ELITE EDUCATION AT THE OTTOMAN COURT FOR HIGHER BUREAUCRACY

Yüksek Bürokrasi İçin Osmanlı Sarayında Elit Eğitimi

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ELITE EDUCATION AT THE OTTOMAN COURT FOR HIGHER BUREAUCRACY

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Bülent ARI

Abstract: It can be concluded that despite some of its weaknesses and side effects, Ottoman administrative mechanism owe all its successes to unique appointment and promotion system within the concept of reward and punishment. This was only possible not through nobility and blood descendancy, but through a system which was based on competence, merit, and loyalty. The young boys of non-Muslim families at the age of 15-20 were collected from the villages and recruited at the Ottoman court. There were certain rules to be promoted within the court educational mechanism. If they reached to Hasoda, after strict education, they could be appointed to higher positions. There are precious registers of contemporary foreign writers about Enderun (inner court). When they were appointed higher positions in the countryside, they since they would follow similar behaviour with the court, there would be an administrative harmony. The article focuses on the sensitivity of this mechanism throughout the Ottoman Classical period. The most important point, which was emphasized in the article is that in case of any failure, they were heavily punished. This process opened new positions to the bottom lines. Ottoman system basically owe its success to this special application. The possibility of renewal of the administrative personnel, created an enthusiasm among the young generation. The article also touch upon the conversion of the unique Ottoman elite educational model to modern European systems towards the XIX th century.

Keywords: Enderun, Devşirme, Saray, İçoğlanı, Ottoman Court

ÖZ: Her türlü yan tesirine rağmen, Osmanlı bürokrasinin başarısı, mükâfat ve mücazat çerçevesinde çağına göre sık ve nevi şahsına münhasır bir eğitim veren Enderun sitemine bağlıdır. Gayrimüslim tebanın çocukları arasında seçilen 15-20 yaş arasındaki devşirme gençlerin en akıllı, dirayetli ve yaşlı olduğu olanlar saraya alınıp orada kariyerlerine devam ederlerdi. Buradaki çeşitli basamaklardan geçip elenenler Hasoda’ya kadar ulaştırılsa yüksek idi ve mezclere tehlikeli olanlar edilirlerdi. Buradaki eğitim modeli hakkında çağdaş yabancı gözlemcilerin kayıtları önemli bilgiler sunmaktadır. Saray ve merkezi idarenin inceliklerini öğrenecek, gastronomi gözlemcilerin kıyıları önemli bilgiler sunmaktadır. Saray ve merkezi idarenin inceliklerini öğrenecek, gastronomi gözlemcilerin kıyıları önemli bilgiler sunmaktadır. Makale Osmanlı Klasik Döneminde bu işleyişin inceliklerini ve hassas noktalarını tarihi örneklerle anlatmaktadır. Makalede gizlenen ve önemli husus, başarışıla çoğalımsızlığa şafakta gelen nesilleri yeni kadrolar açılırmasıdır. Osmanlı sistem bağırsı biraz da buna borçlardır. Bu sertle kadrolar sürekli yenilenir ve aşağıdan gelenlerin işi yaratığı kesilmenmektedir. Makale XIX. asırın sonlarına doğru bu sistem modernizasyonu ve dönüşümüne de kısaca temas etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Enderun, Devşirme, Saray, İçoğlanı, Osmanlı Sarayı

It can be concluded that despite some of its weaknesses and side effects, Ottoman administrative mechanism owe all its successes to unique appointment and promotion system within the concept of reward and punishment. This was only possible not through nobility and blood descendancy, but through a system which was based on competence, merit, and loyalty. Throughout the Classical Age1 which lasted until the end of XVI th century, most of the higher bureaucratic positions were occupied by the collected and recruited subjects.2

1 For Ottoman institutions in the Classical Age, see Halil İnalcık, Classical Age, 1300-1600, London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1973; Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Klasik Çağ (1300-1600), by Ruşen Sezer, YKY, İstanbul 2003.
2 In the Ottoman terminology, they were called “kul”, which meant “slave”. They were of non-Muslim origin, but converted to Islam at their young ages. However, they were not slaves in dictionary meaning but considered to be the servants of the Sultan. For Ottoman recruitment (servant) system see Halil İnalcık, “Ghulam”, Encyclopedia of Islam, 2nd Ed., 1965, 1085-91.
From Mehemed the Conqueror time, higher bureaucratic positions were mainly occupied by the servant originated officials. There were certain justifiable reasons of this case. Soon after the conquest of Constantinople, Mehemed II (who had inherited the Eastern Roman Empire) had established a central system in which all the authority was collected in the personality of the Sultan. This authority was never shared. Servant originated bureaucrats began to gain weight within this administrative system. In this new system, kinship, citizenship, and even original nationality was not important. The only criteria was to be successful. Neither the Sultan, nor the administrative system tolerated any kind of failure. For a sustainable success, all the relevant and sensitive measures were taken at the initial steps of the administrative ladder. To prevent the domination of a certain geographic and demographic region, young boys were collected and recruited from the different regions of Ottoman dominions, brought to Istanbul, and were delivered to the Agha of Janissaries.

In such a system, the young boys could only be promoted in two ways: to join ilmiyye (university-academic career) or to seyfiyye (military classes). The way to climb the ladders of ilmiyye (scholars) passed through diploma from the madrasas (universities) of Istanbul, rather than of countryside. The graduates of these madrasas were appointed according to their competence. Gradual promotion was either as higher scholars or as kadis (judges) of big cities. This article will not focus neither on the elite group among the scholars, nor their education and promotion system, but will concentrate on the future elite administrative authorities, their educational atmosphere and promotion mechanism.

How Young Boys are selected and Recruited at the Court

Throughout the Classical Age, i.e. roughly until 1600, the main source of the future higher administrative positions was devshirme (recruitment) system. For this reason, the court and Sublime Porte have given utmost importance on its operation. Since they would be either Janissaries or court servants, young boys were selected from among the families whose father and mother is known, and brought to Istanbul. To carry out the selection of the boys, an experienced, just, trustable, and religious person was appointed as yayabashi (chief sergeant). When he arrived any village, he collected all the subjects with their children, and then selected only one of the boys at the age of 15-20, from among the families who have more than one boy. The conditions of how the boys to be selected is clearly defined in the kanunname (legal regulation): “Boys of the noble families, boys who are smart, and clever, if possible of clergy should be preferred. Only one of the boys who have two, should be taken. Orphans, and sons of shepherds should be eliminated. Since they are grown up on the mountains, they are not civilised.”

3 For the function of the Sultan (padisah), see Halil İnalcık, “Osmanlı Padişah”, A.Ü. SBF Dergisi, XIII, 1958, pp. 68-79.
4 For the gradual promotion within the ilmiyye class, grades and types of madrasas and their curriculum, see Cahid Baltacı, XV-XVIII. Asırlarda Osmanlı Medreseleri, İstanbul 1976; Hüseyin Atay, Osmanlılarda Yüksek Din Eğitimi, Dergah, İstanbul 1983; Cevat İzgi, Osmanlı Medreselerinde İlim, İzmir, İstanbul 1997.
5 For detailed information on Enderun, see Ülker Akkutay, Enderun Mektebi, Gazi Ün., Ankara 1984; İ. H. Uzuçtaşlı, Osmanlı Devleti’nin Saray Teşkilatı, TTK, Ankara 1988, pp. 297-357.
6 “Müstakim ve umur-dîde yayabaşılar tayin olunurdu”. Kitâb-i Müstetab, Osmanlı Devleti’ne Dair Teşkilat, TTK, Ankara 1988, p. 5.
7 “… Kâfir evladını cem eylemek lazım geldikde ekâbir oğlunu alalar ve papas oğlunu ve kâfir arasında aslı eyü olan kâfirin oğlunu alalar ve iki oğlu olanın bir alalar; ikisin bir uğurdan almayalar ve oğulları olanın dahi güzelce olanın alalar ve babası ve anası ölüb yetim kalan oğlanı almayalar, zira gözü aç ve bî- wâfi edeb olur ve sığırtmaç ve…”, sicilde 701 no. ile kayıtlı 998/1589 tarihli berat, Halit Ongan, Ankara’nın İki Numarah Ser’iye Sicili, TTK, Ankara 1974, p. 54.
8 “Kâfir evladi cem ceylemek lazim geldikde ekbâr oğlunu alalar ve papas oğlunu ve kâfir arasında asli eyü olan kâfirin oğlunu alalar ve iki oğlu olanın bir alalar; ikisin bir uğurdan almayalar ve oğulları olanın dahi güzelce olanın alalar ve babası ve anası öülü yetim kalan oğlany almayalar, zira gözi aç ve bi-iedeb olur ve sığırtmaç ve
Since the control of huge numbers and their travel could create troubles, they were conveyed to Istanbul under the control of a trustable sergeant. Their names with father and mother names and detailed body descriptions were registered in two copies and one of them was sent to the Agha of Janissaries. Two copies of registers were compared in Istanbul to prevent additions and changes of the boys on the way to the capital. Some of the families resisted, while some others consented voluntarily, their child to be recruited into the Ottoman army. When the families were not consented, there were certain malpractices to change the boys. The father could announce that his son was lost, or bribe the priest to erase his name from the church registers. Another method was to save his son through bribing the sergeant. In some cases the villagers collected Money among the residents to keep him away from their village:

Another injustice in Rumelia is that a young rather than an experienced sergeant was sent to collect the boys. To save his son, the poor peasant sells his oxen and even vineyard and takes him back. Since he had no place to settle, he should move to far distances. They go as if to take the boy, but they attempt to take his life. The peasant does not give his life, but gives all his accumulation.

When all the boys were gathered in Istanbul, they were seen by the Sultan personally. In the meantime, a respected scholar, who was competent at ilm-i kiyafet (characterology) examined the appearance of the boys. He looks at lines and other signs on faces, and selected certain boys who fit to the requirements. Boys who have good character, modest and smart were selected for the court, by the approval of the Sultan. Others were given to the Turkish peasants for a limited period of time to learn Turkish language and Turkish customs. They would be the future Janissaries.

Most of the contemporary western authors praised the selection and education system of the boys into the court. They wrote that the senior officials were very dignified, and behave very impressive even on small events. Robert Withers, whose book was published by John Greaves in London in 1653 mention that the young servants in the court were very smart and magnificent. They prove that they would be very precious rulers in future.

According to ancient traditions, the young servants in the court should be selected from among the most noble and civilised Christian families. He added that the Turks believe in the nobility by birth, when supported by a good education, resulted with virtuous personality. This could only be done in the court. The lectures in the court are marvelous. They were educated very carefully by the teachers. They were also taught propriety, good dressing, religious

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9 Goodwin, Godfrey, Janissaries, Saqi Books, London 1997; Türkçe, Yeniçeriler, Doğan Kitap, İstanbul 2001, p. 34.
10 “Rumilinde bir zulm dahi budur ki, Rumili’ne acemi oğlan devşürmeğe bir sâlih ihtiyar yayabaşı gönderilmez, ekâbir dileğiyle bir rüşvet-hor taze yıği şeyhâbı gönderilmez. Raya oğlu halas eylemek için çift öküzün ve bağın ve tarlasın bi’l-kâlliye satub bu yayabaşına verir, oğlunu kurtarur. Dahi ol kafirün oturacak ve duracak yeri kalmaz, eyüce yarar oğlanlar cem’ ederler ve her vilayet Dervişer sûrürler ikiyüz ve üçyüz ve daha ziyade nefer olub k茳l adalet ile Divan-i hümayun getirilir ve saadetî poderádâmne Arz odasında kiz geldi birer bire manzar-i hümayunları oldukça sonara kapu ağası cümlesi güzgen gece geçirir ve her sûriden içlerinde göz dokurcu eyü oğlanları emr-i hümayun ilice iç oğlanlıguna intihab olundukdan sonra Edirne ve Galata ve Ay Meydan saraylarına tevzi olunub ve eyle oğlanları Yenişeri Ağası marifetiyle İstanbul ağaletleri Türk üzerine yazdırurlardı”, Kitâb-i Mevziât-i Ulûm, pp. 106-7.
11 “Bilimeyvenin ikiyüz kehインド ecstatic, vol 1, İkdam Matbaası, Istanbul 1988, p. 106-7.
12 Actually since most of the families were volunteer to deliver their boys, it looks like that it was widespread.

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Çoban Tâifesinun oğlunu almayalar, zira dağılarda büyümüşlerdir, bi-edebeîlerdir.” “Kavanin-i Yeniçerîyan-i Dergâh-i Ali”, Haz. Ahmed Ağkûndüz, Osmanlı Kanunnameleri, C. 9, OSAV, İstanbul 1996, p. 138.
10 “Rumilinde bir zulm dahi budur ki, Rumili’ne acemi oğlan devşürmeğe bir sâlih ihtiyar yayabaşı gönderilmez, ekâbir dileğiyle bir rüşvet-hor taze yıği şeyhâbı gönderilmez. Raya oğlu halas eylemek için çift öküzün ve bağın ve tarlasın bi’l-kâlliye satub bu yayabaşına verir, oğlunu kurtarur. Dahi ol kafirün oturacak ve duracak yeri kalmaz, eyüce yarar oğlanlar cem’ ederler ve her vilayet Dervişer sûrürler ikiyüz ve üçyüz ve daha ziyade nefer olub k茪l adalet ile Divan-i hümayun getirilir vb; saadetî podrádâmne Arz odasında kiz geldi birer bire manzar-i hümayunları oldukça sonara kapu ağası cümlesi güzgen gece geçirir ve her sûriden içlerinde göz dokurcu eyü oğlanları emr-i hümayun ilice iç oğlanlıguna intihab olundukdan sonra Edirne ve Galata ve Ay Meydan saraylarına tevzi olunub ve eyle oğlanları Yenişeri Ağası marifetiyle İstanbul ağaletleri Türk üzerine yazdırurlardı”, Kitâb-i Mûstetab, p. 6; Eyyûbi Efendi Kanunnamesi, Haz. Abdülkadir Özen, Eren, İstanbul 1994, p. 40; “Kavanin-i Yeniçerîyan-i Dergâh-i Ali”, Haz. Ahmed Ağkûndüz, Osmanlı Kanunnameleri, C. 9, OSAV, İstanbul 1996, p. 136.
knowledge and other useful information. In his treatise, written in 1586, Gianfrancesco Morosini mentioned the careful and disciplined education of the young boys within the Ottoman court. The court registers of the names of the young boys are still kept in the Ottoman archives.

Their initial selection to the court affected whole life of those young boys. The apprentice boys (*Acemi Oğlanlar*) were sent to peasant families in the countryside to learn Turkish language. When they learned Turkish and local customs, they were recruited in the army as Janissaries. However they were never promoted to senior positions. The highest posts were allocated for the previous *Enderun* members, who were appointed to their professional carrier from the higher, but not from lower levels. In such a close system, within the court, ranging to 300-400 young men, who were well educated, loyal to him were at the sultan’s service. They were first settled at the Grand Room, then at the Small Room, and respectively promoted gradually to *Seferli Odası* (Expedition Room), *Kilerli Odası* (Store Room), *Hazine Odası* (Treasury Room), and the best to *Has Oda* (Special Room). The ones who were not promoted, left the Palace and appointed to lower levels of administration in the countryside. They were predominated all the affairs of the court and state mechanism, so that when they were appointed as governor (*sancakbeği* or *beglerbegi*) in the countryside. They could easily form an integral part of the state mechanism:

The servants at the court were first educated 7-8 years, and then taken to the *Seferli, Kiler, Hazine and Has* rooms. In each room, as they proved their competence and loyalty to the Sultan, they could be even promoted to the position of Grand Vizier. According to the ancient Ottoman legal tradition, they leave the court with governorship. They rotated into many governorships and viceroyship all around the Ottoman dominions. When he was appointed into the position of Vizier, he was so experienced about the state affairs that in case of a complaint by the subjects at Divan, he does not need to ask anything to other bureaucrats. But the ones who were not competent on state affairs were appointed to lower levels of administration and they could never ascended to Vizierate.

Nevertheless, one could always coincided with the violation of the rules, disloyalty, corruption, and injustice. When these kinds of violations were reported to the Sultan, the responsibles were heavily punished: dismissal, banishment, and in some cases, even execution. So, new positions were opened to well educated young bureaucrats. The magic which sustained

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14 Robert Withers, *Büyük Efendi’nin Sarayı*, translated by Cahit Kayra, Pera, İstanbul 1996, p. 64.
15 “The handsomest, most wide-awake ones are placed in the Seraglio [palace] of the Grand Signor, or in one of two others used only for this purpose, and they rise to the highest government offices. The Turks care not at all whether these boys are the children of noblemen or if fishermen and shepherds. All of this explains why their major officials are all good-looking and impressive, even when their manners are uncouth. Eunuchs have charge of them, and for any little offense they beat them cruelly with sticks, rarely hitting them less than a hundred times, and as much as a thousand.” Gianfrancesco Morosini, 1586, “Turkey is a Republic of Slaves”, in *Pursuit of Power*, Ed. and translated by James C. Davis, Harper and Publishers., NY, p. 136.
16 In XVII th century, there were 41 servants at Hasoda, 112 at Hazine Odasi, 73 at Kiler and 108 at Seferli odas. Hezarfen Haseyn Efendi, *Telhisü’l-Bayan Fi Kavanin-i Al-i Osman*, (1673) Haz. Sevim İlgürel, TTK, Ankara 1998, pp. 61-4.
17 Saraaya tevzi olan oğlanlar sarayda yedişer ve sekizey terbiye olunurlardı. Badehü cherinde göre dokumur eli-i ma’rifet ve akl-i basiret üzere olan oğlanları Hasoda’ya alınıb ba’dehü umûmen çıkmak olbulkul ba’dehü umûmen çıkmak olbulkul olunup doğa ta’im olunub taşra çıkalırdı. Ba’dehü giderek her birlerin liyakat ve kabiliyetlerine göre direk ve mamsib, tâ Veziyirazam olunçası değin yolları evurdur ve Hasoda’da olan Silahdar ve Çukadar ve Rikadbar, booluk ağırlıklarından biryle çıkmakabı kanunları olub ba’dehü liyakat ve istihlakına göre hindemi sebat etdikce büyük Mir-i ahur ba’dehü Kapucuvaş ve andan Mir-i alem ve andan Yeniçeri Ağası ve andan Kastamonu sançaği ve andan başbergelik, ba’dehü her vilayetin başbergeliklerini tasarruf etdikden sonra Mir-i miran-i Anadolu, ba’dehü Rumili ve andan Vezir ve giderek Veziyirazam olan kimesne eemi’ kul ta’sesini ahvalerine ve ağırlıklarına vakif olmuş olur .. ve Divan-i hâmayunda bir umur vaki olduğu veyahud bir memlekedentek çokvaci geldikde “Acaba buna nice cevab vereyüm ve bunun asli nicedir” deyu Reis ağıza ve kethüdası ve sâlîrlerin ağıza bakmakta ihtiyyak olmaz ve şunlar ki ağırlıklarında ve sancak ve başbergeliklerinde imtiyan olub liyakati olmayanları ileri getirülüb vezaret verilmez idi. Kimi ağırlıklarda ve kimi sancakda ve kimi başbergelikde kaldub ve kiminin hilaf-i Şer’ ü kanun vaz’ u hareketleri sebebi ile ebedi azl olub kalurlar idi.” *Kitab-i Müstetab*, p. 6.
the Ottoman system for centuries were renewal of the posts, and open positions for young
generations.18

Education at Enderun

The education at Enderun was under strict discipline. The young servants were almost
isolated from the outside World, and adopted the court life as a whole:

When a young boy was recruited in the court, no one from outside knew him, as if live or
dead. No one from outside knew how they were educated, and promoted. Only old
members of Enderun knew it. There were strict rules on their education. They could not
even make a conversation with other personnel in the court, so that their letters should not be
transmitted to their relatives outside. When an Enderun young boy caught talking a man
outside, both of them were heavily beaten by their seniors.19

Within the court, the young servants had chosen a hoby in accordance with their interests,
and ability. The ones who were succesful in certain fields were favoured soon. In his treatise,
Bobovi, who taught music at the court, tell us about the extraordinary efforts of the abled young
men.20 Some of them were so successful in their fields that their professions had became their
nicknames.

From early periods onwards, the Ottoman sultans had given utmost importance to
literacy. Especially Selim I were strictly sensitive on the issue, and at his time no one remained
illiterate.21 The hard educational procedures continued for long years in the court. When one
was appointed to an outside job, he has fulfilled all the orders, and he was the most patient man
who was appointed to an outside job, he has fulfilled all the orders, and he was the most patient man
that the Sultan to be happy with their services, so that they would be appointed to outside
jobs. So they consented to remain as a simple cavalry.22

When the court servants who were selected with great sensitivity, were appointed to
outside jobs, they started from higher positions. They rapidly climbed the administrative
ladders, according to their competence and loyalty, and reached to vizierate. Since they trained
with palace education, and aware of the local affairs, they could easily dominate the state affairs

18 “The court servants expected the Sultan to be happy with their services, so that they would be appointed to outside
positions. Thus, they could easily get rid of heavy jobs in the court, under strict rules, and take an administrative
position. The rulers are frequently changed, because the Grand Signor had many subjects who wished to be
promoted”. R. Withers, Büyûk Efendi’nin Saray, p. 78.
19 “Kânun-i kadîm budur ki bir oğlan saraya girdükten sonra ayrıt taşradan ani kimesneler bilmeciz ki saq madır, ve
İçoğlanı dedikleri nicحدد ve tarihleri neder ve ne işler, kimesne anilmaz idi, meger ancak saraydan çikanlar
bilirdü; ta bu şekl üzere zabit ü edeb ve erkân var idi ki, mesela bir zülûlü fluct baltacı bir İÇoglanı ile musahabet edeyle
zabit olan ağalar İÇoglanına bi-hadd dehçek urub kezalik baltacuya dahi kethûdası let urudu ve bundan murad
budur ki, İÇoglanı iceri alvalinden bir söz taşraya çikarilmaya veyahud baltaci ile taşraya mektubular varub
gelmeye.” Kitâb-i Müstetâb, p. 26.
20 Bobovi was Polish origin. He was enslaved by the Crimean Tartars and sold to Istanbul. His ability on music took
attention. He served 19 years at the court and had to leave because of his addict to alcohol. Approximately in 1657, he
has written the treatise Serai enderun sic, cioc, Penetrate, dell’ Serajio detto nuoveodei G. sri e Re Ottomani is in this
respect, an important historical source. Original was Italian, but translated into German and French in those days.

21 “Some of the pages study more than the others, each according to his own ability. The Sultan’s intention is not to make
them great scholars. Progress in their study depends on their own interest. Many want to acquire a knowledge that
will distinguish them from the ignorant. Those, who by natural inclination have this ambition, are favored over the
others in the halls.” C. G. Fisher, and A. Fisher, “Topkapı Sarayı in the Mid-Seventeenth Century: Bobovi’s
Description”, Archivum Ottomanicum, c. X, (1985) 5-81, p. 77. I am grateful to then Director of Topkapı Palace, Filiz
Çağman, who informed me about the article many years ago.
22 “Yavuz Sultan Selim Han hazretleri Asr-i himâyanlinda dañi okuyub yazanlar’ın näil-i itîf ve itîfât olduklarını
gibi aksi halde bulunanlar danh darba katar tahdik edildiği cihetle saray-i himâyanlarda cahil ve bi-himmet
kalınlamış ve ekser ağıvât kendi bahisleriyle zâbitlerinin teşvikyle okuyub yazmağa sarf û ikdam ederek Enderun-i
hümâyûnda näil-i merâhit-i cellile ve menâtîb-i dînîye olarak kehîb-i teşîfî edenlerin büyük büyük hizmetlerle
muvaffak olduklarını malumdur.” From Anonim Enderun Tarihi, İstanbul Belediye Kütûphanesi, K 470, Muallim
Cevdet Yazmalari E 11-12, Ülker Akkutay, Enderun Mektebi, Gazi Un., Ankara 1984, p. 153.
22 R. Withers, age, p. 64-5.

Osmanlı Mirası Araştırmaları Dergisi / Journal of Ottoman Legacy Studies
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at Divan. Their success was almost inevitable there. According to Lucette Valenci, *Enderun* was both a school, a machine of selection of precious persons, and of shaping bodies and heads. The Enderun institution only prepare the young servants into loyalty to the Sultan. They learn not to take, but to give orders. Nevertheless, the Western witnesses were surprised for desperation of these well educated, able, and strong people, against the decree of the Sultan, in case of any failure. According to Valenci, these servants obey their fates willingly, but not forcefully. Vis-a-vis the decree of the Sultan, the powerful pashas, and viziers quietly surrendered their necks to the executioner. They even spoke as “the most happiness was to be servant and slave of the Sultan”.

There were many examples to this situation. Antoine Galland, who were in Istanbul in 1672-73, narrated how Kasım Paşa consented his own execution in an astonishing manner.

This situation was clearly summarised and advised by Machiavelli in his book *Il Prince*. The ones who intended to occupy the Ottoman territories should not rely on the insurrection of anyone other than the Sultan himself:

Occupation of Turkey is very difficult, but once it was occupied, management is so easy. Since the Sultan accepted not any partner, everyone is his servant, and they owe all their potential to him. The higher authorities cannot start up a rebellion. They did not have any instrument for rebellion. They cannot drag people behind. On the contrary they will be united. Thus, any country or king should only rely on his own forces. But, once the Sultan is defeated and the country is occupied, no other authority should be feared other than the Sultan. Because no one other than the Sultan is respected.

This political structure reflected the powerful central authority until late XVIIth century. XVIIIth century was an era that local authorities shaked the Sultan. In that period, Sultan Selim III in one hand tried to achieve reforms, while on the other tried to put powerful governors under control. For example, when the Grand Vizier determined dismissal of Cezzar Ahmed Pasha from governorship of Damascus, he wrote a note: “My Vizier, You have discussed the issue of Damascus, and determined the dismissal of Cezzar. If Cezzar was dismissed, and if the new governor was not powerful enough, he is worthless. If powerful enough, he would be another Cezzar, and Cezzar would be twice. Then what will happen to the old Cezzar?”

Surprisingly, although they were at highest ranks, the Sultan still go on educating them. This situation continued until XIXth century. The note and advise of Selim III to Grand vizier Seyyid Hasan Pasha in 1205/1791 is astonishing:

My Vizier, you had no reference from anybody. I myself have assigned you as Grand Vizier. However, you were unsuccessful during the military expedition. Your brother Mehmed was also cruel vis-a-vis the subjects. Do you think that I do not check the running

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23 Lucette Valensi, *Venedik ve Bab-ı Ali*, Bağlam, İstanbul 1994, p. 56.
24 L. Valensi, *age*., p. 56.
25 The rebellious Kasım Paşa had collected 60 thousand troops. One of the pashas has shown him a Sultan’s decree for his execution at a lunch. He quietly had accepted the result. No other pashas on the table conflicted the execution. On the contrary, all went to their own tents. The next day they were on the way to their cities. Antoine Galland, *Istanbul’a Ait Günlük Hatıralar 1672-73*, c. 1, TTK, Ankara 1998, p. 206.
26 “Osmanlı ülkesini istila edebilmenin pek güç, fakat bir kere zapt edildikten sonra da mühafazasının kolay olduğunu görlür. Hâkim olan Sultan orta kabul etmediğinden başka herkes padişahın kulu olup elverilindeki imkanları padişaha borçlandır. Memleketin büyükleriyle birleşerek bir isyan çıkarmak imkânsızdır. Ellerinde böyle bir figada alet olabilecek imkân yoktur; ifşa edilenler bile halkı arkalarında sürekleyemezler. Osmanlı devletine hitçum etmek isteyen kimse onları karşısında birleşmiş olarak bulacaktır. Bu yüzden sadece kendi kuvvetine güvenmelidir. Fakat bir kere muharebede mağlub olup Sultan yeni bir ordu çakaramayacak hale düşünce artık saltanat mensuplarından başka korkacak kimse kalmaz. Çünkü halk nazara saltanat hanedanından başka kimsenin itibarı yoktur.” Nicolo Machiavelli, *Hükûmdar*, translation by Haydar Rıfat, İstanbul 1932, p. 41.
27 “Benim vezirim, Şam maddesini söylemişmisiniz. Cezzar’ın azlini vâcib addeylemişsiniz. Şimdi Cezzar az olsa, yerine gelen muktedir olmasa işe yaramaz. Muktedir olsa o da bir Cezzar olur ve Cezzar ikilenir. Ol vakit eski Cezzar ne yapımalı?!” Enver Ziya Karal, *III. Selim’in Hatt-ı Hümayunları*, TTK, Ankara 1992, p. 138.
state affairs? Is it the way of appreciacion of my favour? While you were out of the state hierarchy, I have appointed you as Grand Vizier. Since I will not fire you, it is my duty to educate you. If you do not regret, it is your decision, but the result will be different than you thought.  

**Conclusion**

After the strict rule of Selim III, central and strong administration went on during the reign of Mahmud II. However, from Tanzimat onwards (1839) we do not observe that kind of strict rules by the Sultans. From then onwards, Enderun was only an educational institution which prepared the students fort he bureaucracy. Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi (General Rules of Education) in 1869 has classified the primary, secondary, and high school education out of the court. Then prepearations for Darü’l-Fünûn (university) has started. Nevertheless, the regular education at Darü’l-Fünûn would start not before 1900.

In 1868, a high school was established at the building of old Galata Sarayı (Galata Court). It was soon after the return of Sultan Abdülaziz from trip to European capitals of Paris, London, Berlin and Vienna. The education at Galatasaray High School would be in western standards. Strange enough, the higher bureaucracy and intellectuals of the late XIX th and early XX th century was graduates of Galatasaray High School.

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28 “Benim Vezirim, Seni bana kimse tarif etmedi. Bizzat kendim intihâb edüb vekâlet-i kübrâyı sana sipariş etdim. Sen ise umûr-i seferde külli tekâsülünden başka Beytülmâl-i Müslüman’ı kat’a siyânêt etmeyüb karndaşın Mehmed’in etmediği mezählm kalmadı. … Sen beni taharrî etmez mi sanırsın. Benim seni intihâbımın teşekkürü bölü mi olur? Nazardan sâkıt olarak anda bunda gezerken seni getürüb sadrazam etdüm. Senden geçmeyeceğime binaen seni terbiyeye ihtimâm-i hümâyûnum lâzım geldi. Eğer bundan sonra mütehhebbih olmaz ise sonra sen bilârânın. İşte ben yazacaklarını yazdırm, vesselemb”. Ahmed Cavid, *Hâdika-i Vekâyi’*, Ed. Adnan Baycar, TTK, Ankara 1998, pp. 112-3.
29 The list of the lectures at Enderun in the year 1292/1876, weekly programme and the names of the lecturers are kept at Topkapı Sarayı Archive, D 4783/1. The names of the students were listed on the document D 4783/2. A similar student list is also kept in the same Archive D 8815, under the title “Hazine-i Enderun-i Hümayûn hademelerinden olup saye-i maarif-vâye-i şehin-sâhîde mekteb-i münüfede tahsil-i ilm etmekle bulunan bendelerinin isimlerini mübeyyin bir kita defterdir”.

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