

Osmanlı Devleti'nin Askeri Modernleşme Süreci Çerçevesinde 19. Yüzyıl Askeri Reformları

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Öz

Tarihsel süreçler içerisinde Osmanlı Devleti'nin 19. yüzyılda yaşadığı modernleşme eğiliminin genel boyutları çerçevesinde askeri boyutlarının incelenmesi ve elde edilen değerlendirmeler ile birlikte askeri modernleşme literatürüne katkı yapmanın sağlanması bu çalışmanın en temel amacını oluşturmaktadır. 18. yüzyıldan itibaren başlayan ve Osmanlı Devleti'nin çöküşüne kadar süren siyasal, idari, kültürel ve ekonomik modernleşme hareketlerinin yanı sıra askeri alandaki yeni yapılanmalar Osmanlı Devleti'nin üzerinde ciddiyeyle durduğu ve tarih sayfalarından silinmesini geciktiren bir eylem olarak ifade edilebilmektedir. Osmanlı Devleti'nin genel bir bağlamda modernleşme süreçlerini irdeleyen literatürden farklı olarak çalışmada, askeri reform ve değişim hareketlerini önemli hale getiren tarihsel süreçleri irdeleyerek uygulanan çözüm önerilerini, alınan önlemleri ve uygulamaya konulan askeri reformları farklı perspektiflerde değerlendirerek modernleşme literatürünün askeri boyutuna katkı yapabilmeyi amaçlanmaktadır. Osmanlı Devleti her ne kadar yıkılmış ve tarih sayfasındaki yerini kaybetmiş olsa da miras bırakmış olduğu modern Türk ordusu, özellikle Birinci dünya Savaşı ve Kurtuluş Savaşı esnasında cephe karşısında başarı elde edebilmiştir. Dolayısıyla bu düşünceden hareket ile bu çalışmada da Osmanlı Devleti'nin askeri modernleşme süreci ve bu çerçeveye ile 19. yüzyılda Osmanlı Devleti'nde yaşanan askeri reformlar incelenmiş ve elde edilen bulgular ile birlikte değerlendirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Osmanlı Devleti, Askeri Modernleşme, Tarihsel Süreç, 19. Yüzyıl, Askeri Reformlar.

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19th Century Military Reforms In The Framework Of The Military Modernization Process Of The Ottoman State

Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to examine the military dimensions within the framework of the general dimensions of the modernization trend of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century and to contribute to the military modernization literature together with the evaluations obtained. In addition to the political, administrative, cultural and economic modernization movements that started from the 18th century and lasted until the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, new structures in the military field can be expressed as an action that the Ottoman Empire seriously emphasizes and delays its erasure from the pages of history. Unlike the literature that examines the modernization processes of the Ottoman Empire in a general context, the study aims to contribute to the military dimension of the modernization literature by examining the historical processes that made military reform and change movements important, and evaluating the solution proposals, the measures taken and the military reforms put into practice from different perspectives. Although the Ottoman Empire was destroyed and lost its place in the history page, the modern Turkish army, which he left behind, was able to achieve success against the front, especially during the First World War and the War of Independence. Therefore, in this study, the military modernization process of the Ottoman Empire and the military reforms experienced in the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century were examined and evaluated together with the findings obtained.

Keywords: Ottoman Empire, Military Modernization, Historical Process, 19th Century, Military Reforms.

1. Introduction

The capitulation agreements signed between Osman and France during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent aim to attract France in favor of the Ottomans in the name of creating an effective power against the Habsburgs. Thus, low taxes were applied against the French in the Ottoman lands and the privilege of doing trade was provided. In addition, the right to carry out missionary acts among the non-Muslim people of the Ottoman Empire was recognized. In the Ottoman Empire, no policy of coercion was followed against the non-Muslim people who were given and encouraged to protect their religion, social opinion leaders, language, laws and norms. In this context, the transfer of non-Muslim people by the French to different sects was not perceived as a threat to the Ottoman Empire. However, later on, the Ottoman State started to support the Protestants against the Catholics, but this did not become a problem for the French. On the contrary, the French influence gradually increased and spread in the Ottoman lands. In this context, until the 1850s, the Ottoman Empire united around a common denominator that did not cause a major political, military, technical and technological problem against Europe.

The Ottoman Empire reached its peak in the 16th and 17th centuries. In this framework, there was no power that could stand against him or pose a threat to him. In

the same period, all of their neighbors could only pursue a purely defense policy. Therefore, the Ottoman Empire did not see the European states as a threat in this process, but on the contrary, it caused its intellectuals to underestimate other state intellectuals. Thus, the Ottoman Empire examined the works of European states only from a technical point of view until the 19th century.

At the beginning of the 18th century, the Ottoman Empire, which tried to produce and spread the firearms of the latest technology of the period by bringing experts from Europe on artillery and firearms, differed from other states with the studies it had done in the field of industrialization with the 19th century. However, the state has never had the authority to carry out these industrialization movements on a regular basis. As a result of this, it could not be included in the production phase and was content with importing weapons only. However, this created a deficit in the Ottoman State budget in the long run and started to pose a big problem. With the effect of the pressures of the Janissaries in different fields, a new army was established and it was not possible for the Ottoman Empire to create new investments related to industrialization. As a result of all these factors, his army, which was in a strong form, deteriorated and deteriorated in the process, and had difficulty in joining or realizing a new military modernization. Although he attempted to modernize the army in terms of the army system and firearms, which he exemplified from the West, the dimensions of change in the ideological mentality could only take an active form in the middle of the 19th century.

In the said period, the state authority and administration did not allow rapid innovation and a military oligarchy began to emerge in the same period. This led to military reforms. This oligarchic group consisted of the children of poor families and were placed in newly established military schools and trained as officers. Because they were under the sultan, they continued to remain a subordinate group to the sultan, similar to the period in which the Janissaries in the Ottoman army system in the classical period had not yet fully degenerated. In this context, the biggest reason for the delay in the modernization of the army in the state and the development of the military system by changing it can be shown to be far behind the times. For a very long time, the Ottoman Empire thought that it would be sufficient to improve and rehabilitate the Janissary Corps. The Ottoman Empire was able to solve this problem only years later, and the presence of officers trained in European quality could only show itself towards the end of the 19th century. Within the framework of all these factors, although the Ottoman Empire took the Prussian army as a model, it is seen that they developed different visions and followed paths in different directions.

The Ottoman Empire could not be included in the comprehensive reform and modernization movements during the constant struggle both in its internal affairs and in its foreign relations. In the time of Mahmut, with a quick decision, he disbanded the Janissary Corps and enabled a detailed reform. In this period, the Ottoman Empire's sole purpose was to protect its existing lands and borders, as well as to protect both sea and land borders.

2. Developments Preparing Military Reforms

The Thirty Years' War had devastating consequences for countries in Europe. However, the developments that took place during and after these wars had permanent

consequences for the states in the continent and the Ottoman Empire (Wilson, 2009: 26). One of the most important results mentioned is the Peace of Westphalia and the developing international order and transformation. However, the main issue that should be emphasized is the effort of the Prussian army during the said wars and the successes that followed this effort. After that, it started the modernization movement in the armies of the Ottoman Empire and then Russia and carried out its studies, and in this context, it was thought that the system in question, which created the Prussian army, should be examined in order to evaluate the modernization efforts in the Ottoman army.

As a result of a general research, it is seen that the Prussian State differed from the very beginning in terms of technical structure and ethnicity when compared with the German principalities in its other counterparts. In addition to the subject, it is known that the name Prussia comes from the Prus tribes who lived in the Southern part of the Baltic Sea in the historical process. This mass society, which has a polytheistic structure in line with their own language and belief systems, first lost their land and then their identity in the form of identity as a result of the Crusades carried out by the Teutonic order and became Christian and assimilated, and was placed at the center of social dissolution by the Germans who were consciously placed in the same region. . However, these states did not separate from each other and were completely under the auspices of the Teutonic order. It fought the Lithuanians, Poles, and Russians over time, but was given much of its territory east of the Baltic coast. Most of the areas outside of Prussia were transformed into independent city-states, and the remaining places came under the auspices of different authorities (Clark, 2007: 47). Thus, as Prussia was founded by peasants and merchants with the idea of ascendancy, it witnessed a more evolutionary process.

Although it is assumed that it was established by taking the feudal structure as an example in a general framework, it expresses a large mass compared to the aristocracy in other countries in Europe, when it is reduced to the general majority, which is called Junker in Prussia. In this context, however, large groups of landowners, such as the sample in Western Europe, could not be formed, and it was seen that people whose personal skills and work were important and therefore rising had a say in the army. On the axis of all these, it can be said that the Prussian army basically resembles the Ottoman army.

In Western Europe, armies were formed when the young children of noble families were taken at an early age and received a military education within the family (Coss, 1989: 73). As a result of non-existent military schools, the children in question were taking military lessons either from teachers assigned by the family or from their close relatives. The eldest child inherited the land and in return provided military service (Bloch, 1968: 98). In another comparison, in the Ottoman Empire, children received their military education together after they were included in the hearth. Promotion was based on talent, and since these children were already taken from non-Muslim families, they could not claim superiority based on lineage (Uzunçarşılı, 1943: 128). In this perspective, it expresses a different adaptation of the Janissary system in the Ottoman Empire of the appearance in the Prussian army, and shows the regulated state of feudal Europe. Members of the Junker class were entitled to enter military schools on the basis of ancestry. All the officers and bureaucrats in the aforementioned army were entirely Junkers, with the exceptions. The personal talents of the Junkers, on the other hand, made

it possible for them to rise in the army and government. As a result of all these, he went through a detailed education and his system based on promotion in the army emerged in the army.

Thus, the success of the Prussian armies, which first formed the center of the modernized military schools, does not have a strange element when it comes to the European armies, which have a core command system and no military training. The Prussian model was taken as an example by many European states, especially the Ottoman state (Clark, 2007: 56).

Under Wilhelm, the basis of the Prussian army was formed and revealed by combining the armed forces. However, the Prussian Assembly, which convened after the Thirty Years' War, demanded the dissolution of this permanent army system or the reduction of its numerical density with another proposal. On the other hand, Friedrich Wilhelm managed to put this proposal on the agenda with the concessions he made on different platforms. By this means, the Prussian army, which was established in a critical process and crisis action and in a regular form, became one of the keystones of the transformation of the state into a centralized structure after the critical period.

The Ottoman Empire, on the other hand, was in struggle with Habsburg and Iran, and then with Russia, respectively, in this process of developments, in essence, it had to deal with uprisings and political conflicts with it, and eventually lost power. Thus, the first territorial losses were experienced in the Balkans, followed by the losses in the Caucasus and Crimea. Prussia and Austria went to develop their land armies because of what Russia did (White, 1995: 98). In this context, while England and the Netherlands, which have a small population but a strong navy, tried to get stronger in the sea lane, France tried to get stronger both on land and at sea. However, these attempts did not allow Prussia and Russia to reach the power to cope with neither the land army nor the navy of England (Eisenstadt, 1965: 665).

While this transformation set an example for some countries, the Ottoman Empire chose to combine its essential tradition with an imported system, since it did not have a feudal system. This system, on the other hand, has been applied by copying it from different countries. During the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, the commercial concessions that the Ottoman Empire gave to the King of France in order to form an alliance against the Habsburg Dynasty were also demanded by England and France over time (Acartürk & Kılıç, 2011: 12). However, unlike East Asia, the Ottoman State consented to these demands, not by force of arms, but rather because it was in search of allies against the rising threat of Russia (Akşin, 1994: 78). In this context, the Ottoman Empire started military reforms much earlier than many other countries since the 18th century, and the main reason for this was the existence of land borders to Austria and Russia. With all these developments, the Prussian model, which was examined in the reforms in the military field, became a model primarily in the European states and then in the Ottoman Empire.

3. The Ottoman State In The Modernization Process

When we look at the general lines of the Ottoman Empire from its foundation to the period of Yavuz Sultan Selim, it can be seen that the policy of expansion and progress was

followed, especially in the west. In addition to the gaza philosophy, the fact that other principalities and states on the eastern and southern borders are of Turkish origin and militarily strong, like themselves, are also effective (İnalçık, 2012: 34). In this context, Fatih Sultan Mehmet's taking the title of "Kayser-i Rum", that is, "Roman Caesar" after the conquest of Istanbul, defining himself as a Roman Emperor, is also important in terms of showing the west-facing direction of the Ottoman Empire (Ortaylı, 2006). : 116-117). This approach brought with it the persistent rejection of the German side's claim to be an emperor (Szalontay, 2005: 48). However, during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, until the conquest of Hungary, Europe was referred to as a marginal region that did not matter for the Ottoman Empire. The lifeblood of the state was beating in Anatolia and the Balkans, just like the Eastern Roman Empire before it (Nicolle, 2010: 25). Relations with Europe consisted of the struggles with the Habsburgs, who claimed rights in the Balkans, especially on Hungary, and with Venice in order to gain sovereignty in the Mediterranean (Çırakman, 2002: 58). On the other hand, during the struggles with Austria, it was seen that the power of the cavalry gradually decreased during the war, and the timar system, which constituted the basic cavalry group in the Ottoman army, was abandoned and the timar system was completely disbanded. Then, in the Janissary Corps, which was a more effective military unit, it started to fill the place of the cavalry as an infantry unit (Börekçi, 2006: 438). Until this period in question, the Janissary Corps had generally served as a unit tasked with protecting the sultan, who was in authority on the battlefields. The base of the army was the sipahis. However, since the training of the Janissaries was a long and elaborate training, it was not possible to be successful on the battlefield with the insufficient number of soldiers present.

After the establishment of modernized armies in Europe, new developments occurred in the Ottoman Empire. In this framework, the Janissaries became a major obstacle to the establishment of a modern army and opposed the aristocracy with the fear that they would lose their authority and privileges. On the other hand, the reason why the Janissary Corps has existed for a long time compared to modern armies like in Europe is shown with its successes in the military field and on the battlefields. The main problem with the Janissary Corps is not related to the structure of the hearth, but it can be shown that the system degenerated and started to become a partner in the political struggles in the palace.

In addition to these developments, the heavy defeats and land losses against Austria and Russia in the 18th century, along with many rebellions and political sidedness of the Janissary Corps, also contributed and accelerated the negativity. At first, the reason for the worsening of the situation was that the Ottoman Empire moved away from its institutions and structure in the classical period; Therefore, some reform movements were carried out to return to the practices of successful sultans such as Fatih and Kanuni (Ateşer, 2001: 193). However, it was soon realized that the main problem was that the state and army system could not keep up with the times (Arslan, 2010: 63). In this context, although the main concern of the Ottoman Empire during the 18th century was expressed as developing the army in terms of technology required by the age, the main problem that existed was that the army continued to be defeated within the framework of institutional regression and indiscipline. Thus, seeing that the root of the problem lay not in the

separation of the Ottoman Empire from its essence, but in the fact that it was behind the times, the authority thought that a more open policy should be pursued against the West (Pustu, 2007: 14).

The Ottoman army owes its success until the 18th century to two basic elements that it created within itself. The first of these is the mounted archer units, which have been continued in a positive way from the very beginning. In a different style from other armies, the Ottoman army used short, agile and strong horses. In addition, the bow used in the Ottoman army had a cosmopolitan structure and had a long range. It was even possible to pierce the armor of a fully armored knight with these springs (Eralp, 1993: 85). However, with the spread of firearms, the new war tactic used by the riflemen protected by the spearmen reduced the effectiveness of the cavalry in both European and Ottoman armies (Aksan, 2012: 56). For this reason, it caused the density of the timar cavalymen, which formed the basis of the Ottoman cavalry, to decrease rapidly. In the most general terms, the Ottoman army was quite behind in terms of equipment.

All of the important military reforms at the end of the 18th century. It was carried out during the Selim period. As a matter of fact, it was observed that he corresponded with the King of France even during his principdom, and communicated with the leading innovation supporters of the period in the Ottoman Empire (Özkaya, 2000: 27). With a similar expression, the new order called "Nizam-ı Cedit" was started in this process and an integrative modernization movement in the Ottoman army was also started in this period (Karal, 1946: 59). Earlier reforms, on the other hand, were narrower and more selective, often focusing on artillery. However, III. Selim not only continued his reform initiatives, but also extended them to the navy, and worked to make modern military training permanent (Batmaz, 2014: 35). However, in response to this, new administrative and financial reforms were made (Pamuk, 2000: 28).

Some groups were aware that it was not possible to completely eliminate the Janissary Corps. Thus, they both sought a new order based on reforming the current Janissary Corps and sought to establish a new and modern army. The Janissary Corps, which felt worried about the new army to be established, tried to prevent it by rebelling. This has sharpened the establishment of the newly established unit within the Bostancı Hearth, which is integrated with the existing hearth, and that its main duty is to create a military force against a possible Russian attack and to protect the capital. Officers were brought from Europe to train this army and the training started in Levent Farm (Elibol, 2009: 87). These developmental modernization movements were followed by the opening of schools where officers brought from countries that did not want Russia to strengthen, such as France, England and Sweden in particular, gave training in military engineering and tactics (Karal, 1946: 129). In addition, the Mütferrika printing house was reorganized and activated, and the French works in the military field were translated into Turkish and published (Unat, 1999: 129). In this context, the beginning of the modernization of the navy was added within the development movements, and many shipyards were rearranged and their work continued. However, despite all these successes, there were reactions against the Nizam-ı Cedit army. In this context, it was aimed to create an uproar among the people by making the ideas that the members of the army wearing western-style military clothes

have left the religion. Therefore, one of the most elaborate reform movements within the scope of the historical process in the Ottoman Empire came to an end.

In the next period, the Ottoman Empire gained German support and tried to modernize its land army in this new model, which it took as an example. Now, a new officer cadre has been formed on a voluntary basis (Ortaylı, 2003: 41).

First of all, a new army of Nizam-ı Cedid type was established with the name of “Asakir-i Mansure-i Muhammediye” and Ağa Hüseyin Pasha with the title of “Serasker” was appointed to the head of this army (Findley, 1980: 97). Soldiers were sought for this new army, which was established as a priority, and efforts were swiftly continued to gather the army in a short time. The soldiers in this army were dressed in western-style clothes and the fez was worn for the first time. With the support of the Sultan, a large number of privates were gathered in a short time and a division was formed by dividing these soldiers into regiments and companies in accordance with the western style structure (Moreau, 2010: 59). A division consisted of about ten thousand soldiers, and each of them was divided into regiments of about a thousand, and the regiments were divided into companies of about a hundred (Aydın, 1994: 179). This ten army system, which is actually an old Turkish system, was generally imported from the West again and again. In addition, the soldiers were subjected to a compulsory military training by being paid daily and paid (Moreau, 2010: 120). The Ottoman Empire took this new system as an exemplary model and took part in the modernization.

Result

The biggest resistance movement in the Ottoman Empire to military reforms came from the military units it housed. The biggest reason for this can be shown as the superiority of the Ottoman army against the Europeans in military perspective for centuries. With this superiority in question, the Janissaries, who were in the military units, could not remain indifferent to any development in Europe on the basis of an ideological thought, which saw themselves as superior. On the other hand, the deterioration of the order of the Janissary Corps by going through development, change and therefore transformation in historical processes and the deterioration of their military discipline, as opposed to the forbidden institution of marriage, as they found a family and engaged in trade and profited by going beyond the whole of other boards can be shown as the reason. This situation did not appeal to the Janissaries, who had to return to the old discipline-based military life and live on a purely military salary, and it took place as a preparatory reason for the change in question.

Many models exemplified by the Ottoman Empire could not be included in the application area due to various reasons and delaying reasons, and the modernization movements in question could not be fully implemented in the models that were taken as delayed. By the end of the 19th century, new models were imported from Europe, and their usage areas were provided by adapting them to the army system of the state. However, when other states and their army systems are taken into consideration, this situation has been delayed and has caused it to be left behind in many respects.

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