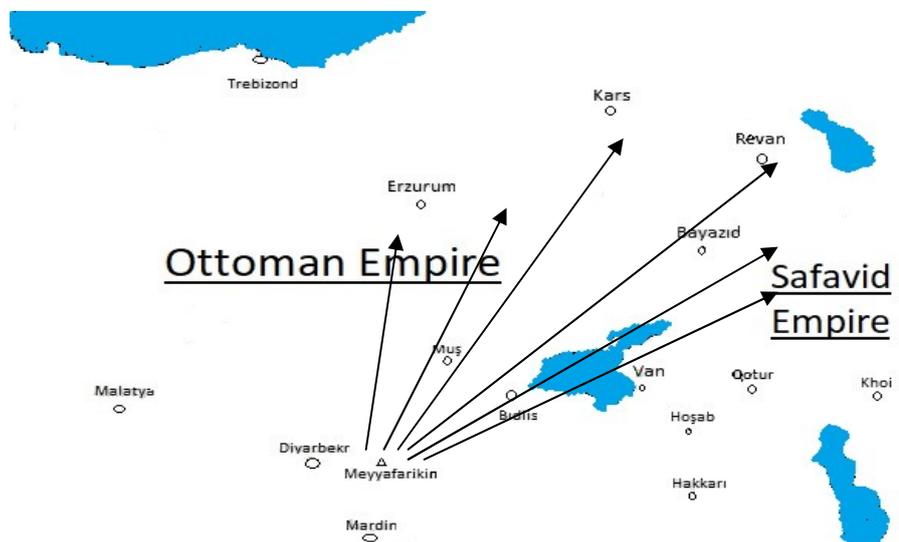
⁸² Cited in Baki Tezcan, “The development of the use of ‘Kurdistan’ as a geographical description and the incorporation of this region into the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century,” in *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilization*, edited by Kemal Çiçek et al. (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 2000), vol. 3, p. 546.

⁸³ Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatname* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, 2006), vol. iv, p. 110: “*Irak-ı Arap ile Osmanoğlu arasında bu yüksek dağlar içinde 6.000 adet Kürt aşiret ve kabileleri sağlam bir engel olmasa Acem kavmi Osmanlı diyarına istila etmeleri çok kolay olurdu*”.

⁸⁴ Çiftçi, “Migration, memory and mytification”, p. 270-288.

further immigrations from the south appear to have taken place, and we now find Kurds scattered nearly all over the country, their northern limit being, roughly speaking, a line from Kars to Erzeroum, extended on to Divriki. It is said that, with the exception of the Kurds of Hakkiari, and the tribe of Mamakanlee, all the Kurds inhabiting the Erzeroum and Van districts originally came from the neighbourhood of Diarbekir.⁸⁵

As Trotter realized, the tribes were used as a military might between the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands and the Suleymani tribes were also included in these tribal movements toward the northern lands. Nikitin also asserts that the Ottoman central government designed the migration of the Kurds en masse in the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands and the Heyderan and his allied tribes were relocated in Armenia by İdris-i Bidlisi after the Battle of Çaldıran in 1514.⁸⁶ Although Nikitin was right that Suleymani tribes had moved to the northern regions en masse and made a shift in the ethnic composition of the region, the date he gave was too early and this process of migration began especially after the mid-sixteenth century.



Map 1. Relocation of Suleymani Tribes to the Northern Ottoman-Iranian Frontiers.

⁸⁵ *Memorandum by Major Trotter*, Constantinople, 30 October 1880 (FO 424/107).

⁸⁶ Nikitin, *Kürtler*, p. 278. E.I. Vasilyeva also cited Nikitin: M.S. Lazarev, Ş.X. Mihoyan, E.I. Vasilyeva, M.A. Gasretyan, O.I. Jigalina, *Kürdistan Tarihi* (İstanbul, Avesta, 2015), p. 94. Nikitin does not support his claim by any reference.

The most detailed information regarding the movement of the Suleymani Kurds was again given by Sharaf Khan, in his *Şerefname* written in 1597. Sharaf Khan describes the Suleymani Emirs in his third chapter where he also gives details on the Emirates of Çemişgezek, Mirdasi, Hazzo, Hizan, Kilis, Şirvan, Zirki and Süveydi. For Sharaf Khan, the Suleymani Kurds consisted of two separate groups: the Suleymani *Mîrs* and the Suleymani Tribes. Sharaf Khan thinks that the forefather of Suleymani *Mîrs* was the last ruler of Umayyad dynasty, Mervan II and that the Suleymanis received their names from Süleyman Ibn Abdul-Malik of Umayyad dynasty.⁸⁷ Although Sharaf Khan links the genealogy of Suleymani *Mîrs* to the Arab Quraysh tribe via the Umayyads, almost all Kurdish *mîrs* and even tribes saw their ancestral backgrounds separate and distant from their subjects that they ruled.⁸⁸ According to the Islamic Shafi School of jurisdiction, a legitimate ruler must be a descendant of Quraysh tribe, and since the Kurds were practicing the Shafi jurisprudence, the Kurdish *mîrs* had asserted that they were the descendants of Abbasids⁸⁹ or Umayyads. Therefore, the conception of Suleymanis' being descendants of Umayyad dynasty should be regarded as fictional rather than a reality.⁹⁰

For Sharaf, Suleymani *Mîrs* had allied with the Safavids and Muhammad Ustaclu, governor of Diyarbekir; and *Mîr* Diyadin Suleymani supported them especially against Alaüddeve of Zülkadir in Maraş region.⁹¹ Ebubekir Tihrani also states that the Suleymani Kurds controlled some castles in the Meyyafarikin region until the

⁸⁷ Şeref Han, *Şerefname*, p. 301.

⁸⁸ Şeref Han, *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Emirs of Hakkari asserted that their forefathers were Abbasids.

⁹⁰ Sharaf Han saw their ancestors as descendants of old Persian Kings. Other *mîrs* such as Hakkari *Mîrs* also declared themselves as Abbasids.

⁹¹ Şeref Han, *Şerefname*, p. 304.

reigns of Qaraqoyunlu (The Black Sheep) and Aqqoyunlu (The White Sheep) states during the mid-fifteenth century.⁹² There are also some sources which show that Suleymani *Mîrs*, such as *Mîr* Bahaeddin and his son *Mîr* Celaledin, stayed under the rule of Ayyubid Meliks of Hasankeyf and they controlled the region between Hasankeyf, Hazzo (Kozluk), and Meyyafarikin during the fourteenth century.⁹³ Therefore, one can argue that the Suleymani Kurds were associated with the Meyyafarikin region since at least the fourteenth century.

When the Ottomans appeared in the region, the Suleymani *Mîrs* accepted the rule of Selim I and they joined the Ottoman armies against the remnants of Safavids in the Mardin region.⁹⁴ Even in the war of Çaldıran in 1514, Nasır Bey Suleymani and Şah Veled Bey Suleymani had allied with the Ottomans.⁹⁵ The Kulp and Meyyafarikin regions were controlled by the Suleymani *Mîrs* during the sixteenth century and as Sharaf states they lost their power when their region was divided into the Kulp and Meyyafarikin districts.⁹⁶ There were two important reasons for the loss of the Suleymani *Mîrs* as Sharaf Khan pointed out: the first was the taxation of the Suleymani tribes and their relocation in the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands. The Suleymani *Mîrs* had to pay taxes to the treasury of Diyarbekir and they had to collect

⁹² Ebu Bekr-i Tihriani, *Kitâb-ı Diyarbekriyye*, tr. Mürsel Öztürk (Ankara, TTK, 2014), p. 34, 45, 221.

⁹³ Yusuf Baluken, “Hasankeyf Eyyubileri (630-866/1232-1462)” (Ph.D. Thesis: Erzurum University, 2016), p. 181.

⁹⁴ Nejat Göyünç, “Diyarbekir Beylerbeyliği’nin İlk İdari Taksimatı” *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi*, vol. 23, İstanbul 1969, p.28. İdris-i Bidlisi, *Selim Şah-Nâme*, by. Hicabi Kırılancık (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2001), p. 279.

⁹⁵ Yusuf Baluken, “Hasankeyf Eyyubileri”, p. 225.

⁹⁶ Şeref Han, *Şerefname*, p. 301-310. Nasır Bey and Şah Veled Bey joined the war of Çaldıran separately which shows that Suleymani tribes were divided internally. While Şah Veled garrisoned in the left side of İdris-i Bidlisi, Nasır Bey also stayed in the right side of İdris-i Bidlisi during the war. Yusuf Baluken, “Hasankeyf Eyyubileri”, p. 225.

substantial amounts from the the Suleymani tribes who mostly resisted paying it.⁹⁷

Secondly, the Suleymani tribes did not return to their winter quarters in the Diyarbekir region but stayed in the Muş, Adilcevaz, Malazgirt, Erzurum, and Van regions especially after these places had returned to the control of the Ottomans.⁹⁸

Sharaf Khan mentions that Suleymani tribes promised to protect the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire in return for receiving *sancakbeyi* and *alaybeyi* titles on the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontier.⁹⁹ The taxation of the Suleymani tribes and the Ottoman conquests toward the Iranian territories let the Suleymani tribes reject the legitimacy of the Suleymani *Mîrs*. The northern territories to which they migrated were not unknown to the tribes since Sharaf Khan and some *mühimme* records indicated that the Suleymani tribes used the highlands of Erzurum, Van and Bayezid as summer quarters.¹⁰⁰

Mühimme records show that the tribes of Besyan, Bociyan and Zilan were pasturing at the Iranian frontier, and sometimes traded with the Iranians though the central

⁹⁷ Suleymani tribes had to pay ten thousand filori since they rejected to join the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. Suleymani Emir, Behlül Bey had to collect this tax from Suleymani tribes. However, this created conflicts between these two. *12 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (978-979/ 1570-1572)*, (Ankara: Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 1996), p. 359: “Biz piyâde virmeğe kâdir değılüz; perâkende olup ısyân u tuğyân iderüz” p. 528: “*Piyâde ü kavvâs virmeğe kudretimüz yokdur. Ammâ; on bin filori yaylakdan avdet olundukda vireliüm*”, p. 223: Later the beglerbeyi of Diyarbekir requested central government to reduce to 3000 *filoris* and it was accepted.

⁹⁸ *91 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, p. 235-236: “*Aşâyir-i mezbûrdan beher sene Bitlis ve Muş ve Kefendür ve Ahlat ve Erciş ve Adilcevaz kaleleri neferatına tayin olunan beş buçuk yük akçayı verirler iken hâlâ aşâyir-i mezbûrun ekseri varıb zikrolunan kalelerde tavattun edip*”. Şeref Han, *Şerefname*, p. 308: For Sharaf, Suleymani tribes did not recognize the leadership of Behlül Bey and rejected to pay their taxes. One of Suleymani Besyan tribe’s leaders, Şahsuvar Bey, declared autonomy in Bayezid after he gathered Suleymani tribes. Based on an Ottoman record, Bayezid was given to Şahsuvar Bey in 1585: BOA, Kamil Kepeci 262/101.

⁹⁹ It was mentioned above that Suleymani Besyan tribe’s leaders became the rulers of Bayezid sancak.

¹⁰⁰ Şeref Han, *Şerefname*, p. 303: Sharaf Khan asserts that there were hundreds of groups of Suleymani tribes who pastured their sheep in highlands of Bidlis, Şerafeddin (in northern Muş) and Aladağ Mountains from the spring season to autumn and they paid one in three hundred sheep (1/300). Also please check: *7 Nolu Mühimme Defteri (975-976/ 1567-1569)*(Ankara: Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2014), p. 95-96, and BOA, A. {DVNSMHHM.d 26/946.

government attempted to stop these relations.¹⁰¹ We understand that the Porte supported these tribes' seasonal migrations which made the tribes accustomed to the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontiers. In an example, a prestigious person named *Keçel* (Bold) Hüseyin in Bidlis attacked the tribes and the central government ordered disciplining this person for his attack of the tribes.¹⁰² As we mentioned above, the central government supported the tribes at the Safavid frontier during the sixteenth century and in order to keep the tribes on the Ottoman side, protected them during their seasonal migrations. At the same time, we learn from the *mühimme* records that the Suleymani tribes accustomed to the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontier before making their summer quarters permanent living spaces.

Mühimme records sometimes addressed the tribes as “Besyan, Bociyan and Zilan tribes”,¹⁰³ since these tribes were the most powerful ones among the Suleymani tribes. According to records of 1515, Suleymani Tribes were probably included under the “*Ulus* and Tribe” administrative division since the Suleymani Beys were sometimes called *Ulus Begi*.¹⁰⁴ According to the 1520 tax records, these tribes were part of the *Liva-i Suleymaniyan* under the leadership of Shah Veled Bey Suleymani who attended the war in Koçhisar, Mardin.¹⁰⁵ For Sharaf, after Shah Veled Bey, the

¹⁰¹ *7 Nolu Mühimme Defteri*, p. 95-96: These tribes sold horses and animal products to the “upper side” (*yukarı canib*) which meant Iranians.

¹⁰² *12 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, p. 135.

¹⁰³ *91 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri*, p. 234.

¹⁰⁴ *6 Numaralı Mühimme Defteri (972-1564-1565)* (Ankara: Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 1995), p. 323- 324, 327, 333.

¹⁰⁵ Nejat Göyünç, “Diyarbakir Beylerbeyliği'nin”, p. 26.

region of the Suleymaniyan was divided between the Kulb and Meyyafarikin regions which decreased the power of the Suleymani Emirs.¹⁰⁶

The Suleymani tribes of Besyan, Bociyan and Zilan had a chiefdom structure that can be called a confederation of tribes. The tax registers of 1518, 1521, 1540 and 1568 confirm that these three powerful tribes were living in the same region.¹⁰⁷ All these three tribes had to mount fifteen to thirty soldiers according to the tax record of 1518 and it describes that this was an old tradition since “*Hasan Padişah*” of Aqqoyunlu State.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, the tax record of 1518 confirms what Ebubekir Tihrani commented that Suleymani tribes were an effective power in the Meyyafarikin region. These records also show that the Ottoman central government carried on the same taxation tradition which was applied by the Aqqoyunlu (white sheep) rulers.

The Suleymani tribes consisted of confederations of tribes, as we can see in the records of 1540, according to which the “*Ekrâd-ı Aşiret-i Bociyan*” had five separate clans while the “*Ekrâd-ı Aşiret-i Besyan*” had four different clans. In this record, “*Ekrâd-ı Aşiret-i Zilan*” is the most populous one since it was comprised of fourteen separate clans, including the Heyderan.¹⁰⁹ These tribes administratively appeared under Diyarbakır’s Savur district’s Berazi village which is also the name of one of those Suleymani tribes.¹¹⁰ Although we are not sure whether all Suleymani members

¹⁰⁶ Tezcan, “The development”, p. 549.

¹⁰⁷ Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ Mehdi İlhan, *Amid (Diyabakır)*, p. 143-172: “*Hâsılı mezkûrîn ber vech-i maktu’ an kadim der zaman-ı Hasan padişah hemçun bûde kemkân mukarrer şode*”.

¹⁰⁹ BOA, TD 200, p. 455. Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ TKA, TD 168.

were included, according to tax record of 1568, the numbers of the Suleymani tribes in Meyyafarikin regions appear as 5,158 tents and 1,457 bachelors, which was quite a high number= around 50,000 souls.¹¹¹

This type of tribal demographic movements toward the northern territories possibly made a shift in the ethnic composition of the region. Baki Tezcan discusses that the usage of name “Kurdistan” was only an administrative-political usage but not based on geographic-ethnic composition.¹¹² Although he confesses that no demographic data exist, he rejects that the usage of the name was not based on geography and ethnic demographic structure. However, we may suggest that the great number of the Suleymani tribes and their relocation in the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontier possibly let the Ottomans to refer to the region over time as Kurdistan after the third quarter of the sixteenth century. The following section also claims that the tribes of the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands kept a memory that they had emigrated from the Diyarbekir region and that this movement began in the third quarter of the sixteenth century. The term “*Kürdistan*” was used by the Ottomans in the same period, so that, we can claim that the usage was based both on geographic-demographic and on administrative and political codes of the region.

In sum, the tribe of the Heyderan, which was a powerful one in the nineteenth century, had originally been part of the Suleymani Zilan tribe, which had been one of the most powerful of eight separate tribes of the Meyyafarikin region. The Suleymani tribes became active in the northern and eastern parts of Diyarbekir region at least from the fourteen century onwards. Ottoman tax records show that their numbers were quite high and their relocation in the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontier

¹¹¹ Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ibid.*

¹¹² Tezcan, *Ibid.*

potentially powerful enough to bring a shift in the ethnic composition of the region that possibly let it be called as Kurdistan by the central government. The Suleymani *Mîrs* and their subjects, the Suleymani tribes, were the two separate class structures and their relations became problematic during the third quarter of sixteenth century. After these relations deteriorated and they rejected the rule of Suleymani *Mîrs* and a power vacuum occurred after the conquests of the Ottomans, the tribes made the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontiers their permanent living spaces. These movements were also supported by the central government since the buffer zone of the Ottoman-Iranian frontier was strengthened by the military might of the allied Suleymani tribes. The Heyderan tribe, which was a small section of another tribe, increased their power over time to become one of the patrons of the region during the nineteenth century as the later chapters will discuss.

2.7 Perception of Tribes: Memory of the Dislocation from Diyarbekir Region

After the relocation of the Suleymani tribes on the northern sphere of the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands, these tribes seem to have become powerful in this region toward the nineteenth century since they were supported by the central government. This section will show how the tribes of northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands, the Heyderan included, kept the memory of their original living spaces.

Mark Sykes, who travelled across all the Ottoman East during the early twentieth century, reveals that all tribes of the northern Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands traditionally believed that they were immigrants from Diyarbekir region: “they have been the masters of the country which they inhabit long before the government of

Constantinople had any power there¹¹³ [...] their tradition state that they originally came from Diarbekir”.¹¹⁴ It seems that this was not the fantasy of Sykes but rather of the tribes in this region which he interviewed. They shared these details with Sykes. He also separates tribes into few groups of which some had already lived in the region before Suleymani tribes entered the region: “These tribes I am inclined to look on as the original shepherd tribes of the region, who inhabited it before Class I [Suleymani tribes] entered the district”.¹¹⁵ He calls the tribes of class I as the “masters” of the region and these tribes are the Hasenan, Berizan, Cibran, Sepki, Ziriki, Rişvan, Zilan, Heyderan and Ademan. We can confirm Sykes through the Ottoman documents mentioned above in which the Zilan, Heyderan, Sepki, Celali, and Camedanlu tribes are described as Suleymani tribes.¹¹⁶ Sykes even reports that some members of the Cibranlı tribe believed that they migrated from “Arabistan”, but Sykes also made a correction on this comment that “this to a northern Kurd man means Diyarbekir”.¹¹⁷ At this point we also need to keep in mind that Hüseyin Pasha of Heyderan also told Ali Emiri that their ancestors had migrated from the Meyyafarikin region at an unknown time. During the Hamidian Era, members of Sinanlı tribe in Bitlis region also made similar comment regarding their historical

¹¹³ We should think that the Ottoman central government became powerful there after the elimination of Emirs during the second quarter of the 19th century. Michael Eppel, “The Demise of the Kurdish Emirates: The Impact of Ottoman Reforms and International Relations on Kurdistan during the First Half of the Nineteenth Century” *Middle Eastern Studies*, March 2008, p. 237-258.

¹¹⁴ Mark Sykes, “The Kurdish Tribes”, p. 475-478.

¹¹⁵ Mark Sykes, “The Kurdish Tribes”, p. 476.

¹¹⁶ BOA, HAT 811/37227- (1822).

¹¹⁷ Mark Sykes, “The Kurdish Tribes”, p. 477.

background in their petitions that their tribe moved to Bidlis together with Heyderan and Hasenan tribes.¹¹⁸

Derviş and Hurşid Pasha who were assigned the mission of demarcation of the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands in late 1840s also made similar comments after they visited the region. For Derviş Pasha,

According to what we learned from the experts of the region (*erbâb-ı vukuf*), the tribes of Zilan, Şikak, Takori, Milan and Celali were originally from Diyarbekir, according to the narratives of the experts of the (Van-Erzurum) region, the Zilan tribe was originally from Diyarbekir region and immigrated to the region.¹¹⁹

His colleague also confirms these details that “the most of the tribes who wander around the sanjaks of Bayezid and Kars are Kurdish and [...] in old times (*kadimde*) they came from Diyarbekir region”.¹²⁰ Their reports submitted during the mid-nineteenth century confirm that not all but some powerful tribes of this region were actually immigrants from Diyarbekir region. They do not specify an exact date for these relocations but it seems that these details were also received from the locals. Hurşid and Derviş Pasha not only visited the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands but they travelled all borderland regions from the north to the south until the Basra region. They only linked the northern tribes of Ottoman Kurdistan to the Diyarbekir region.

¹¹⁸ Bayram Kodaman, “Hamidiye Hafif Süvari Alayları: II. Abdülhamid ve Doğu Anadolu Aşiretleri” *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi*, İstanbul, XXXII (1979), p. 460-461: “Kulları Sultan Selim cennet mekân asrında Hussan [Hasenan] Haydaran vesair Kürdistan aşiretleriyle Diyarbekir çöllerinden gelmiş Sinan aşiretinden şimdi Bitlis vilayeti'nin Çukur kazasıyla civar kazalarda meskûn gayr-i meskûn dâhil-i tahrir olup olmayan aşiretimiz”.

¹¹⁹ Derviş Paşa, *Tahdid-i Hudud*, p. 162.

¹²⁰ Hurşid Paşa, *Seyahatname-i Hudud*, p. 265.

Mela Mahmude Bayezidî also volunteers significant details regarding our case. We discussed above that some leaders of the Suleymani Besyan tribe became the rulers of the Bayezid region based on the Ottoman documents and *Şerefname*. Bayezidî also confirms that

A man named Abdi Bey, who was originally from Meyyafarikin of the Merwanids in Diyarbekir, entered the service of Sultan Murad IV together with some tents from Silvan [...] The cities of Bayezid, Eleşkird, Milwe(?) and their surroundings were given to Abdi Bey and the tribes of Silvan. These fortresses and villages were made prosperous by them. The name of the region of Bayezid and its sub-provinces became *Silivanli* (from Silvan) because of the name of the tribes.¹²¹

We have discussed above that Silivan received its name from the Suleymani tribes. Bayezidî, who lived in the nineteenth century Erzurum and Bayezid, knew that there were close historical links between the *serhad* tribes and Diyarbekir region. These details also show that during the nineteenth century, there was a clear perception regarding the Suleymani/Silivani tribes' relocations toward the northern Ottoman frontiers. However, it was not known in the nineteenth century when exactly the tribes had moved to the Iranian *Serhad* regions.

Although he did so from a nationalist perspective, in *the Sociological Research on the Kurdish Tribes*, Ziya Gökalp offered important explanations parallel to our suggestions. He refers to a verse of Ahmedi Khani's poem "Bokhti [Bohti] and Mameti and Silivi" and misinterprets, that for him, Khani named all Kurds of the Kurmanji dialect as Silivi beyond Bohti and Mameti.¹²² And he adds that their living places can be referred to as "Silivan". Gökalp could not make a connection between

¹²¹ Rohat Alakom, *Torin*, p. 29.

¹²² Ziya Gökalp, *Kürt Aşiretleri*, p. 35.

the migrated Suleymani tribes (Silvani tribes) to the Meyyafarikin (Silvan) region; and called all Kurmanji speaking tribes Silivani excluding Bokhti and Mameti. However, he realized that there was a dominant conception and appellation of being *Silivani* in the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderland. Ahmed-i Khani mentioned the name of the Suleymani tribes as *Silivi*, as Mela Bayezidî also did. Khani probably knew who migrated from Silvan (Meyyafarikin), and made a distinction from other two, Bokhti and Mamedî (Mahmudî), which were different Kurdish emirates/tribes in Cizre and Hoşab regions.

However, Gökalp justly came up with the suggestion and says that the name of Silivi was equal to the name of Zil, which meant the tribe of the Suleymani Zilan.¹²³ He even creates a terminology for the migrated members of the tribes as “*Gamirî*” or “*Gavestî*” so that is why they could not return.¹²⁴ This terminology, which was taken from the locals and does not exist concurrently, symbolizes the conception of relocation of tribes in the northern edges of Ottoman-Iranian frontier which was an important shift in the minds of the locals too.

Thus, during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, together with the Heyderan tribe, some important powerful tribes of the Ottoman eastern frontiers kept the memory of having emigrated from Diyarbekir region. Although the tribes of Milan and Şikak can also be regarded as a part of this relocation, we mostly focused on the migration of the Suleymani tribes, since our focus was limited to the Heyderan and its upper ancient identity, the Suleymanis. Though the documents do not specify when exactly this migration appeared after the second quarter of the sixteenth

¹²³ Ziya Gökalp, *Kürt Aşiretleri*, p. 35.

¹²⁴ Gökalp, *Kürt Aşiretleri*, p. 36. Celadet Ali Bedirhan also shares similar idea that *Gavestî* tribes: Herekol Azizan (Celadet Ali Bedirhan), “Mil u Zil, p. 12-14.

century, there was a collective memory in the nineteenth century tribes of northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands. The Heyderan and other “masters” of the region knew that their ancient living space was the Diyarbekir region. This memory also affirms that Heyderan was one of the Suleymani tribes which emigrated toward the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontiers, and sometimes became Iranian subject.

2. 8 Conclusion

Since the Ottoman central government could not directly control the tribal movable agents especially in its eastern frontiers, some tribes such as Heyderan did not frequently appear in the Ottoman archival records before the nineteenth century. Although this is a difficulty to investigate the history of a tribe, we might possibly reveal where the ancient living space of Heyderan was after having a deep investigation and completing a puzzle. After the mid-sixteenth century, there was an important shift regarding the flows of population in the Ottoman eastern frontiers where the Suleymani tribes included, they immigrated to the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontiers. We do not know when exactly Heyderan became part of this movement but the sources suggest that it was between the mid-sixteenth century and 1620s. Heyderan was one of small clans (*oymak*) of Suleymani Zilan Confederation in Meyyafarikin region in 1540s. We could not follow the movements of Heyderan on a yearly basis since lacking documents but the Heyderan appeared more powerful on the northern sphere of Ottoman-Iranian frontiers in late eighteenth century. Not only Heyderan but other tribes became the patrons of this region after their relocation in the ambiguous Ottoman-Iranian frontiers. The leaders of Besyan tribe became the *mîrs* of Bayezid region which was a frontier zone between the two empires. It was also discussed that some tribes of the region, Zilan, Heyderan, and others, were

referred as Silvani tribes because of referring their ancient living space of Meyyafarikin region.

Although the Ottomanists mostly neglected the relations between the Ottoman central government and the tribes, this relocation was supported by the Ottoman Empire in order to create a safe zone against its biggest foe, the Safavid Iran. The transhumance movements of tribes already addicted them to the region before their permanent residence in northern sphere of Ottoman-Iranian frontiers, since they had pastured their animals in the highlands of Bitlis, Erzurum and Van provinces in summers. This movement did not make a mere shift in the administrative-political structure of the region, but also it possibly influenced the ethnic composition of the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontiers. The numbers of Suleymani tents were close to six thousand in mid-sixteenth century and the Ottoman central government began to refer the region as “Kurdistan” during the same time period. Therefore, it is not possible to suggest, as some researchers did, that the terminology was only political-administrative but not geographic and demographic. During the nineteenth century, the collective memory of the tribes of *Serhad* region presented that these tribes did not forget their ancient living space in Diyarbekir region. This demographic shift even created a terminology (*Gawestî-Gamirî*) and a tribal myth (Mil-Zil)¹²⁵ among the local inhabitants. Heyderan was part of this relocation together with the other Suleymani tribes and re-shaped the political and demographic structure of the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontiers. Considering that the migrated tribes were supported by the Ottoman central government, the tribe- empire relations were not often contradictory.

¹²⁵ For the creation of this myth check: Erdal Çiftçi, “Migration, memory and mytification” *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 54, issue 2 (2018), p. 270-288.

CHAPTER III

APPROACHING THE FINAL DECADES OF THE CLASSICAL

This chapter discusses the internal and external factors which contributed to the functioning of a tribe along the north-eastern Ottoman frontier. The main focus is on the years between 1820 and 1827, when the administrative and political structure of Ottoman East was at the tail end of reflecting institutions and organization of the classical era. The Heyderan was a marchland tribe, which influenced the real-politics in the region located between the margins of two empires, the Ottoman and the Iranian. Though less powerful than a *yurtluk/ocaklık* (family estate) sanjak ruler, and more powerful than a regular tribal unit, the Heyderan engaged in three levels of politics, which I term as inter-state, inter-provincial, and intertribal. The Heyderan, were therefore, involved at three levels of conflict, state, provincial, and tribal, for the purpose of protecting their rights, revenues, and access to shelter. To further and secure their advantages, they created alliances with other states or local sanjak rulers.

Many disputes that arose during this time, were a result of the defection of a powerful Heyderan chief, Kasım Agha.

In 1820, Kasım Agha, was residing in Khoi, under the authority of Qajar Iran's crown prince and the governor general of Azerbaijan region, Abbas Mirza, who had expansionist policies against the Ottoman and Russian Empires. Being located along the frontier between the Ottomans and Iran, Kasım Agha, reevaluated his tribe's position and considered whether it would be advantageous to continue relations with the Iranians, or whether it would be in the best interests of both himself and his tribe to defect to the Ottoman side and establish a new alliance with Selim Pasha, the *mutasarrıf* of Muş. Although the nature of the borderland, located between the Ottomans and the Iranians, was often confronted with such kinds of trans-frontier defections, Kasım was hesitant to cross to the Ottoman side, particularly as he was born and had been raised within the Iranian-ruled part of the region.¹ Despite this hesitation, he came to the decision to cross to the Ottoman side and ally with them against the Iranians to protect his own political and economic interest as it will be elaborated in the following sections. With one thousand tents, consisting of his tribal followers, he severed ties and broke his alliances, with Iran and claimed allegiance to his new ally, the Ottomans. Though such defections were indeed among the norm, Kasım Agha's decisions produced particular results not only between the Ottoman and Iranian Empires, between 1820-1823, but also, within the Heyderan tribe as a whole, developed into a contested "subject" disputed by both the local Ottoman governor and the local hereditary sanjak ruler. This chapter will focus how the Heyderan tribe became a central actor influencing political development within three separate levels of conflict along the Ottoman-Iranian frontier. Before examining the

¹ BOA, HAT 820/37372- (1822).

role of the Heyderan in regards to Ottoman-Iranian and local conflicts, it is imperative to introduce the reader to the general picture concerning where the tribe resided during the 1820s, who were its leaders and how its administrative structure developed in their new territories.

3. 1 Heyderan Leadership during the Early Nineteenth Century

Preferring to refer themselves not with their separate clan name, but rather with an abstract tribal identity, the Heyderan, indicates an important fact, that of collective tribal identity, which was absorbed by the separate clans of the Heyderan tribe. It is possible that the clans maintained a larger tribal identity, that may have been influenced by a shared myth among the clans which united them in the form of a shared ancestral background.² Ottoman sources, however, remain silent as to the details of this background, and do not mention how the myth of a shared ancestral history created a collective identity among the Heyderan clans. Nevertheless, the current living members within the clans of the Heyderan tribe claim that Ademi, Hamdiki, Mar Hori and Asi were four brothers who descended from the same father, and thus from these sons the four clans emerged.³ Although this collective myth continues to be known among the members of the clans, written sources do not show that the relations of the Ademi clan to the Hamdiki, or to the Asi, were kin-based and the Heyderan was a descent group. The relations between the separate clans of Heyderan, and the ruling class, household of Muhammed Şerif, were mostly based on socially constructed perceptions of shared ancestral ties, as well as through the

² Albert Hourani, "Conclusion: Tribes and States in Islamic History" in *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, eds. Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner (Oxford: Uni.of California, 1990), p. 303-311.

³ This information was gathered from the elders of Heyderan's locals: Seraceddin Koç, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal Interview, Mardin, October 25, 2017.

practice of coercion, which was applied by a strong leadership. Furthermore, the class composition within the Heyderan, along with their assumed ancestral origins, and political unification under a prestigious leadership, all indicate the confederate nature of the Heyderan tribe.⁴ Nikitin further confirms the Heyderan sense of group solidarity and shared identity, generally found within Kurdish tribes, as not blood-based, and instead arose due to the organization of the tribes into a state-like political entity.⁵ Heyderan's collective tribal solidarity was therefore, a superior identity, one which helped to unite the confederacy. Thus, they did not conduct their affairs in any manner similar to that of a small kin-based tribe, nor did they have the strength or power of an emirate. However, one can consider their organization to reflect a tribal chieftdom, one that was less powerful than Kurdish emirates in regards to structure, power and bureaucracy.

As discussed in the previous chapter, currently, the earliest known leader of the Heyderan tribe was Şerif Muhammed, or Şero, as he was known locally, in Kurdish.⁶ An Ottoman document, dated 1770, confirms that Muhammed Şerif was the chief of the Heyderan tribe in the Eleşkirt region of Bayezid province.⁷ However, it is unknown who were Muhammed Şerif's contemporaries within the tribe during the late eighteenth century. Following Muhammed Şerif, Ali Agha took the place of chief, becoming a powerful leader within the Heyderan tribe. This information, concerning the chronology of the chiefs during the late eighteenth century, is not

⁴ Hakan Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries* (New York: SUNY Press, 2004), p. 45.

⁵ Basil Nikitine, *Kürtler: Sosyolojik Tarihi İnceleme* (İstanbul: Örgün, 2015), p. 241.

⁶ Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası*, p. 19.

⁷ BOA, C.DH. 19/930-(1770).

substantiated by the archival sources.⁸ However, it is clear that Muhammed Şerif's sons, Ali Agha and Bedri Agha, had both resided near the Iranian cities of Khoi and Çaldıran (today's *Siyah Çeşme*) during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. In terms of successive leaders of the Heyderan tribe, it would appear that Bedri Agha's nephews, Kasım and Muhammed Aghas, maintained a higher position within the tribe than Bedri Agha. This suggests that Ali Agha, rather than his brother succeeded to power as chief. This resulted in Ali Agha's sons attaining a status of great power over the tribe.⁹

During the nineteenth century, the descendants of Muhammed Şerif held positions of leadership within the Heyderan tribe, and as discussed in the previous chapter, this family was to refer as *Torun/Torin* among local inhabitants, until the present day. During the nineteenth century, the Heyderan tribe was composed of separate clans (*kabile*), and these clans were under the leadership and control of the chiefs of Muhammed Şerif's household. Heyderan was not the name of any one clan within the tribe, and neither was the household of *Torin*, named Heyderan, as this term referred to a larger, collective tribal identity. Although the chiefs of the Heyderan clans referred to themselves as Heyderi or Heyderan, in fact this name was only used to reference to their collective tribal identity. Separate clans such as the Ademi, Mar Horan, Hamdiki, Asi, et cetera, which came together under the leadership of household of *Şero*, had created this collective tribal identity. Therefore, the name Heyderan, reflected an abstract and historic term, which referred to the authority of

⁸ Süphandağ, *ibid.*

⁹ BOA, HAT 811/37227- (1822). For Süphandağ, Ali Agha was assassinated by the *mîr* of Bayezid and his newly born son was given his father's name. Therefore, his son, who became one of the powerful chiefs of Heyderan especially between 1850 and 1880s should not be confused with his father Ali Agha, assassinated by the *mîr* of Bayezid: Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası*, p. 315.

the descendants of Muhammed Şerif, and referenced the submission and allegiance of the clans towards this family during the nineteenth century.

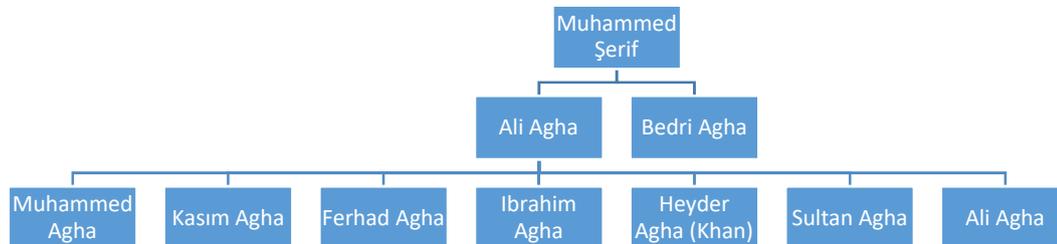


Figure 1. Family tree of Heyderan’s *Torin* ruling family during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Throughout the 1820s and the 1830s, it appears that Kasım and Muhammed Agha held the primary positions of power among the clans of the Heyderan tribe since others were in their youth. According to Ottoman documents, Kasım controlled approximately 1,000 tents, while his brother, Muhammed, maintained power over 500 tents. During the 1820s, these brothers and their clans, resided within the region under Ottoman control, near the regions of Muş, Malazgirt, and Erciş.¹⁰ Unlike their uncle, Bedri Agha, who had decided to remain within Iranian territory, and he controlled 300 Heyderan tents within Khoi and its surrounding area.¹¹ The documentation, therefore, reveals that an estimated total of Heyderan tents during the 1820s, was at the very least 1,800. If we approximate that each tent contained roughly ten persons, than the total population of the Heyderan tribe can be estimated

¹⁰ BOA, HAT 1314/51256- (1821).

¹¹ BOA, HAT 811/37227- (1822). Intra-tribal divisions were often confronted especially after during the Tanzimat era when the States manipulated one against another for the purpose of divide *et impera*. However, tribal chiefs also preferred to increase their power against other chiefs especially getting support of the states.

to have been around 15,000 to 18,000 in the 1820s.¹² It is unclear who the elders were and who were younger among the brothers, however towards the middle of the nineteenth century, İbrahim, Heyder, and Sultan Agha are mentioned most frequently in the documents. By the latter half of the nineteenth century, Ali Agha (son of Ali Agha), became the most powerful of the Heyderan chiefs in the 1860s, he maintained power until the 1880s, when Hüseyin Pasha appears as powerful chief in the Patnos region.

Although the family tree above indicates some of the prominent individuals to emerge out of the household of Şerif, it must be noted that information concerning members of the family may be incomplete. These are the members of the family mentioned in the sources, however, it is possible for other members to have existed and not have been recorded in the extant documentation. For example, a Heyderan chief, named Timur Agha, appeared among the powerful chiefs within the Heyderan in 1804.¹³ However, there is no further information and thus it is unknown what relation Timur may have had to the other members of household of Şerif. Therefore, we may suggest that it is not possible to ascertain the entirety of family ties within nomadic tribal societies.

Within the Heyderan clans, the household of Muhammed Şerif carried authority and prestige above all. It appears that what made a chief *primus inter pares* among the brothers depended on the type of alliance made between the would-be chief and the

¹² Mayevskiy V.T., *19. Yüzyılda Kürdistan'ın Sosyo-Kültürel İlişkileri* (İstanbul: Sipan, 1997), p. 75. Mayevsky visited the region in late nineteenth century adds that the average number of persons in a settled family is eight. I believe that this number should be higher for the nomadic populations since more persons meant power in nomadic transhumance life style. Therefore, I think that the average can be roughly calculated as ten for each tent though we are not sure about this average number. Also in an Ottoman document written after taking census of Kurdish tribes for the Hamidian tribal regiments in 1894, the average number of population for every Kurdish tent was specified between 10 and 15 in a document: BOA, DH.MKT. 40/3- (1894).

¹³ BOA, C.DH. 24/1196- (1804).

clans. Thus, it was the clans who elevated Kasım Agha, allowing him to hold more political power than Muhammed or Bedri Agha as he ruled over the largest number of clansmen, as well as those who held authority within the Heyderan leadership. Unfortunately, as there are no sources which refer to the practice of alliance and allegiances, it is impossible to analyze any relationships or political bargains/ties within the tribe itself, and in particular, between the household of Muhammed Şerif and the remainder of the Heyderan clans.

Furthermore, the names of the clans within the Heyderan tribe are also unknown before the mid-nineteenth century. The clan chiefs of the Heyderan tribe did not mention their clan's name when they petitioned to the Porte. For example, in one of those types of documents, written in 1804, thirty different signatures of Heyderan chiefs appear at the end of the petition, and all referred to themselves as Heyderi, following their first names, with the exception of Timur Agha, who referred to himself not as Heyderi but as Heyderan.¹⁴ As mentioned in the previous chapter, the suffix of *-i* at the end of *Heyderi* indicated the singular form of the name singular, but the suffix *-an*, located at the end of Heyderan, is the plural form, which therefore, refers to the position of authority and leadership that Timur Agha held over the thirty people, whose signature appears at the top left over all other stamps. Since clan chiefs of Heyderan tribe did not describe their clan names, we do not know who those clans were during the 1820s and 1830s. Thus, the powerful collective tribal identity of the Heyderan was contingent upon the strong authority of the *Torin* household of Muhammed Şerif who was able to unite the clans together under the banner of a greater collective identity.

¹⁴ BOA, C.DH. 24/1196- (1804).

3.2 Geography, Peoples and Empires

This chapter will address and analyze how a tribal confederation functioned at three overlapping levels in the Ottoman northeastern frontier between the years of 1820 to 1827. These specifically refer to the relation of the Heyderan tribe within the inter-state, inter-provincial and inter-tribal levels. Before analyzing the conduct of the tribe vis-a-vis various state and local actors, the following pages of this chapter will set out the general environmental, demographic and political conditions of this part of the Ottoman northeastern frontier, in order to better understand the general historical context and developments of the region. As the Heyderan tribe was one example of the general tribal activity in the region, broader factors must be addressed in order to understand the overall place of tribal activity in the frontier and its relationship with the empire.

3.2.1 Geography

The geography and environment of the region had an important impact on the historical development of the northeastern Ottoman frontiers. The frontier zone in this part of Ottoman East, was divided into two parts, separated from each other by the high range Anti-Taurus mountains. This range of mountains formed a natural barrier, which affected the transhumance routes of the tribes, effectively dividing the northeastern frontier from the southern Diyarbekir region. As discussed in the previous chapter, once the tribes that had initially travelled through the Diyarbekir region were successfully relocated to the northeastern frontiers of the empire, there was no counter-movement by the tribes to return to Diyarbekir. In fact, during the whole of the nineteenth-century, only the years of war with Iran and Russia, some

tribes fled to southern or central Anatolia in an effort to avoid becoming caught up in the conflict. The success of the relocation of the tribes, can therefore, partially be attributed to the difficulty of traversing the natural geographic barriers between the northern and southern parts of the frontier. The provinces of Van, Erzurum, Kars, Bitlis, Muş and Bayezid were thus bounded by the mountainous geography of the region, which in the Ottoman sources is at times referred to as the *serhad* (frontier), specifically due to its close proximity to Russian and Iranian lands and for the fact that authority over the area was disputed by these three empires. Furthermore, the natural geographic barriers of north-eastern Ottoman East, led to the development of a markedly different life-style, culinary tradition and culture, then that of its southern neighbor, an issue which is beyond the scope of this study and requires further research.

As the average altitude of the region is quite high, many of the travelers who ventured into this space described it as exceedingly mountainous. Many of the mountains in this area are volcanic and they are also filled with a large number of abundant highland pastures. After the mid-nineteenth century, when the trans-frontier horizontal transhumance activities of the tribes became more limited, most of the tribes tried to utilize these mountainous pastures in order to graze their flocks. Mount Ararat, Süphan, Mount Nemrut, and Aladağ Mountains were some of the mountains that the tribes wandered during the spring and summer months. Other than being a suitable region for the pasturing of animals, there were a number of plains that were also suitable for agricultural activities, due to the fertility of their soil such as the plains located in Erzurum, Muş, Adilcevaz and Erciş.¹⁵ Their limited number, however, led to these plains being the subject of many disputes over their authority

¹⁵ P. Amedee Jaubert, *Voyage en Armenie et en Perse* (Paris: Pelicier Nepveu, 1821), p. 128.

and use.¹⁶ This chapter will examine how the governor of the province of Van, the hereditary *mîr* of Muş, and the tribes, all struggled to maintain control of these lands to further and maintain their own interests.

The climate of the region, emphasized by many traveler accounts, was as important as the geographic and environmental factors, particularly within the limited number of plains. Shiel, Brant, Kinneir and others reported that the region's climate was particularly severe during the winters, which lasted for five or six months, from November until the last days of March.¹⁷ During the winter period, the nomadic Kurdish and Turcoman tribes rented the houses of settled villagers engaged in agricultural production in the plains, which were mostly inhabited by the Armenians.¹⁸ The severe and harsh winters forced the tribes to reside in these village houses, which they resented, comparing their living conditions as residing "in the close and filthy stables".¹⁹

The residency of the tribes during the winter months in the Ottoman frontier developed after the middle of the nineteenth century. Previously, the tribes engaged in trans-frontier crossings between Iranian and Ottoman territories, where, as will be discussed, climate was an important factor in these transhumance activities. The Ottoman lands had a greater abundance of water and pastures compared to the Iranian Çaldıran in Khoi. However the latter was more suitable for wintering due to

¹⁶ Martin Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State* (London: Zed Books, 1992), p. 11-12.

¹⁷ John McDonald Kinneir, *Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan in the Years 1813 and 1814* (London: John Murray, 1818), p. 393. J. Shiel, "Notes on a Journey from Tabriz, Through Kurdistan, via Van, Bitlis, Seert and Erbil, to Suleimaniyeh, in July and August, 1836" *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, vol. 8 (1838), p. 64. James Brant and A.G. Glascott, "Notes of a Journey Through a Part of Kurdistan in the Summer of 1838" *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, vol. 10 (1840), p. 346.

¹⁸ Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State*, p. 107.

¹⁹ Brant- Glascott, "Notes of a Journey", p. 414.

its milder climate. The lands within the Ottoman frontier were therefore more attractive to the tribes during the spring and summer months. During the winter season there was a higher level of precipitation, which resulted in a greater growth of grasses in the plains. Tributaries and springs from three large rivers, the Tigris, Murad and Euphrates, resulted in fertile soil, and thus in the spring their basins were cultivated by settled agriculturalists, while the tribes utilized the small streams in the highlands. Furthermore, Lake Van and its northern basin was also an important fertile plain, highly disputed by the rulers of Muş, Bayezid and Van, each of whom attempted to maintain their own control over the region. Therefore, the trans-frontier defections of the tribes that occurred during the summer were portrayed by historians as highly problematic for the Ottoman and Iranian Empires. Tribes were in fact driven by the basic needs for survival such as access to fertile lands, water and grasses. As will be discussed in this chapter, Kasım Agha's defection was also partially a result of such necessities.

The transhumance routes of the tribes used during their seasonal movements were not shaped or determined by the political boundaries established by the ruling empires. Rather they were determined by the geographic conditions of the region until the middle of the nineteenth century, when Tanzimat rules limited the inter-state movements of the tribes. Until this time, the Heyderan tribe wandered between the Iranian Çaldıran region and the Muş and Bayezid regions. However, although the geography of the region certainly impacted the movement of these tribes, the routes taken were not random and tribal leaders had to ally with either local *mîrs* or governors before travelling to their designated summer pastures. As a result, negotiations between tribes and the imperial center or local governors were often dynamic and complex, as along with political and economic interests, tribal actions

and demands were also driven by utilitarian prospects. Most of the Ottomanists have overlooked the impact of the environment on the movements of these tribes, as they have generally sought to analyze the role of state power and state-tribal relations as the motives behind the various negotiations between the tribes and the empire. Furthermore, the limited pastoral spaces for sheep-breeding in the region also led to conflicts and disputes between various tribes as they were also part of tribal confederations, such as the one between the Heyderan, Celali, Sepki and Hasenan. Thus, tribal leaders often shifted their allegiance between different local or government actors, when their transhumance movements became particularly influential by harsh climate or limited pastures. Therefore, it is clear that the geography and climate of the region had an important effect on the power relations between the various groups.

3.2.2 Peoples

The Ottoman northeastern frontier was primarily inhabited by ethnically indigenous subjects, the Armenians and the Kurds, joined also by Turcoman and Circassian peoples during the nineteenth century. The Armenians, as settled subjects, were predominantly craftsmen in cities or were agriculturalists in villages. Though certain portion of the Kurds also resided in cities and settled in some villages, they were primarily nomadic tribal subjects. Noble aristocratic Kurdish families, who held the greatest prestige, also controlled administrative posts as hereditary sanjak rulers. They were prestigious households who exerted authority over the tribes. Until the Russo-Ottoman war of 1828-29, the cities in the Ottoman northeastern frontier were

primarily populated by Armenians, though some Kurds, Turks, Greeks, Jews²⁰, Georgians and Persians are populated the cities. The invasion of Ottoman lands, until the city of Erzurum, by Russian General Paskewitch, implemented a policy of deportation. Most of the Armenian population was forcefully removed and displaced to Erivan or the Southern Caucasus, regions captured by the Russians from the Iranians. These deportations were also carried out by the Russians in Iranian Azerbaijan, as they attempted to re-populate captured territories with Armenian subjects. The Russian policies increased the ethnic tensions within the Ottoman eastern regions, since most of the *industrious and laborious* population of the region was the Armenians in city centers, and their removal caused depredation in local economy.²¹ According to Kemal Beydilli, the Ottomans had lost approximately 100,000 Armenian subjects, while the Iranians lost some 40,000 from their own Armenian population, once the Russian army retreated.²² Before their emigration, most of the craftsmen and traders in the city centers were the Armenians. They were also the dominant agriculturalists in the countryside. There were also non-tribal Kurdish agriculturalists, called as *Kurmanc/Guran* whose numbers were lesser to the tribal Kurds, who were seen as “the masters of the country” in rural regions of the Ottoman East.²³

The precise demographic composition of the region is unclear; however, following the first half of the nineteenth century, it is clear that the Armenians were no longer

²⁰ Kinneir, *Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan*, p. 383. Kinneir says they resided in Mishi village between Muş and Bitlis.

²¹ Brant- Glascott, “Notes of a Journey”, p. 201.

²² Kemal Beydilli, “1828-1829 Osmanlı –Rus Savaşında Doğu Anadolu’dan Rusya’ya Göçürülen Ermeniler” *Belgeler*, vol. 13, issue. 17 (Ankara: TTK, 1988), p. 376, 407. Fikret Adanır, ““Ermeni Meselesi”nin Doğuşu”, *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015), p. 9.

²³ Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State*, p. 108. Sykes, “The Kurdish Tribes”, p. 475.

the vast majority of ethnic group in the northeastern Ottoman provinces, with the exception of the city center of Van.²⁴ However, Armenian villagers seem still more populous compared to other ethnicities who resided in rural areas. Figures provided by travelers substantiate the argument that the cities of this region suffered a great decline in population during and after the wars with Russia. For example, the city of Erzurum, a city best representing the Ottoman Empire as it was under the authority of an appointed governor-general or field marshal, is estimated to have had a population of 70,000 souls by the French traveler Jaubert in 1806.²⁵ A short time later, Morier in 1809, claims the population of the city was 50,000. By 1813, Kinneir claims the population was 19,000, a decrease by more than half, substantiated by Shiel, who estimated 14,000 people in 1836 and followed by Brant, who claimed the population of Erzurum was about 16,000 souls in 1838.²⁶ Regarding the population of Erzurum, Brant and Şemseddin Sami further claims that the city was more populous in previous time, claim that it once had 130,000 inhabitants.²⁷ Though these figures apply to one city in the province, it is clear that the city of Erzurum lost a significant portion of its inhabitants, more than half at least, during the first half of the nineteenth century although some travelers exaggerated the demographic

²⁴ We have very limited data on the demographic details of the Ottoman East especially regarding the first half of the nineteenth century. The first Ottoman demographic survey of 1831 was not held in the Ottoman East. We currently have limited information for the centers of Erzurum and Van provinces.

²⁵ Jaubert, *Voyage en Armenie et en Perse*, p. 15-17.

²⁶ Kinneir, *Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan*, p. 366. J. Shiel, "Notes on a Journey from Tabriz", p. 64. Brant- Glascott, "Notes of a Journey", p. 201. According to 1835 Population Book, Erzurum had 21,500 souls. Yunus Özger, "Tanzimat Öncesi Erzurum Şehrinin Demografik Yapısı (1251/1835 Tarihli Nüfus Yoklama Defterine Göre)" *A.Ü. Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, vol. 29 (2006), p. 260. For the 1847 Population Book of Erzurum, the province had 70,000 souls while the center of Erzurum was populated with 26,000 people: Haydar Çoruh, "Erzurum'daki Türk ve Ermeni Nüfusunu Gösteren 1847 Tarihli Defteri" *Ermeni Araştırmaları*, vol. 6 (2002), p. 95-115.

²⁷ Brant- Glascott, "Notes of a Journey", p. 201. Cited in Cevdet Küçük, "Tanzimat Devrinde Erzurum'un Nüfus Durumu" *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi*, vol. 7-8 (1977), p.187.

numbers. It is possible to assume that other regions, urban or rural, may had some or similar population losses.

Erzurum seems to have been one of the most populous cities in the Ottoman East between 1808-1809. Figures that were, according to Morier, similar to those of Tabriz, which he put at 50,000 inhabitants.²⁸ This can be compared to the province of Van, one of the pioneering trade centers in the region, whose population figures seem to have been lower than those of Erzurum, as according to Kılıç it had a population of 45,000 before the nineteenth century, yet by 1805-6 Jaubert claims that a mere 15-20,000 inhabitants populated the city, a number which he estimates remained the same at 20,000 between 1829-30.²⁹ For the same period, Hurşid Pasha provides similar figures, putting the population of the city of Van as 21,387 of which 14,588 were of Armenian origin.³⁰ According to these observations, the city of Van saw an important decrease in the number of inhabitants, long before 1828-29. Aside from Erzurum and Van, population estimates also exist for the city of Bitlis³¹, which potentially had 12,000 inhabitants in 1813, followed by a decrease by half to 7,500 in 1836 and then an increase to 15,000 in 1838. Thus, the demographic collapse in the

²⁸ Morier, *A Journey Through Persia*, p. 284.

²⁹ Şeyhmus Bingöl, “Tanzimat Dönemi Merkezileşme Çabaları Sürecinde Van ve Çevresindeki Aşiretlerin İskan ve Adaptasyon Problemleri” (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Ankara University, Ankara, 2013), p. 57.

³⁰ Mehmed Hurşid Paşa, *Seyahatname-i Hudud*, p. 231. According to 1836 Population Book of Van, the villages belonged to the center of Van had 1735 Non-Muslim, 1471 Muslim male populations: Şeyhmus Bingöl, “(H.1252/M.1836) Yılı Nüfus Sayımına Göre Van Kazasına Bağlı Gayrimüslim Köylerin Demografik Yapısı” *Journal of History and Future*, vol. 3 (2016), p. 101-116. Şeyhmus Bingöl, “(H.1252/M.1836) Yılı Nüfus Sayımına Göre Van Kazasına Bağlı Müslim Köylerin Demografik Yapısı”, *Tarih Okulu*, vol. 26 (2016), p. 87-115.

³¹ According to the Detailed Land Registry Book of 1555-1556, city of Bidlis consisted of 1135 Non-Muslim, 274 Muslim, 45 Jewish houses (*hane*). So, Bidlis’s center had around 1,500 houses while the whole provenance of Bidlis, which included Tatvan, Gevaş and Muş, had 5,500 *hane*. Tribes were not included to the records; therefore, we do not have a chance to compare the numbers of tribes to the settled ones. According to this record, the Armenian subjects were the vast majority of the settled population: Ahmet Yılmaz, “413 Numaralı Mufassal Tapu Tahrir Defterine Göre Bidlis Sancağı” (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Selçuk, Konya, 2010), p. 30-45.

region, during the Russo-Ottoman wars, can be seen from the sources but the detailed given numbers of population do not affirm each other and appears contradictory.³²

Smaller cities in the region did not have their demographic structures recorded by travelers as they moved through the region, nor are there any comparable estimates of the rural population residing in villages. However, according to one report, after the middle of the nineteenth century, Armenian villagers no longer exceeded Kurdish and Turcoman nomadic and settled population in rural areas.³³ While the ethnic composition of many villages was half Armenian and half Kurdish, some other villages were now ethnically divided between Kurds and Armenians. Though Armenian-Kurdish relations were often depicted as conflictual, whereby the Kurds were accused of oppressing the Armenians, for the most part ethnic or communal relations were not so strained. As Jaubert visited the region in 1805-6, he noted that:

the lack of pasture, or the severity of the season; in the winter, they [tribes] go to seek shelter under the roof of the plowman to whom, during the summer, they removed part of his harvests. Pressed by the need, independent and fierce as they were before, they are then flexible and submissive, and they live rather well with their hosts.³⁴

Co-existence and social contacts between the Kurds and Armenians were more effective than conflict; however there were some writers who focused on disputes that occurred towards the late nineteenth century.³⁵ Yet for the most part relations

³² Kinneir, *Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan*, p. 394. J. Shiel, "Notes on a Journey from Tabriz", p. 72. Brant- Glascott, "Notes of a Journey", p. 380.

³³ Brant- Glascott, "Notes of a Journey", p. 395-427.

³⁴ P. Amedee Jaubert, *Voyage en Armenie et en Perse*, p.78-82.

³⁵ Actually, the problems between nomadic Kurds and settled Armenians began after the Tanzimat era in 1850s when the tribes were forced to semi-settlement in the villages. This transformed the meaning of land and villages for the tribes. Now on, villages were not only rentals but also the source of income. This will be discussed in the following chapters.

were inter-dependent. The money-lenders who backed the Kurdish hereditary rulers in the region were mostly of Armenian origins, and on a daily basis, the tribes and Armenians villagers traded with each other, engaging in an economically mutual relationship of reliance on one another.³⁶ Spottiswoode shared that “they [tribes] come in to buy and sell at the weekly markets held in the larger villages or towns; and many of them travel peaceably on trading expeditions with the Nestorian and Armenian caravans”.³⁷ Currently, some historians argue that social relations in the Ottoman eastern provinces were not dictated by ethnic boundaries, but rather that Kurds and Armenians co-existed together, both culturally and economically, though these scholars do not deny that there was an increase in tension along communal lines, between Muslim and non-Muslim subjects.³⁸ Since tribes were primarily nomadic and did not build permanent homes, they had to rent the houses of Armenian villagers, who charged a rental income from those tribes during their stay.³⁹ Sometimes the tribes brought their own hay to maintain their flocks through the winter, but this too was mostly supplied by the villagers. The tribes would generally return to the villages in late October, by which point the villagers themselves had completed all agricultural work for the harvest season. Therefore, the tribes did not intervene in the villager’s agricultural cultivation, once they returned from summering in the high pastures.

³⁶ Brant- Glascott, “Notes of a Journey”, p. 350, 379.

³⁷ Spottiswoode, “Sketch of the Tribes”, p. 245.

³⁸ Janet Klein, “Conflict and Collaboration: Rethinking Kurdish-Armenian Relations in the Hamidian Period, 1876-1909” *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1-2 (2007), p. 156. Dzovinar Derderian, “Shaping Subjectivities and Contesting Power through the Image of Kurds, 1860s” *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities and Politics*, eds. Yaşar Tolga Cora, Dzovinar Derderian, Ali Sipahi (New York, I.B. Tauris, 2016), p. 91-108. Uğur Bahadır Bayraktar and Yaşar Tolga Cora, ““Sorunlar” Gölgesinde Tanzimat Döneminde Kürtlerin ve Ermenilerin Tarihi” *Kebikeç*, issue: 42 (2016), p. 7-48. Yaşar Tolga Cora, “Doğu’da Kürt-Ermeni Çatışmasının Sosyoekonomik Arka planı” *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, ed. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015), p. 126-127.

³⁹ Brant- Glascott, “Notes of a Journey”, p. 353, 424.

The tribes organized into a confederation, composed of several separate clans, were the most powerful tribes in the region and they were patrons of the rural areas between the above-mentioned cities. We realize from travelogues that tribes controlled those rural regions, and therefore, the typology that tribes only lived in mountains does not represent a true depiction. This approach does not only otherize and marginalize the tribes but also it distorts the inter-communal relations between the settled and nomadic pastoral tribal agencies.

In addition, the regions in which the tribes wandered and their specific transhumance routes, summer pastures and wintering villages did not substantially change during the nineteenth century. Our subject of discussion, the Heyderan tribe, dominated the lands between Muş and the Iranian parts of the frontier to the northern sphere of Lake Van. The Cibran and Hasenan tribes were powerful in the area between Erzurum and Muş. The Rojki tribes maintained their presence in the Bitlis region, while the Sepki tribe was located in the area between Tutak and Eleşkirt. The Zilan tribe was able to control the region between Kars and Bayezid, and the Turkic Karapapak tribe could be found in Kars, Erzurum, and Eleşkirt. The Celali tribe mostly resided in the Iranian and Erivan regions, though they also entered into the province of Bayezid. Finally, there were the Takori and Milan tribes who lived primarily within the Iranian territories during the same period of the nineteenth century.



Map 2. Northern-Ottoman frontier during the 1820s.

These tribes were mostly nomadic until the mid-nineteenth century, and their safety depended on the speed of their mobility and on the level of militarization within their ranks, both of which were vital in terms of protecting themselves in a segmental manner against either other tribes or the militarized power of either the Ottoman or Iranian government. They were able to move within hours to another territory, if they were under any threat from either empire. Therefore, their very way of life, their nomadism and thus their mobile existence enabled the tribes to maintain their independence and authority. Those living under a confederation were in a particularly secure position, given that they were not only mobile but also already both militarized and politicized in the region. This type of organization and mobile way of living played a significant role in the creation of separate tribal identities. This was not often seen as a dangerous factor by the ruling powers, as they often benefited from the division and disunity that tribal identity engendered between the different tribes of the region. Furthermore, as will be demonstrated by the Heyderan example, even during the Tanzimat period, tribal chiefs were given limited power but they were supported by imperial powers and local rulers due to their various

political, economic and military activities and the way in which these benefited any given power at the time.

3.2.3 Economy

Unfortunately, the study of socio-economic conditions in the northeastern Ottoman frontier has been neglected by scholars. The region's economic prosperity seemed to decline towards the middle of the nineteenth century, primarily due to war with Russia and Iran, which devastated the region's political, economic and social life. As Brant mentioned, the prosperity of Van declined during the 1810s in the region.⁴⁰ Although Erzurum was more prosperous in previous years, at this time its trade activity was still lively as it was located along the trade route of Tabriz-Bayezid-Trabzon.⁴¹ However, following the 1810s, Armenians began to leave the region to the capital or other larger cities, to work as temporary migrants in order to increase their savings. They worked as "laborers, porters, artisans and money-lenders (*sarrafs*)" in Istanbul and enjoyed their savings after returning to their homelands.⁴² These migratory movements could be a sign of how severe the economic decline was in the region during that period.

However, though there are clear signs of economic decline, this does not imply that the economy completely collapsed during the first half of the nineteenth century in the northeastern regions of the Ottoman Empire. The region continued to produce

⁴⁰ Brant- Glascott, "Notes of a Journey", p. 395.

⁴¹ Mesrob Kirkorian, "The Participation of the Armenian Community in Ottoman Public Life in Eastern Anatolia and Syria, 1860-1908" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Durham, 1963), p. 59. Fulya Özkan, "A Road in Rebellion, A History on the Move: The Social History of the Trabzon-Bayezid Road and the Formation of the Modern state in the Late Ottoman World" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Binghamton University SUNY, Binghamton, 2012).

⁴² Kinneir, *Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan*, p.380. Brant- Glascott, "Notes of a Journey", p. 395.

substantial levels of wheat and barley, though travelers observed that some lands were left uncultivated during the 1830s.⁴³ Drill husbandry, two wheeled carts, and irrigation were used for the cultivation of the plains of the region, but the high altitude and severe climate, which lasted for 4-5 months, only allowed for the production of wheat, barley and rye beyond some fruits.⁴⁴ Since the region was well watered and the soil was fertile, the produce could become abundant if the lands were cultivated and no famine has hit the region recently.⁴⁵ Although most of the cultivators in the countryside were Armenians, they certainly were not the only agriculturalists in the region as some Kurdish villages also engaged solely in agricultural production in the regions.⁴⁶ The main income of the local governments exclusively came from the tithe (*öşr*) collected from these peasants, who were mostly Armenians.⁴⁷ The *mîrs* or local governors, therefore, had to protect the safety of these cultivators in order to protect their incomes.

Animal husbandry in the region supplied meat demands of the Ottoman Empire's some provinces. Although many scholars argue that the tribes failed to pay their taxes to the state, and for the most part this was indeed true, those who raised animals did supply the empire with meat, sending their cattle to the capital during the

⁴³ K.E. Abott, "Notes of a Tour in Armenia in 1837" *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, vol. 12 (1842), p. 211. Brant- Glascott, "Notes of a Journey", p. 341.

⁴⁴ Drill husbandry is a method of seeding the soil. Morier and Brant indicated that usage of drill husbandry was a modern method of agriculture in the time of their travels in upper Lake Van region. Morier, *A Journey through Persia*, p. 317. Brant- Glascott, "Notes of a Journey", p. 404.

⁴⁵ Brant- Glascott, "Notes of a Journey", p. 341-2. Zozan Pehlivan, "Abandoned Villages in Diyarbekir Province at the End of the 'Little Ice Age', 1800-50", *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities and Politics*, eds. Yaşar Tolga Cora, Dzovinar Derderian, Ali Sipahi (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2016), p. 223-246.

⁴⁶ Kinneir, *Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan*, p.372. Ameran named village was only inhabited by the Kurds who were cultivators.

⁴⁷ Engin D. Akarlı, "Economic Policy and Budgets in Ottoman Turkey, 1876-1909" *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 28, no. 3 (Jul., 1992), p. 446. Brant- Glascott, "Notes of a Journey", p. 345.

nineteenth century. For Jaubert, the region had enormous quantities of sheep and goats, and every year 1,5 million of them were sent to Istanbul, though many perished during the journey.⁴⁸ As discussed in the previous chapter, even during the sixteenth century, nomadic tribes preferred to relocate to the northeastern Ottoman frontiers, as this region had abundant pastures and access to water. Jaubert further noted that the Ottoman army was primarily nourished by animals raised in the Ottoman East during the Ottoman-French war of 1798-1801, when he himself was in Egypt.⁴⁹ Kinneir and Brant made similar observations during their travels, claiming that the sheep price was cheap and that their numbers were abundant, so much so that they were regularly driven to Syria and Constantinople.⁵⁰ A consular report from 1840 states that 80,000 sheep were transferred from north-eastern Ottoman provinces to Syria.⁵¹ The Heyderan tribe was one of the producers of this important “specimen”, and participated in the animal husbandry economy.⁵² Thus, we can assert that the main income of the tribes was animal husbandry, which necessitated their nomadic or semi-settled living style. They also had to pay animal taxes (*resm-i ganem*) and sometimes wintering taxes (*resm-i kışlak*) to the local *mîr* or governor, depending on who was in control of their wandering or wintering lands. As this, and

⁴⁸ Jaubert, *Voyage en Arménie et en Perse*, p. 78. Feridun Süphandağ shares that the dealers carried the animals of the Heyderan tribe to Aleppo to sell them. They bargained with the leaders of the tribes for the price of sheep: Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017. According to Greenwood, the Ottoman capital mostly received its meat necessities from Rumelia in 16th and 17th century. However, the Ottoman East became the dominant meat supplier of the Porte in the early nineteenth century. Sheeps were taken on road after two months passed over their lambing on April or May: Anthony Greenwood, “İstanbul’s Meat Provisioning: A Study of the Celepkeşan System” (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago, Illinois, 1988), p. 31, 34.

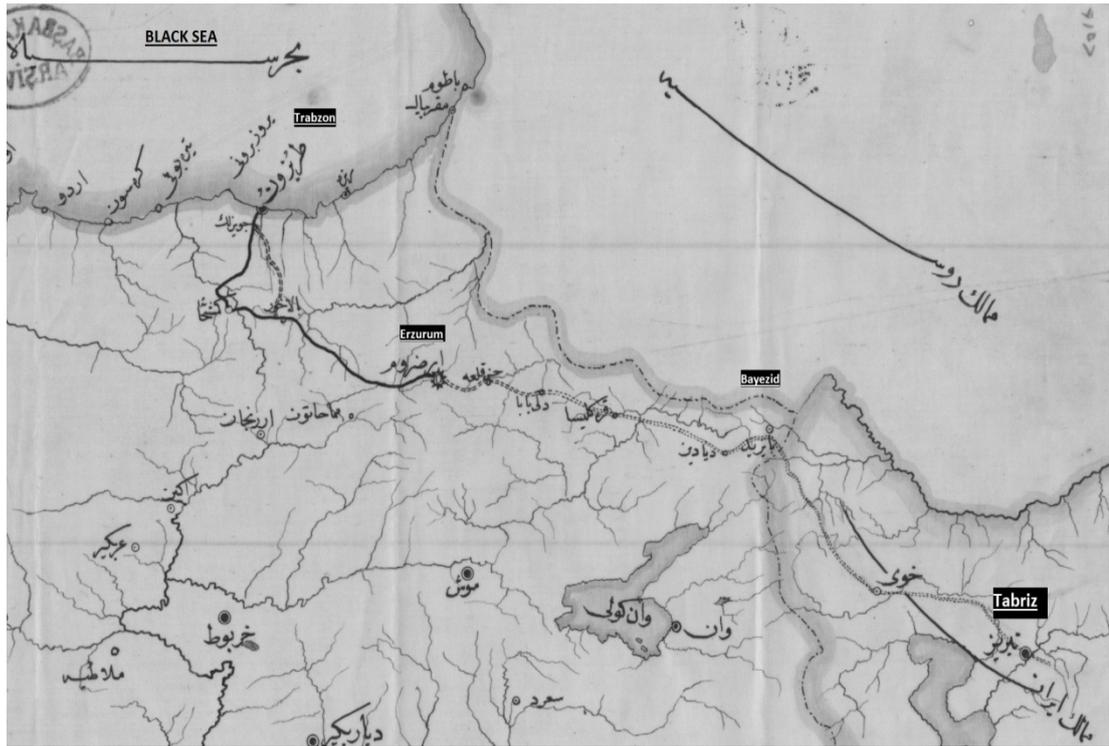
⁴⁹ Jaubert, *Voyage en Arménie et en Perse*, p.78. Semavi Eyice, “Pierre-Amedee Jaubert” *DİA*, vol. 23 (2001), p. 576-578.

⁵⁰ Kinneir, *Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan*, p. 366, Brant- Glascott, “Notes of a Journey”, p. 351.

⁵¹ J. Bowring, *Report on Commercial Statistics of Syria* (London: William Clowes, 1840), p. 16. The report noted that Aleppo consumed 55-60.000 sheep annually.

⁵² Spottiswoode, “Sketch of the Tribes”, p. 245.

the following chapter, will discuss, the taxation of the tribes was not an easy task for the authorities. The tribes were neither wholly dependent on the state for their survival nor were they passive subjects of the empire. Rather they actively pursued alliance that was in their own interests, negotiating between the inter-state or inter-provincial actors. Therefore, banditry was not the chief income of the tribes in this region, as some historians⁵³ have argued according to date that has been manipulated, but rather it was political, economic and cultural codes that were used to weaken other tribes, governors or empires, as this chapter will analyze.⁵⁴ However, this does not mean that the Heyderan did not stay away from banditry activities especially against the settled subjects during the nineteenth century.



Map 3. Tabriz-Bayezid-Erzurum-Trabzon Trade Route.⁵⁵

⁵³ Tibet Abak, "İttihat ve Terakki'nin Kritik Seçimi: Kürt Politikasında Hamidiye Siyasetine Dönüş ve Kör Hüseyin Paşa Olayı (1910-1911)" 1915: *Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015): "Haydaran aşiretinin en büyük geçim kaynağı, bilhassa Ermeniler üzerinde yapılan eşkıyalık ve gasptı".

⁵⁴ Soyudoğan, *ibid.*

⁵⁵ BOA, İ.MSM 78/3421-(1884).

Lastly, trade continued to play an active role in the economy of the region, though its levels fluctuated over the year due to several reasons such as wars, migration, unsafe roads, famine, earthquake, et cetera.⁵⁶ There were two important routes that passed through the northeastern Ottoman provinces. The first and more historic was from Tabriz to Erzurum through Bayezid, which finally reached Trabzon.⁵⁷ The other trade route, which connected Baghdad and Aleppo to Diyarbekir, and then Bitlis to Tiflis through Van, went towards the Southern Caucasus region.⁵⁸



Map 4. Trade Routes in the Ottoman East.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Fulya Özkan, “The Role of the Trabzon-Erzurum-Bayezid Road in Regional Politics and Ottoman Diplomacy, 1850s- 1910s”, *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities and Politics*, eds. Yaşar Tolga Cora, Dzovinar Derderian, Ali Sipahi (New York, I.B. Tauris, 2016), p. 19-41. Bayezid was the best example which was ruined because of the wars, famine and earthquake during the first half of the nineteenth century. The last *mîr*, Behlül Pasha, had to live Bayezid Castle where his ancestors resided and he was captured three times during the wars with the Russians and Iranians (in 1821-3 to Iranians and in 1828-9 and 1853-5 to the Russians two times).

⁵⁷ Kirkorian, “The Participation of the Armenian Community “, p. 59. Özkan, “The Role of the Trabzon-Erzurum-Bayezid Road”, p. 19-41.

⁵⁸ Jaubert, *Voyage en Armenie et en Perse*, p.138.

⁵⁹ Fulya Özkan, “A Road in Rebellion, A History on the Move: The Social History of the Trabzon-Bayezid Road and the Formation of the Modern state in the Late Ottoman World” (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Binghamton University SUNY, Binghamton, 2012). Kinneir, Jaubert, Morier and Brant’s

Though more active and prosperous in the preceding periods, these caravan routes maintained the trade economy of the region active during the first half of the nineteenth century despite the wars. Trade allowed for Erzurum and Bitlis to become more commercially active than other Ottoman provinces in the northeastern region. Kinneir and Morier share that there was continued commercial circulation between Erivan, Bagdad, Erzurum and Tabriz, as well as with the local markets in the cities of Erzurum and Bitlis, which were well stocked with various products.⁶⁰ The merchants who traded along these commercial routes were predominantly Armenians, Persians and Greeks.⁶¹ Furthermore, dealers regularly dealt with the tribes and negotiated trade deals where they would carry and sell their animals in distant lands.⁶²

The Ottoman documents indicate that there was a lack in the grain supply in the province of Van between the years 1819 and 1826, and that the city of Van was supplied grain from Iran by primarily Iranian merchants.⁶³ Thus, although the trade routes were not always safe to traverse, this did not prevent trade from continuing in the region. Brant does however describe in 1838, that trade within Van province was not as well-furnished or abundant as compared to Erzurum and Bitlis, and that this was probably due to the fact that the main trade routes did not pass through the city

travelogues indicate that trade routes in the Ottoman East existed as how it was shown in this map. Check these account for more detailed description of the trade circulation.

⁶⁰ Kinneir, *Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan*, p. 380-395. Morier, *A Journey Through Persia*, p. 321.

⁶¹ Özkan, "The Role of the Trabzon-Erzurum-Bayezid Road", p. 19- 41. Kirkorian, "The Participation of the Armenian Community", p. 59.

⁶² Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

⁶³ BOA, Hat 794/36856A-(1821).

of Van.⁶⁴ Furthermore, European products were not well-circulated in the region, according to some traveler accounts from the first half of the nineteenth century. However, it is known that British products travelled in high quantities on the trade route between Trabzon and Tabriz, and that the route had a rate of 1,5 million pounds.⁶⁵ Some records also indicate that British officials were concerned for the future of trade and politics of the British Empire when the Russians invaded the Erzurum region during the Crimean war in 1854:

The great commercial road between Turkey and Persia is thus placed at the mercy of the Russians, threatening a trade in which British manufactures are considerably engaged with serious, if not total, obstruction, impeding our political communications with Tehran, and tending to increase the moral influence of Russia at the Persian Court.⁶⁶

Other products, such as cloth, were either produced locally in Bitlis or were traded from Damascus, Diyarbekir and Aleppo.⁶⁷ There were internal custom houses that the merchants had to pay taxes to for their commercial products, money which then went to the local governors. The custom house in Erzurum was the main check point for the products that circulated along the inter-state trade routes during the early nineteenth century.⁶⁸ Thus, the economy of the region was particularly active and diverse in the northeastern Ottoman provinces, as they were located at the juncture of the boundaries of three states: Ottoman, Russia and Iran.

⁶⁴ Morier, *A Journey Through Persia*, p. 316. Özkan, "The Role of the Trabzon-Erzurum-Bayezid Road", p. 19- 41.

⁶⁵ Brant- Glascott, "Notes of a Journey", p. 380-396. C.W. Crawley, "Anglo-Russian Relations 1815-1840" *The Cambridge Historical Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1929), p.67.

⁶⁶ Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to the Earl of Clarendon on August 20, 1854, Therapia, published in *Papers Relative to Military Affairs in Asiatic Turkey, and Defence and Capitulation of Kars* (London: Harrison, 1856), p. 3.

⁶⁷ Brant- Glascott, "Notes of a Journey", p. 380-396. J. Shiel, "Notes on a Journey from Tabriz, p. 72.

⁶⁸ Morier, *A Journey Through Persia*, p. 320-323.

3.2.4 Politics

During the entire nineteenth century, the European powers, especially the British and Russian Empires, referred to the Ottoman Empire as the “sick man of Europe”, and thought to partition its territories among themselves. We might assert that conflicts between the western global powers regarding ideas on how to share the Ottoman territories prevented the dissolution of the empire.⁶⁹ Until the Ottoman-Russian war in 1828-29, the British Empire remained neutral in terms of the question of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. However, later the British government preferred to maintain a weak Ottoman state, rather than to allow for a French-ruled puppet Egyptian state, or any other Kurdish/Armenian state that would in turn be backed by Russians.⁷⁰ As the next chapters will discuss, the British government suppressed the movements of the Kurdish *mîrs* during their revolts, and the idea of creating an Armenian state was also not supported by the British conservative governments.⁷¹ The British government believed it was necessary to hinder Russian advancement into the northeastern part of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, the British signed a trade treaty with the Ottoman government in 1838, in order to guarantee protection of their trading rights and commercial dominance within a weak Ottoman state. This was a particularly important step for the British, as their political agenda was more crucial in the eastern territories of the empire, than in the western parts, particularly in terms of the Balkans. Russian interests in both the Ottoman Empire and Iran were far more aggressive and included expansion through war and conquest.

⁶⁹ Robert F. Zeidner, “Britain and the Launching of the Armenian Question” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 7, no. 4 (oct, 1976), 465-483.

⁷⁰ Crawley, “Anglo-Russian Relations 1815-1840”, p. 47-73.

⁷¹ Zeidner, “Britain and the Launching of the Armenian Question”, p. 465-483.

While four wars occurred between the Russians and the Ottomans (1806-12, 1828-29, 1853-56, and 1877-78), there were two with Iran, resulting in losses for the Iranian Qajar Shahs, in 1804-13 and 1826-28, which ended with the Gulistan and Türkmençay Agreements.

At this time, Napoleonic France supported the newly established Qajar dynasty against Russian expansion in the region.⁷² The Qajar dynasty was able to centrally consolidate its power. It did so by eliminating local dynasties, and thus was also able to pursue expansionist policies of Abbas Mirza. Both Russia and Iran, therefore, came into conflict primarily for this reason as they both expressed the desire to extend their rule into Azerbaijan and the Southern Caucasus. However, Russia's expansionist plans were neither concrete nor well executed. Despite holding a more powerful position in the region, particularly in comparison to the Ottoman and Iranian Empires, Russia itself did not decisively pursue their expansionist policy in this region and often retreated after conquering either Ottoman or Iranian territory.⁷³ Similar to the British Empire, Russian expansion was pursued through the implementation of colonialism, rather than direct, centralized rule in these regions.

Russian expansionist tactics along the northeastern Ottoman provinces were often hindered by the European powers. For example, although France ceased to support Iran, the British Empire continued to aid in the preservation of the Qajar Empire in the region, specifically to curb Russian expansion. Furthermore, though the Russians attempted to boost the use of the Tiflis-Batumi trade route by supporting merchants

⁷² Jaubert was the envoy of Napoleon, disguised as a merchant, when he was passing through the Bayezid province. He was arrested in Bayezid and stayed in the jail for three months until the *mîr* was dead because of the plague. Jaubert, *Voyage en Arménie et en Perse*, p. 36-44.

⁷³ Muriel Atkin, *Russia and Iran 1780-1828* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980), p. 162.

who used it, their plans were unsuccessful as the Trabzon-Tabriz route continued to remain active.⁷⁴ To further destabilize the region, the Russians also argued for the protection of Armenian subjects within both empires during the nineteenth century, though they did not support an independent Armenian state in the region.⁷⁵ Most of the productive Armenian subjects of the Ottoman and Iranian Empires were willingly, and sometimes forcefully, moved to the newly captured territories from Iran by Russia between 1828-30.⁷⁶ Therefore, for the Ottomans, the security of the northeastern provinces was in jeopardy due to both the actions of Russia and the weakness of Iran. This instability resulted in an increase in the importance of the powerful borderland confederative tribes as they began to act, indirectly, as instruments of the Ottoman Empire, protecting the margins of the empire. Furthermore, maintaining the goodwill of borderlands tribes such as the Heyderan gained increased importance for the Ottoman Empire as Russia emerged into a third actor in the region, willing to influence and receive defecting tribes during the nineteenth century.

This chapter will also address the role of the Qajar Crown Prince, Abbas Mirza, who, as governor general of the province of Azerbaijan, applied various expansionist policies of his own from Tabriz at the expense of the Ottoman Empire, which eventually resulted in war between the two sides between 1821-23.⁷⁷ Since the Iranians lost the southern Caucasus to the Russians, the Qajar Crown Prince did not only attempt to recapture those territories, but he also pursued expansion into

⁷⁴ Özkan, “The Role of the Trabzon-Erzurum-Bayezid Road”, p. 19-41.

⁷⁵ Selim Deringil, “Abdülhamid döneminde Ermeni Meselesi” *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015), p. 96.

⁷⁶ Beydilli, “1828-1829 Osmanlı –Rus Savaşında”, p. 365-434.

⁷⁷ Sabri Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands: Making A Boudary* (New York: Cambridge Uni. Press, 2013), p. 45-59.

Ottoman territories, by proclaiming authority over the borderland provinces and the tribes residing within them. The Heyderan was one of the tribes that Abbas Mirza claimed rulership over, and attempted to forcefully contain them within Iranian land in order to support the military, economic and social prosperity of the Azerbaijani region. He was the most powerful prince among the sons of Fath-Ali Shah and controlled the most strategic region of the province of Azerbaijan, which bordered both the Ottoman and the Russian Empires.⁷⁸ As soon as the Qajar dynasty eliminated the local dynasties and united Iranian territory, Abbas Mirza re-established the ruined city of Tabriz, which at the time was one of the most populated cities in the northeastern Iranian region.⁷⁹ As Morier noted, Abbas Mirza was particularly proud of his military strength, praising his cavalry, which was mostly composed of tribal members. He did acknowledge, however, that his infantry division was not as formidable as those of the European Empires.⁸⁰ Thus, the role of the tribes in the Qajar army was crucial, and this chapter will analyze their place in regards to Iran and Abbas Mirza, and the claims he made regarding his authority over the tribes during the early years of the 1810s. Although Abbas Mirza made an enormous effort to modernize his army, and to improve architecture, industry and the sciences, his efforts were halted in part by the devastating loss in the Russo-Iranian war of 1826-8, and by his death in 1833 before he was able to ascend the throne.⁸¹ His attacks into Ottoman territories, supported both by the Russians and the tribes had significant impacts on the political and military developments of the region.

⁷⁸ Robert Grant Watson, *A History of Persia from the Beginning of the Nineteenth Century to the Year 1858* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1866), p. 197-204.

⁷⁹ Morier, *A Journey through Persia*, p. 279.

⁸⁰ Morier, *A Journey Through Persia*, p. 282.

⁸¹ Jaubert, *Voyage en Arménie et en Perse*, p. 161. We can see in the traveler accounts that Abbas Mirza was so eager to make the Iranian state more powerful in the region against the Russian and Ottoman States.

During the nineteenth century, Erzurum emerged as a strategic city, that was particularly representative of the center and from which centralization policies were enacted. It was a center of an imperial periphery and became one of the most important cities not only in the northeastern provinces of the empire, but within all of the eastern territories of the empire. The ex-grand viziers, Hüsrev, Rauf and Galip Pasha were some of the Ottoman governor-generals whose military action or diplomatic efforts were particularly effective in Ottoman East and along the Russian/Iranian frontiers.⁸² Ottoman Erzurum was equal to Iranian Tabriz in terms of its developed bureaucracy, hierarchy, demography and commerce during the 1820s and 1830s. The Ottoman chronicler, Şânizade noted that Erzurum was an important strategic province for the Ottoman central government:

There is no necessity for stating that Erzurum Province is the center of the eastern territories [of the Ottoman Empire]. It is an obligation for the governors of Erzurum to put in order, protect, strengthen the frontier territories carefully with their prestige and power. Keeping the region under custody and foresight of the developments consigned to the governors. These were consigned and same as his [Hüsrev Pasha] forerunners, the governors were also entrusted with a task of being commander-in-chief of the Eastern Imperial Army.⁸³

The governor generals in Erzurum had to keep the balance of power between inter-state, inter-provincial and inter-tribal relations. The region was primarily controlled by local, indigenous, hereditary Kurdish Beys/*Mîrs* who had the title of *mutasarrıf* Pasha (sanjak ruler). As the next chapter elaborates, the Ottoman East was under the

⁸² Appointing the ex-grand viziers, Rauf and later Galip Pasha, to Erzurum indicate that Erzurum was one of the major Ottoman sanjaks in the whole empire.

⁸³ Şânizade Mehmed Ataullah Efendi, *Şânizade Tarihi II: Osmanlı Tarihi (1223-1237/ 1808-1821)* ed. Ziya Yılmaz (İstanbul: Çamlıca, 2008): “Erzurum Eyâleti ise aktâr-ı şarkıyyenin kürsisi mesâbesinde idüğü müstağni-i takrir olduğuna binâ'en, vâlıleri kesb-i nüfûz u iktidâr ederek, etrâf u eknâfa ihâle-i enzâr-ı basîret ve takviye ve muhâfaza-i serhadât esbâbının istihsâliyle havâlî-i mezbûrenin istikmâl-ı intizâmı husûsuna ihtimâm ü dikkat eylemeleri lâzimededen olup, müşârunileyhin [Hüsrev Paşa] eslâfî dahi Şark Cânibi Ser'askerliği ünvanı inzimâmı ile me'mûr olageldikleri”

authority of these hereditary rulers until the mid-nineteenth century, when the central government no longer allowed for them to maintain their privileges. They had sovereign and expansionist inter-provincial desires and often attempted to enlarge their territories at the expense of neighboring provinces. Bitlis, Muş, and Bayezid were some of the hereditary Ottoman sanjaks, whose status differentiated from the regular, centrally administered sanjaks. These sanjaks were regarded *yurtluk/ocaklık* (family estate) or *hükümet* (sovereign), and thus were not under the direct control of the center, particularly as their distance to the center, and their unique geographic environment placed them in a similar position to that of the Arabian Peninsula, the Albanian Mountains and northern Ottoman Africa.⁸⁴ The Sanjaks of Muş and Bayezid will be the main focus of this chapter, although these administrative units were less powerful than the ones established in the southern regions such as the Hakkari, Müküs, Cizre, Baban, İmadiye and Soran Emirates. Besides, the province of Van was an Ottoman classical sanjak, and its marshal-governors (*muhâfiz*) were centrally appointed. However, although Van was under direct central authority, its political and economic status, and as a representative of Ottoman authority, was not equal to that of Erzurum.

The *mîrs* of these sanjaks became the primary military force in the region, and they did so by exerting authority over the Kurdish tribes in the region who were the primary military power of the *mîrs*. As discussed in the previous chapter, the leaders of the Besyan tribe had created the Bayezid Emirate in the sixteenth century by organizing the Suleymani tribes. Similarly, the *muhassıl* of the Khans of Bitlis, Alaaddin Bey, received the support of the tribes and separated the Muş district from

⁸⁴ Maurus Reinkowski, *Düzenin Şeyleri, Tanzimat'ın Kelimeleri: 19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Reform Politikasının Karşılaştırmalı Bir Araştırması* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2017), p. 13. Bruinessen, *ibid.*

Bitlis, and declared it as a sovereign administrative unit during the middle of the eighteenth century.⁸⁵ His descendants, Murad and Selim Pasha, became one of the most powerful *mîrs* in the region between 1800 and 1820s. Both had received in time the title of *Rumeli Beglerbeyi* (governor-general of Rumelia), and the former also became the governor of Diyarbekir in 1807.⁸⁶ Murad Pasha's son, Selim Pasha, who will be discussed in detail in this chapter, also received the same title as his father, and pursued his own expansionist policies, which could only be carried out with the support of the tribes in the region. Thus, the tribes often became necessary partners for both the central and local authorities in order to support various military, political and economic initiatives. The Heyderan tribe was one of those important actors in the region. The northern sphere of the Lake Van region and the tribe- empire relationships will be the primary focus of this chapter. It will also address the role of the Heyderan tribe in three separate and overlapping layers of political, military and socio-economic developments: inter-state, inter-provincial and inter-tribal relations.

3. 3 The Political-Administrative Structure of Heyderan's Living Spaces

The space occupied by the Heyderan was not only a frontier area during the Ottoman-Qajar Iran era, but historically this region was also a buffer zone between the ancient Iranian and Greek Empires.⁸⁷ The legacy of the region's status continued into the modern era, acting in a similar manner, a border district between the

⁸⁵ Alaaddin Bey was appointed by the Khans of Bidlis to Muş which belonged to Bidlis *hükümet* sanjak during the mid-eighteenth century. Check the other sections of this chapter for further details on the Alaaddin Bey and his family.

⁸⁶ Mehmed Süreyya, *Sicil-i Osmani*, vol. 4 (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 1996), p. 1115. Murat Pasha was authorized with this status since he promised to control the tribes who controlled Şirvan (upper Batman) where it had gold and silver mineral deposits: BOA, Hat 107/4270 (1808).

⁸⁷ Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, p. 31.

Ottoman and Safavid empires throughout the early modern period. In particular, the Ottomans, utilized the region as a protective buffer against those enemies located along its eastern front, where by the nineteenth century, both the Iranian and Russian Empires bordered the empire.⁸⁸ Possible incursion/invasion into the heart of the Ottoman Empire by these states, led the Porte to negotiate with the local dynasties of the region, and their allied tribal entities.⁸⁹ Therefore, from the time of Selim I onwards, the Ottomans created an alliance with the local hereditary Kurdish rulers.⁹⁰ Prior to Ottoman expansion, the Kurdish hereditary emirates, and some smaller, local tribes, had enjoyed semi-autonomous administrative authority in the region, beginning in the thirteenth century, when the Ayyubids appointed Kurdish governors in the region.⁹¹ Thus initially, it was not the Ottomans who had assigned administrative positions to the Kurdish *mîrs*.⁹² However, the Ottoman Porte preferred to pursue the established traditional administrative structure of the region by continuing to appoint local hereditary rulers to act in their name despite the fact that their power had been curtailed by the Safavids during the previous fifteen years roughly from 1500 to 1515. A number of tax registers, compiled during the mid-

⁸⁸ Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires 1908-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). A.C.S. Peacock, *The Frontiers of the Ottoman World* (Proceedings of the British Academy, vol. 156) (Oxford: Oxford Uni. Press, 2009). Kemal Karpat & Robert W. Zens, *Ottoman Borderlands: Issues Personalities and Political Changes* (Madison: Uni. Of Wisconsin Press, 2003).

⁸⁹ Baki Tezcan, "The development of the use of 'Kurdistan' as a geographical description and the incorporation of this region into the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century," in *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilization*, edited by Kemal Çiçek et al. (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 2000), vol. 3, p. 545-546.

⁹⁰ Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State*, p. 136- 175. Özoglu *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State*, p. 43-65. David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), p. 21-36.

⁹¹ Bülent Nuri Kulağuz, "Muş ve Çevresindeki Türk Mimari Eserleri" (Unpublished MA thesis)(Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi, Van), 1996, p. 15. Yılmaz Öztuna and N. Sevgen also share that the Sharaf Khan dynasty was given power in Bitlis during the time of Ayyubids.

⁹² Özoglu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State*, p. 46-49: Hakan Özoglu argues that after the Mongols, the Qara Qoyunlu and the Safavids did not allow for autonomy among the Kurdish Emirs. However, we cannot proclaim that all Kurdish Emirs lost their authority and power as was discussed in the previous chapter.

sixteenth century, reveal that the Ottomans assigned similar taxes to those of the Aq Qoyunlu State, which had been applied to the region during the fifteenth century.⁹³

The Ottomans applied three separate administrative structures in the region.⁹⁴ The most important administrative unit applied to the region was the establishment of Pasha Sanjaks, such as in Erzurum and Van, where the Porte appointed its own bureaucrats from the center to administer the region, and the local hereditary rulers were subordinate to them in status. Erzurum, in particular, was a center of control by Ottoman East on behalf of the Ottoman Sultan during the nineteenth century.

Regarding Erzurum's significant role, Kinneir adds that:

The pashalic of Erzeroom is one of the largest and most important governments in the Turkish empire, inferior only to Egypt, and equal to Bag(h)dad... the pasha has a superintending authority over all the begs of Koordistan as far to the south as Sert.⁹⁵

Meanwhile, the governor of Van, at times carried the title of *muhâfiz*, as he was responsible in ensuring the safety of the eastern frontier against the threat of the Iranians. Sometimes, the notables from the region came to be appointed to the position of *muhâfiz* of Van. However, the same process was not visible in Erzurum as the sanjak displayed the highest level of Ottoman representation in Ottoman East.⁹⁶ Unlike the *yurthuk/ocaklık* and *hükümet* rulers who were native to the region, the centrally appointed governors were addressed by the local hereditary rulers as

⁹³ Mehdi Ilhan, *Amid (Diyabakır)*, p. 172: “*Hâsılı mezkûrîn ber vech-i maktu' an kadim der zaman-ı Hasan padişah hemçun bûde kemkân mukarrer şode*”.

⁹⁴ Ayn Ali Efendi. *Kavanin-i Âl-i Osman Der Hülasa-i Mezâmin-i Defter-i Divan*, 1018 (1610). İ. Metin Kunt, *Sancaktan Eyalete: 1550-1650 Arasında Osmanlı Ümerası ve İl İdaresi* (İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1978). Tuncer Baykara, *Anadolu'nun Tarihi Coğrafyasına Giriş I: Anadolu'nun İdari Taksimatı* (Ankara: Türk Kültürü Araş. Enstitüsü, 1988).

⁹⁵ Kinneir, *Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan*, p. 365.

⁹⁶ Sinan Hakan, *Müküs Kürt Mirleri Tarihi ve Han Mahmud* (İstanbul: Peri, 2002). Orhan Kılıç, *XVI. ve XVII. Yüzyıllarda Van* (Van: Van Belediyesi Kültür ve Sosyal İşler Müd., 1997).

“*devletlu*” [representative of state].⁹⁷ Shiel also emphasized to the difference between the perceptions of identities between the centrally appointed Ottoman pashas and local hereditary rulers that, for him, the *muhafiz* governor of Van, İshak Pasha, “is [was] an Osmanli, not a Kurd”.⁹⁸ Although the rulers of the Pasha sanjaks were centrally appointed and powerful in status, their military prowess was limited and they were dependant on the military strength of the emirates and their fortified and armed tribal power.⁹⁹ The governor of Erzurum, in particular, found himself in a position where he had to check and balance the power of the local *mîrs* of such places as Bayezid, Bitlis, Hakkari, Muş, Mahmudi and Müküs.

In addition to the establishment of the Pasha sanjaks, the Ottomans created two unique and separate sanjak types, the *hükümet* (semi-autonomous) and the *yurtluk/ocaklık* (family estates). Bitlis can be held as an example of a *hükümet* sanjak, which was granted a status of autonomy within its borders, yet the *mîr* and his subsequent army were to provide military support (i.e. soldiers) to the Porte if it so requested. As Bitlis was *mefruz’ul kalem ve maktu’ul kadem*, no registrations were compiled within the sanjak, as no other taxes or duties were assigned to such sanjaks. Furthermore, authority was heredity, and they were ruled by members from the same family until no heirs remained to inherit the position. However, although theoretically the *mîrs* of *hükümet*s ruled the population within their borders

⁹⁷ Hat 801/37093D- (1823). Selim Pasha of Muş addressed the *Muhâfiz* of Van, Mahmud Pasha, as “*devletlu*” but Selim Pasha and Behlül Pasha of Bayezid were not referred to in the same manner.

⁹⁸ J. Shiel, “Notes on a Journey from Tabriz”, p. 61.

⁹⁹ Selim Pasha became a scapegoat for losing the war to the Iranians in 1821-1823 since according to the claims, Selim Pasha did not recruit his eight thousand cavalries. Power of the mîrs of Bayezid can be seen as a good example: Erdal Çiftçi, “Administrative Structures in the Upper Ottoman Kurdistan During the 18th Century,” *Nubihar Akademi*, vol.4, 2015, p. 41- 55.

autonomously, in practice, the Ottoman central government often intervened in their daily administrative rule.¹⁰⁰

Although *yurtluk/ocaklık* sanjaks were considered less autonomous in status and paid annual taxes to the central government, they sometimes became more powerful than the *hükümet* sanjaks, as evidenced by the Bitlis sanjak, as compared to the sanjak of Bayezid.¹⁰¹ During the eighteenth century between 1720 and 1799, only three *mîrs* had ruled the *yurtluk/ocaklık* of Bayezid sanjak, Mahmud, Abdulfettah and Ishak Pasha.¹⁰² However, in the *hükümet* of Bitlis, every two or three years, a different khan from the same ruling family came to power.¹⁰³ Kinneir stated that this family feud decreased the power of the Khans of Bitlis, and after the mid-eighteenth century, the region came to be influenced and dominated by the rulers of Muş that exploited the political turmoil in the *hükümet* sanjak of Bitlis.¹⁰⁴ Disputes among the ruling family members and intervention from the Porte to check-and-balance the local power within the region, were two of the primary causes for the decrease of power in the region of both Bitlis and some other *hükümet*s during the eighteenth century.

The Ottoman territories where the members of the Heyderan wandered were a region under dispute between the *mîrs* of Bayezid and Muş. As it was discussed in the previous chapter, the Bayezid Province was an emirate dating back to the sixteenth

¹⁰⁰ Mehmet Öz, "Ottoman Provincial administration in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia: the Case of Bitlis in the Sixteenth Century" *International Journal of Turkish Studies*, vol. 9 (2003), p. 119-143. Mehmet İnbaşı, "XVIII. Yüzyılda Bitlis Sancağı ve Idarecileri" *A.Ü. Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, vol. 33 (2007), p. 243- 261.

¹⁰¹ Çiftçi, *Ibid*, p. 48.

¹⁰² Yakup Karataş, *Bayezid Sancağı ve Idarecileri 1700-1914* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2014).

¹⁰³ İnbaşı, *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁴ Kinneir, *Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan*, p. 394.

century. The Sanjak of Muş, however, was normally a part of the fiefs (*has*) owned by the Khans of Bitlis, until the middle of the eighteenth century. According to a document, the Khan of Bitlis had appointed a *muhassıl* (tax collector) to collect taxes in Muş on his behalf, yet Alaaddin Bey, a local tribal notable in the region, declined as he argued that he did not take orders from the Khans of Bitlis any longer.¹⁰⁵ The governor of Erzurum declared that Alaaddin was *tavâif-i Ekrâd* (of Kurdish tribal background), and in response to the actions of the Khan of Bitlis, he organized the Kurdish tribes in the region under his authority. Alaaddin attacked the environs of Muş, and in response, the governor of Erzurum requested permission from the center to punish Alaaddin and remove him from power. If the Porte granted his request, he would then move to collect soldiers that would be provided by the *mîrs* of Bayezid, Pasin, Kiğı, Eleşkird, Diyadin, and others, in order to suppress Alaaddin. Therefore, it can be argued that the governor-general of Erzurum could only effectively assert his control in the region, if he had the military support provided in the form of soldiers of the local hereditary *mîrs* in the region.

It is clear from the Ottoman documents, that Alaaddin became the ruler of Muş after 1747, although it is unknown that a response was given from the center to Ibrahim Pasha, the governor of Erzurum, in regards to taking any actions against Alaaddin. He appears as *mütesellim* (tax collector) and his descendants were referred as *Alaaddinzâdes*.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, until the present day, there are some existing mosques and baths built by Alaaddin, to be found in Muş, which indicates that

¹⁰⁵ BOA, C.DH. 270/13478-(1747). BOA, C.DH. 98/4864-(1748).

¹⁰⁶ BOA, C.DH. 98/4864-(1748): One year later, Alaaddin was still *mütesellim* in Muş. BOA, C.DH. 134/6681-(1828): this document describes that *mîrs* of Muş as Alaaddin Pashazades. For Garo Sasoni, the Emirs of Muş were the descendents of Alaaddin Pasha. Sasoni, *Kürt Ulusal Hareketleri*, p. 104-105. Fatih Gencer, *Merkeziyetçi Idari Düzenlemeler Bağlamında Bedirhan Bey Olayı* (Ph.D. Thesis, Ankara University, Ankara, 2010), p. 126.

Alaaddin pursued and acquired some degree of autonomous power and status in Muş.¹⁰⁷ It seems that Alaaddin was authorized to maintain some type of autonomous authority in the region, after the Porte received complaints about him from Ibrahim Pasha. For Brant, “Alau-ddin Beg, a Kurd chief, made a successful resistance to the government forces sent to destroy the independence he was trying to establish. He was the founder of the family of Emin Pasha of Mush”.¹⁰⁸

Although the available Ottoman sources do not describe such a development, Alaaddin did successfully resist the dominance of the Porte, and he and his descendants, became the rulers of Muş, and later, of Bitlis as well. In fact, Alaaddin’s son, Maksud, even managed to increase his power and authority within the region more than his father had for he was referred to as *mutasarrıf* Pasha of Muş. Maksud also built bridges, mosques and pious endowments (*waqf*) in Muş, and ruled the region under the title of *yurtluk/ocaklık*.¹⁰⁹ His son, Murad Pasha, was referred to as Maksud Paşazâde, and also ruled Muş, during the early nineteenth century.

The previous chapter discussed that Selim Pasha of Muş referred to his father, Murad Pasha that during his time the Heyderan tribe had lived in Muş under his authority. Due to this fact, we know that the *mîrs* of Muş, Selim Pasha and his ancestors (Alaaddin, Maksud, and Murad Pasha), had controlled the sanjak of Muş since the mid-eighteenth century. As happened to other hereditary sanjaks, *yurtluk/ocaklık* sanjak in Muş was eliminated by the middle of the nineteenth century. This did not occur until 1849 despite an unsuccessful attempt of the early implementation of

¹⁰⁷ Bülent Nuri Kulağuz, *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ Brant- Glascott, “Notes of a Journey”, p. 348.

¹⁰⁹ Bilal Yılmaz, “Muş Vakıfları” (Unpublished MA Thesis) (Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi, Van), 2009.

Tanzimat rules in 1830s by Esad Muhlis Pasha, governor of Erzurum, who later became the first governor of the “province of Kurdistan” in 1847.

During the late eighteenth century, the Heyderan tribe was allied with the *Mîr* of Bayezid, Ishak Pasha, who had enlarged his territories by capturing Hınıs, Tekman, Malazgirt, Eleşkirt and Patnos, and subsequently appointed his own heirs to these sanjaks.¹¹⁰ Hınıs, Tekman and Malazgirt were disputed territories located between the two *yurtluk/ocaklık* sanjaks of Bayezid and Muş, until the first quarter of the nineteenth century. In a document written in 1797, the governor of Erzurum, Yusuf Ziya Pasha, complained that Ishak Pasha did not follow orders that he had issued and that Ishak Pasha’s power exceeded even that of his own.¹¹¹ Thus, according to Yusuf Ziya Pasha, “Ishak Pasha is leading the rats of Heyderan demolishing its environs and the miserable peasants”.¹¹² Furthermore, he also claimed that Malazgirt and Eleşkirt were to be given to the *Mîrs* of Muş, such as Selim, rather than remaining in the hands of Ishak Pasha in order to check and balance the power of those *mîrs*. So to speak, the rulers of Bayezid and Muş controlled these regions by appointing their heirs to the sub-provinces of their central sanjaks, in order to be able to exert authority over their environs, while allowing their heirs to accumulate experience in the area of politics.

Although the Heyderan supported Ishak Pasha of Bayezid in the late eighteenth century, they created a new alliance with the *Mîr* of Muş, Murad Pasha, and several years later in 1804, they attacked to the province of Bayezid. In 1804, Ishak Pasha’s heir, Mahmud Pasha, began to rule in Bayezid sanjak and he complained about the

¹¹⁰ BOA, C.ML. 210/8665- (1793).

¹¹¹ BOA, C.DH. 68/3392- (1797).

¹¹² Same source.

attacks of the Heyderan against his own peasants living in his province.¹¹³ Mahmud accused both Murad Pasha of Muş and the Heyderan, for as far as he was concerned, Murad Pasha let the tribe pillage and kill within his province. This indicates that any alliance between the *mîrs* and the tribe were temporary, and that both sides carried out actions that were foremost to their own advantage. It is not clear why the Heyderan shifted their allegiance and created a new, temporary alliance with the *mîrs* of Muş. However, current oral historical information indicates that *mîr* of Bayezid assassinated the chief of Heyderan tribe, Ali Agha, and therefore, relations turned into enmity.¹¹⁴ This case also demonstrates that alliances between the local *mîrs* and the tribes were dependent on dynamic and complex relations. The nature of these types of fragile relations was closely similar to tribe- empire relations, which will be discussed in the following pages.

It seems that Mahmud Pasha exacted revenge in response to the attacks of the Heyderan, after he voiced his complaints. In a document written in the same year, when the Heyderan had pillaged the Bayezid region, the chiefs and clan leaders of the Heyderan tribe petitioned the Porte. They informed the Porte that Mahmud Pasha had seized their five hundred thousand sheep, together with their horses, camels, oxen and other properties, which were worth a total of about five thousand pouch (*kise*) *akçe*.¹¹⁵ Mahmud Pasha's attack actually meant assaulting the neighboring emirate of Muş since the Heyderan had allied with Murad Pasha of Muş. Their petition demonstrates that the Heyderan leaders were hoping to convince the Porte to

¹¹³ BOA, C.ML. 562/23066- (1809). This kind of arbitrary use of power, which was very often in the region, did not only represent brigandage activities but also local political codes and alliances. Otherwise, it would be a reductionist approach to the local dynamics.

¹¹⁴ Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

¹¹⁵ BOA, C.DH. 24/1196- (1804).

allow Murad Pasha to retrieve their properties from Mahmud Pasha of Bayezid. Mahmud Pasha's revenge increased tensions between the tribe and the *mîrs* of Bayezid, for following his action no Heyderan chief allied with a *mîr* of Bayezid since 1804.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, it is possible to suggest that the tribes directly communicated with the Ottoman central authorities and sent petitions to the Sultan, although no Ottoman document written by the Porte or the governor of Erzurum that directly addressed a tribal leader during the early nineteenth century. The Porte hardly recognized the chiefs as official representatives of the tribe and, therefore the local hereditary sanjak rulers functioned mostly as intermediaries between the imperial center and other tribal leaderships. This arrangement continued until at least the middle of the nineteenth century, when the reformation policies led to direct rule of the tribes by the center.

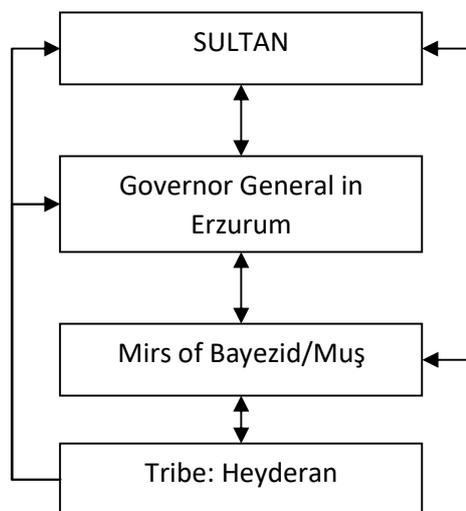


Figure 2. Hierarchy and Compellation.

¹¹⁶ The elders of Heyderan's leading family assert that during the early years of nineteenth century, their most prominent leader, Ali Agha, was assassinated in the Ishak Pasha Castle by the *mîr* of Bayezid, Mahmud Pasha. This might be the main reason for why the Heyderan tribe had not allied with the *mîrs* of Bayezid anymore and they waged war against each other. Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

Finally, we can conclude that the Heyderan tribe was mostly residing in regions that were controlled by administratively semi-autonomous hereditary Kurdish rulers in the upper Lake Van region until the middle of the nineteenth century. The alliances between the *mîrs* and the tribe were fragile and complex, often reflective of whatever best served the tribe's interest and therefore, at any time, the tribe might have allied with another emirate. The real power holders in the region were the *yurtluk/ocaklık* sanjaks, held by Kurdish tribal leaders. Although there were some regular Ottoman sanjaks in the Adilcevaz, Erciş and Ahlat regions, they were also given to the local prestigious people but their status was more local and limited than the *yurtluk/ocaklık* sanjaks. The Heyderan had to be allied with a powerful upper administrative power, who was either the *mîrs* of Bayezid or Muş or the *muhâfiz* of Van. In the following section, the developments that occurred during the 1820s will show that Heyderan was not a distant and isolated tribal entity from the inter-state politics. This centers around Kasım Agha, and his brother Muhammed Agha, and they played an important role in influencing developments in the region's frontier politics after their defection from the Iranian to the Ottoman side in 1820.

3. 4 The Defection of Kasım Agha of the Heyderan to the Ottoman Territories

The defection of tribes to the Ottoman or Iranian Empires was typical of the environment to be found in the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontiers until the formation of ethnic nation-states of Pahlavi Iran and Kemalist Turkey. Although some historians have held the borderland tribes responsible for creating conflict along the edges of the two empires, actually the Ottoman and Iranian states allowed for these regions to remain politically and militarily active. During the summer of

1820, Kasım Ağa from the Heyderan tribe decided to cross to the Ottoman regions, where the *mutasarrıf* of Muş, Selim Pasha, was the ruling authority.¹¹⁷ Kasım Ağa's defection to the Ottoman Empire was neither the first nor the last time that members of the Heyderan tribe sought refuge within Ottoman lands.



Map 5. Kasım Ağa's defection to the Ottoman provinces of Muş and Malazgirt¹¹⁸

Selim Pasha was the central figure in this border crossing, as he supported Kasım's defection to the Muş region. Selim had already paved the way for the defection of Kasım's brother, Muhammed Ağa to Muş in 1818, along with the five hundred tents under his leadership. According to the Iranians, Muhammed Ağa had been permanently living in the Iranian territories, and Selim had secretly engineered their crossing into his territories in 1818.¹¹⁹ Ferhad Ağa, who was the brother of Kasım and Muhammed, also crossed to the Ottoman side in 1819, with the support of Selim Pasha, but the Khan of Erivan sent soldiers to return those branches of Heyderan to

¹¹⁷ BOA, HAT 820/37372- (1822): "*mezbur Kasım Ağa Hoy'da tevelliüd etmiş*".

¹¹⁸ The current estimation of distance that Kasım Ağa crossed was over than 150 kilometers from Iranian Çaldıran to Ottoman Muş and Malazgirt regions.

¹¹⁹ BOA, HAT 4/102-(1818): "*hafiyeten ve bâki kalanlar*". Şanizade Mehmed Atullah Efendi, *Şanizade Tarihi II*, p. 999-1002.

the Iranian ruled border territories shortly before Kasım's defection.¹²⁰ While Kasım still resided within the Iranian-ruled borderlands, he sent a message to his brother, Muhammed Agha. He warned him that Abbas Mirza might have dispatched troops to forcefully remove Muhammed Agha and his followers to the Iranian Khoi region. However, this did not occur and soon after Kasım himself defected to Muş, crossing one and half hundred kilometers.¹²¹

The Ottoman archival records describe that Kasım and Muhammed Agha were under the authority of crown Qajar Prince, Abbas Mirza, who was the governor of Azerbaijan.¹²² The Iranian crown prince maintained his power by depending on the military might of the Iranian tribes, although he made attempts to modernize his own army. Similar to the Iranians, the Ottomans also claimed sovereignty over the subjects located along the margins of the Empire. Thus, the crossing of various tribal leaders and their people was not only supported by the *mîr* of Muş, but also by the Ottoman central government in Istanbul. Selim Pasha was assigned the duty of aiding in the crossings, by the Porte, as he declared: "as I was ordered by the Sultan's decree to bring the Sepki and Heyderan tribe".¹²³ Therefore, the defections of tribes who resided within the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands, were opportunities presented to the tribes by the central governments, which allowed them to exchange allegiances when it was in their best interests to do so.

¹²⁰ BOA, HAT 820/37372-(1822).

¹²¹ BOA, HAT 1/18G- (1820). A rough estimation of distance between Khoi's Çaldıran region to Muş' Malazgirt is 150 kilometers. We do not know how long it took for Kasım to cross this distance.

¹²² BOA, HAT 1/18K- (1820). "*Abbas Mirza'nın sahâbetinde ve hizmetinde oldukları*". Although the document mentions the Khoi region, Kasım Agha and the Heyderan tribe was probably living in the Iranian Çaldıran region, which was controlled from Khoi.

¹²³ BOA, HAT 445/22266A: "*En asl Devlet-i Aliye-i Osmaniye aşâirinden olub bir müddetten beri cânib-i İran'a firarda firar üzere olan Sepki ve Haydari aşâirini cânib-i İrandan celb edib getiresiz deyu irâde buyrulduğundan gönderib celb getirilib dûr-i duriğ etmeyerek verib sahâbet edib*".

Ottoman documentation often mentions that the Heyderan tribe was under the *sahabet* (patronage) of the *Mîr* of Muş, Selim Pasha.¹²⁴ The term *sahabet* indicates that there was a hegemonic relationship between the *mîr* and the tribe, for the Porte did not directly address or deal with the tribe. Instead, the *mîrs* functioned as intermediaries between the Porte and the chiefs of the tribe. Selim Pasha pursued the policy of aiding and transporting large numbers of tribal members from the Iranian borderland on behalf of the Ottoman central authorities as vigorously as he could. However, such maneuvers, by and on behalf of the Porte are often overlooked by Ottoman scholars and instead the conflict between the two empires within the borderlands is often laid solely at the feet of the tribes.

The exact reason for Kasım and his brothers' defections to the Ottoman ruled region in the years between 1818 and 1820 is unknown. However, Selim Pasha attempted to legitimize these border crossings through various approaches and explanations. For Selim Pasha himself, Kasım Agha's temperament was not compatible (*adem-i imtizac*) with the Iranians, and he was considered to be resentful of Abbas Mirza. Furthermore, Selim Pasha indicated that the tribe was religiously incompatible with Iran, stating that since the Heyderan belonged to the Sunni Shafi'i School of Islamic jurisprudence, he believed it was logical for Kasım Agha to defect from the Shi'i rule he, and his tribe, were under.¹²⁵ Although these motives can certainly be counted towards the making of such a decision, a more accurate motive for Kasım's defection

¹²⁴ The *muhâfız* of Van, Sert Mahmut Pasha, even mentioned the same terminology that the Heyderan was under the patronage of Selim: "*Selim Paşa hazretlerinin indinde olan Haydari Aşireti*": BOA, HAT 801/37093A. Another document also mentions the same status of the Heyderan: "*Selim Paşa'nın maiyetlerinde olan Haydari Aşireti*": BOA, HAT 801/37093B-(1823).

¹²⁵ BOA, HAT 1/18K- (1820).

can be found in the desire to avoid the mandatory tasks that were required from the tribes by Abbas Mirza such as taxation and military services.

With the assistance of the European powers, first Russia and France, and last the British Empire until 1819, when it terminated its policies in Iran, Abbas Mirza made a strong attempt to modernize his army.¹²⁶ However, his efforts to pursue and implement modernizing policies in support of his expansionist goals were hindered due to a limited budget.¹²⁷ Therefore, Abbas Mirza probably placed heavy tax/military burdens over the tribes under his authority, especially towards the late 1820s. Furthermore, Nikitin states how Abbas Mirza regularly collected money or goods from the members of Iranian tribes via the tribal leaders that he kept close to him.¹²⁸ An Ottoman document also reveals that he took members of the tribes captive in order to prevent any chief from possibly staging a rebellion.¹²⁹ Ahmed Cevdet Pasha confirms Averyanov's point, that the Iranians honored and bribed the tribal leaders into collecting taxes from their own tribal members during the 1820s.¹³⁰ In light of such financial pressures, it is clear that the motives behind Kasım's defection

¹²⁶ Stephanie Cronin, "Building a New Army: Military Reform in Qajar Iran" in *War and Peace in Qajar Persia*, ed. By Roxane Farmanfarmaian (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 47-87. The French traveler Jaubert was arrested by the *Mir* of Bayezid, Mahmud Pasha, and charged with being an agent sent by Napoleon to Abbas Mirza. He was jailed until Mahmud Pasha's death, caused by the spread of cholera, which hit the city in 1805: Jaubert, *Voyage en Armenie et en Perse*, p. 17-68. Averyanov also confirms that cholera arrived in Bayezid province in 1805: Averyanov, *Osmanlı İran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler (19. Yüzyıl): Türkiye, İran ve Rus Kürtlerinin Çağdaş Politik Durumu* (İstanbul: Avesta, 2010), p. 32.

¹²⁷ Graham Williamson, "The Turko- Persian War of 1821-1823: winning the war but losing the peace" in *War and Peace in Qajar Persia*, ed. By Roxane Farmanfarmaian (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 88-109.

¹²⁸ Nikitine, *Kürtler*, p. 274. For Nikitin, the every single tent of Zilan tribe had to provide one big, and two small, sheep as tax to Abbas Mirza's officials. Averyanov also states that Abbas Mirza made it obligatory for the tribes to provide one armed soldier for every five tents.

¹²⁹ BOA, HAT 811/37227-(1822): This document describes the fact that the relatives of the powerful Hüseyin Agha of the Zilan tribe were held captive by Abbas Mirza, and therefore, could not defect to Ottoman territories for years: "*rehin almak üzere adam ahz ve tevkif eyledikleri*".

¹³⁰ Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet* (Dersaadet: Matbaa-i Osmani, 1301(1883)), vol. 12, p. 7.

were not mostly the result of personal or religious and sectarian differences, as suggested by Selim Pasha. Rather, it would appear that Kasım acted pragmatically and preferred not to remain under the strict rulership of Abbas Mirza, and instead opted to pit the one state against the other, and in return for his allegiance, hoped the outcome would produce a reduction in the tasks assigned to him by the crown prince in Iran.

Selim Pasha's justification was an attempt to legitimize the defection of tribes, for both the Ottoman and Iranian mentality. Thus, he proclaimed that there was a historical ground supporting the "return" of the Heyderan to the Ottoman-ruled lands within the border zone. He collected some information from the elderly members of the Heyderan tribe, in order to provide evidence that historically they had resided in the Meyyafarikin (Silvan) region of Diyarbekir province before migrating to the Ottoman frontier regions of Muş, Malazgirt, Erciş and the Iranian territories of Khoi.¹³¹ As being a hereditary *mîr*, for Selim Pasha, the leaders of the Heyderan, at times, crossed the borderlands to the Iranian side, but their permanent living space was Muş, Malazgirt and Erciş, the region generally under his control throughout the 1820s.¹³² By means of such a historical reasoning, he argued that the Heyderan tribe was an Ottoman Kurdish tribe (*Devlet-i Aliye Ekradı*), and not one of Iranian heritage.¹³³ Selim Pasha further claimed, that the Iranian government did not possess the right to claim domination over the tribe.

¹³¹ BOA, HAT 1/18G- (1820).

¹³² BOA, HAT 4/105- (1820): "*Bir müddet-i mütemâdiden beri Muş, Malazgirt ve Erciş'te olan aşiret*".

¹³³ BOA, HAT 1/18G- (1820).

As discussed in the previous chapter, Iranian bureaucrats did argue for the right to rule over the Heyderan and, therefore, claimed that the tribe was Iranian, for at least, the past two hundred years.¹³⁴ Claims over the historical origins of the tribe were an important argument formulated by the Ottoman-Iranian bureaucracy, providing both powers with what was thought to be legitimate reasons for ruling the tribe. The Ottoman central government accepted Selim Pasha's arguments, and did not question whether his claims were correct. The dispute of historical origins further demonstrates that the Heyderan possessed an important and valuable status within the Ottoman-Iranian frontiers during the 1820s.¹³⁵

Selim Pasha's rank as a *mîr-i miran* of the hereditary sanjak of Muş, also provides evidence regarding the role played by these officials within the existing tribe-*mîr*-empire relations, before the disinheritance from power of the Kurdish Emirates. When the Heyderan tribe crossed into Ottoman lands, and decided to forge a new alliance with the Ottoman Empire, Selim Pasha requested winter quarters (*kışlak*) from the center on behalf of the Heyderan tribe. No document has been found, revealing that the Heyderan tribe directly sent a letter requesting winter quarters for themselves. Rather, as the following pages elaborate, Selim Pasha wrote to the Porte on behalf of the tribe, and furthermore, he generally sought to use the tribe to further his own objectives/ambitions, rather than those of the imperial center. It is noteworthy that Selim only requested authorization for the winter seasonal settlement of the Heyderan, within the winter quarters (*müştaya ruhsat*).¹³⁶ As will be argued, seasonal settlement of the tribe was a tactic employed by Selim Pasha to expand his

¹³⁴ BOA, HAT 4/108- (1820).

¹³⁵ Ahmed Cevdet Pasha used the same argument on the historical background of the Heyderan that Selim Pasha declared which based on the collected information from the elders of Heyderan tribe.

¹³⁶ BOA, HAT 1/18G-(1820).

control into neighboring territories by settling tribes allied with him, as a measure to displace those tribes, such as Sepki, who were allied with another *mîr* or governor. Therefore, Selim's objective was not solely limited to welcoming and wintering tribes as a host. In addition, the Heyderan tribe was meant to be used as an instrument of expansion and power for Selim Pasha.

He did not send in a request to authorize summer, as well as winter, pastures for the tribe. As the Heyderan was a nomadic tribe, which consisted of wandering pastoralists he also did not need to request for the authorization of the tribe's transhumance activities, only in regards to the regions where they actually settled for a season. This was partly due to the fact that the region, where the Heyderan tribe wandered with their flocks, such as the Çaldıran region, was not yet clearly demarcated by either empire, and both Ottoman and Iranian tribes used the same region, together, for pasture. In addition, the tribes had to live in village houses during the winter season, as their tents were not sufficient shelter to protect them from the harsh snowy weather. Tribes generally rented houses from sedentary villagers during the winter months, however it is unclear as to how they proceeded to negotiate and agree upon rates and payments.¹³⁷

Although the specific details are unknown, the wintered Heyderan tribes had to pay the villagers for the homes, and sometimes a *yurtluk/ocaklık* ruler or governor

¹³⁷ BOA, C.DH. 123/6109-1825: Behlül Pasha reports that Kurdish tribes settled during the winter season in rayah houses...otherwise they would set up their tents and would remain under the snows: "*Ekrâd vakt-i şitâda hânesiyle reâyâ hânesine girip oturacaktır veyahut çadır kurup berf üzerinde kalacaktır*".

general in Erzurum as well.¹³⁸ Brant's visit to an Armenian village in southern Muş provides a similar example:

The village of Kizil Aghaj, though apparently large, contained only thirty Armenian families: the numerous buildings, which give it an appearance of some extent, are occupied by the Kurds and their cattle, as thirty families of Sherif Agha's tribe winter here... They however owned about 300 heads of cattle and 600 sheep [...] His tribe pays about 480 *l.* [*lira*] for their Kışlak.¹³⁹

Similar to Sherif Agha's case, members of the Heyderan tribe also had to give wintering fee to the settled villagers and the rulers of the region, *mîr* of Muş/Bayezid or *muhâfiz* of Van or the governor of Erzurum. Therefore, crowded tribes meant revenues for the local governors and *mîrs* in the region.

Kasım's defection, however, to lands clearly marked as Ottoman, raised the tension between the Ottomans and the Iranian Empires to that of a conflict, between 1820 and 1821. The semi-autonomous buffer state of Erivan, under the leadership of *Serdar* Hüseyin Khan, as well as the Khan of Khoi, both sent a number of letters to Kasım and Muhammed Agha. The content of this correspondence included harsh threats against the aghas, and over time, the threats increased in intensity and significance. In one document, the Iranians requested that Kasım Agha to return to Iranian lands, however, in another document Kasım Agha was warned that if he and his clan did not return, the Iranians would recruit soldiers to punish all defected Heyderan tribe, regardless of whether its members fled to the Diyarbekir region.¹⁴⁰

The Iranians punctuated these threats by overlaying them with a religious tone,

¹³⁸ See chapter three, which discusses the fact that Sultan Agha sent gifts to the governor of Erzurum. Emin Pasha received six hundred pouches filled with *kuruş* from the Heyderan in return for wintering.

¹³⁹ Brant- Glascott, "Notes of a Journey", p. 353.

¹⁴⁰ BOA, HAT 1/18G-(1820).

scapegoated and depicted political defection of Heyderan as the primary cause for the deterioration of relations between the two Islamic Empires.¹⁴¹

Thus, the Iranians endeavored to reverse the decisions made by the Heyderan's chiefs by declaring that their defection was also an anti-Islamic act, and hoped this would result in their return to Iranian lands. Furthermore, the Iranians were aware of Selim Pasha's support of the Heyderan leaders and the role he played in their defection to Ottoman lands, and accordingly, threatened Selim Pasha as well.¹⁴² In a letter sent by the Iranians, they attempted to frighten the Heyderan chiefs by exaggerating possible international tensions:

Now there is no animosity between the Iranian and Russian States. Currently, the Russians are hostile towards the Ottomans. The soldiers of France were recruited to capture Islambul [Constantinople]. They sent a message that if the Porte does not hand over the city, they will capture it. You know this very well. There is no use for you [seeking help-] from the Ottomans. They only try to take care of their own affairs. Send your letters to this side as soon as possible before our army's recruitment.¹⁴³

A possible military expedition led by the Russians was used to threaten the tribe, and it indicates that Kasım Agha and his brother's defections to Ottoman lands were actually influenced by conflict that had erupted between the Iranians and the Russians between 1804-1813. Furthermore, the Porte's possible capture was also

¹⁴¹ BOA, HAT 4/108-(1820): “*Ne için siz iki Devlet-i İslam beyninde ihtilâfa bâis olub kıyâmete kadar halâs olmayacaksınız*”.

¹⁴² BOA, HAT 1/18G-(1820): “*şimdi padişâh memleketinde bir Selim Paşa zuhûr etmiş eğer fırsat olur ise onu dahi müzmehil ve memleketini garet iderek kendimi ana bildireceğim deyu*” (A man named Selim Pasha emerged in the lands of the Sultan, I [Abbas Mirza] will teach him who I am and I will destroy his territories).

¹⁴³ BOA, HAT 846/37986E-(1823): “*Şimdi Urus ile İran arasında bir adâvet yoktur. Urusun adâveti şimdi Osmanlı ilendir. Bâdema Kral-ı Frenk cem olub Islambul'a cevap eylemişler. İslambul'u boşalt bize vir yoksa tedarikin gör yetdi men dahi üzerinize gelürüm. Bu sözleri sizler eyuce bilürsüz. Osmanlı'dan sizlere bir imdad yokdur. Osmanlı kendi başının hayrına düşmüş ve beş paşaları Mora üzerinde nâbedid olmuş elbette [one word illegible] elbette bir gün evvel kağıdınızı bu tarafa irsal idesiz kim tâ kim asker hücum olmuş sizi ezâ ile söyleşüb cevâbınıza bir hoş binâ edelim vallâh'il azîm böyle bir fırsat ele girmez bir gün evvel ademinizi bu tarafa irsâl idesiz*”.

used as an instrument to entice the tribe to return to Iranian territories. Although this clearly was a fabricated rumor, the fact that it was mentioned and used as a tool to bring back the chiefs to Iran, it also reveals that these same chiefs were conscious of the inter-state politics of their time, and their own active roles within them, and thus they were not an isolated group of nomads.¹⁴⁴ Kasım and his brothers were therefore aware that the information they received from Iran was false, for they continued to reside in Ottoman lands and pursue an alliance with the Porte. Finally, the attempts to force the Heyderan to return to Iranian territory demonstrate the significance of the tribes for both empires. If this was not the case, Abbas Mirza would have ignored their defection or the Ottoman authorities would have returned the Heyderan tribe to the Iranian regions.

These written warnings soon escalated into formal attacks carried out by soldiers in the employment of the Iranian Hasan Khan during October of 1820 against the Ottoman northeastern frontier region in the provinces of Kars and Bayezid. Hasan Khan, who was the brother of Hüseyin Khan, attacked and looted the Kars and Taşlıçay's villages, stealing animals belonging to the villagers, assaulting an Armenian priest, toppling and burning trees, and generally plundering the region.¹⁴⁵ Hüseyin Pasha, who was the governor general in Erzurum, as well as other Ottoman governors were ordered to resolve conflicts in the region, as the Porte did not wish to engage in a war within its eastern frontiers while also being engaged in a war in the Balkans.¹⁴⁶ Hüseyin Pasha sent some letters to Abbas Mirza, requesting the looted goods be returned, while he attempted to decrease tensions between the two empires.

¹⁴⁴ Samira Haj, "The Problems of Tribalism: The Case of Nineteenth-Century Iraqi History" *Social History*, vol. 16, no: 1 (January, 1991), p. 45-58.

¹⁴⁵ BOA, HAT 825/37413- (1820).

¹⁴⁶ BOA, HAT 825/37404F- (1821).

However, he maintained that it was impossible to send the Heyderan tribe back to the Iranian territories.¹⁴⁷ Although Hüsrev Pasha believed that through communication with Abbas Mirza he would be able to diffuse tensions between the two empires, instead the Iranians attacked Ottoman territory in autumn of 1821, which resulted in the last Ottoman-Iranian war, which would finally end only in 1823. The following section will analyze how the defection of the Heyderan tribe became central to a conflict that escalated into war between the Ottomans and Iranians.

3. 5 The Ottoman-Iranian War of 1821-1823 and Effects of Inter-State Conflict on the Heyderan

The defection of the Sepki, and especially the Heyderan, tribes to Ottoman territories in 1820, in combination with the Ottoman refusal to return the tribes to Iran, escalated tensions between the two empires and eventually led to the final Ottoman-Iranian war between 1821-1823. Lazarev argues that both policies of expansion, and border-crossings of the tribes, combined to induce the last Ottoman-Iranian War.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, it is argued that Abbas Mirza, who ruled a key Iranian territory, Azerbaijan, declared war against the Ottomans on the pretense of retrieving the defected tribes though the Shah did not intend for an Ottoman-Iranian war.¹⁴⁹ Robert Grant Watson, as well as some scholars, also argue that the two wandering tribes were responsible for causing the war.¹⁵⁰ However such a conclusion appears too

¹⁴⁷ BOA, HAT 1314/51256-(no date): “[*Aşiretin*] İran’a tâbi oldukları ber vech âli bâis-i kıyl ü kâl olamayacağı zâhir” (the tribe’s subjection to the Iranians will not going to be part of any discussion).

¹⁴⁸ M.S. Lazarev&et al., *Kürdistan Tarihi*, p. 116.

¹⁴⁹ Watson, *A History of Persia*, p. 197-204.

¹⁵⁰ Watson, *A History of Persia*, p. 197.

simplistic and does not consider the wider political context in both the empires as well as the local emirates operating near the border.

The Ottoman documents reveal that the border crossings of the wandering tribes were part of the nature of this geography and the attacks of the Iranians, therefore, graveled the Ottoman bureaucrats.¹⁵¹ Furthermore, Cevdet Pasha provides some enlightening information through his criticism of Ottoman policies. He regarded the Ottoman policies concerning the Ottoman East throughout the 1820s to have diminished authority in the region, as Halet Efendi's policies removed some of the local notables from power.¹⁵² We know that Halet Efendi's role was quite prominent in affecting Ottoman policies against the local notables such as the Ali Pasha of Ionnina and Mamluk governors in Baghdad during the period from 1810s to early 1820's, and he was one of the chief advisers and *nişancı* to Mahmud II until 1822. Halet Efendi, a conservative supporter of Janissary and received bribes, played important role in appointing and dismissing both Ottoman rulers/bureaucrats which empowered the Greek independent movements.¹⁵³ Cevdet Pasha describes how some of these rulers were beheaded unjustly, as a result of these policies, and thus, most of the local hereditary rulers and tribal leaders preferred to ally with the Iranians. He considered the Iranian *mirzas* as more successful in the region, compared to the Ottomans, for they bribed tribal leaders, and also honored them, in order to maintain

¹⁵¹ BOA, HAT 820/37372-(1821): “*İran canibinden aşiret-i mezkûrenin tedibi bahanesiyle*” (with the pretense of disciplining the tribe).

¹⁵² Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 12, p. 6. Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, p. 45-46.

¹⁵³ Stanford J. Shaw- Ezel Kural Shaw, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Modern Türkiye*, vol.2 (İstanbul, E Yayınları, 2006), p. 33-34. Abdülkadir Özcan, “Halet Efendi” *DİA*, vol. 15, p.250. Dina Rizk Khoury, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu 'nda Devlet ve Taşra Toplumu: Musul, 1540- 1834* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2003), p. 66. Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Mordern History* (New York, I.B. Tauris, 2005) p. 31, 393. For Philliou, Mehmet Sait Halet Efendi increased his power since he was backed by the Phanariots: Christine M. Philliou, *Biography of An Empire: Governing Ottomans in An Age of Revolution* (Los Angeles, University of California Press, 2011), p. 54-58.

their allegiance.¹⁵⁴ Averyanov also confirms that during this time, Abbas Mirza supported many Kurdish tribal leaders.¹⁵⁵ Halil İnalçık noted that although the Porte preferred to avoid a war with the Iranians, Hüsrev Pasha, who was governor general in Erzurum, reduced the power of the Bayezid Sanjak, as he wanted to dismiss Behlül Pasha and assign his heeler, Behlül's relative, Abdulfettah Pasha to rule the Sanjak, instead.¹⁵⁶ Hüsrev Pasha's act of dismissing Behlül Pasha, led the Iranians to attack the Bayezid region, for the region's political/administrative structure became unsteady. As Cevdet Pasha describes, the Ottomans were shocked by the loss of Bayezid, not only did the Iranians not encounter any resistance when they invaded the territory, but they were also to easily capture one of the best garrison castles located along the northeastern Ottoman frontier.¹⁵⁷ Therefore, for Ottoman bureaucrats, Hüsrev Pasha and Halet Efendi's policies resulted in the alienation of local notables and the tribal chiefs who resided on the Ottoman northeastern frontier. As a result, the relations between the Iranians and the Kurdish tribes, improved.

Williamson, in his discussion, details several reasons for why this war appeared. He argues that, Abbas Mirza had lost territories to Russia, and thus in order to increase territory held by the Iran, he turned towards the Ottoman Empire. As it weakened at

¹⁵⁴ Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, *Ibid.*. Süleyman Pasha, who became the *muhâfız* of Van in 1826, also recorded that in order to get the support of the local tribal chiefs, it became customary that they need to be paid and honored by the government officials in Van region: “*Eyâlet-i Van'da olan bilcümle aşâir ve kal'a beğleri eğer vali tarafından hoş tutulur yani akçeye müteallik hizmet me'mûl olunmayıp belki aralık aralık kendilere in'âm ve ikram olunur ise cümlesi devlet-i ebed'üd-devamın kulu ve kölesi olub hoş tutulmadığı surette İran'lu kendilerine civar olunduğundan ve iltimaslarına müsaade sûreti göstereceklerinden ol tarafa meyl etmeleri melhûz olmağla bunları bir gûna sıkıştırmayarak hüs-n-ü tevâriş ve iltifat ile kullanmak lâzmeden idüğü*”.

¹⁵⁵ Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, p. 27.

¹⁵⁶ Halil İnalçık, “Hüsrev Paşa” *DİA*, vol. 19, p.42.

¹⁵⁷ Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, p.10.

this time, for it was engaged in conflict with Wallachia, Bosnia and Ionnina.¹⁵⁸ Additionally, Abbas Mirza's "enthusiasm" and "a point of honor", in particular, precipitated the war, though the Iranian Shah did not support his campaign against the Ottomans.¹⁵⁹ On the other hand, Abbas Mirza was supported by Russian forces, to the point where some Russian soldiers fought with the Iranian army as they attacked the Ottoman Toprakkale town.¹⁶⁰

However, Williamson makes an argument which claims that a lasting alliance between the Iranians and the Kurdish tribes could never have been maintained in the first place, specifically due to sectarian differences. He argues that a persistent alliance between the Kurdish tribes and the Iranian Empire was simply not possible, because the Kurds practiced Sunni Islam, while the Persians were officially of Shi'a denomination. Nevertheless, the tribes of northern Ottoman-Iranian frontier did not formulate their tribal policies based on religious consideration or in response to sectarian difference. Rather, they were quite pragmatic for their power negotiations with the state. Besides, during Abbas Mirza's campaign, much of the Iranian force consisted of Kurdish cavalry soldiers, as stated by Cronin: "to European observers, Iran's military strength had always resided in its irregular cavalry, furnished by the tribal khans [chiefs], which had proved itself so effective in lightning raids and defensive skirmishing".¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ Williamson, "The Turko- Persian War of 1821-1823", p. 89, 91.

¹⁵⁹ Williamson, "The Turko- Persian War of 1821-1823", p. 98-101.

¹⁶⁰ Cronin, "Building a New Army", p. 55-57. Williamson, "The Turko- Persian War of 1821-1823", p.89.

¹⁶¹ Cronin, "Building a New Army", p. 58. BOA, HAT 820/37372-(1822): This document also confirms that Zilan tribe had allied with the army of Abbas Mirza.

Furthermore, sectarian differences may, for some historians, explain the reasons behind defection, but they also argue that their very defection added to the atmosphere of conflict. Williamson states that the “Pasha of Erzerum’s protection of recalcitrant Kurdish tribesmen [caused the war]”.¹⁶² Williamson viewed the Heyderan as a group of disobedient nomads only, and did not question why Hüsrev Pasha advocated for the Heyderan to remain within Ottoman territory. As mentioned above, the Heyderan tribe crossed the border with the support of Selim Pasha who was approved to act in this manner by the Porte. Therefore, the Heyderan’s movements into Ottoman territory cannot be regarded as simply disobedience along the imperial frontiers.

Although it is known that the primary causes of the last Ottoman-Iranian war did not include the Heyderan tribe, this does not imply that the tribe’s role was not a significant one. Ahmet Cevdet Pasha commented that the Heyderan’s defection was *menâzi-i fiha* (an important issue between the two empires).¹⁶³ When the war ended and the two sides signed a peace treaty in Erzurum, on July 28, 1823, the third article referred to tribal movements.¹⁶⁴ Both sides agreed that if the Heyderan, or any other Ottoman tribe, crossed the border into Iranian territory, the Ottomans would not prevent their movement, and essentially their defection, to Iran. Furthermore, the Iranian government, for its part, would not allow for newly crossed tribes to once

¹⁶² Williamson, “The Turko- Persian War of 1821-1823”, p. 98.

¹⁶³ Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, p. 271.

¹⁶⁴ Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, vol. 12, p. 89, 271, 272: “*Madde-i Sâlise: Beyni’ d-devleteyn menâzi-i fiha olan Haydaranlı ve Sebki aşiretlerinden ehyevm Devlet-i Aliye toprağında bulunanlar bu tarafda oldukça İran hududuna tecavüz ile hesâret ederler ise men’ ve terbiyesine serhâdat-ı Devlet-i Aliye memurları tarafından dikkat olunub eğer tecavüz-ü hareketten bunlar ferâgat etmez ve serhâdat memurları tarafından te’kid olunamaz ise bâdezin tesahhüblerinden kefid oluna ve eğer kendü rıza ve ihtiyarları ile yine İran ilkasına geçerler ise Devlet-i Aliye bunları men etmeyib ve ol tarafa geçtikden sonra tekrar Devlet-i Aliye tarafına geçerler ise kat’a tasahhüb ve kabul olunmaya ve eğer İran tarafına geçerler ise Devlet-i Aliye hududuna tecavüz ve hesâret eyledikleri halde Devlet-i İraniye serhâdatı zâbitanı men-i tecâvüz ve tasallutlarına dikkat eyleye”.*

again defect and return back to the Ottoman side. The Ottomans themselves were to uphold this restriction on movement, for once the tribes crossed into Iranian lands, Ottoman border officials would not allow for these newly emigrated tribes to return once more to Ottoman territories. Another Ottoman document relays details of a discussion held between the former Grand Vizier, now the new governor general of Erzurum, Muhammed Emin Rauf Pasha, and the Iranian representative, Mirza Muhammed Ali.¹⁶⁵ As this document suggests, a heated discussion occurred.¹⁶⁶ The discussion primarily concerned the situation of the Heyderan, rather than, for example, the custom rate for Iranian nationals.¹⁶⁷ Finally, Rauf Pasha convinced Muhammed Ali for keeping the members of Heyderan in the Ottoman regions but this discussion might have prevented the peace treaty since the two sides strictly resisted to keep the tribe on their side.

When Abbas Mirza invaded Ottoman territories and conquered the provinces of Bayezid, Erciş, Bitlis, Muş and Hakkari, according to Cevdet Pasha, the Iranian army pursued members of the Heyderan tribe, who had fled to the Diyarbekir region, once

¹⁶⁵ Kemal Beydilli, “Mehmet Emin Rauf Paşa” *DİA*, vol. 28, p. 476.

¹⁶⁶ BOA, HAT 1315/51273-(1823): Dialogs during the meeting were recorded by the Ottoman side on this document. Chronicler Esad Efendi also noted that the heated discussion was the tribes that both sides wanted keep them in their side. Since our subject of discussion was the Heyderan tribe, other tribes were not discussed here such as Sepki tribe which was also became the subject of conflict as same as the Heyderan tribe. Mehmed Esad Efendi, *Vakanüvis Esad Efendi Tarihi* (İstanbul: Osmanlı Araştırmaları Vakfı, 2000), p.229-233. Also see the following foot note.

¹⁶⁷ Bruce Masters, “The Treaties of Erzurum (1823 and 1848) and the Changing Status of Iranians in the Ottoman Empire” *Iranian Studies*, vol, 24, no. 1/4 (1991), p. 3-15. Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, p. 89: “Esas mesâlihe 1159 tarihinde Nadir Şah ile akd olunan mesalihenâme olmağla tesviye-i maslahat suhûl iken İran sefiri Sebki ve Haydaranlı aşiretlerinin İran tebaâsından olduklarından bahisle bunların red olunmalarını iddia etmekle mübâhase uzadı. Mükâleme kırılma derecesine geldi. Nihayet bazı kuyûd ile aşiret münâzâsına Zilkade'nin 19. günü fâysal verilebildi. Ve muâhedenâme murahaslar beyninde imza olunarak Dersaadet'e takdim olunmağla Dersaadetê lede'l vusûl taraf-ı hümâyundan dahi tasdik buyruldu”.

they received the letters containing the threat against them from Huseyin Khan.¹⁶⁸ The discussion conducted in Erzurum, as well as the Iranian army's persistence in tracking down the fleeing members of the Heyderan, indicate the fact that for the Iranians, the Heyderan were not merely a pretense of legitimizing expanding their own territories at the expense of the Ottomans. The role of the Heyderan and their defection cannot be viewed as simply a symbolic matter. Rather, the Heyderan tribe was an important military and political local agency became an influential aspect of inter-state disputes at the time. Furthermore, these disputes could not be sustained in the long term. As the war was coming to an end, Iranian merchants advocated for a peaceful atmosphere. The cholera spread through the army of Abbas Mirza, who by now lacked the finances to continue supporting further campaigns into the Ottoman zones.¹⁶⁹ After the peace treaty was signed and the war concluded, both parties "maintained territorial status quo" within the frontier zones. However, disputes continued to occur in the southern regions, particularly in the Hakkari and Suleymani districts.¹⁷⁰

To conclude, the Heyderan tribe was involved in the Ottoman-Iranian war of 1821-23, their defection from the territory of one empire to the other, was not a symbolic act used as a mean to justify going to war. Although it is not possible to assert that the defection of the tribe was the sole cause of this conflict, by going through the historiography on the subject, and through an analysis of the negotiations recorded during peace proceedings in Erzurum, it is possible to conclude that the issue of

¹⁶⁸ Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, p. 10. Kasım Agha was threatened by the Iranians in a letter before the war that even if they escaped to Diyarbekir, the Iranians would catch and punish them: BOA, HAT 1/18G-1820.

¹⁶⁹ Cihat Aydoğmuşoğlu, "Abbas Mirza (1789-1833) ve Dönemi" *The Journal of International Social Research*, vol. 4, issue. 19, (2011), p. 132. Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, p. 52.

¹⁷⁰ Williamson, "The Turko- Persian War of 1821-1823", p. 90.

hegemony in regards to the Heyderan tribe was of vital importance for the two powers. This is further verified by the fact that both the Ottomans and the Iranians, during treaty negotiations, attempted to force the other side to comply and leave the Heyderan either on the Ottoman lands or to send them back to Iran. As neither would relent, they finally agreed on the third article, which stated that the Ottomans would not stop the tribes' defection to the Iranian side nor would the Iranians allow those defected one to the Ottoman side again. However, this article was not applied in practice to the region until the emergence of the modern nation-state in Turkey and Iran. The Iranian representatives knew that the defection of tribes was an integral part of the nature of the Ottoman-Iranian frontiers and the Heyderan were going to defect to their territories in the future. Therefore, Muhammed Mirza finally accepted the offer of Rauf Pasha to allow the Heyderan's stay in the Ottoman side.

3. 6 Why the Heyderan was Significant for the Empires?

The second chapter discussed the fact that the tribes had carried out a military function, and that the Ottoman Porte supported the creation of a tribal buffer zone along the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontiers since the sixteenth century. Both the Ottoman and Iranian Empires, as well as local hereditary *mîrs* needed to increase the number of tribal members who were allied with them, and who were considered to be movable militarized subjects that could function as light cavalry units. During the 1820s, both sides determined to keep substantial numbers of tribal members, in order to strengthen their own regions. However, based on Ahmed Cevdet Pasha's comments, the Porte was not as successful as the Iranians, in being able to maintain

large numbers of tribal members in their region during the 1820s.¹⁷¹ Abbas Mirza had actually paid the tribal chiefs, in an effort to entice them to remain in Iranian lands and continue to ally, militarily, with the Iranians, against the Russian and Ottoman Empires.¹⁷² As Atkin discusses:

Tribal cavalry provided the backbone of most of the khans' armies. The tribes' military skills and habitual mobility were a volatile factor in the struggle for domination of the eastern Caucasus.¹⁷³

Similarly, the Iranians addressed Kasım Agha as “*umdet’ul aşâir ve kabâil-i izam*” [esteemed of tribes and the eminent of clans] in order to bring honor to him and entice him to return to Iran territory.¹⁷⁴ Even following the conclusion of the war and the peace treaty of 1823, the Iranians continued to pursue policies that sought to bring Kasım back onto their territory, so much so that after a few years, Kasım did indeed return. Therefore, although the Heyderan played a role in initiating the war between the Ottomans and the Iranians, the Iranians nevertheless, welcomed Kasım back to Iran after 1823, since they continued to need tribal forces with the margins of their borders.

Ottoman officials, and especially the local hereditary *mîrs*, were also aware of the fact that the tribes could have provided important military support against the Iranians. In fact, their military strength was a crucial aspect of the tribe’s characteristics, as the Heyderan was used by the Ottomans in proxy wars, which were carried out against the Iranian territories, whether settled or moveable subjects.

¹⁷¹ Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, p. 6.

¹⁷² Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, p. 27.

¹⁷³ Atkin, *Russia and Iran 1780-1828*, p. 12.

¹⁷⁴ BOA, HAT 4/108- (1820).

Furthermore, as the tribes maintained a separate tribal collective identity, the Ottoman Porte could use them to attack and plunder Iranian territories without a formal declaration of war. Under such circumstances, the Porte could also maintain its ignorance in the conflict and be devoid of any responsibility for both the conflict between the tribes and the subsequent looting. Thus, the independent nature of the wandering tribes, at times, awarded power to the Ottoman central government.

In 1823, when the Ottoman central government was not powerful enough to pursue an offensive attack against the Iranians, and therefore, hoped to lower tensions between them, Selim Pasha was assigned an important duty by the Porte. Selim states that:

As the Sultan's decree was ordered that I was assigned for sending freebooters to Iran, however, the season of plunder has not come yet and the pillagers will be sent when the season is reached.¹⁷⁵

The Porte ordered Selim Pasha to send tribes to loot the Iranian territories. The *mîr* of Muş, Selim Pasha, acted an intermediary between the Ottoman imperial center and the tribe regarding the implementation of this duty. Given that the Ottomans did not wish to pursue a war against the Iranians, the duty of avenging the Iranians and assaulting their frontier villages, could only be carried through the actions of the tribal elements in a way of proxy conflicts by Kurdish tribes on the Iranian side.¹⁷⁶ During the nineteenth century, although the Ottomans and Iranians did not declare

¹⁷⁵ BOA, HAT 846/37986A- (1823): “*Cânib-i İran’a çapul gönderilmekle ahz-ı sâr-ı intikam olunmak husûsuna ihtimam ve dikkat-i çâkerî kılınması emr ü irâde-i seniyye buyrulmuş olmakla henüz çapul irsâlinin vakti tesadüf etmemiş olub vakti oldukda tubk-ı tahrir ve i’şârları üzere mütevekkela alellahü’n-nasir cânib-i İran’a çapul irsâl olunacağı*”.

¹⁷⁶ This avenger was a type of response against the policies of Abbas Mirza, who also let the Khan of Erivan to pillage the Ottoman villages in Kars region.

war against each other after 1823, their ally tribes sometimes had carried proxy wars against each other in the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands.¹⁷⁷

In April of 1823, Selim Pasha describes the fact that the region was not geographically convenient to pillage during the mid-spring season. Regarding this matter, Spottiswode, who travelled within Ottoman East, shares that there existed a “scheduled” plundering season, which began in May when the tribes wandered into the highland pastures and reached its peak by the month of June.¹⁷⁸ Several months later, in July 1823, Selim Pasha sent a letter to the Porte informing it of the fact that he had fulfilled his assignment. The Heyderan tribe had attacked Iranian territory, and brought back a substantial amount of booty and goods, with a number of cut tongues, heads and some slaves. Later two Yezidi Kurds were captured as slaves, one boy and girl, between the ages of six and twelve.¹⁷⁹ Muhammed Emin Rauf Pasha, the governor-general of Erzurum, informed the Porte that “the pillagers were rewarded and they were encouraged to pay attention to pursuing their pillaging without having a break during these days”.¹⁸⁰ In support of the pillaging, Rauf Pasha requested from the Porte the sum of 100,000 *kuruş* to be distributed by Selim Pasha as financial assistance. Although the Porte granted the request, the Sultan complained

¹⁷⁷ Erdal Çiftçi, “Ottoman Policy in the Ottoman-Iranian Borderland”, p. 7-18.

¹⁷⁸ Spottiswoode, “Sketch of the Tribes”, p. 244. For a similar banditry activities in Black Sea region regarding “going to banditry” like going to fish check: Oktay ÖZEL, “O İnce Çizgi: Osmanlı Son Dönemi Pratiğinde Eşkıyalıkla Kahramanlık Arasında Salınanlar,” *Kebikeç*, vol. 2 (2012), p. 107-138.

¹⁷⁹ BOA, HAT 766/36113- (1823). The Yezidis were the indigenous ethno-religious group of the Kurdish people, combined syncretic beliefs taken from Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Islam. They were once powerful tribes in the Patnos and Ebeğ regions until the Heyderan tribe forced them to leave during the late nineteenth century: Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal Interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017. For more information on Yezidis check: Birgül Açıkıldız, *Yezidis: the History of a Community, Culture and Religion* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010).

¹⁸⁰ BOA, HAT 766/36113-(1823).

that “until now many *akçes* were spent”.¹⁸¹ In July 1823, as the Iranians were to send a delegation to Erzurum to sign the peace treaty to formally end the Ottoman-Iranian war, Muhammed Emin Rauf Pasha gave the order for the attacks by the Heyderan into Iranian territory to continue until the end of the war.

Therefore, as demonstrated above, the Heyderan tribe functioned as an instrument of war on behalf of the Porte, and was able to attack the Iranian villages and tribes.

Both the Heyderan’s military power and their tribal identity were necessary characteristics of the tribe that the Ottomans were then able to exploit in a method that allowed for them to gain some military advantages over the Iranians along the frontier regions. In fact, an Ottoman document refers to the Heyderan as a “useful tribe” (*işe yarar*) and as a “highly distinguished one from among all of the Iranian” tribes (*İran ’lu ’nun mümtâz ve serfirâzi*) during the 1820s.¹⁸² For this reason, Rauf Pasha could not accept the request formulated by the Iranian representatives to send the Heyderan tribe back to the Iranian territories, brought forward as part of the peace treaty proceedings. Specifically, he was unable to accommodate the request while he, himself, was still utilizing the tribe’s military might to continue attacks on Iranian territory. Also, these activities were not referred as banditry, although they were, since it was under a support of empire, and therefore, we realized that banditry activities of tribes many times appeared as a result of the political, economic and cultural codes of the region rather than only tribal vendetta activities.¹⁸³ As both the Ottomans and the Iranians were aware of the fact that the Heyderan was one of the most powerful among the Iranian tribes, Abbas Mirza also did not want to lose this

¹⁸¹ BOA, HAT 846/37986- (1823): “*şimdiye kadar az akçe gitmedi*”.

¹⁸² BOA, Hat 1314/51256- (1821).

¹⁸³ Soyudoğan, *Ibid*.

important military potential to an enemy empire, reflecting the insistence of the Iranians for the return of the Heyderan to Iranian territory. Therefore, allowing for the Heyderan to remain on Ottoman lands, not only meant losing a significant military ally, but it also led to the emergence of a new enemy for the Iranian Empire, one that attacked the territory of the empire through the support of another.

The Heyderan tribe was not only a significant military ally for either empire, but by their economic activities, they were also essential to the economic prosperity of the region. Ottoman officials reported that if the Heyderan defected from Iranian territory to the Ottoman side, their living spaces would remain uninhabited and desolate.¹⁸⁴ In 1804, when the goods of the tribe were seized by Mahmud Pasha of Bayezid, we learn that the Heyderan tribe had been in possession of thousands of animals. According to these details, the seized animals in the hands of the Heyderan, included, half a million sheep, 205 camels, 1,311 packhorses, 5,525 cattle, and 454 horses.¹⁸⁵ If we consider this seizure to reflect only a part of the Heyderan's total assets, then it can be argued that the tribe was, indeed, quite prosperous in the animal husbandry economy, along the Ottoman-Iranian frontier. Furthermore, in addition to bringing prosperity to the mountainous, contested frontiers of the empire, these tribal subjects were occasionally subjected to taxation by the central government.

Therefore, the Ottoman and the Iranian central governments often pursued tribal policies whose intention was to keep the tribes within their own territories not only during the 1820s but also through the Tanzimat era, as will be discussed in the

¹⁸⁴ BOA, Hat 1314/51256- (1821): “*hâli kalacağı*”.

¹⁸⁵ BOA, C.DH 24/1196- (1804). This document, a petition (*arzuhal*) written by the members of tribe to the Sultan, accused the *mîr* of Bayezid, Mahmud Pasha, in 1804 for seizing the properties of Heyderan tribe. Some more details can be found in this document to see what kind of properties a nomadic tribe held during the early nineteenth century.

following chapter. Therefore, it is possible to assert that both empires accorded substantial importance to policies that supported the nomadic tribes located along the frontier zone. Finally, these policies even led to criticism from within the Ottoman bureaucracy such as that given by Ahmed Cevdet Pasha in reference to the policies of Halet Efendi, during the 1820s.

3. 7 Inter-Provincial Disputes for Regional Authority Between an Ottoman Governor and a *Mîr* : Heyderan's Wintering (*Kışlak*) Problem

This section will discuss what other factors, besides inter-state conflict between Ottoman and Iranian forces, shaped the politics in northern Ottoman-Iranian frontier provinces. The region the Heyderan occupied also became a regional dispute of power in particular between the centrally appointed Ottoman governors and the local hereditary *mîrs*.

Although historians have generally overlooked the details of such regional conflicts, the Ottoman East did have complex administrative structures, especially during the 1820s, which significantly impacted its political development. As discussed above, the local *mutasarrıf* of Muş, Selim Pasha, paved the way for the defection of the Heyderan leaders in 1818 and 1820. After the border-crossing of the Heyderan, a new discussion emerged between Mahmud Pasha, centrally appointed *muhâfız* of Van, and Selim Pasha regarding the position of the Heyderan tribe. Disputes occurred between these two Ottoman officials, concerning the Heyderan's temporary wintering in some of the villages. While Selim Pasha wanted to settle them in the provinces of Erciş, Patnos, and Adilcevaz in another's area, Mahmud Pasha rejected Selim Pasha's proposal, as it meant that the Heyderan would settle for the winter in

lands that were under his direct administrative control, and thus where he derived his income from. This section will elaborate how a *mîr* and a governor entered into a conflict with each other, regarding the use of land under their rule and its subsequent revenues, by focusing the place and role of the Heyderan, in these regions during the 1820s.

Similar to the case of Behlül Pasha, who ruled within the province of Bayezid, Selim Pasha and his forefathers had also ruled the sanjak of Muş with the title of *yurtluk/ocaklık* (family estate) since the mid-eighteenth century, when the khans of Bitlis lost their power in the region. Selim Pasha was one of the most powerful power holders in the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontier region during the 1820s. Selim Pasha began to rule the sanjak of Muş in 1811 with the title of *mutasarrıf* (governor of sanjak) and the rank of *Rumeli Beğlerbeyi* (Governor-general of Rumeli) as his father also had.¹⁸⁶ Malazgirt, Tatvan, Bitlis, Hınıs, and Bulanık were all within the control of Selim Pasha, while the neighboring territories in the east such as Adilcevaz and Erciş were under the control of the governors of Van. As *mîrs*, Selim and Behlül Pashas resided within garrisoned castles, and they provided a system of checks-and-balances in regards to the powerful tribal confederations. Averyanov mentions that the *mîrs* of Muş and Bayezid possessed a great amount of prestige, and held a significant amount of power over the Kurdish tribes in northern Ottoman eastern frontier.¹⁸⁷ For the *mîrs*, the greater the number of allied tribes they governed over, the greater their security, revenue, prestige, and expansion.

Therefore, they had to continuously negotiate with the tribes in order to actively maintain their authority in the region. As Gencer discusses, the *mîrs* strived to govern

¹⁸⁶ BOA, C.DH. 68/3382- (1811).

¹⁸⁷ Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, p. 25.

the tribes, one of which was the Heyderan, in order to advance and bolster their own military power in the region.¹⁸⁸ Thus, Selim Pasha supported the defection of Kasım Agha and his brothers for such specifically pragmatic reasons. Therefore, the empire and the *mîr* shared overlapping advantages and interests in terms of maintaining the allegiance of the frontier tribes.

Selim Pasha was not the only one who sought to secure his own interests. Centrally appointed governors, such as *muhâfiz* Mahmud Pasha in Van, also had to procure their own revenues in return of their salary while appointed to the position. As a Pasha sanjak, which differed from the hereditary ruling family estate of the Muş sanjak, the governors of Van received their revenues from the northern regions of the Lake Van region. In particular, they claimed income from Adilcevaz and Erciş, since the territories to the east and the south were controlled by the hereditary emirates of Mahmudi, Müküs, and Hakkari.¹⁸⁹ Although both were Ottoman Pashas, Mahmud and Selim entered into conflict with each other beginning in 1820, when Selim Pasha decided to settle the Heyderan in the villages within the provinces of Adilcevaz and Erciş, after Kasım Agha defected to the Ottoman side. The conflict arose due to the fact that each Pasha had opposing interests in the region. The wintering of the Heyderan, for both, was not simply a seasonal, temporary settlement of the tribe, but rather was seen as a means of expanding the power of the *mîr* via the tribe, by sending his allies to winter, and then to capture the land and revenues of the neighboring governor.

¹⁸⁸ Fatih Gencer, *Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler*, p. 79.

¹⁸⁹ Sinan Hakan, *Ibid.*

Having fulfilled the Porte's requirement to bring the Heyderan tribe to the Ottoman side of the frontier, Selim Pasha wrote to the Porte that they had to provide winter quarters for the tribe since they came here upon the Porte's demand in the first place.¹⁹⁰ He stated that the Porte had earlier replied with an assurance that the central government would solve the problem, however, at that time no solution was yet provided. Thus, Selim Pasha argued that his territories were already overrun by other tribes and he required further territory for the quartering of the Heyderan tribe.¹⁹¹ Selim Pasha requested that the Porte send an imperial order to Mahmud Pasha, obliging him to settle the Heyderan's a couple hundred tents in the villages within the provinces of Adilcevaz and Erciş.¹⁹² If the Porte refused to allow the wintering of the tribe in these regions, Selim Pasha threatened, on behalf of the Heyderan, that they would return to Iranian territories due to the lack of wintering territories for their people.¹⁹³

However, Mahmud Pasha strictly refused this proposal by proclaiming that the seasonal settlement of the Heyderan's two hundred tents was not possible, for he had allocated these villages to the Şikak tribe, who were, historically, an enemy of the Heyderan tribe.¹⁹⁴ Mahmud Pasha added that only sixty villages remained prosperous in the Van province because of the Iranians' attacks during the war of 1821-1823,

¹⁹⁰ BOA, HAT 812/37250U- (1825): “*aşiret-i merkûme'nin cânib-i İrandan celb ve sahâbet kılınmaları babında sâdır olan emr-i âli ve irâde-i seniyye [...] aşiret-i merkûme'nin müştaları tedbirine bakılır deyü fermûde-i seniyye-i âlileri buyurulmuş olmağın müştanın vakt ve zamanı duhûl etmekte olub*”.

¹⁹¹ BOA, HAT 812/37250U- (1825): “*zîr-i hükümet-i çakerânemde vaki kaza ve kura reaya ve fukaranın ber vech ile eğer o merkumânın müştasına tab ve tâkat-ı iktidar ve liyâkatları olmadığından*”.

¹⁹² BOA, HAT 1/18K- (1820).

¹⁹³ BOA, HAT 445/22266A- (1824).

¹⁹⁴ BOA, HAT 761/35993- (1820).

and that each village had only approximately three or five houses. Mahmud Pasha wanted to avoid agreeing to, and allowing, the Heyderan to temporarily and seasonally settle in the villages within the provinces of Adilcevaz and Erciş. Hüsrev Pasha, the governor of Erzurum, supported Selim and his intended action, however, when the war began in the late summer of 1821, the issue remained unresolved and faded into the background as the last Ottoman-Iranian war became the central issue between 1821-1823. When the peace treaty was signed in July 1823, the issue of wintering of Heyderan in villages once more came to the forefront, Mahmud and Selim Pasha once more engaged in the same dispute, continuing from where they had stopped earlier.

We understand that Mahmud Pasha had eventually agreed on the temporary wintering of the Heyderan tribe in the villages located in Adilcevaz and Erciş during the winter seasons of 1821 and 1822 while the war continues. However, in terms of a longstanding policy, Mahmud Pasha continued to fight against the wintering of the Heyderan within regions under his authority. Mahmud Pasha's continuing reluctance to allow the Heyderan to winter in these districts was understandable, for during the years that the tribe did settle in regions under his rule, they paid their wintering taxes to Selim Pasha because the Heyderan chiefs were the allies of him.¹⁹⁵ With this way, Mahmud Pasha temporarily had lost part of his side income, the wintering tax (*kışlak rüsûmu*), which was collected from the tribes in return of sheltering in the rented village houses. Mahmud Pasha argued that the province under the authority of Selim Pasha contained over five hundred prosperous villages in Malazgirt and Hınıs and could easily support the Heyderan. Therefore, the wintering of the tribe in Van was

¹⁹⁵ BOA, HAT 801/37093A- (1823).

detrimental to the few prosperous villages located there.¹⁹⁶ Finally, Mahmud Pasha clearly pointed out that Selim Pasha specifically wanted the Heyderan to winter in these districts of Van Province in order to be able to extend his own power by enlarging his own territories at the expense of Mahmud Pasha. Thus, to Mahmud Pasha, the issue of where to temporarily winter the Heyderan tribe was one that was used by Selim Pasha as a method of expansion, of both his power and territory, into the neighboring districts of the Ottoman province of Van. It must also be emphasized that although Rauf Pasha, the Governor of Erzurum, similarly stated that Selim Pasha intended to control the areas of Adilcevaz and Erciş, he did report that Selim was not exaggerating in his claim that his territories were not sufficient enough for the wintering of the overcrowded Heyderan tribe.¹⁹⁷ The provinces of Eleşkirt and Bayezid were desolated as a result of the war, and consequently, Mahmud Pasha had to allow for the seasonal settlement of the Heyderan once more, during the winter months of 1824.

The Porte was also aware of the policies of Selim Pasha, however, they did not want to enter into a conflict with him, and they endeavored to keep the Heyderan tribe within Ottoman territory.¹⁹⁸ The central administration concerned that if they opposed Selim Pasha's plans, a new inter-state problem might have arisen along the eastern Ottoman frontier, problem which was similar to those that had developed

¹⁹⁶ BOA, HAT 801/37093A- (1823): “*Muş kurâları ve Hınıs ve Malazgirt beş yüzden mütecâviz kurây-ı mâmure olduğu cümleinin meşhûr ve mâlûmudur [...] Yine paşay-ı mümâileyhi cânib-i âcizâneme tercih ederek kendinin mahâl-i müştâsı var iken Van hudûdunda aşiret besletmenin ne münâsibi vardır? [...] Lâkin zîr-i hükümet-i âcizânemde iki kazâdan gayri şenlik olmadığından anlar dahi paşay-ı mümâileyhin zabtına geçtiği surette ne gûna idare edeceğim ve ne sûretle taayyüş olunur?*”.

¹⁹⁷ BOA, HAT 901/39612- (1824).

¹⁹⁸ BOA, HAT 801/37093- (1823): “*paşây-ı mümâileyh iki baştan kuşkulanıb bir gâile husûsunu mûcib olacağı iştibâh olmağın aşâir-i mezkûrenin geçen sene misüllü bu senelik dahi Erciş ve Adilcevaz tarafında müştanişin olmaları matlûb-u âli olub*”.

with the Ottoman Empire and the local Kurdish *mîrs*, such as Behlül Pasha of Bayezid, the hereditary rulers in Hakkari and Mahmud Pasha of Soleimani.¹⁹⁹ Furthermore, after the death of his older brother, Muhammad Ali Mirza, Abbas Mirza continued to be active both in the Iranian Azerbaijan region and the Kermanshah provinces. Therefore, any conflict between the Ottoman imperial center and Selim Pasha could have pushed Selim to an alliance with the Iranians. As the Iranian war had recently ended, there was also a concern that the Heyderan tribe could once more offer their loyalty to Abbas Mirza.²⁰⁰ As an Ottoman document reveals, even during the Iranian war, Selim Pasha considered betraying the Ottomans, for “neither he moved nor did he send his soldiers”, proving the delicate situation along the frontier regarding loyalty to an empire by the *mîrs* of the region.²⁰¹ These examples indicate general attitudes of a *mîr*, defending their hereditary status and territory against the conflicting interests of two empires by acting politically according to the very nature of existence on the frontiers.

Cevdet Pasha and Hurşid Pasha both commented that after the Ottoman-Iranian war, Selim Pasha’s fate had been decided when he did not militarily support the Ottoman recruits against Abbas Mirza during the war. Selim Pasha was therefore eventually executed for treason, in Erzurum, as Galib Pasha became governor-general of Erzurum later in 1827.²⁰² Initially, the Porte delayed the execution of Selim until this

¹⁹⁹ Behlül Pasha of Bayezid received the Iranian title of *sertib* (Brigadier General) from Abbas Mirza: BOA, Hat 846/37986E- (1823). Ahmed Cevdet Pasha states that affairs in Ottoman eastern provinces got worse since Mahmud Pasha, the hereditary ruler of Soleimani, allied with Abbas Mirza after 1823: Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, p. 12.

²⁰⁰ BOA, HAT 801/37093- (1823).

²⁰¹ BOA, HAT 817/37302F- (1821).

²⁰² Cevdet Pasha says Selim’s brother was given the title of khan in the Muş region when the Iranians invaded: Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, p. 9-13. Orhan F. Köprülü, “Mehmet Said Galib Paşa”

year, leading Mahmud Pasha to accuse Rauf Pasha of protecting Selim, whom he considered to have betrayed the Sultan.²⁰³ Rauf Pasha, however, defended his actions, which meant the delay of Selim Pasha's death:

I [Rauf Pasha] take care of the profits of the Sublime Ottoman State, not Selim Pasha's, [...] Mahmud Pasha was not capable of controlling the tribes with his five or ten men, and only agitated the region of Erciş and Adilcevaz.²⁰⁴

Although Rauf Pasha was aware of the fact that Selim Pasha could have created a new conflict in the region, he was also conscious of the limited prestige that Mahmud Pasha held among the Kurdish tribes. Thus, Rauf Pasha's comments seem correct regarding relations between himself, the tribes and the *mîr*.

To solve the disagreement between Selim and Mahmud Pasha, the Grand Vizier went so far as to advise removing Mahmud Pasha from Van. However, Rauf Pasha disagreed with the Sultan regarding this proposal, as Rauf Pasha emphasized the fact that Mahmud Pasha had successfully aided the Ottoman army during the Ottoman-Iranian war.²⁰⁵ The Porte decided against interfering in the local politics for a number of years after the war, and in particular, did not oppose Selim Pasha's policies via the Heyderan within the northern Lake Van region. Thus, Selim Pasha's rule continued until his execution in 1827 to expand and the Porte came to see that the only possibility to reduce Selim's power would be through the severing of ties and allegiance between Selim Pasha and the Heyderan. This occurred during the summer

DİA, vol. 13, p. 331. Mehmed Hurşid Paşa, *Seyahatname-i Hudud*, p. 288: "Muş'lu Selim Paşa'nın irtikab eylediği hıyanet cihetiyle otuz sekiz tarihinde".

²⁰³ BOA, HAT 801/37093F-(1823): "Yoksa bu misüllü hâin-i padişahi olan kulları üzerine tercih ve teslim etmek lââyık-ı şân ve şekva değildir".

²⁰⁴ BOA, HAT 801/37093E- (1824).

²⁰⁵ BOA, HAT 802/37108- (1824).

of 1824. It was at this time that a reversal in the situation between the *mîrs* and the tribe occurred. Selim Pasha noted that Muhammad Agha, the chief of Heyderan, had left both his lands and protection in favor of settling in the Erciş province, which was under the control of Mahmud Pasha.²⁰⁶ It is unclear why the alliance between Muhammad Agha and Selim Pasha had terminated, but it is known that Mahmud Pasha began to support the Heyderan tribe against Selim Pasha. Now, the relationship between a *mîr*, Selim Pasha, and the Heyderan tribe, had reversed itself as they were no longer allies, and instead, became enemies as this will be elaborated in the following section.

It is important to note that although both the Heyderan and the Sepki tribes²⁰⁷ needed lands for wintering, Selim Pasha's plan only concerned the Heyderan and, interestingly enough, he did not communicate on behalf of the Sepki tribe. Furthermore, Selim Pasha did not offer to settle the Heyderan tribe into the territories of Bayezid Province where another hereditary Kurdish ruler, Behlül Pasha, was in rule, only advocating to settle them in the region north of Lake Van, where Mahmud Pasha ruled. Selim Pasha did not venture to negotiate on behalf of the Sepki tribe due to the fact that the tribe was already allied with Behlül Pasha and was under the command and protection of the *Mîr* of Bayezid. Moreover, an Ottoman document states that Behlül Pasha and the Sepki chief, Süleyman Agha, in fact, became relatives.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ BOA, HAT 814/37264- (1824): “*tarafımızdan ayrılıp Van eyaletine giden Haydari Muhammad Ağa ile bizim Sepki Süleyman Ağa'nın meyânelerinde zuhûra gelen münâzaaları*”.

²⁰⁷ Sepki, who was locally believed that they were lastly converted from Yezidi religion to Islam, was a Heyderan-like another powerful tribe mostly wandered in Eleşkirt, Karakilise, and Tutak districts.

²⁰⁸ BOA, HAT 901/39612-(1824): “*Sepki Aşiretinin hâlâ Bayezid Mutasarrıfı Behlül Paşa'ya kârâbetiyle münâsebetleri derkâr*”. This document reveals that they were not only allies but became relatives: BOA, HAT 812/37250K- (1825): “*Sepkili Süleyman Ağa'nın Bayezid mutasarrıfı Behlül Paşa'nın akrabasından olmasıyla*”.

Indeed, as local *mîrs*, both Behlül and Selim had similar expansionist policies along the Ottoman frontier region. However as the Bayezid region was greatly affected compared to Muş region by the Ottoman-Iranian war and effectively, left in ruins, Behlül Pasha was not in a position to engage in any regional disputes. While Selim Pasha knew that if he could have settled the Heyderan in the territories of the Bayezid region, the Heyderan and Sepki tribes could have attacked each other. Such actions, however, would not have helped to extend Selim Pasha's control and thus was not a part of his policy or plans. This changed, once the Heyderan tribe ended its alliance with Selim. Following the summer of 1824, the Heyderan betrayed him and Selim Pasha began to support the Sepki tribe against the Heyderan in Patnos as the following section discusses.²⁰⁹

As noted above, the political climate in northern Ottoman-Iranian frontier was quite complex, detailed and dynamic, and alliances were mostly unsteady and fragile during the 1820s. Mahmud and Selim Pasha's conflict regarding the wintering of the Heyderan meant the control of those territories by the *mîr*, as the tribe, at time, acted as an instrument of expansion for their regional allies. Therefore, the tribes did not only become part of the inter-state relations, but they were important elements in the regional politics too.

²⁰⁹ BOA, HAT 901/39612-(1824): For the report of the Governor of Erzurum, Rauf Pasha, Selim Pasha had given winter quarters to Heyderan tribe in his controlled Patnos district but when their relations were worsened, Selim Pasha now gave wintering rights in Patnos to Sepki tribe. For Rauf Pasha, Selim avenged Heyderan tribe for breaking the alliance with him.

3. 8 Inter-tribal Conflict: Selim Pasha's Politics on the Heyderan Tribe between 1824-1827

During the summer of 1824, the alliance between Selim Pasha and Muhammad Agha of the Heyderan ended totally, although the reasons behind this rift are unknown. All we know is that despite Selim protected the Heyderan under his hegemony, and attempted to winter the tribe in the villages of Adilcevaz and Erciş, he now withdrew his support and acted against them.²¹⁰ Now, Mahmud Pasha, governor of Van, began to protect the Heyderan from Selim Pasha, and also allowed the Heyderan to winter within his territories under his control.²¹¹ A tension between Selim and Mahmud Pasha was quite high from August 1824 to January 1825.

During the summer of 1824, for Behlül Pasha's argument, Selim Pasha requested from Behlül Pasha that the Heyderan winter in the territories of Bayezid province, rather than in Adilcevaz and Erciş. For Behlül, Selim Pasha made this request in order to try and force the Heyderan to retreat and return back to Iranian territory because the Heyderan chiefs ended their allegiance to Selim Pasha, going so far as to communicate his intentions to the Iranians themselves.²¹² As Beyezid province contained the last Ottoman garrison city before the territories of Iran, Selim Pasha planned to accuse Behlül for allowing the Heyderan to cross back to the Iranian side of the border frontier. This marks an end to Selim Pasha's relations with the Heyderan tribe, and especially with Muhammad Agha, after the summer of 1824.

²¹⁰ Ottoman sources do not mention Kasım Agha during those years; Kasım might have acted separately from Muhammad Agha.

²¹¹ BOA, HAT 814/37264-(1825): "*Haydari Ağası düşman tarafına gitmeyib nezd-i âcizâneme gelmiştir*".

²¹² BOA, C.DH. 123/6109-(1825): (the date of the document supposed to be 1824): "*Selim Paşa Haydaranlı Muhammad Ağa husûsunda kaç defa İran'a tahrir edib ve Muhammed Ağa'yı cebren ve kerhen döne döne İran'a gönderdiği cümlelerin mâlûmu bir hâlettir*".

At this time, Muhammad Agha of the Heyderan tribe had allied with Mahmud Pasha while Selim began to provoke the Sepki tribe, who inhabited the regions of Erciş and Patnos, against the Heyderan tribe. In response to Selim's actions, Mahmud Pasha raised an army and arrived in the Erciş region.²¹³ Bedri Agha of Heyderan, who was under the command of Abbas Mirza in Iran, and Behlül Pasha, both received letters from Mahmud Pasha, who invited them to help Muhammad Agha, against Selim. It remains unknown as to whether they responded to this request, however Mahmud Pasha did march until Adilcevaz with an army, in order to defend his territories from Selim Pasha's intrusion. Previously, Mahmud Pasha had acted in a similar manner in order to prevent the Heyderan from entering the region. This time, he was marching to Adilcevaz in order to protect the wintering Heyderan. At the same time, Selim Pasha sent his own soldiers to Malazgirt, although both parties promised Muhammad Emin Rauf Pasha that neither would attack unless the other provoked him. This tension ended, temporarily, with the intervention of Rauf Pasha, but at the local level, with the support of Selim Pasha the Sepki tribe had attacked Muhammad Agha, and had looted their goods.

This resulted in inter-tribal war between Süleyman Agha of the Sepki, and Muhammad Agha of the Heyderan in the Patnos region. Mahmud Pasha insisted that Selim Pasha was to blame for this outcome and accused Selim of behind the scenes machinations such as the looting of the Heyderan tribe by the Sepki tribe. For Selim, however, this was nothing more than an inter-tribal dispute, and for him, inter-tribal conflicts were a part of the very nature of regional politics.²¹⁴ Selim Pasha claimed that he was being slandered by Mahmud, and argued that it was impossible to return

²¹³ BOA, HAT 814/37264- (1824).

²¹⁴ BOA, HAT 814/37264J- (1824).

the looted goods as this was an inter-tribal issue that should be resolved by the parties, the two tribes, involved. Finally, he was able to return a small number of horses to Heyderan's side for the sake of retaining some of their own prestige. We do not know if Selim returned the whole of pillaged properties of Muhammad Agha, but the conflict continued between the two tribes and both Pashas after the winter season had passed.

The primary cause of the conflict between the two tribes can actually be attributed to the two Ottoman representatives: Selim and Mahmud Pasha. Not only were they disputing the wintering problems of the tribes, but they were also in disagreement regarding the Tatvan region. According to Mahmud Pasha, Selim was sending tribes, who were allied to him, into the regions of Ahlat and Tatvan in order to gain control over the area.²¹⁵ However, Selim Pasha claimed that although Tatvan was administratively part of the province of Muş, its revenues belonged to the province of Van.²¹⁶ Such arguments continued between the two Ottoman officials to the point that the Porte became wary of the conflict during the last months of 1824. Thus, it is clear that there were several levels of conflict within the complex political atmosphere of northern Ottoman-Iranian frontier. The region, therefore, experienced conflict or disputes at the inter-state, inter-regional, and inter-tribal level. Economic and territorial expansionist factors were the driving forces behind these conflicts. The Heyderan played a role at each level.

During the summer of 1825, disagreements between the tribes as well as the two Pashas resumed, and Mahmud Pasha, *muhâfiz* governor of Van, was dismissed from

²¹⁵ BOA, HAT 814/37264- (1824).

²¹⁶ BOA, HAT 814/37264K- (1824): “*el hâsıl kurahây-ı mezbûrun hükümeti bizim olub yalnız mahsûlatı Van ocaklusunun olduğundan*”.

the power in either August or September, 1825.²¹⁷ Rauf Pasha, the governor and *Serasker* of Erzurum, was also dismissed from duty and the Porte appointed Galib Pasha as the new governor of Erzurum. Such actions reflected a genuine interest on the part of the Porte to make important changes in the regions, as two years after his appointment; Galib Pasha sentenced Selim Pasha to death upon his arrival in Erzurum in 1827.²¹⁸ Selim Pasha escaped to Şirvan and later begged the pardon for his life but his excuse could not change the final decision of the central government.²¹⁹ The result of continuing conflicts in the region and the beginning of Russo-Iranian war of 1826-1828, were the fact that the Ottoman central government could no longer ignore these disputes between the two Ottoman Pashas, and thus, attempted to stabilize the region's politics.

What paved the way for these changes? Firstly, it appears that Selim Pasha had attempted to forcefully return the Heyderan to the region of Muş during the summer of 1825, and when he could not accomplish this goal, he instead attempted to push them toward the Iranian territories.²²⁰ Secondly, inter-tribal aggressions continued to increase between the Sepki and Heyderan tribes, resulting in the pillaging of 7,000 sheeps, 2,000 buffalos, 400 carthorses and their commodities, belonging to Muhammad Agha, were pillaged by the Sepki tribe with the support of Selim Pasha.²²¹ When Mahmud and Selim Pashas continued to skirmish with each other and failed to reconcile, the former was removed from office and latter was

²¹⁷ Süleyman Pasha was appointed to Van Province: BOA, HAT 812/37250L- (1825).

²¹⁸ Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, *Tarih-i Cevdet*, p. 9-12.

²¹⁹ BOA, HAT 1229/47949- (1827), BOA, HAT 515/25183- (1827), BOA, HAT 770/36176- (1827).

²²⁰ BOA, HAT 814/37264- (1825).

²²¹ BOA, Hat 814/37264D- (1825).

executed.²²² Since the Russians had expansionist policies in the northern Iranian territories, the Ottoman central government saw it necessary to organize its eastern provinces as they did in 1827.

Selim Pasha was one of the most powerful rulers in northern Ottoman eastern frontiers during the 1820's. His territories extended from Hınıs, Malazgirt, and Muş to Siirt, and he attempted to expand his power towards the Iranian territories, and over the northern sphere of Lake Van region.²²³ He previously held the title of *Rumeli Beğlerbeği*, and regularly communicated with the other *mîrs* of Şirvan, Hizan and Hakkari.²²⁴ Ultimately, his policies alienated the Heyderan tribe and his dispute with the tribe increased the tension in the region, until the Porte was forced to more decisively intervene in the politics of the region. After Selim, his son Emin Pasha came to rule the province of Muş as the next *mîr*, however, as it will be discussed, the political tensions within the region continued to increase during the 1830s, when pre-Tanzimat rules were applied by Esat Muhlis Pasha, the governor of Erzurum, who later became the first governor of the Province of Kurdistan. Therefore, tribal conflicts were not simply brigand activities of disobedient tribes, but also, these tribes were centrally involved in the regional-borderal power politics. In addition to their usual and mundane habit of various acts of banditry, we must point to the fact that these tribes acted as proxy agents for their regional allies, as well as being important forces in their own right with their own self-interests in an effort to maintain their own political and economic advantages.

²²² Selim Pasha's son, Emin, came to rule of Muş after his father was executed. For more information see the following chapter.

²²³ BOA, C.DH 125/6216- (1825).

²²⁴ BOA, Hat 814/37264- (1825).

3. 9 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the relations between one of the most powerful tribes in the northern Ottoman-Iranian frontier, the Heyderan tribe and their leaders, with the regions' other power holders. The Heyderan tribe directly participated in the region's politics at three different levels. Their acts and alliances in the region influenced the policies of the two empires, the regional power holder pashas, and the relations of local tribes. They were not passive to the political developments and were not isolated subjects. These tribes were not easily controlled by a *mîr*, a crown prince, or the state. I have also argued that frontier policies were not simply determined by imperial decrees, but also by regional politics between local actors. Also, developments at the local level within northern Ottoman-Iranian frontiers influenced the shaping of imperial policies. Hereditary sanjak rulers, such as Selim Pasha, negotiated with these tribal chiefs in order to enlarge, or at least pursue their own agenda and power within their hereditary territories. Furthermore, both the Ottoman and the Iranian Empires were forced to encourage or support the defection of tribes in an effort to make their frontiers secure and prosperous. At three levels, the Heyderan tribe played a crucial role in the region, and they should be taken into consideration if the political nature of their living spaces is to be understood. Therefore, although the tribal entities in this region are generally depicted as primitive passive banditries by some historians²²⁵, the Heyderan was an active political tribal entity, which created and adjusted its own pragmatic policies, as demonstrated during the years between 1820 and 1827.

²²⁵ Süleyman Demirci- Fehminaz Çabuk, "Celali Kürt Eşkîyası: Bayezid Sancağı ve Osmanlı-Rus-İran Sınır Boylarında Celali Kürt Aşireti'nin Eşkîyalık Faaliyetleri (1857-1909)" *History Studies*, vol. 6, issue. 6 (2014), p. 71-97: The writers approached the Celali tribe with an essentialist and labelling way and depicted it nothing more than only bandits who just destroyed its own environs. Sıtkı Uluerler, "Osmanlı-İran Sınır Tespiti ve Güvenliği Açısından Bazı Aşiretlerin Çıkardığı Sorunlar (1850-1854)" *Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, vol. 25, issue.2 (2015).

CHAPTER IV

THE AGE OF *TANZÎMAT-I HAYRÎYE* AND THE HEYDERAN TRIBE

The edict of Gülhane, which was read by Mustafa Reşid Pasha on November 3, 1839, promised to bring about significant changes to the Empire's political, social and economic life. One of the purposes/intents of the Edict was to increase the strength and efficiency of Ottoman rule over the distant frontiers and their subjects. Considering that "all history with an endpoint is a myth"¹, in Ottoman East, the changes brought on by the edict, had already begun to be implemented during the 1830s, and rather than a rapid change driven by the edict, there was a long and continuous process by the empire to exert control. Furthermore, there was an increase in tensions between the region and the center, as in 1847 the Ottomans carried out a military expedition against the hereditary semi-autonomous rulers. This military engagement by the Ottomans resulted in a complete transformation of the administrative structure of the area. The historic political institutional structures of

¹ Callum G. Brown, *Postmodernism for Historians* (Malaysia: Longman, 2005) , p. 101.

Ottoman East were radically changed, and although some of the privileged sanjak rulers remained in their posts, their previous privileges were removed as the region came under direct rule. This chapter will examine and discuss how Ottoman East confronted this key transformation, in particular as a tribal entity. Through the example of the Heyderan, the chapter will consider how a tribe and its chiefs were affected by, and how they reacted to, the administrative changes implemented by the empire onto the region. The first section of the chapter will primarily refer to the reduced power of the hereditary sanjak rulers, as a means of understanding the general situation in Ottoman East during this age of reforms imposed from above by the empire. This will be followed by a discussion by how the centralizing policies of the empire and the local governments affected the marchland tribe, Heyderan, living along the margins of the empire. In conclusion, the chapter will analyze tribe- empire power relations during this period, through the figure of Ali Agha and his relationship with the territory of Ebeğ, as both the tribe and the territories through which it wandered, were contested subjects for both the Ottoman and Iranian empires.

4. 1 Abolition of the Classical Political Structure of the Ottoman Eastern Frontier until 1849

Tanzimat-ı Hayriye brought historic changes to the administrative and political structure of Ottoman East through the implementation of direct control by the Porte for the first time in the history of the region and in the whole empire. After 1847, the hereditary Kurdish Emirates were abolished, and Sultan Abdülmejid I was referred to as the conqueror of Kurdistan. Medals were minted with the name of “Kurdistan”

for Ottoman officers who had joined the military expedition.² No military aggression had occurred between the hereditary Kurdish rulers and the Ottomans when Sultan Selim I conquered the region in 1514. Furthermore, due to the intermediary role of İdris-i Bidlisi, most of the prestigious ruling class in the Kurdish Emirates pledged their allegiance to the Ottoman rule, and thus worked with the Ottoman Sultans, rather than resisting against them, while generally maintaining their previous positions of authority. By 1847, the relationship had changed irrevocably. Although the Ottoman sultans had previously referred to themselves as the *hâkim* of Kurdistan, Abdülmecid I added, for the first time, the appellation of “conqueror”.³ The following section will discuss how this new rule over Ottoman East was applied in the territories of *yurtluk/ocaklık* and *hükümet* sanjaks beforehand.

4.1.1 The Destruction of the *Mîrs*’ Power in the Ottoman East

Since the post-war era, changes during the mid-twentieth century influenced the development of Ottoman historiography concerning the era of new rule in Ottoman East. Three separate historiographical approaches, from three different perspectives, developed regarding the emergence of the new nineteenth century Ottoman order.⁴

The first, considered the modernist approach, viewed the reformation of the Tanzimat era as a process of westernization, which occurred in a political atmosphere that was driven by a conflict between two powerful factions, the modernist bureaucrats and the so-called “backward” conservative groups. In this approach

² Musa Çadırcı, *Tanzimat Döneminde Anadolu Kentlerinin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapısı* (Ankara: TTK, 1997), p. 194.

³ *Takvim-i Vakayi*, December 13, 1847: “*bu kere yeni baştan fetih*”.

⁴ Cem Emrence, “Three Waves of Late Ottoman Historiography, 1950-2007” *Middle Eastern Studies Association Bulletin*, vol. 41, no: 2 (Winter 2007), p. 137-151.

westernized and secular Ottoman bureaucrats are centrally argued as providing the only means through which to save the decline of the Ottoman Empire.

Implementation of strict new rules and administrative changes from the top, that would forcefully transform the political structure of the empire, were discussed by the researches although their primary focus on the Ottoman central government marginalizes the rest of society and their role in process of modernization. Bernard Lewis, Roderic Davison, Stanford Shaw, Carter Findley, Niyazi Berkes and İlber Ortaylı are some of the pioneering scholars of the modernist approach.⁵ The second historiographical approach to the reform era appeared after the 1970s. It adopted a macro model of writing, which viewed the reforms as the result of a semi-colonized state structure, which attempted to resist global capitalism in order to prevent its demise.⁶ This approach directs its focus towards economy, class structure, and state-society relations although it remained methodologically structural.⁷ The final approach to have developed regarding the reform era is termed the post-structural approach, which emerged after the 1990s as a result of globalization, and the resistance against western-oriented historical writing, and directed its focus to the regional and peripheral developments of the Ottoman Empire.⁸ Rather than

⁵ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London: Oxford Uni. Pres, 1961), Roderic Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876* (Princeton: Princeton Uni. Pres, 1963). Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, vol: 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge Uni. Pres., 1977). Carter Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton Uni. Press, 1980). Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill Uni Pres, 1964). İlber Ortaylı, *İmparatorluğun En Uzun Yüzyılı* (İstanbul: Alkım, 2005).

⁶ Cem Emrence, “Three Waves of Late Ottoman Historiography”, p. 141-143.

⁷ Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey: A Study in Capitalist Development* (London: Verso, 1987). Huri İslamoğlu-İnan, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge Uni. Press, 1987). Immanuel Wallerstein & Reşat Kasaba, *Incorporation Into the World Economy* (Binghamton: Fernand Braudel Center, 1980).

⁸ Cem Ermence, “Three Waves of Late Ottoman Historiography”, p. 143-145. Martin Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State: The Social and Political Structure of Kurdistan* (London: Zed Boks, 1992). Wadie Jwaideh, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement: Its Origins and Development* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2006). Sinan Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde Kürtler ve Kürt*

discussing westernization and the influence of the global economy on the political realm, this approach analyzes the negotiations and bargaining activities between the Porte and local subjects for power. According to this historiography, the peripheral subjects were not passive actors, but rather were politically active agents, who pushed back against the central authority and played a vital role in the developments of the reformation age.

Although the former two main approaches to the reform era have developed the historiography and produced important insights regarding changes in the Ottoman Empire; the effects of the Tanzimat period on the peripheral region of the Ottoman Empire, particularly Ottoman East, have largely remained, for the most part, outside of scholarly interest regarding this period.⁹ While important scholarly work has been produced regarding Ottoman East, the focus remained on the administrative-political nature of the region and how it was transformed into a more centralized structure.¹⁰ Furthermore, one of the main characteristics of these studies is that they analyze the new order through the military expedition undertaken by the Ottoman Empire against the hereditary Kurdish rulers between 1834 and 1847.¹¹ These studies discussed how

Direnışleri (1817-1867) (İstanbul, Doz, 2011). Hakan Özođlu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties and Shifting Boundaries* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007). Sabri Ateş, *The Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands: Making Boundary 1843-1914* (New York: Cambridge Uni. Press, 2013). Eugene L. Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan, 1850-1921* (Oxford: Uni. of Oxford Press, 2002). Metin Atmaca, "Politics of Alliance and Rivalry on the Ottoman-Iranian Frontier: The Babans (1850-1851)" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Albert Ludwigs University of Freiburg, 2013).

⁹ Donald Quataert, "Recent Writings in Late Ottoman History" *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 35 (2003).

¹⁰ Martin Van Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State: The Social and Political Structure of Kurdistan* (London: Zed Boks, 1992). Wadie Jwaideh, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement: Its Origins and Development* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2006). Sinan Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde Kürtler ve Kürt Direnişleri (1817-1867)* (İstanbul, Doz, 2011).

¹¹ Nilay Özok-Gündođan, "Ruling the Periphery, Governing the Land: The Making of the Modern Ottoman State in Kurdistan, 1840-1870" *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, vol. 34/1 (2014).

the Emirates of Soran, Bahdinan, Müküs, Hakkari and lastly, Cizre, were removed from power, after they pursued independent-minded activities. While security concerns were the main driving force behind the actions of the Porte, these scholars also address the issue of what kind of economic revenues were to be gained from Ottoman East by the empire, if the hereditary rulers could be ousted from their positions. However, scholarly work has insufficient number of studies specifically concerning the Ottoman provinces of Muş and Bayezid, where the *yurtluk/ocaklık* sanjak rulers were in power.¹² Part of the reason may be due to the fact that the *mutasarrıf* hereditary sanjak rulers did not organize any military insurrections against the Ottomans, and thus this area has failed to attract the interest of scholars studying the applications of the new rule of the Tanzimat period, particularly in regards to Muş and Bayezid. Additionally, as the resistance of the Kurdish notables has come to symbolize an active assertion of their own identity, heritage, power, and the maintenance of the *status quo* of the region's political structure, scholars prefer to highlight this turning point rather than analyzing the development in the lesser sanjaks, and the role of their rulers, despite the fact that they too were removed from power after 1847.¹³

The major military expeditions of the Ottoman central government against the Ottoman Kurdish Emirates were applied in two phases. The first one was carried out

¹² We should exclude the study of Fatih Gencer who focused the northern Ottoman Kurdistan while also discussing Bedirhan Pasha's revolt: Fatih Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler Bağlamında Bedirhan Bey Olayı" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Ankara University, Ankara, 2010). Some scholars contributed to the field but their researches were written in apprehension of proving the Turkishness of the region. For an analyzes regarding the approaches of the researchers check: Uğur Bahadır Bayraktar, Yaşar Tolga Cora, ""Sorunlar" Gölgesinde Tanzimat Döneminde Kürtlerin ve Ermenilerin Tarihi" *Kebikeç*, no. 42 (2016), p. 7-48. In order to assert some retrospective ideas, some researchers only discussed whether the local *mîrs* acted in sovereign or under a strong direct rule of the Ottoman State: Mehmet Öz, "Ottoman Provincial Administration in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia: The Case of Bidlis in the Sixteen Century" *Ottoman Borderlands: Issues, Personalities and Political Changes*, ed. Kemal H. Karpat, Robert W. Zens (Madison: Center of Turkish Studies, 2003), p. 145-156.

¹³ The tribes of the region during the Tanzimat period also were not well studied.

between 1834-1839, and the second between 1843-1847. Initially, the military excursion of İbrahim Pasha, son of Muhammed Ali of Egypt, to the Ottoman territories suspended the military expeditions of the Porte in Ottoman East during the first campaign as revealed by some Ottoman documents.¹⁴ The first phase of Ottoman expedition was carried out against the *Mîr* Muhammed of Soran, the Kurds of the Garzan region, Said Bey, Han Mahmud of the Emirate of Müküs, İsmail Bey of İmadiye, and *Mîr* Seyfeddin of Cizre, by the Porte, under the command of Muhammed Reşid Pasha, and later, Hafız Pasha.¹⁵ During the second phase, the suspended military expedition resumed, and a new alliance between Nurullah Bey of Hakkari, Han Mahmud of Müküs, and Bedirhan Bey of Cizre, was dismantled by the Ottomans, and Ottoman East was “repetitively” (*mükerreren*) re-conquered until the summer of 1847.¹⁶ This military expedition brought a “historic transformation” and “the whole of this country, for the first time, has been brought under control of the Porte”.¹⁷ At the end of this transformation, while some *mîrs* were executed such as *Mîr* Muhammed of Rawanduz, others disinherited and became salaried rulers in the same territories or exiled to the Balkans, to Arab lands or to various Greek Islands.¹⁸

As the following section of this chapter elaborates, administrative reforms in Ottoman East aimed to bring security and economic gains to the region, which the

¹⁴ Esad Muhlis Pasha could not take Emin Pasha from the power since he says that the attacks of Egypt intervened his plans: BOA, HAT 721/34364A-(1833): “*hâdisey-i Mısriye araya girdiğinden*”.

¹⁵ Helmut Von Moltke, *Türkiye Mektupları* (İstanbul, Remzi, 1969), p. 180-198. Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde*, p. 67-105.

¹⁶ Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde*, p. 193-232. M.S. Lazarev, “19.Yüzyılda Kürdistan (1800-1880)” *Kürdistan Tarihi*, ed. M.S. Lazarev & Ş.X. Mihoyan, (İstanbul: Avesta, 2015), p. 122-134. *Takvim-i Vakayi*, December 13, 1847.

¹⁷ Ateş, *Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, p. 85.

¹⁸ Ateş, *Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, p. 83. Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde*, p. 237-252. Atmaca, ‘Politics of Alliance and Rivalry on the Ottoman-Iranian Frontier’, p. 159-161.

Porte was particularly in need of during the nineteenth century.¹⁹ Although economic acquisition was one of the main goals of the Porte, some privileged sanjak rulers were not removed from power, however, they were no longer absolute rulers within these territories as their privileged status of being sovereign was ended.²⁰ The age of reform in the Ottoman Empire, did not only affect the administrative structure of Ottoman eastern provinces, bringing them under the authority of the center, as by this time Sultan Mahmud II had already abolished the Pashas of Mamluk dynasty in Baghdad (1831), removed from power the Azms of Damascus in 1807, the Jalilis of Mosul in 1834, and the Karamanli Dynasty from Tripoli of Barbary in 1835, in order to bring the frontier regions under direct Ottoman control.²¹ In Ottoman East, the completion of this process, or the “de-emirization” of the region, resulted in the fracturing of the administrative structure. This process is considered as the “re-clanization” of Ottoman East as the “proto-state” structures of the preceding emirates were eradicated, and lesser, though still powerful, tribal chiefs remained to claim their place.²² As further described by Bruinessen, this process of centralization was carried out through the de-centralization of local rule in Ottoman East, which eliminated the upper administrative *yurtluk/ocaklık* and *hükümet* sanjak rulers, and in turn, empowered the local tribal chiefs.²³

¹⁹ Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (New Jersey: Princeton Uni. Press, 2008), p. 17- 48.

²⁰ Behlül Pasha of Bayezid, Cemşid Bey of Palu, Nurullah Bey of Hakkari were some of those *mirs* who lost their privileged status, but continued to rule, with a lesser title and decreased power. Özk-Gündoğan, “Ruling the Periphery”. Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde*, p. 261-265. Yakup Karataş, *Bayezid Sancağı ve İdarecileri* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2014), p. 79-109.

²¹ Hanioglu, *A Brief History*, p. 61. Lisa Anderson, “Nineteenth-Century Reform in Ottoman Libya” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 16, no: 3 (August 1984), p. 327. Atmaca, “Politics of Alliance and Rivalry on the Ottoman-Iranian Frontier”, p. 148, 155.

²² Ateş, *Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, p. 82.

²³ Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State*, p. 175.

The Porte saw the elimination of the Kurdish emirates as inevitable and irrevocable, as the activities of the sanjak rulers were quite expansionist, and, at times, included the forging of alliances with the enemies of the Ottoman Sultan. In 1835, the Province of Van was under the control of Han Mahmud, while almost all of the districts surrounding the Lake Van region were in the hands of him, the *mîrs* of Müküs, who had begun to expand towards the Hakkari Emirate, during the previous years.²⁴ The *Muhafiz* of Van, İshak Pasha, had the support of Han Mahmud, which meant that the northern regions of Lake Van, where the Heyderan, as well as other tribes resided, were under the indirect control of the *mîrs* of Müküs.²⁵ Not only Han Mahmud, but others, such as *Mîr* Muhammed of Rawanduz, and Bedirhan Pasha of Cizre, acted in a similar manner, and their inter-emirate aggressions became the pretense behind their removal from power by the Ottoman Empire.²⁶ Therefore, we can argue that the Kurdish Emirates were already weakened, both politically and militarily, due to inter-emirate conflicts, before the Ottoman military expeditions into the region.

When the army of Muhammed Ali of Egypt attacked the Ottoman provinces in northern Syria and Nizip, some of those *mîrs* allied with the Egyptian army. The resulting internal antagonism among the emirates led to a division of alliances, and

²⁴ Shiel, "Notes on a Journey from Tabriz, Through Kurdistan, via Van, Bitlis, Se'ert and Erbil, to Suleimaniyeh, in July and August, 1836" *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, vol. 8 (1838), p. 250.

²⁵ Shiel, "Notes on a Journey", p. 66: "Pashalik of Van control the northern parts. Several tribes of Chader nishin tent-dwelling Kurds live in the northern part of the Pashalik of Van which reaches to the territory of Bayezid. These are Haideranus of 1500 tents, Sipki of 1000 tents, the Shulu of 200 tents".

²⁶ Michael Eppel, "The Demise of the Kurdish Emirates: The Impact of Ottoman Reforms and International Relations on Kurdistan during the First Half of the Nineteenth Century" *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 44, no: 2 (March 2008), p. 250.

the reduction of their power during this period of conflict.²⁷ For Lazarev, the *Mîr* of Rawanduz supported the Egyptian army with supplies, and in return received military aid from the Egyptian army.²⁸ *Mîr* Muhammed did not only refuse to pay his annual tribute to the Ottoman treasury, but he also minted his own coins, he delivered the *khutba* under his own name, rather than for the Ottoman Sultan, and subsequently, declared autonomy.²⁹ *Mîr* Muhammed also tried to modernize his own tribal army similar to Muhammed Ali's Egyptian army in order to resist against the Ottoman military expeditions.³⁰ A defensive alliance, reached in 1846, between Han Mahmud, Nurullah Bey of Hakkari, and Bedirhan Pasha, was the first and last alliance, in which the emirates banded and acted together. The threat posed by the central authorities, was not powerful enough for the *mîrs* to overcome their animosity towards each other, and as they continued to pursue policies of expansion towards each other's territories, they regarded their neighbors as enemies rather than allies and the alliances often broke down. Such circumstances meant that the Ottoman army did not encounter or confront a joint resistance in either 1834 or 1846.

Rather than the military might of the Ottoman army, it was the historic bureaucratic power implemented by the Ottoman officers that managed to suppress the resistance of the hereditary rulers of Ottoman East. The Ottoman army was able to retain the loyalty and allegiance of the tribes and some *yutluk/ocaklık* sanjak rulers, while they attacked those insurgent hereditary rulers. For example, we know that in 1838, when the Garzan Kurds were successfully suppressed by the Ottomans, Bedirhan Pasha

²⁷ Eppel, "The Demise of the Kurdish Emirates", p. 251.

²⁸ Lazarev, "19.Yüzyılda Kürdistan", p. 123.

²⁹ Lazarev, "19.Yüzyılda Kürdistan", p. 118.

³⁰ Lazarev, "19.Yüzyılda Kürdistan", p. 129. *Mir* Muhammed established armory factories imitating the Egyptian Khedive. See Atmaca, "Politics of Alliance and Rivalry on the Ottoman-Iranian Frontier", p. 159, 164.

provided crucial military support to the Ottoman army.³¹ Furthermore, *Mîr* Muhammed of Rawanduz was defeated due to the alliance between Bedirhan and the Ottomans, for Bedirhan hoped to increase his power in Cizre, through the dismissal of his brother, *Mîr* Seyfeddin.³² Thus, not only was Bedirhan Pasha considered an esteemed ally in the eyes of Muhammed Reşid Pasha during the military expeditions, but so were the *mir* of Muş, Emin Pasha, and his brother, Şerif Bey.³³ Molla Hadi, though initially an ally of *Mîr* Muhammad, when the Ottoman army approached the Soran Region, declared that any resistance enacted against the Ottoman Caliph was considered un-Islamic, and thus he left his previous alliance.³⁴ These developments indicate that the Ottoman military expedition to Ottoman East, which intended to apply new administrative rule to the region, did not encounter any major, unified military resistance and instead was able to weaken the power of the local hereditary rulers through diplomatic means, such as offering various positions to some of the existing rulers, and maintaining alliances with the tribes.

Although the *divide et impera* approach of the Ottomans to its eastern provinces was a significant way to check the power in the region, it should not be exaggerated since the local power holders were already divided through internal strife and conflict among the *mirs*.³⁵ Bedirhan Pasha was, in fact, betrayed by his own cousin during the 1847 resistance against the Ottoman army, yet this act of Yezdanşer was not abnormal, as Bedirhan had disinherited Yezdanşer's father, Mir Seyfeddin, several

³¹ Moltke, *Türkiye Mektupları*, p. 180-199. Lazarev, "19.Yüzyılda Kürdistan", p. 126.

³² Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde*, p. 75. The policies of Bedirhan Pasha later caused his cousin, Yezdanşer's betrayal since Bedirhan did the same thing to his father Seyfeddin in 1838.

³³ Brant, "Notes of a Journey", p. 351. Shiel, "Notes on a Journey", p. 75.

³⁴ Lazarev, "19.Yüzyılda Kürdistan", p. 126.

³⁵ Atmaca, "Politics of Alliance and Rivalry on the Ottoman-Iranian Frontier", p. 158.

years before by allying with the Ottoman army in the first place. Furthermore, not all power holders wanted to enter into a local alliance, such as Han Mahmud's brother, Han Abdal, who viewed Bedirhan as an enemy, since Bedirhan had carried out attacks in the Müküs region during the 1830s. Therefore, the transformation of Ottoman East from having a "proto-state" nature into one of a "tribal nature" did not confront any powerful resistance on either the part of the Ottoman Empire, or even within the emirates themselves. The temporary and fragile nature of the alliances between *mîrs* that were hostile towards each other did not temper the family feuds pursued within and between their emirates. Thus, the implementation of a new political order by the empire in Ottoman East did not encounter any real or significant resistance.

The involvements of foreign empires had a significant impact on the development of the historic transformation that was carried out in Ottoman East, during the 1830s and 1840s. The political interests of Iran, Russia, and the British Empire, accelerated the demise of the local rulers during this age of reform. Although the governors of Qajar Iran implemented their own pro-tribal policies unofficially, after the treaty of 1823 was signed between the Ottoman and Qajar Empires in Erzurum, the local hereditary emirates could not politically maneuver between the Ottoman and Iranian Empires.³⁶ When Bedirhan Pasha attempted to ally with the Iranian Empire, he was unable to produce a situation where he could pit Iran against the Ottomans.³⁷ The role of the British must be considered when assessing Bedirhan's failure, for the British Empire aimed to prevent any decrease of power in regards to the Ottoman Empire's position in Ottoman East. The reasoning behind this was the fear of Russia

³⁶ Eppel, "The Demise of the Kurdish Emirates", p. 245.

³⁷ Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde*, p. 219.

expansion towards the Mediterranean and the Indian Continent. Therefore, British consuls supported the Ottoman Empire, and put great pressure on the Iranians for the assistance they provided to the rebelling local hereditary Kurdish Emirates. If Ottoman East was lost to the Russians, warm water access might lead the Russian Empire to develop into a maritime colonial empire, which was against the interests and policies of the British Empire.³⁸ Thus the British Empire, especially Salisbury's conservative party, felt that a strong, centralized presence in Ottoman East would result in blocking any attempts of Russian advancement.³⁹ According to Eppel, British Consul Wood persuaded *Mîr* Muhammed to yield to the Ottomans, rather than allying with the Iranians or Russians.⁴⁰ Yezdanşer also attempted to ally with the Russians, and sent letters to Russian representatives in order to persuade them to ally against the Ottomans.⁴¹ However, the British consul warned Yezdanşer against such actions, and he eventually became a hostage at the British Consulate in Mosul, until he was re-appointed by the Ottoman Sultan to reorganize the Kurdish tribes, during the Crimean War.⁴² Therefore, we might suggest that the British viewed the emirates as fickle allies and possible enemies, who pursued policies against their own interests, as they could ally with Russia at any time. Thus, the pressure from such strong global powers eliminated any opportunity for the emirates to maintain their positions in geo-politics, and encouraged their surrender to the direct rule of the

³⁸ Kamal Mazhar Ahmad and Celile Celil assert that the Russians did not have any permanent policies against the Ottoman East. What they missed was that the Russians could not overcome the counter-balance activities of the British, who provided support to the Ottoman government during the Ottoman-Russian Wars in the nineteenth century: Kamal Mazhar Ahmad, *Birinci Dünya Savaşı Yıllarında Kürdistan* (İstanbul: Berhem, 1992), p. 25. Celile Celil, "Introduction" to *Osmanlı İran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, Averyanov (İstanbul, Avesta, 2010), p. 9-14.

³⁹ Zeidner, "Britain and the Launching of the Armenian Question", p. 465-483.

⁴⁰ Eppel, "The Demise of the Kurdish Emirates", p. 253.

⁴¹ Averyanov, *Osmanlı İran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, p. 134.

⁴² Averyanov, *Osmanlı İran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, p. 134. Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde*, p. 297-298

Ottoman Porte, who dismantled the system in inheritance, that for the *mîrs*, was based on a heritage of ancient ruling.

Lastly, we must mention that the Ottoman Porte not only acted militarily against Ottoman East, but it also implemented a variety of policies to the area, which differed from region to region. While the rebellious pashas and *beys* were disinherited and exiled to distant regions, generally, the Porte continued to assign the same families to the positions of salaried officials.⁴³ Muhammed Behlül Pasha of Bayezid, Nurullah Bey of Hakkari, Han Abdal of Müküs, Yezdanşer of Cizre, Şerif Bey of Muş and the *Beys* of Palu were all appointed as district governors (*müdür*).⁴⁴ They were no longer the owners of their ancient living spaces, but simply salaried officials appointed to control the territory on behalf of the Ottoman Sultan. This period, which I term the transitional period, occurred after the military expeditions, between late 1840s and 1850s, and is reflected by the fact that direct Ottoman rule was implemented in Ottoman East, through the mediation of the state in the appointment of local officials. Though these officials remained from the families of previous *mîrs*, they attained their administrative position from the state, rather than by inheriting them. However, after 1856, most of the newly-salaried hereditary rulers, were also dismissed from their duties, and the Sublime Porte attempted to increase the level of state centralization in Ottoman East. Although this was a historic transformation, the Ottoman Empire hardly returned to the ancient classical regime of the *yurtluk/ocaklık* administrative system, despite the fact that several times, the Porte allowed the rebellious *mîrs* to return and oversee the organization of the tribes during times of war, such as the time of the Crimean War.

⁴³ Özok-Gündoğan, “Ruling the Periphery, Governing the Land”, p. 162-163.

⁴⁴ Özok-Gündoğan, “Ruling the Periphery, Governing the Land”, p. 162-163. Karataş, *Bayezid Sancağı*, p. 79- 109. Gencer, “Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler”, p. 171, 178, 181.

The military expeditions and the transitional period, brought about by the removal of the *mîrs*, resulted in significant changes to the administration of Ottoman East. The region, as a whole, administratively atomized and decentralized, and the Ottoman governors and district rulers now had to directly deal with the tribes after the elimination of the *mîrs*. They did so by officially assigning the status of tribal officer (*müdüir*) or headman (*muhtar*) to the tribal chiefs, who now performed the role of intermediary between the empire and tribes. This was unlike the previous situation, where the *mîrs* were the intermediaries between the tribes and the empire, and the Porte had, in fact, no direct rule or contacts with them as the previous chapter discussed. The centralization of the classical administrative structure of Ottoman East now resulted in the state holding responsibility of checking-and-balancing the tribes, through the creation of direct alliances with their chiefs. These minor power holders were very eager for this development, and they tried to fill the power vacuum left by the Kurdish *mîrs*. Thus far, we have discussed how the Ottoman suppression of the rebellious Kurdish rulers developed; however, the following section will discuss how northern Ottoman provinces, where the Heyderan Tribe resided, confronted with this historic transformation, before analyzing the developments that the Heyderan confronted during the Tanzimat Era.

4.1.2 Pre-Tanzimat Rules, the Heyderan Tribe and the End of Hereditary Rule in the Region in 1849

Several sources indicate that the implementation of the direct rule of the Ottoman Porte had already been attempted in eastern Ottoman provinces as early as the 1830s. For example, in the province of Muş, the Porte eliminated its *yurtluk/ocaklık* sanjak ruler who had controlled Hınıs, Tekman, Bitlis, Malazgirt, and Muş, the region that

the Heyderan resided in. The governor of Erzurum, Esad Muhlis Pasha, submitted a proposal to the Porte to bring Muş province under direct rule though the Porte was hesitant for this suggestion. An analysis of the Ottoman documents makes clear that the suggestions of the governors of Erzurum had great influence over the Porte, due to the fact that the rule of the province of Erzurum was most important and powerful representative of the empire in the region. Kinneir explains in early nineteenth century how crucial the governorship of Erzurum was in the Ottoman Empire:

the pashalic of Erzeroom is one of the largest and most important governments in the Turkish empire, inferior only to Egypt, and equal to Bagdad...the pasha has a superintending authority over all the begs of Koordistan as far to the south as Sert [i.e. Siirt] [...] in the event of any European power ever undertaking the invasion of Persia or India, there is certainly no spot east of Constantinople better calculated for assembling a large force than the plain of Erzurum.⁴⁵

Kinneir was aware of how significant the pasha of Erzurum was in Ottoman East, and he also made clear the significant geo-strategic location of the Plain of Erzurum, which was considered to be a gate to both the Ottoman Porte in the west, and the Iranian/Indian continent in the east. Thus, it is no surprise that the governors of Erzurum possessed a primary role in the historic transformation that occurred at this time in Ottoman eastern provinces, and the following section will indicate that Ottoman policies of direct rule were attempted far earlier than their eventual implementation. Regarding the implementation of direct rule, it was not applied until 1847, due to the attacks of the Egyptian army on Ottoman territory, and the insurgencies of Kurdish Emirates. However, the project of executing direct rule, as initially conceptualized by the governors of Erzurum, was taken up again by the Porte, as soon as conditions allowed for such a change to be actualized. Furthermore,

⁴⁵ Kinneir, *Journey through Asia Minor*, p. 365-366.

although the role of the tribes was secondary compared to that of the hereditary Kurdish sanjak rulers, the part played by the Heyderan will be also discussed, in order to understand how they developed into a key player, influencing this administrative transformation.

During the Russian War of 1828-1829, the Russian General Paskevich conquered the eastern frontiers of the Ottoman Empire, and Erzurum fell under the control of Russia. This loss greatly affected the Ottoman Porte. It led the Porte to question the reliability and dependability of the Kurdish Emirates, who controlled the Ottoman Empire's eastern frontiers, for they had opted to remain neutral during the conflict, and thus did not lend their support to the Ottoman army.⁴⁶ The *muhafız* of Van, and *mutasarrıf*s of Muş and Bayezid, provided military aid to the Ottoman army, however the Porte viewed their support as insufficient and of demonstrating disloyalty. Emin Pasha, who succeeded his father, Selim Pasha of Muş, became the ruler of Muş and he received some gifts from the governor of Erzurum, Esad Muhlis Paşa, during the war. Esad Pasha tried to keep him loyal to the Ottoman side and he considered that Emin Pasha might ally with Russian forces.⁴⁷ Thus, Esad Pasha felt it was imperative to support Emin Pasha in Muş, and to actively isolate him and prevent any interaction he might develop with the Russians. Averyanov also provides some details regarding Emin Pasha, and that fact that he was able to play one empire, both Russian and the Ottoman Empire, via Esad Pasha, against the other “hypocritically” during the war.⁴⁸ Similar information was given by Esad Pasha, who

⁴⁶ Averyanov, *Osmanlı İnan Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, p. 55, 81. Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State*, p. 179.

⁴⁷ BOA, HAT 721/34364A- (1833): “*Rusyalu tarafına tebâiyet iderek türlü müfşedâta ibtidar ideceği mütâlaasından dolayı hasbe'l vakt [...] paşay-ı mümâileyh bazarur temin [...] Muş'a mütesellim tayin [...] Rusyalu muharebelerinde din ve devlete bir güne hizmet eylemediğinden başka*”.

⁴⁸ Averyanov, *Osmanlı İnan Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, p. 55, 81.

himself claimed that Emin Pasha did in fact made an agreement with the Russians, and promised to provide them with support if he was given the authority to rule in the regions from Erzurum to Diyarbekir once the conflict was concluded.⁴⁹ Esad Pasha further added that General Paskevich sent special gifts to Emin Pasha during the war years of 1828-1829.

At this point, Monteith similarly suggests that the majority of the Kurdish Beys supported the Russians, by saying “take Erzeroum and you will be willingly joined by all our tribes”.⁵⁰ Monteith further added that some Kurds were in fact allied with the Russian army, the Pasha of Bayezid, Behlül, had attempted to ally with the Russians, though the Pasha of Muş remained neutral during the war.⁵¹ The Ottoman documents produced after the war mostly refer to the betrayal of the hereditary Kurdish sanjak rulers, and consequently the governors of Erzurum advocated removing them from power as soon as possible.⁵² Although Erzurum fell into the hands of the Russians, during the war the hereditary Kurdish rulers neither skirmished with the powerful Russian Empire, nor did they definitively choose a side, preferring to await the results of the war, before declaring an ally. The inaction of the Kurdish principalities can be argued to have increased the urgency for direct rule in Ottoman East among the Ports and governors of Erzurum.

Şefik Ali Pasha in 1830, and Esad Muhlis Pasha in 1833, advised the Porte with similar suggestions: to dismiss the hereditary rulers of Muş and to bring the region

⁴⁹ BOA, HAT 721/34364A- (1833).

⁵⁰ W. Monteith, *Kars and Erzeroum: With the Campaigns of Prince Paskiewitch in 1828 and 1829* (London: Longman, 1856), p. 264.

⁵¹ Monteith, *Kars and Erzeroum*, p. 220, 264.

⁵² BOA, HAT 721/34364A- (1833).

under central rule.⁵³ According to Şefik Ali Pasha if the region was controlled directly, the revenues of the imperial treasury would increase. In addition, he clearly inferred that if an Ottoman official from within the Sublime Porte were to go and rule the region on behalf of the state, the various problems in the region could be resolved.⁵⁴ Furthermore, Esad Muhlis Pasha gave specific details as to why he believed that Muş should come under the direct control of Erzurum.⁵⁵ For him, Hınıs, Tekman and Muş were close to the central city of Erzurum, and therefore, to maintain the security of the city, he regarded the elimination of the hereditary rulers of Muş as necessary. He added that there was a well-fortified castle in Hınıs, and therefore, the possibility of Kurdish revolts (*cerâin-i ekrâdâne*) could develop into a potential security risk, endangering the city of Erzurum. Therefore, Esad Pasha saw the elimination of the hereditary rulers of Muş necessary, in order to attain efficient government (*hüsn-ü idare*), increase economic revenues (*hâsılat me'mul olub*) and implementing necessary precautions (*muktezây-ı maslahat*). Şefik Ali and Esad Muhlis Pasha, who both held the position of governorship in Erzurum, thus summarized the policies of the Ottoman central government, during the early 1830s.

Ultimately, it was fiscal and security matters that threatened the status of the hereditary sanjak ruler of Muş, Emin Pasha, who had Hınıs, Tekman, and Bitlis under his control through his brothers. Emin Pasha was living in his castle in Muş,

⁵³ BOA, HAT 1040/43065Y- (1830), BOA, HAT 790/36808H- (1833).

⁵⁴ BOA, HAT 1040/43065Y- (1830): “*cânib-i mîriden zabt olunarak aşâiri def’ ile imar ve say olunsa hâsılat memûl olub bu emrin buraca layık husûlü dahi bir takrib Muş’a [one word illegible] Devlet-i Aliye’den birisinin mutasarrıf nasbına muhtaç olub [...] azl ve celb olunan Murad Paşa biraderi silahşöran-ı hassadan İbrahim Bey kulları en asl Muş’a namzed olarak celb olunmuş ve her ne kadar onların cinsinden olub meram üzere istihdâma şâyan değil ise [...] bir nebze usûl-u devlet-i âliyye’ye kesb-i ulaa etmiş olduğundan [...] Devlet-i Aliyye’den birisinin nasbında suhûlet me’mûl idüğünden mümâileyh Emin Paşa’nın azli husûsuna irâde-i âliye ta’alluk ider ise şimdilik yerine İbrahim Bey kullarının nasbı münâsib gibi olduğu”.*

⁵⁵ BOA, HAT 790/36808H- (1833).

while his brothers Murad and Şerif Bey were residing in Hınıs and Bitlis.⁵⁶ Thus, the southern territories of Erzurum were occupied by these hereditary rulers, while other regions of Lake Van were controlled by Han Mahmud during the 1830s. Under such circumstances, the Sublime Porte did not want to dismiss all of the hereditary rulers at once, and instead allowed that the sanjak rulers of Bayezid and Muş remain in their position, thus securing their allegiance to the Porte, while in turn suppressing other sanjak rulers, such as Seyfeddin Bey of Cizre and Han Mahmud of Müküs. By acting in this manner, the Porte rejected the suggestions of the governors of Erzurum, and refused to abolish status of Muş province, and instead simply dismissed Emin Pasha and appointed a different *mîr*, Hüseyin Pasha, to the office.⁵⁷ In fact, the Porte implemented different policies at various times, which were dependent on the situation in the locality. One policy was to allow for less powerful sanjak rulers to maintain their positions, a counter point to the more powerful *mîrs* of Ottoman Kurdish provinces which the Porte removed from power. Yet, even these policies were subject to change. For example, Behlül Pasha of Bayezid, who garnered much prestige and respect from the Kurdish tribes, was dismissed from power. However, he was reappointed between 1828-29, for the Porte needed his influence among the tribes in order to organize them against the Russian forces. As Wagner discovered:

Though the Castle is tolerably strong, it offered no effectual resistance to the Russians in 1828. Behlül Pacha had been removed from his post in consequence but he was soon recalled, as the Porte discovered that it required a chief of Koordish blood to manage the Koords.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Brant, "Notes of a Journey", p. 345, 380. The castle was located in the region called Çevirme which is currently named as Haspet Castle in Soğucak village. The castle is in ruins since the mid-nineteenth century, almost all of the castles of the hereditary sanjak rulers were demolished by the Ottoman governors.

⁵⁷ Brant, "Notes of a Journey", p. 351.

⁵⁸ Moritz Wagner, *Travels in Persia, Georgia and Koordistan vol. 3* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1856), p. 65.

As Wagner noted, the Ottoman policies were flexible and sometimes, even after trying to implement centralized rule, they preferred to revert back to the old order to keep the security of the region at the first stage. Furthermore, although initially thought to be an ally of the empire, Emin Pasha was also dismissed from power in 1833, as he was determined to be actively trying to dominate regional politics, which was in opposition of the policy of the governor of Erzurum. Emin Pasha's agents were captured in Erzurum with secret letters, he was accused of ordering the death of certain people, and he forcefully obtained six hundred pouches (*kise*) of *akçe* from the Heyderan tribe, claiming it as a wintering tax (*kışlak rüsûmu*).⁵⁹ Esad Pasha could not permanently halt Emin Pasha's activities, due to the aggressive activities of Mehmed Ali Pasha of Egypt (*Hâdisey-i Mısriyye*), however in 1833 a temporary solution was implemented, where both Esad Pasha and the Porte dismissed Emin Pasha from power.⁶⁰ Emin Pasha's actions led to this dismissal, as it was revealed that he collected secret information from Erzurum, and communicated with his own Armenian agents via letters written in Armenian. He ordered the deaths of some individuals who could potentially replace him, as they were members from the same family. Finally, his over-taxing of the Heyderan tribe for wintering led to the defection of some of the Heyderan to the Iranian territories. These developments led to the dismissal of Emin, and his brothers, from their positions, and the Porte appointed his relative, Hüseyin Pasha, as the next hereditary sanjak ruler of Muş in his stead.⁶¹ This development occurred only after the signing of the Treaty of *Hünkâr İskelesi*, in 1833, at which time Hüseyin Pasha was appointed as *mutasarrıf* of Muş.

⁵⁹ BOA, HAT 721/34364A- (1833).

⁶⁰ BOA, HAT 721/34364A- (1833).

⁶¹ BOA, HAT 450/22351- (1833).

Initially, however, Hüseyin Pasha was unable to enter Muş as he did not have the support of the tribes in the region. This situation was resolved through the involvement of Esad Pasha, who urged the Heyderan and some other tribes to give their support to Hüseyin Pasha. Thus, the Ottoman bureaucrats, who held positions and acted on the periphery of the empire, were able to manipulate one *mîr* or tribe against another in order to apply further their own policies, as they preferred to replace the ruler of Muş region by dismissing Emin Pasha and his brothers. Alternately, they also suggested the removal of any *mîr* who acted independently, and instead appointed another, docile ruler, who could be depended on to follow the orders and apply the policies of the central Ottoman government.

As mentioned above, rather than a simple top-down reform approach, where the center imposed new policies in Ottoman East, the situation confronted on the ground played an equally, if not more, significant role in shaping Ottoman policies in the region. Since Emin Pasha had collected six hundred pouches in tax, from Sultan Agha, the brother of Kasım Agha of the Heyderan, some members of the tribe preferred to remain on Ottoman territory and thus allied with Hüseyin Pasha. They were joined by the Hasenan tribe against the insurgents of Emin Pasha, who now fled to and took refuge with the Atak Kurds, hereditary rulers in Lice and Hani.⁶² Emin Pasha and his brothers sent letters to many Kurdish tribal chiefs in an effort to maintain their allegiance against Hüseyin Pasha backed by governor of Erzurum and tribes of Heyderan and Hasenan.⁶³ Emin Pasha, and the *hakims* of the Atak region, worked to increase their military might as much as they could, before embarking on a

⁶² Brant, "Notes of a Journey", p. 351. BOA, HAT 450/22351C- (1833).

⁶³ BOA, HAT 450/22351H- (1833): This file has the letters which were sent to the separate tribal chiefs by Emin Pasha and his brothers to invite them to their side against Hüseyin Pasha and their allies. The Hasenan tribe was a powerful tribal confederation in the Muş, Malazgirt and Bulanık regions.

military expedition to Muş. Not only did Esad Pasha back the newly appointed Hüseyin Pasha, but he also allowed Kasım Agha to return from Iran and provide military aid and support to his brother, Sultan Agha.⁶⁴ According to the agreement of 1823, signed between the Ottoman and Iranian Empires, Esad Pasha should not have accepted the defection of Kasım Agha to Ottoman territories, however he proclaimed that since Kasım had been forcefully taken to the Iranian lands, the third article of the agreement was void in this case. Kasım and Sultan Agha provided much needed military support to Hüseyin Pasha, and they subsequently won the war against Emin Pasha and his allies. Such local developments, therefore, shaped the alliances at a local level, which the Porte was able to exploit by supporting such divisions and using them as a method to check and balance the power of the hereditary *mîrs* and of the tribes.

Emin Pasha's forcefully levying excessive wintering tax did not only cause the defection of a branch⁶⁵ of Heyderan tribe, to the Iranian lands, under the leadership of Kasım Agha, but also placed the governor of Khoi, Cihangir Mirza, son of Abbas Mirza and brother of Shah Muhammed Mirza, in a position to defend the right of the Heyderan. Cihangir Mirza sent an envoy to Erzurum to request the return of the levied tax that had been taken by Emin Pasha, in 1832. If the government of Erzurum did not return this amount to the Heyderan, he threatened to gather an army against Emin Pasha.⁶⁶ Cihangir Mirza argued that the Heyderan tribe was an Iranian tribe, and therefore, it was his responsibility to defend the rights of the tribe. However, the Ottomans viewed this right as illegitimate, as they argued that the Heyderan was an

⁶⁴ HAT 789/36798- (1833).

⁶⁵ By saying branch, I mean a group of Heyderan tribe that was led by an agha of the *Torin* family since we do not know which agha controlled which clans and sub-clans of the Heyderan tribe.

⁶⁶ BOA, HAT 721/34364L- (1832).

Ottoman tribe and therefore under their own protection. In 1833, when Muhammed Mirza, the brother of Cihangir Mirza, became shah, and exiled Cihangir from Khoi, the tensions regarding the Heyderan tribe, reduced. Yet the tribe's resistance to Emin Pasha continued and Sultan Agha acted with the support of Hüseyin Pasha of Muş in Ottoman side. Despite these developments, Emin Pasha was once more appointed to govern Muş in the following year. This was due to the fact that he assured the authorities that he would settle the Kurdish tribes, pay one thousand pouch *akçe* to the government, rather than return the 600 pouches to the Heyderan, and to organize the newly modernized army (*Asâkir-i Muhammediye*) in Muş.⁶⁷ We see in the notes of Brant's journey, that the Porte accepted Emin Pasha's offer, and he was returned to his seat.⁶⁸ Shiel and Brant provide similar details, where Emin Pasha, and his brothers, became the favorites of Muhammed Reşid Pasha, joining the Ottoman military expeditions in the Garzan region⁶⁹ in 1835: "They [Emin Pasha and his brothers] were much esteemed by Mohammed Reşid Pasha, and did him good service in his operations against the Kurds".⁷⁰ Emin Pasha was active in Muş during the dismissal of the *muhâfiz* of Van, Timur Pasha, who was suspiciously close with Han Mahmud at the time. Thus, Emin Pasha's assurances to the Porte led to his reappointment, particularly due to the fact that the government needed to maintain an alliance with the local hereditary leaders in order to organize and harness the military power of the tribes loyal to the Ottoman Empire, to counter those rebelling against it.

⁶⁷ BOA, HAT 625/30883- (1833).

⁶⁸ Brant, "Notes of a Journey", p. 350: Brant visited Emin Pasha and his brothers in 1838.

⁶⁹ The current official name of Garzan is Kurtalan under Siirt Province.

⁷⁰ Brant, "Notes of a Journey", p. 351, Shiel, "Notes on a Journey", p. 75: Shiel visited the region in 1836 two years before than Brant made its journey.

Similar actions occurred in other parts of the region. As mentioned above, Behlül Pasha of Bayezid was also recalled in the same manner in 1828. Yezdanşer, too, was recalled in 1853, to Cizre, in order to organize the tribes residing on Ottoman territory, even though earlier he had been dismissed from power, and had taken refuge at the British Consulate in Mosul.⁷¹ Thus, the Ottoman Porte did not hesitate to re-appoint the hereditary rulers when they were needed, and matters regarding the tribes were sometimes seen as secondary issues, such as the problem of over-taxing the Heyderan. Unfortunately there is no information regarding the reimbursement of the Heyderan, thus it can be argued that maintaining the rights of the tribes was indeed not a primary concern for the state, particularly as the Ottoman documents describe that “six hundred pouches will be disregarded for now”.⁷²

In 1839, Emin and his brothers were ordered to join the Ottoman army in Birecik, with five thousand cavalry soldiers. However, Emin Pasha and his brothers did not arrive readily, and thus the state officials interpreted their hesitation as reluctance, exiling them to Vidin as a result.⁷³ The *mîrs* of Muş had lost their privileges and rule of power after their exile to Vidin; however, in 1845, Emin Pasha’s brother, Şerif Bey, was re-appointed to Muş as *kaimimakam*, for the government planned to suppress the revolts in Muş, and to dismiss the last hereditary rulers who were revolting against the government: Bedirhan Pasha, Nurullah Bey and Han Mahmud.⁷⁴ Once these revolts were suppressed, the Sublime Porte exiled the rebellious hereditary rulers, and appointed their heirs as salaried officers to the

⁷¹ Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde*, p. 288-296.

⁷² BOA, HAT 625/30883- (1833): “*Haydaran’dan alınan altı yüz kesenin ise şimdilik sükûnet edilmesi*”.

⁷³ BOA, HAT, C.AS. 947/41125- (1839). C.AS. 469/19549- (1840).

⁷⁴ Gencer, “Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler”, p. 126. BOA, C.DH. 61/3029- (1845).

regions. They remained in their posts for some years, though their privileged status has been disinherited by the state. In 1849, Şerif Bey and Behlül Pasha were exiled from their seats, and while the former was sent to Damascus, the latter was forced to settle in Erzurum.⁷⁵ These developments indicate that the Sublime Porte did not need to organize a military expedition to the northern regions of Ottoman East, to act against the hereditary rulers of Bayezid and Muş. As these *yurtluk/ocaklık* privileged hereditary rulers had already lost their powers, as early as early 1830s, their weakened state posed no threat to the Ottoman authorities, unlike those such as Bedirhan Pasha and other rulers in the south. Therefore, due to this weakened state and through the above mentioned diplomatic means, the Porte was able to maintain the allegiance of the rulers of Muş and Bayezid, along with the tribes who were allied to them, while they held military expedition against the last hereditary rulers in the south, in 1847. Thus, the transitional period continued for a longer period of time in Ottoman East, between the years 1830s and 1849, meaning that the hereditary rulers maintained their positions longer, though their power was greatly reduced, until finally they were entirely dismissed from the region. Hence, this transition towards direct central rule was not due to the fact that the *yurtluk/ocaklık* rulers were greater foes for the empire, as Çadırcı has suggested, rather, these rulers maintained their positions, in some manner, in order to act as allies of the state against those in the southern parts of the region. Furthermore, their prestige was still secure among the tribes, allies that the empire needed in the area, and their lands were viewed as secure buffer zones against those who had revolted. The constant dismissal and rearrangement of who held positions of power in Muş and Bayezid, were easily accomplished by the empire due to their weakened state as a whole, and thus the

⁷⁵ Karataş, *Bayezid Sancağı*, p. 110. Gencer, “Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler”, p. 235- 236. BOA, A.MKT 221/32- (1849).

position of hereditary ruler was easily dismantled in 1849 without any resistance. Concurrently, the Heyderan tribe, also shaped its own policies based on local developments in ways that furthered or secured its own advantage. The military might of the tribe, further influenced how the government of Erzurum reshaped the structure of the Muş Emirate in 1833 when Esad Muhlis Pasha supported Hüseyin against Emin Pasha. Esad Pasha's policies of pitting certain tribes against rebellious ones, also signaled the direction of future policies followed by the Porte, where they empowered and authorized the tribes to act, in place of the disinherited *mîrs*.

4.1.3 The Revolt of Han Mahmud and the Heyderan Tribe

Han Mahmud and his brothers ruled the Emirate of Müküs, located today in the region of Bahçesaray, in the province of Van. During the Russian-Ottoman Wars of 1828-9, they increased their power in the area, and conquered Hoşab Castle in 1830, which had previously been the center of Mahmudi Emirate.⁷⁶ Since the Mahmudi Emirs were no longer powerful enough to prevent any attacks on their lands, Han Mahmud did not encounter any significant obstacles regarding his expansion, and thus was able to extend his control into the southern and eastern territories of Van Province. At times, Han Mahmud was able to also control the city center of Van, such as during the weakened rule of Timur Pasha, between 1829-1831.⁷⁷ Petitions sent by Han Mahmud to the Porte also indicate that he had attempted to help Timur Pasha maintain his position until Emin Pasha of Muş finally dismissed Timur Pasha

⁷⁶ Sinan Hakan, *Müküs Kürt Mirleri Tarihi ve Han Mahmud* (İstanbul: Peri, 2002).

⁷⁷ Mehmet İnbaşı, "Van Valileri (1755-1835)" *A.Ü. Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, issue 29 (Erzurum, 2006), p. 202.

with the support of the governor of Erzurum, Esad Muhlis Pasha, following 1831.⁷⁸ Tensions between the Ottomans and Han Mahmud, greatly increased after 1838. In fact, Bedirhan Pasha of Cizre and Nurullah Bey of Hakkari had initially attacked the territories of Han Mahmud since they did not want to confront a powerful emirate in the north, furthermore, they justified their encroachment into Han Mahmud's territories by claiming them as rightfully their own in the first place. Following the attacks of Bedirhan Pasha and Nurullah Bey with the support of the Porte in 1839, Han Mahmud and his brothers were captured and sent to Istanbul.⁷⁹ However, when the Egyptian army headed towards Ottoman territories in Nizip, the Porte ended up releasing Han Mahmud and his brothers, who were then able to re-capture Hoşab Castle from the Ottoman soldiers, and re-build their power once more after allying with Bedirhan Pasha and Nurullah Bey in 1842. During the revolts of 1843-1847, Han Mahmud even possessed control over the northern regions of Lake Van, where the Heyderan wandered and resided.

Ottoman documents provide very little information concerning the Heyderan tribe between the years of 1836-1848. We understand from the travel accounts of Brant that Sultan Agha of the Heyderan was in the regions of Erciş, wandered in the northern territories of Lake Van, and that he had close ties with Ishak Pasha, who was the governor of Van province.⁸⁰ According to Shiel, there were 1,500 tents of the Heyderan tribe that were under the control of the *pashalık* of Van, in 1836, in the

⁷⁸ HAT 810/37204- (1832).

⁷⁹ Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde*, p. 111-115. As explained above, these attacks of Bedirhan Pasha caused Han Abdal, brother of Han Mahmud, to hate him. Later in 1847, Han Abdal did not support the alliance of the Bedirhan, Han Mahmud and Nurullah Bey in 1843- 1847.

⁸⁰ Brant, "Notes of a Journey", p. 403, 412-413.

northern Lake Van region.⁸¹ For Brant, during this period, half of the tribe resided in Iranian territories, under the leadership of Kasım Agha, while the others were under the authority of Sultan Agha. Brant states that he believed Sultan Agha to be a powerful tribal chief, who allied with the Ottoman Empire, sent gifts to the governors of Erzurum for getting wintering houses, and regularly visited the governor of Van.⁸²

Other than the comments made by Shiel and Brant, almost no other sources in the Ottoman archives mention the Heyderan at this time. This possibly indicates that most of the Heyderan tribe had defected to the Iranian territories in response to the increased tensions along the margins of the Ottoman Empire, particularly after 1839. As some of the Kurdish tribes were forced to join the Ottoman military forces, most likely the Heyderan was also required to participate in the war against the Egyptian army. Although there is no information in the Ottoman documents regarding the recruitment of the Heyderan, there is some reference to the fact that members of the Heyderan had already defected to Iranian territory by 1836.⁸³ Furthermore, remembering the fact that Emin Pasha had recruited five thousand cavalry soldiers from members of the Kurdish tribes, those of the Heyderan who did not wish to participate in the war most likely defected to Iranian territory.

Initially, during the revolts of Han Mahmud, in alliance with Nurullah Bey and Bedirhan Pasha, İbrahim Agha of the Heyderan, brother to Kasım and Sultan Agha, granted his support to Han Mahmud. At the time, Han Mahmud appointed his brother to the region of Adilcevaz, and his son to the region of Erciş, in order to organize the

⁸¹ Shiel, "Notes on a Journey", p. 66.

⁸² Brant, "Notes on a Journey", p. 412-414.

⁸³ BOA, A.MKT 149/46- (1848): "*Van sancağı dâhilinde haymenişin Haydaranlı Aşiretinden olub ol havalı tağlibesinden muhâfaza-i can ve mal zımında on iki (=1836) sene mukaddem İran cânibine gitmiş olan aşiret-i mezkûre*".

tribes against the Ottoman army.⁸⁴ Although we are not sure whether Ibrahim Agha's branch of the Heyderan voluntarily joined Han Mahmud, there are some records that indicate that the tribe was, in fact, forced to do so.⁸⁵ By this point, however, he preferred not to become militarily involved in Han Mahmud's revolt, and thus made the decision to defect to Iranian territory until May 1847 when he and his tribe participated in the attack on Malazgirt against the armies that Ottomans supported.⁸⁶ Although Han Mahmud wrote letters, harshly threatening Ibrahim Agha, they had no effect on his decision to leave the area.⁸⁷ Meanwhile, the cousin of Ibrahim Agha also betrayed his alliance with Han Mahmud, rather than leaving the region entirely, he submitted his loyalty to the Ottoman Empire.⁸⁸ Thus, after losing these allies along the northern sphere of Lake Van, the dissolution of his alliances with the *mîrs* of Cizre, Müküs, and Hakkari followed, and so Han Mahmud decided to surrender to Ottoman forces in Tatvan, in July 1847.⁸⁹ The majority of the members of the Heyderan tribe appear to have remained on the Iranian side of the frontier during these developments. When the alliance of the Kurdish Emirates dissolved, Ibrahim and Mustafa Agha of the Heyderan also ended their allegiance to Han Mahmud and terminated their alliance with him.

Following the suppression of the revolts of the Kurdish emirates, some documents reveal that the chiefs of the Heyderan petitioned the Porte to request to winter in

⁸⁴ Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler", p. 133. His brother Abdurrezzak and his son Abdulaziz Bey were assigned to the northern Lake Van region by Han Mahmud.

⁸⁵ Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler", p. 166: Ibrahim Agha complained to the government that if Ottoman army did not send an army to support them, he was going to cross to the Iranian side.

⁸⁶ Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde*, p. 214.

⁸⁷ BOA, İ.MSM 50/1269- (1847), Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde*, p. 214.

⁸⁸ Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde*, p. 223. Ibrahim Agha's cousin was Mustafa Agha, who was a son of Sultan Agha and the father of Hacı Temir Pasha.

⁸⁹ Hakan, *Osmanlı Arşiv Belgelerinde*, p. 299.

lands located within Ottoman territory. In the petitions of Heyder Agha, Ali Agha and İbrahim Agha, we find that they explained their defection to Iranian territories as a means of defense for their lives and properties (*muhâfazay-i can ve mal*), or else they would have been forced to join Han Mahmud and his forces.⁹⁰ These documents describe that the tribe crossed to the Khoi region twelve years ago [in 1836], albeit reluctantly, and that now they hoped to be granted winter quarters within the Ottoman side of the frontier.⁹¹ İbrahim Agha did not petition (*istid'anâme*) the Porte until after 1850, when his brother, Heyder Agha, was given a paid position by the local Ottoman governors in 1849.⁹² Furthermore, by the mid-nineteenth century, the Heyderan were still described as nomadic and tent-living (*haymenişîn*), and thus needed a stable political environment in order to pasture their flocks and winter in rented houses. Thus, the conflict between the empire and the emirates would have forced the tribe to join, militarily, either one side or the other. Not seeing any economic benefits to this, there was no hesitation on the part of the Heyderan to move their flocks and tents to Iranian territory and wait the conflict out. Even İbrahim Agha, although initially allying with Han Mahmud, realized that the alliance would not aid his branch of the tribe in any way, and became neutral in the conflict until its end. Likewise, other leaders within the Heyderan tribe did not remain in Ottoman lands, attempting to avoid being put in a position where they would be forced to ally with either the empire or the rebellious *mîrs*. Thus, it would appear that the revolts of the emirates were of no political or economic value to the Heyderan and that they most likely realized that the alliance of the emirates would ultimately

⁹⁰ BOA, A.MKT. 149/46- (1848). BOA, A.MKT. UM. 25/60- (1850).

⁹¹ BOA, İ.MSM. 52/1345G- (1848).

⁹² BOA, A.MKT.UM. 25/60- (1850). Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Ankara, October 22, 2017: For Süphandağ, the descendants of İbrahim Agha remained in the Iranian side.

fail. In fact, their lack of participation, or the inability of the emirates to organize the tribes to ally with them, was one of the significant reasons why the revolt of the emirates was unsuccessful, as internally their political structure and inter-alliance conflict was already too weak to withstand an imperial power. The Heyderan was, therefore, the only one among the tribes that Han Mahmud failed to cement a secure alliance with, that could have helped him to hold back Ottoman imperial power.

4. 2 The Heyderan Tribe and the Application of Tanzimat Rules after 1850s

4.2.1 The Heyderan Tribe during the Mid-Nineteenth Century

During the Tanzimat Era, the Heyderan tribe generally wandered in the same region, between highlands of the northern parts of Lake Van, to the border zone of Ebeğe⁹³, located between Bayezid and Iranian Çaldıran. While some branches of the Heyderan wintered in the villages of the same region, located within Ottoman territory, others wintered in the villages of Iranian Çaldıran, a more preferable area for some of the tribal members during the winter season. Sultan Agha shared with Brant that “the pastures and abundance of water in Turkey were great advantages over Persia, but the milder winter in the latter country was some compensation”.⁹⁴ Even during the early twentieth century, some Heyderan members regularly moved back and forth between Ottoman and Iranian Çaldıran. For the wintering of the tribe, they regularly settled in Iranian part, yet to pasture their animals they preferred to return to the pasture located along the northern edge of Lake Van, in Ottoman

⁹³ The Ottoman documents also could not standardize the name of Ebeğe and sometimes wrote the name as Abağa, Abi Ağa, or Abagay. Since the region is currently called as Ebeğe by the locals, I preferred to use Ebeğe. The pastures of Ebeğe lied from Ottoman Çaldıran to the center of Bayezid.

⁹⁴ Brant, “Notes on a Journey”, p. 414.

Çaldıran.⁹⁵ Hurşid Pasha also shares that Heyder Agha led some 150 tents into Iranian Çaldıran during the winter season, and that during the summer season, they regularly returned to Ebeğe to pasture their animals.⁹⁶ During the Tanzimat Era, therefore, the region of Ebeğe was generally under the use and control of the Heyderan tribe, although historically it had been the residence of the Yezidi Kurds.⁹⁷



Map 6. Ebeğe located in the Ottoman-Iranian borderlands.

By the Tanzimat period there were no longer any Heyderan tents to be found in Muş, Malazgirt and Bulanık, particularly after the mid-nineteenth century. As discussed in the previous chapter, some branches of the Heyderan wandered and wintered in those regions, but once tribe-*mîr* relations worsened, the tribe's wandering spaces contracted to only include the regions of Iranian Çaldıran, and the villages of Erciş and Adilcevaz, where the current members of the Heyderan resided. Therefore, it can

⁹⁵ For Ali Emiri, Hüseyin Pasha told him that his scholar Molla Resul wintered in the Iranian side and they will meet after the end of the winter season: Ali Emiri, *Osmanlı Vilâyet-i Şarkiyesi*, İstanbul, 1337(1918), p. 53. However, we need to mention that frontier crossings mostly ended after the Tanzimat era in late 1850s.

⁹⁶ Mehmed Hurşid Paşa, *Seyahatnâme-i Hudud* (İstanbul: Simurg, 1997), tr. Alaattin Eser, p. 263.

⁹⁷ Derviş Paşa, *Tahdid-i Hudud-u İrâniye* (İstanbul: Matbaa-i Amire, 1870), p. 141. Mehmed Hurşid Paşa, *Seyahatnâme-i Hudud*, p. 238.

be argued that during the period of reform, the wandering spaces of the Heyderan diminished by at least one hundred kilometers.

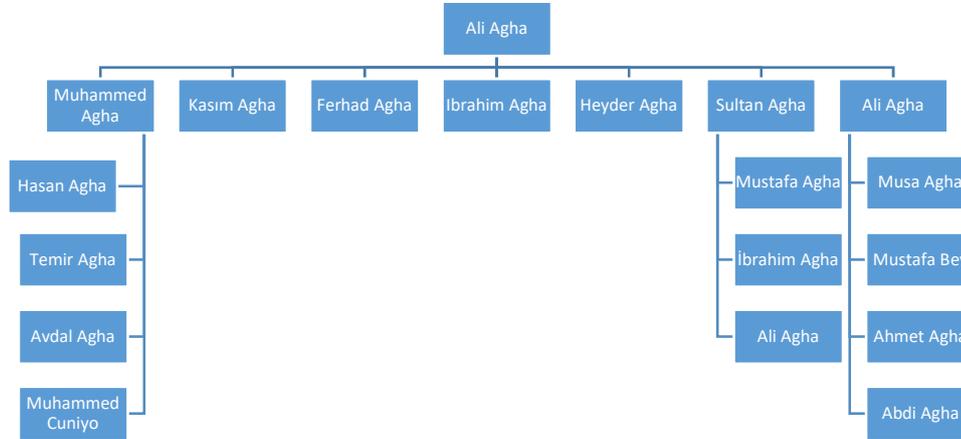


Figure 3. Some leading chiefs from the *Torin* Household around mid-nineteenth century.

The table above shows a sample of leading chiefs from the Heyderan tribe’s class of ruling elite, the *Torin* family, during the era of the Tanzimat reforms. Before the mid-1850s, Heyder Agha and Ali Agha allied and acted together, however after this period, Ali Agha began to pursue his own policies, separate from his brother, Heyder Agha who resided primarily on the Iranian side of the frontier border.⁹⁸ While Ali Agha began to wander primarily in the Ebeğe region, his remaining brothers resided in the areas of Erciş and Adilcevaz.⁹⁹ While the descendants of Kasım and Heyder Agha remained on the Iranian side of the border, Muhammed and Sultan Agha’s heirs became leaders of the branches of the Heyderan that wandered in Erciş and Adilcevaz, particularly during the Hamidian Era, when they both received the title of “pasha”, such as Blind Hüseyin Pasha, Emin Pasha and Hacı Temir Pasha. Although Sultan Agha did lead a branch of the Heyderan, he was not thought to have held

⁹⁸ Mehmed Hurşid Pasha, *Seyahatnâme-i Hudud*, p. 263.

⁹⁹ Check the section of 4.2.6 for policies of which atomized the tribe.

more power than any of the other chiefs within the tribe.¹⁰⁰ However, those chiefs who received the backing of the Porte, through the acquisition of certain titles, such as Ali Agha and his descendants, were able to increase their power and prestige among their own followers and in the eyes of the Ottoman Empire. Nikitin describes the wealth and prosperity of Ali Agha, as displayed by his dinner table, thus claiming that this was a symbol of how high of a position he held in the hierarchy of the Heyderan.¹⁰¹ Therefore, the following pages will elaborate how some of the less powerful Heyderan chiefs were able to increase their power and prestige among the members of their tribe, especially the ones in Erciş, Patnos and Adilcevaz regions.

These leaders of Heyderan tribe mentioned above, who were the members of *Torin* family, maintained their position and status as the head of the Heyderan tribe as a whole, during the Tanzimat era, as can be seen from petitions that they sent to the Porte throughout the period. Heyder Agha was described as the *mîr* of the tribe (*mîr-i aşiret*), or chief of tribes (*reis-i aşâir*), which indicates that he held a position of great power among the other chiefs of all of the Heyderan.¹⁰² These titles were not used by the other chiefs, who also signed the petition, and this indicates that there was an important level of hierarchy inside the particular branches of the tribe. In their petition, many of signee did refer to themselves as chief of clan (*oymak ağası*) within the tribe, though they did not refer to their clan by name, but rather only to the upper identity of tribe's name, the "Heyderi". This indicates that different clan leaders of

¹⁰⁰ Brant, "Notes on a Journey", p. 412: "Sultan Agha is said not to be rich, indeed not more so than many of the respectable members of the tribe".

¹⁰¹ Nikitine, *Kürtler: Sosyolojik Tarihi İnceleme* (İstanbul: Örgün, 2015), p. 239.

¹⁰² BOA, İ.HR 56/2606- (1849). BOA, HR.MKT. 29/63- (1850): "*Haydaranlu mîr-i aşireti Haydar Ağâ*". For *mîr-i aşiret* check: M. Ali Ünal, "XVI. Yüzyılda Güneydoğu Anadolu'da Tımar Tevcihleri-Mîr-i Aşiret ve Cebelü Timarları" *I. Uluslararası Mardin Tarihi Sempozyumu* (İstanbul, 2006), p. 279- 298.

Heyderan tribe were gathered under the leading aghas of *Torin* family, which shows that the tribe was organized in a way that was more confederative in structure.

In 1848 and 1849, we come across the titles of “chief” (*agha*), “representative of the tribe” (*kethüda*), “deputy chief of the tribe” (*kahya*), and “white-bearded elders” (*aksakallı*) inside the Heyderan tribe.¹⁰³ Aghas of *Torin* family signed the petition at the end in the upper left corner which indicates their prestige and power over the other members of the signees. Almost all had their personal seals stamped on the petition, while the rest had only finger-marked the document. However, another petition, written in 1858, had different titles, such as “head of tribe” (*aşiret müdürü*) and “headman” (*muhtar*).¹⁰⁴ With the newly implemented direct rule of the region, the titles held by the chiefs were transferred and transformed into state titles, which made those chiefs not only hereditary members of the tribe, but also an official state representative/intermediary of the Empire. In acting as state representative, these chiefs were now instrumentalized by the empire, a result of policies enacted from the top, the center of government, as well due to policies pursued by the chiefs themselves at the local level, which in turn transformed the administrative and political structure of Ottoman East.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ BOA, İ.HR. 56/2606- (1849). BOA, İ.MSM 52/2606- (1849). BOA, İ.MSM 52/1345A- (1848).

¹⁰⁴ BOA, MVL 574/93- (1858).

¹⁰⁵ Yonca Köksal, “Coercion and Mediation: Centralization and Sedentarization of Tribes in the Ottoman Empire” *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol 42, no: 3 (May 2006), p. 469.

Table 2. Seals and fingerprints stamped on a petition of Heyderan chiefs in 1858.¹⁰⁶

Deputy (<i>Naib</i>) (Seal)	Director of Heyderan Tribe (<i>Müdür-ü Aşiret-i Heyderanlı</i>) (Seal)	(Seal)	Chamberlain ¹⁰⁷ (<i>Kethüdâ</i>) (Seal)	Headman (<i>Muhtar</i>) (Seal)	Chamberlain (<i>Kethüdâ</i>) (Seal)
Chamberlain (<i>Kethüdâ</i>) (Seal)	Headman (<i>Muhtar</i>) (Seal)	Chamberlain of Tribe (<i>Kethüdây-i Aşiret</i>) (Seal)	White-bearded (<i>Aksakallu</i>) (Seal)	Chamberlain (<i>Kethüdâ</i>) (Seal)	Chamberlain of Tribe (<i>Kethüdây-i Aşiret</i>) (Seal)
Headman (<i>Muhtar</i>) (Seal)	White-bearded (<i>Aksakallu</i>) (Seal)	Chamberlain (<i>Kethüdâ</i>) (Seal)	(Fingerprint)	(Fingerprint)	(Fingerprint)

However, this does not mean that the internal structure of the tribe had also been completely transformed during the reforms of the Tanzimat era. For example, the council of white-bearded elders continued to hold their status as an advisory council to the chief. These elders were not referred to with the title of *agha*, *kahya* or *kethüda* in the documents. Therefore, the status of the *aksakallı* appears to have remained one within the advisory structure of the tribe, separate from the executive order of the chiefs. During the period of reform, the *aksakallı* protected their position within the

¹⁰⁶ BOA, MVL 574/93- (1858). Compare it Appendix D to see how the Tanzimat rule has transformed the titles of chiefs.

¹⁰⁷ Kethüda mostly appears as representative of tribe subordinate to the chiefs.

hierarchy of the tribe, as they did not take the titles of *müdür* or *muhtar*. For Nikitin, the chief's tent functioned like a tribal council and the *aksakallis* had the right to question the chief's orders, although the orders of the chief were usually taken as the final decision of the tribe.¹⁰⁸ Although Bruinessen asserts that the elders did hold no real power, Brant witnessed in 1838 that after he was hosted in the tent of Sultan Agha that "he [Sultan Agha] does not appear to possess great power and may be considered as the president of the council of elders without whose concurrence nothing of much importance is undertaken".¹⁰⁹ Since we have almost no knowledge about how the council within the tribe (*majlis*) functioned, any suggestions regarding chief-*aksakalli* relations might be misleading. What is clear is that the elders of the tribe were a part of tribal rule, and acted as an advisory council to the chief, regardless of whether they held any real power or not. The petitions described above, and the signatures on those petitions, signed by Heyder, Ali, and other aghas of Heyderan's clan leaders, show that they had the same structure as the branch of Sultan Agha.

We have enough sources to suggest that the Heyderan tribe consisted of separate clans during the reform era. Since Ottoman documents and traveler accounts mostly referred to the clans of Heyderan tribes by their upper-collective tribal name, and therefore did not provide their actual clan names, we have little details concerning the functioning of the clans within the Heyderan tribe. However, we do know the names of the Heyderan clans from the writings of Hurşid and Derviş Pasha, who visited the upper Ottoman-Iranian borderlands, as part of an effort to demarcate the borders, and subsequently separate the tribes. For Hurşid Pasha, the clans of the

¹⁰⁸ Nikitine, *Kürtler*, p. 263.

¹⁰⁹ Brant, "Notes on a Journey", p. 412-413.

Heyderan in Bayezid were the Ademan, the Şeyh Hasenan, the Marhori, the Hamdikan, the Dürtuyi, the Akubi, and the Hilekki.¹¹⁰ Some members of these clans also resided in Erciş and Adilcevaz.¹¹¹ The total number he gave was around two thousand tents, although he neglected to provide information regarding those who resided in Ebeğ, who were under the rule of Ali Agha. Derviş Pasha recorded the names of Heyderan's clans in greater detail¹¹²:

Table 3. Clans of Heyderan for Derviş Pasha.

HEYDERAN TRIBE	
<i>The Main Sub-clans of Heyderan Tribe: 800 families</i>	
Helki/Helkan	Başımı
Laçiki	Dertopi
Soran	Akubi
Asi	Seçarki
Şeyh Hasenan (300 tents)	
<i>Sub-clans of Heyderan's Hamdiki Clan: 600 families</i>	
Atmanki	Mele-i Mire
Marhori	Benoşti/Benoşteki
<i>Sub-clans of Heyderan's Ademi Clan: 600 families</i>	
Kalki	Mikaili
Miroyi	Yekran
Zatoyi	Aliski
Şeyhki	Cafoyi
Şemski	Badoyi
Kaski	Tacdoyi
Huveydi	
Total Heyderan Tents: 2000	

According to the details given by Derviş Pasha, some of the clans within the Heyderan held a position of being primary clan units, while other clans were of a lesser status, though still part of the Heyderan tribe as a whole. However, the

¹¹⁰ Mehmed Hurşid Pasha, *Seyahatnâme-i Hudud*, p. 263.

¹¹¹ Mehmed Hurşid Pasha, *Seyahatnâme-i Hudud*, p. 232.

¹¹² Derviş Paşa, *Tahdid-i Hudud-u İrâniye*, p. 154-155.

Hamdiki and Ademi clans of the tribe were thought of as separate tribes, although they were still considered to be a part of the Heyderan tribe, in general.

Unfortunately, we do not know which aghas of *Torin* family governed which clans of Heyderan and their sub-clans, though we do know that intra-tribal alliances were not stable. For example, the Ademi tribe, which was a big clan of Heyderan, was not controlled by the aghas of *Torin* family after the mid-nineteenth century though they were sometimes allied together against the threats that came from another tribe. In addition, Derviş and Hurşid Pasha did not give the names of any chiefs who ruled those clans and sub-clans of the Heyderan. However, Derviş Pasha supports the information provided by Hurşid Pasha that the Heyderan tribe consisted of more than two thousand families during the mid-nineteenth century. The following section will analyze how the direct rule, implemented due to the Tanzimat reforms, affected the status of the Heyderan during the age of centralization, by questioning the policies of the central and local Ottoman governments from different angles.

We will discuss that the Tanzimat rule was in dilemma from the beginning on how to approach the tribal chiefs whether supporting them or exiling from the region. And then we are going to look at how Tanzimat's taxation and settlement policies were applied over the members of Heyderan. The following section will discuss that salaried tribal chiefs had already become an instrument of state apparatus and the power of those chiefs were atomized. Finally, it will be demonstrated how the Tanzimat government marginalized and orientalized its own subjects in their frontiers by suppressing the unruly activities.

4.2.2 Dilemma of the Empire: Supporting or Exiling the Tribal Chiefs?

After the disinheritance of the hereditary sanjak rulers, tribe- empire relations evolved into more direct relations, since the intermediary class structure, *mîrs*, no longer existed, particularly after the 1850s. As explained in the previous chapter, Selim Pasha of Muş sent letters to the Porte in order to receive permission for giving winter quarters to Kasım Agha and his followers who defected to the Ottoman lands in the 1820s. Now, after the implementation of the Tanzimat rules, this duty was carried out by the local Ottoman governors. Tribes, also petitioned the Porte directly, in order to request admission into Ottomans lands, particularly for wintering. However, these *istid'anâmes* were not necessarily sent in order to receive permission for the transhumance and wandering activities of the tribes, particularly since the pastures in the Ottoman frontier were unbounded and already allowed the tribes to wander freely. The petitions sent to the Porte were mostly applications for Ottoman subjecthood in order to receive permission specifically for the wintering of the members of tribes on the Ottoman side of the frontier, thus for temporary settlement. The chiefs of the tribes were in contact with state officials at the local level, and vice versa before they submitted their *istid'anâme* to the Porte, in order to be accepted as Ottoman subjects. This type of communication procedure shows that tribe-empire relations transformed into direct and centralized contact, which previously had been lacking both due to the mediation of the local *mîrs* and the fact that the state had not previously officially recognized the tribal chiefs as representatives.

As part of the newly implemented centralization process in Ottoman East, most of the powerful tribal chiefs received a title of representation from the Ottoman central government. They officially became the head of different branches of same tribes

(*aşiret müdürü*), and received monthly salaries from the local government's treasury. During this first phase, the Porte once more entered into a transitional period to allow the tribal nomads to become accustomed to state taxation, and the chiefs of the Heyderan were authorized by the center to collect taxes from their followers. Although the tribal chiefs had already been collecting taxes from their clan members, to fill their own tribal coffers, now they would need to forward the same levied taxes to the governments, if the central government did not exempt them from taxation that sometimes the Porte privileged the tribal leaders to keep them their ally. By doing so, they would now become a part of the Ottoman state structure and become true Ottoman subjects. In some cases, if the chiefs endeavored to avoid paying taxes and acclimatize to their new status, Ottoman officials were authorized to execute harsher measures in an attempt to pacify the socio-political border-crossing structure of the tribes, by trying to exile some of the tribal chiefs to further assimilate them into Ottoman subjecthood during the Tanzimat era.

In 1848, Heyder Agha, and the prominent chieftains of the Heyderan tribe, signed and sent a petition to the Porte requesting to become Ottoman subject, as they had been residing in Khoi on the Iranian side since 1836.¹¹³ This petition indicated that the implementation of the new reforms did not result in any state-tribal conflict. Heyder Agha, who signed the petition at the top, referred to himself as the chief of the tribes (*reis-i aşâir*), while others regarded themselves as clan chiefs (*oymak ağası*), which indicates that the Heyderan acted collectively in 1848 to protect their access to shelter. According to this petition, the Heyderan chiefs emphasized a few important points:

¹¹³ BOA, İ.MSM. 52/1345A- (1848).

We confirm to give our taxes and will deal with agriculture (*ziraat ve harâsetle meşgul olarak*) [...] we are going to build our houses and settle... without hiding anybody we will register our population...and will practice the new rule (*usûl-ü tanzimât-ı hayriye*) without acting against it anymore.¹¹⁴

The specific phrases that were selected by the chieftains of the Heyderan indicate that they were eager to conform to the new rules introduced during the Tanzimat era. Rather than free will of choice to declare that they will practice the Tanzimat rules, it seems that they were forced to petition under specific conditions to gain acceptance onto Ottoman territory. They promised to cultivate and settle with their own free will, although this did not correspond with the transhumance activities of the Heyderan, who probably had thousands of animals at this time. The petition therefore, reveals the fact that the Heyderan chiefs not only wanted to defect to the Ottoman side, but that their desire was so great that they were willing to promise to transform their way of life, from a wandering nomadic existence to one, which required them to adopt an agricultural life style. Such a drastic change in both their traditional way of life and their means of subsistence continues to puzzle historians. In fact, the change was considered to be so drastic, that even Esad Muhlis Pasha, who was governor general of the newly created province of Kurdistan, also tried to understand why Heyder Agha, and his followers, did not simply prefer to stay in the Iranian side, and thus maintain their original way of living, but instead chose to cross to Ottoman lands in 1849.¹¹⁵

As Gencer briefly mentions, in the summer of 1848, there was a famine on the Iranian side of the border and the Heyderan tribe attempted to cross to the Ottoman

¹¹⁴ BOA, İ.MSM. 52/1345A- (1848).

¹¹⁵ BOA, A.MKT. 227/13- (1849): “*Bunların İran taraflarına gidememeleri ne esbâba men ’uttur etraftıyle bittahkik izâhen*”.

side with eight hundred tents in the same year.¹¹⁶ The famine must have been severe enough that the Heyderan thought it was necessary to winter in Ottoman territory. However, the leaders of the tribe were well aware of the insistence with which the Sublime Porte was acting to implement their mission to transform the administrative and economic nature of the Ottoman East, and therefore, the Heyderan chiefs thought that it was necessary to emphasize that they would follow the orders of both the Porte and the local government. Thus, their promises of settlement were most likely a symbolic argument of submission to the Porte in order to receive support from Ottoman officials. Furthermore, neither the Heyderan nor Ottoman officials were certain of each other's loyalty or trust and thus the Ottomans expected that the tribes would continue to practice their traditional way of living during the age of reform as well. It was for such a reason that Esad Pasha argued that the tribes should be placated, in order to be able to eventually overcome this problem of non-settlement, as he emphasized to Muhammed Reşid Pasha:

It is not possible to trust Heyder Agha and his tribal people. In other words, they do not reside in a specific place and wherever suits their interests, they make it a custom to go back. Now, even though their settlement was done, since they were a contested tribe, the Iranians may proclaim [authority] over the tribe.¹¹⁷

The local council of Van supported Heyder Agha's request of defection to the Ottoman side and were eager to apply the new Tanzimat rules to the region, which included the settling, registering and taxation of the Heyderan, for the council believes that such an action would provide a positive example that could be followed

¹¹⁶ Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler", p. 253.

¹¹⁷ BOA, A.MKT. 227/13- (1849).

by other tribes in the area as well.¹¹⁸ Bulanık, Malazgirt and Ahlat regions had many demolished villages and according to the council members, the Heyderan could repopulate these areas, and make them prosperous once more.¹¹⁹ The Ottoman officials also knew that Heyder Agha was supported in Iranian Çaldıran by the Iranian government.¹²⁰ The Ottoman governor of Kurdistan Province informed the *kaim-i makam* of Van that the councils should not answer the tribe's request until an official order from the Sultan was received, and that until that time, the tribe should remain close to the Ottoman side through the month of August, 1848.¹²¹ The Porte, however, delayed its decision regarding the Heyderan's request, probably due to the 1847 treaty with Iran, which was going to demarcate the borders and determine the residence and protection of contested tribes in the region. It was not until the following year, in 1849, that the Ottomans demonstrated eagerness towards keeping the leaders of the Heyderan within their territories. The treaty would soon be implemented, which meant that representatives of both sides would conduct an expedition that would determine which state had authority over the contested tribes. By maintaining close ties to the chiefs of the Heyderan tribe, the local Ottoman authorities could claim that the tribe should officially be declared as Ottoman, rather than Iranian. Furthermore, this treaty meant that the Ottomans could not publicly allow for Heyder Agha to defect to their side, thus also influencing their decision to delay a formal decision to the tribe's petitions. Thus, the best option for the Porte

¹¹⁸ BOA, İ.MSM. 52/1345D- (1848).

¹¹⁹ BOA, İ.MSM. 52/1345C- (1848): the names of villages are recorded in this document. According to the document, it seems that the military expedition of the Ottoman forces competed with the supporters of Han Mahmud in the upper Lake Van probably caused the demolition of the some villages in Malazgirt, Bulanık and Ahlat region.

¹²⁰ BOA, İ.HR. 56/2606- (1849): "*aşiret-i merkûme ise İranlu'nun bey nazarında olub*".

¹²¹ BOA, İ.MSM. 52/1345G- (1848).

was to maintain close ties between the chiefs and the local authorities and to secretly bribe the Heyderan to remain loyal to the Ottomans.¹²²

Bribing the chiefs, or the notables of the distant territories of the Ottoman empire was not unique to Ottoman East, and the Sublime Porte acted in a similar manner whenever it needed to integrate unruly groups into its system as this time, such as in Tripoli.¹²³ Field marshal, Muhammed Reşid Pasha, and the governor of Kurdistan province, Esad Muhlis Pasha, as well as the Sublime Porte agreed that “not publicly, but quite secretly, giving 15,000 or 20,000 *kuruş* to Heyder Agha is not against the benefits of the state”.¹²⁴ The approach of the Ottoman governors confirms Deringil’s analysis where the “paying a little bit of something” (*bir miktar şey*)¹²⁵ to Heydar Agha was very similar to “the British practice of “cajoling local leaders””,¹²⁶ which Deringil termed as “borrowed colonialism” regarding the Ottoman practice, considering the fact that it was enacted for the survival of the State. This secret bribing (*atiyye-i seniyye*) of Heyder Agha indicates that, during the beginning of the new rule, the central government had already adopted the policy of supporting and encouraging the chiefs of the tribes in order to exert direct control over its borderland subjects within its eastern frontiers. The disinheritance of the *mîrs* created a power

¹²² Check the following footnotes regarding bribing of Heyder Agha.

¹²³ Anderson, “Nineteenth-Century Reform in Ottoman Libya”, p. 323: “In Tripolitania [...] the Ottoman governors tried alternately to bribe and to coerce the local notables into cooperation with the new regime”.

¹²⁴ BOA, İ.HR 56/2606- (1849): “*Haydar Ağa’ya gayet hafî olarak bir miktar atiye-i seniyye itâsı fâideden hâli olmayacağından bâde hazinece tesviye olunmak üzere emvâli merkumeden 15-20 bin kuruş veyahut daha ziyâde ve noksan velhasıl icâb-ı hâle göre her ne miktar şey tensib ider ise anın itâsı*”.

¹²⁵ BOA, İ.HR 56/2606 (1849): “*aşiret-i merkûme ağası Haydar Ağa’ya hafî sûretle bir miktar şey verilmesi münâsib olacağına*”.

¹²⁶ Selim Deringil, “They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery: The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post Colonial Debate” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol: 45, no: 2 (April, 2003), p. 318.

vacuum, and the Ottoman eastern rural frontiers now came under the control of the chiefs of the tribes. In contrast, the centrally and newly appointed *kaim-i makam* of Van had no popular legitimacy or power within the borderland regions, particularly those lying in the Iranian frontiers, as well as in the rural parts located along the northern part of the Lake Van region, where the Heyderan resided. In one document written by Esad Muhlis Pasha, he offers another solution to the government, who could not exert its control over the regions where the Heyderan wandered, that other than bribing the chiefs, the most powerful among them could be separated, while the remaining members in their tribe would be allowed to stay. His suggestion was stated as follows:

After the elimination of the Iranian tribes' entrance to the contested border regions, the chiefs of the Heyderan tribe were going to be separated from the rest of the tribal members and they were going to be settled and paid monthly in distant lands such as in Erzurum and Diyarbekir.¹²⁷

Although Esad Muhlis Pasha did not target the tribe regarding their ethnic or cultural assimilation, what he attempted to do was to socio-politically assimilate the members of the Heyderan tribe, and transform them into loyal Ottoman subjects. Thus, dividing-and-ruling of the tribe via separation of chiefs, while allowing for the rest of the tribe to remain, was suggested as a means to solve the weakness of Ottoman power regarding the border-crossing Heyderan, particularly since Ottoman authority over the tribe was contested by the Iranians. Furthermore, this socio-political pacification of the tribe might have made the Heyderan more loyal to the Ottoman State.

¹²⁷ BOA, A.MKT. 227/13- (1849): “*İran aşâiri gelmekten men kılınıktan sonra aşiret-i merkûmenin ağâvat nâmına olanları bit'tefrik hududa baidce olan yani Erzurum ve Diyarbekir gibi mahallere gönderilerek ve münasib miktar maaş verilerek yerleştirilmesi*”.

It seems that over these few years between the treaty and its implementation, the Porte had to decide whether it should pursue a similar policy to that of dealing with the hereditary sanjak rulers, and thus separating the chiefs of the Heyderan, or whether it should instead empower them within the territories they inhabited in order to become an authoritative force, representing the Ottoman state within the borderlands. Finally, the suggestion of the governor general of the province of Kurdistan was not implemented by the Porte, for the leading chiefs of the Heyderan, Heyder Agha, Ali Agha and the others, were able to reside within their territories historically occupied by their tribes for at least a few hundred years. However, this offer of Esad Muhlis Pasha demonstrates how strict and decisive the Tanzimat rules were during the age of reform, regarding a borderlander tribe and their chiefs.

4.2.3 Taxation of the Tribe under the New Rule

Before the application of the Tanzimat Rules, the local or central Ottoman governments had difficulties levying pasture taxes on the tribes. For the most part, the tribes provided the *mîrs* / governors with their sheep taxes (*ağnam rüsûmu*) and their wintering taxes (*kışlak rüsûmu*), however, after the application of the Tanzimat reforms, the Ottoman archival records show that the Heyderan also paid summer pasturing taxes in the year of 1848. According to Spottiswoode, the summer pastures of the Heyderan tribe lay on the Erzurum-Tabriz road to Maku, the great Persian road.¹²⁸ Along with the Heyderan, he also names the Celali, Milan and Şikak as tribes as among those who pastured in the same territories. In a petition of the Heyderan tribe, they emphasized that “in the spring season [of 1848], by coming to

¹²⁸ Spottiswoode, “Sketch of the Tribes”, p. 244.

Ebeğe village, we paid an abundant amount of summer tax and [gave] expensive gifts to the officials of Mahmudi province” after the Tanzimat rule became dominant in mid-nineteenth century.¹²⁹ The Council of Van Province also confirmed that the Heyderan tribe fully paid their pasture taxes, which was a rare case in terms of state-tribe relations.¹³⁰ In their petition, by emphasizing that they fully paid the pasture tax to the government the tribe attempted to convince the state that they were obeying the orders of the new rule.

However, despite their assurances to the government that they meant to conform to the new order, during the period of Tanzimat reforms in early 1850s, the movement or defection of the Heyderan between Ottoman and Iranian lands continued without hesitations.¹³¹ The Ottoman central government naturally saw these border crossings as a problem, yet they could not provide a plausible and permanent solution. Still, the Ottoman authorities continued to allow defected members of the Heyderan to reside within their frontiers, as an alliance with the tribe continued to mean further military power, revenue, and the protection of the frontier for the Ottoman state.

When they defected from the Iranian side, the local and central governments mostly exempted those new border-crossing tribes from taxation to encourage them to remain on the Ottoman side willingly, for they could not force their removal from Iran, as they would have certainly escaped to return across the border, as stated by

¹²⁹ BOA, İ.MSM 52/1345A- (1848).

¹³⁰ İ.MSM 52/1345D- (1848).

¹³¹ İ.MSM 52/1345B- (1848). “*bir müddetten beri nısfı miktârı memâlik-i mahrûsey-i şahâne dâhilinde ve diğherleri memleket-i İrâniye içinde ikâmet etmekte ve vakit ve fırsat buldukça ve bâzı kervan ve saire gelip geçtikçe bu taraftakiler öteye ve bazen ötekiler berüye geçip yağma ve garet vesâir gûne harekete cesaret*”.

Reşat Kasaba.¹³² In 1855, some members of the Heyderan tribe arrived from the Iranian regions and were settled in the villages of Erciş and Adilcevaz. A document describes the defection of the tribe as such:

for this year of 1271 [1855], taxes will not be collected for the temperament of the time and benefits of the states (*mizâc-ı vakt ve maslahattan*). After the next year's [1856] March, they will be levied the same taxes like their equals.¹³³

Thus, as these tribes were re-accepted into Ottoman lands and as Ottoman subjects, they were sometimes exempted from taxation for the year that they crossed in.

Although the Ottomans and Iranians had made an agreement regarding the separation of borders and tribes (*tahdid-i hudûd ve tefrik-i aşâir*) in 1847, neither side appeared to be applying the rules of the agreement. This lack of rigid adherence to the treaty, allowed for the defection of the tribes to continue as usual, an act exemplified by the Heyderan. The States saw the defection of the tribe to another state as a problem but not when the tribes crossed to their own territories. Therefore, it is possible to suggest that both states carried expansionist policies, as they tried to extend their authority over the contested tribes in their frontier regions, even during the period of reform in the Ottoman Empire. As the previous chapter discussed, the Ottoman central government supported the local hereditary ruler of Muş in 1820s to bring the Heyderan tribe into the Ottoman territories and resisted against the Iranians for returning the tribe. Now, the Ottoman central government applied similar policies via its own centrally appointed rulers in 1850s. As the last section of this chapter will

¹³² Reşat Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants & Refugees* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), p. 108.

¹³³ BOA, İ.MVL 337/14534- (1855). Governor of Van and Hakkari, Ziya Paşa: “*Bu senelik (1271-1855) vergi tahsilinde müsâidelice davranılmış, mizâc-ı vakt ve maslahattan add olunduğundan bi-lütf-u Te’ala mezkûr hânelere dahi gelecek (12)72 [i.e. 1856] senesi Martından itibaren emsâli misillü vergi tahsiliyle miktarının arz ve beyanına ibtidâr olunacağı derkar*”.

elaborate the “problem” of defection was therefore not simply related to the traditional transhumance activities of the tribes, but was also linked to the imperial policies of the Ottoman/Iranian States, which viewed the tribes as an instrument of expansion in the region.

As mentioned above, the Ottoman local governments sometimes applied separate taxation policies towards separate branches of the tribes. While newcomers were exempted from taxation, one year earlier, in 1854, some branches¹³⁴ of the tribe in the Erciş region had given 20,000 *kuruş* to the local government.¹³⁵ The number of Heyderan tents who had to pay this amount was mentioned as between “300-400”. It seems that this branch of Heyderan paid their annual taxes to the government regularly. In the Ebeğë region, Ali Agha of the Heyderan, and his followers, also had to pay 24,000 thousand *kuruş* annually until 1864.¹³⁶ Arguing that Ali Agha was the most powerful among the Heyderan branches, although it is unknown exactly how many tents were under his control, he was responsible for paying only 24,000 *kuruş*. This is particularly true if compared to the other branches of the Heyderan in the Erciş region whose chiefs were of a lesser status in power and therefore possibly consisted of fewer tents in total. In the same year, Ali Agha also received 2,000 *kuruş* monthly and therefore, the local government in Van, under whose authority was also Ebeğë, did not receive any tax incomes from this branch of the Heyderan.¹³⁷

The variety of policies that the Ottoman state pursued in regards to the different branches of the Heyderan, shows that the Ottomans did not adopt one general

¹³⁴ I prefer to say “branch” since it is not clear which clans or sub-clans were in this group.

¹³⁵ BOA, İ.MVL 323/13765- (1854).

¹³⁶ BOA, MVL 678/117- (1864). It was raised from 15,000 to 24,000 and then to 50,000 in 1864.

¹³⁷ BOA, İ.MVL 473/21446- (1862).

strategy in their dealings with the tribes as mentioned above. As Özk-Gündoğan has similarly described “the Ottoman state developed its strategies on a case-by-case basis, taking multiple criteria into consideration”.¹³⁸ Therefore, the policies of the Tanzimat era did not produce one method for dealing with the tribal subjects of the Ottoman Empire. Rather as each case was first individually evaluated, centralist ruling tendencies were applied in different and variously enforced manners throughout the region. What made the policies of Tanzimat era special was the fact that the Ottoman local authorities directly attempted to transform the tribe into docile Ottoman subjecthood and benefit from these fiscally accountable units by extending central power over them. The state officials also knew that it was the tribal chiefs who now held the power to implement the new reform policies, in place of the *mîrs* who had previously acted as a decentralizing and mediating force between the state and the tribes in the region.

4.2.4 What Did Settlement (*iskân*) Mean?: Sedentarization or the Semi-Sedentarization?

Settlement of nomadic moveable subjects was not only an important project of the new rule, but it was also a continuation of policies since the seventeenth century.¹³⁹ However, it is not possible to generally state that local authorities had tried to sedentarize the whole of the Heyderan tribe during the Tanzimat era. During this age of reform, “geographically bounded and hierarchical tribes”¹⁴⁰ were settled via negotiation with the chiefs of the tribes, but since the Heyderan’s wandering spaces

¹³⁸ Özk-Gündoğan, “Ruling the Periphery, Governing the Land”, p. 162.

¹³⁹ Yasemin Avcı, “The Application of Tanzimat in the Desert: The Bedouins and the Creation of a New Town in Southern Palestine (1860-1914),” *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 45 (2009), p. 970.

¹⁴⁰ Köksal, “Coercion and Mediation”, p. 469, 487.

were frontier regions, the governments of the Tanzimat era did not permanently settle all of the branches of the Heyderan. Although there are many Ottoman documents related to the “problem” of settling the tribes, what exactly it meant by the term “settle” (*iskân*) is not clear, particularly in regards to the Heyderan. Did it mean transforming a transhumance or nomadic tribal lifestyle into a settled, agriculturalist one? Or was it more nuanced than that, referring to the transformation of a nomadic existence into a semi-nomadic one? Or does the term signify something else completely?

As mentioned above, in the petition of Heyder Agha, the chiefs of the tribe claimed that they would participate in agricultural cultivation, however they did not state whether they would, in turn, completely abandon their nomadic or transhumance activities.¹⁴¹ In fact, there are no findings that support a complete transformation in the lifestyle of any branch of the Heyderan, from nomadic or semi-nomadic to settled agricultural life. Even a document stating that, a small number of forty or fifty Heyderan tents settled to cultivate their own land in 1850, in Antap (current Tutak), does not confirm that this group did, in fact, cease their pastoral activities as well.¹⁴² Yet despite this ambiguity, the document concludes that the settling of these tribal members, regardless of how few they were in total, was a positive development regarding the modernization mission of the Tanzimat reforms. In general, however, it is clear that for the most part, the Heyderan’s pastoral way of life continued despite a significant decrease in their transhumance routes after the demarcation of the borders with Iran and ceased their trans-border defections.

¹⁴¹ BOA, İ.MSM. 52/1345A- (1848).

¹⁴² BOA, A.MKT. UM. 31/55- (1850).

We understand that, since the Heyderan's wandering spaces were part of the imperial frontier zone, security was much more important than the strict implementations of the reforms of the Tanzimat Era. Two significant Ottoman documents shed some light of what exactly the authorities might have meant in regards to settling the tribes and how this related to the Heyderan. Some eighty tents of the Heyderan tribe, which were controlled by Ali Agha's brother, İbrahim Agha, were settled in Adilcevaz's Sarısu village in 1855.¹⁴³ According to this document, İbrahim Agha even built five houses for his own family. A further one hundred Heyderan tents also settled in sixteen existing villages located in Erciş during the same year. This document reveals that 180 Heyderan tents were settled in the villages of Erciş and Adilcevaz, with the assistance of Ali Agha of the Heyderan, who resided in Ebeğ. This indicates that the Porte had to work with the tribal chiefs to sedentarize the nomads, and they attempted to do so by using Ali Agha to aid with the Heyderan's Erciş and Adilcevaz branches.¹⁴⁴ However, a second Ottoman document reveals the extent to which the tribe's members were settled. Written only three years later, in 1858, it provides an account of the true level of sedentarization of the Heyderan. According to this document, the settled members of the Heyderan tribe actually "resided in a nomadic way" and "they wintered in houses of villagers in a conventional way".¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, the document continues to disclose the fact that most of the "settled" members of the Heyderan had defected back to the Iranian region after two years had passed from the time of their "settling".¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ BOA, İ.MVL 337/14534- (1855).

¹⁴⁴ Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire*, p. 83.

¹⁴⁵ BOA, HR.MKT. 190/12- (1858): "*reâya ve kura ahâlileri hânelerine eski vakitler misüllü kışlak verilerek*". BOA, İ.MSM 52/1345B- (1848): "*göçebelik sûretiyle iskân*".

¹⁴⁶ BOA, HR.MKT. 190/12- (1858): "*geçen baharda pek çoğu yine İran'a avdet etmiş*".

The above case, therefore, demonstrates that for the Ottomans, the settlement of the tribe did not necessarily mean a complete transformation from nomadic to sedentary. Rather, it seems to have implied an attempt at a process in which some of the members of the tribe would adopt a semi-nomadic lifestyle instead. The use of the term “wintering” (*kışlak*) suggests that the Ottomans had attempted to only address the problem of wintering the tribe, and thus although they settled, they did so by residing in rented houses of the villagers, as the Heyderan had previously done. It is possible to suggest that the Ottomans may have forced these tents to semi-settle and build their own houses in the villages where they were settled, however as only a few years later many tribal members moved back to Iranian territory. Furthermore, despite having Ali Agha organized the “settlement” of his members; it seems that some members of the tribe were not that enthusiastic. They did not support this attempt at transforming their tribal-nomadic lifestyle into one of semi-nomadism, or semi-settlement, which also meant increased taxation and expected military service for the state.¹⁴⁷ However, some personal information gathered from the elders of the tribe indicate that not all of the Heyderan tribe defected to the Iranian lands and they built their houses and grazed their flocks in the pastures of Aladağ and Süphan Mountains which were near to Erciş and Adilcevaz.¹⁴⁸ They returned to their own houses before the winter season, and in this way, they gradually transformed into a semi-settled life style.

¹⁴⁷ Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire*, p. 79. Avcı, “The Application of Tanzimat in the Desert”, p. 970.

¹⁴⁸ Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

The sedentarization policies of the Porte aimed at the creation of modern Ottoman subjects within the periphery of the state.¹⁴⁹ Findings, however, do not show that the state took any forceful or coercive actions against the Heyderan regarding sedentarization. Rather, authorities simply took step to limit the tribe's wandering spaces to specific areas in the Ottoman territories and wanted the tribes to build their own houses. The same document mentioned that

If they were settled in a nomadic way and another branch of the tribe would stay in Iran, they cannot leave their previous [nomadic] lifestyle. However, if they build their own houses similar to the settled Ottoman subjects; sedentarize in these houses; and separate from each other, the problem will be eliminated.¹⁵⁰

The interruption of the tribal connections between the separate branches of the Heyderan, wintering them in their own houses, and decreasing the space in which they could pursue their pastoral activities, were all offered as a method to transform the members of the tribe into regular Ottoman subjects during the Tanzimat era. As a result, there are some signs of gradual semi-settlement among a few of the branches of the Heyderan, which occurred during the 1860s.¹⁵¹ However, as Chantre has also claimed, semi-settlement of the Heyderan tribe in Ebeğe occurred primarily during the era of Abdulhamid II in the 1880s, separate than the ones in Erciş and Adilcevaz

¹⁴⁹ Ebubekir Ceylan, *The Ottoman Origins of Modern Iraq: Political Reform, Modernization and Development in the Nineteenth Century Middle East* (London: Tauris, 2011), p. 148.

¹⁵⁰ BOA, İ.MSM 52/1345B- (1848): “*emr-i iskânlarını istid'a eylemiş olanlar yine göçebelik sûretiyle iskân olunur ve bir takımı yine İran tarafında kalır ise bu halde ahvâl-i sâbıklarından ferâgat etmemeleri me'mûl olub sâye-i şevketvâye-i hazret-i cihandârî'de ekser ahâli mutavattını misillü hâneler inşa ettirilerek tavattun ve ikâme olunurlar ve cümlesi birlikte bölünürler ise mahzur-u mezkûr mündefî olacağı*”.

¹⁵¹ BOA, İ.MVL 473/21446- (1862): “*yed'imizde bulunan kâffe-i arâziyi dahi tapuya rabt eyleme*”.

region.¹⁵² Thus, it can be argued that the greatest issue for the State was not necessarily the nomadic lifestyle of the Heyderan, but rather that in disregarding Ottoman regulations concerning their wandering, the result was a loss of revenue for the State. Also, by practicing a fully nomadic lifestyle, the tribe continued to agitate the problem of defection, which resulted in a loss of border security along the frontier. Therefore, we cannot suggest that the Tanzimat rules forced the Heyderan to completely abandon their life of pastoralism, or that the new reforms coerced them into fully settling in villages.

Overall, Tanzimat's sedentarization policies can be considered as ideal outlines of what the state wished would occur, however not particularly for the Heyderan's case since their wandering region was a frontier. There was no single policy regarding the settlement of the Heyderan, employed by Ottoman authorities. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that some tents of the tribe were semi-settled in the regions of Erciş and Adilcevaz, while other clans of the tribe remained nomadic in Ebeğeli until the 1880s. The fear of defection to Iran appears to have led the Ottomans to carefully monitor the tribe along the eastern borderlands and to remain flexible as much as possible with the implementation of its reform policy. Although officials planned to create Ottoman subjects out of the frontier tribes by limiting their wandering spaces, neither the Ottoman nor Iranian authorities went so far as to completely enforce limitations on the tribe's transhumance activities. This only occurred after the emergence of ethnic-nation states.¹⁵³ Thus, we might suggest that

¹⁵² Ernest Chantre, "De Beyrouth A Tiflis" *Le Tour De Monde Nouveau Journal Des Voyages*, Paris:1889, p. 290-296: For him, Ali Agha's branch of Heyderan in Ebeğeli semi-settled when Musa Agha led the tribe during the 1880s.

¹⁵³ F. Koohi-Kamali, *The Political Development of the Kurds in Iran: Pastoral Nationalism* (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2003).

the nomadic transhumance activities of the Heyderan were dominantly transformed into a semi-settled lifestyle the most especially after 1860s during the Tanzimat Era.

4.2.5 Salaried Tribal Chiefs

One significant aspect of the Ottoman state's new reform program was to support the tribal chiefs in order to achieve fiscal and security aims along the margins of the empire. While the Tanzimat rule had supported urban notables in the city centers, tribal chiefs were pioneered in rural frontiers to practice the new reforms.¹⁵⁴ Chiefs supported by the state received certain privileges, which not only allowed them to assume a position of greater power and become representatives of their branches of the tribe, but to also become mediators between the state and tribal society along the borderland.¹⁵⁵ As both medals and titles were given to these chiefs by the state, their legitimacy as political actors further increased in eyes of the Ottoman government. Therefore, the Heyderans were no longer a marginal tribe in the frontier regions. Not only the Heyderan, but many of the tribal chiefs, or sheikhs, were authorized to receive a monthly payment from the government in return of being representatives of their own societies, and thus they became part of the integration of the tribes into the Ottoman State.¹⁵⁶ The chart below displays tribal chiefs, who temporarily received monthly payments after 1849:

¹⁵⁴ Uğur Bahadır Bayraktar, "Periphery's Centre: Reform, Intermediation, and Local Notables in Diyarbekir, 1845-1855" *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities and Politics*, eds. Yaşar Tolga Cora, Dzovinar Derderian, Ali Sipahi (New York, I.B. Tauris, 2016), p. 171-172.

¹⁵⁵ Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire*, p. 112.

¹⁵⁶ Avcı, "The Application of Tanzimat in the Desert" p. 975: The Sublime Porte applied similar project of integration of the tribal sheiks in the southern Palestine too.

Table 4. Monthly payment of the some tribal chiefs.¹⁵⁷

Chief	Payment (<i>Kuruş</i>)	Chief	Payment (<i>Kuruş</i>)
Ali Agha of Oramar	200	Yakup Agha of Buyi	300
Saido of Şebdilli	350	Sano Agha of Yezidi Tribe	200
Zerko Agha of Hasenan	500	Abdal Agha of Heyderan	500
Mustafa Agha of Heyderan (<i>müdür</i> of Heyderan)	500	Ali Agha of Heyderan	2,000
Keleş Agha of Şikak	200	Ömer Agha of Sepki	700
Saido Agha of Takori	250	Ahmed Agha of Makori	300
Ömer Agha of Milan	350	Ali Agha	1,000

İbrahim Agha, the brother of Heyder Agha, petitioned the government in 1850 to allow him to take refuge in Ottoman lands, and furthermore he requested that he receive a payment of 1,500 *kuruş* per month from the authorities, similar to the one his brother Heyder Agha received.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, payment of the tribal chiefs as an Ottoman policy resulted in an increased number of defections to Ottoman lands by some of the Heyderan chiefs. İbrahim Agha, Heyder Agha, Ali Agha, Muhammed Agha, Temir Agha, Abdal Agha and Mustafa Agha all received monthly allowance from the government, and although all were related to each other, they each held authority over a different branch of the Heyderan tribe. As the above table demonstrates, Ali Agha's salary was significantly higher than the salaries of the remaining chiefs. This is due to the fact that Ali Agha not only held more power than the other chiefs, but he also held the role of securing the control and safety of the passage route through Ebeğ, which led to the summer pastures of both the Ottoman and Iranian tribes. He was made director (*müdür*) of Ebeğ and was given the title of

¹⁵⁷ Gencer, "Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler", p. 256.

¹⁵⁸ BOA, A.MKT.UM 25/60- (1850). İbrahim Agha had supported Han Mahmud and took refuge to the Iranian territories as the previous pages discussed.

dergâh-ı âli kapıcıbaşılığı,¹⁵⁹ along with the fifth degree *majidi* decoration, which was bestowed upon him for the support he had provided to the Ottoman army, and the help he provided in the restoration of Van Castle during and after the Crimean War.¹⁶⁰ According to Averyanov, this title was equal to that of “brigadier”, and thus it was a top level title, however, Ali Agha did not receive the title of “*Mirliva/Mîr-i Mirân Pasha*” although Averyanov believed it to be so.¹⁶¹ We should remember that the last disinherited *mîrs*, Nurullah Bey of Hakkari, and Şerif Bey of Muş, had also received the title of *dergâh-ı âli kapıcıbaşılığı*, and had also been appointed to the position of district governor (*müdür*) of their hereditary territories, before they were sent into exile in 1849.¹⁶² The Porte now had to ally with the chiefs of the tribes even after the implementation of a more centralized rule in the region, as tribal identity continued to remain strong and eclipsed any sense of Ottoman subjecthood.

The monthly payments received by the chiefs, though authorized by the center, were not, in fact, paid out of the treasury of the central or local governments. Rather, these salaries were mostly generated from the chiefs’ followers, the members of the tribes. The government adjusted an amount of annual taxation for the separate branches of the tribes, and the chiefs were responsible to collect those taxes and forward them to the treasury of the local governments. In the case of Ali Agha, since the annual payment of Ali Agha’s group was 24,000 *kuruş*, and Ali Agha himself received

¹⁵⁹ *Kapıcıbaşı* was a title for the head of Sultan’s Palace guards but after the eighteenth century, this title was also given to the provincial notables (*âyân*). Powerful and prestigious notables received this title during the nineteenth century: İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti’nin Saray Teşkilatı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1984), p. 406-407. Avcı, “The Application of Tanzimat in the Desert”, p. 969-983: The status of Ebeğe was almost similar to the newly built provincial city of Beersheba in Southern Palestine which the State empowered the Bedouin sheikhs to integrate them into the Ottoman system.

¹⁶⁰ BOA, MVL 574/93- (1858).

¹⁶¹ Averyanov, *Osmanlı İnan Rus Savaşlarında*, p. 89.

¹⁶² Ateş, *Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, p. 83.

2,000 *kuruş* monthly, there was no income for the government of Van province. Then in 1864, the government decided to increase this amount to 50,000 which in turn caused Ali Agha's defection to the Iranian side.¹⁶³ If we exclude some payments of encouragement given by the state to entice the chiefs to defect to the Ottoman side, the chiefs received their salaries from the taxation of their own tribal members.

The reforms implemented during the Tanzimat era utilized the tribal chieftains in order to control the members of the tribes residing in Ottoman lands and to collect taxes from them on behalf of the local government. Remembering that the last Kurdish *mîrs* held the same titles and a similar status in the region, the newly salaried chiefs became instruments used by this newly modernizing state in order to transform the mobile and independent-minded nomadic tribes into dependent Ottoman subjects. Furthermore, this transitional period of the re-clanization of the Ottoman eastern frontiers increased the power of the tribal chiefs. It also transformed the tribal chiefs into the representatives of the State for their own tribal members as well. The chiefs stepped into the similar role and came to reflect the same popular legitimacy and authority as the *mîrs* once had during the pre-Tanzimat era.¹⁶⁴

Therefore, the tribal chiefs were already instrumentalized by the State before the creation of the Hamidian light cavalry regiments in the 1890s.

¹⁶³ BOA, MVL 678/45- (1864).

¹⁶⁴ What made Bedirhan, Behlül and Emin Pashas came to the power was the support of the Porte which made them successful against their competitors.

4.2.6 Dividing the Frontier and Atomizing the Tribe

Tribal divisions presented many opportunities for state intervention, in order to control and secure its borderlands for territorialization.¹⁶⁵ One of the important policies of the Ottoman central government, during the age of reform, was to empower lesser chiefs in order to atomize, or divide, borderland society.¹⁶⁶ Sabri Ateş describes this process as the re-clanization of Ottoman East, since under the previously powerful Kurdish *mîrs*, the region was incorporated into small proto-state structures under the strict control of the hereditary ruling class.¹⁶⁷ At this time, the Heyderan chiefs were less powerful political actors in the region. Following the Ottoman State's dismantling of the emirates, the Heyderan chiefs held the potential to become tribal emirs of the region, and soon found themselves in a position where they were able to have a say in state-tribe relations. While there were a few prominent leaders in the Heyderan tribe, such as Kasım and Muhammed Agha during the 1820s, after the state implemented its reforms, less prestigious chiefs within the tribe were also able to increase their own power, as the Porte did not wish to support a single prominent chief, and thus deal with one united, powerful tribal entity. Governmental support of a number of chiefs, particularly the ones who held lower status, allowed the state to divide or atomize the Heyderan to rule over it more easily, and furthermore, to receive a greater income from the tribe.¹⁶⁸ Although the Heyderan's Erciş and Adilcevaz branches were previously controlled by Ali Agha,

¹⁶⁵ Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire*, p. 102.

¹⁶⁶ Ateş, *Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, p. 82.

¹⁶⁷ Ateş, *Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, p. 82.

¹⁶⁸ There were similar divide-and-rule tribal policies in Baghdad too that Reşid Pasha divided and appointed tribal chiefs to control the tribal subjects: Ebubekir Ceylan, "1858 Toprak Reformunun Bağdat'ta Uygulanışı: Keiko Kiyotaki, Ottoman Land Policies in the Province of Baghdad, 1831-1881" *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi*, vol: 3/5 (2005), p. 832.

the Porte gave authority to less powerful leaders, dividing this branch too. During the mid-1860s, this resulted in the Heyderan being classified as two separate branches: one branch was in the Erciş, Patnos, and Adilcevaz region, and the other was composed of the followers of Ali Agha, who resided in Ebeğe.¹⁶⁹ Thus, re-clanization of Ottoman East was not limited to the general political structure in the region, but led to deep division and the development of separate, individual leadership within the tribes as well.

It is possible to call this process “dividing the already divided” in order to rule the region, for the various members of the *Torin* household had a legitimate right to govern their own separate branches of the tribe. However, their authority was subordinate to those holding greater power. By providing support to the less prestigious chiefs, the Porte or the local government was providing authorization for the separation of these chiefs from the tribal leaders and to become powerful, independent chiefs, in their own right. Although Ali Agha was still the most powerful among the Heyderan’s *Torin* household, from 1858 to 1864 we are confronted by many other relatives of Ali Agha who began to act independently. In 1859, the Sublime Porte granted Muhammed Agha¹⁷⁰ in Bayezid’s Patnos region the title of tribal governor (*müdür*). In return, he had to collect 40,000 *kuruş* annually and forward it to the treasury of Van province in order to maintain his new position.¹⁷¹ This development meant that Muhammed Agha was no longer subordinate to Ali Agha, and his monthly salary of 500 *kuruş* was also granted by the

¹⁶⁹ Spottiswoode, “Sketch of the Tribes”, p. 245.

¹⁷⁰ Muhammed Agha was the grandfather of Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha who will be discussed in the following chapter during the Hamidian era.

¹⁷¹ BOA, İ.MVL 412/17992- (1859).

government. At times, the authorities re-united the Erciş and Adilcevaz branches of the Heyderan under Ali Agha once more, though only if it was beneficial to the state.

In 1862, after one such merging, the government once more divided the tribe, and separated those who resided in Erciş' Sarısu region, appointing Temir Agha¹⁷² as tribal governor (*müdür*).¹⁷³ A document recording the move to divide the tribe shows that the request came from Temir Agha himself who no longer wanted to remain subordinate to his uncle, Ali Agha. He also proposed to increase the annual tax from his branch of the tribe, from 35,000 to 50,000 *kuruş*, and promised to register the number of animals (*tâdâd-ı ağnâm*) owned, if the Porte would accept his offer, and separate his branch from Ali Agha's. Another document reveals that Temir Agha's offer was accepted by the Porte, since, as Ottoman officials described, "with this way security and fiscal consideration" became more assured for the State.¹⁷⁴ Later in 1864, Sultan Agha's son, Mustafa Agha was also given the title tribal *müdür*, together with a monthly salary of 500 *kuruş*. These documents record the process through which the state atomized the Heyderan to its own benefit (*maslahat*), and the result of this policy was that no single powerful chief could emerge, who could in turn exert authority over the entirety of the Heyderan tribe in the region during the Tanzimat era.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² Temir Agha was the father of Hüseyin Pasha.

¹⁷³ İ.MVL. 473/21446- (1862). Temir Agha also promised to register their lands. This shows that the land code of 1858, which necessitated registering personal lands, had not properly applied in Erciş and Adilcevaz yet until 1864. Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State*, p. 182-184. Klein, "Conflict and Collaboration", p. 158.

¹⁷⁴ İ.MVL. 473/21446-4- (1862).

¹⁷⁵ BOA, MVL 678/111- (1863).

When Abdal Agha¹⁷⁶ also became a separate tribal *müdür* in 1858, Ali Agha and his followers petitioned the Porte, and accused the governor of Van of weakening the power of tribe, “who was under miserable and scattered conditions”.¹⁷⁷ A tax assessor in Erzurum also sent a report to the Porte, concerning the fact that the governor of Van had acted in such a quick and decisive manner, claiming that he should have considered the wills of the tribe as a whole and taken action accordingly. For the tax assessor, Ali Agha and his followers performed a crucial role in Ebeğe, protecting the Sublime borders (*hudûd-u hâkâniye*), and thus Ottoman authorities were to treat the tribes with a similar temperament (*mîzac*) to that of the European powers, in regards to their colonial subjects. He viewed the relationship between the Ottoman state and the Kurdish tribes as mirroring that of the one the European powers had with their colonial subjects, thus placing the state in a paternal role and making the Heyderan into colonized subjects. Furthermore, he argued that this meant that the Ottoman governors should be more prudent in their application of atomizing policies to the tribe, despite the resultant fiscal and security benefits to the state. He also suggested that the governors should approach the situation by first understanding the wants or temperament (*mîzac*) of the tribe as a whole, rather than taking advantage of dissent in their ranks to formally divide the Heyderan. Therefore, during this historical transformation of Ottoman East, the state not only atomized the power structure of the emirates by encouraging re-clanization within the ranks of the tribes, but they also solidified this dissent and disunity, by formally dividing the tribe into separate branches through the granting of titles and salaries to less powerful and prestigious chiefs.

¹⁷⁶ Abdal or more locally Evdal was the brother of Temir Agha. The names of chiefs given through out this thesis were from the same *Torin* family.

¹⁷⁷ BOA, MVL 574/93 (1858): “*mezbur müdürümüz [Ali Agha] tâb getiremeyib ve bunun üzerine aşiretimiz birbirimiz perâkende oluruz nihâyetinde perişanlık elvirecek*”.

4.2.7 The Modern Face of the State: Making its own Orient and the “Other”

Said’s idea of western orientalism helps us to understand why some British and Russian officials or travelers saw Ottoman East as a backward entity, without even the potential to eventually modernize.¹⁷⁸ By categorizing certain groups as “other” in regards to their identity and the space they resided in, they were able to determine who was modernized/ developed and who was not. However, what Said failed to note was the idea that western orientalism could be appropriated by those very states to which the term was originally meant to represent, and applied to subjects within their own borders, whom they could “other” or orientalize in manner similar to that which was applied to them by the West. Some scholars have analyzed the idea that orientalism was not limited to European States and an “orient” can create its own “orient”, as shown by Powell in regards to Egypt’s Sudan.¹⁷⁹ Ussama Makdisi’s “Ottoman Orientalism” article also made the claim that as the Ottoman center represented the most modern space within the state, it allowed the state to legitimize modernization efforts regarding its own “backward periphery”, in this case, Mount Lebanon.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ Averyanov, *Osmanlı Iran Rus Savaşlarında*, p. 22, 28, 46, 51: Averyanov described the tribes as “savages”, “half-savages”, as having “savage independence”, and as being “savage and possessing unlimited independence”. Major Frederick Millingen, *Wild Life Among The Koords* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1870), p. 168, 254, 300: Millingen sometimes addressed the Kurds and Armenians as “half savage people”, with a “barbaric style”, or as “wild mountaineers”. Zharmukhamed Zardykhan “Ottoman Kurds of the first world war era: Reflections in Russian sources” *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 42, issue 1, (2006), p. 67-85: Zardykhan showed that Russian officials imaged “Kurds” as “backward nomadic” subjects but this approach fluctuated to positive images of potential allies when the Kurds played positive role for the Russian expansionism.

¹⁷⁹ Eve M. Troutt Powell, *A different Shade of Colonialism: Egypt, Great Britain, and the Mastery of the Sudan* (Los Angeles: Uni. of California Press, 2003).

¹⁸⁰ Ussama Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism” *The American Historical Review*, vol. 107, no: 3 (June 2002), p. 768-796.

We might suggest that the Tanzimat era's modernizing mission became a process of self-orientalism within the Ottoman eastern frontier. The tribal members residing within the imperial periphery were seen as not real Ottomans, but as potential subjects, who first needed to be transformed into modern Ottoman subjects. As Kasaba has argued, Ottoman officials viewed the nomadic tribes as primitive, as raiders, "animal like" and wild, which were ideas similar to those of European travelers and officials who explored the region.¹⁸¹ In fact, some Ottoman documents refer to the Heyderan as a "backward" tribal entity of the frontier that needed the civilizing mission of the State. An Ottoman doctor, Muhlis Efendi, who served in Bayezid, wrote to the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran in 1864, described the role of Ali Agha in the Ebeğe region, and afterwards commented that:

If capable and powerful governors had been appointed to this region, those savage Kurds, who did not stay away from distorting the public order, could have been eliminated, and the borders of the Sultan would have been properly protected by those Kurds faithfully.¹⁸²

Securing and controlling the frontier borders of the State, where members of Heyderan tribe were located, represented a modern facet of the state, and the "savage" Kurds could only be capable of serving the state if they were aggressively

¹⁸¹ Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire*, p. 10. Fikret Adanır, "'Ermeni Meselesi'nin Doğuşu", *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015), p. 15.

¹⁸² BOA, HR.TO 446/65- (1864): "*Devlet-i Aliyenin memâlik-i İraniye ile hemhudûd bulunan eyâlet ve elviyesinde icrây-ı hükûmete memur intihâbında itinâ buyurulmuş olsaydı bunca uygunsuz hâlât zuhûra gelmez idi çünkü buraların ahvâline oldukça itlâ-ı kesb etmiş olduğundan bu havâliye ashab-ı ehliye ve iktidardan vali ve kaim-i makamlar tâyin buyurulmuş olsa idi, el hâlet-i hinde rahat durmayıp ahâlinin emn ü asâyişini ihlâlden hâli olmayan şu vahşi Kürdlerin kibr ü müfsidâtları bertaraf edildikten başka hudûd-u hakâniyenin hüsn-ü zabt ve rabtıyla emr-i muhafazasını bile mezkûr Kürdlere sûret-i sâdikânede gördürmek mümkün olur idi*".

ruled by a strong, centralized authority.¹⁸³ Transforming the unruly tribes into docile subject could therefore, only be achieved through a powerful and forceful implementation of direct rule by the government in Istanbul. Otherwise, for Muhlis Efendi, the Heyderan and other “backward” borderlanders could not have become valuable subjects, serving for the benefit of the modernized state. This mentality of Muhlis Efendi was probably influenced by the ideology of social-Darwinism, which was particularly influential among Ottoman intellectuals during the Tanzimat era.¹⁸⁴ It can be argued that it influenced the political atmosphere of the age of reform, particularly regarding ideas of perfection, progress and the changes needed to survive.

In a letter written to the Porte in 1867, Muhammed Reşid Paşa the governor of Erzurum, wrote that some branches of the tent-dwelling (*haymenişîn*), “vagrant” Heyderan tribe were wandering around the province of Van, and therefore, they needed to be settled in order to direct them into the correct stage of civilization (*dâire-i medeniyete alınarak*).¹⁸⁵ Due to their nomadic pastoral lifestyle, the Heyderan tribe was viewed as a non-modern entity, and unless they were settled and placed under state control and authority, they could never become a part of the modern state. The Tanzimat era’s officials perceived those wandering Heyderan groups as the “other”, as those who needed to be “guided” towards a “modern” stage of humanity and subjecthood. Another Ottoman official, who was a tax assessor in Erzurum in 1858, reported to the Porte that:

¹⁸³ Savagery and wildness were the two dominant terminology of the Tanzimat State. For more information check: Maurus Reinkowski, *Düzenin Şeyleri, Tanzimat’ın Kelimeleri*, p. 142-146.

¹⁸⁴ Ülker Öktem, “Effects of Charles Darwin’s Theory of Evolution in Tanzimat” *Kaygı* 19/2012, p. 15.

¹⁸⁵ BOA, İ.DH. 567/39502- (1867).

even if there are some beliefs of seeing Kurdish clans (*Ekrâd tâifesi*) as non-useful (*kullanılmaz*) and non-beneficial (*ve işe yaramaz*); as it was known, that whoever the nations, the European States controlled [colonized], they beneficially used and disciplined (*pek güzel kullanıb ve terbiye edip işe yarattı*) those peoples, since they [the European States] shaped their own orders according to those nations' temperature and habits. It cannot be denied that in this way the Europeans facilitated their own advantages¹⁸⁶

This report, as shown above, was written from Erzurum to defend Ali Agha, since the local government of Van province had decided to divide a branch of the Heyderan tribe, and remove it from the control of Ali Agha. This Ottoman official compared the policies of colonial European States to the Ottoman state, and made the suggestion that the Heyderan could be transformed into a more valuable instrument of state power if the policies were modified to fit the temperature/habits of the tribe, or in this case, to the ideas of Ali Agha. The statement coming from this Ottoman official, reflect the idea that the Porte did not view the members of the tribe as real Ottoman subjects, but rather as an “other”, whom the state could use and benefit from.

By making an analogy between the tribes of Ottoman eastern provinces and colonized subjects of the West, the tax assessor of Erzurum was also indicating that he viewed the Heyderan as an “other”, which needed to be dealt with differently than a true Ottoman subject. His approach to the tribe not only resulted in otherization of it, but also implied that the civilizing mission of the Tanzimat reforms imitated ideas displayed in Western colonialism, which in the Ottoman context, Deringil refers to as

¹⁸⁶ BOA, MVL 574/93- (1858): “Gerçi Ekrâd tâifesi haklarında bazılarının itikâdı başka olub yâni bunların bir vakidde kullanılmaz ve işe yaramaz gibi efkârda bulunurlar ise de mâlum-u âli-i velîniâmları buyrulduğu üzere Avrupa devletleri herhangi millet ellerine geçirseler mizâc ü müşvarlarına göre emr-i idârelerinin hüsn-ü suretini bularak pek güzel kullanıb ve terbiye edip işe yaradı kendilerinden menâfi-i istihsâli eyledikleri cây-ı inkar olamayacağı”.

“borrowed colonialism”.¹⁸⁷ Claiming that there was “belief of some” (*bâzularının itikâdi*) among Ottoman officials that the Kurds were in no way profitable to the state, also reveals the fact that the tribes considered to be “backward” and unable to transform into a modern entity. Therefore, it is possible to suggest that such Ottoman officials such as the tax assessor, created their own idea of an orient within the empire during the Tanzimat era. They placed it along the eastern Ottoman frontier, and represented the Heyderan as colonial subjects who without the civilizing mission of the modern state, would remain in their backward and “oriental” state. As Deringil and Makdisi have argued, these ideas were a means of resistance employed by Ottoman officials, whereby if the Ottoman state resembled the European colonial state of their enemies, they themselves would not become the colonized.¹⁸⁸

4.2.8 Suppression of the Unruly Salaried Chiefs

During the age of reform, although the Ottoman State centralized its authority in Ottoman East, the successful control and settling of the tribal members was not actually achieved.¹⁸⁹ Despite more direct control of the territory by the central authorities, members of the tribes continued to loot the neighbouring territories. Normally, when a member of the tribe pillaged properties belonging to someone else, the tribal chief of the raider was responsible for the restitution or reimbursement of the looted properties, especially once they returned to their wintering territories.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ Deringil, “They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery”, p. 317-318.

¹⁸⁸ Deringil, “They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery”, p. 341. Makdisi, “Ottoman Orientalism”, p. 768-796.

¹⁸⁹ Musa Çadırcı, “Tanzimat Uygulanması ve Karşılaşılan Güçlükler (1840-1856)” in *Tanzimat: Değişim Sürecinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu*, ed. Halil İnalcık, Mehmet Seyitdanlıoğlu (Ankara: Phoenix, 2006), p. 157.

¹⁹⁰ Brant, “Notes on a Journey”, p. 413.

According to Spottiswoode, who travelled Ottoman eastern provinces in 1864, there was a “plundering season” that began in May, and increased throughout the summer.¹⁹¹ During the Tanzimat era, not only the members of the tribes, but also the tribes’ *müdürs*, continued to tyrannize the villagers.

A file of Ottoman documents reveals that Sultan Aghazâde İbrahim Agha, who was one of the Heyderan’s tribal governors (*müdürs*) in the district (*kaza*) of Erciş, in 1864, obtained service and wheat from the villagers in the Patnos district (*kaza*), but did not pay them.¹⁹² The villagers petitioned the council of Patnos, who recorded what kind of properties were taken from the villagers, and the council forwarded their report (*mazbata*) to the council of Erciş. According to this report, İbrahim Agha, his brother Ali Agha,¹⁹³ and their relatives, received wheat, some amount of money, sheep, goats, and oxen from the villagers. The tribe also wintered in the villages, and received labor during the building of a sheep barn, without payment. After it was reported to the grand council of Van, Derviş Bey was assigned the duty of resolving this problem. He was sent from Van to Patnos with soldiers and both villagers and representatives of the tribe were present for the investigation. At the conclusion, an agreement was reached by both sides. It was decided that the sheep barn was to be demolished, as its construction was not legal in another Armenian village. Ali Agha would cover the payment for the work, as well as the fee calculated for some wheat bushels (*Patnos kilesi*) that had been unpaid, at a rate of 80 *kuruş* per bushel. Furthermore, the wintering fee was paid by the tribe to the villagers and some

¹⁹¹ Spottiswoode, “Sketch of the Tribes”, p. 244. An Ottoman document explains that tribes had to go to the summer pastures in Ebeğe until the end of the spring season in May: BOA, MVL 258/49- (1853).

¹⁹² BOA, MVL 679/74- (1864).

¹⁹³ This Ali Agha was the son of Sultan Agha, not the brother of Sultan Agha who resided in Ebeğe.

animals and money returned to their owners. Finally, some additional *kuruş* were added to the tax amount required of the tribe, as the previous payment was incomplete.¹⁹⁴

The council of Patnos, which had reported the unruly activities of Sultan Aghazâdes, forwarded this complaint to Van on April 10, 1864, and within two weeks, on April 24, 1864 the issue was resolved. The speed at which a solution was presented is evidence of the type of governing that was implemented during the Tanzimat era and it indicates how the modern state tried to function in Ottoman East, in order to keep the tribes under control. The local government sent their representative to Patnos, and he returned almost all of the property and fees owed to the owners. Derviş Bey was able to retrieve them from the sons of Sultan Agha, one of whom, İbrahim Agha, was a tribal governor (*aşiret müdürü*) at the time. However, what is clear was the fact that the representative of the tribe, who carried the title (*müdür*), still participated in unruly activities. The ruling enforced on the chiefs demonstrated how, during the Tanzimat era, state officials attempted to apply strict rules and control over the tribes, yet it is also clear that the centralization policies of the state were not able to fully control the actions of the tribe and its leaders, regardless of the fact that they were officially appointed to their positions by the state. However, as the later chapters will discuss, during the era of Abdülhamid II the activities of the tribes were no longer monitored and similar complaints of villagers were ignored by the state. During the Tanzimat era, we see that the local governments of Ottoman East such as in Van attempted to function with a significant authority, tried to enforce its rule over the branch of the Heyderan who resided in the Erciş region.

¹⁹⁴ BOA, MVL 679/74- (1864).

Although the researchers mostly asserted that the Armeno-Kurdish relations began to get worse during the Hamidian era especially after the Berlin Treaty in 1878, it seems that the relations had already begun as a class conflict among the chiefs of Heyderan and the villagers of Patnos during the Tanzimat era.¹⁹⁵ Its enforcement of Heyderan's semi-settlement in the villages of Erciş and Adilcevaz led them to build houses, which made a shift on their collective social organization of production.¹⁹⁶ Though pastures and water were the two significant sources for their nomadic life before, now, land became necessary merchandise for members of the Heyderan tribe too. Thus, agrarian problem did not appear as an ethnic conflict in Hamidian era but rather mostly began with the enforcement of the Tanzimat rules which had changed the meaning of land for the member of tribes. Nevertheless, unlike the Hamidian regime, the Tanzimat's local governments did not ignore the Heyderan chiefs' unruly activities.

On June 18, 1864, a month after the trial in Patnos, the governor of Hakkari and Van, Ahmed Pasha,¹⁹⁷ sent a letter to the Porte, criticizing the *kaim-i makâm* and the council of Bayezid. According to Ahmed Pasha, İbrahim Agha, who looted the properties and goods of the villagers of Patnos, was now appointed by the council of Bayezid as *müdür* of the district (*kazâ*) of Patnos.¹⁹⁸ Ahmed Pasha shares that İbrahim Agha's status as tribal governance (*aşiret müdürlüğü*) was removed due to

¹⁹⁵ Yaşar Tolga Cora, "Doğu'da Kürt-Ermeni Çatışmasının Sosyoekonomik Arkaplanı" *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015), p. 130.

¹⁹⁶ Samira Haj, "The Problem of Tribalism", p. 49.

¹⁹⁷ Atmaca, "Politics of Alliance and Rivalry on the Ottoman-Iranian Frontier", p. 175. Ahmed Pasha was a *mîr* of Baban Household and he was incorporated into the Ottoman bureaucracy after the power of the Baban Emirate was eliminated by the Porte. Ahmed Pasha had strict taxation policies for the tribes and he increased the Heyderan's amount of annual sheep and tithes taxes as will be discussed later. It would be interesting to study other disinherited *mîrs* who continued to become an Ottoman Pasha since the historiography often depicted them as rebels, exiled and pacified.

¹⁹⁸ BOA, MVL 679/74-3- (1864).

the activities he had carried out against the villagers of Patnos. In his place, Mustafa Agha was appointed as the tribal *müdür* of the Heyderan in the Erciş region. Ahmed Pasha questions how an unruly tribal chief, who was fired from his duty, could then be appointed to a higher post, that of district governor (*kaza müdürü*). He claimed that the actions taken by the council were “against the rules of sublime ministry” (*hilâfi vekâletpenâhileri*) and requested that the Porte reverse the decision of the Bayezid Council.

In June 1864, Bayezid was ruled by a council, which was headed by a *kaim-i makam*, Ali Bey. The Porte removed the previous district governor of Bayezid, Vamık Efendi in May 1864 due to an accusation of bribery.¹⁹⁹ We do not know why the council of Bayezid appointed İbrahim Agha, particularly after the action he had taken against the villagers. We can infer two possible reasons: the first is that İbrahim Agha may have bribed the *kaim-i makam*, or the council of Bayezid appointed him as an act against the decision taken by the council of Van. Muhlis Efendi, noted in June 1864, in a letter that

after Vamık Efendi was fired, Kalcıoğlu Ali Bey from Trabzon was appointed as the governor of Bayezid. I know the Ali Bey’s personality very well. He is incapable and corrupt (*liyâkatsiz ve mürtekib*). No doubt that he will compromise with the council of Bayezid and will prefer his own interests rather than those of the state and Bayezid’s subjects.²⁰⁰

Muhlis Efendi’s personal comments regarding the personality of the new ruler of Bayezid, particularly his willingness to compromise with the council, may be correct, and it may explain why İbrahim Agha was appointed as district governor (*kaza müdürü*) of Patnos. Whatever the reason may be, the governor of Van, Ahmed Pasha

¹⁹⁹ Karataş, *Bayezid Sancağı*, p. 166.

²⁰⁰ BOA, HR.TO 446/65- (1864).

opposed the decision of the council as he considered it to be against the nature of the Tanzimat reforms, whose aim was to transform tribal society into ordinary and docile Ottoman subjects, rather than unruly, wandering tribal entities.

4.3 Contested Tribe, Contested Frontier: Ali Agha and the Pastures of Ebeğ²⁰¹

After the Ottoman state abolished the position held by the hereditary sanjak rulers in 1847, the newly modernizing state attempted to transform its eastern borderlands into a more secure zone, under its control as it was explained above.²⁰² The concept of subjecthood, which direct rule by the state necessitated, was still unclear in some Ottoman-Iranian frontier territories. This was particularly so before the reforms were implemented, as the ambiguous state of the borders meant that neither tribal members nor Ottoman officials were aware of exactly where one state's territory ended and the other began. The Porte did not accept the status of unclear, fuzzy lands and the fluidity of crossings, which did not allow for powerful state control over the tribes, who were seen as "fiscally accountable units".²⁰³ For this purpose, Ottoman and Iranian officials met in Erzurum and came to a conclusion in 1847, deciding that representatives from both sides would establish a Survey Commission, to be accompanied by intermediaries from Russia and Great Britain, who would act as observers. The commission began its survey in January 1849 and completed its work

²⁰¹ Ebeğ was a contested borderland region, located in the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderland, and belonged to the province of Van. By describing Ebeğ, it refers to current region remained between Van's Çaldıran and Doğubeyazıt districts in Turkey.

²⁰² For Adelman and Aron, in the move towards the creation of ethnic-nation states, the nature of the frontier evolved first into borderlands, and then into bordered-lands. We might suggest that after the removal of power from the emirates in Ottoman East, the Ottoman-Iranian frontier evolved into a borderland and even bordered-lands: Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron, "From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and Peoples in between in North American History" *The American Historical Review*, vol. 104, no. 3 (June, 1999), p. 814-841.

²⁰³ Ateş, *Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, p. 177

in September 1852, headed by the Ottoman Chemist Derviş Pasha.²⁰⁴ Ottoman officials strove to keep as much of the borderlanders, and territory in the region, on the Ottoman side of the border, going so far as to provide historical evidence from the archives, proving the validity of their claims.²⁰⁵ Thus, the officials in the commission not only strove to determine a proper border between the Ottoman and Iranian states, but as an accompanying goal, they also tried to claim as much of the border zone population as possible. Therefore, Ottoman officials addressed this issue as “making a border and separation of tribes” (*tefrik-i aşâir ve tahdîd-i hudud*), which referred to a related process of making those distant frontiers controllable, during the Tanzimat era.

Both sides had also agreed in Erzurum in 1847, that according to article eight, the contested tribes (*menâzi fih*) would be given the final option to choose to reside on the Ottoman or Iranian side of the border. Once the decision was made, neither side would allow for the defection of those tribes, and the borders would be guarded by both Ottoman and Iranian imperial soldiers to block these crossings.²⁰⁶ The Heyderan tribe was one of the contested tribes that both sides attempted to exert hegemony over during this period of centralization too. In the Tanzimat era the importance of the tribe for the Ottomans is highlighted by the fact that Ottoman officials attempted to bring as many tribal members as they could to the Ottoman borderlands, before the

²⁰⁴ Ateş, *Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, p. 140.

²⁰⁵ In this document, in order to argue for Kotur against the Iranians, the Ottoman officials wanted the Porte to find and send to them the imperial decrees which authorized the rule of hereditary *mîrs* in Kotur in previous centuries: BOA, A.MKT.MHM 756/16- (1849). Also this document describes that the Ottomans attempted to keep the tribes as their allies in their territories: İ.MVL 132/3551- (1848): “*beynüddeleteyn tebâyetlerinde ihtilaf olan aşâirden memâlik-i devlet-i aliye’de bulunanlardan hiç ferdin İran canibine salıverilmemesine mübâderet olunması emr u ferman buyrulmuş*”.

²⁰⁶ BOA, İ.MVL 132/3551- (1848).

journey of the commission members began.²⁰⁷ As mentioned above, Heyder Agha was one of the chiefs who were secretly bribed by the Ottomans, so that he would remain, with his tribe, close to the Ottoman side.²⁰⁸ Similar actions were also carried by the Iranian government, as they too honored Heyder Agha, bestowing upon him an official status in 1850, so that he would remain in Iran.²⁰⁹ Thus, when Heyder Agha and his followers petitioned the Porte in 1848, they emphasized that the Iranian government favored them: “although we were honored by the Iranian government and benefited from this side”.²¹⁰ However, although the Porte secretly supported the chiefs, they did not allow the branches of the Heyderan, which they had bribed, to settle in Ottoman lands immediately, as they had to abide by the Erzurum agreement, and wait until the commission finished its survey and its findings determined the place of the tribes and the border.²¹¹ Therefore, the Porte authorized a payment to Heyder Agha, and made some efforts to keep as many Heyderan members on their side, as possible, without officially settling them within their borders.²¹²

²⁰⁷ As discussed in the third chapter, Selim Pasha of Muş applied a similar mission in the 1820s. Now, the Ottoman governors made the same effort to keep the tribes in their side.

²⁰⁸ BOA, İ.HR. 56/2606- (1849).

²⁰⁹ BOA, HR.MKT. 29/63- (1850): “*Haydar Ağa ol tarafta tevkif ve taltif olunarak iade ettirilmediği beyanyla gereğinin icrası*”.

²¹⁰ BOA, İ.HR. 56/2606- (1849). Heyder Agha was referred as *Meer-i Panj (Mîr penç)* Brigadier by the locals.

²¹¹ BOA, A.MKT. 1149/46- (1848): “*bunların tefrik ve temyizi zımında memurlar gönderileceğinden bu mâkûle münâzaalı aşâirin tefrik ve temyizine kadar sâlifüzzikr gelmiş olan aşiret hânelerinin icâb-ı vech ile oyalandırılması*”.

²¹² A letter was sent to the branches of the Heyderan in Van province stating that the members of Heyderan were guaranteed safety after the disinheritance of the hereditary sanjak rulers: Gencer, “Merkeziyetçi İdari Düzenlemeler”, p. 164.

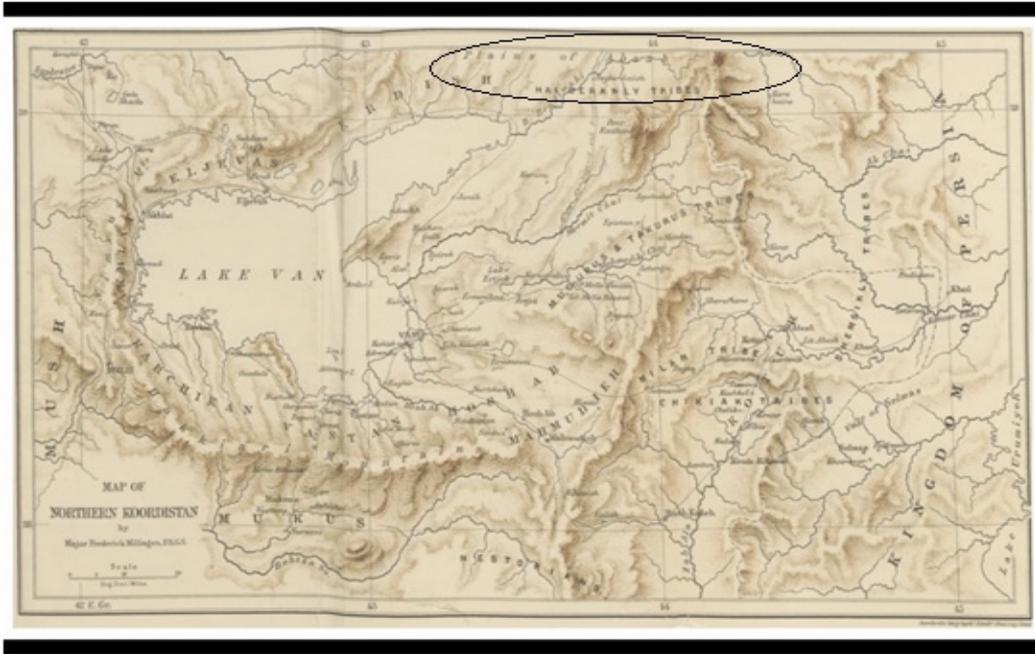
The Porte and local Ottoman governments were both conscious of the benefits of having the Heyderan reside along the Ottoman-Iranian frontier.²¹³ Not only were some of the tribal chiefs more powerful within their own tribes than others, but they also held more power and influence among chiefs of other tribes as well. Ali Agha of the Heyderan was one such chief, powerful both within his own tribe and among the others in the region. Thus, it was to the benefit of the Ottomans to maintain ties with Ali Agha, so that he would remain within the Ottoman side of the border, and in turn be able to exert control in the names of the Ottomans over the contested frontier zone of Ebeğe.²¹⁴ Furthermore, the Heyderan chiefs themselves were eager to ally with the Ottomans, for they received several benefits in return, including temporary exemption from taxation.²¹⁵ So, what made Ali Agha a significant ally of the Ottomans was the fact that he functioned both as an instrument of the state, and of expansion, in Ebeğe.²¹⁶

²¹³ Field Marshal Muhammed Reşid Pasha personally visited Ebeğe region in order to directly contact the tribal chiefs and invite them to the Ottoman side. Heyderan chiefs noted this in their petition: BOA, İ.HR. 56/2606 (1849): “*Anadolu Orduy-u Hümayun müşiri olup bu havâliye teşrif buyurmuş olan devletlü Muhammed Reşid Paşa hazretleri ’ne arz olunarak Devlet-i Aliye tebâliğına kabul olunmamızla*”. According to Muhammed Hamdi Pasha, governor of Erzurum, the Ottomans sent their officials to the chiefs to persuade them for defecting their own side: BOA, HR.MKT. 29/63- (1850): “*Anadolu Orduy-u Hümayunu Müşiri devletlü paşa hazretlerinin taraf-ı çakerâneme vâki olan işârlarına gore muahharen taraflarından memur tayiniyle ağay-ı merkûm temin olunarak iade ettirilmiş*”.

²¹⁴ Even the Ottoman officials were not sure how exactly the name of Ebeğe was pronounced as they wrote in a document “*Ebeğe or Ebeğey or Abgay*”: BOA, A.MKT.UM 137/9- (1853).

²¹⁵ Ateş, *Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, p. 82.

²¹⁶ For Tom Sinclair, Kurdish hereditary rulers and their emirates functioned as an instrument of expansion. We might enlarge this claim to include the tribes as well, for they too functioned in a similar manner: Tom Sinclair, “The Ottoman Arrangements for the Tribal Principalities of the Lake Van Region of the Sixteenth Century” *Ottoman Borderlands: issues personalities and political changes*, ed. Kemal H. Karpat, Robert W. Zens (Madison: Uni. Of Wisconsin Press, 2003), p. 133.



Map 7. Millingen's Map which shows the Plain of Ebeğe as "Abaah".²¹⁷

Ali Agha made his decision to ally with the Ottomans in 1849, and he pursued this alliance until 1864, except for the year 1853-1854, during the Crimean war.²¹⁸ Ali Agha sided once more with the Ottomans after 1854, and during the Crimean War, he assisted them with the restoration of the Castle of Van. Furthermore, he supported his own tribe's defection to the Ottoman side and organized their settlement along the northern sphere of Lake Van until Ebeğe. For this reason, the Porte honored him with a fifth degree *majidi* medal, the title of *dergâh-ı âli kapıcıbaşılığı*, a monthly salary of 2,000 *kuruş*, and exemption from any taxes and duties for three years between 1856 and 1859.²¹⁹ After 1859, Ali Agha paid 15,000 *kuruş* to the treasury of the local government in the province of Van-Hakkari, which was a symbolic (*gâyet*

²¹⁷ Reached on September 25, 2017 at www.flickr.com/photos/britishlibrary/11091407135/in/photostream. Check 'British Library HMNTS 10076.f.27.

²¹⁸ BOA, HR.TO 446/65- (1864): "On beş sene akdem gelmiş olduğu İran tarafına avdet edeceğini arz ve inhâ eylemiştir".

²¹⁹ BOA, İ.DH. 346/22781- (1856).

cüz'i) amount, representing the annual sheep tax (*ağnâm rüsûmu*).²²⁰ This amount was raised to 24,000 *kuruş* in the early 1860s, and then to 50,000 *kuruş* in 1864, which resulted in Ali Agha severing his relationship with the Ottoman government and prompted his defection to Iranian territory.²²¹ As it can be seen in the growing number of the tax amount, the Tanzimat state attempted to gradually benefit from the tribe though Ali Agha was a significant and necessary Ottoman ally in Ebeğ region.

Security reasons made Ali Agha a significant ally not only in the eyes of the Ottomans but also for the Iranian and the Russian States. During the Crimean War, Averyanov shares that Russian officers sent letters to Ali Agha in order to persuade him to break his allegiance to the Ottomans and to ally with the Russian army in 1853.²²² According to Averyanov, Ali Agha replied that since the Russians had not been able to conquer Ottoman territory and had retreated after their military expeditions, he could not ally with the Russian forces as it would leave him vulnerable to Ottoman retaliation later.²²³ We know that in 1854, Ali Agha was in Iran and was taken hostage due to an attempt made to defect to Ottoman territory.²²⁴ Therefore, it seems that Averyanov was correct when he claimed that Ali Agha initially remained neutral when the Crimean War began and it did not cross into, and ally with, the Ottoman side until 1854. He probably chose to remain neutral due to the possibility that Russian forces could possibly have succeeded and remained in Ottoman eastern provinces permanently. Furthermore, Iranian attacks on his family, during this period also imply that Ali Agha was forced to remain on the Iranian side

²²⁰ BOA, MVL 678/45- (1864).

²²¹ BOA, İ.DH. 567/39502- (1864).

²²² Averyanov, *Osmanlı İran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, p. 101-102.

²²³ Averyanov, *Osmanlı İran Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, p. 101-102.

²²⁴ BOA, İ.MVL 323/13765- (1854).

of the border. A document written in 1854 reveals that Ali Agha crossed over to the Ottoman side that year and received a monthly salary of 1,000 *kurus*.²²⁵ Therefore, although he had broken his alliance with the Ottomans when he defected to Iran in 1853, the Porte not only supported his return to the state but also provided him with a payment. This was done as a token of appreciation for the fact that he allied with the Ottomans rather than the Russians, and the Porte was eager to receive the assistance he could provide with his tribe.²²⁶ As it happened, Ali Agha did support the imperial army and also helped to repair of the Castle of Van.²²⁷

As mentioned previously, some of the branches of the Heyderan under the authority of Ali Agha had economic accountability to the state and so the local government of Van atomized, or divided, this power in 1858, 1862 and 1863. Although Ali Agha ruled over the branches of the Heyderan in Erciş and Adilcevaz, the Porte agreed with the decision of the Van Council and abolished his authority over the members of the tribe in this region.²²⁸ However, Ottoman sources claim that even divided, the members of the tribe were in a powerful economic situation, due to the number of well-raised animals within their possession.²²⁹ Brant also observed that the Heyderan tribe was a wealthy and crowded one, and that they often sent representatives to sell

²²⁵ BOA, İ.MVL 323/13765- (1854).

²²⁶ Field Marshal Selim Pasha invited Ali Agha to the Ottoman side: BOA. İ.MVL 323/13765- (1854): “*Mümâileyh Ali Ağa kulları Bayezid’e azimet birle ibrâz-ı ubûdiyet ve izhâr-ı istikâmetle meşhûr cihâniyan olan lütf ü merhamet-i cenâb-ı şehinşâhiye celb ve dâvet eylediği Ferik saâdetlu Selim Paşa hazretleri bendeleri tarafından ba vürûd leffen takdim kılınan tahrirat meâlinde dahi inhâ olunmuş*”.

²²⁷ BOA, İ.DH. 346/22781- (1856). BOA, MVL 574/83- (1858): “*Orduy-u Hümayun’da elimden geldiği kadar hizmet-i hazırây-ı pâdişâhide bulunarak*”.

²²⁸ BOA, MVL 574/93- (1858).

²²⁹ BOA, İ.MSM 52/1345G- (1848): “*ağay-ı merkûm hânelerinin cümlesi mal ve ağnam ashâbı olub*”. According to one document, Ali Agha controlled 3,000 tents of the Heyderan members: BOA, HR.TO 446/65- (1864).

their animal stock in Istanbul.²³⁰ In 1858, the tax assessor in Erzurum reported to the Porte that as merchant negotiators traded with the Heyderan in the Ebeğ region, going on to then sell their animal in Damascus and Istanbul, the Iranians expended great effort to try and control the Heyderan and the Ebeğ region in order to also participate in their trading activities.²³¹ Therefore, the policies of the reform era had to take into account the financial advantages that the Heyderan brought to the state and in what way the Ottomans could benefit from the tribe within its frontier zone. For this purpose, a transitional period emerged, whereby the Porte attempted again and again to benefit from the wealth of the tribe. In 1864, the governor of Van, Ahmed Pasha, forced Ali Agha to pay 50,000 *kuruş* as income owed for the annual sheep tax, along with a payment of one tenth of the tithe over four years.²³² However, Ali Agha did not pay this amount and instead defected to the Iranian side of the border, as he was also threatened with imprisonment and exile.²³³ Although fiscal concerns were a crucial aspect of the Tanzimat reforms, security was the primary concern for the State, and therefore, Ali Agha and his followers were once more allowed to return to Ottoman lands in 1867.

The Tanzimat era's project of fixing a territorial boundary and separating the tribes, created some difficulties not only for the tribes but also for various state policies. When Ottoman and Iranian representatives demarcated the borders and transformed the frontier to more closely resemble a bordered land, the habits and transhumance routes of the tribes were not carefully taken into account. As Lazarev mentioned,

²³⁰ Brant, "Notes of a Journey", p. 352.

²³¹ BOA, MVL 574/93- (1858).

²³² BOA, MVL 678/117- (1864).

²³³ BOA, İ.DH. 567/39502- (1867).

when the commission conducted their survey, they disregarded any claims or use of the land by the Kurds and this resulted in several difficulties for the tribes.²³⁴

Although the Ottomans were able to maintain the pastures of Ebeğe within their own border, and exerted enormous efforts to fully Ottomanize the region by banning the entrance of Iranian tribes to the pastures, they had to admit that, historically, this region and its pastures had always been used by both Ottoman and Iranian tribes.²³⁵

The governor of Bayezid, Pertev Efendi, added that thousands of sheep were brought to the pastures of Ebeğe, with more than 3,000 tents, which housed these tribal members during the spring and summer seasons.²³⁶ As Ateş has suggested, the reason behind the border-crossings of the tribes was to attain access to fertile land and resources, and thus was driven by ecological rather than political considerations.²³⁷ As the Porte was aware of the transhumance activities of the Iranian tribes, it attempted to use Ali Agha as an instrument of the state engaged in the expansion of Ottoman authority in this contested zone. They attempted to have him block the entrance of the Iranian tribes into Ebeğe, reserving the pastures for solely the use of Ottoman tribes. Therefore, Ali Agha was not only a tribal chief of the Heyderan, used for the benefit of Ottomans by the officials, but also functioned at times as a representative of the Ottoman authority in the Ottomanization of a contested tribal borderland.

²³⁴ Lazarev, “19.Yüzyılda Kürdistan”, p. 144.

²³⁵ BOA, HR. MKT 190/12- (1857): “*Ebeğe sahrâsı aşâir-i İraniye ’nin musattah nazarı ve mine ’l kadim yaylakları olduğundan*”.

²³⁶ BOA, MVL 258/49- (1853). Pertev Efendi writes that these tribes did not have any other option but only bringing their cattle to the pastures of Ebeğe in spring and summer seasons.

²³⁷ Ateş, *Ottoman-Iranian Borderlands*, p. 177.



Figure 4: Tent of Ali Agha's son Musa Agha in 1881.²³⁸

The Sublime Porte was aware of the fact that if they did not support Ali Agha, and win the alliance of his tribe, they could lose the Ebeğ  pastures, which consisted of more than three hundred villages and an abundance of pastures, to the Iranians.²³⁹ Therefore, the protection of the Ottoman border in Ebeğ  could only be secured if Ali Agha maintained an alliance with the Ottomans. Without Ali Agha's presence the Porte was sure that Iran would attempt to make a claim over the pastures, by having other tribal groups move into them, as they attempted to do via the Karapapak Turkic tribe in 1861.²⁴⁰ When the governors of Van threatened Ali Agha by atomizing the tribe, and increasing the amount of taxes, some Ottoman officials accused the governors of misunderstanding the real political situation, and Ali Agha's role in exerting Ottoman hegemony in the region. Muhlis Efendi, a medical doctor in Bayezid, wrote that talented Ottoman governors were not appointed to the Ottoman-Iranian border provinces but to Izmir, Trabzon, Selanik and such places. Therefore

²³⁸ Mission scientifique de Mr Ernest Chantre, sous-directeur du Museum de Lyon, dans la Haute M sopotamie, le Kurdistan et le Caucase. V, Kurdistan, de Bitlis   Bayezid / Photographies de Mr le Capitaine Barry.

²³⁹ BOA, MVL 678/45c- (1864): "*Tanbat ve Yarım Kaya ve Kazlıg l nahiyeleri gibi [Ebeğ 'yi] men zi fih h km ne koyacakları*".

²⁴⁰ BOA, A.MKT.UM 516/12- (1861): "*Kars'ta olan Karapapak taifesi Azerbaycan'a gidib Ebeğ  ve Mahmudi sahrasına yerleřtirilmeye  alıřıldıđı*".

he believed, that the issue was not related to the power held by Ali Agha, but rather with the inexperienced and weak governors, who did not consider the peculiarity of the region when administering their decisions. The policy of centralization pursued by the Porte during the Tanzimat era, also created some problems for the regime as governors appointed from the center were not necessarily chosen for their knowledge of the region or their experience regarding how to approach local notables and tribal chiefs. Therefore, this newly-adopted modern-style of government, which imposed Tanzimat rules from the top-down, at times jeopardized Ottoman control in the frontier regions, rather than ameliorating the problems.²⁴¹

Ali Agha also benefited from his position as an Ottoman representative in the Ebeğ region. According to some reports, he gave pastures to Iranian tribes, and in return received taxes from them.²⁴² One of those tribes belonged to another branch of the Heyderan tribe; however as it was an ally of the Iranian government, the Porte considered this allowance made by Ali Agha as dangerous in terms of maintaining its own security along the border. However, as tribal identity was stronger than the newly imposed concepts of either Ottoman or Iranian subjecthood, Ali Agha considered the Iranian Heyderan as belonging to his own tribe, resulting in the governor of Van launching a complaint against Ali Agha. As mentioned above, the boundary making process did not solve the issue of tribal border-crossing, as neither their transhumance lifestyle nor their tribal identity was taken into account by the commission. Ali Agha's argument that the Iranian Heyderan was a part of his own

²⁴¹ Mark Pinson, "Ottoman Bulgaria in the First Tanzimat Period: The Revolts in Nish (1841) and Vidin (1850)" *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 11, no:2 (May 1975), p. 103. Cabir Doğan, "Tanzimat'ın Van'da Uygulanması ve Han Mahmud İsyanı" *History Studies*, vol: 3/2 (2011), p. 159. Ceylan, "1858 Toprak Reformunun Bağdat'ta Uygulanışı", p. 832: Similarly, since Necip Pasha tried to increase control, heavy taxes, and oppression over the tribes of Baghdad, this resulted in tribal revolts.

²⁴² A.MKT. 287/55- (1857): "cânib-i İran'dan aşâir celbiyle mahal-i mezbûrede yaylak vererek tevkîf etmekte ve aşâirin bu sûretle gelmeleri bâ-irâde-i seniyye mem'nu olduğu kendisine kararen tebliğ olundukça bunlar benim aşiretimdir [deyü]"

tribe was not seen as a legitimate one by the Porte, and although they refrained from confronting the issue until 1864, they were forced to when the new governor of Van applied more stringent rules regarding the movement of Ali Agha and his tribal followers. Therefore, it is clear that the demarcation of the Ottoman-Iranian borders was not fully accomplished during this period, since the marchland tribes in Ebeğ, such as the Heyderan, disregarded any state borders and continued crossing from one state into the next, in their traditional, nomadic ways. Finally, Ali Agha did not hesitate to provide pastures to the Iranian branches of the Heyderan, as tribal identity in the frontier region was far more stronger than the reformers' ideas of Ottoman subjecthood and citizenship that the Porte attempted to apply.

Ali Agha defected back to Iran, when the governor of Van, Ahmed Pasha, attempted to abolish Ali Agha's privileges in 1864. Ali Agha was threatened with imprisonment if he could not deliver 50,000 *kuruş*, which amounted to a one hundred percent increase on the annual sheep tax (*rüsûm-u ağnâm*). Furthermore, Ahmed Pasha stated that his followers would be recruited into the army, and the tribe was forced to pay four years' worth of tithe in 1864. Ali Agha and his men accepted Ahmed Pasha's demands in Van, but once they returned to Ebeğ, they did not recognize the decisions of the new governor.²⁴³

Instead, Ali Agha sent thirty men to the neighboring council of Bayezid (*liva*) and requested that the region of Ebeğ come under the jurisdiction of Erzurum or Bayezid, otherwise he and his tribe would defect to the Iranian side. Ali Agha did not dispute the demands of the governor of Van, rather he disputed his authority of Ebeğ in general, and instead requested that the entire administrative structure of the

²⁴³ BOA, MVL 678/117- (1864).

Ebeğ̃e region be changed. His claims and requests show that he too was aware of how important his position in the area was to the Ottoman authorities. He argued that the new governor had unfairly assigned the Heyderan such high taxes, and threatened that, if he were to return to Iran, the Ottomans would no longer be able to hold the Ebeğ̃e region, as Iranian tribes would easily enter this contested frontier zone.²⁴⁴ He claimed that he had exerted enormous efforts to control the Ebeğ̃e region, on behalf of the Porte and thus used the threat of his defection as a way to blackmail the authorities into protecting his status and privileges. Ahmed Pasha, however, ignored the function Ali Agha served in the region, and not only acted within the spirit of the new reforms, but personally, he also wanted to normalize the power of Ali Agha, so that he came to be in a similar position as other less powerful chiefs. The Porte had no choice but to support Ahmed Pasha's actions as they complied with the spirit of the Tanzimat, and so Ali Agha defected to the Iranian side of the border that same year. In fact, the Porte would have exiled Ali Agha anyway had he come to the city of Van, but as he did not accept the invitation of the governor he was not arrested.²⁴⁵

This case also indicates that the weak position of the Porte and the local Ottoman government of Van in Ebeğ̃e during the Tanzimat period, as they could not maintain full authority over Ali Agha. The Porte did try to attempt to replace Ali Agha by appointing another chief to take his place, in the hopes that he would be able to ensure that the tribal members remained in the region, however, their efforts at this failed. Three years later, when the new governor of Van and Hakkari took office, Ali Agha and his followers were re-accepted to the same territories, and the Ottomans allowed their defection, even though it was against the Erzurum Agreement of 1847.

²⁴⁴ BOA, MVL 678/45- (1864).

²⁴⁵ BOA, MVL 679/73- (1864).

Thus both the Ottoman and the Iranian states created opportunities for defection by the tribes from one territory to the other, and in fact encouraged them to do so. Examining only the role of the tribes in creating inter-border problems in the frontiers provides only one perspective of a complicated atmosphere along the border, and also ignores the role of imperial policies in their frontier zones, pursued during this period of reform.

4.4 Conclusion

The new rules implemented during the Ottoman age of reform, brought about a historic transformation to Ottoman East. The classical Ottoman political structure of the region was dismantled as hereditary privileged sanjak rulers were no longer given the right to maintain and pursue their own prestige and power. Although the Porte had attempted to abolish the hereditary sanjaks during the early 1830s, in order to fully centralize rule, the Ottoman state had to wait until conditions became more favorable. Although a military expedition to the region was seen necessary in 1847, the Porte and the local Ottoman governments entered into a transitional period, where centralized rule was slowly implemented and they applied diplomatic pressure in order to decrease the authority of rival emirates in the region. The northern hereditary sanjak rulers of Muş and Bayezid were less powerful than several others such as Bedirhan Pasha, Han Mahmud and Nurullah Bey. The Porte was able to exploit their competitive rivalry and divide them, eliminating their positions and power.

Once the hereditary rulers were removed, less powerful actors in the region moved to take their place, and the Heyderan, as a powerful tribal entity was able to step into a

position of official authority on behalf of the Ottoman state. Through the authorization of the Porte the chiefs of the Heyderan were able to assume positions of power in the region. To prevent any one chief from consolidating power and rising to a similar level as the previous sanjak rulers, the Porte atomized, and thus decentralized tribal rule in order to insert its own authority and check the growth of any individual political aspirations. The Heyderan were now under the direct authority of the Ottoman officials of Van, Bayezid and Erzurum, who were appointed by the center, different than the *mîrs* of Muş and Bayezid. Although this change in authority empowered some of the Heyderan chiefs, such as Ali Agha, this type of direct rule also balanced the power of the tribal chiefs by “cajoling” them with salary payments and by bestowing official titles upon them. This type of direct rule employed by the Ottomans did not result in complete control over the separate branches of the tribes, for they continued to wander through areas that still functioned as a borderland, and into Iranian territories. They continued to defect and travel between the margins of the two empires, resisting any efforts of sedentarization on either side of the border by actively maintaining their nomadic routes. Although the two states demarcated their boundaries, the protectors of those lines were the tribal chiefs who acted as instrument of protection and expansion on behalf of the state power, such as in Ebeğ. Ali Agha was the most powerful among the chiefs of the Heyderan tribe, and local governments attempted to limit the level of his prestige by granting authority to the less powerful chiefs.

The modernizing mission of the state aimed to transform those branches of the Heyderan into loyal Ottoman subjects, however Ottoman officials continued to approach them as distant tribal agents, who represented the “other”, thus orientaling them from within. The Heyderan were not necessarily forced to settle

permanently and leave their transhumance and nomadic activities, however, the Porte did ask them to build their own houses, and to wander during the summer season in the Ottomanized highlands, which meant a transformation from nomadic life to semi-nomadism. The transhumance routes of the Heyderan narrowed compared to previous decades, despite the fact that their passages were still controlled by the salaried and titled chiefs. Again, the Porte and Ottoman local governments could not exert full control over the margins of the state, and therefore continued to need the tribal chiefs to represent state authority. In the end, the state had to be flexible with its own policies, and temper any strict implantation of Tanzimat rule over the Heyderan, who were a contested tribe, in a contested zone along the empire's margins.

CHAPTER V

THE AGE OF COLLABORATION: HAMIDIAN ISLAMISM IN THE OTTOMAN EAST, 1891- 1908

As already analyzed in the preceding chapters, the nature of state-tribe relations were often complex and dynamic, and the Hamidian era further created a new shift in the relations of the Heyderan to the Ottoman Empire during the late nineteenth century. This period can be referred to as a time or age of collaboration for the central government did not attempt to politically and economically suppress the tribal members and their chiefs. Contrary to the previous period of the Tanzimat, the new Sultan, Abdülhamid II, collaborated with the Ottoman Muslim tribes, due to his Islamist policies. It is important to note that Abdülhamid II's Islamism was mostly operative rather than ideological, and externally it was a tool to counter-balance the effects of foreign intervention into the state domain.¹ As Duguid and Çetinsaya emphasized, in order to better understand the policies of the Hamidian era we should

¹ Selim Deringil, "Legitimacy Structures in the Ottoman State: The Reign of Abdülhamid II (1876-1909)" *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 23, no: 3 (Aug., 1991), p. 350-355. Kemal H. Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 17.

focus on Abdülhamid II's policies regarding the Ottoman eastern provinces.² As the Heyderan was one of the most powerful tribes along the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands, this and following chapter analyze how the tribe played a role in the political, economic and social transformation of the region. Though historians have generally contrasted the era of the Tanzimat to that of Abdülhamid II, these two chapters also suggest that there were not only differences and alterations in Ottoman practices in the region, but also continuities adopted from the previous Ottoman policies. This chapter will discuss how the Ottoman Hamidian era, when confronted with major political, economic and social problems, was shaped by the policies of Abdülhamid towards the tribes of empire's margins. Furthermore, the chapter will focus on the creation of the Ottoman tribal regiment: the Hamidian Light Cavalry Units, which were referred to by Abdülhamid II's aide-de-camp, Miralay Vehbi in his report, as the Benevolent Institution (*Teşkilât-ı Hayriye*).³ The Heyderan tribe joined this new military institution and formed nine regiments in 1891, where its chiefs became some of the most powerful military leaders along the northern Ottoman-Iranian borderlands. The Sultan, though not the actual central government, supported the chiefs both militarily and economically, and in turn overlooked any unlawful acts on their part. Imperial support of these Muslim tribes led to the development of a chaotic atmosphere in the region, of which will be analyzed by focusing on intra-tribal, inter-tribal and tribe to non-tribal relations. Before discussing the formation of the Hamidian light cavalry units, we need to understand the Hamidian era in detail, in order to ascertain which political and economic development were confronted by the Ottoman Empire. The next chapter will further

² Stephen Duguid, "The Politics of Unity: Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia" *Middle Eastern Studies* (May, 1973), p.144. Gökhan Çetinsaya, "II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Kuzey Irak'da Tarikat, Aşiret ve Siyaset" *Divan*, vol. 2 (1999), p. 167.

³ Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası*, p. 121. BOA, Y.PRK. MYD. 11/42- (1892).

give details on the Heyderan tribe and how Hamidian Islamism was practiced over the Ottoman East through the tribal regiments.

5.1 Hamidian Policies and “*Teşkilât-ı Hayriye*”

5.1.1 The Reign of Abdülhamid II

There are manifold causes, which shaped the political, social and economic developments of the Ottoman state during the Hamidian era. The personality of Abdülhamid II was certainly one of the most significant features to influence this period. He became the 34th Sultan of the Ottoman Empire and remained on the throne from 1876 to 1909. During the reform era of the Tanzimat, characterized by its secular westernization (1839-1876), the Ottoman State was controlled by the bureaucracy, and the Ottoman Sultans (Abdülmecid I and Abdülaziz) held less power among the senior Ottoman Pashas.⁴ Abdülhamid was able to regain traditional sultanic power, and once more rule over the office of the Ottoman grand viziers, the *Bâb-ı Âli*. During his rule, Abdülhamid II was always plagued with the fear of dethronement, as he had witnessed the previous dethronements of both his uncle, Abdülaziz I, and his brother, Murat V. The former’s suspicious suicide after his dethronement, and Ali Suavi’s attempt of enthroning the latter, increased Abdülhamid’s fears, and therefore, he aimed to create a palace bureaucracy that was especially loyal to him after he inherited the throne. Within a few years, he exiled powerful pashas, such as Mithat Pasha, into the distant provinces of the empire,

⁴ Benjamin Fortna, “The Reign of Abdülhamid II” *The Cambridge History of Turkey: Vol. 4 Turkey in the Modern World*, ed. Reşat Kasaba (Cambridge: Cambridge Uni. Press, 2008), p. 49.

wrested control of the ministries, and weakened the power of the grand viziers.⁵ Furthermore, he applied similar tactics in order to expand his power and legitimacy to the distant provinces and over the provincial elites and tribal chiefs located along the farthest edges of the empire. The subsequent change in the position and power of the Sultan resulted in a palace bureaucracy, embodied by the personality of Abdülhamid, and thus historians have come to refer to this period as the Hamidian era, as it particularly reflects the Sultan's character and its impact on state and administrative structures.⁶

During the Hamidian era, the Ottoman state was confronted with major political problems by the global powers. Czarist Russia continued to pursue her expansionist policies, which aimed towards gaining access to the Mediterranean through the Balkans, and to gain control of the Bosphorus and the Caucasus. Furthermore, Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian national movements were supported by Russian Pan-Slavic policies. However, regarding Russian expansion little to no response was received from the remaining global empires, until the Treaty of Stefano was signed after the great Ottoman-Russian war of 1877-1878.⁷ This war was particularly dangerous, for though Russia was able to conquer Ottoman territory in the east up to the city of Erzurum. Russian imperial forces were able to penetrate the Balkans deep enough to have almost reached the imperial capital of the Ottoman state from the West. This was a particularly alarming development for the remaining western powers. For though the British Disraeli and Gladstone governments were eager to partition the

⁵ Engin Akarlı, "Economic Policy and Budgets in Ottoman Turkey, 1876-1909" *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 28, no.3, (Jul., 1992), p. 443-476 . Fortna, *Ibid.* François Georgeon, *Sultan Abdülhamid*, tr. Ali Berktaş (İstanbul: İletişim, 2006).

⁶ Georgeon, *Ibid.*

⁷ Stanford J. Shaw-Ezel Kural Shaw, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Modern Türkiye vol. 2* (İstanbul: E Yay., 2006). p. 234-235.

Ottoman State, the possible conflicts that could emerge regarding claims to former Ottoman lands between other global powers prevented the application of this practice.⁸ Russia's interest and its actions in pursuing these, as witnessed during the recent Russo-Turkish war, confirmed the possible problems that could emerge if the Ottoman Empire was dismantled and partitioned.

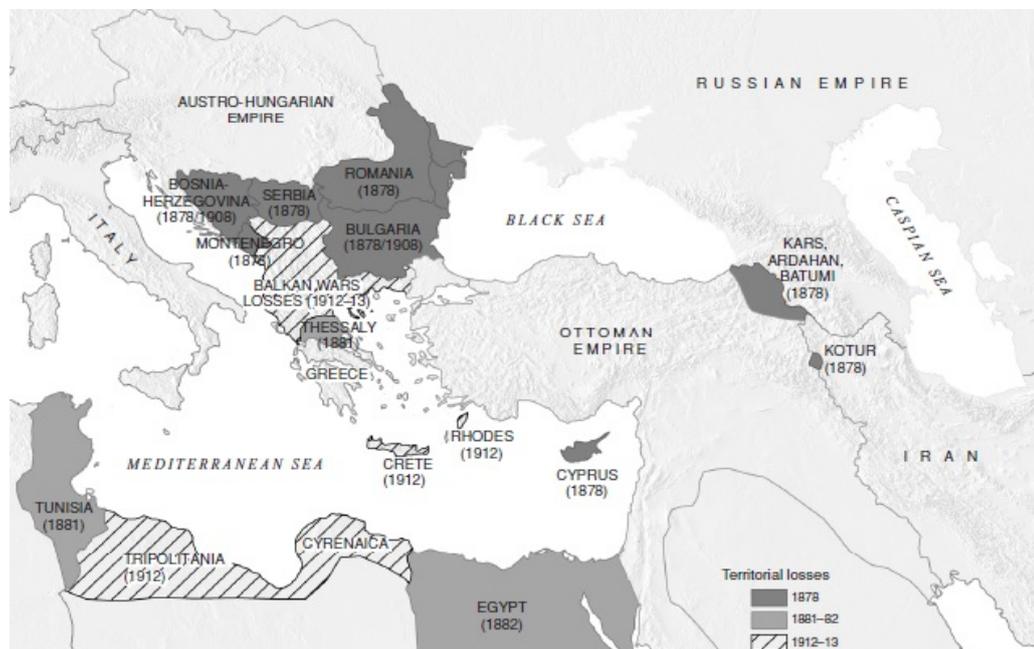
“The sick man of Europe”, as the Ottoman State was now referred to at this time, had become admitted into the Concert of Europe from the time of the Treaty of Paris, signed in 1856. However, during the Treaty of Berlin conference in 1878, Ottoman representatives felt humiliated by the European powers. Their treatment was reflective of the position of the Ottoman Empire at this time, that it was powerless and its existence and destiny dictated by and held in the hands of Western powers that pursued a policy of global balance.⁹ For example, both French and British governments who wanted to maintain their economic interest in the region felt that Russian expansion into any part of the Ottoman Empire was a threat to such policies, as well as to the general balance of power in Europe. The British consular reports from Erzurum, Van, Harput, Diyarbekir and Aleppo show that during the 1880s and 1890s, imports and exports were dominated by the British government. This was threatened when Russia reached Erzurum in 1878, as British activities in the entire region were blocked by the activities of the Russians, as Erzurum was centered between the Trabzon, Bayezid and Tabriz historical trade road.¹⁰ Thus, the British and French government continued to pursue the protection of the Ottoman state;

⁸ Robert F. Zeidner, “Britain and the Launching of the Armenian Question” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 7, no. 4 (Oct., 1976), p. 465-483.

⁹ Georgeon, *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Boyajian to Hampson, vol. 13, Diyarbekir, March 25, 1891(FO 195/1728). Boyajian to Lloyd, vol. 23, Harput, June 19, 1890 (FO 195/1728).

however, the Treaty of Berlin significantly affected the integrity of the Ottoman State.



Map 8. Ottoman territorial losses during the late Nineteenth Century.¹¹

Though the British ambassador to Istanbul promised Abdülhamid II to protect Ottoman territorial rights during the Treaty of Berlin, the British representatives did not honor their promises, and the Ottoman representatives had no other option but to confirm what the global powers adjudicated.¹² According to the treaty, Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia remained sovereign under the protection of Russia, while the Austro-Hungarian Empire had the right to station their soldiers in Bosnia-Herzegovina.¹³ While Kars, Ardahan and Batumi remained on the Russian side of the border, both Bayezid and Eleşkirt provinces were returned to the Ottomans, primarily due to the fact that the British wanted to maintain their economic activities along the Tabriz-Erzurum-Trabzon trade route. The British government felt that it had to

¹¹ Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, 1908-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge Uni. Press, 2011), p. XV.

¹² Georgeon, *Ibid.*

¹³ Shaw, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu*, p. 238.

protect the political and economic status quo of Asia Minor in order to keep its hold over colonial India safe. Therefore, Britain declared that it would temporarily occupy Cyprus, and a few years later also invaded Egypt in 1882. The control of Egypt was important for the British, for the French had occupied Tunisia in 1881, and there was a fear that they might later attempt to control the Suez Canal.

The Treaty of Berlin had a significant effect on Ottoman self-perception regarding its territorial integrity. Though state officials previously saw Rumelia and the western Anatolian provinces as the heartlands of the empire, now, the Ottoman State had become a true Asiatic State, and thus Abdülhamid II turned his attention towards the protection of the empire's eastern and Arabian territories. These territorial losses sparked mass migrations of Muslims to the Anatolian provinces, and the State had to solve this problem under a deficit economy. As Fortna put forward, bankruptcy in economy, unpaid foreign debts since the Tanzimat era, corruption of Ottoman officials and growing ethnic-nationalist sentiments created continued political crises in the Ottoman Empire.¹⁴ Furthermore, the Berlin Treaty's 61st article re-emphasized the European protection of Ottoman Armenian subjects, and some Ottoman Muslims were already in rebellion against the Ottoman Sultan. Additionally, a Kurdish Sufi Sheikh, Ubeydullah Nehri, aimed to create an Islamo-Kurdish sovereign state in 1880,¹⁵ while Zaydi Imams in Yemen questioned the Islamic legitimacy of the Ottoman Sultan.¹⁶ Sultan Abdülhamid II did not only confront a territorial loss, but

¹⁴ Fortna, "The Reign of Abdülhamid II", p. 44.

¹⁵ Kamal Soleimani, "Islamic Revivalism and Kurdish nationalism in Sheikh Ubeydullah's poetic Oeuvre" *Kurdish Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1 (May 2016), p. 5-24. Ubeydullah sent letters to the Heyderan chiefs to invite them to his movements but they did not join his movement: BOA, Y.A.HUS. 167/15- (1881).

¹⁶ Thoman Kühn, "Shaping and Reshaping Colonial Ottomanism: Contesting Boundaries of Difference and Integration in Ottoman Yemen, 1872-1919" *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, vol. 27, no. 2 (2007), p. 315-331.

he was also under the threat of losing his Islamic legitimacy and power over his Ottoman Muslim subjects.¹⁷

The legitimacy crisis regarding his caliphate caused Abdülhamid II to adopt a policy of protecting and supporting distant and peripheral Muslim notables and chiefs. This was a manifestation of a new policy or ideology that Abdülhamid was actively providing support behind, that of Islamism. Some researchers assert that Abdülhamid II supported the settlement of Muslim immigrants in Anatolian territories in order to balance out the population ratios of Muslim to Christians, as Christians at this time came to be seen as “threats”.¹⁸ The Ottomans sources often address the Sultan as caliph [*hilâfetpenâhîleri*], for his glory over the Ottoman bureaucracy [*nezâretpenâhîleri*]. Therefore, we need to note that despite European perceptions of weakness, the Ottomans were still powerful enough to protect their distant Asiatic provinces. This was particularly the case once Abdülhamid II began to ally with the local unruly notables or chiefs in those regions, particularly in Ottoman East such as the Heyderan tribe as the following chapter will analyze in details.

Economic deficiency and corruption dominated the Hamidian economy. The senior Pashas who were located near Yıldız Palace received high wages, but there is evidence that the Ottoman governors and soldiers who, in particular, were located within the frontier provinces did not regularly receive their salaries.¹⁹ While the Palace was indebted to the Galata bankers in Istanbul, governors sometimes

¹⁷ Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire 1876-1909* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004).

¹⁸ Fuat Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi: İttihat ve Terakki'nin Etnisite Mühendisliği (1913-1918)* (İstanbul: İletişim,2008), p. 45-48.

¹⁹ Georgeon, *Ibid.* Sami Önal, *Sadettin Paşa'nın Anıları: Ermeni-Kürt Olayları (Van, 1896)* (İstanbul: Remzi, 2004): Sadettin Pasha described how the soldiers of the imperial army in Van were under economic hardship. Zeki Pasha also noted that the governors and soldiers of the imperial army did not receive their salaries for months: Y. PRK. ASK 135/99-(1898).

borrowed money from Muslim merchants and Armenian Amiras in order to pay the salaries of the soldiers in Erzurum.²⁰ Furthermore, to finance his own expenditures, Abdülhamid II extended incomes for his own privy purse (*Hazine-i Hassa*), which brought him one and half million liras annually, and he used it to keep senior officials, religious officials, notables and chiefs by his side.²¹ Although the state revenues increased during this period, however in turn, state expenditures raised more than the incomes.²² Modernization and centralization of the frontier provinces increased with parochial commercial, agricultural and industrial developments, while the development of railway and communication networks escalated in distant provinces.²³ Therefore, the modernization and centralization policies of the Empire continued during the Hamidian era, but war indemnities and foreign debts forced Ottoman officials to over-tax their peasantry, who continued to remain the primary sources of state revenue.²⁴ As the government needed extra cash, they supported tax-farming (*iltizam*), and sometimes the next year's revenues were collected in advance from those tax-farmers, at a discounted amount.²⁵ The practice was one that was continued to be implemented from the Tanzimat era, particularly in the Ottoman eastern provinces as will be explained below, where the Heyderan leaders themselves

²⁰ BOA, BEO 2670/200250-(1905): 210,000 *kuruş* was borrowed from the merchants, Tevfik and Hansiyan Efendi in Erzurum. Fikret Adanır, ““Ermeni Meselesi”nin Doğuşu”, 1915: *Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015), p. 4.

²¹ Georgeon, *Sultan Abdülhamid*, p. 225-232. Fortna, *Ibid.* Akarlı, *Ibid.*

²² Akarlı, “Economic Policy and Budgets”, p. 456.

²³ Nadir Özbek, “Modernite, Tarih ve İdeoloji: II. Abdülhamid Dönemi Tarihciliği Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme” *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi*, vol. 2, no. 1 (2004), p. 74. Akarlı, “Economic Policy and Budgets”, p. 450-456.

²⁴ Akarlı, “Economic Policy and Budgets”, p. 446. Nadir Özbek, ““Anadolu Islahatı,” “Ermeni Sorunu” ve Vergi Tahsildarlığı, 1895- 1908,” *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, no.9 (2009), p. 64. Nadir Özbek, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Gelir Vergisi: 1903- 1907 Tarihli Vergi-i Şahsi Uygulaması,” *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, no: 10 (2010), p. 79.

²⁵ Akarlı, “Economic Policy and Budgets”, p. 444.

became tax-farmers, and came to be accused of over-taxing the Muslim and Armenian peasantry.

In addition to the economic and political crises already plaguing the empire, the Russian and British government also added to the problems facing the Hamidian government, as they pressured it to develop reform policies for the six Ottoman eastern provinces, *vilâyet-i sitte* (Erzurum, Sivas, Mamuret'ül Aziz, Van, Diyarbekir and Bidlis) as suggested by the Treaty of Berlin. Imitating the Bulgarian national movement, the Armenian intelligentsia urged the global powers to create a sovereign state in the Ottoman eastern territories, however the British and Russian Empires were against the development of an independent Armenian territory located in that region. Instead, the global powers closely followed developments in the Ottoman eastern provinces through their consul / vice-consuls, and thus, their ambassadors pressured the Sultan to incorporate the Armenian citizens into the Ottoman political and military system. However, Abdülhamid was quite hostile to such suggestions and proposals of reforms, as he feared that any consideration of their implementation would result in a possible foreign intervention in the Ottoman eastern provinces.²⁶ Furthermore, Armenian political parties organized some demonstrations against the Porte in Istanbul, such as an attack to the Ottoman Bank in 1896 and an assassination attempt of the Sultan in 1905. Such activities increased the tension between the state and the Armenians, and they were followed by state retaliations against its Armenian subjects, who resided in both the center and within the eastern provinces.²⁷

²⁶ Georgeon, *Ibid.*

²⁷ Selim Deringil, ““The Armenian Question in Finally Closed”: Mass Conversions of Armenians in Anatolia during the Hamidian Massacres of 1895-1897” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol.51, no.2 (2009), p. 344-371. Edhem Eldem, ““Banka Vakası” ve 1896 İstanbul Katliamı”, *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015), p. 176-198. Mehmet Polatel, “The Complete Ruin of A District: The Sasun Massacre of 1894” *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities and Politics* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), p. 179-

The Treaty of Berlin and foreign involvement in the eastern provinces greatly increased the politicization of the atmosphere in the Ottoman eastern provinces, and Abdülhamid's policies of Islamism exacerbated unlawful activities against Armenian and some Muslim peasants. Tanzimat governments had supported the tribal chiefs, and transformed them into state representatives in order to act as mediators and to better state-tribe relations; however, at the same time, the state also tried to suppress the unruly activities of these very same chiefs under their employment. In contrast to actions taken during the Tanzimat reforms, the Hamidian era's support of Muslim subjects led the authorities to ignore any unruly activities, and the operative policies of Islamism thus transformed the region into a skirmish zone. Not only the chiefs but also the regular members of the tribes were transformed into a tool to be used by the state apparatus through the creation of the Hamidian Light Cavalry Regiments.

Within this Ottoman Hamidian era's atmosphere of political, economic, social and legitimacy crisis, the state attempted to incorporate the tribal elements in the east, such as the Heyderan and others like them, who were large, crowded and powerful Sunni Muslims, into the Ottoman system. Therefore, this period can be referred to as an age of collaboration between the state and the Muslim tribes.

Although Hamidian Islamism shifted from previous Tanzimat policies and began to empower Muslim tribal chiefs instead, there was continuity about the centralization policies of the State, regarding control in the Ottoman East. Tribal chiefs, such as Hüseyin Pasha and others, continued to visit the Ottoman governors or commanders regularly, which paved the way for the ability of the state to exert control over tribal chiefs. However, this did not result in achieving a different outcome regarding the

198. Zozan Pehlivan, "Bayezid 1877: Egemen Anlatıda Görünmeyen Katliam" *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015), p. 84-91. For the creation of Armenian problem in the Ottoman East see: Adanır, "'Ermeni Meselesi'nin Doğuşu", p. 3- 43.

notorious activities of those chiefs in the region, since they were also encouraged to suppress any possible threats, such as those posed by Kurdish nationalists or Armenian revolutionaries. Yet, the Hamidian government continued to spend extra efforts towards the centralization of its own power over eastern borderlands, regards to the cross-border movements.

It is hardly visible from the sources that the trans-border movements of tribes continued during the Hamidian era. This indicates that most of the tribes of this marchland region had already chosen a side, and thus remained on either Ottoman or Iranian side of the border, during the Tanzimat Era until 1890s. Since Tanzimat governments granted titles, salaries, and even decorations to the tribal chiefs, most of the powerful tribal chiefs preferred to stay within Ottoman lands, although there is visible evidence that shows some of the tribes had remained in the Iranian empire. Therefore, when the Hamidian government established the Hamidian cavalry units and declared its new policies of privileging the chiefs, most of the tribal chiefs were already residing and located in Ottoman lands.

Another important continuity regarding Hamidian centralization over the protection of its eastern borders and territory, is evident in the way the Ottomans approached towards the Heyderan vs. Celali conflicts that occurred in the Ebeğë region between 1890 and 1896. As the previous chapter discussed, Ali Agha of the Heyderan in the Ebeğë region was supported by the Tanzimat government for the sake of protecting pasture lands in the border area. Now, during the Hamidian era, the Ottomans backed the Heyderan tribe against the Iranian Celali tribe in order to keep the Ebeğë region within the Ottoman sphere. Although it seems that the conflicts between the Ottoman Heyderan and Iranian Celali were simply tribal disputes, in reality, both tribes were

engaged in a proxy war on behalf of their hegemonic superior state powers: the Ottomans and the Iranians.²⁸ Both empires laid claim over the territory by using the tribes as agents representing their interests.²⁹

The creation of more discrete borderlands shaped tribal identities since the more defined territories did not allow the tribes to wander arbitrarily along the border territories. Both Ottoman and Iranian officials met in the region regularly under official appointments in order to “solve” the question of tribal conflicts. However, those meetings focused on how to control, enlarge and protect, as much of the territorial gains of each empire, for their tribal collaborators. The Heyderan’s tribal identity was referred to as “our” in the Ottoman sources, while the Iranian Celalis were as otherized “Iranian”.³⁰ The commission could not complete its mission of “solving” any tribal disputes for six years, until 1896, since neither side refrained from protecting both their imperial rights, and those of their allies. This indicates that Hamidian policies empowered and collaborated with their tribal subjects, and at the same time, continued to adopt the core Tanzimat policies of centralization in the Ottoman East. Therefore, during the age of collaboration the perception of the Ottomanness or Iranianness of tribal subjects further increased and became explicit, even though tribal identities continued to be more powerful.

The Hamidian tribal regiments were created by Abdülhamid in order to centralize and control the eastern rural regions of the empire through implementation and putting into practice his Islamist policies. Therefore, we might suggest that focusing on a

²⁸ Erdal Çiftçi, “Ottoman Policy in the Ottoman-Iranian Borderland during the 19th Century” *History Studies*, vol: 8/1, 2016, p. 7-18.

²⁹ This technic was almost similar to the Russian-Iranian conflict over the northeastern Iranian tribal subjects: Moritz Deutschmann, *Iran and Russian Imperialism: The Ideal Anarchists, 1800-1914* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 64.

³⁰ Çiftçi, *Ibid.*

specific Hamidian tribal regiment will help us to understand the regional and central policies of the time. By analyzing the role of the Heyderan tribe in the development of these regiments, the following parts will explain why and how the Ottoman state entered into relationship of collaboration with the local tribes in that region. First, the creation of Hamidian tribal regiments and the Heyderan's involvement in this institution will be discussed. How these policies empowered some tribal chiefs will be also examined by focusing on a few powerful Heyderan chiefs: Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha in the next chapter. The results of these developments will be analyzed within the framework of intra-tribal and inter-tribal relations, as the power struggles which developed within this context became one of the primary events which led to the devastation of the region. Furthermore, in tandem with devolving relations between and within tribes, the issue of the relationship between tribal and non-tribal subjects will also be examined, as it too contributed to the resulting depredation within the region. Lastly, next chapter will discuss the policies of three separate actors who had various and different approaches in terms of dealing with the Hamidian chiefs: the Sultan and the Ottoman military class, the British consuls, and finally, the Ottomans governors. Before analyzing the role of Heyderan in detail, we need to see how and why Abülhamid II established the Hamidian tribal cavalry regiments in early 1890s.

5.1.2 “*Teşkilât-ı Hayriye*”: Creation of Hamidian Tribal Cavalry Regiments

Abdülhamid II did not only create his own bureaucratic elite to surround him at the center, but he also attempted to enlarge his control over other Muslim ethnic identities, who he suspected could possibly revolt against him. This was particularly

important in the wake of rising nationalist movements operating in the remaining Ottoman territories. For example, the Albanians had created the nationalist League of Prizren, in support of an independent Albania. In Egypt, Urabi Pasha vocally opposed the Sultan, similar to the Mahdis in the Sudan and the Zaydi Imams in the Yemen, who in fact revolted against the Sultan. Finally Sheikh Ubeydullah had been in contact with the British government in order to garner support for the building of an independent Islamic Kurdish State.³¹ Though the British government did not consider supporting a Kurdish movement, some discussions were held in England to examine the idea that if the Kurds were to be supported by the British government, they could possibly prevent further Russian expansion into the region.³² Seeing these developments, Abdülhamid II created the Palace Guards (*Saray Muhâfız Alayı*), composed of the Albanians at Yıldız Palace, the Tribal School (*Aşiret Okulu*) for the Arab/Kurdish chiefs' juveniles residing in the capital, and tribal cavalry regiments for the Kurds in the Ottoman eastern provinces.³³ Since this study is related to the latter, we are going to elaborate on the Hamidian tribal regiments in the following section.

5.1.2.1 The Founding Purpose of the Regiments

Under the supervision of Şakir Pasha, who was appointed as ambassador to St. Petersburg, Abdülhamid II ordered the establishment of a Russian Cossack-style

³¹ Georgeon, *Ibid.* Burinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State*, p. 185. Michael A. Reynolds, "Abdürrezzak Bedirhan: Ottoman Kurd and Russophile in the Twilight of Empire" *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, vol. 12, no. 2 (Spring, 2011), p. 419. Sabri Ateş, "In the Name of the Caliph and the Nation: The Sheikh Ubeidullah Rebellion of 1880- 1881," *Iranian Studies*, 47: 5 (2014), p. 735- 798.

³² Henry Howorth et al., "Kurdistan: Discussion" *The Geographical Journal*, vol. 3, no. 2 (Feb., 1894), p. 92-95.

³³ Georgeon, *Ibid.* Mehmet Rezan Ekinçi, "Osmanlı Devleti Döneminde Milli Aşireti: XVIII.-XIX. YY." (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Elazığ University, Elazığ, 2017).

cavalry regiment composed of members from the Muslim Sunni tribes.³⁴ Marshal Muhammed Zeki Pasha, son-in-law of the sultan, was another pioneering figure regarding the development of these regiments, who became the head of the Fourth Army in Erzincan, in order to organize the new regiments, and maintain them under close surveillance. The regiments would be staffed by members of various tribes, whose chiefs would in turn become the military officers who would lead them. In return, the Ottomans promised to bestow some additional rights or exemptions upon these regiments and through such a method were able to persuade many of the tribes to join the state system in an official capacity as parts of the imperial military. Zeki Pasha began to work on the formation of this new institution in 1890, and the first set of regulations were published in 1891, which was followed by the visit of the tribal chiefs to the Sultan's Palace for a ceremony marking the official establishment and entrance into the regiments.³⁵ The number of regiments rapidly increased to 56 by 1893, and in 1899, there were 63 regiments, most of them predominantly consisting of Kurdish tribes, but also including some Karapapak and Arab tribes.³⁶ These Kurdish tribes were viewed as allies by the state, and Abdülhamid II was portrayed as the "father of the Kurds" for the Sultan provided them with additional rights and protection against any sanctions.³⁷

³⁴ Ali Karaca, "Şakir Paşa" *DİA*, vol. 38 (2010), p. 307-308. Ali Karaca, *Anadolu Islahatı ve Ahmet Şakir Paşa (1838-1899)* (İstanbul: Eren, 1993).

³⁵ Bayram Kodaman, "Hamidiye Hafif Süvari Alayları: II. Abdülhamid ve Doğu Anadolu Aşiretleri" *İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Dergisi*, İstanbul, XXXII (1979), p. 443. Joost Jongerden, "Elite Encounters of A Violent Kind: Milli İbrahim Paşa, Ziya Gökalp and Political Struggle in Diyarbakir at the Turn of the 20th Century" *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbakir, 1870-1915*, ed. Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij (Leiden: Brill, 2012), p. 61.

³⁶ Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State*, p. 186. The name of "Hamidian Tribal Regiments" changed to "Hamidian Light Cavalry Regiments" after the second regulation in 1896: Kodaman, "Hamidiye Hafif Süvari Alayları", p. 33-34.

³⁷ Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State*, p. 186.

There are a number of studies regarding the structure and establishment of the Hamidian tribal cavalry regiments, however, these studies do not focus on any specific tribe. Bayram Kodaman, Eugene Rogan, Stephen Duguid, and Janet Klein have written specifically on the structure of the Hamidian regiments and the Imperial School for Tribes (*Aşiret Mekteb-i Hümayunu*).³⁸ These scholars all provide specific reasons for the establishment of these institutions: first, to control the tribes for any possible Kurdish uprising against the Ottoman State; second, to suppress Armenian political activities in the region; and third, to block potential attacks against Ottoman lands by Russian or British forces. Therefore, there was not one single reason behind the creation of the regiments, but rather, as Klein described, a “manifold mission” created these regiments.³⁹ We need to reemphasize that these regiments were a realization of Abdülhamid II’s Islamism policies in the Ottoman eastern rural frontiers. Therefore, the Hamidian government did not let Yezidi Kurds, the Druzes in Lebanon or the Alewite tribes in Dersim, join the regiments for they were seen as possible “threats” to the rule of Abdülhamid II if they were militarized by the State.⁴⁰ Therefore, the *Tanzimât-ı Hayriye*’s Ottomanism policies were increasingly replaced with Abdülhamid’s Islamism and the resulting *Teşkilât-ı Hayriye* (Beneficial Institution) during the early 1890s.⁴¹

³⁸ Bayram Kodaman, *Ibid.* Stephen Duguid, *Ibid.* Eugene L. Rogan, “Aşiret Mektebi: Abdülhamid II’s School for Tribes (1892-1907), *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 28, (Feb., 1996), p. 83- 107. Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011). Edip Gölbaşı provides some crucial comments regarding the Hamidian regiments: Edip Gölbaşı, “Hamidiye Alayları: Bir Değerlendirme” in *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım* eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015), p. 164- 175. For the region’s socio-economic background see: Yaşar Tolga Cora, “Doğu’da Kürt-Ermeni Çatışmasının Sosyoekonomik Arka planı” in *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım* eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015), p. 126-139.

³⁹ Klein, *Ibid.* Gölbaşı, “Hamidiye Alayları”, p. 166.

⁴⁰ Gölbaşı, “Hamidiye Alayları”, p. 165. Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası*, p. 99.

⁴¹ Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası*, p. 121. Kodaman, “Hamidiye Hafif Süvari Alayları”, p. 429.

The integration of the Ottoman rural tribal zone and Kurdish subjects into the state system was one of the primary concerns of the Hamidian regime.⁴² Though the Tanzimat era had limited the trans-frontier movements of the tribes, they continued to be perceived as a “threat” to Ottoman unity. This was due to the fact that they were not fully assimilated into the Ottoman system, as they continued to maintain some sense of separate collective identities and pursued their own agendas.⁴³ Tribal agendas were thus a cause for concern for the Ottoman state as demonstrated by Sheikh Ubeydullah, who at this time became the latest example of a subject who could rally together the tribes into one Kurdish movement and act against the Porte. The Porte was aware of the fact that during previous years, some of the Kurdish tribes had supported the Russian expeditions into Ottoman territory, and thus had retreated from the frontlines due to pragmatic reasons, rather than to remain out of state loyalty.⁴⁴ Averyanov shares that the Porte was conscious of the freestanding status of the Kurdish tribes, and thus attempted to transform the members of the tribes into docile Ottoman subjects by integrating them into the Ottoman system through the development of the regiments.⁴⁵ Similarly, Klein also suggested that governmentality and administrative power, which the Ottomans tried to settle on the margins of empire, were the one of the manifold missions of Sultan Abdülhamid II.⁴⁶ As discussed in the previous chapter, Tanzimat officials allied with the chiefs, while at the same time, they also subdued tribal members, especially when they carried out unruly activities. Now, Abdülhamid II reversed this process as he needed to integrate

⁴² David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007), p. 62.

⁴³ Duguid, “The Politics of Unity”, p. 141.

⁴⁴ McDowall, *A Modern History*, p. 59.

⁴⁵ Averyanov, *Osmanlı-İran-Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, p. 202.

⁴⁶ Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 135.

not only the senior Pashas working out of the center, but also the tribal zone at the edge of the empire by co-opting and uniting the tribes with the central government.⁴⁷

An Ottoman document clearly laid out the policies of Abdülhamid II:

in order to make Kurdish tribes loyal to the reign of the Sultan, and to make them faithful [and] in order to investigate which Armenians and Kurds are obedient and which are rebellious, the Hamidian regiments were created for this mission.⁴⁸

During the reign of Abdülhamid II, not only Armenian armed organizations but also Armenian villagers living in the rural areas of the Ottoman eastern provinces were seen as a potential threat to state and border security, and consequently were alienated from state policies. The Ottoman government even considered upgrading the status of the Erciş sub-district from a *kaza* to a *mutasarrıflık*, in order to be able to justify an increase in their ability to exert control over the Armenian population in the region. One Ottoman document clearly states that since the Armenian population was dominant in Erciş, there must be a Hamidian regiment located there in order to control them.⁴⁹

Discussion regarding demography, and the composition of the population, became more apparent after the Treaty of Berlin, which contained a provision forcing the Ottomans to protect their Armenian subjects from Muslim Kurds and Circassians.⁵⁰

The British consul in Erzurum and the vice-consuls in Van, Trabzon and Diyarbekir

⁴⁷ Reynolds, “Abdürrezzak Bedirhan”, p. 419.

⁴⁸ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK. 101/48- (1894).

⁴⁹ BOA, DH.MKT 9/15- (1893): “*Erciş kazâsının ehemmiyetinden dolayı orada bir Hamidiye Alayı Süvarisi teşkil olunmak ve ahâlisinin nüfusunun ziyadesi Ermeni bulunmak hasebiyle civârında bulunan Adilcevaz ve Bargiri'nin dahiliyle 3. sınıf mutasarrıflığa tahvil*”. For another example of the same issue see: Hamdi Özdiş, “Coğrafyanın Azizliği ya da Sınırboyunda Nahiye Olmak: Vakıf Nahiyesi (1879-1914)” *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırmaları ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi*, vol. 25, p. 149-166.

⁵⁰ Kodaman, “Hamidiye Hafif Süvari Alayları”, p. 433-444.

closely followed the developments in the region.⁵¹ The Armenians were now under the protection of the global powers, which further increased the perceptions of them as both separatists and external threats to the security of the State.⁵² The Ottomans preferred to maintain the “Kurdishness” of the region, in order to shake and counteract any ideas concerning the “Armenianness” of the area.⁵³ Therefore, Sultan Abdülhamid II saw the creation of the regiments as direct resistance to any possible Armenian national movements, which emerged in the late 1880s, such as the Armenakan, Hınçak and Taşnak movements.⁵⁴

The central government emphasized that no other method could be used to keep such element under the control of the state, beyond implementing and using the Hamidian tribal regiments. Therefore, it was necessary that the state fully support the Hamidian chiefs. A document described, “A solution must be found to block the Armenian “degenerates” [...] the royal army is insufficient for this, and there is no solution but to utilize the tribes and clans after bringing them under control and making them obedient”.⁵⁵ Furthermore, the Ottoman consuls to Khoi and Salmas in Iran, closely

⁵¹ The British consul was in Erzurum and others in Diyarbakir, Van, Trabzon were vice-consuls.

⁵² Edip Gölbaşı, “1895-1896 Katliamları: Doğu Vilayetlerinde Cemaatler Arası “Şiddet İklimi” ve Ermeni Karşısı Ayaklanmalar” 1915: *Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım* eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015), p. 144-148.

⁵³ Janet Klein, “Conflict and Collaboration”. For the British and Ottoman dilemma over how to refer to the Ottoman East, see: Aslıhan Gürbüz, “Hamidian Policy in Eastern Anatolia (1878- 1890)” (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara, 2008), p. 32- 38.

⁵⁴ Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State*, p. 186. Fuat Dündar, “”Eski Rejim”de Ermeni Nüfus Meselesi, 1828-1908” 1915: *Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015), p. 117.

⁵⁵ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 179/72- (1902) “*Ermeni müfsidesine bir sed ve men-i kat’i olabilmek kuvvetini hâiz bir çâre ve tedbir sât-ı arz etmek hususundan ibarettir [...] Orduy-u Hümâyunda idâre-i hâliye ve ayinesi şu şekil ve tarzda devam ettikçe Ermeni gâilesi gittikçe mündefî olmak değil bilakis tezyid ve terakki ederek devleti bir meseley-i dâime içinde bulunduracağı ve netâyic hâsil olacağı [...] binâenaleyh bu gâileyi esasından ve menfaat ve siyaset-i devlet nokta-i nazarında kat’ ve imha için aşâir ve kabâil-i umûmiyeyi bir zabt ve rabt ve intizam ve inzibat altına alınarak asâkir-i mülûkâne misüllü bir kûvve-i muntazam şekline alınarak devlet-i ebed müddet için âlâ-ı şan ve satvete lâyük ve nâtik bir kuvve-i muntazama şekline koymaktan başka bir çâre yoktur”.*

observed Armenian militants operating on the Iranian side, and subsequently suggested that the only way to prevent them from crossing into Ottoman territory was to militarize the tribes under duty.⁵⁶ As this will be indicated below, the Armenian militants were unable to establish dominance in some of the areas which were under the control of these powerful tribal chiefs. Hüseyin Pasha of the Heyderan tribe was one of these chiefs, and due to his unlawful rule, Hüseyin Pasha became a *persona non grata* in the region.

Ethnic-nationalist movements were given legitimacy in the Treaty of Berlin, and subsequently the Bulgarians, Romanians, Serbs, and Montenegrins all received sovereignty, which resulted in a territorial loss for the Ottoman State.⁵⁷ Furthermore, this meant that both the Russian and Austria-Hungarian Empires expanded their control over the Balkans, and for the Ottomans, the Armenians represented another group with a possible nationalist agenda that would lead them to advocate for separation based on ethno-nationalist ideals, which could materialize if the global powers came to be involved. Therefore, the *Regulations on the Hamidian Tribal Regiments (Hamidiye Aşiret Alaylarına dair kanunnâme)* clearly defined in the first article that the purpose behind the creation of those regiments was to protect the fatherland from any attacks by the foreign states through the recruitment of nomadic tribes who had not fulfilled their military obligations.⁵⁸ Thus, this was a reactionary policy against the threat of Britain and Russia as described in the following Ottoman document: “the most important power of the State is the cavalries. Since the State is

⁵⁶ BOA, BEO 3293/246830- (1902).

⁵⁷ Reynolds, “Abdürrezzak Bedirhan”, p. 418.

⁵⁸ *Hamidiye Süvari Alaylarına Dair Kanunnamedir* (Dersaadet: Matbaa-i Osmaniye, 1308), p. 2-3.

under economic depredations, the Hamidian regiments were built [and] the threats of foreign states will be eliminated.”⁵⁹

Ottoman documents also note that the Russians registered Kurds under their authority, in order to organize a tribal army similar to the Hamidian tribal cavalry units.⁶⁰ Averyanov, who was a Russian military agent, also shared that the larger tribes of the southern region, the Hakkari, Boti, Reşkotan, and Jaf had not yet applied to become a part of the Ottoman Hamidian tribal corps. Therefore, the tribal chiefs had to be supported by the Russians, in order to maintain their allegiance to the Russians and against the Ottomans.⁶¹ In the southern regions of the empire, the tribes were able to maintain greater sovereignty than those located in the northern area, and thus we might suggest that those tribes neither needed to nor wanted to join the Ottoman regiments and in turn, come under direct Ottoman rule. Furthermore, the Ottomans were primarily focused on the north-eastern provinces within the empire, for they expected that Russian expansion would move in that direction, with the support and alliance of the Armenian population. Therefore, the regiments were primarily clustered along the axis of the Russian and northern Iranian borders.⁶² In sum, the creation of the Ottoman Hamidian tribal regiments aimed to integrate the Kurds into the Ottoman state system in order to suppress any Armenian ethnic-national movements, as well as to protect the region from any possible attacks that could be carried out by global powers, as had occurred in the Balkans.

⁵⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.BŞK 46/64- (1896). Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State*, p. 185.

⁶⁰ BOA, BEO 862/64586- (1896).

⁶¹ Averyanov, *Osmanlı-İran-Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, p. 207-259.

⁶² Kodaman, “Hamidiye Hafif Süvari Alayları”, p. 468. McDowall, *A Modern History*, p. 59.

5.1.2.2 Rules, Ceremony and Admission to the Regiments

The previous chapter discussed the process by which the tribal chiefs became official state representatives (*aşiret müdürü*) of their own, as well as intermediaries between tribal members and the State. Sultan Abdülhamid II extended his governmental authority over the members of the tribes by making the regular members of the tribe into a tribal cavalry that was in turn a branch of the state army. In order to encourage participation and increase the size of the tribal cavalry, the Hamidian government extended certain rights to those who joined these regiments. One of the most effective incentives was exemption from state taxation, which though resulting in an economic loss to the state, was deemed secondary to the issue and concerns regarding maintaining the unity of the empire, particularly in that region.⁶³

Additionally, the chiefs of tribes were able to preserve and even increase their authority and power in the region, particularly after receiving the right to collect tithes from those residing within the borders which they controlled.⁶⁴

The sheep tax (*ağnâm*), income tax (*temettû*), property tax (*emlak vergisi*) and the tithe (*öşr*) were some of the state taxes that the officers of the regiments were exempted from.⁶⁵ Though the 39th and 40th articles of the regulation noted that any crimes committed by these cavalry soldiers while on duty would be tried in military courts, in practice, economic privileges were followed by de facto exemption from judiciary executions. For example, a man named Haydar, who was from the Hasenan tribe, received imperial clemency from Abdülhamid II after he was admitted to join

⁶³ Duguid, *Ibid*. In Duguid's view, centralization-oriented reforms in the region were subordinate to issues of unity and survival. According to Bruinessen, these regiments were also paid during on active duty although we could not reach such details: Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State*, p. 186.

⁶⁴ BOA, DH.MKT 1869/105- (1891). BOA, MV 72/82- (1892). BOA, BEO 664/49773- (1895).

⁶⁵ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 91/97- (1893).

the tribal regiments.⁶⁶ This was very similar to Abdülhamid's policies of Islamism in the southern regions, where he pardoned and released the chiefs of the Berzenji, Talabani, Jaff and Hamawend tribes, as a method of trying to integrate them into his sphere of loyal subjects, although these tribes did not join the regiments.⁶⁷ The similar exclusionary de facto judiciary rights received by the Heyderan chiefs will be further analyzed in detail below, particularly in regards to how their unlawful power struggles were simply ignored by the Hamidian government as means of maintaining the loyalty of the chiefs.

Regarding the provisioning of the regiments, such matters were to be handled by both the state and the tribe. The state was to provide the weapons and banners of each regiment; however it was the responsibility of the tribe to supply clothing and horses for the members of their regiments. Interestingly, the central government also ordered each regiment to differentiate itself in various ways, which signified their various ethnic differences. For example, their clothing was to specifically indicate which regiments were Kurdish, Arab and Karapapak.⁶⁸ They were to undergo various training drills within the military camps, but also in their own summer pastures, though this was never properly applied.⁶⁹ Furthermore, the members of regiments were not allowed to leave their territories unless they received permission from their own tribal chiefs, who at this point had also become the commanders of their military units.⁷⁰ Previously, it was discussed how inability to control the movable tribal members was one of the major problems that the Empire attempted to resolve. With

⁶⁶ BOA, DH.MKT 1/9- (1892).

⁶⁷ Gökhan Çetinsaya, "II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Kuzey Irak", p. 153-165.

⁶⁸ *Hamidiye Süvari Alaylarına Dair Kanunname*dir, p. 6-7.

⁶⁹ *Hamidiye Süvari Alaylarına Dair Kanunname*dir, p. 4-5.

⁷⁰ *Hamidiye Süvari Alaylarına Dair Kanunname*dir, p. 6-7.

these rules, the Ottoman government finally created an opportunity to implement a policy which would exert control over various members of the tribes, by placing their chiefs in a position to do so on behalf of the Empire.

Under these privileges and regulations, a group of tribal chiefs prepared to leave for the Palace of Abdülhamid II, in order to present their loyalty to the Sultan and swear an oath so that they could be accepted into the regiments, as required by the regulations.⁷¹ They made the journey in May 1891, which consisted of 52 tribal chiefs, whose number was dominated by chiefs from the Heyderan tribe, as the chart below shows:

Table 5. List of Hamidian Chiefs traveled to Istanbul in 1891.

The Chiefs and Officers of Newly Created Tribal Cavalry Regiments who Traveled for the Ceremony in Istanbul in May 1891 ⁷²			
Group Leader	Degree ⁷³	Name	Details
Hüseyin Agha, who was one of the chiefs of the Heyderan Tribe	1	Sultan Agha	The officers from the five regiments built by Hüseyin Agha
	1	Muhammed Agha	
	2	Muhammed Agha	
	2	Yusuf Agha	
	2	Derviş Agha	
	2	İbrahim Agha	
	3	Mahmut Agha	
	4	Ali Agha	
	4	Muhammed Agha	
Hacı Temir Agha, who was one of the chiefs of the Heyderan Tribe	1	Tosun Efendi	The officers from two of the regiments built by Hacı Temir Agha
	2	Hacı Musa Agha	
	2	Ali Bey	
	2	Kasım Agha	

⁷¹ *Hamidiye Süvari Alaylarına Dair Kanunname*dir, p. 9.

⁷² BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 71/79-(1891).

⁷³ Degree (Derece) probably refers to the hierarchy among the tribal members since powerful tribal chiefs were numbered as “1”.

(Cont'd)

Emin Agha, who was one of the chiefs of the Heyderan Tribe	1	Hacı Hasan Agha	The officers from four of the regiments built by Emin Agha
	1	İbrahim Agha	
	2	Ali Agha	
	2	Hasan Agha	
	2	Abdal Agha	
	3	Ahmed Agha	
	3	Süleyman Agha	The officers from two of the regiments built by Muhammed Siddık Agha
	1	Mustafa Agha	
	4	Ali Agha	
	4	Yusuf Agha	
3	Hamid Efendi		
4	Hamza Agha		
Kuluhan Agha, who was one of the chiefs of the Zirikanlı Tribe	2	Abdal Agha	The officers from two of the regiments built by Kuluhan Agha
	2	Yusuf Agha	
	2	Ahmed Agha	
	5	Ali Agha	
	1	Ali Agha	The officers of a regiment built by the Ademanlı tribe
	2	Derviş Agha	
	1	İbrahim Efendi	The officers of a regiment built by the Makori tribe
	5	Yusuf Agha	
	1	Hüseyin Agha	The officers of a regiment built by the Takori tribe
	5	Kalender Agha	
	2	Osman Agha	The officers of a regiment built by the Milan tribe
	5	Şeyho Agha	
	2	Hasan Agha	The officers of a regiment built by the Şemski tribe
	5	Abdi Agha	
	1	Şeref Agha	The Sakan Tribe promised to create two regiments but it was understood that it was currently not possible. They were separated from 21 regiments
	5	Hasan Agha	
	2	Abdal Agha	
	3	Muhammed Agha	Cibranlı Tribe promised to create two regiments but it was understood that it was currently not possible. They were separated from 21 regiments
	1	Kuluhan Agha	
	4	Hamza Agha	The officers of a regiment built by the Loli tribe
1	Hacı Mirza Agha	The Şivili Tribe promised	

(Cont'd)

	1	Cafer Agha	to create two regiments but it was understood that it was currently not possible. They were separated from 21 regiments
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The first group sailed from Trabzon to the capital and visited Sultan Abdülhamid in his palace. The following chart below also indicates that some of the chiefs could not organize the required number of regiments, such as the Sakan, Cibranlı and Şivili tribes. Even Hüseyin Pasha, who had promised to build five regiments, could only accomplish the formation of four. Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Agha of the Heyderan tribe were eager to join the regiments, as they also competed against each other due to an intra-tribal cousin struggle. These three Heyderan chiefs held tribal titles (agha) before their visits, however when they returned from Istanbul they received the title of tribal lieutenant colonel (*aşiret kaymakamı*), for they held the position of commander of their own regiments.⁷⁴ In time, some of these pashas would receive the high-ranking position of colonel/brigadier, as well as some other corresponding military decorations.⁷⁵ Furthermore, the number of degrees listed in the chart indicates that ranks were distributed based on the hierarchal positions of the chiefs within their tribe. Thus, their journey to Istanbul transformed them from a tribal entity into one that was organized by the state apparatus and in turn blessed in a ceremony designed by the Sultan to cement their new status and role within the Empire. Almost all of the tribes within the Ottoman eastern provinces joined the

⁷⁴ Averyanov, *Osmanlı-İran-Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, p. 203-204. Other tribes such as Milli İbrahim also received the title of pasha after his visit the Sultan: Ekinçi, "Osmanlı Devleti Döneminde Milli", p. 231. *Salnâme-i Askeri* (İstanbul, Matbaa-i Askeri, 1311-1895), p. 524-576.

⁷⁵ *Salnâme-i Askeri* (İstanbul, Matbaa-i Askeri, 1324-1908), p. 533-536.

regiments over time, and some other tribes from the southern regions in Urfa and Cizre also entered into the regiments as well.

Their visit was an important policy of Abdülhamid II, who tried to increase the legitimacy of his rule over the Muslim subjects residing within his territories. For Deringil, there was a “face value” and a “power of symbolism” in those visits, which the Sultan used to try and regain some sense of legitimacy, particularly in regards to ruling over the tribes in the eastern part of the territory.⁷⁶ After the ceremony was blessed by the caliph of the Islamic world, it was followed by the distribution of each regiment’s banners, which symbolized an induction into the army of the caliph. Now, titles, decorations, and banners of each tribal regiments became an ideological device. It was very similar to Abdülhamid’s distribution of flags, which were sent to African Muslim chiefs in Morocco and Chad.⁷⁷ Fortna summarized how those “image management” ceremonies were meaningful:

as sultan–caliph, Abdülhamid intended to take advantage of the power of image and symbol through such means as ceremony, architecture, the act of bestowing medals and honours, visibly close relations with sufi orders, dedicatory inscriptions, the sultan’s monogram and the language of official pronouncements to his subjects, in as broad a manner as possible.⁷⁸

As Fortna suggested, Abdülhamid II was not only building an army but he was also shaping the perception that Muslims had of the empire. He wanted them to believe

⁷⁶ Deringil, “Legitimacy Structures”, p. 354. For the role of imperial gifts to the political legitimization see: Nadir Özbek, “Imperial Gifts and Sultanic Legitimation During the Reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II, 1876- 1909,” *Poverty and Charity in the Middle Eastern Contexts*, ed. Mine Ener, Amy Singer and Michael Bonner, p. 203- 220.

⁷⁷ Georgenon, *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ Fortna, “The Reign of Abdülhamid II”, p. 53.

that there was a glories and imperial highness who held legitimate Islamic authority, to whom the members of the tribes needed to be loyal.⁷⁹

After their journey, the new tribal pashas of the regiments had to fulfill their oaths by organizing new regiments composed of members from their tribes. The more regiments they organized also meant more power for the new tribal pashas.

According to the regulation's second article, a regiment had to contain at least 512 mounted men with weapons.⁸⁰ However, although there were enough tribal followers to meet the demands for the formation of these cavalry units, the numbers of horses needed to stock the regiments remained far lower. Therefore, in order to increase the number of horses, the chiefs even registered their mules, while Ottoman officials were conscious of the shortage of horses.⁸¹ The chart below, prepared by Şakir Pasha, displays the number of animals and regiments assembled in the autumn of 1891:

Table 6. List of Şakir Pasha for Firstly Established Hamidian Regiments in 1891.

Şakir Pasha's Report on Hamidian Tribal Regiments in October 1891 ⁸²							
Promised Regiments	Tribes	Chiefs	Place	Regiment No	Soldiers	Animals ⁸³	Details
1	Sepki	Hüseyin Agha	Antap ⁸⁴ and Eleşkirt	1	645	350	(...)
1	Sepki	Hasan Bey	'	2	550	300	(...)

⁷⁹ Deringil, "Legitimacy Structures", p. 352.

⁸⁰ *Hamidiye Süvari Alaylarına Dair Kanunnamedir*, p. 3.

⁸¹ Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası*, p. 111-116.

⁸² BOA, Y.MTV 55/29- (1891).

⁸³ Rather than specifying the number of horses the report mentioned "the number animal" (*hayvan*) which indicates that horses and mules were counted to the records.

⁸⁴ Antap is current Tutak, district of Ağrı province.

(Cont'd)

2	Sepki	Hacı Yusuf Pasha	“	3	540	300	(...)
			“	0	0	0	(...)
1	Zilanlı	Selim Paşa	Bayezid	4	568	350	(...)
1	Zilanlı	Eyüp Paşa	“	5	500	300	(...)
2	Karapapak	Ali Agha	Eleşkirt	6	500	300	(...)
			(0)	(0)	(0)	(...)	
1	Karapapak	Tosun Agha	Antap	7	500	300	(...)
5	Heyderanlı	Hüseyin Paşa	Antap and Diyardin	8	650	310	On behalf of his brother Sultan Agha
			Diyadin	20	547	300	On behalf of Muhammed Agha
			“	21	529	310	On behalf of Hüseyin Agha
			“	22	540	330	On behalf of İsmail Agha
			(...)	(0)	(0)	(0)	...
4	Heyderanlı	Emin Paşa	Antap and Diyardin	9	522	300	On behalf of his brother
			Erciş	18	540	300	On behalf of Süleyman Agha
			(...)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(...)
			(...)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(...)
1	Cemedanlı	Hüseyin Bey	Eleşkirt	10	500	300	(...)
2	Ademanlı	Mirza Agha	Diyadin	11	500	300	(...)
			“	12	500	300	(...)
2	Heyderanlı	Muhammed Sıddık Agha	Bargiri ⁸⁵	13	672	330	(...)
			“	14	549	291	(...)
1	Makori	İbrahim Efendi	Mahmudi	15	574	351	(...)
2	Şivili	Hacı Mirza ve Cafer Aghalar	“	16	533	305	Built by Cafer Agha
			(0)	(0)	(0)	(...)	
1	Takori	Hüseyin Agha	“	17	271	150	Two troops assembled
...	Murad?	Muhammed Agha			446	194	Three troops assembled (two of them formed a regiment)
2	Heyderanlı	Hacı Temir Paşa	Adilcevaz	19	630	300	(...)
			(...)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(...)

⁸⁵ Bargiri is current Muradiye, district of Van province.

As this chart demonstrates some of the chiefs were not able to organize enough regiments after they returned to their territories, however within a few months, some managed to organize up to four regiments. The number of soldiers in a regiment at times exceeded the required 512, however, the number of horses was regularly half as many as needed, often times averaging at around 300 per regiment. Şakir Pasha noted that the number of animals was low during this time, and that the tribes themselves would provide the additional number of animals needed. Referring to consular reports, Klein suggests that the exact number of animals and soldiers was exaggerated by Ottoman officials.⁸⁶ This was indeed possible, as the records note that the numbers of animals in each tribe usually documented at around 300. However, the regulations did not specify any lower limit regarding the number of animals that had to be provided for a regiment. Therefore, the deficiency in the number of expected horses did not result in any trouble for the chiefs of tribes when they organized the regiments. Within a few months, twenty-two regiments were built by the Kurdish and Karapapak tribes, within a close axis in the vicinity of the Ottoman-Russian border. Within nine years, the numbers of regiments would rise to sixty-three, as shown above.⁸⁷ All three of the Heyderan and two of the Zilanlı chiefs, together with one Sepki leader, received the title of “tribal Pasha”.⁸⁸ It was an important shift in the title associated with their positions, for now they had officially entered into the Ottoman military system, and therefore, viewed their status as being

⁸⁶ Klein, *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ “Turquie”, *Revue Militaire* (Paris: Chapelot, Janvier-Juin 1905), p. 190: This French report confirms the numbers of those sixty-three regiments of Kurdish, Turkic and Arab tribes in 1905 as Kodaman and Bruinessen suggested: Milli, Miran, Şikak, Hasenan, Cibran were some of the other powerful tribes entered to the regiments. For more detail on Milli tribe see: Ekinci, *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ We need to mention that the ranks of the Hamidian chiefs were separate from the brigadier rank of the imperial Ottoman army. For example, they were referred as tribal brigadier (*aşiret mirlivası*) rather than only as brigadier (*mirliva*).

equal to, or even higher than, that of local officials who were a part of the Ottoman civil bureaucracy.

The nine regiments of the Heyderan tribe were built in Patnos, Tutak, Diyadin, Adilcevaz, Erciş and Bargiri, which was the highest number of regiments from among all of the Hamidian tribal regiments. Hüseyin Pasha also became one of the pioneering developers of these regiments, since he created four of them, in total. He made enormous efforts to organize the tribes, as the acting British consul Hampson reported in January 1891. He states that Hüseyin travelled from Erzurum to Eleşkirt in order to convince the different branches of the Heyderan tribe to join the regiments.⁸⁹ The creation of the Hamidian tribal regiments empowered some of the aghas in the region, while at the same time they also increased the number of less-powerful or minor chiefs operating in the region, as the Tanzimat reforms had done in a similar fashion. Averyanov witnessed this transformation and shared that “we [Russians] have to deal with these less powerful tribal agents since their numbers increased”.⁹⁰ Furthermore, these chiefs became each other’s enemies, and inter/intra tribal disputes further increased during this period. Each wanted to be the dominant leader in neighboring lands, which resulted in a chaotic political and military structure in the region. Therefore, Hamidian policies continued to further atomize the tribal structures which actually degraded tribal power but also created more enemies among the leaders of the tribe.

Before concluding this section, it is imperative to emphasize that Abdülhamid II also created an Imperial tribal school (*Aşiret Okulu*) in Istanbul, in particular for the scions of the Arab Muslim chiefs. The 11th article of the regulations concerning the

⁸⁹ Hampson to White, no: 7, Erzurum, Jan. 23, 1891 (FO 195/1728).

⁹⁰ Averyanov, *Osmanlı-İran-Rus Savaşlarında Kürtler*, p. 235.

Hamidian tribal regiments thus required that the chiefs of the Kurdish and Karapapak tribes send their children to this tribal school.⁹¹ These children were to return their homeland as lieutenant military officers, if they successfully fulfilled the requirements of the school's curriculum. It was also a part of Abdülhamid II's effort at image management, as he attempted to integrate the distant, and potentially rebellious, younger Muslim generation into his protected domains.⁹² The school was a five year crammer boarding school, which hosted the sons of the powerful chief, aged between twelve to sixteen years old, and it was open from October 1892 until 1907.⁹³ It was Abdülhamid II's social engineering and hostage mission that he attempted these tribal boys to become loyal citizens to himself and the empire, and thus he isolated them from the social life of Istanbul.⁹⁴ Although Hasan Sıddık Heyderani from the Heyderan tribe's Ebeğe branch, who was also one of the boys who studied at the tribal school, mentioned that the school provided a good quality of meals, education, and treatment,⁹⁵ for Rogan, there were many problems regarding the serving quality of the school, in areas such as heating, meals, and et cetera.⁹⁶ Most of the tribes were not eager to send their offspring to the school, and the Ottoman central government often complained to the governors in the region regarding the limited number of participants.⁹⁷ There are some Ottoman documents which reveal that the local governments requested that the chiefs of the Heyderan,

⁹¹ *Hamidiye Süvari Alaylarına Dair Kanunnamedir*, p.5.

⁹² Deringil, "Legitimacy Structures", p. 354.

⁹³ Eugene L. Rogan, "Aşiret Mektebi: Abdülhamid II's School for Tribes (1892-1907)" *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 28, no. 1 (Feb., 1996), p. 83.

⁹⁴ Rogan, "Aşiret Mektebi", p. 83.

⁹⁵ Alişan Akpınar, *Osmanlı Devletinde Aşiret Mektebi* (İstanbul: Göçebe, 1997), p. 40, 72.

⁹⁶ Rogan, "Aşiret Mektebi", p. 93-100.

⁹⁷ Rogan, "Aşiret Mektebi", p. 100. Deringil, "Legitimacy Structures", p. 354.

Celali, and other tribes, send one of their boys as required by the Porte.⁹⁸ Hüseyin Pasha's son, Salih Bey, also attended this school, together with Hasan Sıddık Heyderani.⁹⁹ Shortly before Abdülhamid II's forced abdication from the throne, the school was closed in 1907, as the Ottomans realized that the school had the opposite effect of suppressing any ethnic-nationalist impressions within the boys, as evidenced by the conflicts between Arab and Kurdish boys, who fought with each other, often.¹⁰⁰ In time, some of the graduates of this school also became the leaders of the Kurdish national movement, *Azadi*, such as Halid Bey of Cibran.¹⁰¹ Therefore, the tribal school was not only an implementation of hostage politics over a generation of young boys from the distant Muslims tribes in the east, but it also served as a project that tried to socially engineer these boys into Ottoman citizenship, loyal to the state and to the Sultan.

In conclusion, we might suggest that the Hamidian tribal cavalry units were a version of Abdülhamid II's Islamic modernism, implemented along the empire's rural frontiers. Though the Tanzimat era had resulted in the suppression of the tribal chiefs, he reversed this approach and instead attempted to execute a policy whose purpose was also that of centralization and unification along the empire's edge. As has been argued by a number of scholars, Abdülhamid II was not against the goals of the Tanzimat reforms, however he reshaped them, instead focusing the Empire's ideological approach to one which used the "unifying force of religion".¹⁰² However, we need to mention that the centralization of the atomized tribal branches resulted in

⁹⁸ BOA, MF.MKT. 830/32- (1905). BOA, Y.HUS. 5/72- (1892).

⁹⁹ BOA, MF. MKT. 592/22- (1901).

¹⁰⁰ Rogan, "Aşiret Mektebi", p. 83.

¹⁰¹ Bruinessen, *Agha, Sheikh and State*, p. 280.

¹⁰² Deringil, "Legitimacy Structures", p. 347.

a situation where the chiefs of the tribes became militarily, politically and economically more powerful and thus the state's control over them waned. Some chiefs attempted to further increase their power by engaging in unlawful acts of dispossession and the over-taxation of Muslim and Armenian subjects. Tribal chiefs, who became commanders of the branches of their regiments, legitimized their unlawful acts by referring to their legal status as military representatives of the state. And the local/central governments generally ignored such activities in order to keep the tribes on their side. The creation and development of Abdülhamid's regiments in this region was affected by both foreign and internal threats. This resulted in complex structure regarding tribe-empire relations, as well as affecting the region's social, economic and political life. The following chapter will elaborate and analyze these changes by specifically focusing on the activities of the Heyderan chiefs in upper Lake Van region.

CHAPTER VI

THE AGE OF COLLABORATION: HEYDERAN HAMIDIAN REGIMENTS AND THEIR CHIEFS, 1891- 1908

This chapter will analyze and discuss how exactly the Heyderan chiefs increased their power and attempted to become the paramount dominant figures in the region, after receiving the support of the Hamidian government through the creation of the Hamidian tribal regiments. It will also show how a centralized traditional figure of authority in the tribe, the *Torin* chiefs of the Heyderan, performed a mediator role for the empire, as an indirect ruler in the region, instrument of encapsulating imperial power. As Salzman suggested, the centralized authority structures of the tribes were incorporated into the imperial system more easily, and this was accomplished through the indirect rule of state backed middlemen.¹ Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Agha, who now held the titles of tribal Pasha, were tasked with the mission of enacting political and economic power in the upper Lake Van region. This further increased the creation of a paramount leadership in the area, as there were no longer any functioning tribal councils of white-bearded elders (*aksakallı*) or *kethüdas*, those

¹ Philip Carl Salzman, 'Tribal Chiefs as Middlemen: The Politics of Encapsulation in the Middle East', *Anthropological Quarterly* 2 (1979).

who had previously influenced the figures of tribal authority, as seen in the documents added to the appendix.² Therefore, during the Hamidian era collective petitioning by tribal members is no longer encountered, as the chiefs took on the role of mediator between the imperial agencies and the tribesmen. Thus, we can suggest that creation of authoritative leadership re-established the tribal power structure. This chapter discusses how the Heyderan chiefs were involved in the encapsulating role of indirect rule and how they entered into conflict with each other in order for one to emerge as the tribal *mîr* of the region during the Hamidian era after 1890s.

6.1 The Hamidian Tribal Pashas: The Heyderan Chiefs in the Upper Lake Van Region

After the Heyderan tribes entered the nine corps of the Hamidian tribal regiments, three tribal chiefs in particular were able to significantly increase their power: Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha. Despite the fact that all three were cousins, they soon turned on each other and became enemies. Their mission was to become *primus inter pares* of the region in Patnos, Erciş and Adilcevaz. As Averyanov noted, since the Hamidian regime supported every single chief to join the Hamidian militias, via the organization of tribal regiments, the tribal chiefs now saw that this provided them the opportunity to enlarge their territories, revenues and power.³ For this purpose, they sought to enlarge size of the lands and the number of villages under their control. As the removal of the hereditary *mîrs* had left a power vacuum in the region, and the remaining sub-district governors held little authority, these new tribal chiefs were able to consolidate and expand their power in turn. We discussed above that most of the branches of the Heyderan tribe had settled in Erciş and

² See Appendices pages.

³ Averyanov, *Ibid.*

Adilcevaz during the Tanzimat period between the late 1850s and early 1860s, after they were divided from the Ebeğ section. Parallel to their semi-settlement, land became a more valuable source for revenue for both the chiefs and the members of the tribes; however their main economic activity was still animal husbandry. They did not simply settle and become agriculturalists. During the Tanzimat era, the ancestors of these three pashas stepped into leadership roles, and became the heads of the separate branches of the Heyderan tribe (*aşiret müdürü*). Therefore, Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha had already acquired powerful positions within the tribe before the Hamidian tribal regiments were created. Below, this region will be the primary focus of analysis, with particular attention paid to the activities of Hüseyin Pasha rather than to those in the Ebeğ region. This is due to the fact that the actors and factors in the Erciş and Adilcevaz regions were more representative of local developments in this region of the Ottoman Empire during the Hamidian era. Although Ali Agha was the most powerful chief among the Heyderan chiefs during the Tanzimat era, now, the chiefs from the Erciş and Adilcevaz branches had acquired more power and authority.

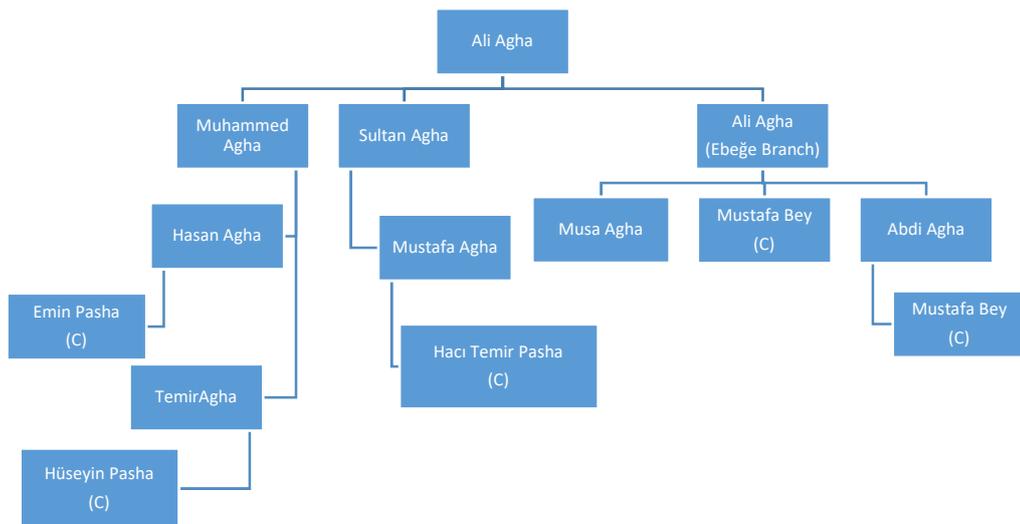


Figure 5. The family scheme of Heyderan chiefs who became commanders in the regiments: (C).

It was discussed previously that Mustafa Agha, Hasan and Temir Agha held positions of leadership in the Heyderan tribe (*aşiret müdürü*) within the Erciş, Adilcevaz and Patnos regions. Therefore, Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir already possessed a certain amount of prestige among the members of their tribes. They were also part of the *Torin* class of the Heyderan tribe, which furthered their prominence and increased their esteem in the eyes of their tribesmen. Within a few years of the establishment of the regiments, Hüseyin not only became the most powerful chief from among those of the Heyderan, but his power and authority exceeded that of other tribal chiefs and local district governors in the region as well. Yet, his authority was not absolute. He could not enforce his will and suppress all of the other local power holders, and the Hamidian central government could have eliminated his hold over the region if Abdülhamid abandoned his policy of supporting the local Muslim notables and chiefs.⁴

Hüseyin was born in 1848, directly following the period when the last Kurdish *mîrs* were eliminated from power in Ottoman East. When he was born, his family was probably residing on the Iranian side until the 1850s, when they escaped from the region in response to the Ottoman expedition in late 1840s. According to the current descendants of Hüseyin Pasha, he lost his father, Temir Agha, when he was a child and was subsequently raised by his uncle, Hasan Agha in Erciş.⁵ Hüseyin's father, Temir Agha, had been the head chief of the Heyderan tribe in the Erciş region in 1862.⁶ Therefore, Hüseyin was probably a teenager when he lost his father. This meant that he was conscious of his father's prestige among the ruling elite of the

⁴ Gölbaşı, "Hamidiye Alayları", p. 171.

⁵ Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

⁶ BOA, İ.MVL. 473/21446- (1862).

tribe. After the loss of his father, with his cousins, one of whom was Emin, who would become his greatest enemy during the 1890s. In later sections of this chapter, we will see that Hüseyin and Emin escalated the region's chaotic atmosphere especially between 1895-1898 due to the intra-tribal attacks they enacted on surrounding villages under each man's authority. Perhaps, their relationship began to worsen during their time spent living together in the same house after the death of Hüseyin's father. However, according to the locals, their disagreement stemmed from jealousy, and this led to the intra-tribal wars between Hüseyin and Emin.⁷ This stands as a significant example which indicates how the Hamidian regiments further atomized the Heyderan tribe during the late nineteenth century. As mentioned, the Heyderan branches were atomized by the Tanzimat rules, however, this breakup of the tribe into smaller units did not result in any conflict among them at this time. During the Hamidian era however, the chiefs who grew up together in the same house, now became enemies, competing in an effort to emerge as the most powerful of all. Therefore, we can suggest that further atomization of the tribe became a central reason for the development of unlawful activities in the region. Although he was less powerful than the former two, Hacı Temir Pasha was also an important figure during the Hamidian years, and also involved in this intra-tribal conflict between the chiefs. He was a son of Mustafa Agha who became the head of the tribe (*aşiret müdürü*) when his brother, İbrahim Agha acted unlawfully against the villagers in 1864 as previously discussed.⁸ However, it is clear that Hacı Temir's position was not as authoritative as the other two chiefs, for he allied with Emin Pasha against Hüseyin during the intra-tribal disputes between 1895-1898.

⁷ Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

⁸ BOA, MVL 679/74-3- (1864).

According to Janet Klein, Hüseyin was a lesser sub-chief among other Heyderan chiefs until he was empowered by the Ottomans after the creation of the regiments.⁹ For Klein, Hüseyin became the director of security (*kol müdürü*) for Patnos after he assassinated his relative.¹⁰ He was not a lesser Heyderan chief by 1890 when the regiments were established. Hüseyin was the head of Patnos (*nahiye müdürü*), which was a sub-district of Tutak, and dependent to the sanjak of Bayezid, and to Erzurum province.¹¹ In regards to Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha, no documents have been found which confirm whether they carried any official titles, before the creation of the regiments. However, they were also chiefs of the Heyderan tribe, who held much prestige in the regions of Erciş and Adilcevaz.

After the induction ceremony of May 1891 in Istanbul, Hüseyin and Hacı Temir assumed the rank of military lieutenant colonels (*kaymakam*).¹² Emin Pasha declined to enter to the military class (*askeriye*) and did not officially become the commander of any regiment; however he did enter into the civil bureaucracy (*mülkiye*) with the title of pasha, and also assumed the role of *de facto* commander of two of the regiments that his brothers had organized in Erciş.¹³ It is not clear why he preferred to join the bureaucracy, perhaps he thought the civil service held more prestige than that of the military or he wanted to remain separated from the other former two tribal chiefs. The chart showing who participated in the ceremony in Istanbul indicates that Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha had their own separate groups, and that the

⁹ Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 137.

¹⁰ Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 156.

¹¹ BOA, DH.MKT. 1875/123- (1891). Hüseyin was the head of Patnos at least after 1887: *Salnâme-i Vilâyet-i Erzurum* (Erzurum: Vilayet Matbaası, 1304-1887), p. 291.

¹² *Salnâme-i Askeri* (İstanbul, Matbaa-i Askeri, 1311-1895), p. 539, 543: Hacı Temir Pasha had a 3rd degree Osmani merit and also the title of *mîrû'l ümerâ*.

¹³ BOA, A.MKT. MHM 639/26-30- (1897).

largest unit was that of Hüseyin Pasha. The greater number of members among Hüseyin's group may indicate that a struggle for authority had already begun between the tribal chiefs. Even by this time, no chief stood in representation of the other and their groups were separated from the beginning of the implementation of the regiments. This separation of the members and chiefs would increase within a few months after their return from Istanbul.

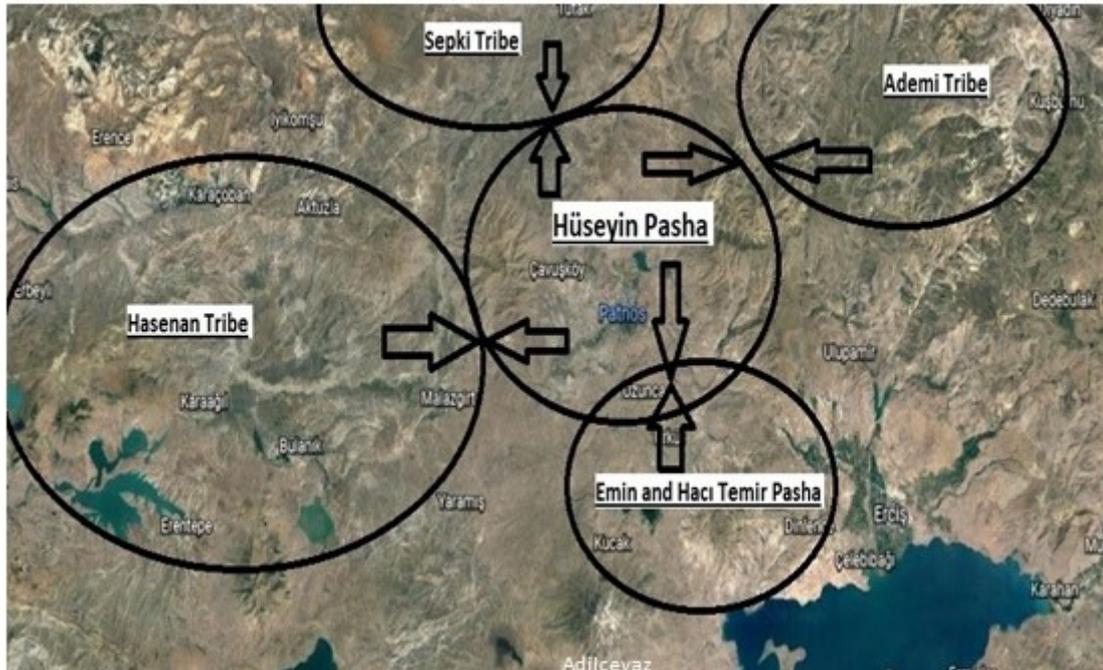
Although Ottoman documents show that Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha were residing in the separate districts of Patnos, Erciş and Adilcevaz, they were actually living in villages that neighbored those districts. Hüseyin was controlling the villages of Patnos and its northern and western spheres, while Emin was effective in the villages near Erciş. Hacı Temir Pasha's village was in the Sarısu region (Kôse), which was under the administrative authority of the Adilcevaz district (*kaza*). These villages were close to each other, and they administratively belonged to separate provinces. The sub-district of Patnos (*nahiye*) and its northern villages, which were under Hüseyin's control, administratively first belonged to the Tutak district (*kaza*), then to the Bayezid *mutasarrıflık* and finally to the Erzurum *vilayet*.¹⁴ However, Emin Pasha and Hacı Temir Pasha's villages were administered from Van, through Erciş and Adilcevaz.¹⁵ Any chief who could gain dominance within the region could become an effective political force in all three of the provinces which neighbor it. For example, Emin Pasha's father, Hacı Hasan Ağa, was a member of the provincial council in Erciş.¹⁶ The historic trade route of Aleppo-Bidlis-Tiflis and Bağdat-Diyarbakır-Tiflis passed through this area, providing it with an even greater

¹⁴ Tahir Sezen, *Osmanlı Yer Adları* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri, 2017), p. 608.

¹⁵ Sezen, *Osmanlı Yer Adları*, p. 9.

¹⁶ *Van Vilayet Salnâmesi* (Van: Matbaa-i Vilayet, 1315-1899), p. 167.

importance than simply being a border region of the empire. Therefore, all three Heyderan chiefs were quite insistent and decisive in their pursuit of dominance and authority in the region.



Map 9. A Rough Map of Hüseyin, Emin, Hacı Temir Pasha's Dominant Areas in Early 1890s and Neighboring Tribes.

As will be detailed below, Hüseyin Pasha emerged the victor in the region, in the struggle for power against his fellow tribal chiefs, Emin and Temir Pasha.

Furthermore, he also managed to wrest power away in an inter-tribal struggle against the Karapapak, Sepki and Hasenan tribes. The areas under his control expanded to include some villages in Tutak, Malazgirt, Adilcevaz and Erciş. He attained this level of authority in the region through his appointment to both military and civil position of power in Patnos. He became a legal tax-farmer (*mültezim*) in the area, received toll taxes from the trade merchants who passed through Patnos, and sold sheep to Aleppo via dealers. Together with these economic opportunities, the Sultan and the Ottoman Fourth Army officials protected him from any legal actions or judiciary

sanctions. Most importantly, his rank was raised to the highest military level among the Hamidian tribal chiefs: a tribal brigadier (*aşiret mirlivası*).

Hüseyin Pasha received the rank of lieutenant colonel (*kaymakam*) right after the creation of the regiments as many of the other tribal chiefs had.¹⁷ Until 1895, relations between Hüseyin and the center were not at their best, as all of the chiefs were involved in intra- or inter-tribal struggles, which created problems regarding stability in the region, for the Ottomans who were also dealing with reforming the six Armenian provinces. During 1895-1898, all three pashas pillaged various Armenian and Muslim villages and attempted to declare their protection over them.¹⁸ The motive of their plunders was pragmatic for gaining economic power and the attacks were not made against their own controlling villages, but rather directed against another rival chiefs' Armenian and Muslim villagers as the following sections will discuss in details. In late 1897 or early 1898, Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha were arrested and sent to Istanbul where they stayed for up to a half year.¹⁹ However, after receiving imperial clemency, Hüseyin became more powerful, and evidenced by the records of a foreign consul who claimed that Hüseyin Pasha was integrated to “a secret mission”.²⁰ All three promised to abstain from any conflicts with each other, and to maintain their allegiance to the government agencies. However, it is not clear exactly what the Sultan and the officials close to him requested of the tribal chiefs.

¹⁷ *Salnâme-i Askeri* (İstanbul, Matbaa-i Askeri, 1311-1895), p. 524-543.

¹⁸ As Özbek puts forward, the purpose of chiefs was to get rich through declaration of hegemonic power over the peasantry. Özbek, ““Anadolu Islahatı””, p. 79.

¹⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 235.2- (1905). BOA, Y.MTV 171.94- (1898).

²⁰ Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, 139.

After their return, Hüseyin Pasha received a gold legion of merit [*Altın liyâkat madalyası*] in 1897 since he offered to join the Greco-Ottoman War of 1897, and provide the government with four regiments at his own expense.²¹ Within a year, Hüseyin Pasha received the rank of colonel (*Miralay*) in 1898 together with a 3rd degree Mecidian decoration.²² The central government was in turn, pleased that the intra-tribal disputes among the Heyderan chiefs had decreased, and Hüseyin both personally and voluntarily wanted to join a war fought elsewhere by the Empire. With this offer, Hüseyin Pasha won the favor of Abdülhamid, as the state now considered that a tribal “threat” had been eliminated and successfully integrated into the imperial sphere of loyal subjects. However, by this point Hüseyin’s offer was not deemed necessary as the Ottomans were performing successfully in the war until April of 1897, when Hüseyin’s letter was received by the central government.²³ Nevertheless, the activities of Hüseyin Pasha were closely followed by the Hamidian government, even as he gained popularity within the state apparatus, for Abdülhamid II’s suspicion extended well beyond his senior pashas, and included several other government officials. In one document, the central government warned the Fourth Army in Erzincan that Hüseyin Pasha should not meet with the British vice-consul of Bayezid who had arrived in Tutak in 1902, as this would constitute an unfavorable act in the eyes of the state.²⁴ In any case, Hüseyin Pasha did not end up meeting with Mark Sykes, this famous British diplomat and traveler, who stayed at his house in Patnos for one night on April 10, 1899.²⁵ Sykes was told that Hüseyin Pasha went to

²¹ BOA, İ.TAL 111/84- (1897). BOA, Y.EE 145/53- (1897).

²² BOA, İ.TAL 140/8- (1898).

²³ BOA, Y.EE 155/88- (1897).

²⁴ BOA, DH. TMIK. M. 133/9- (1902).

²⁵ Mark Sykes, *Through Five Cities*, p. 101-103.

Adilcevaz, and subsequently ordered his family to host Sykes and to treat him well.²⁶ It seems that Hüseyin deliberately avoided meeting Sykes, probably in an effort to halt any suspicions the Ottoman government might have had regarding his intentions and loyalty, which were under watch by Hamidian secret agents who were active all over the State.²⁷ Thus it is clear that during the Hamidian era neither the government nor the chiefs trusted each other, even when relations amongst them were in a positive and mutually beneficial state.

Hüseyin Pasha further increased his prestige during the last eight years of Hamidian rule. In 1905, the Ottomans sent an army to Yemen to suppress the Shia Zaydi movement, which had undermined the caliphate of Abdülhamid II.²⁸ Hüseyin Pasha himself provided the central government with an offer to join this expedition with two of his furnished regiments, together with the State army. However, his offer was declined again after the governor of Van sent a letter to the central authorities mentioning the fact that if Hüseyin Pasha left the Van area the Armenian revolutionaries (*fedâî*) might attempt to gain control of the region.²⁹ Hüseyin Pasha returned from Adilcevaz to Patnos and within a few months he received the rank of tribal brigadier general (*mirliva*), which in turn provided him with one of the highest ranks that had been bestowed upon any of the Hamidian tribal officers, not including Milli İbrahim Pasha. Similar to Hüseyin Pasha, Milli İbrahim was also an effective

²⁶ Sykes, *Through Five Cities*, p. 101-103: Sykes says two corners of Hüseyin Pasha's house were protected by his men in night. After 10 p.m. he shares that they began to howl like wolves to communicate the others in the separate parts of Patnos. Their howls were replied by others with similar voices. Though Sykes felt mysterious, the locals mention that until a few decades, it was a traditional communication message of the watchmen that they warned the others that they were in their duty to protect the places. Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

²⁷ Georgeon, *Ibid.*

²⁸ Kühn, *Ibid.*

²⁹ BOA, Y.PRK. ASK 231/31- (1905).

powerful authority in the Urfa, Mardin and Diyarbekir regions but the latter received this rank before Hüseyin Pasha in 1902.³⁰ According to an Ottoman document, which contains the words of “Your Holiness Brigadier”, Hüseyin Pasha was also sent one more decoration, the 2nd degree *Osmani* merit, which further solidified the integration of Hüseyin Pasha into the ranks of the Hamidian government and further impacted the relationship between the state and Hüseyin Pasha in a positive way.³¹ In 1905, Hüseyin Pasha specifically requested to go on a pilgrimage in order to fulfill his religious obligations, and Abdülhamid II rewarded him with his request, due to the fact that he had become such a close, powerful ally of the Sultan.³² As will be discussed in the following sections, Hüseyin Pasha maintained strict control over the villages under his authority by appointing his relatives, members of his tribal branch or a person from the village to act on his behalf. This prevented the Armenian political movements from becoming effective in his region. Therefore, some pro-Hamidian governors did not want him to join the war in Yemen, as he was able to maintain stability along the border and they feared his absence might affect that negatively.

When Hüseyin Pasha received his military rank in 1891, he had to leave his previous occupation of being the governor of Patnos (*nahiye müdürü*). However, we see from the Ottoman sources that Hüseyin Pasha was sometimes re-appointed to the

³⁰ BOA, İ.TAL. 377/2- (1905). Ekinçi, *Ibid*.

³¹ BOA, İ.TAL. 383/30- (1906). Some more men who were his relatives also received merits. He probably received this merit for his offer, and also for collecting an extraordinary amount of war tax from his territories. With this merit, Hüseyin Pasha received three Ottoman decorations in total: a gold merit (*Altın Liyakat*), 3rd degree *Mecidi* and 2nd degree *Osmani*.

³² BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 235/2- (1905). Hüseyin Pasha was reflected as a religious person who did not miss his daily five prayers, according to his descendants. They also added that Hüseyin Pasha often exchanged ideas with various religious personalities: Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017. This might be correct since we know that Hüseyin Pasha asked Said Nursi whether to join the Sheikh Said movement in 1925. When Said Nursi stayed neutral, Hüseyin Pasha also preferred to remain neutral during this movement’s activities.

position.³³ In 1892 and in 1900, he appears once more as the governor of Patnos with the same group of people under his authority.³⁴ During some of the years, he was not at this post because his nephew, Muhammad Agha, and his son, Abdullah Bey, respectively held the primary civil positions in Patnos (*müdür*) while his son also received the title of *mîr-i mirân*.³⁵ So, Hüseyin Pasha and his family members were both the official leaders of the civil bureaucracy and also, the military heads of their tribal regiments in Patnos. Therefore, Hüseyin Pasha saw his authority as being more legitimate and of higher rank than the district governors of Tutak, Erciş and Adilcevaz.

As the following section will also elaborate, Hüseyin and the other Hamidian chiefs received financial support from the government through the legalization of their tax-farming. This further increased their power and prestige, but also caused intra-tribal or inter-tribal struggles, which deprived the Armenian and Muslim villagers of both economic and political stability, as they were often attacked and plundered by those from villages controlled by the enemy. In conclusion, before entering the details of how the tribal chiefs increased their authority in the region through various financial gains, it should be mentioned that the Hamidian era further increased the official titles, ranks and powers of the Heyderan chiefs in the upper Lake Van region.

Hüseyin was able to attain the highest rank that could be given to him by the state, from among all of the Hamidian chiefs in the Ottoman eastern provinces; however his power could only be enforced within the upper Lake Van region and did not

³³ BOA, MKT 1508/94- (1898): Hüseyin Pasha received 288 kuruş for this occupation only.

³⁴ *Salnâme-i Vilâyet-i Erzurum* (Erzurum: Vilayet Matbaası, 1310-1892), p. 191. *Salnâme-i Vilâyet-i Erzurum* (Erzurum: Vilayet Matbaası, 1318-1900), p. 191: Katip Dursun Efendi was the clerk of Patnos' sub-district council, while Sheikh Yusuf Efendi, Hacı Muhammed Efendi, Molla Musa and Artin Ağa were members of the council.

³⁵ BOA, A.MKT. MHM 639/26- (1896). BOA, DH.MKT 702/29- (1903).

extend beyond it. This was both the result of Hüseyin's personal efforts and of Abdülhamid II's policy of supporting the local Sunni Muslim "threats" in an effort to gain their support and allegiance. Although Hüseyin's rank, titles and power were almost equal to those of Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha during the early 1890s, Hüseyin was able to increase his prestige after his release and return from Istanbul. It seems that Hüseyin Pasha was more politically involved with the government in comparison to the others. When Hüseyin Pasha offered to join and support the Ottoman army with his own regiments during the two wars in 1897 and 1905, the remaining Heyderan chiefs did not make any similar offers. Therefore, Hüseyin Pasha distinguished himself from them as a more loyal subject of the Sultan. The following sections will focus on local developments regarding the financial development of the chiefs who became powerful in this region.

6.2 Chiefs as Tribal Tax-farmers

Before the mid-nineteenth century, villagers paid their taxes to the local hereditary rulers or the governors of Van in the upper Lake Van region. Tithe incomes were one of the main revenue sources for these rulers. In order to keep their revenues high, these *mîrs* had to secure the relationship they had with both villagers and tribes. After the abolishment of the hereditary sanjak rulers, the Ottoman central government could not maintain an authoritative presence in the countryside and a power vacuum was left behind in the rural Ottoman territories. Throughout the same period, during the Tanzimat era after the 1850s, the central government applied settlement policies towards the moveable nomadic tribes. The members of these tribes gradually built their own houses and adopted a semi-settled lifestyle, but did not fully integrate into a fully settled, agricultural existence. Thus, it was the tribal chiefs that became the

only powerful actors that could fill this power vacuum in the countryside, and Hüseyin Pasha was one of the chiefs who moved to fill this power vacuum in the upper Lake Van region. He not only became the head of the sub-district (*nahiye*) of Patnos, but also a legal tax-farmer within the region.



Map 10. Tribal composition of the Ottoman East.³⁶

The tribal chiefs also collected an illegal tax called “*khafir*” from the Armenians, who received protection from other tribes, in return.³⁷ Although it could not be determined that the Heyderan chiefs collected “*khafir*” taxes from the non-tribal settled agriculturalists, the chiefs did enter into conflicts over providing protection or rulership of the villages, in order to collect tithe from them. According to the locals, the chiefs collected one tenth of the tithe from the villagers and no any other regular taxes, but other sources indicate that the villagers were many times over-taxed,

³⁶ Retrieved on March 22, 2018 from https://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100035251755.0x00007a: The Armenian dominant territories are indicated in green color in this map.

³⁷ Tessa Hoffman- Gerayer Koutcharian, “The History of Armenian-Kurdish Relations in the Ottoman Empire” *Armenian Review*, vol. 39, no. 4-156 (Winter-1986), p. 8. Mayevsky shares that *khafir* was paid by the Christians to the chiefs as a sharecropping tax. According to Abdullah Varlı, the translator of Mayevsky’s book to modern Turkish, he adds that the tribal men also gave similar taxes to their chiefs: *Gayê Agha*, *pûr* and *eydani*. Therefore, chiefs not only received taxes from the Christian subjects only: Mayevsriy, *19.Yüzyılda Kürdistan*, p. 214.

dispossessed of their land or forced into labor.³⁸ When the tribal chiefs became Hamidian tribal officers, they further increased their economic activities by bidding for the right to collect the tithes from other, more distant villages. Akarlı discussed that the inhabitants of villages, who were vulnerable to the authority of the tribal chiefs, were not in any position to be able to offer a bid for right to tax-farm during the Hamidian era.³⁹ At times, the tribal chiefs were even able to gain this right through illegal means, by using the name of other villagers, but kept the tax collection in their possession.⁴⁰

Normally, both Hamidian chiefs of the regiments or governors did not have a right to bid for the collection of tithes, unlike the Ottoman grandvizier as mentioned in an Ottoman document.⁴¹ However, for the chiefs in the area, they viewed collection of the tithes as a necessary step towards gaining control of the revenue from these villages in order to increase their authority and power. During the Hamidian regime, as mentioned by the governor of Bidlis, the local governments could not prevent the Hamidian officers from tax-farming the villages, particularly since the Hamidian tribes were the dominant authority in the region, and no foreign person had the ability to intervene.⁴² Therefore, during the Hamidian era, tax-farming rights were not openly available, but rather, were obtained by whoever had the most authority, military and political, in the region. Whoever held this power became the official tax-farmer of the villages under his control. Intra-tribal and inter-tribal struggles to gain control of the surrounding villages, thus also meant obtaining the rights to tax-

³⁸ For those sources see the next chapter.

³⁹ Akarlı, "Economic Policy and Budgets", p. 448.

⁴⁰ Gölbaşı, "1895-1896 Katliamları", p. 161.

⁴¹ BOA, DH.TMIK.M. 57/76- (1898). Özbek, ""Anadolu Islahatı" , p. 74.

⁴² BOA, DH.TMIK 13/36- (1897).

farming in the villages. As will be discussed below, this method of obtaining tax-farming rights will become the primary source of disorder and continued conflict in the Ottoman East during the period.

Although the Ottoman grand-vizier warned the governors of Van and Erzurum that it was illegal for Hamidian tribal officers, or any other state official, to become tax-farmers, the Cabinet (*meclis-i vükelâ*) decided in August 1898 that Hamidian officers could officially become the tax-farmers of Muslim villages, though they could not in Christian villages.⁴³ Furthermore, the offers to obtain the rights to tax-farm could not be for the wholesale of the district, but rather on an individual basis for every single village. Auctions would be held for every single village, and if no tax-farmer appeared for the villages that were being auctioned, they would be given to for consignment (*emâneten*). Christian villages were exempted from this kind of bidding, and that Hamidian officers did not have the right to offer a bid for those villages. However, this exemption remained on paper for the most part, due to the fact that either Hüseyin or the other Hamidian chiefs did not allow for any other persons to enter the territories under their authority. They could not allow for villages within their regions to be auctioned off to outsiders, as this would result in a loss of financial stability and economic superiority for the chiefs. Therefore, the Heyderan chiefs also continued to act as tax-farmers of the Armenian villages: simply in another person's name.⁴⁴ These people were mostly the heads of their villages or the relatives/men of powerful Hamidian tribal officers.⁴⁵

⁴³ BOA, MV. 96/20- (1898).

⁴⁴ Gölbaşı, "1895-1896 Katliamları", p. 161.

⁴⁵ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 170/19- (1901): Hacı Ayaz Aghazâde İbrahim Agha was not a man of Hüseyin Pasha but a notable of the village. Hüseyin Pasha gave him a paper that showed that Hacı Ayaz was the representative of Hüseyin Pasha in the village. Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 141.

According to McDowall, sometimes, the government offered tax-collecting rights to the Hamidian chiefs, as the state itself could not always deliver their promised salary.⁴⁶ However, it seems that providing the officers with tithe-collecting rights, or ignoring their unauthorized control of Armenian villages, was not an outcome that was due to the weakness or inability of the Hamidian government to enforce its will. Rather the Hamidian government deliberately sought to back the Hamidian officers, so that they would be able to control the rural regions of the six provinces that the European powers were forcing the Ottomans to reform. Thus, one can argue that the Hamidian government could have suppressed the Hamidian chiefs if they chose to, as the Committee of Union and Progress was able to after 1908.

Also, the function of Hamidian chiefs regarding the collection of taxes became useful for the State since they used Hüseyin Pasha's authority to collect extraordinary taxes from the upper Lake Van region as well. During the Hamidian era, the state tax collectors could not freely enter the areas where the tribes were powerful unless they made it clear to tribal member that Hüseyin Pasha had allowed this process.⁴⁷

Therefore, Hüseyin's integration into the Ottoman state system created the possibility for the taxation of unruly tribal members, and for tax collectors to gain the ability to collect extraordinary war taxes from members of the tribe even while they were in their highland pastures.⁴⁸

Hüseyin Pasha was one of those Hamidian officers, who was privileged by the Hamidian government and thus increased the numbers of villages that he directly or

⁴⁶ McDowall, *A Modern History*, p. 59-60.

⁴⁷ BOA, DH.TMIK.M 80/30- (1899).

⁴⁸ BOA, Y.PRK.UM 76.105- (1905): "*o sırada yaylada aldırılan resmin*"

indirectly tax-farmed. His territories extended to include some villages located in Tutak and Adilcevaz after he emerged victorious from both intra-tribal and inter-tribal wars.⁴⁹ Sometimes, Hüseyin Pasha dispossessed the villagers and bought their lands for low prices, but his goal was not to depopulate either the Armenian or Muslim population. However Klein was right that Hüseyin Pasha deliberately dispossessed the Armenian and Muslim villagers of their animals, fields and commodities.⁵⁰ For her, “tithes and taxes were used by Hüseyin as a pretext to rob villages”.⁵¹ Klein further argues that direct violence, threats, and raids were the strategies that Hüseyin used in order to attain properties, which for her, became a “culture” in Ottoman East.⁵² Although these suggestions can be seen in the Ottoman documents, we do not have sources that suggest that Hüseyin Pasha expelled many of the peasants in the territories that he controlled.⁵³

Klein does not refer to the power struggles of the Hamidian tribal chiefs, which were one of the main sources of conflict in the attempt to garner and possess more property. Since Klein’s study only analyzes British and French consular reports without giving specific information, the Hamidian chiefs were not portrayed as legal powerholders, but only as bandits.⁵⁴ The main objective of the British consuls was to drive the Hamidian officers out of the region, due to the fact that their intra-and inter-tribal conflicts did not allow for the integration of the Armenian subjects into the

⁴⁹ BOA, BEO 2708/203053- (1905).

⁵⁰ Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 139.

⁵¹ Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 141.

⁵² Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 142.

⁵³ BOA, DH.H. 74/7- (1911).

⁵⁴ Hampson to White, Erzurum, Jan. 1891, in *La Revue des Revues* (Paris, 1890), p. 492-497. FO 195/1728 and FO 424/197-198 have many examples describing such cases.

Ottoman system, a process which Abdülhamid's Islamism policies was against. As the British did not support the idea of an independent Armenian state, they believed that only through a systematic integration of the population and a reform of the administrative and economic structures of the Armenian populated provinces, would then make the Armenians be able to become integrate into the Ottoman system.⁵⁵ For British government, this was the only means possible to counter-balance the formation of a Russian-backed Armenian state. For this reason, the British consuls sometimes distorted the brigand activities of the chief and they greatly ethnicized the problems as the last section will discuss.⁵⁶ The result was that the intra-tribal or inter-tribal power struggles were reflected as Armenian massacres during the Hamidian era, in these documents. However, rather than a collective massacre of the local population, Hüseyin Pasha's actions were instead related to his own economic gain and solidification of power over the region. He dispossessed the population of their property, over-taxed them, compelled the most vulnerable people in the region into forced labor, and even ordered the killings of some individuals when they resisted. Furthermore, Klein comes to the point that both Armenian and Muslim villagers were dispossessed of their properties due to the vulnerability of their lands to attack and administrative abuses.⁵⁷

Hüseyin Pasha's one of the main incomes probably stemmed from revenues collected from the villagers in the regions under his control.⁵⁸ He used the income he managed to gather from this unlawful over-taxation, to also financially assist the State in

⁵⁵ Adanır, ““Ermeni Meselesi”nin Doğuşu”, p. 39.

⁵⁶ Özbek, ““Anadolu Islahatı” , p. 78.

⁵⁷ Klein, *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Klein, *Ibid.* Tibet Abak, “İttihat ve Terakki'nin Kritik Seçimi: Kürt Politikasında Hamidiye Siyasetine Dönüş ve Kör Hüseyin Paşa Olayı (1910–1911)” *1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*, eds. Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2015), p. 277- 293.

various manners, and in particular to financially assist the empire's soldiers. Although, we know that Hüseyin Pasha sold 10,000 bushels of wheat to Van province in 1899, after he hoarded wheat in 1898.⁵⁹ He donated wheat to the royal army soldiers in Muş, at the request of the local Ottoman government.⁶⁰ Furthermore, he also collected extraordinary war taxes on behalf of the government, and transferred it to the local Ottoman authorities, during the Ottoman war in Yemen in 1905.⁶¹ This extraordinary taxation was another cause of the continually degrading conditions that the villagers suffered in this region during the Hamidian era. Trade, on the other hand, was quite active in the northeastern Ottoman provinces, and Hüseyin Pasha also managed to profit from this activity, as the trade route passed through Patnos from the Arab provinces, to Iran and Russia. According to British consular reports, the total trade amount occurred was £154,000 in Van Province, £238,000 in Erzurum, and £124,000 in Diyarbekir in 1890.⁶² The British government dominated trade in the Ottoman eastern provinces, and the result was that the British controlled %23 of Erzurum's trade in 1889.⁶³ A British newspaper gladly shared that British trade had increased to %29 in 1902, as had been %27 in 1900 and %25,5 in 1901.⁶⁴ However, although the trade route was dominated by products of Britain, France, Russia and Austria, Hüseyin Pasha was able to collect a toll-tax from the merchant traders who passed through territories under his control, despite this being

⁵⁹ BOA, DH.ŞFR 234/69- (1899).

⁶⁰ BOA, BEO 2492/186853- (1905).

⁶¹ BOA, BEO 2649/198623- (1905). BOA, BEO 2708/203053- (1905).

⁶² Hampson to White, no. 21, Erzurum, May 16 1891 (FO 195/1728).

⁶³ Hampson to White, no. 21, Erzurum, May 16 1891 (FO 195/1728).

⁶⁴ "British Trade with Erzeroum", *The Devon and Exeter Gazette*, Friday July 10, 1903: It was 68,130 pound in 1902.

illegal, thus profiting from the robust trade in the region.⁶⁵ According to some documents, Hüseyin Pasha sometimes even seized the property of merchants on the trade route, such as of Mahmud and Tevfik Bey, who were Russian nationals, because they did not pay toll tax as he required of them, and had not received permission to cross through the territories that were under his control at various points between the years 1901 and 1905.⁶⁶ Hüseyin Pasha defended his action, claiming that he only requested remuneration for the accommodations and expense that he had provided to the traders during their 24-hour stay in his territory.⁶⁷ Thus, it seems that Hüseyin Pasha violated the rules as he both collected a toll-tax from merchant traders, and held the tithe-collecting rights of Armenian villagers. However, it would be an oversimplification to claim that Hüseyin Pasha's all activities were unlawful since Hüseyin Pasha, himself was also involved in trade as he sold sheep to Aleppo through the sheep dealers, and thus earned a substantial income from his participation in this trade.⁶⁸

Some sources also clearly indicate that Hüseyin Pasha dispossessed the Kurdish villagers in Zomik, one of the villages nearest to Hüseyin Pasha's own, Çakırbey. It appears that the villagers themselves could not petition the center and complain to the Sultan of the fact that they had been illegally dispossessed of their lands by Hüseyin Pasha. It was only after the demise of Abdülhamid II that commissioners were sent to this village to investigate the claim that only Hüseyin Pasha had right to assert ownership over the village. The villagers argued that their lands were forcibly

⁶⁵ BOA, DH.EUM.KLH 4/7- (1917).

⁶⁶ BOA, DH.TMIK.M 104/90- (1901). BOA, BEO 2492/186853- (1905).

⁶⁷ BOA, BEO 2519/188925- (1905).

⁶⁸ Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

taken from them. During the investigation in the village, some of Hüseyin Pasha's men had been positioned in some areas of the village to stand guard, and thus fired their guns into the air in an attempt to intimidate the commissioners. In such a manner, Hüseyin Pasha attempted to halt the investigation for he knew they would discover the allegation to be true. Hüseyin Pasha left the group instantly and the commissioners had to return to the center of Patnos, in order to avoid stirring any disturbances. Later, the commissioners reported important information, after they compared Hüseyin Pasha's title deeds to the ones in the records office. They found that the entirety of the lands belongs to the village were registered in thirty separate title deeds, of which Hüseyin Pasha owned twenty. In 1874, the value of all of the land was 219,800 *kuruş* when they were in the hands of the villagers, however, within ten years until 1884-1885, Hüseyin had bought the majority of it for 22,300 *kuruş*.⁶⁹ Also, the lands of the villagers, who still held 10 title deeds in 1911, were not listed in record office. The commissioners believed that Hüseyin Pasha most likely bribed the records office in order so that these records would not be found. This case also exemplifies what Nadir Özbek suggests that Hamidian chiefs increased their wealth through allying with some local government agents for shared interests.⁷⁰ Also, the twenty separate title deeds held by Hüseyin Pasha, in actuality also included and consisted of excess land, which was not listed as land that was a part of these title deeds. For example, the 3rd and 4th title deed belonging to him, show that he owned 25,000 square meters of meadow, when in fact an extra 50,000 square meters of land was not recorded in the title deed, although it was in fact included as a part of this piece of land. Therefore, Hüseyin Pasha asserted to the commissioners that the villagers had sold him the entirety of the village lands, and

⁶⁹ BOA, DH.H. 74/7- (1911).

⁷⁰ Özbek, ““Anadolu Islahatı” , p. 79.

during the investigation he repeatedly asserted that no other individual owned any land in the village.

Hüseyin Pasha re-asserted these claims in his petitions written to both the Sultan's office and the ministry of war after the investigation.⁷¹ The act of petitioning these offices also demonstrates the fact that he wanted to receive protection from the central government. Furthermore, it is undeniable that Hüseyin Pasha had bought the land for an undervalued and very low price. Under such circumstance, it seems that the Kurdish villagers were dispossessed of their property even before the creation of the Hamidian tribal regiments, and of course could not launch any complaints against Hüseyin Pasha while he held such a powerful position during the Hamidian era. Therefore, the villagers had to wait to sue him for their property, until after Abdülhamid II was dethroned.

6.3 Major Factors for the Region's Declining Conditions

Research focused on the Ottoman eastern provinces during the Hamidian era, has largely approached local developments through a broad and inexplicable perspective.⁷² There are few monographic studies that have been produced, and therefore, what exactly happened at local level remains unclear.⁷³ One aspect that has been neglected by some scholars is the role of rival tribal chiefs, and their struggle for power and legitimacy, as one of the core reasons behind arbitrary use of violence

⁷¹ BOA, DH.H. 74/7- (1911).

⁷² Klein, *Ibid.* Bruinessen, *Ibid.* Özoğlu, *Ibid.* Osman Aytar, *Hamidiye Alaylarından Köy Koruculuğuna* (İstanbul: Medya Güneşi, 1992). Specific examples were hardly given in these sources.

⁷³ Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij also assert that more local studies are needed in order to understand social relations in the Ottoman eastern provinces during the Hamidian era: Joost Jongerden, "Elite Encounters of A Violent Kind", p. 82. Jelle Verheij, "Diyarbakir and the Armenian Crises of 1895" *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbakir, 1870-1915*, ed. Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij (Leiden: Brill, 2012), p. 136.

in the area during the Hamidian era. Atomized tribes created chiefs, who were able to gain a significant amount of authority after they attained state-backed power via the Hamidian tribal regiments. They entered into violent power struggle with their own relatives or other tribal chiefs, in order to emerge as the new “tribal *mîr*” within their region.⁷⁴ Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Pashas were the key Heyderan chiefs who also entered into such encounters, fighting against each other in order to gain dominance in the region during the Hamidian era. Therefore, although historians have generally neglected this general background information, it was the conflict between these chiefs that we argue is one of the primary reasons for the development of the chaotic atmosphere in the region at this time. It will be also shown that innocent villagers were victimized by the tribal chiefs’ arbitrary use of power.

Hüseyin Pasha and his cousins were notorious for their actions against each other, as reported in the British media and consular reports. Although these reports sometimes exaggerated local developments, they portrayed Hüseyin and the others as bandits deliberately out to vandalize especially Christian villagers. Also, the foreign consular reports and media ethnicized these attacks, depicting the violence as that of tribal Kurd against Armenian villager. All three of the Heyderan chiefs attempted to integrate as many Muslim and Christian villages, as they could into their domains, in order to become more powerful than their rival both politically and economically. Therefore, both the Armenian and Muslim villagers were victimized and they had only two options regarding the conflicts. That was either to leave the territory under siege entirely or to stay silent and support one of the chiefs in the struggle in order to survive. This section will first focus to the intra- and inter-tribal attacks of the Heyderan chiefs in the upper Lake Van region. It will address the role and actions of

⁷⁴ Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 129-131.

tribal chiefs and their men, and will analyze how they technically performed violent acts against the local, vulnerable agriculturalist Armenian and Muslims subjects.

6.3.1 Intra-tribal Conflicts between the Heyderan Chiefs

The Hamidian government was mostly and only content to warn the local tribal chiefs to end their quarreling, and did not take any substantial actions until the problems weakened the primary goal of the Ottoman Hamidian state agenda: unity of the empire.⁷⁵ When Abdülhamid II realized that conflict between the tribal chiefs was inevitable, he generally preferred to use exile as a tactic to end the conflict or make the “threat” loyal to him.⁷⁶ We will see that the Heyderan Hamidian tribal chiefs were only threatened with exile after their brigandage activities, during their arrest in Istanbul in 1897-1898. These intra-tribal disputes, which escalated between 1895-1898, were significant since they even paved the way for the British government to issue a diplomatic note to the Hamidian government in 1896.⁷⁷

We have evidence that confirms that intra-tribal conflicts increased following the creation of the regiments in the upper Lake Van region. Hüseyin Pasha offered compensation to Hacı Temir Pasha probably due to the fact that he had either ordered or caused the murder of one of the latter’s men in 1892.⁷⁸ We do not know how the dispute developed before and after the murder, but Hacı Temir Pasha did not accept the compensation offered by Hüseyin Pasha. This refusal could have occurred for one of two reasons: either Hacı Temir Pasha found that the compensation amount

⁷⁵ Duguid, *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Georgeon, *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ BOA, A.MKT. MHM 639/26-24- (1896).

⁷⁸ BOA, BEO 47/3474- (1892).

was too low or that he had decided to exact revenge against Hüseyin Pasha. The British consul in Erzurum already mentioned in a report in 1890 that the region might enter into a great state of assaults:

There has been considerable disorder in the country on all sides of Erzeroum, prompted, it appears to me, more by a desire to plunder the weak and unprotected than by animosity of race or creed. From whatever cause this state of affairs may arise, it is necessary that order and confidence should be promptly restored.⁷⁹

After 1890, it is clear that tensions between the Hamidian chiefs had escalated and that the Armenian and Muslim subjects worried on their safety. Later, two of Hüseyin Pasha's senior men were killed by men belonging to Hacı Temir Pasha's tribe, after meeting with each other in a village under the authority of Hacı Musa Agha, who was also one of Hacı Temir Pasha's men.⁸⁰ The violence and attacks carried out between these three men, escalated into collective arbitrary use of violence, particularly after 1895. There were attacks organized by Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha against the surrounding villages under each chief's authority and control.⁸¹ Fifteen villages were subjected to this kind of plundering, which were localized to the middle of the Adilcevaz and Erciş region, an area all three Pashas attempted to occupy. Each side carried out attacks on villages controlled by their enemy, in order to both exact revenge on them and to damage the authority of the chief, by plundering the animals and crops belonging to the villagers, regardless of whether these were Armenian or Muslim villages.

⁷⁹ Lloyd to Jane, no. 59, Erzurum, July 12, 1890 (FO 195/1688).

⁸⁰ BOA, BEO 595/44605- (1895). Hacı Musa Agha was part of Hacı Temir Pasha's entourage when he visited Istanbul for the ceremony in 1891: BOA/Y.PRK.ASK 71/79- (1891). Hacı Musa should not be confused with Musa Agha of the Khoyti tribe in Muş.

⁸¹ BOA, Y.PRK.BŞK 43/94- (1895).

A Russian envoy, Mayevsky, mentioned that the primary conflict in the region was caused by the disputes which occurred between these three cousins during the 1890s.⁸² The British consul in Erzurum admitted that they could not acquire knowledge regarding the exact nature of what was happening in the Erciş and Adilcevaz regions as they state that: “it is difficult to obtain exact details of what takes place in those districts”.⁸³ They justly learned that most of the Armenian sheep and wheat was carried off by the chiefs, but they did not mention that these attacks were a result of arbitrary usage of power occurred during the intra-tribal disputes. The Hamidian government warned these three chiefs in March 1896 when they invited them to appear in Erzincan, which was where the Fourth Army was stationed under the leadership of Zeki Pasha, who was responsible for the Hamidian tribal regiments.⁸⁴ The government did not take any judiciary actions against the Hamidian tribal officers, however they were probably warned to cease their violent actions, and sent back to their place of origin.

Nevertheless, the situation escalated towards the month of August 1896, as Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha allied together against Hüseyin Pasha, and thus gathered in a highland plain called Pani.⁸⁵ The reasons behind these conflicts were intra-tribal rivalry, which occurred due to “jealousy”, “vanity” and “hostility” between the chiefs according to the Ottoman officials.⁸⁶ However, since the Fourth Army was tasked with the duty to protect the Heyderan tribal officers, Commander-in chief Rıza Pasha

⁸² Mayevskiy, *19. Yüzyılda Kürdistan*, p. 182.

⁸³ Hallward to Graves, Van, no. 22, August 27, 1894 (FO 195/1846).

⁸⁴ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 639/26-4- (1896).

⁸⁵ BOA, DH.TMIK.M 12/48- (1896).

⁸⁶ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 639/26-29- (1896). BOA, A.MKT.MHM 639/26-31- (1896). BOA, DH.TMIK.M 16/5- (1986).

reported that there were no signs of conflict in the region, and that all of the pashas continued normally with their daily business.⁸⁷ However contrary to what Rıza Pasha reported, the conflicts in this region actually escalated during the period.

Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha's plan was to attack Hüseyin Pasha's home in Patnos, and then to defect to the Iranian side.⁸⁸ Hüseyin Pasha, however, also organized his own group of men to build up his own defenses in Patnos. Two imperial battalions were sent from Van, and thus managed to halt the commencement of a local war.⁸⁹ The Fourth Army could no longer avoid involvement in this conflict for the intra-tribal rivalry had not only increased but had the potential now to develop into a local war between two sides of the tribe. The written documents do not give the details of the alliance, but oral historical sources claim that Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha allied with the Ademi tribe in Diyadin, while Hüseyin Pasha received the assistance of the Sepki Tribe in Tutak.⁹⁰ The Ademi tribe in Diyadin was a branch of the Heyderan tribe, but after the 1850s, they began to function as their own separate tribe.

However, since Emin Pasha's mother was a daughter of the ruling chief of the Ademi, he received their help to fight against Hüseyin Pasha. The latter's relation to the Sepki tribe, however, was not quite as strong, but it seems that they were able to forge a political alliance against Emin's group. The alliance and buildup of Hüseyin Pasha's forces appears to have been a defensive strategy, contrary to the buildup of the forces by Emin.⁹¹ As far as the known sources reveal, the Hamidian government was able to prevent a war in this region, however many of the villages predominantly

⁸⁷ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 639/26-15- (1896).

⁸⁸ BOA, DH.TMIK.M 12/48- (1896).

⁸⁹ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 639/26-13- (1896). BOA, A.MKT.MHM 639/26-18- (1896).

⁹⁰ Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

⁹¹ BOA, DH.TMIK.M 12/48- (1896).

Armenian villages were negatively impacted by the intra-tribal conflict which resulted in constant plunder of their sheeps and revenues. According to Şakir Pasha, who was the mastermind behind the organization and development of the Hamidian tribal regiments, the chiefs had “dishonored” (*lekedâr*) the tribal regiments due to the conflict they had began with each other.⁹² Thus, Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha’s power struggles now became a matter of inter-state politics between the Ottoman and British.

In November 1896, the Hamidian government was confronted with a particularly troublesome situation with British representatives, resulting from the conflicts between the chiefs in the region, when the ambassador in Istanbul issued a diplomatic note to the Ottoman foreign office.⁹³ They warned the central government to give orders and military assistance to the local Ottoman governors, in order to arrest Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha. The Hamidian government did not expect this development and suspected that it resulted from the involvement of the governor of Van. They questioned Şemseddin Bey in a letter in order to determine whether he had shared any information with the British vice-consul in Van regarding the arrests of the Hamidian chiefs.⁹⁴ It seems that he did indeed share his will of arresting Heyderan chiefs with the British vice-consul since the governor wrote to the central government that Hüseyin, Emin, and Hacı Temir Pasha did not listen any notices that had been issued by him, and he had offered to discipline them by forcing them into exile (*têdip ve tenkilleri*).⁹⁵ These chiefs were ordered to come to Erzincan

⁹² BOA, Y.PRK.MYD 17/27- (1896).

⁹³ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 639/23-24- (1896).

⁹⁴ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 639/22-23-24- (1896).

⁹⁵ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 639/22-23-24- (1896).

again for interrogation and Marshal Zeki Pasha once more protected them.⁹⁶ This time the problem was more serious and the Ottomans received a diplomatic note from the British Empire to arrest these Heyderan chiefs. Thus, the three Hamidian chiefs were sent to Istanbul in January 1898 and placed under arrest. Their second visit to Istanbul was not for a symbolic ceremony but rather due to a punishment.⁹⁷

The activities of these three Hamidian chiefs exceeded the limit of what could be ignored, and many villagers became the victims of their tribal attacks. As some researchers discuss that there were many migrations to the district or city centers during this period, these local conflicts technically caused these migrations.⁹⁸ Some Ottoman sources reveal how the conflicts between the chiefs affected not only the region, but the larger economy as well. For example, grain prices increased in 1895, because many villagers fled to other districts or city centers.⁹⁹ Mayevsky stated similar information, referring to the fact that in 1898 the price of wheat was raised to 90-95 *kuruş*, while it had been around 35-40 *kuruş* in 1896-1897.¹⁰⁰ He also added that the price of wheat dropped to 10-12 *kuruş* in 1900, a time when the intra-tribal conflicts had more or less settled.¹⁰¹ Thus, intra-tribal power struggles were one of the main problems in the Ottoman eastern provinces during the 1890s, which especially affected fled of the more vulnerable Armenian villagers to the city centers.

⁹⁶ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 639/32- (1896).

⁹⁷ BOA, Y.MTV 171/94- (1898).

⁹⁸ Hoffman, "The History of Armenian-Kurdish Relations", p. 5. Christopher Clay, "Labour Migration and Economic Conditions in Nineteenth-Century Anatolia" *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 34, no. 4 (Oct, 1998), p. 1-32.

⁹⁹ BOA, A.MKT.MHM. 666/9- (1895).

¹⁰⁰ Mayevsriy, *19.Yüzyлда Kürdistan*, p. 100.

¹⁰¹ Mayevsriy, *19.Yüzyлда Kürdistan*, p. 100.

We have some important reports that were compiled by the Ottoman central government during the same period regarding the causes of intra-tribal attacks in this region, but neither a date nor author appears on the documents. These reports also do not provide any details on how or where they were prepared, but Ottoman officials in Istanbul received it in October 1898. This report provided the number of animals and houses that were destroyed due to the conflict between Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı

Temir :

Table 7. List of Plundered Armenian Villages.

This is the register of Christian villages which were attacked by the Kurdish tribal leaders ¹⁰²						
Survey (<i>mülâhaza</i>)	Current numbers		Former numbers		Name of village ¹⁰³	Name of district
	Sheep	House	Sheep	House		
These villages were plundered by the followers of Emin Pasha	0	22	3,000	200	Azruf (Bayramlı) ¹⁰⁴	Erciş
	40	10	1,200	60	Zağzah (Akçayuva)	“
	Completely destroyed		1,500	80	Cudkiye (Karatavuk)	“
	0	11	1,500	60	Kenzek (Kırkdeğirmen)	“
These villages were plundered by the followers of Hüseyin Pasha	80	15	2,000	100	Norşin (Heybeli)	Adilcevaz
	Completely destroyed		1,500	100	Sinnekömür (Kömürlü)	“
	100	40	800	60	Karakeşiş (Yarımada)	“
	100	40	1,500	60	Sipan bala (Süphan ulya)	“
	50	32	1,000	50	Aşağı sipan (Süphan süfla)	“
	50	25	1,000	80	Nur sancak (Norşincik)	“
	30	60	950	80	Koçerin (Erikbağı)	“
	130	45	850	80	Horanıs (Karşiyaka)	“

¹⁰² BOA, A.MKT.MHM. 672/31- (1898).

¹⁰³ These villages located in between Adilcevaz and Erciş districts. Most of them were abundant lakeshore villages.

¹⁰⁴ The names with parenthesis are the present-day official names of the villages.

(Cont'd)

	150	40	1,000	65	Pargat (Esenkaya)	“
	150	70	1,800	120	Arin (Göldüzü)	“
	250	60	2,500	130	Aranhoz (Kavuştuk)	“
	50	15	650	45	Arçıra (Akçıra)	“
Total	1,210	485	22,750	1,370

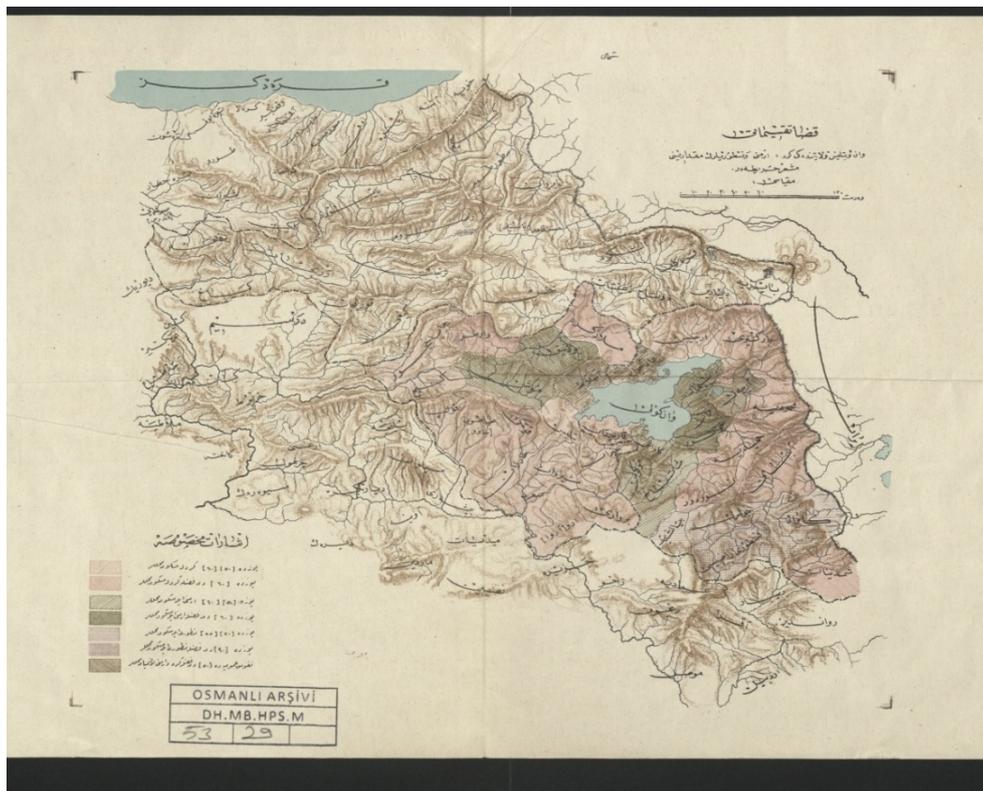
This chart presents the number of sheep and houses that were seized by the activities of both Hüseyin and Emin Pasha. These were villages along the northern lakeshore, located between the districts of Adilcevaz and Erciş, in a region *Filistan*. Since the villagers of this region dominantly had consisted of Armenian villagers, the locals still refer to this area as the land of *file* (a version of *fellâh*), which refers to both the agricultural activities of the villagers, and to their Christian religious background.



Map 11. The Armenian populated villages between in Erciş and Adilcevaz which was called as *Filistan*.

No documents have been found to question the numbers provided in this chart but it is clear that Emin and Hüseyin Pashas' arbitrary use of violence was one of the dominant causes of the decrease in the Armenian population. According to the document, 95% of the sheep owned by the Armenians were carried off by these

chiefs. This same document does not provide the name of no other chiefs, only naming the leaders of the two sides, Hüseyin and Emin Pasha. Therefore, we might suggest that the author of the document was aware of the fact that intra-tribal disputes were the cause of this devastation in the region.



Map 12. Map of Armenian/Kurdish/Nestorian Percentage in Van/Bitlis Provinces.¹⁰⁵

So, who prepared this undated and anonymous document?¹⁰⁶ The unknown writer also shared that Hüseyin Pasha’s men cut the trees of the Armenians to build a sheep fold, and that the Armenians were sometimes forced to carry these trees, free of charge. It can be confidently assumed that this document was composed by the

¹⁰⁵ The map indicates that *Filistan* had an Armenian population of more than %60, but in Erciş and Malazgirt, however the population of the Kurds was over 60%. See, BOA, DH.MB.HPS.M. 53/29- (1911): “*Kaza taksimatı: Van ve Bitlis vilayetindeki Kürd, Ermeni, ve Nasturilerin mikdاریyetini müş'ir haritadır*”.

¹⁰⁶ BOA, A.MKT.MHM. 672/31- (1898).

British vice-consul in Van, G.S. Elliot, as the same report was sent to British ambassador O’Conor in Istanbul, in 1898.¹⁰⁷

Other Ottoman documents of the same file did not refer to the fact that this report was received from the British Embassy, and there are some important differences between the English and Ottoman versions of the same report. According to the English version, Hüseyin Pasha had pillaged all of the grains that the villagers had harvested, to sell for the next year and was hoarding them, as experience had led everyone to believe that next year’s harvest would not be profitable and subsequently the prices would increase. On the other hand, the Ottoman version states that Hüseyin did not seize the grains but offered bids (*hubûbata ihâley-i dest etmekte-dir*) for these grains. Furthermore, in the English version, the chart was added with a note that Emin Pasha had massacred most of the Christian villagers and deliberately buried them alive. These notes regarding Emin Pasha’s notoriety were not added to the Ottoman version. In addition, the note, “these villages were plundered by the followers of Hüseyin Pasha” which was written in Ottoman version was written differently in English version:

These villages owe their present condition to Hosein Pasha. It is true he disregarded the order he received to massacre the people, but the price of his protection can be seen from table. Many Kurds objected to killing the Armenians, because they are supported by the labour of the latter. Armenians were killed by Hosein Pasha, but not in so wholesale a manner by Emin Pasha.¹⁰⁸

According to this report, there was an external motivation to exterminate the Armenians, and while Emin Pasha applied the order of the letter, Hüseyin Pasha paid no attention to it. We have no documents to critique or substantiate the authenticity

¹⁰⁷ Elliot to O’Conor, no. 61, Van, October 14, 1898 (FO 424/197).

¹⁰⁸ Elliot to O’Conor, no. 61, Van, October 14, 1898 (FO 424/197).

of the details given by Elliot. The given numbers seem to be correct, but might be under- or over- exaggerated too. However, it is clear that the Armenians of the *Filistan* were confronted with devastating conditions due to the attacks carried by cousin chiefs.

During the same period after Elliot's report was received by the central government, a petition was sent to the Porte from the Armenian stewards (*kahya*) of the same villages, to deny what Elliot had written in his report. These signees described their conditions and claimed that they were happy with Hüseyin Pasha, and did not have any problems living under his authority.¹⁰⁹ They stated that the members of the tribe were in highlands during that time, and that the complaints were made by some who carried grudges against the Hamidian tribes. The date of this particular document was October 1899, which was one year after Elliot's report had reached the central government. According to Mayevsky, Hüseyin protected the villages mentioned in the report from the plundering activities of Emin Pasha's men, after he had sent his brother, Sultan Agha, to these villages.¹¹⁰ Mayevsky adds that the British consuls were on a mission to expel Hüseyin and the other Hamidian chiefs, thus leaving the Armenian population defenseless.¹¹¹ Mayevsky traveled to these villages, and during his visit, the villagers told him that Hüseyin Pasha protected them against other attackers and they requested that Mayevsky prevent Hüseyin Pasha's expulsion from the region. Vahan Baibourtian also shares similar ideas on the nature of the conflicts:

We should take into account that though in the 1880s and 1890s a significant part of the Kurdish feudal upper class and ordinary members of tribes were instrument an instrument for the sultan's government to solve the Armenian

¹⁰⁹ BOA, DH.TMIK.M 76/47- (1899).

¹¹⁰ Mayevsriy, *19.Yüzyлда Kürdistan*, p. 184.

¹¹¹ Mayevsriy, *19.Yüzyлда Kürdistan*, p. 184.

Question by massacre, there were tribal chiefs and even entire tribes which not only refused to participate in the Armenian massacres, but frequently took the Armenians under their protection. To ignore this fact will mean to elucidate the history of Armenian-Kurdish relations one-sidedly or tendentiously as a result of nationalistic narrow mindedness and political short-sightedness [...] Some tribal chiefs such as Hüseyin Pasha in Adiljevaz, Haji Khan in Norduz, and Ibrahim Pasha in Shehriveran did not allow massacres in their territories either.¹¹²

Klein justly adds that Şemseddin Bey, the governor of Van, did not pay attention to this petition because he believed that the Armenians were forced to sign the petition in order to exculpate Hüseyin Pasha.¹¹³ As his order was disregarded by the Hamidian officers, it suggests that Şemseddin Bey had anti-Hamidian sentiments and his comments might not represent the reality, objectively. However, in the same manner, we can neither state definitively that the Armenians could freely choose to either accuse or exonerate Hüseyin Pasha. It is likely that Hüseyin Pasha protected his villagers for political economy in order to maintain power, prestige and financial resources against Emin Pasha, but also both directed violence against other villagers. Some petitions sent from villages located in Filistan in Arin that orders had been given by Hüseyin Pasha to murder three Armenians who had resisted giving the one fourth of the year's harvest to the chief, in 1904.¹¹⁴ This indicates that violence and murder were also applied against their own Armenians in Hüseyin's controlling villages. Therefore, it does seem that Elliot's portrayal is correct, and that Hüseyin Pasha sought to apply violence against the vulnerable Armenian peasants under his authority, in order to keep his revenue source safe.

¹¹² Vahan Baibourtian, *The Kurds, the Armenian Question and the History Armenian-Kurdish Relations*, tr. Mariam Mesyopyan (Ottawa, Vahan Baibourtian, 2013), p. 154.

¹¹³ Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 139.

¹¹⁴ BOA, DH.TMIK.M. 184/46- (1904).

Elliot had sent his reports to the Porte at approximately the same time that Hüseyin, Emin, and Hacı Temir Pasha had returned to their hometown, in late summer of 1898, after Abdulhamid II had provided them with an imperial clemency.¹¹⁵ As the Sultan protected Muslim leading actors in the Empire's other spaces, and in following this policy, he released the three chiefs, as he believed that the territories of Heyderan chiefs had to be integrated into the Ottoman domain in order to strengthen Ottoman defenses against "threads": Armenian revolutionaries, possible Kurdish nationalist movements and Great Powers.¹¹⁶ However, the Sultan did not come to take this decision lightly, as initially it had been decided that the chiefs would be exiled to Edirne.¹¹⁷ Hüseyin and Hacı Temir Pasha were to be placed as officers in the 2nd Royal Army's 7th and 8th cavalry regiments, though they would maintain their same rank.¹¹⁸ Since Emin Pasha was not a Hamidian officer, and was instead a civil bureaucrat (*mülkiye*), he was to be exiled to Tripoli and placed in a proper position to do with state affairs.¹¹⁹ In actuality, it seems that these plans were also developed in order to threaten the chiefs and to placate the British ambassador to the Porte and thus remove his oversight on the matter. Within a few months, they were released and allowed to return to their homelands, and had to maintain their "promis[ing] to follow the orders of the State".¹²⁰ After their return, Hüseyin Pasha even received a gold merit [*altın liyâkat*] and promotion to the rank of colonel

¹¹⁵ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 134/102- (1897).

¹¹⁶ Georgeon, *Ibid.* Çetinsaya, *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ BOA, Y.MTV 171/94- (1898).

¹¹⁸ BOA, Y.MTV 171/94- (1898). Both were lieutenant colonel at that time.

¹¹⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 134/102- (1897).

¹²⁰ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK. 235/2- (1905): "*Dâirey-i askeriyede misafır olan Hüseyin, Emin ve Timur gerek yekdiğerine gerek hükümet-i seniyyeye karşı hilâf-ı rızây-ı âli harekette bulunmayacaklarını taahhüd etmelerine*".

[*miralay*], due to his offer of joining the Porte during the Greco-Ottoman war of 1897 with his four regiments free of charge.¹²¹

Once Abdulhamid II personally pardoned all three tribal chiefs, the intra-tribal conflict between them, significantly decreased. Although at times some sporadic attacks did occur against villages in the other's territories. Correspondence reports found among the Ottoman documents, however, reveal that the intensity of conflict in the region and the tensions between the chiefs, decreased, as Hüseyin Pasha made peace with both of his enemies following subsequent attacks on villages in each other's territories, following their return.¹²² It seems that Hüseyin and Emin Pasha were much more aggressive during the peak of the intra-tribal conflict as each side would exact revenge on the other after an attack was made against villages under their protection.

Emin Pasha's relationship with Hacı Temir Pasha also worsened at times, because the latter at times attempted to defect to the Iranian side, such as in 1899, and later in 1907 to settle in Ahlat and thus distance himself, and his tribe, from the intra-tribal attacks enacted by Emin Pasha.¹²³ In 1907, two Armenians from the village of Koçeri (Erikbağı) accused the bands under the rulership of both Emin and Hüseyin Pasha of their mutual attacks on each other and how that caused great devastation in their lives.¹²⁴ Other notorious attacks occurred in 1907, in the village of Gameşwan (Değirmendüzü), which was located between Patnos and Erciş. According to oral historical sources, when Hüseyin Pasha was not in the region, probably during his

¹²¹ BOA, İ.TAL 111/84- (1897). BOA, İ.TAL 140/8- (1898).

¹²² BEO 1312/98340- (1899).

¹²³ BOA, DH.MKT 2202/45- (1899). BOA, DH.TMIK.M 180/33- (1904).

¹²⁴ BOA, DH.TMIK.M 248/10- (1907).

pilgrimage to Hejaz, his son, Abdullah Bey, who was the head of Patnos district during his absence, sent one hundred of Hüseyin Pasha's senior men (*Mêr Khas*) to gain control of Gameşwan village. However, most of Hüseyin's men were killed during the fighting with the Armenian villagers, to whom rifles were distributed by Ali Bey, a brother of Emin Pasha.¹²⁵ The head scribe of the council of Van province, Mecid Efendi, was sent from Van to obviate any further intra-tribal attacks from either side.¹²⁶ Thus, at times, the Armenians also had to join the intra-tribal conflicts, in order to protect their commodities, and also the profits of the chiefs, who had authority over their villages. While Hüseyin Pasha defended the Armenians in the *Filistan* region, his group members now attacked the Armenians in Gameşwan, as this village was under the protection of Emin Pasha's brothers. Baibourtian summarizes the reciprocal conflicts regarding the effects over the Armenians: "According to an Armenian source, 'when a Kurdish agha attacked an Armenian who belonged to another Kurd, the latter would attack the Armenians of the first Kurd in revenge. Thus in both cases it was the Armenians who suffered'.¹²⁷

In sum, we can conclude that one of the primary conflicts occurred in the region after the implementation of the Hamidian tribal regiments, as they led to the development of instability in the region, due to the resulting increased intra-tribal attacks of the now-powerful tribal pashas. Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha entered into an alliance with each other in order to defeat Hüseyin Pasha in 1890s, and in doing so, increased the level of violence by acquiring the support of the neighboring tribes of Ademan

¹²⁵ Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası*, p. 418. Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017. Kurdish traditional folk song sang for this conflict: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ey1DLbogD0Q>

¹²⁶ BOA, DH.MKT. 1153/47- (1907).

¹²⁷ Baibourtian, *The Kurds, The Armenian Question*, p. 33.

and Sepki and subsequently involving them in this local warfare. They plundered and killed the population of the villages of the rival chief; and over-taxed the villagers; and applied forced-labor to the population. Klein's argument that "targets were chosen for their weakness and inability to protect themselves, not because of their ethnic or religious background" is correct but we need to mention that most of the villagers were Armenians especially in *Filistan* and Armenians were much more victimized from these arbitrary usage of powers.¹²⁸

Some Ottoman governors attempted to prompt the government into removing the Hamidian tribal chiefs due to their unlawful activities. These local state representatives were also worried prudentially about the resulting possible foreign intervention. However, for the Sultan, the unlawful acts of the chiefs could be disregarded since the Hamidian chiefs were responsible for suppressing Armenian revolutionaries in the region and for keeping the Armenian potential "threat" under suppression. The Hamidian government also sought for decreasing the Armenian population in the region in a manner of demographic warfare.¹²⁹ Therefore, ethnicity became a factor for the reasons of being victimized to such local conflicts despite the fact that we cannot see anti-Armenian collective violence during the Hamidian era yet in upper Lake Van region.

6.3.2 Did Ordinary Tribesmen Cause Major Depredations?

Some researchers have broadly and vaguely discussed that the harassment of non-tribal subjects was the result of activities carried out by ordinary tribesmen whose

¹²⁸ Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p.140.

¹²⁹ Dikran Mesrob Kaligian, *Armenian Organization and Ideology Under Ottoman Rule, 1908-1914* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2009), p. 229.

lifestyle transformed to a settled one. Retrospectively, the tension was defined with ethnic terminology and occurred between tribal Kurds versus agrarian Armenians:

The Kurds, who were once only a pastoral tribe living exclusively from the breeding and selling of their herds, aspired to become an agricultural people. In order to obtain this goal they simply stole the land surrounding the Armenians and became the legal owners of the land previously belonging to their neighbours, either by a fictitious sale or by flagrant infringements.¹³⁰

For Klein, there was the indirect method of enforcing the sale of the territories held by Armenians to the Hamidian Kurdish tribes, by ensuring that the Armenians were forced into debt.¹³¹ Klein does not make difference between the ordinary Heyderan tribesmen from the men of Hamidian chiefs. As Özok-Gündoğan has suggested, since there are not enough monographic studies on the matter, we do not know what the daily relations were between the peasants and tribesmen, who settled in the region during the period after the Tanzimat era.¹³² She does provide how peasants did petition the Porte in the post-revolutionary era of 1908, in order to point out that they may be granted back lands that had been confiscated by the local notables. This situation as described by Özok-Gündoğan was not so different from that of the Kurdish villagers of Zomik, who were dispossessed of their holdings by Hüseyin Pasha. Some examples have been found which show that the orders to dispossess peasants of their lands, primarily came from the tribe's leading rulers, such as Hüseyin Pasha. Without the permission of the chiefs, and their own personal intervention in this situation, regular tribesmen were not allowed or able to perform collective violent attacks against the local peasantry. We have some vague examples

¹³⁰ Cited in Hoffman, "The History of Armenian-Kurdish Relations", p. 18.

¹³¹ Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 147.

¹³² Nilay Özok-Gündoğan, "A "Peripheral" Approach to the 1908 Revolution in the Ottoman Empire: Land Disputes in Peasant Petitions in Post-Revolutionary Diyarbekir" *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbekir, 1870-1915*, eds. Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij (Leiden: Brill, 2012), p. 179- 215.

of permission to settle in some Armenian villages rather than violent attacks and molested. For example, some members of the Şemski clan, who belonged to the Ademi tribe, requested permission from Hüseyin Pasha to be allowed to settle in the village of Sipan-ı Ulya. This was one of the villages that were under the direct control of Hüseyin Pasha in the *Filistan* region.¹³³ The tribe's reason for settlement, however is unknown. It is unclear whether they requested to settle due to a shift from nomadism to semi-nomadism or whether they wanted to leave their current region due to the impact of intra-tribal violence and conflict among another Ademi Tribe. However, the claim of "selling the lands to the Kurds" represents a vague statement, and researchers have not been able to separate and analyze the exact activities of local notables in contrast to those of ordinary tribesmen.

It is possible that there occurred a transformation from a nomadic-lifestyle of the Heyderan clans, to one that was semi-settled. Such a change might have had some negative effects on the local non-tribal agriculturalists as the revenues of the land would now have to be shared with the newcomers. However, there is not enough data to definitively state that the arrival and settlement of nomads into the region led to economic depredation, thus is the reason for this transformation of the area. Also, these new-comers did not simply exchange one type of life-style for another because they did not settle and became agriculturalists, but rather continued to travel to their highland pastures, beginning in the spring and staying until the late autumn months. Even some British reports indicate that the Armenian villagers were settled in some villages after the Kurds were expelled by the tribal chiefs since the former knew better how to cultivate the land well.¹³⁴ They only stayed temporarily, living in their

¹³³ Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

¹³⁴ Hallward to Graves, no. 35, Van, November 10, 1894 (FO 195/1846).

own houses during the winter months together with the non-tribal agriculturalists, and a petition of Armenian villagers stressed that members of the tribe remained in their highland pastures for the most part, as they had in the previous completely nomadic lives.¹³⁵ This indicates that the semi-settlement of the Kurds did not necessarily bring about major changes to the relationship between cultivators residing in the villages and ordinary tribal members who still largely pursued animal husbandry.

We must also bear in mind the fact that non-tribal subjects did not have the option to question the orders of the Hamidian tribal officers or their men especially the Armenians, who were considered as second-class subject throughout the Empire.¹³⁶ In fact, at time they were indeed murdered, whether due to an order or arbitrary decisions of the tribal men, for at this time, killing an Armenian or any non-tribal Muslim subject, did not result in any judiciary measures against the perpetrators.¹³⁷ German Archeologist Dr. Belck shared how an Armenian was arbitrarily shot by the Hamidian Kurds under the plea of being a revolutionary while he was traveling alone between the cities.¹³⁸ Similar to the killing of three Armenian villagers in Arin village, by analyzing the reports of the Acting British consul Hampson, in Erzurum, Klein states that Sheikh Nuri was assassinated by Hüseyin's men.¹³⁹ We know from local oral sources that the name of the Muslim cleric was not written correct since it

¹³⁵ BOA, Y.PRK.UM 36/77- (1897). BOA, DH.TMIK.M 76/47- (1899): Villagers mention that the Kurds of village were in highlands during the time of writing this petition.

¹³⁶ Kaligian, *Armenian Organization*, p.1.

¹³⁷ Elliot to O'Conor, no.60 inclosure 1, Van, Oct. 10, 1898 (FO 424/197).

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 140.

was actually “Sheikh Romi”.¹⁴⁰ He was referred to as Romi because he originated from inner Anatolia, and had worked in the region as a state civil servant and settled there after his retirement. More likely Hüseyin himself ordered his murder because he donated some villages to the children of Sheikh Romi, who continue to reside there in Patnos, today.¹⁴¹ Hallward also reported a similar disorders affected Muslim villagers too:

At the heel place we came to a small and very nesty Kurdish village in the plain of Patnotz (Erzeroum Vilayet) and old Kurd begged me to impress on the Vali that there would be no preace in the country as long as Hussein Pasha and Emin Pasha were there; this is no doubt that their removal would do little good unless they were really punishes, as their sons and relatives would continue the same course conduct”.¹⁴²

Thus, neither Muslim nor non-Muslim subjects truly had any other recourse than to obey the rules set out by the Hamidian Kurdish chiefs, or else to leave their homes and the circumstances enforced upon them.

According to some British reports, the conditions in the Ottoman eastern provinces had worsened compared to the period of hereditary *mîrs*, entering a poorer and more miserable state.¹⁴³ Therefore, the agrarian problem in the region was more wide-spread struggle among the powerful actors and vulnerable people.¹⁴⁴ As mentioned above, the residents of the village of Zomik were forced to sell their lands to Hüseyin Pasha for low prices.¹⁴⁵ More likely Hüseyin Pasha applied the same tactics in the

¹⁴⁰ Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

¹⁴¹ Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

¹⁴² Hallward to Grawes, no. 18, Van, July 31, 1894 (FO 195/1846).

¹⁴³ White to Marquis of Salisbury, no. 384, Constantinople, Dec. 24, 1887 (FO 424/145).

¹⁴⁴ Klein, *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ BOA, DH.D. 74/7- (1911).

Armenian villages of the *Filistan* region.¹⁴⁶ Thus, it seems that it was not the ordinary tribesmen, but rather Hüseyin Pasha and the circle of men closest to him, and subsequently most powerful in the tribe, that was the perpetrators of the devastating conditions to which non-tribal subjects were subjected to. Therefore, the overall situation was one where the tribe's ruling elite was responsible for the violence in the region against the residents, rather than regular attacks perpetrated by ordinary tribesmen. And also, perpetrators and vulnerables were not clearly defined with ethnic categories although the Armenians were the most vulnerable ones in the rural areas of the upper Lake Van region in the Ottoman East.

6.3.3 Inter-tribal Conflicts

Another key factor that added to the tumultuous atmosphere of the region, and subsequently caused the migration of settled agriculturalists to other districts or city centers, was inter-tribal power struggles whose aim was to increase the number of villages under a tribe's protection.¹⁴⁷ As mentioned above, rather than following standard procedure and offering a bid for the right to collect tithes, it was the power struggle between tribal branches (and not only within tribal branches) which determined who would be the tax-farmer of every single village in the region. Therefore, it can be argued that tensions further increased between the chiefs of the separate tribes, when the Hamidian government enforced standard policy and

¹⁴⁶ Elliot to O'Conor, no. 61, Van, October 14, 1898 (FO 424/197).

¹⁴⁷ For trans-hemispheric migration of Armenians check: David Gutman, "The Political Economy of Armenian Migration from the Harput Region to North America in the Hamidian Era, 1885-1908" *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities and Politics*, ed. Yaşar Tolga Cora, Dzovinar Derderian and Ali Sipahi (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016), p. 42-61.

conducted auctions for every single village in 1898.¹⁴⁸ Some researchers also argue that famine was an important cause of the migrations of the rural populations to the city centers, and though this can indeed be argued to the years 1897-1898, intra- or inter-tribal conflicts actually seem to have been more problematic regarding the loss of property and arable land for both agriculturalists and tribesmen.¹⁴⁹ The following section will analyze examples of inter-tribal conflicts to argue that they were one of the primary reasons behind the agricultural devastation of the region, particularly in the villages and rural areas where a chief's authority was under dispute.

The Sepki was one of the other most important and powerful confederative type of tribes whose members were mostly located in the region between Tutak, Hamur, Karakilise (Ağrı) and Eleşkirt. Their living space bordered the northern territories of the Heyderan tribe, and thus the two tribes were neighbors. Separate Sepki leaders also created three Hamidian tribal regiments.¹⁵⁰ Hüseyin Agha, Hasan Bey and Hacı Yusuf Pasha were the three commanders of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Hamidian tribal regiments.¹⁵¹ These three chiefs also entered into a power struggle and various conflicts with the supporters of Hüseyin Pasha of the Heyderan, and their motives were primarily financial. In 1893, a group belonging to the Sepki tribe murdered two followers of Hüseyin Pasha, and in response, the latter's men gathered a group of 1,500 in order to exact revenge on the Sepki. According to Hüseyin Pasha, he had ordered the men to cease their plan, but they did not obey and insisted on entering

¹⁴⁸ BOA, MV. 96/20- (1898).

¹⁴⁹ Zozan Pehlivan, "Abandoned Villages in Diyarbekir Province at the End of the 'Little Ice Age', 1800-50", *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities and Politics*, eds. Yaşar Tolga Cora, Dzovinar Derderian, Ali Sipahi (New York, I.B. Tauris, 2016), p. 223-246. McDowall, *A Modern History*, p. 61.

¹⁵⁰ BOA, Y.MTV 55/29- (1891).

¹⁵¹ BOA, Y.MTV 55/29- (1891).

into a tribal feud for reasons of revenge.¹⁵² Regarding this inter-tribal conflict, the British consul in Erzurum, R.W. Graves, mentioned in his reports that Hüseyin Pasha's men attacked the villages located along the Erzurum-Van road, and that Hüseyin played no role in those events.¹⁵³ He added that this conflict was the result of a feud between the Heyderan and Sepki tribes, and that both Muslim and Armenian villagers were affected by these attacks. For him, the violence continued in villages located in Eleşkirt, a region controlled by the Sepki tribe.¹⁵⁴ Graves summarizes the conflicts:

The blood feud between the Sipkanli and Haidaranli has also taken a more active turn. Early in April there was a fight between the Sipkanli and Haidaranli under Hussein Pasha of Patnoss [...] in which eight men were killed after which the Haidaranli in strong force invaded the Sipkanli country in Alashgerd, and burnt their villages of Bourni Boulak, Harakho Oulia and Harakho Sifla, besides plundering several othervillages; the inhabitants taking refuge with the Ali Torounli section of the Sipkanli Tribe, under Yousouf, who live further to the eastward. The Hassananli Tribe also took advantage of the defeat of the Sipkanli to plunder their village of Nokhoutlou".¹⁵⁵

According to Graves, both chiefs, Hüseyin Pasha and Hacı Yusuf Pasha, were brought to Erzurum and were forced to enter into a peace with each other in June of 1894.¹⁵⁶ Thus, it seems that after they were warned in Erzurum, tensions between the tribes decreased temporarily although in later years they once more attacked the villages under the protection of the other.¹⁵⁷ These further attacks show that Hüseyin Pasha's assertion that his tribal members were insubordinate and not following his

¹⁵² Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası*, p. 356.

¹⁵³ R.W. Graves to Nicolson, no. 9, Erzurum, 14 Feb. 1894, (FO 195/1846).

¹⁵⁴ R.W. Graves to Currie, no. 28, Erzurum, May 3, 1894 (FO 195/1846).

¹⁵⁵ R.W. Graves to Currie, no. 28, Erzurum, May 3, 1894 (FO 195/1846).

¹⁵⁶ R.W. Graves to Currie, no. 41, Erzurum, June 8, 1894 (FO 195/1846).

¹⁵⁷ BOA, DH. TMIK.M. 8/16- (1896).

order cannot be taken as to be true, for his tribesmen could not organize nor attack on such a scale without his permission in the first place. This can also help explain the emphasis that the British consuls focused so insistently towards Hüseyin Pasha and his operations in the region as the last section of this chapter will analyze.

In 1900, the conflict was reignited. This time it occurred between Hüseyin Pasha and the Sepki Hüseyin Bey, who was the head of the 2nd Hamidian Light Cavalry Regiment, and a member of prestigious Ali Torinzâde family.¹⁵⁸ The grandvizier Halil Rıfat Pasha wanted to send them to the Regular *Nizamiye* Court or the Court-Martial to be tried for the crimes committed against each other's territories and population but no document indicates that they were confronted with any judiciary sanctions.¹⁵⁹ According to the Regulation of the Hamidian Light Cavalry Regiments, these chiefs should have been tried in the Regular *Nizamiye* Courts, as these attacks occurred during daily interactions between the tribes, when they were not on official duty for the state.¹⁶⁰ However, neither of these chiefs were tried even in the Martial Courts, for, as it was argued above, the Hamidian regiments in the eastern provinces were empowered and supported by the Sultan, to also de facto exempted their actions from any consequences brought about by the judiciary powers of the State.

The attacks also resulted the loss of life and property of the tribesmen from the weaker side. As Hacı Yusuf Pasha told Lynch, "they were in daily expectation of attack from Hoseyn Pasha of Patnotz [and he] had quite recently burnt some villages

¹⁵⁸ The leading leaders of the Sepki tribe were also referred as *Torin*, due to their aristocratic tribal background similar to Heyderan, Zilan and Hasenan tribes.

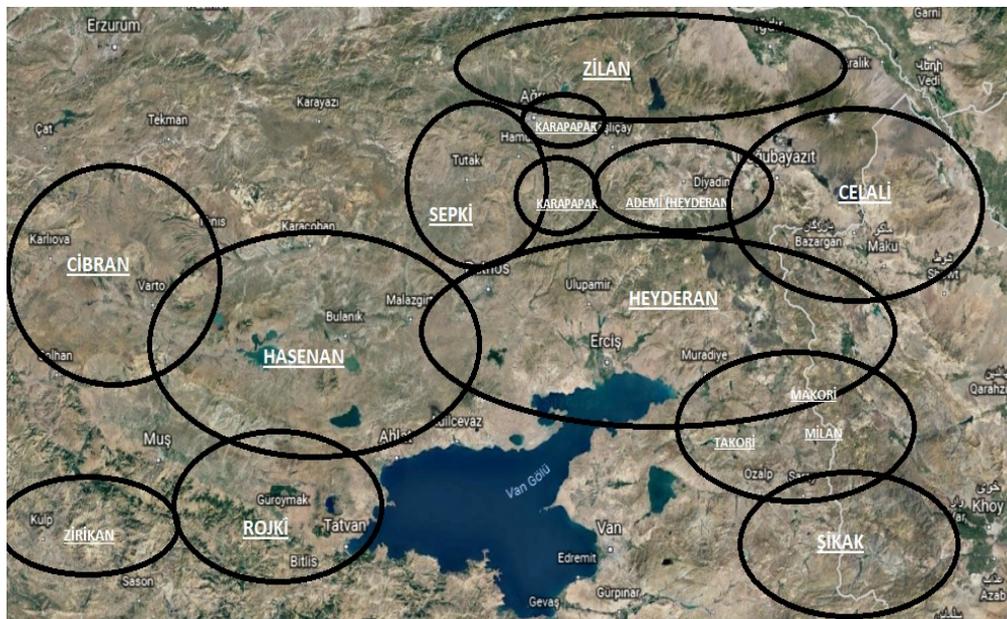
¹⁵⁹ BOA, Y.A.HUS 406/62- (1900).

¹⁶⁰ Kodaman, "Hamidiye Hafif Süvari Alayları", p. 471.

of the Sipkanli, and reduced the clan to poverty”.¹⁶¹ Financial matters were the most common matter at the center of the disputes and conflicts. Such conflicts were initiated by the attempts of one of the tribes to declare a village as being under their protection, and essentially declaring that taxable income for themselves.¹⁶²

Therefore, these attacks threatened the security and lives of the inhabitants of the villages and it seems that most of them preferred to leave in order to escape the chaos caused by these inter-tribal conflicts for control.

In addition to attacking the villages, the tribes also continued to struggle for control of the highland pastures as well. The trans-frontier movements of the tribes had decreased significantly beginning in the 1850s, and they mostly employed the limited highland pastures of Mount Süphan, Tendürek, and Aladağ, for the grazing of their sheep. Therefore, not only the villages and plains were economically valuable, but also the value of highland pastures increased following the Tanzimat era.



Map 13. Living Spaces of Some Powerful Tribes in the Ottoman East.

¹⁶¹ H.F.B. Lynch, *Armenia: Travels and Studies vol. 2* (London: Longmans, 1901), p. 17.

¹⁶² BOA, DH.TMIK.M. 248/31- (1907).

As a result of these developments, in 1894, some members of the Heyderan tribe entered into a conflict with the Ademi tribe. The pastures of Tuci (Dedebulak) in the southwestern range of Mount Tendürek became the subject of inter-tribal conflict between the Heyderan and Ademi tribes in 1894.¹⁶³ Some members of the latter were murdered and others injured, but the two sides made peace according to their tribal customs and overcame their problems. Though the conflicts were settled according to the customary tribal laws, four years later in 1898, the provincial court of appeal demanded that one of the men from Hüseyin Pasha's regiment, the Hamidian Acting Captain (*Yüzbaşı vekili*) Ali Agha, appear at the Court of Appeal in Van, so that the court could try and sentence him for murder.¹⁶⁴ The governor of Van, Tahir Pasha, sent a letter to the Ministry of Interior Affairs in order to receive clemency from the Sultan for Ali Agha, for otherwise the inter-tribal wars could once more begun.¹⁶⁵ It is particularly significant that the courts wanted to sentence Ali Agha four years after the intra-tribal conflicts between Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha had been resolved, and also when the three chiefs had recently returned to the region, following their release from Istanbul in 1898. Although there is no clear evidence or information, one can speculate that perhaps there were officials/people who hoped to continue or maintain instability in the region through a continuation of intra-tribal conflicts. However, due to central state support, Ali Agha seems to have been exempted from any judiciary sentencing and so no collective inter-tribal wars began again between the two tribes. Nevertheless, the case regarding the pastures of Tuci does provide evidence that highland pastures were also a point of contention between

¹⁶³ BOA, ŞD 1887/10- (1898).

¹⁶⁴ BOA, ŞD 1887/10- (1898).

¹⁶⁵ BOA, BEO 1234/92525- (1898).

the tribes, during the Hamidian era, leading to conflict over whose authority was legitimate where, similar to those regarding the lowland villages and plains.

Another instance of inter-tribal conflict is found in Ottoman documents, where Hüseyin Pasha's men and some member of the Hasenan tribe attacked villages in the area between the regions under each tribe's authority. The Hasenan tribe was also a powerful confederative type of tribe that created five Hamidian regiments and controlled the regions of Malazgirt and Hınıs, located in the western border of the Heyderan controlled region.¹⁶⁶ Although the cause of the conflicts between the two tribes occurred as a result of their pursuit of gaining power over the villages of Malazgirt, the Ottoman officials simply referred to these struggles as "tribal animosity".¹⁶⁷ In 1893, some petitions of the villagers accused Sufi Pasha of the Hasenan of attacking villages. However, later in 1898, Hüseyin Pasha's son, Abdullah Bey, also plundered another village that was not in his territory, but rather in Malazgirt and thus under the authority of the Hasenan chiefs.¹⁶⁸ In 1901, a petition, signed by 48 people who were Muslim clerics (*imam*) and the heads of different villages (*muhtar*) in Malazgirt, was sent to the Porte accusing, with strong language, Hüseyin Pasha of carrying out various violent acts against the villagers.¹⁶⁹ They also accused the Sultan indirectly by stating that

[n]o problems remained for the rule of the Ottoman State in Muş sanjak. Hüseyin Pasha's sultanate is the sign for the accomplishment of Kurdistan's creation. We knew that these territories as a part of the Ottoman Sublime State but we see that the Sultan of this region is actually Hüseyin Pasha. We do not see any change on this man who is a fraud, bandit and murderer. If our

¹⁶⁶ BOA, Y. MTV. 55/29- (1891).

¹⁶⁷ BOA, DH. MKT. 5/58- (1893).

¹⁶⁸ BOA, DH. MKT. 5/58- (1893). BOA, BEO 1139/85415- (1898).

¹⁶⁹ BOA, Y. MTV. 218/13- (1901).

rights will not be protected, we will take our life to the hands of this region's other rulers [defection to Iran/Russia].¹⁷⁰

These Muslim villagers used fairly threatening and grievant language in this petition sent to the Porte, which indirectly accused the Ottoman Sultan of protecting Hüseyin Pasha. Thus, they threatened the central government with defection to other states. They were victimized by the attacks carried out by the Heyderan as they struggled to gain control in the region by plundering villages in Malazgirt, as a means of attacking the Hasenan chiefs. Despite sending such a petition, there was no change brought forward by the government and the attackers did not receive any judiciary punishment.



Figure 6: A group of Hamidian Tribal Officers from the Karapapak Tribe.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ BOA, Y. MTV. 218/13- (1901): “*Muş sancağı dâhilindeki mahâkim-i Osmaniye ve devâir-i seniyye için mevâd-ı iştilal bir dava kalmadı. Haydaranlı reisi Miralay Hüseyin Paşa Kürdistan namıyla teşkiline muvaffak olduğu hükümdarlık bandırası altına envâi mutâtkârane aşâir ve ahâlîy-i matbuay-ı aldı tabiyetlerimizi Devlet-i Aliye-i Osmaniye biliriz. Halbu ki bu vatan ve bu havalinin hükümdâr-ı digeri Hüseyin Paşa olduğunu görüyoruz. Zira ötedenberi hakkında istika etmekle usandık. Mahv derecesini bulduk. Bir tesirât göremiyoruz. Hilebaz, eşkıya, hamis, devlet hâini olan bu adamın taht-ı esâretinde ne vakte kadar kalacağız. Hiç icraat-ı âdile göremeyecek miyiz? Halimizi câlib-i dikkat ve merhametten sâhib olub da [sic] arandığımız hukukumuz muhafaza buyrulmazsa halkıma kalan canımızı pençe-i zâlimânesinden tahlisi için civarımız olan hükümdârın zir-i himayesine tabiyetimizi ilan ederek”.*

Another example portraying inter-tribal conflict occurred between Hüseyin Pasha and the Karapapak tribe. Most of the Karapapak Turkic tribes were immigrants of Iran and the Russian southern Caucasus. They built three separate Hamidian regiments: Ali Agha in Eleşkirt, Tosun Agha in Tutak, and later Mihr Ali Bey in Sivas.¹⁷² In 1901, an inter-tribal struggle between the Karapapaks in Tutak and Hüseyin Pasha's men was on the brink of commencing when the government sent a small commission to address the oncoming conflict and it seems that the commission was successful in stopping the anticipated atrocities.¹⁷³ The Ottoman documents praised Hüseyin Pasha (*izzetli*) when it was shared that the commission was assigned to carry out this job although some members of Karapapak tribe had accused Hüseyin Pasha of treachery in the petition they had sent some three months ago.¹⁷⁴ Thus, though the conflict was avoided, not all members of the opposing side were placated by the commission's presence nor the final decisions made regarding Hüseyin Pasha.

In fact, it seems that the Porte simply ignored any accusations of treachery that were made by the members of the Karapapak tribe. In their letter, Karapapak people called Hüseyin Pasha with banditry and accused him of seizing their money, some weapons, and property. A man among the villagers was appointed to this village by Hüseyin Pasha as his representative after he issued a decree-like paper. For these Karapapak members, Hüseyin Pasha planned to create a sovereign government, and

¹⁷¹ Some researchers asserted that this officer sitting in the picture is Hüseyin Pasha. However, it was taken from the book of Lynch and he wrote that he was an officer from Karapapak tribe. He might be Ali Agha or Tosun Agha from Karapapak tribe. This picture was taken from Lynch: Lynch, *Armenia*, p. 4-5: "Group of Karapapakh Hamidiyeh Cavalry".

¹⁷² BOA, Y.MTV 55/29- (1891).

¹⁷³ BOA, DH.MKT 2535/58- (1901). BOA, DH.MKT 511/60- (1902).

¹⁷⁴ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 170/19- (1901).

soon, he would be in open rebellion against everyone in the region, such as the previous feudal lords (*derebeyler gibi*) [i.e. the Kurdish *Mîrs*].¹⁷⁵ They also threatened the government with defection, and claimed they would move to another state [Iran or Russia] if Hüseyin Pasha was not suppressed by the central authorities. Thus, the members of the Karapapak tribe, who accused Hüseyin Pasha of various crimes against them, did so in order to have him removed from the region, as it seems his men continued to perform attacks on their villages. However, Hamidian government did not change their policies and kept silent on their policy of supporting the perpetrators.

Though arbitrary use of violence continued in the region, Hüseyin Pasha did not actually become involved in any movement against the central government, in particular any Kurdish national movements, until 1929, he was forced to escape Turkey to join a Kurdish national movement, as will be discussed in the last chapter below. At this time, Hüseyin Pasha used violence for personal gains and attempted to enlarge his control over Karapapak villages in Tutak, and thus assigned a man to rule the village on his behalf, as he did in other villages under his authority. No document has been discovered however, which indicated that large-scale collective inter-tribal disputes continued between the Heyderan and Karapapak tribes later on. Probably these skirmishes on the part of Hüseyin's men did not escalate into a larger conflict, with the interference of the government. The less-powerful position of Karapapak probably meant that they could not exert as much authority in the region or expect as much support from the state, as Hüseyin Pasha did.

¹⁷⁵ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 170/19- (1901).

Hüseyin Pasha issued similar decrees in other villages that were under his authority, as his territories extended toward upper shores of Lake Van. In another petition from the Karapapak tribe, they mention that Hüseyin Pasha issued a decree (*buyruldu*) for an Armenian man, which declared that the person was under his protection, during his voyage within Hüseyin's territories.¹⁷⁶ The writers of the petition claimed that the place of origin of the traveler has been deliberately torn from his identification paper (*tezkere-i Osmani*), and thus they accused Hüseyin Pasha of protecting a member of the Armenian revolutionary movement.¹⁷⁷ Also, they charged that Hüseyin Pasha was protecting Armenian revolutionaries, and that he also had some Armenian fugitives in his villages.¹⁷⁸ Although these accusations might be correct, the documents do not actually confirm them. There is no evidence that Hüseyin Pasha allied with or supported Armenian revolutionaries at this time, and this is further supported by the fact that they were not active in the territories under his control. Similarly, there were also some accusations made against Milli İbrahim Pasha that he too helped Armenian fugitives, by helping them to flee to Egypt or Europe.¹⁷⁹ Therefore, we can assert that the petitions written in the following period, regarding the effects of such conflicts was an important factor regarding the increasingly misleading and sometimes exaggerated information about the region's local developments.

¹⁷⁶ BOA, Y.MTV. 217/4- (1901). Since Hüseyin was both the head of the military and civil service classes in the sub-district of Patnos, and also a powerful chief of the region, it was quite normal that he issued a paper for travelers, ensuring their safety: İlkay Yılmaz, *Serseri, Anarşist ve Fesadın Peşinde: II. Abdülhamid Dönemi Güvenlik Politikaları Ekseninde Mürur Tezkereleri, Pasaportlar ve Otel Kayıtları* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2014), p. 166-183.

¹⁷⁷ İlkay Yılmaz, *Serseri, Anarşist ve Fesadın Peşinde*, p. 166-183.

¹⁷⁸ BOA, Y. MTV. 217/4- (1901).

¹⁷⁹ Jongerden, "Elite Encounters of A Violent Kind", p. 77.

Overall, we can assert that the intra- and inter-tribal power struggles between the Hamidian tribal officers over their desire to increase their revenues via assuming the control of various villages and pastures technically became one of the core causes responsible for the unruly atmosphere in the upper Lake Van region. Although this study does not address the issue of where exactly the villagers migrated, we might conclude that most of the vulnerable Armenians left their homelands and migrated to city or district centers for these causes. Violence and conflict in the region was arbitrary, and occurred as acts of expansion or retaliation in the territory of an enemy chief, to either damage their revenue or halt their expansion or as an act of revenge for previous attacks. Majority of the settled and agriculturalist population in the rural Ottoman eastern provinces were Armenians, and this group became particularly victim to such attacks.¹⁸⁰ Hüseyin Pasha and other Heyderan tribesmen appear not to have deliberately expelled the villagers under their own authority, as that would result in a loss of revenue, which they received from agricultural production. This policy however, did not apply to villages under the control of other tribal chiefs. Although the villages under the authority of one chief were technically protected, those chiefs did also disposses the population of their land, over-tax them and employ forced labor, all in the name of economic gains. The documentation on at hand reveals that Hüseyin Paşa too was not immune to this. Finally, villagers, especially Armenians, who were forced to endure such acts could hardly complain to the government about the mistreatment they experienced at the hands of their own chiefs, for the chiefs were protected by the policies of the Hamidian government. Most of the complaints, therefore, had to wait until the Hamidian government lost its power after the re-introducing of the Constitution in 1908.

¹⁸⁰ Özbek, ““Anadolu Islahatı””, p. 78.

6.4 Discursive Power of the Documents: Hüseyin Pasha, the Armenian Movement and the Empires

Although Hüseyin Pasha was actively involved in the bloody and extraordinary violence enacted against vulnerable people in the region, the existent sources do not confirm that he was part of any collective massacres against Armenians or any other Muslim subjects during the Hamidian era.¹⁸¹ He was portrayed as a symbol of ethnic violence against the Armenians and his arbitrary use of power against the Muslim subject was not shared in the British consular reports and periodicals.¹⁸² It is true that Hüseyin Pasha dispossessed the population under his authority of their land, that he over-taxed them and also drove them to perform forced labor, however there has been no data found regarding a massacre of those subjects. He became an unwanted person (*persona non-grata*), due to claims that he had massacred the Armenian subjects in his region during the whole Hamidian era. Interestingly, the other Heyderan chiefs, Emin, Hacı Temir, Mustafa and Muhammed Siddık hardly appear in the consular reports, despite the fact that they too used also arbitrary power of violence in the upper Lake Van region.¹⁸³ The British consuls and some governors tried to have Hüseyin dismissed from the region because of Hüseyin's unlawful acts, but the Fourth Army defended Hüseyin Pasha. Intra- and inter-tribal attacks conducted by Hüseyin Pasha were completely ignored by the Fourth Army, and were stated as never happened. Therefore, it is quite difficult to determine which sources are more reliable. For these reasons, some scholars appear to fall short in portraying

¹⁸¹ Klein, *Ibid.* Abak, *Ibid.*

¹⁸² Owen Miller, "Sasun 1894: Mountains, Missionaries and Massacres at the End of the Ottoman Empire" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Columbia University, New York, 2015), p. 26.

¹⁸³ Mustafa and Muhammed Siddık Beys were the grandsons of Ali Agha of Ebeğë who we discussed in earlier chapter. They also became lieutenant colonels in Ebeğë region.

an accurate image of Hüseyin Pasha, particularly since they only used British or Russian consular reports, without paying enough attention to the local dynamics and developments.¹⁸⁴

Why Hüseyin Pasha became the primary subject in the British newspapers appears to be related to the institution of the Hamidian tribal regiments, which was clearly considered to be a method employed by Abdulhamid II to suppress any Armenian national and revolutionary movements. Also, as Hüseyin Pasha did not allow Armenian revolutionary movements to become dominant in his territories, it may seem as though he too was employing similar target of controlling the upper Lake Van area. He appointed men from the upper echelons of his tribe to control the villages, and this was a representation of his own authority rather than a direct attempt to suppress rarely visible Armenian national resistance in this region. In April 1895, Hüseyin Pasha reported to Ottoman officials that he discovered information regarding an Armenian man in Patnos, who had received three medals from foreign states, and that some papers were sent to this person from the Armenian revolutionaries.¹⁸⁵ Also, according to the British consul in Erzurum, Hüseyin Pasha imprisoned up to twenty Armenians from Patnos who were accused of having close ties with the Revolutionary Armenians in Russia.¹⁸⁶

Local oral sources also confirm that Armenian movements did not become effective in the territories controlled by the Heyderan, in comparison to the inner Ottoman

¹⁸⁴ Klein, *Ibid.* Abak, *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 714/26- (1895).

¹⁸⁶ Hampson to William, no. 23, Erzurum, March 7, 1891 (FO 195/1728).

territories of Muş and Bitlis.¹⁸⁷ However, the location of the Heyderan tribe and the lands they controlled, were in a strategic place, near the borders of Iran and Russia, where the Armenian revolutionaries crossed to enter Ottoman territory.¹⁸⁸ Bayezid, Erciş, Ebeğe were some of the places that the Armenians crossed from Russia and Iran and into the Ottoman eastern provinces.¹⁸⁹ The fact that they did not settle in these regions, nor conduct their activities in them, is probably due to the strength of Hüseyin Pasha's authority. For this reason, Hüseyin Pasha was not allowed to join the Yemen War in 1905, as this would result in a loss of "protection and security of the Sublime domain because of the Armenian "sedition"" as noted by Marshal Zeki.¹⁹⁰ He also mentioned that "while the joined hands of [Hüseyin's] regiment and officials of military and civil bureaucracy devastated where Armenian treachers [*hazelesi*] [revolutionaries] appeared, sending this regiment to Yemen will serve for the "seditious groups" who are afraid to cross [through] these territories".¹⁹¹

Hüseyin Pasha was aware of the fact that if he allowed the Armenian movements to gain headway in his territory, he might have lost the support of the state, which would in return have threatened both his authority and revenue streams in the region. Therefore, he did not support the Armenian political movements. However, as there were many notorious activities of him and also accusations made against him and his men, the result is a convergence of information that is difficult to sort in order to reveal the real actions and motives of Hüseyin Pasha. For example, Karapapak tribal

¹⁸⁷ Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017. Kaligian, *Armenian Organization*, p. 1.

¹⁸⁸ Kaligian, *Armenian Organization*, p. 1.

¹⁸⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.UM 36/77- (1897).

¹⁹⁰ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 231/31- (1905).

¹⁹¹ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 231/31- (1905).

members accused Hüseyin Pasha of hiding Armenian revolutionaries, and of protecting some suspicious Armenian travelers, who passed through areas under his control.¹⁹² Few Ottoman sources also claim that some ordinary tribesmen belonging to the Heyderan assisted the Armenian revolutionaries in order to receive some sort of financial compensation. As one reveals, a member of the Heyderan tribe, Abdi, sold weapons for profit to the Armenians.¹⁹³ The Heyderan were not the only tribe to profit from this situation. Some members of other tribes also received payments from Armenian revolutionaries, in return for their help in crossing the border from Russian territory into the inner Ottoman provinces through Eleşkirt, Tutak and Malazgirt.¹⁹⁴ The acting governor of Van even warned the Porte, he specified that some of Hüseyin Pasha's men were helping Armenian revolutionaries, and he was worried that the Kurds might eventually also ally together against the government.¹⁹⁵ These accusations can be regarded as an outcome that resulted from the utilitarian expectations of the tribal members. It appears that Hüseyin Pasha, and those closest to him, did not set out to destroy the power of the revolutionaries, but they also did not allow for them to become effective within his territories. This was due to the fact that Hüseyin Pasha was highly engaged with Ottoman officials and it was due to their support that he had received his high rank, the ability to claim legitimate rule of the region and the power and authority that this allowed. Also, the acting governor of Van's statements indicate that Hüseyin Pasha was still unreliable in the eyes of government agents.

¹⁹² BOA, Y.MTV 217/4- (1901).

¹⁹³ BOA, DH.TMIK. 163/33- (1904).

¹⁹⁴ BOA, A.MKT.MHM. 642/25- (1900).

¹⁹⁵ BOA, DH.ŞFR. 391/74- (1897).

Hüseyin Pasha's actions indicate that he was primarily driven by practical or pragmatic concerns, meaning he acted in ways that would increase either his revenue or his power. This aggressive pragmatism became apparent following the dethronement of Abdulhamid II, as Hüseyin Pasha attempted to preserve his position by reconciling with the new regime after the declaration of the Second Constitution in 1908.¹⁹⁶ Therefore, studies need to combine British, French and Russian sources, together with Ottoman sources, and perhaps even include oral historical sources, in order to understand the actual historical atmosphere of the region, and the activities of the Hamidian tribal chiefs.

One of the most significant arguments regarding the role of Hüseyin Pasha is related to the Ottoman expedition against the Armenians in Sasun in 1894. According to current studies, the Hamidian government wanted to teach the Armenians of Sasun a lesson, as they would not pay their taxes to the government officials, due to a double-taxation process, where they paid taxes to both the state and the tribes, in return for their protection (*khafir*).¹⁹⁷ Sasun was a mountainous region located in southern Muş and some revolutionaries from Hınçak and Taşnak became active in the area.¹⁹⁸

According to British consular reports, the members of the Bekiran tribe, Reşkotan tribe and the Sheikhs of Zilan joined a military expedition against the Armenians in Sasun.¹⁹⁹ Polatel also confirms that both the Bekiran and Badikan tribes joined the State army against the Armenians. The tribes and the Armenians were already at odd

¹⁹⁶ BEO 3749.281157- (1910).

¹⁹⁷ Mehmet Polatel, "The Complete Ruin of A District: The Sasun Massacre of 1894" *The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities and Politics*, eds. Yaşar Tolga Cora, Dzovinar Derderian, Ali Sipahi (New York, I.B. Tauris, 2016), p.181. Owen Miller, *ibid*.

¹⁹⁸ Mayevsriy, *19.Yüzyılda Kürdistan*, p. 132-133. Kaligian, *Armenian Organization*, p. 1.

¹⁹⁹ Boyajian to Graves, Private copy, Diyarbekir, Oct. 29, 1894 (FO 195/1846): For this report, 500 Heyderan tribal men joined Sasun expedition, however, later it was mentioned that no Heyderan chiefs went to Sasun. Owen Miller, *ibid*.

due to the unpaid taxes, and the tribes also joined for the expected booty that they would retrieve after the military expedition.²⁰⁰ To Polatel, the Heyderan chiefs did not participate in the expedition, as the British consul had warned the Porte that if Hüseyin Pasha did join, problems might increase in the region.²⁰¹ However, Klein mentions that Hüseyin Pasha did in fact join the imperial army in Sasun:

[Hüseyin was] entrusted with official military orders to proceed to Muş, where his regiments would work to put down “the Armenian rebellion” brewing in the mountainous region of Sasun. He may even have volunteered his services for this mission to avoid punishment, as he would also do several times in the future. Over the course of the next year, Hüseyin Pasha would become one of the parties most connected with the massacres of Armenians that bloodied much of Kurdistan during the years 1894-1896. Although little is known about any official orders he may have been given in putting down Sasun rebellion, it can be surmised from available sources that the Heyderani Hamidiye forces he commanded were also responsible for a significant amount of “extracurricular” violence against Armenians in his own districts, and indeed, he became notorious for his involvement in these sanguinary activities.²⁰²

Klein suggests without providing exact data that the Heyderan chiefs and Hüseyin Pasha were indeed involved in the bloody violence against the Armenians. She claims that Hüseyin Pasha possibly joined the massacre in Sasun, though she was unable to conclusively prove her argument.²⁰³ However, at the same time, British reports also indicate that Hüseyin Pasha did not become involved in any military expedition, and no Ottoman sources mentioned that he took a role in Sasun expedition.²⁰⁴ The British consul in Erzurum, R.W. Graves, sent a report to the British ambassador in Istanbul, Philip W. Currie, on September 1, 1894, where he

²⁰⁰ Polatel, “The Complete Ruin of A District”, p. 183-194.

²⁰¹ Polatel, “The Complete Ruin of A District”, p. 188.

²⁰² Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 138.

²⁰³ Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 236.

²⁰⁴ Graves to Currie, no. 68, Erzurum, Sep. 20, 1894, (FO 195/1846).

wrote that Hüseyin Pasha was in custody in Erzurum, due to the violence resulting from inter-tribal conflict, but assumed that Hüseyin Pasha would participate in the expedition which would gather in Muş.²⁰⁵ However, on September 20, 1894, he wrote that Hüseyin Pasha's troops returned from Muş to Patnos due to the spread of cholera in the region, and thus he did not join the army in Sasun.²⁰⁶ In contradiction, British vice-consul Boyajian in Diyarbekir wrote on October 29, 1894, that ten thousand Hamidian troops, of which five hundred were members of the Heyderan, joined the expedition in Sasun. One month later Mr. Graves denied Boyajian on November 23 that "the Hamidiye irregulars of the Haidaranlı tribe, mentioned by Mr. Boyajian as helping to bring the total of Kurds engaged to over ten thousand men, took no part in the operation, but were sent back from Moush".²⁰⁷ Thus, contrary to the claim made by Klein, finally, we can conclude that the Heyderan chiefs and their tribal members did not in fact join the military forces in Sasun.²⁰⁸ However, if the British agents did not suppress the Ottoman government, the Hamidian tribal regiments might have been used in suppressing the uprising in Sasun, which actually was not quite powerful at all. Also, it seems that the government agents hesitated to use Hamidian forces in Sasun since it might have shown the level of atrocities carried by the governmental/local tribal agents in Sasun.

Later in 1895, some Hamidian tribal regiments were gathered in Muş but again, they did not go beyond the center of Muş according to British consular reports.²⁰⁹ Some

²⁰⁵ Graves to Currie, no. 59, Erzurum, Sep. 1, 1894, (FO 195/1846).

²⁰⁶ Graves to Currie, no. 68, Erzurum, Sep. 20, 1894 (FO 195/1846).

²⁰⁷ Boyajian to Graves, Private copy, Diyarbekir, Oct. 29, 1894 (FO 195/1846). Graves to Currie, no. 90, Erzurum, Nov. 23, 1894 (FO 195/1846).

²⁰⁸ Owen, "Sasun 1894", p. 165.

²⁰⁹ Longworth to Currie, no. 3, Trabzon, March 12, 1895 (FO 424/182).

rumors were shared by the British vice-consul of Trabzon, Longworth. In his account, Hüseyin Pasha brought ten Armenian women from Sasun, while the Sultan gave orders to the Heyderan chiefs to destroy the Armenians which resulted in the death of 15,000-20,000 people.²¹⁰ His report indicates that he received this information from the Armenians, since he wrote that “the Kurds themselves told us [Armenians] that the Sultan gave orders by telegram to [...] destroy us [Armenians]”.²¹¹ The rumors that Longworth shared were in fact manipulated, as he himself was unsure of their validity when he shared the news. Rather, as Miller showed, it was the Bekiran and Badikan tribes, who were not connected in any way to the Hamidian tribes, who joined the army in Sasun.²¹² As some scholars had described, the Hamidian tribes actually played a lesser role in the massacres conducted in the region, than what has been suggested by historians.²¹³ However, it seems that although the Heyderan chiefs did not join the expedition, some numbers of Armenian girls were brought as slaves to Hüseyin and Emin Pasha because not only Longworth but Hallward also shared similar report from Van:

It is said that a considerable number of Armenian girls from Sasson were brought by soldiers and sold to Kurds in the Adelcevaz and Arjish districts. It seems certain that some of them are in the hands of the notorious Hussein and Emin Pasha.²¹⁴

Therefore, in order to understand what kind of unlawful activities the Hamidian tribes participated in the Eastern Ottoman provinces, one needs to evaluate the role

²¹⁰ Longworth to Currie, no. 3, Trabzon, March 12, 1895 (FO 424/182).

²¹¹ Longworth to Currie, no. 3, Trabzon, March 12, 1895 (FO 424/182).

²¹² Miller, *Ibid.*

²¹³ Gölbaşı, “Hamidiye Alayları”, p. 170-172.

²¹⁴ Hallward to Graves, no. 15, Van, February 18, 1895 (FO 195/1891).

of every single, individual Hamidian tribal regiment, or perhaps maybe even the activities of each chief.

It seems that attacks (*iğtişas*)²¹⁵ on Armenians were primarily more ethnicized in the city centers than the ones undertaken by the tribal chiefs for personal gains in the rural areas. The British consul in Erzurum, Mr. Lloyd, wrote on October 20, 1890 that Armenians were attacked in the city center of Erzurum, where some of them were killed, and had their houses plundered.²¹⁶ The consul claimed that the perpetrators of the crimes were released, but that some of the Armenians were detained without reason. Also, the British embassy in Istanbul issued a diplomatic note to the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior in February of 1896, claiming that if the Ottoman imperial soldiers had been dispatched earlier to the region, as the attacks of Kurds in Van had begun to occur, then the violence against the Armenians that followed could have been suppressed.²¹⁷ In addition, they worried that the recruitment of reserve troops (*asâkir-i redife*) for the next year was a sign of forthcoming possible assaults. Furthermore, the British consul also claimed that the Ottoman imperial soldiers were accused by some of participating in the arbitrary usage of violence against the Armenians in the city center of Bitlis. As mentioned, while there were some city notables who organized attacks against the Armenians in Diyarbekir in 1895, at the same time, Milli İbrahim Pasha sent his soldiers to protect

²¹⁵ The sources do not use such a word used for the arbitrary use of power driven by chiefs in the rural region of Heyderan during the Hamidian era.

²¹⁶ Lloyd to White, no. 77, Erzurum, Oct. 20, 1890 (FO 195/1688).

²¹⁷ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 666/18- (1896): “*Kuvvey-i askerîyey-i mevcûde iğtişâşatın bidâyetinde Ekrad aleyhine hüsn-ü istimal edilmiş olsa idi iğtişâşat derhal bastırılmış olurdu. Asâkir-i redifenin silâhâtına alınması hususunun esbâb-ı iğtişâşatın tezyîdine medâr olması muhtemeldir [...] asâkir-i şâhâne Bitlis kitâline iştirâk ile ittihâm olunduğundan*”.

the Christians living in the rural areas from the violence.²¹⁸ Thus, there are many reports, some based on hearsay, which named several actors who may or may not have participated in violent acts against local Armenian populations in cities.

However, it is also true that sometimes the Armenian revolutionaries attacked their own people in order to be able to later propagate that Muslims were acting out violently against them in Van, as the British vice-consul in Van, Mr. Devey, wrote on January 26, 1891.²¹⁹ Therefore, it is possible to assert that the problems in the rural regions of the Ottoman eastern provinces were not as much politicized, in a way that they were in the city centers, where the Armenians also had more overt nationalist sentiments. Mayevsky shares the fact that, for example, the Armenian priests in Van had more nationalist sentiments and antagonism against the Muslims.²²⁰ Also, Mr. Wratislaw, wrote to the British ambassador, Mr. White, in 1888 that “the sentiments of nationality, which is so strong in the Armenians of Van”.²²¹

This convergence of contradictory information regarding both the actors and the factors that contributed to the violence in the Ottoman eastern provinces can be seen as an outcome of the global political tension between the Ottomans and other powers over the region. The newspapers published in Europe often manipulated the actual facts, and the consuls wrote their reports without verifying the data that they received. For example, although Hüseyin Pasha did not have any power over more than four well-equipped regiments of 2,000 people, a pro-Armenian newspaper

²¹⁸ Jongerden, “Elite Encounters of A Violent Kind”, p. 74.

²¹⁹ Devey to Hampson, no. 4, Van, Jan. 26, 1891 (195/1728).

²²⁰ Mayevsriy, *19.Yüzyülda Kürdistan*, p. 111.

²²¹ Wratislav to White, no. 24, Erzurum, Feb. 22, 1888 (FO 424/145).

published by Armenian Revolutionary Federation in Paris, *Pro Armenia*, asserted that he commanded 27 detachments and each had 520 to 560 men.²²² Also, the consular reports indicate that their writings were shaped by the policies of the British government. For example, Mr. Hampson, the British consul in Erzurum, wrote to the British ambassador in Istanbul during the formation of the Hamidian tribal regiments in 1890, that “Hussein is a dangerous person to whom to entrust an official mission of any sort; and I have already been warned that we may shortly expect to have unpleasant evidence of his presence in Alashgerd”.²²³ Hüseyin (Agha at that time) actually left to travel to Eleşkirt, in order to help organize the Hamidian tribal regiments, three months before he travelled with the other chiefs to Istanbul for the initiation ceremony. Therefore, Mr. Hampson’s report emphasizes the fact that with Hüseyin in the region, British policies regarding their presence would confront new obstacles in the Ottoman eastern provinces.

In another report of his, written in April 1891, he learnt that Hüseyin was going to travel to Istanbul, and therefore warned the British ambassador that “this may therefore appear to your excellency a favourable moment to press the Porte to take measures for the punishment and removal of Huseyin especially as he is shortly leaving for Constantinople”.²²⁴ When Mr. Hampson introduced Hüseyin Pasha in one of his memoranda, he began with the following words: “Let's follow the career of this monster”.²²⁵ Hüseyin was already declared a *persona non grata* by British because of his notorious activities. For as an empowered tribal chief in the region, he

²²² “Sur la Frontiere” *Pro Armenia*, Feb. 20, 1908, p. 1238.

²²³ Hampson to White, no. 7, Erzurum, Jan. 23, 1891 (FO 195/1728).

²²⁴ Hampson to White, no. 36, Erzurum, April 4, 1891 (FO 195/1728).

²²⁵ Hampson to White, Erzurum, Jan. 1891, *La Revue des Revues* (Paris. 1890), p. 492-497.

participated in activities that disarranged the region's politics which the British agents were against since they wanted to integrate the Armenians into the Ottoman state system rather than to Russians. Thus, the reciprocal plunders and seizures of the villagers, resulted during inter- and intra- tribal conflicts, were easily manipulated by the consular reports and global media as presented via a cliché of targeted sectarian attacks against Christians due to their ethnic identity.

During the Hamidian era, the liberal and conservative British parties argued for the protection of not only for the Protestants in the Ottoman Empire, but also for all of the Armenians in the empire and did not have any plans to support the creation of an Armenian state.²²⁶ Some researchers also indicated that the Liberal British leaders used the cases of Ottoman Christians to criticize their conservative rivals:

This violence coincided with the development of a yellow press in Great Britain and the rise to political power of the Liberal Party under William Ewart Gladstone, who utilized the massacres that befell Christians in the Balkans as a tool to criticize their Conservative Party opponents.²²⁷

The Gladstone government tried to utilize the atrocities perpetrated against the Armenians during the Hamidian era to criticize the Conservative Party too. Also, the British consuls and the ambassador in Istanbul kept a close eye on the Ottoman eastern provinces, and pressured the Porte to implement reforms to improve the conditions of the Armenians in six of the provinces (*vilâyet-i Sitte*), particularly in relation to the Kurds and Circassians, as mentioned in the Treaty of Berlin in 1878. A British colonel serving as part of the intelligence service, Mr. Bell, emphasized how crucial it was to protect the "Armenian frontier" of the Ottoman Empire against

²²⁶ Robert F. Zeidner, "Britain and the Launching of the Armenian Question" *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 7, no. 4 (Oct, 1976), p. 470-475.

²²⁷ Miller, "Sasun 1894", p. 9.

Russia, in order to protect the commercial and strategic profits of the British Empire.²²⁸ Therefore, the British consuls in the region summarized three important points, regarding the changes that the Ottomans needed to make: protection of the Armenians against “habitual savages of the Kurds[,] all liberty of thought and action excepting the exercise public worship, [and] unequal status held by the Christians as compared with the Mussulman in the eyes of the government and before the law”.²²⁹ These changes would mean the integration of the Armenian subjects into the state, and also, the abolishment of the Hamidian tribal regiments. Therefore, the driving motive of British policies was not only humanitarian but also political and financial. Abdulhamid II did not agree these reforms, for he believed that the reform agenda of the Great Powers might pave the way for the creation of an independent Armenian state, similar to those established in the Balkans. Parallel to the British strategy of attempting to force reforms in the region, the intra- and inter-tribal conflicts and unlawful notorious acts of the chiefs, which devastated both Armenian and Muslim peasants alike, were rightly depicted as arbitrary attacks. However, such a violence of chiefs was selectively reflected as ethnic hatred towards Armenian villagers during the Hamidian era.

It can be also realized that most of the Kurdish actors were introduced as brigands. Mehmed Pasha, who was a member of the disinherited Bayezid *mîrs*, was also introduced as a “brigand”, although when he was a member of the Council of State (*Şûrây-ı Devlet*).²³⁰ Although Mehmed Pasha had no role on such activities similar to

²²⁸ Memorandum of Colonel M.S. Bell from Deputy Quartermaster-general, Intelligence branch, Simla, May 9, 1888 (FO 424/145).

²²⁹ Lloyd to White, no. 77, Erzurum, Oct. 20, 1890 (FO 195/1688).

²³⁰ Hampson to White, no. 17, Erzurum, Feb. 20, 1891 (FO 195/1728). Mehmed Süreyya, “Mehmed Paşa” *Sicil-i Osmani* 4 (İstanbul, Tarih Vakfı, 1996), p. 1038.

those of Hüseyin, both actors were equalized to draw a picture of oppressor Kurds versus oppressed Armenians with an essentialist perspective. Together with misinformation, some of the material reported by the newspapers indeed appeared to be correct, and thus the result was a confusion of facts and fiction. For example, in a newspaper, published in January 1907, with the title of “Kurdish Exactions”, Hüseyin Pasha forced to take a good year’s harvest from the villagers, though the crop that year was deficient.²³¹

Although there were many Hamidian tribal chiefs, the media and the consuls primarily focused on the activities of Hüseyin Pasha since he closely worked with the Ottoman Hamidian government. At times, the British media was even contradicted by the consular reports themselves, concerning events in the regions. When Liberal Gladstone criticized the government of Salisbury in 1891 for the fact that they took no actions to protect the Ottoman Armenians from collective violence, the British consul in Erzurum reported that the Armenian peasants were protected by the “*bey*s and *aghas*” and that there were no collective assaults.²³² However, the Armenian political parties pressured the British Empire, especially Gladstone, for the removal of Hüseyin, as he controlled a strategic corner of three frontier Ottoman provinces, and thus his removal was seen a necessary step in achieving their goals. The militarization of Hüseyin-like chiefs, therefore, did not fit to the policy of the British Empire, who only wanted to keep a weak Ottoman state in existence, and to integrate

²³¹ “Kurdish Exactions”, *The Aberdeen Daily Journal*, Tuesday January 15, 1907.

²³² Devey to Hampson, no. 5, Van, Jan. 12, 1891 (FO 195/1728).

the Armenian subjects/political movements into the empire, rather than to pave the way for more collective Russian-Armenian relations.²³³

Contradictory information regarding Hüseyin Pasha was not only specific to the British consular reports since some Ottoman sources also manipulated the local developments. While the commander-in-chief and the Fourth Army ignored the violence committed by the chiefs, some Ottoman governors tried to stabilize the region's atmosphere by arresting or expelling the Hamidian chiefs from the region.²³⁴ The chiefs did not follow any of their orders, and the governors often warned that the power struggles between the tribes might damage Ottoman policies in the region.²³⁵ For example, the *kaymakam* of the Hamidian 37th Regiment, Seyyid Salih Bey from the Celali tribe, was accused by the *mutasarrıf* of Bayezid, of forcing Armenian villagers in the village of Meryemana (Sağdıç) to build his houses. The *mutasarrıf* prudentially worried that foreign consuls might use this case against the state to force their own agendas, and he suggested to the central government that Salih Bey be stopped.²³⁶ However, Marshal Zeki Pasha criticized and targeted Bayezid's *mutasarrıf* in the matter, and even claimed that such a response might affect the tribes negatively and also the Hamidian policies. When Hüseyin and his men attacked and plundered some villages, the investigations into the matter became null anyway for as Ottoman documents describe, he was in the process of

²³³ Zeidner, *Ibid.* "Martini-Henry Rifles Distributed to Kurds" *The Jersey Weekly Press and Independent*, Saturday Morning August 9, 1890: Martini rifles were given to the Hamidian regiments and this further worried the British government.

²³⁴ Nadir Özbek, "The Politics of Taxation and the "Armenian Question" during the Late Ottoman Empire, 1876- 1908," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, no. 4 (2012), p. 794.

²³⁵ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 666/18- (1896).

²³⁶ BOA, Y.PRK.DH 10/4- (1897). BOA, Y.PRK.UM 36/77- (1897): Muhammed Kamil Pasha, the grandvizier, also shared similar ideas to control the Hamidian chiefs for any possible foreign invasion.

establishing the Hamidian tribal regiments.²³⁷ Therefore, parallel to the conflict between the Palace and the ministries, the provincial military and civil bureaucracy (*mülkiye*) officials also criticized each other regarding the handling of the Hamidian tribal atrocities.²³⁸

As Klein has also described, the governors of Erzurum and Van, Rauf Pasha and Şemseddin Bey, tried to limit Hüseyin Pasha's notorious activities through exiling him from the region.²³⁹ For example, when Şemseddin Pasha shared with the British Vice-consul that if the Porte supported him, he would ensure that Hüseyin Pasha would be removed and tried. Instead, it was Şemseddin Pasha who was removed from Van, and replaced by Tahir Pasha, who was a pro-Hamidian governor and also supporter of Hamidian chiefs, became the new governor in Van.²⁴⁰ Therefore, he stayed in Van for at least for eight years, from 1897 to 1905.²⁴¹ Furthermore, the head of the Fourth Army, Marshal Zeki Pasha, often praised the creation of Hamidian tribal regiments, as he believed that they helped to integrate the Kurdish chiefs into the state system at the expense of further alienation of the Armenian subjects.²⁴² He ignored some of the local Ottoman governors for their complaints directed against Hüseyin Pasha, and even targeted them with treachery for being under influence of the British consuls and the Armenian political movements. For him, the "accusations" against, and "scapegoating" of the Hamidian officers was mostly "slanders", and demoralized the Hamidian chiefs who work for "state

²³⁷ BOA, DH.MKT. 1998/68- (1892). BOA, DH.MKT 1875/123- (1891): "*tahkikâtun hitâmi*".

²³⁸ Georgeon, *Ibid.*

²³⁹ Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 138.

²⁴⁰ BOA, Y.PRK.UM 76.105- (1905).

²⁴¹ BOA, Y.PRK.UM 76.105- (1905).

²⁴² BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 232.23- (1905).

politics”.²⁴³ Therefore, we cannot claim that there was one single Ottoman state agenda among all Ottoman officials regarding the activities of the Hamidian tribal regiments. Disagreements between the Palace/army and the civil bureaucrats continued in the periphery of the Ottoman eastern provinces between the Fourth Army officials and some of the local governors.²⁴⁴

In general, the Hamidian government did not apply any judicial process to deal with the unlawful attacks in the region, and the chiefs and tribes made peace according to their own tribal rules. It was discussed above that Ali Agha was called to court four years after his crime was committed although the tribes had already solved their dispute according to tribal customs.²⁴⁵ For example, in Ebeğ, the Ottoman commissions could not make peace for six years (1890-1896) between an Iranian backed Celali tribe, and the Ottoman-supported Heyderan tribes. However, the two sides agreed to resolve their differences after they made an agreement based on customary tribal laws.²⁴⁶ This indicates that the Hamidian tribal regiments not only provided military power to the chiefs, but also *de facto* judiciary power, which the tribal chiefs used whenever necessary.

Although there were many complains against Hüseyin Pasha’s role in the murders, no document has been found indicating that the perpetrators were sanctioned. Therefore, the unlawful acts of the Hamidian chiefs were not punished by the judiciary branch of the Empire. Instead, in some cases, Hüseyin Pasha distributed some land or money to the descendants of the murdered family as compensation, as

²⁴³ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 232.23- (1905).

²⁴⁴ Gölbaşı, “Hamidiye Alayları”, p. 171.

²⁴⁵ BOA, BEO 1234/92525- (1898).

²⁴⁶ Erdal Çiftçi, “Ottoman Policy in the Ottoman-Iranian Borderland during the late 19th Century: The Case of Ebeğ” *History Studies* (March, 2016), 7-18.

he had to Sheikh Romi's family and the men of Hacı Timur Pasha.²⁴⁷ Furthermore, according to a petition that noted "it should be kept secret because if shared, my life will be under danger", Hüseyin Pasha ordered that judiciary decisions reached by himself should be executed directly, without the transfer of the culprits to the official Ottoman judiciary institutions, in order to display to the population the idea that his region was under the rule of justice and equity.²⁴⁸ The executions of three Armenian peasants in the village of Arin, the arrest of twenty Armenians in Patnos, and the case of Sheikh Romi indicate that Hüseyin Pasha acted as the executive-judiciary power in his territories under arbitrary use of violence for personal gains. As he was the head of both the military (brigadier) and civil branches (*müdür*) in Patnos, for Hüseyin, it was logical that he easily controlled judiciary power in the region as well.

6.5 Conclusion

The creation of the Hamidian tribal regiments and paramount chiefs increased the region's intra- and inter-tribal feuds. The empowered chiefs did not hesitate to fill the power vacuum left behind by the hereditary *mîrs*. Other than protecting sporadically the borders of the Empire, the tribal military regiments rarely functioned like an Ottoman standard military organization. The integration of the Kurds into the Ottoman state system was a continuation of the policy implemented during the Tanzimat reforms that Abdulhamid II strived to accomplish as well. However, Abdülhamd's policy differed from that of the Tanzimat era, for in an effort to integrate the tribes into the empire as he not only transformed the tribal chiefs from governor of tribe (*aşiret müdürü*) into military officer pashas, but also into official

²⁴⁷ Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Personal interview, Ankara, October 22, 2017. BOA, BEO 47/3474- (1892). Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 140.

²⁴⁸ BOA, Y.MTV. 217/4- (1901).

tax-farmers, heads of the civil bureaucracy (*mülkiye*) in Patnos. In addition, these tribal pashas preferred to interpret all this to be *de facto* judiciary-executive power holders, and the Hamidian government tolerated it.

Aggressive pragmatism led the notorious activities of the tribal chiefs and they were able to achieve their own personal goals through taking advantage of the new situation that applied through the policies of Hamidian Islamism. The state seemingly attempted to transform both the chiefs and tribes into the state apparatus in order to protect its rural eastern territories against both Armenian agitation and foreign state intervention. Therefore, the Hamidian chiefs were protected, especially by the Sultan and the military class. Being one of those powerful chiefs in a strategic location, Hüseyin Pasha rose as both the greatest aggressor, and therefore, a scapegoat at the same time for the region's economic and political instability, particularly in British and French consular reports. Some consuls attempted to expel him from the region by justly emphasizing and/or at times unjustly exaggerating the conflicts he was involved in by targeted campaigns against more vulnerable Christians. The plunder and seizure of villages mostly and technically occurred during and after the power struggles that happened between the various chiefs in the region. The Hamidian central government and military class simply and unjustly viewed these unlawful acts as "slanders" against the Hamidian tribal Pashas. The resulting violence, however, does not seem to have plan to purposefully massacre the rural population, particularly based on ethnic consideration, as they were the very population they needed in order to collect their tax-farming revenues. The ordinary tribal population itself on the other hand appears not targeting the settled population collectively beyond individual assaults. Tribal members generally continued to pursue animal husbandry and thus remained in the highland pastures except during

the winter months. This also seems to have prevented largely collective dispossession of the agriculturalists by ordinary tribal people. Since Armenians were much more vulnerable to such attacks and most of them agriculturalists and non-militarized, they were much more victimized by the chaotic atmosphere of the region.

Finally, our findings also indicate that the Hamidian tribal regiments were used by Abdulhamid II in order to implement his Islamist ideology within the Ottoman eastern rural frontiers. When Abdulhamid lost power in 1908, so too did the Hamidian tribal chiefs lose their powers. The rival cousins, Hüseyin, Emin and Hacı Temir Pasha had to join a group in order to defect to the Iranian territories collectively and as a result lost much revenue and vast property. Therefore, without state support, the Hamidian chiefs could not have become a powerful entity in the region, and no permanent collaboration would appear between the tribe and Empire. After 1908, the Committee of Union and Progress alienated the tribes and saw them as a remnant of the, by then, “ancient” Hamidian system. Therefore, it was the Hamidian policies of the time that created an age of collaboration between the tribal chiefs and the Empire, which furthered the political ambitions of both groups between 1890 to 1908.

CHAPTER VII

THE AGE OF DISSOLUTION: THE HEYDERAN TRIBE DURING THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

This chapter analyzes how the Heyderan tribe lost its bargaining agency, political/military collective power and its noble leadership after the collapse of the last powerful Ottoman Sultan, Abdulhamid II. Since the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) preserved its expansionist mission towards the Iranian and Russian imperial boundaries, the tribes more or less functioned as its agents in the region until 1917.¹ Natural boundaries between tribal and state lands were still clear-cut until the Sheikh Said Rebellion of 1925, since Adilcevaz, Patnos, Muradiye, Ebeğ and Çaldıran were still under the control of the Heyderan chiefs. However, what is clear is that while the state consolidated its power against the tribes, the power of the latter waned over time. Although the Heyderan protected its political-military collective power within Turkey's eastern borders until 1925, this came to the end when the modern nation-states of Turkey and Pahlavi Iran consolidated their power,

¹ Touraj Atabaki, "Pantürkizm ve İran Milliyetçiliği" *İran ve I. Dünya Savaşı: Büyük Güçlerin Savaş Alanı*, ed. Touraj Atabaki (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı, 2010), p. 125-140.

breaking down the alternative power held by the tribes of the area. The Heyderan's leading cadre was exiled to the inner Anatolian territories, even though these chiefs did not take part in any Kurdish nationalist movements until 1925. Such actions were examples of a return to the CUP policies of exiling and assimilation, in order to integrate tribal members into the citizenship of the modern Turkish nation-state.

This shift was an important development regarding the state-tribe relationship since the former did not recognize the political or military power of the latter. The tribes could not be allies of the state, but rather as possible "threats" in regards to the unity of the modern nation-state. Direct rule over the tribal members was necessary and middlemen chiefs could not represent encapsulated or encapsulating powers anymore. The territorialization of nation state boundaries was practiced through the creation of the clear-cut defined lands, which was considered as necessary for a safe haven, for the "survival" of the nation. Therefore, the new modern nation-state of Turkey, and its leading cadres, did not pursue the policies of imperial expansion and this caused the end of the Heyderan's collective tribal military/political power. This chapter further analyzes how this process was applied to the Heyderan's living spaces during the period of 1908 to 1929.

7.1 Heyderan Chiefs after the Post-Revolutionary Era of 1908

Tribe-state relations entered into a new stage of dissolution after Abdulhamid II was forced by the Young Turk opposition to re-introduce the Ottoman second constitution in July 1908. Revolutionary nationalist members of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) increased their powers and controlled the second army in Thessalonica. Within a year, they had dethroned the last powerful Ottoman Sultan

and the citizens, most of whom had been oppressed under the rule of the Hamidian government, celebrated these developments with the words of “liberty, fraternity and equality”.² The Sultan-Caliph’s oppressive rules, CUP’s secret organisations in European countries, and deepened economic-social crises paved the way for the declaration of the constitution.³ The tribal chiefs knew that this marked the end of their own rule as well as the end of the Hamidian age. The state ceased to support the Hamidian leadership from 1908 to 1911, as “the father of the Kurds” no longer ruled.⁴ The new regime embarked on new missions in the region through the appointment of new local governors. The governor of Erzurum, Muhammed Celaledin Bey, and the various governors of Van now became a nightmare for Heyderan chiefs. They attempted to imprison them, seize the villages they controlled, force them to pay their taxes in full, and make followers of the chiefs to leave the villages they had only lately settled in. As Hüseyin Pasha was the most powerful leader in the region, an analysis of his life during this period would yield an understanding of the developments in the upper Lake Van region. As the region also bordered Russia and Iran and because there was an abundance of Armenian political activities there, Hüseyin Pasha’s life stands as a key representative of his time. Therefore, this section will explore this in more detail on the basis of Ottoman documentation and Hüseyin Pasha’s own petitions.

² As there are several studies on the creation of the CUP movement, this work focuses on post-revolutionary era’s developments regarding state-tribe relations.

³ Özak-Gündoğan, “A Peripheral Approach”, p. 182. Şükrü Hanioglu, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (Oxford: Oxford Uni. Press, 1995). Feroz Ahmad, “The Young Revolution” *Journal of Contemporary History*, 3/3 (July, 1968), p. 19-36. Donald Quatert, “Economic Climate of the Young Turk Revolution” *Journal of Modern History*, 51/3, p. 1147-1161.

⁴ Some Hamidian Kurds called Abdulhamid II “the father of the Kurds,” since he supported them.

Like other Hamidian tribal leaders, Hüseyin Pasha was displeased with the new CUP regime since it meant he could no longer freely pursue his goals and activities.⁵ Between 1908 and 1911, relations between Hüseyin Pasha and the new regime were quite strained. The CUP, which was allied with the Armenian leadership, and the representatives of the old regime, the Hamidian aghas were to be punished by the new regime. One month after the restoration of the constitution, the acting governor of Erzurum sent a report to the central government complaining that, since the population and their leaders were from the same tribe and thus had the same identity, they received the right to collect the tithe at low prices.⁶ The government had realized that, by taking away the tribal leaders' power, it could increase the income of the treasury. Thus, the new regime also had an economic motive to bring down the Hamidian tribal leaders during this period. This was also related to what Klein and Kaligian call the "agrarian question/land issue," which created high tension in the region between the Kurdish and Armenian villagers.⁷ The Ottoman documents also describe how conflicts over land (*arâzi ihtilâfi*) were a major issue, and when the CUP government was supporting the Armenians between 1908 and 1911, this created real tension in the region.

For the Armenians, especially, the new regime meant that the Hamidian chiefs could be tried and imprisoned for their former notorious activities against the villagers. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation also suppressed the CUP government for the

⁵ One of the best examples of post-revolutionary developments among the Hamidian chiefs was the case of Milli İbrahim Pasha. His enemies Prinçizades, notables in Diyarbekir, organised an army to destroy his power.

⁶ BOA, DH.MKT 1294/21- (1908).

⁷ Klein, *Ibid.* Kaligian, *Armenian Organization*, p. 103-110.

return of Armenian lands seized by the Hamidian chiefs.⁸ The foreign consuls and the Armenian Patriarchate also focused on the activities of Hüseyin Pasha and, once the new regime had come to power, they spent a great deal of effort trying to get Hüseyin Pasha imprisoned or exiled. In October 1908, the deputy governor of Van complained that:

Since Hüseyin Pasha and his peers had been tried in military court, their cases were not held there [i.e., locally] and they had been released. Therefore, they must be trialed not by the military court but by the regular civil court. This case went against the constitution.⁹

The new regime no longer sought to maintain the status of the Hamidian leadership, and so the Hamidian leaders lost their privileges in the eyes of the new government. In January 1909, Hüseyin Pasha's file was sent from Adilcevaz to Van and Hüseyin Pasha himself was called there to face trial.¹⁰ Similarly, Hüseyin Pasha's cousin, Emin Pasha, was also called to trial "in order to drive them from the region".¹¹

7. 2 The Agrarian Question

From 1890 to 1908, the Hamidian leaders increased their wealth, land, and income as they had been given the authorization to take control of local subjects by central government. The Hamidian aghas acted as tax farmers (*mültezims*) and Hüseyin Pasha, in particular, increased his prestige and lands by controlling the villages in the upper Lake Van region. With the restoration of the constitution, villagers who were

⁸ Kaligian, *Armenian Organization*, p. 8, 229: For Kaligian, this issue became a milestone for the rupture of the CUP-ARF (Armenian Revolutionary Federation) relations.

⁹ BOA, DH.MKT 2623/53- (1908).

¹⁰ BOA, DH.MKT 2702/53- (1908).

¹¹ BOA, DH.MKT 2703/23- (1908).

dispossessed or had abandoned their land to escape intra-and-intertribal conflicts now had the right to claim for their possessions. However, although Klein and Abak maintain that the new regime supported the Armenians' cases, the Ottoman documents show that the government acted very slowly in this regard. The governor of Erzurum wrote to the central government to say that a new regulation was needed and proposed a way to solve the agrarian problem following the return of the Armenian population after the restoration of the constitution.¹² Muslim villagers also petitioned local governments to come up with a solution; one such document mentions that "the owner of [a particular plot of] land, the Armenian Boyaciyan family, has a fake land title (*tapu*) and we do not know where to go with 230 people".¹³ As Klein justly explains initial years of CUP-supported governments were a period when "emergent ethnic identities began to take shape during the process of conflict".¹⁴ Armenians were seen as the patrons of the future in the eyes of the Hamidian leadership during this period. The governor of Erzurum received several complaints saying that "the lands of Armenians had been taken from them [i.e. Hamidian chiefs]"; to these complaints the governor replied that "the lands of the Kurdish tribes were taken more than those of Armenians during this period".¹⁵ Based on a news report from the local newspaper published in Erzurum, 40 Armenians and 30 Kurds were killed after a conflict broke out among them and Hüseyin Pasha later set three Armenian villages on fire in October 1912, according to the complaints.¹⁶

¹² BOA, DH. MUI. 63/25- (1910).

¹³ BOA, DH.MUI. 63/25-4- (1909).

¹⁴ Klein, *Ibid*, p. 166.

¹⁵ BOA, DH.MUI. 63/25-7- (1910).

¹⁶ BOA, BEO 4089/306614- (1912).

The agrarian problem was not limited to the Hamidian leaders and the Armenians: Muslim villagers also made numerous complaints against the Hamidian leaders.¹⁷ One villager from Tutak, Abdüssamed, sent a petition to the government in 1909 requesting that he recover his lands from Hüseyin Pasha.¹⁸ The agrarian question was a broad conflict that occurred throughout the region between the Hamidian aghas and the peasantry. The Kurdish villagers in Zomik also petitioned the Porte and requested the return of their lands since Hüseyin Pasha had captured them during the Hamidian era.¹⁹ Therefore, the statement that “the main livelihood of the Heyderan tribe was banditry and seizure from the Armenians” was not in fact a phenomenon limited to the Armenians.²⁰

The Ottoman documents indicate that the policies of the CUP regarding the agrarian question began to shift against the Armenians as early as 1910. The Armenian representation in Erzurum petitioned the central government and the Armenian Patriarchate as follows:

If applications concerning the disputed lands are not made during the same year, these cases will be transferred to the local courts according to the new decision of the council of state (*Şûrâ-yı Devlet*) and the council of ministers (*Meclis-i Vukela*). Armenians do not have the moral or economic support to defend themselves in these courts. This decision will not bring an increase of agriculture, but contention and death. Therefore, this decision must be changed for the sake of the state and the administration. This will damage the constitution.²¹

¹⁷ For similar petitioning the Porte, check Özk-Gündoğan, *Ibid*. Most of the petitioners were Muslims in her documents. Kaligian, *Armenian Organization*, p. 107.

¹⁸ BOA, DH.MKT 2766/58- (1909).

¹⁹ BOA, DH.H 74/7- (1911).

²⁰ Tibet Abak, “İttihat ve Terakki’nin Kritik Seçimi”, p. 277- 293.

²¹ BOA, DH.MUI 63/25-18- (1910). If the disputes did not occur within the year that the complaints were made, these cases had to be solved in the courts. The disputes between Hüseyin Pasha and Zomik villagers were transferred to a trial in Erzurum in 1912.

Another report by the governor of Erzurum, Celal Bey, describes how “land conflicts between the “oppressors” (*mütegallibe*; i.e., the Hamidian aghas and their men) and the Armenians/ Kurds must be solved as soon as possible. Eighty percent of the lawsuits are related to this issue”.²² Abak also describes how the politics of the CUP changed more decisively after 1911, with the government realizing that it had to ally with the Hamidian aghas since local politics proved to be extremely complex, especially after the Russians had strengthened relations with the Kurds.²³ However, this did not mark a permanent change in CUP policies against the Kurds. The CUP had already decided to abolish the power of the Kurdish leadership, but in practice they acted according to political developments as well as because of the complexity of legal procedures concerning the land issue.

Between 1908 and 1910, Hüseyin Pasha was tried and his power was reduced considerably after many of his lands were seized. According to an Ottoman document, Hüseyin Pasha was highly irritated about losing lands in the center of Patnos during the post-revolutionary era.²⁴ As part of border politics, Hüseyin Pasha then defected with some of his men to Iran in late 1909, causing the government to fear his political activities there with Russian and Kurdish nationalists.²⁵

Abdurrezzak and Kamil Bedirhan Bey had close ties with the Russians and they were already on a mission to create a sovereign Kurdistan with Russian support against the Ottoman State.²⁶ A powerful Kurdish chief, Simko Agha from the Şikak tribe also controlled the Iranian Khoi region where the Heyderan chiefs took refuge into.

²² BOA, DH.MUI 63/25- (1910).

²³ Abak, *Ibid.*

²⁴ BOA, DH.H. 74/7- (1911).

²⁵ Reynolds, “Abdurrezzak”, p. 426.

²⁶ Reynolds, *Shattering Empires*, p. 58-63. Kaligian, *Armenian Organization*, p. 106.

Although their relations fluctuated, Seyyid Taha II, the grandson of Sheikh Ubeydullah, also acted in a similar manner to create a sovereign rule in the Ottoman East especially in his Hakkari region.²⁷ Hüseyin Pasha's and other Heyderan chiefs' defection to Iran and their possible alliance in the Russian occupied north-western Iranian territories made a Kurd-Russian-Armenian alliance a high possibility in the eyes of Ottoman officials.

Therefore, the government preferred to postpone the punishment of Hüseyin Pasha. The year of 1911 also marked the beginning of the Tripolitan War, which would be followed by the Balkan Wars. Under these circumstances, the government preferred to delay its plans for Hüseyin Pasha and others, as is clear from a document sent to Erzurum in 1914: "Until the current situation returns to tranquility, the ongoing investigation into Hüseyin Pasha is delayed".²⁸ Thus, the government did not, in fact, return to Hamidian policies yet between 1910 and 1911; these years marked a transitional period during which the government postponed its agenda on this matter. It is worth noting here that the abandonment of the support for Armenians in regard to the agrarian question shows that the relations between the CUP and the Armenians had decisively changed. As Klein argues, support for the Armenians between 1908 and 1911 planted the seeds of competition among the villagers and ethnic identities became a more sensitive question for the future.²⁹ Although he engaged in some exaggeration, the words of the marshal of the Fourth Army, Tatar Osman Pasha,

²⁷ Metin Atmaca, "Fragile frontiers: Sayyid Taha II and the role of Kurdish religio-political leadership in the Ottoman East during the First World War" *Middle Eastern Studies* (online published on Dec. 12, 2017).

²⁸ BOA, DH.ŞFR 45/69- (1914).

²⁹ Klein, *The Margins of Empire*, p. 152-169.

indicate how the policies of the CUP government influenced relations between Armenians and Kurds in the region between 1908 and 1910:

As a result, the Kurds are profoundly hopeless, while the Armenians acted spoiled and like lawyers. I did not see the Kurds carrying guns, but almost all the Armenians publicly carry guns in the villages and city centers.³⁰

7. 3 Blind Hüseyin Pasha after the CUP Period through World War I

During the early CUP period, *Mirliva* Hüseyin Pasha was primarily referred to by the government point as Blind (*Kör*) Hüseyin Pasha, indicating that he was no longer being praised.³¹ Hüseyin Pasha had been the pioneer of the Hamidian leaders in the region, but was now disappointed with the policies of the new regime. Hoping to ally with the government, he declared his loyalty to the CUP regime, but when the government proceeded to act against his interests, he put a few plans in motion.

According to Klein, he asked for the assistance of the general of the Fourth Army to write on his behalf to governors; he offered to take part in the war in Bulgaria with his regiments; and, he attempted to ally with the Armenian Taşnak and the Kurdish clubs.³² According to the locals, some pro-Hamidian pashas offered Hüseyin Pasha to give support to the counter coup of 1909 (March 31 incident), by providing a so called Eastern Army, which might have been created among the Hamidian tribal regiments, as a way to counteract against the Army of Action (*Hareket Ordusu*).³³

Hüseyin Pasha did not act against the new CUP government and this local witness seems to be correct in his statement, because Hüseyin Pasha later emphasized in a

³⁰ Osman Aytar, *Hamidiye Alaylarından Köy Koruculuğuna* (İstanbul: Medya Güneşi, 1992), p. 132.

³¹ Hüseyin Pasha lost vision in one eye because of cataracts. Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

³² Klein, *Ibid*, p. 159.

³³ Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

letter how he had pledged his loyalty to the constitution clear during the counterrevolution of 1909:

I have promised to protect the Constitution with my all family and tribe and with the very last drop of my blood, and I can even prove that I expressed my loyalty in a telegram sent on the day of the incident of March 31.³⁴

Hüseyin Pasha continued to attempt to ameliorate his relations with the government up until his arrest in Van in August 1909; after this, however, he was quickly released.³⁵ An Armenian representative (*murahhas*) complained about his release, but this did nothing to affect the order.³⁶ Although the government was attempting to reduce the power of the Hamidians, they were also acting carefully: a direct order to destroy his power might have created chaos among the Kurds, and this may be why the government released him after only a few months. However, Hüseyin Pasha's arrest likely affected him, and so he began to make plans to cross the border. The Armenian Patriarchate informed the central government that "Hüseyin Pasha gathered people in Karakilise. They have plans against the new regime and have used negative words against the Constitution".³⁷ The government's answer to this was to claim that it was an exaggeration on the part of the Patriarchate, and to reiterate that the region was under control.³⁸ In the meantime, Hüseyin Pasha fled to Iran with Emin Pasha, Hacı Timur Pasha, Muhammed Sadık Pasha, and Mustafa Pasha, who

³⁴ BOA, BEO 3749/281157- (1910): "Öteden beri şân-ı şevketimizi temin edeceği muhakkak olan meşrutiyetimizi muhâfazaya kendi ve evlâd-ı tyallerim bilcümle rüfeka ve aşiretimle kanımın son damlasına kadar hizmet edeceğimi yemin ile telif etmiş ve semeresi olarak 31 Mart hadise-i zâilesinde Van telgrafhanesi vasıtasıyla keşide ettiğim telgraf ve buna mukabil aldığım teşekkürnâme ile isbat edebilirim".

³⁵ BOA, DH.MUİ. 122/21- (1909).

³⁶ BOA, DH.MKT. 2894/95- (1909).

³⁷ BOA, DH.TMIK.M. 274/57- (1908).

³⁸ BOA, DH.TMIK.M. 274/57- (1908).

were the most powerful of the Heyderan leaders but all cousin rivals to one another.³⁹

Hüseyin Pasha crossed the border and sought asylum from the Khan of Maku, staying there between December 1909 and May 1910.

Hüseyin Pasha began to take advantage of “borderland politics” defecting to the other state in order to deal with the other government(s).⁴⁰ He stressed how the governor of Erzurum, Celal Bey, was the primary reason for his crossing the border. However, it seems that the pasha really went to Iran to bargain between the Russian and Ottoman Empires. According to Lazarev, Hüseyin Pasha told the Russians that if a deal could be struck between the Russians and the Kurds, he would offer to rule all the Kurdish lands for the Russian state.⁴¹ Abak also mentions that the Russians corresponded directly with Hüseyin Pasha, offering him and some of his men a place to stay in the northern Caucasus. In Abak’s view, the Russians were afraid to ally with someone as powerful as Hüseyin Pasha, and therefore offered him only a small place to live considerably away from the Ottoman border.⁴² The Ottomans also learned that Hüseyin Pasha was making plans with the Russians.⁴³ Celal Bey warned the government that, in Erzurum, “there is a Russian official working and he receives more money than the consul. All he does is travel, and it seems that he has been appointed for a special task on the Kurds”.⁴⁴ The Armenian patriarch also warned the central government that “the Kurds have a major plan in the region against the

³⁹ Klein, *Ibid*, p. 159.

⁴⁰ Klein, *Ibid*, p. 156–157.

⁴¹ Cited in Aytar, *Ibid*, p. 260.

⁴² Abak, *Ibid*.

⁴³ BOA, DH.MUI 26/14-1- (1910).

⁴⁴ BOA, DH.MUI 67/60- (1910).

Ottoman state, and the government must act to stop this process”.⁴⁵ It seems that the Armenian leadership also feared that the Kurdish leaders might have allied with the Russians in the region. In any case, however, Hüseyin Pasha did understand that the Russians would not give him the power that he wanted, as, in May 1910, he sent a petition to the Ottoman government that reads as follows:

I received correspondence from the Fourth Army that Emin Pasha, Timur Pasha, the other chiefs, and I were invited to Ottoman lands, with the conditions to be arranged. It was decided by the government that, if there is a land that has been earned, the decision will be left to the council of state [*Şûrâ-yı Devlet*], our rank and titles will not be revoked, and our confiscated lands will be returned. It cannot be denied that, at the time of the rightful Constitution, this act deserves gratitude. With legal land titles, I have the right to make my own decisions on these lands. However, if there is land that has been earned illegally, I leave the decision to the Council of State. My conscience forces me to mention that, for a few piasters of taxes, I was put into such a condition as to have to leave behind my homeland, my properties, and my family. The governor of Erzurum put my life in danger, and so I left my homeland because of his unfair orders. I have promised to protect the Constitution with my all family and tribe and with the very last drop of my blood, and I can even prove that I expressed my loyalty in a telegram sent on the day of the incident of March 31. I accepted the orders of the state to pay my taxes and debts. However, the governor of Erzurum, Celal Pasha, sent me a telegram stating that there was no option being given by the government to me, and I was told that the decision to come to Ottoman lands was up to me. I have spent my life in service of the state up through this age, and I do not deserve his sentence of expulsion. He claims that I revolted against the state, but I only went to the border to protect my own rights. My forefathers and myself put our lives in service of the state, and we are ready to defend the state wholeheartedly. Though all different peoples received their rights in Ottoman lands through the Constitution, my own rights have been ground under the governor of Erzurum’s foot. He randomly confiscated lands that I had held for 40 years and granted them to others who had no right to them. He claimed that I have 50,000 piasters in debt to the banks, although the government is in 100,000 piasters in debt to me. The government can investigate my case, appointing the members of parliament from Bitlis, Bayazid, and Hakkari. We request that our lawsuits be tried in the military court, not in the civil court, as is appropriate to our military class.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ BOA, BEO 3744/280796- (1910).

⁴⁶ BOA, BEO 3749/281157- (1910).

Once Hüseyin Pasha realized that returning to the Ottoman lands would be preferable, he requested that the government protect and maintain his status, power and prestige similar to once he had during the Hamidian era. He was correct that the governor of Erzurum, Celal Bey, was attempting to limit his activities. Thus, it can be understood that the CUP wanted to keep Hüseyin Pasha and the other Hamidian leaders on their side, despite the fact that Celal Bey believed that he should not be readmitted. On this topic, the governor of Erzurum and the leaders of the Fourth Army held opposing views as Celal Bey shares:

I agree with the statement of the *mutasarrıf* of Bayazid not to invite Hüseyin Pasha, because he wants to make a deal with the government to increase his prestige. Therefore, the marshal of the Fourth Army and the class of civil servants (*mülkiye*) should act together, not against each other.⁴⁷

Celal Bey's position can be seen as a representation of the CUP rule: he did not waver in his ideas even when the government itself decided to invite Hüseyin Pasha back to Ottoman lands, and he calls the pasha and his men as "rats" and does not expect that they will be useful to the state.⁴⁸ He also wrote to the central government in reply to the accusations that Hüseyin Pasha made against him:

Hüseyin Pasha had in fact forcefully taken lands from other people, and that is why these lands were confiscated. He was lying when he said that I blocked him from returning to the Ottoman lands. This is his own politics that he is using to regain prestige.⁴⁹

Celal Bey's ideas were even more concrete than this, as he offered to completely abolish the Hamidian tribes:

⁴⁷ BOA, DH.MUI. 26/14- (1910).

⁴⁸ BOA, BEO 3742/280577-52- (1910).

⁴⁹ BOA, DH.MUI. 26/14-23- (1910).

There are 18 regiments, but in reality only 4 or 5 can properly be established. Annually, they cost the government 18,000 liras. Rather than being a benefit, they were dangerous for the state. The tribal people need to be rescued from this structure, and they should be transformed into ordinary Ottoman villagers. We can protect the border with the royal army and the gendarmerie.⁵⁰

The CUP's most prominent mission was in line with Celal Pasha's recommendation, but the government was waiting for the most opportune time to act. Therefore, Abak is right in that the CUP government, at some point, returned to the policies of the Hamidian era since the Hamidian tribal regiments were not abolished but their numbers were reduced and the name of the institution was changed.⁵¹ The government still needed the tribe's military power and, what is more, Hüseyin Pasha still had the potential to organize a large revolt against the Ottomans using the region's various tribes.⁵² The government also knew that Hüseyin Pasha could have allied with the Bedirhanis and Simko Şikak if the government did not bring him to the Ottoman side. The government, therefore, gave Hüseyin Pasha one month to cross the border in May 1910 and, during this period, he went to Van, since his relations with Celal Bey were not good. According to McDowall, the government did not simply invite him to the Ottoman side but sent a group of people under the supervision of Sayyid Muhammed Sadiq to entice Hüseyin Pasha to Van.⁵³ The foreign consuls and the Armenian Patriarchate complained that the governor of Van

⁵⁰ BOA, DH.MUİ. 26/14-34- (1910).

⁵¹ Mehmet Mer Sunar, "Doğu Anadolu ve Kuzey Irak'ta Osmanlı Devleti ve Aşiretler: II. Abdülhamid'den II. Meşrutiyet'e" *Kebikeç*, vol. 1 (2000), p. 126. Tribal Regiments (*Aşiret Alayları*) and Tribal Reserve Cavalries (*Aşiret İhtiyat Süvarileri*) were some of the names used to refer to the regiments during the CUP era.

⁵² BOA, DH.MUİ. 26/3- (1910).

⁵³ McDowall, *A Modern History*, p. 96-99.

had greeted Hüseyin Pasha warmly.⁵⁴ The support of the government for the Armenians in the region was lost in practice although the CUP leaders kept close connections with the Armenian leadership.⁵⁵ However, the tribal leaders had to be kept under control. In 1910, the Armenian Patriarchate requested that the Hamidian regiments be abolished, but the government stated, “it is currently impossible to abolish the Hamidian regiments, but it is possible to reduce their numbers”.⁵⁶ Therefore, the CUP government only re-named the Hamidian tribal regiments as “tribal regiments” (*Aşiret Alayları*) in 1910⁵⁷ and villagers who complained and petitioned about Hüseyin Pasha did not receive support from the Porte. It was a period during which the CUP rule preferred to temporarily return to Hamidian policies that would last until 1916.

7. 4 Hüseyin Pasha during World War I

Although Hüseyin Pasha and the other Heyderan leaders returned to their lands, their power was actively limited and they were never able to return to the conditions that they had enjoyed during the reign of Abdulhamid II. Having lost most of his control over Erciş and Adilcevaz, Hüseyin Pasha stayed in Patnos. As a result, the Armenian Patriarchate lodged another complaint in 1913 to the government concerning the Pasha’s activities: “Patnos is an Armenian homeland. Although the lands were given to the Armenians, they were taken again by Hüseyin Pasha, who burned Armenian hay, seized sheep, and constructed buildings from the stones of Armenian

⁵⁴ BOA, DH.MUİ. 63/25.37- (1910). Most of the Heyderan chiefs returned to the Ottoman lands with few exceptions: BOA, DH.MUİ 276/15- (1910).

⁵⁵ Kaligian, *Armenian Organization*, p. 102-103.

⁵⁶ BOA, BEO 3742/280577- (1910).

⁵⁷ Kodaman, “Hamidiye Hafif Süvari Alayları”, p. 476.

churches”.⁵⁸ The head of Patnos (*müdüür*) replied to these accusations on Pasha’s behalf, stating that

Hüseyin Pasha did not burn the hay and he has no connection with the seizure of the animals. Manof Agha⁵⁹ has been warned before not to leave his animals out in public. That’s why his animals were taken. And Hüseyin Pasha’s buildings are on his own lands.⁶⁰

It seems that Hüseyin Pasha still engaged in notorious activities in Patnos with the government supporting him. In the same month, the Armenian patriarch also warned the government that “Hüseyin Pasha is distributing guns to the tribal men and the Armenian people are terrified of his activities”.⁶¹ In August 1913, *Mirliva* Hüseyin Pasha received a Mejjidi medal of the third rank for his unknown activities in Ebeğe and Erciş.⁶² It was the governor of Van who had proposed to the central government that Hüseyin Pasha be rewarded, saying that, “in order to encourage the other tribal leaders, Hüseyin Pasha should be given a decoration”.⁶³ The Ottoman documents do not clearly describe how exactly Hüseyin Pasha had been useful in the border region of Ebeğe and in Erciş, but it seems most likely that the Pasha received the medal for suppressing Armenian revolutionary activities because the document described that he “protected and secured” these regions.⁶⁴ He did not participate in the Kurdish uprising in Bitlis in 1914 and this may have been the reason why the governor of

⁵⁸ BOA, DH.EUM.EMN. 30/43- (1913).

⁵⁹ Agha was not limited only to the Kurdish chiefs but some Armenian leaders were also referred as chief (Agha).

⁶⁰ BOA, DH.EUM. EMN. 30/43-8- (1913).

⁶¹ BOA, DH.EUM.EMN 30/43-45- (1913).

⁶² BOA, İ.TAL. 484/55- (1913). Actually he received 3rd degree Mejjidi in 1898, but in this document it is stated that it was re-given in 1913. This indicates that it had been taken from him.

⁶³ BOA, DH.KMS 3/38- (1913).

⁶⁴ BOA, DH.KMS 3/38- (1913).

Van wanted to keep Hüseyin Pasha away from the movement.⁶⁵ The government exerted some effort in keeping Hüseyin Pasha on its side during this period, as investigations into his affairs were halted and his tax debt was deferred in 1914.⁶⁶

Hüseyin Pasha's movements were often scrutinized by the CUP government, but this was more so in 1914, before the World War I began.⁶⁷ According to Lazarev, Hüseyin Pasha attempted to reach a compromise with the Russians, offering them his services by making contact with the Russian deputy consul in Bayazid and Van.⁶⁸ In May 1914, the Ottoman consul to Khoi and Salmas warned the government that Hüseyin Pasha was still in close relations with the Russian consuls in the region.⁶⁹ Although Lazarev points out that Hüseyin Pasha had even proposed a Kurdish-Armenian alliance under Russian rule, however, he did not accept such offer made by Kamil Bedirhan Pasha, and in fact forwarded Bedirhan's secret letter to the governor of Erzurum. In this letter, Kamil Bedirhan proposed to Hüseyin Pasha that he cross over to the Russian side, and act against the Ottoman state.⁷⁰ According to the Kurdish poet Cigerxwîn, Hüseyin Pasha's reply to Kamil Bedirhan was harsh: "You are not the son of Bedirhan Pasha. If you were, you would not put the honor of Islam beneath the feet of infidel soldiers".⁷¹ According to the poet, Hüseyin Pasha came to regret these words after he fled to Syria in 1929 to take part in the Khoybun

⁶⁵ Tibet Abak, "Rus Arşiv Belgelerinde Bitlis isyanı (1914)" *Toplumsal Tarih Dergisi* (Nisan, 2011).

⁶⁶ BOA, DH.ŞFR. 440/90- (1914) and BOA, DH.ŞFR 45/69- (1914).

⁶⁷ BOA, DH.KMS 21/23- (1914): According to the document, Hüseyin Pasha and Hüseyin Bey from Takori tribe communicated with the Russian consul. Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası*, p. 458: the Ottoman minister of war mentioned that Russian-Kurdish alliance was possible.

⁶⁸ Aytar, *Ibid*, p. 260.

⁶⁹ BOA, DH.ŞFR 40/151- (1914).

⁷⁰ BOA, DH.ŞFR 453/111- (1914).

⁷¹ Kemal Süphandağ, *Hamidiye Alayları, Ağrı Kürt Direnişi ve Zilan Katliamı* (İstanbul, Peri, 2012), p. 289.

movement in 1929. In his reply, Hüseyin Pasha may have used religious discourse, but in fact he was a very pragmatic person. He most likely thought that the Russians would not be a better choice for him. When the War began, Hüseyin Pasha remained on the Ottoman side and the Heyderan tribe was recruited into the 3rd Army's 3rd regiment as a reserve cavalry division.⁷² According to Hüseyin Pasha's son, Mehmed Bey, the Pasha protected the bridge of Karmuş in Ahlat and, in this way; the Ottoman army was able to cross the bridge, though Hüseyin Pasha's unit suffered many casualties.⁷³ Although it has been stated that Hüseyin Pasha stopped the Russians in the Karakilise region for a short period of time,⁷⁴ according to the Directorate of Security Deputy Director (*Emniyet-i Umumiye Genel Müdür Vekili*) Ahmet Sait, "although the Heyderan tribe had a strength of 20 to 30,000 men, Hüseyin Pasha and his tribe did nothing and even left their hold in Kılıç Gediği without firing a bullet".⁷⁵ According to Lazarev, when the Russians reached the upper Van region, Hüseyin Pasha immediately offered to work with them. Although no available sources prove Lazarev's assertion regarding the arrest of Hüseyin Pasha, Lazarev shares that Hüseyin was arrested and scheduled for a court martial in military court.⁷⁶ However, the available sources and local oral sources suggest that Hüseyin Pasha had never been arrested and stayed as an ally in the Ottoman side during the Russian expeditions into the region.

⁷² Mehmet Evsile, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nda Kafkas Cephesi'nde Aşiret Mensuplarından Oluşturulan Milis Birlikleri" *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi* (Ankara, 1996), p. 911–926.

⁷³ Süphandağ, *Ibid*, p. 287.

⁷⁴ Süphandağ, *Ibid*, p. 291.

⁷⁵ BOA, DH.EUM.KLH. 4/7- (1917). According to Mayevsky, Kılıçgediği was the best road connecting Erzurum to the Van region, and was therefore an important passage from Eleşkirt to Tutak and then Erciş. Mayevsriy, *ibid*, p. 70.

⁷⁶ Aytar, *Ibid*, p. 141.

In 1917, he was exiled from the region together with his tribe after their exodus from the Russian army. According to Aytar, during the war, the General Directorate for Settlement secretly decided to obstruct any possible agreement between the Kurdish tribes, the Armenians and Russians.⁷⁷ Thus, in March 1917, Hüseyin Pasha and the Heyderan tribe had already left the region, not to return until July 1919. In 1918 the Pasha had petitioned the government to return, a request which the government declined.⁷⁸ Hüseyin Pasha and the powerful Kurdish leaders in the region had already lost their status in the eyes of the CUP regime especially when the Russians retreated from the region because of the Russian Revolution. As mentioned above, the government had long sought the right time to remove them from power. The government and the local governors prioritized this case and the Ottoman archival documents present the assimilation policies that were going to be applied when the proper time came.

Meanwhile, the Ottoman archival resources do not present enough information to give a clear indication of the role that the Heyderan tribe and Hüseyin Pasha played in 1915. Although Hüseyin Pasha was the most prestigious figure in the upper region of Lake Van, there was only one Ottoman document available concerning him in the Ottoman Prime Ministerial Archive. In March 1915, a secret message was sent from internal affairs to the governor of Van, Cevdet Bey, stating that:

the Armenians might have a secret agreement with the Kurds. The activities of Kamil Bedirhan prove this. You must be very careful. Hüseyin Pasha and others like him must be investigated closely. If they act together with the Armenians, immediately take measures and arrest them.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Aytar, *Ibid*, p. 157.

⁷⁸ BOA, DH.EUM.KLH. 4/7-4- (1918). They probably left the region in late 1916 when the Russians captured Eleşkirt and Karakilise.

⁷⁹ BOA, DH.ŞFR. 51/14- (1915).

In the government's eyes, it was possible that Hüseyin Pasha had offered his service to the Russians and this was why the government sought him under surveillance in 1915. Some locals asserted that Hüseyin Pasha protected the local Armenians and, later, when the government warned him, he also supported the state army during the deportation of Armenian villagers in the Adilcevaz and Erciş districts on April 19-20, 1915. James Bryce and Toynbee also pointed out that Hüseyin Pasha, Abdülmecid Bey of the Sepki tribe and Hacı Musa Bey of Khoyti acted together with the local Ottoman governors to massacre the Armenian subjects in 1916.⁸⁰ Reymond Kevorkian, on the other hand, makes unclear statement that Hüseyin Pasha and the other Heyderan leaders were close to the Armenians.⁸¹

The war years brought devastation to tribal people and their families too. One of Hüseyin Pasha's nephews, Tahir Agha, the son of Hacı Temir Pasha, was executed in the Sarısu region by Armenian militants on their way to Erciş, which had been conquered by the Russian and Armenian forces in June 1915.⁸² According to oral historical sources, the members of the Heyderan tribes escaped from the Russian and Armenian military forces and were victimized by their attacks. They referred to the year of 1915 as "the year that mothers threw their babies [to survive]" [*Sala dîya weledê xwe davêt*].⁸³ Also, Muhammed Sıddık Bey, a Heyderan chief in Ebeğe, was murdered in Arin Village (Göldüzü) in Adilcevaz while he was trying to cross to the

⁸⁰ James Bryce ve Arnold Toynbee, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Ermenilere Yapılan Muamele, 1915-1916* (London: Gomidas, 2009), p. 119.

⁸¹ Raymond Kevorkian, *The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History* (New York, Tauris, 2011), p. 655.

⁸² Törehan Serdar, "Adilcevaz'ın Milli Mücadele'deki Yeri" *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi*, vol. 12, no. 35 (Temmuz 1996), p. 541.

⁸³ DüNDAR, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, p. 399. Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

inner Ottoman provinces with his family members to escape the Russian and Armenian attacks.⁸⁴ Therefore, some members of Heyderan tribe still consider that the war years victimized their ancestors because of the Russian invasion to the region.

After 1917, Hüseyin was deported from Siverek to Konya. He was not given any duties between 1917 and 1919 and was rarely paid by the government. According to Hüseyin Pasha's grandson Süphandağ, the Pasha stood against the government's orders and that was the reason for his exile.⁸⁵ However, the documents do not confirm his suggestions since Hüseyin Pasha did not stand against the Ottoman government, he possibly perpetrated violence during the deportation and their exile was part of the CUP's Turkification process, which were applied against most of the powerful chiefs of the region.

7. 5 Exile and the Assimilation Policy of the CUP Government, 1917 to 1919

After the Russian invasion in the Ottoman eastern provinces in 1916, Hüseyin Pasha and other Heyderan chiefs allied with the Ottomans and escaped to Adıyaman and Siverek in March 1917. Since many Heyderan men had died in the war, the tribe had many orphaned children, and the CUP government ordered a school to be opened in order to "Turkify" them.⁸⁶ The Heyderan tribe was recruited in April, and Hüseyin Pasha and some of his men were ordered to settle in Konya. Some of Emin Pasha's

⁸⁴ Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

⁸⁵ Süphandağ, *Büyük Osmanlı Entrikası*, p. 280–300.

⁸⁶ Uğur Ümit Üngör, *Young Turk Social Engineering: Mass Violence and the Nation State in Eastern Turkey- 1913–1950* (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 2009), p. 224.

family members were also settled in Adana.⁸⁷ Talat Pasha's writings to the governor of Diyarbakır on May 1916 reveal the CUP government's mission concerning the tribes:

It is absolutely not permissible to send the Kurdish refugees to southern regions such as Urfa or Zor. Because they would either Arabize or preserve their nationality there and thus remain a useless and [even] harmful element, the intended objective would not be achieved, and therefore the deportation and settlement of these refugees need to be carried out as follows. Turkish refugees and Turkified city dwellers should be deported to the regions of Urfa, Maraş, and Antep and settled there. To stop the Kurdish refugees from pursuing their tribal life and maintaining their nationality wherever they have been deported, the chiefs must absolutely be separated from the common people, and all influential personalities and leaders must be sent separately to the provinces of Konya and Kastamonu and to the districts of Niğde and Kayseri. The sick, the elderly, and single and poor women and children who are unable to travel will be settled and supported in the town of Maden and the counties of Ergani and Behremaz, to be dispersed into Turkish villages and among the Turks [...] Correspondence will be conducted with the final destinations of the deportations, whereas the method of dispersion, how many deportees have been sent where and when, and settlement measures will all be reported to the ministry.⁸⁸

The government thus planned to assimilate the tribal identity of the Heyderan tribe by separating chiefs and dispersing other members of tribe in Turkish or Arab villages. The Heyderan, it must be noted, were not the only tribe to whom the government applied such policies during this period. One of the most powerful tribes in the Muş and Erzurum regions, the Hasenan, was also deported to Siverek. In connection with these deportations, the Swiss missionary Künzler stated, "among the deportees I also saw many high-ranking Kurdish army officers, who had courageously fought the Russians in the field at the outbreak of the war, and who

⁸⁷ BCA, 272-74-67-30-6-1- (1918).

⁸⁸ Üngör, *Ibid*, p. 217–218.

now bitterly perceived the treatment by the Turks as ingratitude”.⁸⁹ Heyderan chiefs and Hüseyin Pasha were probably among some of these high-ranking Kurdish army officers.

The CUP rulers saw that it was necessary to create a safe fatherland in the Anatolian provinces for the survival of Turkish ethnic identity when World War I began. For this purpose, demographic engineering operations were directed against the Greek, Armenian and Kurdish populations. After 1916, the CUP government expelled the Kurdish chiefs and sheiks to the inner Anatolian cities as part of its Turkification and civilizing mission.⁹⁰ The mastermind behind the CUP rule, Ziya Gökalp, saw the tribal nature of the Kurds as a “disease” which needed to be cured; otherwise, they might threaten the survival of a Turkish national identity.⁹¹ The CUP rulers, under the influence of Social-Darwinist positivist ideas, used science, statistics and mapping to legitimize their own assimilation policies.⁹² Thus, the Turkish immigrants were settled in the south-eastern provinces while the Kurdish tribes were settled in western and inner Anatolian cities in small numbers from 1916 onwards.⁹³ The social engineering programme of the CUP government continued from 1916 to 1918 and it was re-applied by the new rulers of the Turkish nation-state after 1925.⁹⁴ Hüseyin Pasha and other Heyderan chiefs became a part of this forced relocation process.

⁸⁹ Üngör, *Ibid*, p. 220.

⁹⁰ Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, p. 399-435.

⁹¹ Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, p. 402.

⁹² Dündar, *Modern Türkiye'nin Şifresi*, p. 430-432.

⁹³ Dündar, *Ibid*.

⁹⁴ Deportation after 1925 was limited to the head of tribe and did not include the ordinary members of Heyderan tribe.

When Hüseyin Pasha was in Adıyaman, the government developed a major plan relating to him and his tribe. The following was written by Talat Pasha to the province of Urfa in March 1917: “Hüseyin Pasha should be removed as the head of his tribe and he should be driven to a suitable place to be disciplined”.⁹⁵ Another document also states that “in order to reduce his prestige and power, Hüseyin Pasha should not be allowed to return to his place of origin”⁹⁶ and “he should be tried in military court or his family and tribe should be divided up and settled in separate places. In this way, the region will be freed from Hüseyin Pasha”.⁹⁷ The General Directorate of Security asked the opinion of the governor of Urfa in March 1917:

After dispersing the tribe and appointing a person who has close relations with the government, we can settle the tribe in Turkish and Arab villages. In a few years the Heyderan tribe will no longer exist. We should act now because it will be difficult to do this after the war ends.⁹⁸

Later on September 1917, Talat Pasha continued:

This is the most proper time to act, and it will be difficult to apply this process after the war ends. In this way, the government will have more control over the tribe. In place of Hüseyin Pasha, the government should appoint another person, one who is close to the government.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ BOA, DH.ŞFR. 74/267- (1917): “Mahrem ve mahsusdur: Kürt aşâiri rüesasından Haydaranlı Kör Hüseyin Paşa'nın aşireti efradıyla beraber Hısn-ı Mansurdan [Adıyaman] Urfa cihetine geçtiği bildiriliyor. Hüseyin Paşa ve maiyeti halkı devr-i sâbıkda yaptıkları şekâvet ve şenâiyetle maruf olduğu gibi Harb-i Umumiden evvel ve sonar bir takım münasebetsiz ahvâl ve harekâtıyla tanınmış ve aşireti efradını dab u harekâtına alet ettiği anlaşılmıştır. Mümaileyh aşireti başından alınarak münasib bir mahale tebedi hakkındaki mütalaanız serien ibnâsı”.

⁹⁶ BOA, DH.ŞFR. 551/7- (1917).

⁹⁷ BOA, DH.EUM.KLH. 4/7- (1917).

⁹⁸ BOA, DH.EUM.KLH. 4/7-10- (1917).

⁹⁹ BOA, DH.ŞFR. 75/79- (1917): “Kör Hüseyin Paşa aşiretinin başında reis sıfatıyla orada kaldıkça rüesasıyla tesis-i münâsebet ettikçe harbden sonrasi için daha ziyade variddir. [erased] hazırasından istifade edebilmek aşiretinin başından çekilmesi ve yerine hükümete bağlı daha muti ve merbut [erased] getirilmesi muvafık olur. Şimdiye kadar harbde hiç bir muvaffakiyet göstermeyen ve mine'l kadim ve hayatları daima [erased] kurtulmayan mezkur aşiret üzerinden haris, müfsid bu şahsın nüfuzu ref edildikten sonra kalan [erased] üzerinde istediğini tatbik edebilir. Münasib mahallerde mutasarrıf surette ve kullanılmakla iskân eder[erased] kariyelerine dağıtır ve bunun netice-i tabiisi olarak bir kaç sene sonra da Haydaranlı Aşireti kendiliğinden [erased] bunun yapılabileceği en

As the document describes, the CUP government believed that these were the most suitable conditions within which to apply its assimilation policies on the tribes and efface the possible threat of tribal identities. The governor of Urfa agreed with this idea, replying that “the tribes should be divided up and settled into separate places, but currently the Heyderan tribe has 5,000 followers. Therefore, Hüseyin Pasha should not be touched at the moment”.¹⁰⁰ He also adds that this policy should be applied to the Milan and Karakeçi tribes as well which were the most crowded and powerful tribes of the region in Diyarbekir and Urfa provinces.

Accordingly, Hüseyin Pasha and his followers were divided up and settled in Konya, Afyon,¹⁰¹ and Eskişehir.¹⁰² The Pasha and some of his family members were also offered settlement in Seydişehir.¹⁰³ It is not clear where exactly in Konya he was settled between 1917 and December 1919, but in September 1917 the governor of Konya mentions that “we are in the process of settling the tribes. They were separated from each other in suitable ways. Hüseyin Pasha was settled in a separate place away from his tribal members”.¹⁰⁴ The government was worried that the Heyderan tribe might join up with other tribes in the Urfa region, and this was why they were not allowed to settle in Adıyaman, Siverek, or Urfa. Instead, a Turkish-

müsâid zaman ise asıl bu sıralardır. Harbden sonra muhitini etrafa [erased] mücavir aşâirler tesisi münasib ideek ve bittabii şimdiki hallerine [one word illegible] bir kat daha kesb-i kuvvet [erased] [after the war] bunları ne birleştirmek ve ne de dağıtmak kabil olamaz. Olsa bile şimdi ittihâz olunacak tedâbir [erased] katiyen kağı gelmez. Binaenaleyh merkum Hüseyin Paşa'nın aynı cibilliyet ve istidâdda bulunan [erased] ile beraber orada ve aşireti başından kaldırılması lazımdır”.

¹⁰⁰ BOA, DH.ŞFR. 551/7- (1917).

¹⁰¹ BOA, BEO 4582/343591- (1919).

¹⁰² BOA, DH.KMS. 55/2.12- (1919).

¹⁰³ BOA, DH.ŞFR. 102/60- (1919).

¹⁰⁴ BOA, DH.ŞFR. 564/52- (1917).

populated region was considered to be a more suitable place allowing control and suppression of this prestigious and powerful chief of the Heyderan tribe. The government believed that members of Heyderan might react negatively if Hüseyin Pasha were to be imprisoned so, instead, they ordered the tribe to be scattered among Turkish-populated areas and, thus, keep Hüseyin Pasha isolated from his men. During this period, Hüseyin Pasha was due some small payments on account of his rank and title.¹⁰⁵ However, it seems that the government did not pay this salary regularly, because petitions in this regard were sent to Istanbul on Pasha's behalf. In May 1919, the Major General Ali Rıza Pasha wrote that,

in the war, Hüseyin Pasha sacrificed an important part of his tribal power for the sake of the state. Because of the final disaster, he lost his goods and properties and came to Konya. And he was unable to receive his salary.¹⁰⁶

The governor of Adana also wrote to the Porte that the family of Abdullah Bey, brother of Emin Pasha, had suffered an economic crisis and their monthly payments of 1,200 *kuruş* was not enough to cover the needs of their nineteen family members.¹⁰⁷ In 1918, Hüseyin Pasha also requested permission from the government to return to his home region, but this request was not accepted until August 1919.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, their forced settlement and dispersion in separate villages put the chiefs and ordinary members of tribes under poor conditions.

¹⁰⁵ BOA, DH.ŞFR. 91/247- (1918).

¹⁰⁶ BOA, BEO 4578/343287- (1919).

¹⁰⁷ BCA, 272-74-67-30-6-1- (1918).

¹⁰⁸ BOA, İ.DUİT. 118/81- (1919).

7. 6 Heyderans in the Post-War Years

After the leaders of the CUP government fled the country in late 1918, the new government allowed Hüseyin Pasha to return to his place of origin during the armistice years. According to one Ottoman document written in July 1919 by the General Directorate for Settlement to the governor of Konya,

Hüseyin Pasha remained loyal to the government during the war and served the state with his tribe. Since he was in a bad situation economically, the request made on his behalf has been approved, and he may go to his homeland with his cousins.¹⁰⁹

Some other members of Heyderan and Zilan tribes also petitioned the government to defend their territories against the Armenian army if the government would allow their return to their homeland.¹¹⁰ Some documents state that Hüseyin Pasha visited Istanbul in June 1918 before he left for his homeland with ten thousand people who were still in Konya at that time.¹¹¹ Another document also shows that the government helped the members of the Heyderan tribe who were forced to settle in Konya to return to their native lands.¹¹² The conclusion one may come to is that the government had probably made a deal with Hüseyin Pasha to defend its eastern provinces before their release.

Some studies suggest that Hüseyin Pasha was sent to his home region through Sivas, with the support of Britain and the government of Ferit Pasha, in order to organize

¹⁰⁹ BOA, İ.DUİT. 118/81- (1919).

¹¹⁰ BOA, İ.DUİT. 18/51- (1919).

¹¹¹ BCA, 272-00-00-74-67-29-3- (1918). BCA, 272-14-75-21-6-3- (1919).

¹¹² BCA, 272-14-78-42-7- (1918).

the Kurds and Armenians against Mustafa Kemal's movement.¹¹³ Hüseyin Pasha was provided with economic support by the government and went to Sivas with 4,000 men.¹¹⁴ Although Mustafa Kemal had close connections with the Kurdish tribal leaders after this period, he did not have direct contact with Hüseyin Pasha. The orders concerning Hüseyin Pasha and the Heyderan tribe seem to have gone into abeyance now and the assumption that Hüseyin Pasha had been sent to the region to organize the Kurds and Armenians does not seem especially strong, because Hüseyin Pasha subsequently fought against the Armenians in the region.¹¹⁵ Between 1919 and 1920, large numbers of Heyderan cavalries under the leadership of Hüseyin Pasha joined Kazım Karabekir's units in the attacks in Kars and Gyumri.¹¹⁶ Also, Hasan Sıddık Heyderani, the nephew of Hüseyin Pasha joined the Erzurum and Sivas Congress, and represented the Heyderan community and Van province.¹¹⁷

Relations between the Heyderan chiefs and the new rulers of the Republic of Turkey were mostly peaceful until 1925. Hüseyin and his sons stayed in separate villages in the area between Adilcevaz to Patnos, and it seems that they still held some prestige in the region, but were not as powerful as they had been during the Hamidian era.¹¹⁸ Hüseyin Pasha offered a bid in the annual auction of barley and received it in

¹¹³ Cited in Aytar, *Ibid*, p. 260-261.

¹¹⁴ BOA, BEO 4582/343591- (1919). BOA, DH.ŞFR 102/60- (1919). And BOA, DH.KMS 55/2.12- (1919).

¹¹⁵ Süphandağ, *Ibid*, p. 300. Süphandağ received this information from Garo Sasuni. Or we might suggest that Hüseyin Pasha had to ally with Kazım Karabekir Pasha against the Armenians since the Porte had no power in eastern provinces anymore.

¹¹⁶ Garo Sasoni, *Kürt Ulusal Hareketleri*, p. 256.

¹¹⁷ Süphandağ, *Hamidiye Alayları, Ağrı Kürt Direnişi*, p. 312.

¹¹⁸ Süphandağ, *Hamidiye Alayları, Ağrı Direnişi*, p. 340.

1920.¹¹⁹ Hasan Sıddık Heyderani was elected by the Van province, and became a member of the Grand National Assembly until 1924.¹²⁰ It seems that Hüseyin Pasha was hesitant to join the Great National Assembly in Ankara and instead, Hasan Sıddık Heyderani became a member of parliament between 1920 and 1924, because a document referred to him as “Hüseyin Bey who was elected as a member to the Grand National Assembly”.¹²¹ One might assert that Hüseyin Pasha did not trust the new government in Ankara or did not want to be fully integrated into the new state structure because he wanted to continue to pursue independent authority in his indigenous territories. Perhaps he believed that being a member of the parliament might have passified him both politically and economically. However, there is also a possibility that he thought he would be chosen to represent Bayezid province, as his place of residence, Patnos, was administered from Bayezid. Kazım Karabekir, the commander of the Eastern Army, noted in his book that there was competition over becoming a member of the parliament in the Bayezid province. While the local notables and tribal chiefs wanted to choose a person native to Bayezid Province, the representatives of Ankara supported a centrally appointed person.¹²² We know that this discussion became very important in Ankara too. In 1922, some members of the parliament, who were against Mustafa Kemal, offered a new code that if a candidate did not live in a place up to five years, they could not be nominated for the members

¹¹⁹ Feridun Süphandağ, Interviewed by Erdal Çiftçi, Ankara, October 22, 2017.

¹²⁰ BCA, 30-10-4-23-13- (1920).

¹²¹ BCA, 30-10-4-13-13- (1920): “*Büyük Millet Meclisi azalığına intihab olunan Haydaran Aşireti rüesâsından Hüseyin Bey*”.

¹²² Kazım Karabekir, *Kürt Meselesi*, ed. Faruk Özerengin (İstanbul: Emre, 1994), p. 63: “*Kürt mebusu çıkarmakta musır bulunan Bayezid Livası dâhilindeki bazı eşhas*”.

of parliament.¹²³ However, this offer was not accepted, and probably the centrally appointed government agencies did not want Hüseyin Pasha to become a member of the parliament. Although it was suggested above that Hüseyin Pasha probably did not even want to join the new government in Ankara, according to some reports, Hüseyin Pasha sometimes visited Ankara.¹²⁴ Therefore, although we do not have any specific information as to why the chiefs of the Heyderan did not fully join the new state structure, this might be the result of center-periphery conflicts over the authority of power.

Kazım Karabekir shares important insights in regards to the newly developed nation-state policies against the tribal chiefs and tribesmen at the time. Since the new state rulers began to re-establish the implementation of state policies, there was an important question over the nature of relations between the State and the tribes in the East. According to Karabekir, there should no longer be a centralized authority of tribal power, and therefore, the mediating role of the chiefs had to be abolished in order to civilize the tribesmen and integrate them into the citizenship of the new state of Turkey.¹²⁵ He offered that the state should use various tools to integrate tribal subjects, such as the education of the tribesmen, the building of roads, sedentarization, recruitment in the military, and enforcing direct control of tribal

¹²³ Cemil Koçak, “Siyasal Tarih 1923-1950” in *Türkiye Tarihi 4: Çağdaş Türkiye 1908-1980*, ed. Sina Akşin (İstanbul, Cem, 1997), p. 89.

¹²⁴ Karabekir, *Kürt Meselesi*, p. 60- 61: For the deputy commander of the Eastern Front, Ali Said, Hüseyin Pasha was in Ankara in 1923 together with Şevket Bey, who is member of the parliament from Bayezid Province: “*Bu işlerde [Choosing a local member of parliament] Ankara’da bulunan Kör Hüseyin Paşa’nın ve Bayezid Mebusu Şevket Bey gibi diğer muhalif mebusların alakadar olduğunu tahmin etmekteyim*”.

¹²⁵ Karabekir, *Kürt Meselesi*, p. 45, 54: “*Kürdistan’da takip olunacak dâhili siyasette rüesayı lüzumsuz himaye etmeyerek aşiret fertleriyle bila vasıta temasa ve resmi müracaatlarda reisin tavassutunu kabul etmemek mühimdir. Bu suretle kendisini reisin zulmünden kurtaran, ona hayat ve saadet veren bir hükümet ve idareye karşı teveccüh ve mutavaatları (itimatları) artacağı bedihidir*”. “*Kürdistan’ın ve Kürtlerin temeddünü için*”.

subjects in order to break the collective political/military power of the tribes.¹²⁶ He clearly pointed out that protection of tribal agencies might become dangerous for the State.¹²⁷ However, Karabekir offered that the pacification and destruction of the collective tribal identities must progress gradually (*kâide-i tedrici*).¹²⁸ For him, the Turkish government had to be careful in terms of how it integrated the tribesmen into a state system with direct rule. When we consider Karabekir's suggestions, it is clear that the power holders of the State did not implement a transitional period, because the Kurdish rebellions were on their way, spreading among the tribal and religious class.

Although Hasan Sıddık had close ties to Mustafa Kemal Pasha, he realized that relations between the government and tribes will only get worse and he eventually fled to Iran in 1924.¹²⁹ In 1925, the members of a Kurdish nationalist organization called *Azadi* (Freedom), Halit Bey from the Cibran tribe and Yusuf Ziya (Koçzade) Bey, who was also a member of parliament like Hasan Sıddık, were hanged by the government as a result organizing Kurdish national movement. When Halit Bey had been transferred to Bitlis from Erzurum through Patnos, Hüseyin Pasha and his tribal members stayed silent as they did not want to get involved with a national movement against the Turkish government. Also, in 1925, when the Sheikh Said Rebellion began, Hüseyin Pasha stayed neutral after he did not get support of Said Nursi, who

¹²⁶ Karabekir, *Kürt Meselesi*, p. 45-61.

¹²⁷ Karabekir, *Kürt Meselesi*, p. 46: “*Aşiret teşkilatının her ne nam altında olursa olsun temadisi (devam etmesi) bu asırda maddi ve manevi ve dahili ve harici zararlı bir şeydir*”.

¹²⁸ Karabekir, *Kürt Meselesi*, p. 57.

¹²⁹ Fatma Müge Göçek, *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present, and Collective Violence against the Armenians, 1789-2009* (Oxford: Oxford Uni. Press, 2015), p. 547. Cited in Süphandağ, *Hamidiye Alayları*, p. 311-321.

was a prestigious cleric in the region, to ally with the cadre of Sheikh Said.¹³⁰

Nevertheless, all the chiefs of the Heyderan tribe, together with prestigious people from the region, were accused of supporting the Sheikh Said Rebellion and the government deported them in the winter of 1926. The new government in Ankara saw it necessary to eliminate the heads of tribes and Muslim clerics to stop them organizing contingent rebellions against the government. In spite of the fact that many of the deported people were allied with the government or had stayed neutral, the new government sought a way to neutralize the region's powerful prestigious leadership to maintain control and suppress the region. The policies applied in the region were no different from the policies of the CUP government but this time the head of tribes and the religious class were deported from the region for a total elimination of their power.

For a second time, Heyderan chiefs and their family members were exiled to the inner Anatolian cities en masse. While Hüseyin Pasha was sent to Antalya, his sons were settled in Kayseri, Konya, Balıkesir and Manisa.¹³¹ Some confronted economic hardship once again, as evident in the petition of Hüseyin Paşazâde Salih Bey written in 1927.¹³² He had been given a four bedroomed house and the rental incomes of two stores for his nine people in Balıkesir's Balya district. Salih Bey noted that the revenue of one of these stores was cut by the governor and the family members suffered from hunger.¹³³ It is unclear what the government in Ankara did after this

¹³⁰ Abdülkadir Badıllı, *Mufasssal Tarihçe-i Hayat*, vol. 1 (İstanbul: İttihad, 2006), p. 691-695. Said Nursi simply stayed neutral and did not support Sheikh Said Rebellion but he did not declare that he was against the movement.

¹³¹ Süphandağ, *Hamidiye Alayları*, p. 353-355.

¹³² BCA, 272-12-55-140-7- (1927).

¹³³ Yearly income of the two stores' rentals was 100 lira for his petition.

petition but their deportation from their lands, and their complaints indicate that they were living under hard conditions.

Although the government attempted to eliminate the power of the tribes, the chiefs of Heyderan, Zilan, Sepki, Ademan and Khoyti were sent to the same city, Antalya.¹³⁴

It seems that the government did not keep a close surveillance on them since the chiefs planned to rebel against the government after fleeing their lands in the spring. Some documents show that Hüseyin Pasha was allowed to settle in Kayseri with his two sons, Mehmet and Nadir Bey, in 1927.¹³⁵ He complained to the government that the head of the Abandoned Properties Office (*Emvâl-i Metrûke Müdürü*) in Kayseri was preventing them from receiving their properties, which were given to them to make up for their abandoned goods in their homeland. Two mills, two inns (*han*), a hostel and a store were promised to them in return for their properties in the upper Lake Van region.¹³⁶ It seems, however, that Hüseyin Pasha sent this petition in order not to make the government suspicious of his plans before his escape to Syria.

¹³⁴ Süphandağ, *Hamidiye Alayları*, p. 354: Abdülmecit Bey of Sepki, Ahmed İbrahim Agha of Ademan, Ali Beg who was son of mirza agha of Ademan, Resul Bey of Zilan, Hacı Musa Bey of Khoyti were some of those together with Hüseyin Pasha, who were seperated and exiled to Antalya province.

¹³⁵ BCA, 272-11-23-118-36- (1927).

¹³⁶ BCA, 272-11-23-118-36- (1927).

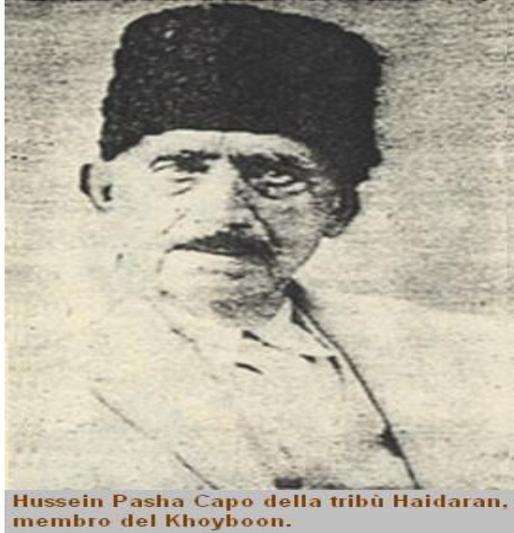


Figure 7. Hüseyin Pasha's photo taken by Khoybun in 1929.

It is not known how Hüseyin Pasha and his sons planned their final escape and what they aimed to do. What is known is that they first escaped to Syria and then met with French bureaucrats to persuade them to help to the Kurdish movement in Bayezid province under the leadership of Khoybun members.¹³⁷ When the offer was rejected, Khoybun assigned them to join the Kurdish nationalist movement which had sprung up in 1926 in Bayezid Province. İhsan Nuri Pasha was the commander of the movement and the main support came from the tribal chiefs of the Kurdish tribes, but the Kurdish league, Khoybun, gave orders to İhsan Nuri and controlled the movement from their headquarters in Damascus and Beirut.¹³⁸ Khoybun was established in 1927 by Bedirhanis, Cemilpaşazades, and other Kurdish nationalists in

¹³⁷ Ahmet Mesut, *İngiliz Belgelerinde Kürdistan* (İstanbul: Doz, 1992), p. 229. Süphandağ, *Hamidiye Alayları*, p. 353-356.

¹³⁸ Silopi (Kadri Cemilpaşa), *Doza Kurdistan*, p. 120-126. İhsan Nuri Paşa, *Ağrı Dağı İsyanı* (İstanbul: Med, 1992).

French occupied Damascus and Beirut and tried to organize Kurdish nationalist movements in eastern Turkey.¹³⁹

The French and British governments did not allow Hüseyin Pasha and his group passage to Northwestern Iran since their relations with the Turkish government were good.¹⁴⁰ Therefore, the group was divided into two: while Hüseyin Pasha's four sons, Mehmet, Nadir, Afit, Yusuf, and a grandson, Süleyman,¹⁴¹ planned to cross from Turkish territories to Mt. Ararat, others, Hüseyin Pasha included, were going to be hosted by the Barzanis in northern Iraq during their passage to the same destination. However, at the final stage, all were killed by the state army or state backed tribal militants except Mehmet and Nadir Bey who survived and joined the movement. In 1929, Hüseyin Pasha, his eldest son, Abdullah Bey, and a grandson were also assassinated by Medeni, a son of Hacı Musa Bey of Khoyti, who was a fugitive at that time and had escaped to the Barzan region. The assassination of Hüseyin Pasha was not clearly identified and we do not know how Medeni planned his plot when Hüseyin Pasha was hosted in Barzanis territories. However, it seems that killing Hüseyin Pasha secured Medeni's forgiveness since he later fled back to the Turkish territories and went on to have close relations with the Turkish state officials until his assassination by Hüseyin Pasha's descendants. Also, Nuh Bey, who was brother of Hacı Musa Bey and uncle of Medeni, was put into death by the Barzani family for their assassination plans against Hüseyin Pasha. According to İhsan Nuri Pasha, the leader of the uprising in 1926 to 1932 in Bayezid province, Hüseyin Pasha became a victim of his own decisions, since for him, the Pasha had mostly sided with the

¹³⁹ Jwaideh, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement*, p. 284-285.

¹⁴⁰ Süphandağ, *Hamidiye Alayları*, p. 353-382.

¹⁴¹ Süleyman was a son of Hüseyin Pasha's oldest son, Abdullah Bey.

Ottoman, CUP and Republican governments. However, he also says that his two sons reversed his notorious prestige because of their involvement with the uprisings.¹⁴²

If Hüseyin Pasha had joined the Mount Ararat Revolt in the Bayezid province, the government might have confronted a more organized rebellion in the region because the Kurdish national movement had already increased its power in 1929-1930. Many chiefs, who had previously been enemies, such as Ferzende Bey of Hasenan,¹⁴³ Hesko Bro Telli of Celali, Halis Agha of Sepki, Mehmet and Nadir Bey of Heyderan gathered under the leadership of İhsan Nuri Pasha during the movement from 1928 to 1930.¹⁴⁴ The movement expanded to encompass the Karakilise, Erciş and Adilcevaz regions.¹⁴⁵ Mehmet and the Nadir brothers and Emin Pasha's sons were assigned to direct the rebellion in their native region.¹⁴⁶ The rebellion was not well organized and, because of disagreements among them, the Turkish army was able to largely suppress the movement in August 1930 in the Erciş region. To a large extent, the government suppressed the movement lastly in Mt. Ararat in September 1930 after obtaining the support of the Iranian government and organizing powerful offensive attacks to the rebels with the help of Turkish airforce.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² İhsan Nuri Pasha, *Ağrı Dağı İsyanı*, p. 55-58.

¹⁴³ For the story of Ferzende Bey check: Metin Yüksel, "On the Borders of the Turkish and Iranian nation-states: the Story of Ferzende and Besra" *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 52/4, p. 656-676.

¹⁴⁴ *Genelkurmay Belgelerinde Kürt İsyanları I* (İstanbul, Kaynak, 2012), p. 495-525. Zinnar Silopi (Kadri Cemilpaşa), *Doza Kurdistan* (İstanbul: Avesta, 2012), p. 131.

¹⁴⁵ *Genelkurmay Belgelerinde*, p. 407-422.

¹⁴⁶ Süphandağ, *Hamidiye Alayları*, p. 371.

¹⁴⁷ "İhata Bitti Tenkil Başlıyor" *Akşam*, July 12, 1930. For the role of Turkish airforce check: Robert Olson, "The Kurdish Rebellions of Sheikh Said (1925), Mt. Ararat (1930), and Dersim (1937-8): Their Impact on the Development of the Turkish Air Force and on Kurdish and Turkish Nationalism" *Die Welt des Islams*, vol. 40/1 (2000). The revolt finally came to its end after the rebels conflicted with the Iranian forces in 1932: Yüksel, "On the Borders of the Turkish and Iranian nation-states", p. 660.

During the summer of 1930, the Turkish newspapers frequently shared news about the suppression of the Kurdish movement. Although the government and some reporters of dailies were aware of the seriousness of the rebellions' power, the newspapers described the movement as simply a banditry movement that the government forces would shortly suppress.¹⁴⁸ Separate newspapers shared the same information which indicates that state officials attempted to control public ideas via the media. The massacres in Zilan valley were covered in the newspapers and the villagers, who gave support to the rebels, were described as being bandits too.¹⁴⁹ The general inspector to all Eastern Provinces (*Şark vilâyetleri umûmi müfettişi*), İbrahim Tali Bey's words, reported by the newspapers, were that "it was realized that five villages assisted the brigands. I abstained from using the state weapons against the citizens until now. No doubt that the people, who assisted the brigands, will be punished with the most violent way".¹⁵⁰ Since the sons of Hüseyin and Emin Pasha headed the movement in this region, some villagers who belonged to the same tribal identity supported them. After the suppression of the movement, while Hüseyin Pasha's two sons were imprisoned in Iran, Emin Pasha's sons were killed during combat with the government forces in the Erciş and Çaldıran regions. With the end of the movement in Bayezid, the Heyderan chiefs lost most of their political power, but the members of the tribe have continued to protect their tribal identities in the same region until the present day.

¹⁴⁸ "Ağrı Hadisesinin Aslı Nedir?" *Vatan*, June 29, 1930. "Şark Hududunda" *Akşam*, July 10, 1930.

¹⁴⁹ "İhata Bitti Tenkil Başlıyor" *Akşam*, July 12, 1930.

¹⁵⁰ "Asilerin Reisi" *Vakit*, July 14, 1930.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has discussed how tribal solidarity played a role in imperial frontier throughout the nineteenth century. The fragile and complex sets of relations among Heyderan and tribes, hereditary rulers, governors, and states were analyzed to understand how tribal agency could influence local, provincial and inter-state power relations. Since the Kurdish tribes were the most powerful actors in the rural territories of the Ottoman Eastern frontiers, they were often crucial to the economic, political and demographic structures in those areas. Tribal leadership was often in contact with states or representative of states, actively involved politics, creating their own political agendas. Although there was a dialectical symbiosis between tribe-state relations and relations were variable, the Ottoman imperial administration often saw tribal people as their irrevocable allies. This co-existence sometimes transformed tribal chiefs and even regular tribal members into government agents, as occurred during the Tanzimat and Hamidian era. The expansionist policies of empires necessitated the support of tribes, not only to guarantee unity and the security of the imperial margins, but also to enlarge the territorial, economic, and

human resources of those empires located in the frontier regions. The tribe also accepted state authority as a means to negotiate inter-tribal and intra-tribal conflicts, as tribal political economies could not function independently.

Although this co-existence between tribe-empire relations was mostly positive, both sides attempted to apply their own policies to suppress each other's agendas.

Sometimes state authorities attempted to increase taxation rate on tribes, and to recruit tribal members to the army, while the tribes themselves contrived with neighboring states as they negotiated border-politics. The modernizing mission of the Ottoman center sought to minimize the power and solidarity of the tribes, persuading their members to accept regular and dependent Ottoman subjecthood since the Tanzimat era. However, the same center still protected expansionist agendas akin to the rulers of modern-nation states. The last powerful Ottoman Sultan, Abdulhamid II, improved state-tribe relations to the dethronement of rule of law that the Tanzimat advocated. After his dethronement, the tribes also lost prestige and power. The CUP rulers attempted to eliminate the tribal solidarity of Heyderan, but remaining imperial agendas required input from tribal chiefs. Ultimately, as the modern-nation states were born, Kemalist Turkey and Pahlavi Iran exiled or suppressed the tribal chiefs, who had overseen the political and military autonomy of the tribes. The Heyderan's leader cadre was eliminated from local politics after 1925, and the tribe lost its tribal political solidarity, although some members continued to protect their own tribal identities. The Heyderan was no longer a bargaining side and their collective socio-political identity was almost eliminated after the exile of the leading chiefs of the Heyderan.

Tribe and non-tribal villager relations were also dynamic, and so shifted sometimes being contradictory to somewhat safer conditions during the nineteenth century. Non-tribal villagers were often pressurized by tribal members although the hereditary rulers and local Ottoman governors at some level tried to protect the balance between those separate agents before and after the Hamidian era. After the Tanzimat era, the Ottoman representatives were not properly able to fill the power vacuum left behind the hereditary rulers in the region. Nevertheless, the modernity of the Tanzimat era unsuccessfully attempted to check relations by putting the tribal chiefs under pressure. The Hamidian Era brought about another major transformation in the region, since the Empire no longer protected the rights of non-tribal subjects after the tribal chiefs engaged in brigandage type arbitrary use of violence.

Since the Hamidian government confronted pressure from especially British and Russian Empires, it tasked the tribal chiefs with protecting the unity of the Empire's eastern margins. Therefore, power struggles further degraded the relations of the region's separate agents, since many less powerful chiefs of separate tribal branches attempted to become a paramount leader and enlarge their territories, revenues and power against the surrounding territories of other chiefs mostly by targeting the innocent villagers and their commodities. The cousin rivalry was only one of the rivalries that put the region in jeopardy. Armenian and Muslim villagers were also victimized by these power struggles, but the source of the conflicts was not thoroughly collectively ethnicized in the rural regions contrary to the city centers during the Hamidian era. The pillages undertaken against the ones, which were under the protection of other chiefs; and the villagers were attacked by one another, since the Hamidian chiefs avoided pillaging their own villages. What we see in those

villages was the arbitrary use of violence on individual cases. Finally, this meant total collapse of rule of law in the rural regions of the Ottoman East.

Local hereditary rulers had been the main power players in the provincial politics of the Ottoman eastern frontiers until the Tanzimat era, as was discussed in relation to the rulers of Muş and Bayezid in this dissertation. They engaged in mediating roles between the Empire and the tribes. They instrumentalized the tribes for their own missions, and therefore state-tribe relations were largely similar to *mîr*-tribe relations. The hereditary local rulers received their main military power from alliances with the tribes, and without their support they could not act as powerful agents. The *mîrs* had to receive both the supports of the imperial authorities and the other tribes to stay in power.

Inter-emirate antagonism of the pre-Tanzimat era shared similarities with the inter-state or inter-tribal conflicts, and these overlapping disputes complicated the region's politics, rendering them both dynamic and fragile. A tribal agent might shift alliance by preferring another tribe, *mîr* or state; thus, the politics in the eastern Ottoman provinces were not simple and stagnant. This dissertation demonstrates how a tribal agent, the Heyderan, influenced three separate overlapping levels of the inter-state, inter-provincial and inter-tribal relations. Later when the region became a subject of international discussions following the Treaty of Berlin, all the representatives of the individual States involved and created their own discourses regarding local developments. Convergences arose because of the diverse and disputed missions of the separate state/non-state actors on the region's politics.

The eastern Ottoman provinces emerged as highly politicized administrative structures during the nineteenth century, and the region's status as a tribal buffer

zone next to rival Russian and Iranian states played a special role in their development. The Heyderan had the option of aligning with the surrounding states, and the area they wandered was viewed as an important territory by all three states. The tribes were fiscally accountable agents and the animal husbandry activities of tribes in this region supplied meat necessities of some Ottoman provinces. Tribal control of these areas did not only have consequences for the Ottoman or Iranian States, the Russian and British Empire also had to keep the politics of the region under close check, since the historic trade route crossed from the Heyderan's wandering rural territories.

When the Heyderan chiefs were empowered during the Hamidian era, they received tolls as taxes from traders who crossed from the upper Lake Van region although it was illegal. The chiefs participated in the trade, selling their animals to dealers from the trade caravans. In addition, the tribes consisted of thousands of members and that made the region prosperous, as shown in Ottoman documents regarding the Heyderan tribe during the nineteenth century. The human resources of the tribes populated the empires' rural buffer zone, and both the Ottomans and Iranians tried to win as many tribal members as possible to their side. Hence, the importance of tribes was not limited to their militarized moveable warfare, although this increased the tribes' importance on the imperial margins.

The tribes' military prowess not only benefitted tribal missions, but the local power holders, governors/hereditary rulers and central governments also exploited these powers. Both the local and central governments on the Ottoman and Iranian side used militarized members of the tribes to attack their enemies, and to advance their own politics. Their own tribal councils comprised of notable *Torin* chieftainship, clan

chiefs, white bearded elders, stewards (*kahya*), who could decide independently to forge permanent or temporary alliances with provincial and regional powers.

The creation of the modern nation-state did not only eliminate an imperial order, but destroyed the collective power of the empire's tribal allies. Although the Heyderan chiefs protected their status at some level, until the rulers of modern Turkey consolidated their power along the eastern margins of the state, the Heyderan tribe actually no longer had a powerful bargaining position when the last powerful Sultan lost his power in July 1908. Therefore, contrary to imperial policies, the Heyderan were not seen as economically or politically accountable agents, but rather as threats to the survival of a newly constructed national identity. When the new rulers of the modern nation-state attempted to create a safe haven for their new identity based on Turkishness in a demarcated territory, the Heyderan chiefs were, therefore, eliminated from power in order to transform the tribal subjects into modern citizens.

Within the period from the Tanzimat to the creation of the nation-state of Turkey, while state power increased, tribal political/military collective power decreased. As the documents in the appendix indicate, within this period, the chiefs were instrumentalized and transformed into government agents. They went from being chiefs (*agha*), white-bearded elders (*aksakallı*), clan chiefs (*oymak ağası*) to tribal governor (*aşiret müdürü*), headman (*muhtar*), and lastly, to tribal pasha. Tribal councils were no longer effective over the political authority of the tribe, but rather the individual, powerful leaders of the tribes became the middlemen and mediators between the state and the tribesmen. The central government continued to centralize its power over the periphery within this period and state territories began to be encroached into tribal lands. With the creation of the nation-state of Turkey, tribal

lands were fully incorporated into the state especially after the suppression of the Kurdish nationalist movement, the Ağrı Rebellion, during the second phase of the 1920s. The natural boundaries between state and tribe were now abolished, and the tribesmen of the Heyderan were confronted with a new identity, which embodied being a citizen of modern Turkey or Iran. However, tribal self-perception and local tribal identities identities remained protected and dominant, despite the fact that the collective political and military power of the tribe no longer existed.

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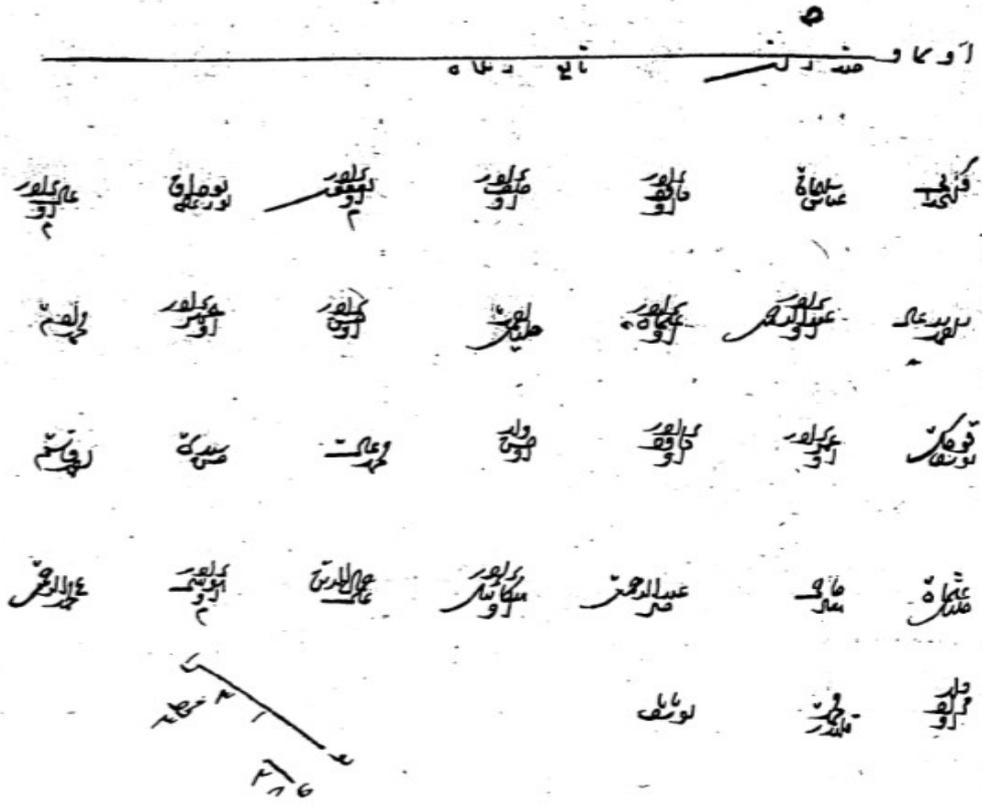
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APPENDICES

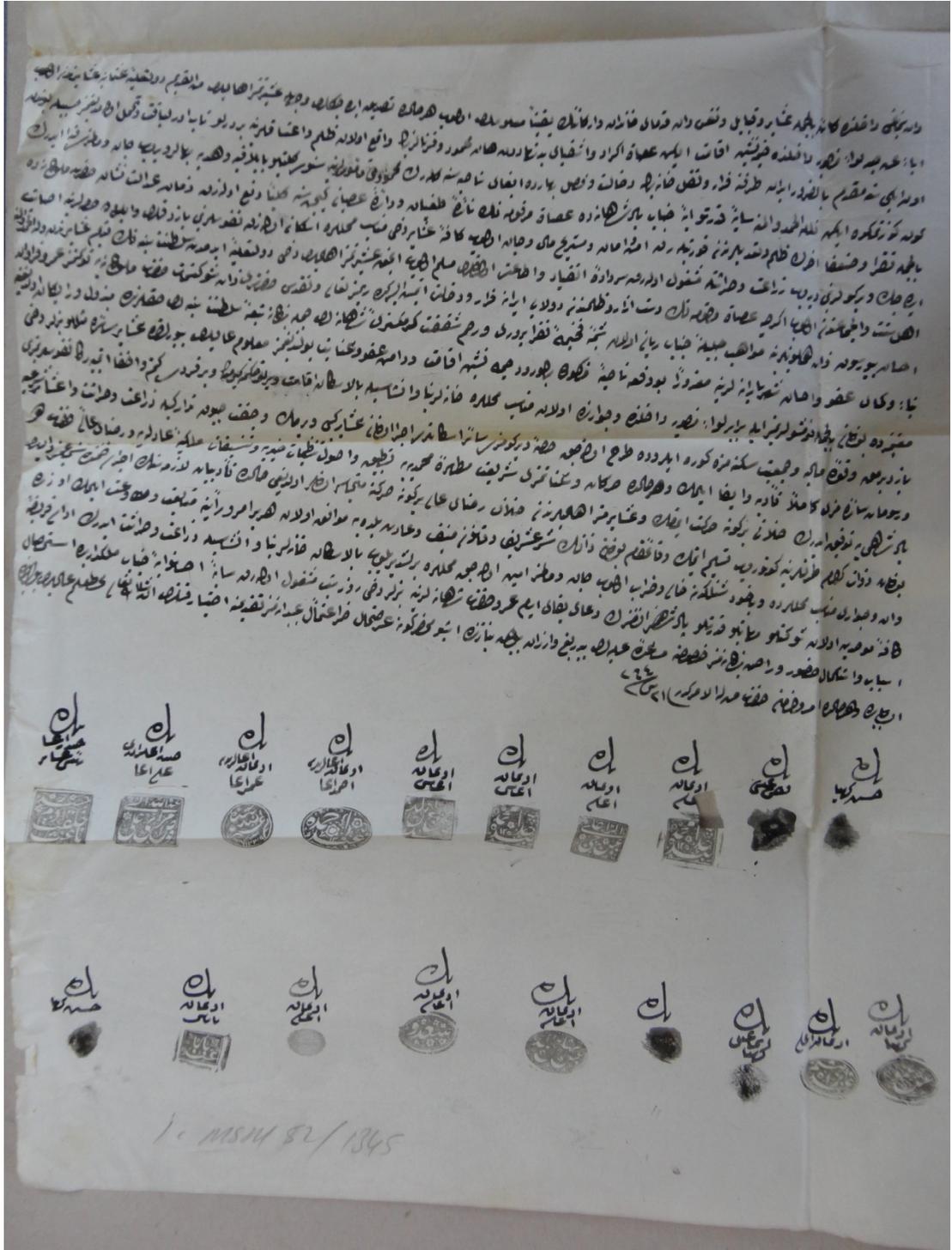
APPENDIX A. Heyderan Appears as a Clan (*Oymak*) in Diyarbekir Region in 1840



BOA, TD 200- (1540)

(A *Tahrir* Record which shows Heyderan as a clan of Zilan tribe in Diyarbekir region in 1540)

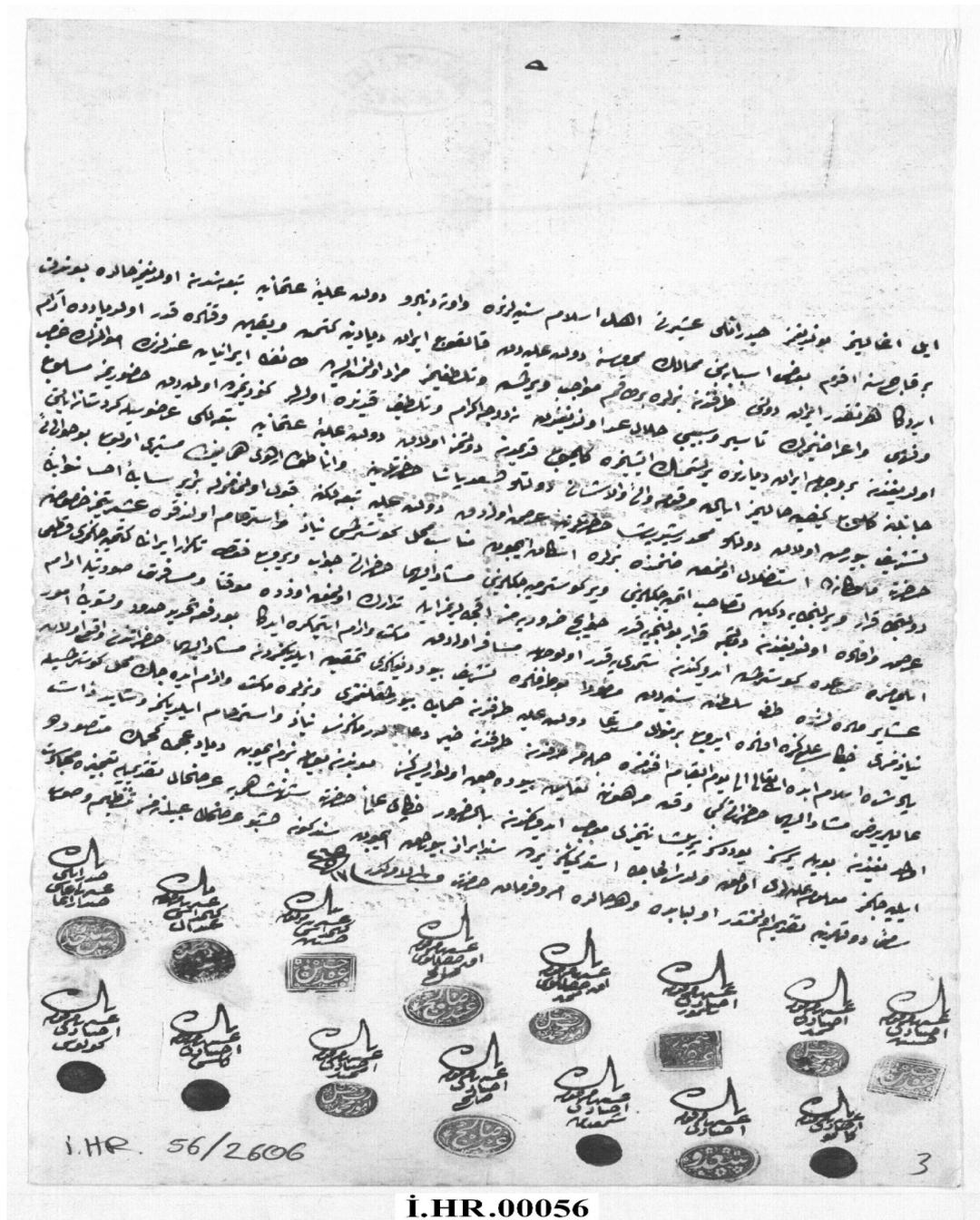
APPENDIX B. Petition of Heyderan Tribe for the Acceptance to the Ottoman Lands in 1848



BOA, İ.MSM. 52/1345A- (1848)

(Some group of Heyderan under the leadership of Heyder Agha requested an official acceptance to the Ottoman territories in 1848. They specify that they will follow the Tanzimat rules)

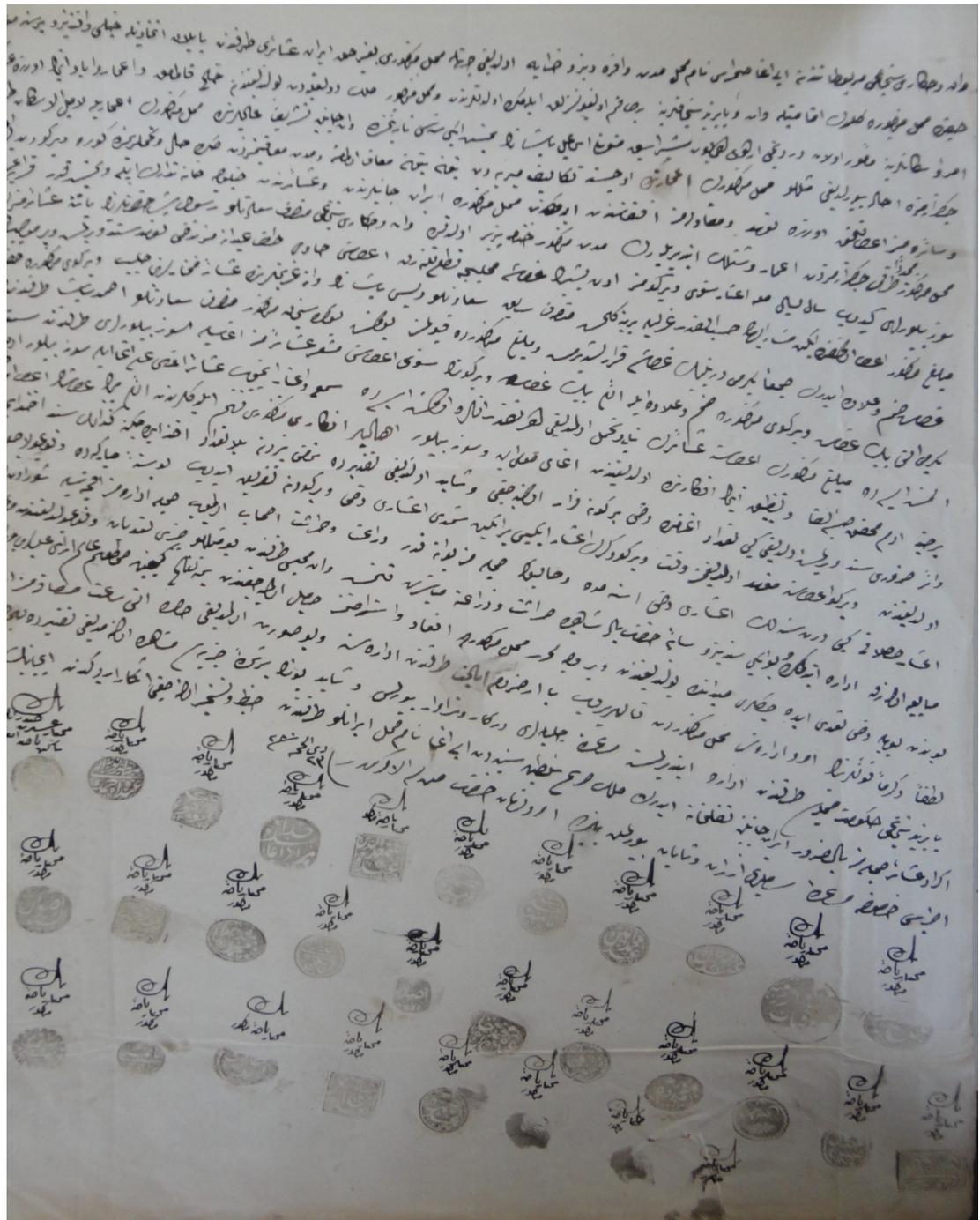
APPENDIX C. Petition of Heyderan Tribe for the Acceptance to the Ottoman Lands in 1849



BOA, İ.H.R. 56/2606- (1849)

(Official application of the Heyderan tribal members, who wandered in Iranian lands, for the defection to the Ottoman side)

APPENDIX D. Petition of Heyderan Tribe after the Application of Tanzimat Rules in the Ottoman East in 1864



BOA, MVL 678/45- (1864)

(This is a petition of Heyderan's leading cadre in Ebeğ region and it was written to condemn the policy of internal division of the tribe. This document also indicates that how Tanzimat rules transformed the tribe until 1860s since the tribal chiefs appeared under an official state title as *müdür* rather than tribal representations of *kethüda*, *aksakallı*, or simply *agha*)