IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

MASTER'S THESIS

IMPERIAL GOVERNANCE AND EDUCATIONAL REFORMS: THE DARULMUALLIMAT, MOBILITY OF FEMALE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE (LATE 19TH–EARLY 20TH CENTURY), WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO LIBYA

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ISTANBUL, 2025

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by
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A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in History

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ACADEMIC HONESTY ATTESTATION

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented by academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ÖZ

İMPARATORLUK YÖNETİMİ VE EĞİTİM REFORMLARI: OSMANLI İMPARATORLUĞU'NDA DARÜLMUALLİMAT, KADIN ÖĞRETMEN VE ÖĞRENCİLERİN HAREKETLİLİĞİ (19. YÜZYIL SONLARI–20. YÜZYIL BAŞLARI), LİBYA ÖRNEĞİ

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Haziran 2025, 89 Sayfa

1839 Tanzimat Fermanı'nın ilanıyla birlikte Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda eğitim alanında reform hareketleri hız kazanmıştır. Bu reform hareketleri imparatorluğun uzak vilayetlerini de kapsayacak şekilde eğitim faaliyetlerinin yaygınlaştırılmasını hedeflemiştir. Bu durum, yeni öğretmenlerin yetiştirilmesinin yanı sıra merkez ile çevre arasında, öğretmen ve öğrenci mobilizasyonunu da beraberinde getirmiştir. Ancak, dönemin siyasi, sosyal ve ekonomik koşulları o kadar hızlı değişmiştir ki, bu reformların ve beraberindeki eğitim hareketliliğinin sonuçlarını değerlendirecek çok az fırsat ortaya çıkmıştır.

1869 Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi ile kız çocukları için eğitimin zorunlu hale getirilmesi, kadın öğretmen ihtiyacını ortaya çıkararak Darülmuallimat'ın kurulmasını sağlamıştır. Böylelikle merkez ile vilayetler arasında kadın öğretmen atamaları başlayarak hareketli ve aktif bir eğitim mobilizasyonu oluşmuştur. Ancak Darülmuallimat mezunlarından bir kısmının uzak vilayetlerde görev yapmaktan kaçınmaları nedeniyle bu duruma pratik bir çözüm olarak Darülmuallimat'ın leyli kısmı açılmış ve vilayetlerden gelen kız öğrencilerin Istanbul'da eğitim alıp, memleketlerine dönerek öğretmenlik faaliyetlerine başlamaları hedeflenmiştir.

Bu çalışma, Tanzimat sonrası dönemde Trablusgarb (bugünkü Libya) vilayetinde yaşanan kadın öğretmen ve öğrenci mobilizasyonunu, eğitim reformlarının tetiklediği bu hareketlilik sürecini ve Osmanlı sonrası dönemdeki kalıcı etkilerini analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma bulguları, söz konusu eğitim hareketliliğinin etkilerinin Osmanlı Devleti'nin çöküşünden sonra da devam ettiğini ve mezun olan öğrencilerin kendi bölgelerinde eğitim faaliyetlerini sürdürdüklerini ortaya koymaktadır. İncelenen arşiv belgeleri ışığında, bu hareketliliğin yapısı ve sonuçları değerlendirilmiş olup, özellikle kadın öğretmenler ve öğrenciler ekseninde kapsamlı bir analiz sunulmaktadır. Bu analiz, Osmanlı eğitim reformlarının vilayetler düzeyindeki etkisini anlamak için yeni bir perspektif sunarken, kadın aktörlerin imparatorluğun son dönemindeki sosyal dönüşümdeki rolünü de görünür kılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Darülmuallimat, Kadın Öğretmen-Öğrenci Mobilizasyonu, Kız Çocuklarının Eğitimi, Trablusgarb Vilayeti.

ABSTRACT

IMPERIAL GOVERNANCE AND EDUCATIONAL REFORMS: THE DARULMUALLIMAT, MOBILITY OF FEMALE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE (LATE 19TH–EARLY 20TH CENTURY), WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO LIBYA

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With the declaration of the Tanzimat Edict (1839), reform movements in education gained momentum in the Ottoman Empire. These reforms aimed to expand educational activities to the empire's remote provinces, leading to the training of new teachers as well as the mobilization of both teachers and students between the center and the periphery. However, the political, social, and economic conditions of the time changed so rapidly that there was little opportunity to assess the outcomes of these reforms and the accompanying educational mobility.

The 1869 Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi (Public Education Code) created a demand for female teachers and led to the establishment of Darülmuallimat (Female Teachers Training College). This resulted in the appointment of female teachers between the center and the provinces, fostering a dynamic and active educational mobilization. However, since some graduates of Darülmuallimat refrained from working in distant provinces, the Leyli (boarding) section of Darülmuallimat was introduced as a practical solution. Female students from the provinces were educated in Istanbul and then returned to their hometowns to begin their teaching careers.

This study analyzes the mobilization of female teachers and students in the province of Trablusgarb (present-day Libya) during the post-Tanzimat period, the mobility process triggered by educational reforms, and its lasting effects in the post-Ottoman period. The research findings reveal that the effects of this educational mobility continued after the collapse of the empire and that graduates continued their educational activities in their hometowns. In light of the archival documents analyzed, the structure and consequences of this mobility are evaluated, and a comprehensive analysis is presented, with a particular focus on female teachers and students. This analysis offers a new perspective on understanding the educational mobilization paved by Ottoman educational reforms and their impact at the provincial level, while also emphasizing the role of women in the education field during the late empire.

Keywords: Darülmuallimat (Female Teachers Training College), Female Teacher-Student Mobility, Girls' Education, Province of Trablusgarb.

DEDICATION

To my dear husband, İheb, with love.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my advisor, Assistant. Prof. İbrahim Vehbi Baysan, for his invaluable guidance and unwavering support throughout this research. His constructive feedback, patience, and intellectual rigor were essential in helping me develop both this thesis and my academic perspective. Without his mentorship and the vision he helped me cultivate, this work would not have been possible.

I also extend my deepest appreciation to my husband, İheb, for his steadfast support throughout this process. His assistance in deciphering archival materials, in addition to his unwavering patience and motivation, was indispensable to the completion of this thesis. I could not have navigated this journey with such confidence without his encouragement.

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ISTANBUL, 2025

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BOA, A.}MKT.MHM.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Sadaret Mektubi Kalemi Mühimme Evrakı Presidency Ottoman Archives, Grand Vizierate Incoming Documents, Registers of Important Affairs
BOA, DH.İD.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Dahiliye Nezareti İdare Evrakı Presidency Ottoman Archives, Ministry of the Interior, Administrative Documents
BOA, DH.MKT.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Dahiliye Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi Presidency Ottoman Archives, Ministry of the Interior, Correspondence Office
BOA, DH.MTV.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Dahiliye Nezareti Mütenevvia Kısmı Presidency Ottoman Archives, Ministry of the Interior, Miscellaneous Section
BOA, HRT.h.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Harita Defterleri Presidency Ottoman Archives, Maps Registers
BOA, İ.DH.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi İrade Dahiliye Presidency Ottoman Archives, Imperial Decree – Ministry of the Interior
BOA, İ.MVL.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi İrade Meclis-i Vala Presidency Ottoman Archives, Imperial Decree – Supreme Council of State
BOA, MF.ALY.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Maarif Nezareti Tedrisat-ı Aliye Dairesi Presidency Ottoman Archives, Ministry of Education, Department of Higher Education
BOA, MF.İBT.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Maarif Mekatib-i Aliye Kalemi Presidency Ottoman Archives, Ministry of Education, Bureau of Higher Schools

BOA, MF.MKB.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Meclis-i Kebir-i Maarif Presidency Ottoman Archives, Grand Council of Education
BOA, MF.MKT.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi Presidency Ottoman Archives, Ministry of Education, Correspondence Office
BOA, MKT.MHM.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Mektubi Kalemi Mühimme Evrakı Presidency Ottoman Archives, Correspondence Office, Registers of Important Affairs
BOA, MV.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Meclis-i Vükela Mazbataları Presidency Ottoman Archives, Council of Ministers' Reports
BOA, Y.EE.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Yıldız Esas Evrakı Presidency Ottoman Archives, Yıldız Palace, Main Collection
BOA, Y.MTV.	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi Yıldız Mütenevvi Maruzat Evrakı Presidency Ottoman Archives, Yıldız Palace, Miscellaneous Petitions

TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM

This thesis retains the original Turkish characters (‘ç’, ‘ğ’, ‘ı’, ‘ş’, ‘ü’) in all Turkish words. These letters are kept to preserve the correct pronunciation and meaning. Rather than using anglicized versions, the Turkish spellings are preserved to reflect their authentic pronunciation.

ç – /ch/ as in "church"
ğ – /g/ (soft g, often silent or lengthens the preceding vowel sound)
ı – /ɯ/ (similar to the 'i' in "cousin," but pronounced further back in the throat)
ş – /sh/ as in "shoe"
ü – /ü/ (similar to the 'u' in "cute," but with the tongue positioned higher and further forward)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The educational reforms that gained momentum with the proclamation of the Tanzimat Edict in 1839 helped spread schooling even to the remote provinces of the empire. The expansion of education and the increasing demand for teachers created a new situation by facilitating the mobility of both teachers and students between the provinces and the center.

1.1. Framing the Study: Context, Literature, and Methodology

Modernization movements in the Ottoman Empire, especially in the field of education, accelerated with the proclamation of the Tanzimat Edict in 1839. The reorganization initiative in the field of education continued as part of centralization policies and had an impact on the peripheral provinces. With the new education policies in effect, the relations between the provinces and the center were tried to be strengthened. In particular, so far as the new institutions are concerned, increased demand for education paved the way for the opening of new schools in the region. This inevitably led to training new teachers as well as the mobilization of teachers and students between the center and the periphery.

The main reasons for the prioritization and expansion of education in the modernization movements that gained momentum with the Tanzimat in the Ottoman Empire were the need for a new generation of administrators equipped with modern education[1]. The goal of the Tanzimat bureaucrats was to gain complete control of the administration and to create a cadre of civil servants loyal to the center[2].

[1] Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy, and Discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 86.
[2] Halil İnalcık, "Sened-i İttifak ve Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayunu," *Belleten* 28, no. 112 (1964): 615.

Education had a binding and integrative mission at this point. The fundamental purpose of modernization in education was to open contemporary educational institutions for the upbringing of new generations and to spread them throughout society, including faraway provinces. It is possible to say that there was a centralist perspective here. Through the new social structure that they aimed to build, state bureaucrats appeared to use education as a tool to encourage social cohesion and gradual adaptation to reform ideals. While there is limited direct evidence to confirm that one of their primary goals was to strengthen ties with distant provinces, the broader educational policies suggest a concern with integrating peripheral regions into the administrative framework. The 1869 Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi consolidated educational reforms and provided a comprehensive framework for subsequent modernization efforts.

Yet beyond the structural and legal framework of educational reforms, how these policies functioned in practice and how scholars have interpreted them remains a matter of further research. Contrary to Fortna's emphasis on Western ideological penetration[3], Tanzimat bureaucrats primarily sought pragmatic solutions to structural challenges triggered by the Industrial Revolution's global ripple effects, notably the need for skilled labor and administrative centralization[4]. While Fortna frames these reforms as a tension between "Westernization" and "preservation," this binary oversimplifies Ottoman agency[5]. The state's adoption of Western-style institutions (e.g., technical schools) was less about cultural dissolution, a problematic assumption in Fortna's analysis, and more about adapting to global economic pressures. Thus, the perceived tension between modernization and tradition reflects not a policy failure but the complex negotiation of global and local imperatives.

Evered's suggestion that Ottoman bureaucrats aimed to build a "holistic social system" through education appears to be an overgeneralization[6]. There is limited direct evidence to show that educational reforms were part of such an ambitious and unified

[3] Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 45.
[4] Donald Quataert, *Manufacturing and Technology Transfer in the Ottoman Empire, 1800-1914* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2010), 11.
[5] Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 45.
[6] Emine Ö. Evered, *Empire and Education under the Ottomans* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2012), 2.

plan. Instead, the reforms were shaped more by the immediate needs of governance and administration. Rather than reflecting a clear social vision, these efforts seemed to focus on managing change within existing structures. Moreover, the establishment of a widespread education system could contribute to social cohesion, though this assumption requires careful historical verification.

While broad social engineering claims may be overstated, the 1869 Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi demonstrates how pragmatic educational reforms served immediate governance needs. Making sıbyan mektebleri (primary schools) compulsory for both boys and girls is the most concrete indicator of this initiative. Although it had a realistic and solution-oriented perspective in practice, given the empire's vast territory, difficulties were certainly encountered, particularly in teacher appointments.

The introduction of compulsory education for girls created an urgent demand for female teachers, which led to the establishment of Darülmuallimat (Female Teachers Training College), as no dedicated institution for training women educators existed. As schooling expanded to remote regions of the Empire, this need became particularly acute. However, challenges emerged when Darülmuallimat graduates, for various reasons, either refused assignments in distant provinces or failed to begin teaching after graduation. To address this, the Ottoman government implemented an innovative solution through Leyli Darülmuallimat (Boarding Female Teachers' Training College), encouraging potential female students from the provinces to be educated in the imperial capital, with the requirement that they return to their hometowns to teach after graduation. This policy not only solved the teacher shortage but also created an unprecedented mobilization of students and educators across imperial territories.

This study examines the mobilization of students and teachers in Trablusgarb (modern-day Libya) during the late Ottoman period. Following the educational reforms initiated after the Tanzimat era, newly established institutions provided significant opportunities for both male and female students from Trablusgarb to continue their studies in Istanbul. When we evaluate this student mobility, we can see that for female students who had graduated from rüşdiye mektebi (secondary schools) coming from distant provinces, the Leyli Darülmuallimat provided an incredible opportunity for girls. By coming to Istanbul for their education and then returning to their hometowns

to begin their teaching careers, they offered themselves a rare chance, especially considering the conditions of the time. While facilitating student mobility, these reforms also enabled the deployment of female teachers to the province through centralized appointments. Drawing on archival documents, this research reconstructs the framework of this educational mobilization and analyzes its outcomes, with particular focus on female participants. Furthermore, it traces the lasting impacts of these policies in the post-Ottoman period.

The research presented here adopts a qualitative historical research approach[7] to examine the patterns of educational mobility among students and teachers in the province of Trablusgarb during the late Ottoman period. The research is grounded in an analysis of both archival sources, with a focus on understanding how educational mobility was shaped by the political and social reforms of the era. While the study is informed by gender-sensitive analysis, its primary focus is the movement of students and teachers across the empire, particularly those who transitioned between different regions for educational purposes.

The primary sources for this research include state correspondence, educational records, appointment registers, and personal files from the Ottoman Archives in Istanbul. These documents provide invaluable insights into the appointments and educational trajectories of female teachers who were appointed to the province of Trablusgarb after graduating from the Darülmuallimat, as well as the experiences of students from Trablusgarb who studied at the Leyli Darülmuallimat in Istanbul and later returned to their hometowns to teach. These sources are crucial for understanding the mobility patterns of both students and teachers in the context of late Ottoman educational reforms.

In addition to archival research, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to position this study within broader historiographical debates on Ottoman education and imperial policy, with particular attention to how these reforms influenced educational mobility. The study also utilizes a limited number of interviews with descendants and local historians in Libya. These interviews provide contextual insights into the lived

[7] Bruce L. Berg, "Historiography and Oral Traditions" *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 4th ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2001), 210–224.

experiences of individuals involved in educational mobility, particularly regarding key figures such as Bedia Flayfala, Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi, and Cemile al-Izmirli. Although these interviews may not provide conclusive historical evidence, they offer important insights into how the actions and movements of these individuals have been remembered- or at times, forgotten—throughout history.

This study examines how the movements of students and teachers across the empire influenced the educational landscape of the region, both during the late Ottoman period and in the years that followed. In this context, this approach helps to show how the educational reforms implemented during the late Ottoman period led to significant changes in the region, while also highlighting their lasting impact on the educational systems in areas that were once part of the empire, even after its collapse.

When we look at the bigger picture, we see a negative situation, which includes the socio-economic and structural challenges faced by the Ottoman bureaucrats. They saw the modernization of education as a way to strengthen the state and carried out reforms with this purpose in mind. Thus, education was made compulsory for both boys and girls, and educational activities were launched in remote provinces. However, the political, social, and economic conditions of the time evolved so rapidly that there was little opportunity to evaluate the results of these reforms.

What should be highlighted here, and is often overlooked, is the movement that these reforms sparked within the empire. While the political and social goals were not fully achieved in the end, a significant movement of teachers and students began under the given circumstances. This educational mobility, which is the focus of this study, continued even after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, showing that students from the former territories of the empire not only initiated but also successfully carried out the intended educational activities in their homelands.

1.2. Existing Literature and Research Gaps

Most studies on Ottoman educational history focus on the reforms implemented after the Tanzimat period, while the effects of these reforms on the mobility between the center and provinces are addressed in a limited manner. With the increase in the

number of educational institutions, the mobility of students and teachers between the center and provinces has increased, making the reflections of educational policies on the ground more visible. However, the long-term effects of this mobility in the field of education are still open to research. This study aims to analyze the mobility of students and teachers during the late Ottoman period in the Trablusgarb province, tracing the practical outcomes of these reforms in the field.

One of the first significant assessments of the Ottoman education system is Osman Ergin's[8] work. He examines the educational policies of the Tanzimat period primarily as part of the state's modernization efforts and interprets them in relation to the centralization process. While discussing the structure of educational institutions in detail, Ergin also draws attention to the practical shortcomings. Ergin's work, renowned for its encyclopedic scope, serves as a pivotal reference in demonstrating the diversity and institutional transformation of educational institutions during this period.

The comprehensive approach in Ergin's study is similar to Yahya Akyüz's[9] evaluation of the history of Turkish education. Akyüz analyzes the history of Turkish education not only through institutional structures but also through the relationship between education and society, and the effects of this relationship on social development. Similarly, Ergin's study examines the education system from a broad perspective, considering both its theoretical and practical dimensions. Akyüz presents the Turkish nation's ideas, practices, and institutions related to education, discussing how lessons can be drawn from past educational experiences and how these can shed light on current educational problems. Both studies provide comprehensive and in-depth analyses of the historical evolution of the education system and its long-term effects on society.

The comprehensive approach found in the works of Ergin and Akyüz is also adopted in Mustafa Ergün's[10] work. Similar to Ergin's analysis, Ergün takes a deep dive into

[8] Osman Ergin, *Türk Maarif Tarihi*, vols. 1-2 (İstanbul: Eser Matbaası, 1977).
[9] Yahya Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi M.Ö. 1000 - M.S. 2001* (Ankara: Pegem Yayınları, 2021).
[10] Mustafa Ergün, *İkinci Meşrutiyet Devrinde Eğitim Hareketleri 1908-1914* (Ankara: Pegem Akademi, 2021).

the structure of the educational institutions of the time. His analysis emphasizes the social and political context of the reforms that led to the creation of these institutions. Drawing attention to the importance of understanding the education system of the Second Constitutional Monarchy period in order to fully comprehend the Turkish educational thought, structure, and legislation of the Republican period, Ergün makes a significant contribution to the field with this detailed research.

Cemil Öztürk's in-depth analysis covers the historical development of teacher training institutions from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic in detail. In addition to vocational and technical teacher training schools, Darülmuallimat, which holds an important place in the training of female teachers, is also discussed in the work. The role of Darülmuallimat in promoting girls' education and integrating women into the teaching profession is evaluated within a historical context. Öztürk's study holds a significant place in the literature due to its detailed and comprehensive approach to the historical development of Darülmuallimat. [11]

When we consider these studies, the main point we encounter is that the formation of institutions is presented in an encyclopedic manner. Institutions are addressed chronologically within their historical context, and in a sense, political and social changes can be observed in the institutional context through this chronology. However, this comprehensive perspective overlooks the social dynamics that bring about change and transformation in the field of education, along with their practical effects and analysis.

While previous studies have generally examined the Ottoman education system in the context of centralized reforms and treated educational institutions encyclopedically within a historical framework, Fortna[12] and Somel's[13] work adopts a more dynamic and multidimensional perspective on educational movements. These two studies emphasize that the modernization process is shaped not only by institutional structures but also by social and cultural contexts. Fortna and Somel go beyond the historical and

[11] Cemil Öztürk, *Türkiye'de Dünden Bugüne Öğretmen Yetiştiren Kurumlar* (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2005).
[12] Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).
[13] Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy, and Discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

institutional analyses that Ergin and Akyüz focus on, and address educational reforms at both the theoretical and practical levels, exploring their impact at both the social and individual levels.

Benjamin Fortna's study on the Hamidiye Idadi schools is an important contribution to the history of Ottoman education. Rather than viewing the educational reforms of Abdülhamid II's reign as a passive adoption of European models, Fortna sees them as a unique form of educational reform that blended Islamic and traditional Ottoman elements. Fortna's analysis details the institutional, cultural, and financial foundations of the idadi schools and argues that they offered an "Ottoman interpretation" of modernization. In addition, Fortna shows how these reforms were shaped by elements such as the maps used in the schools, the architecture of the school buildings, and the content of the ethics courses, demonstrating how these innovations coincided with Ottoman identity. By taking into account how educational reforms functioned within the social and cultural context, and how students reacted to these innovations, Fortna's study reveals that the process of modernization in education was not only an effort at Westernization, but also developed in harmony with the Ottomans' own cultural values. In this respect, Fortna's study adds a significant novelty to the existing literature on Ottoman modernization.

One of the comprehensive works of Selçuk Akşin Somel on the spread of modern public schools in the Ottoman provinces is an important work that examines the Ottoman education system from a broader perspective. Somel thoroughly examines the Ottoman educational reforms, particularly the spread of modern schools in the provinces, in terms of social disciplining, westernization, and central-provincial relations. His study looks at the process of modernization in education from legal, institutional, and financial perspectives, while emphasizing how these processes affected different segments of Ottoman society. Somel provides a comprehensive account of the formation of the Ottoman modern educational structure, highlighting how Western educational models were adapted to Ottoman society and the role of local dynamics in this process. This study makes a significant contribution to the literature by analyzing the Ottoman educational reforms from a different perspective than previous studies and by revealing the developments in provincial regions.

İbrahim Vehbi Baysan's doctoral dissertation[14] provides a comprehensive historical analysis of Ottoman educational reforms from the pre-Tanzimat period to the late 19th century. This study draws on archival records and institutional history to follow how the Ottoman education system changed over time, especially with the rise of new schools and educational models. The thesis is structured thematically and chronologically, covering critical turning points such as the Tanzimat Edict (1839) and the Islahat Fermanı of 1856. It also explores the foundation of key educational councils and ministries, the evolving curriculum of various schools, and the role of religious and ethnic communities in the establishment of public schools across different provinces. The study, which also examines the education of girls and the founding process of Darülmuallimat, contributes significantly to the historiography of Ottoman modernization and state formation through education by considering both central and provincial perspectives.

Emine Evered's[15] study makes an important contribution by examining the politics and practices of modern education in the Ottoman Empire. It treats the educational reforms of the period from 1869 to 1908 not only as reform attempts by the central government to establish social and political control but also as a reflection of the power struggles between the provinces and the centre. However, while this study argues that Ottoman educational reforms were shaped by a multidimensional social and cultural context, it also leaves ambiguities regarding whether these reforms were the product of a broader social vision beyond educational policies. The claim that such reforms were, in fact, an effort to establish a 'holistic social system' to rebuild society is open to debate. There is no direct, concrete evidence that Ottoman bureaucrats aimed to implement such a unified plan through education. Rather, educational reforms were shaped to respond to the administrative and managerial needs of the government. Rather than reflecting a social vision, these reforms seem to have been aimed at managing change within existing structures. Moreover, the notion that efforts to establish a universal education system can increase social cohesion remains an assumption that requires careful historical verification.

[14] İbrahim Vehbi Baysan, *State Education Policy in the Ottoman Empire During the Tanzimat Period (1839-1876)* (PhD diss., University of Manchester, 2004).
[15] Emine Ö. Evered, *Empire and Education under the Ottomans* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2012).

Michael Provence's[16] work offers a compelling analysis of how the last generation of the Ottoman Empire contributed to the formation of the modern Middle East. In contrast to narratives that focus on the decline of the empire, Provence presents a narrative that assesses the lives of individuals, especially young intellectuals and political activists, who lived in the last period of the empire. In terms of the history of education, this work is noteworthy for devoting an important place to the Ottoman military schools. Provence highlights how these institutions played an important role in shaping modern educational structures and explores in depth their indispensable function in both the modernization efforts of the empire and the creation of new nation-states. Provence's multidimensional analysis breaks new ground by demonstrating how Ottoman heritage fundamentally shaped the Middle East's modern socio-political landscape.

Mehmet Neyzi's *The Imperial School for Tribes*[17] is an in-depth study of how the education system in the Ottoman Empire reflected ethnic and cultural diversity. Focusing specifically on local and tribal schools, the book explores how these institutions both shaped the social structure of society and influenced center-periphery relations in education. Neyzi reveals how education policies were shaped at the local level, how tribes developed their own understanding of education, and how these structures transformed during the process of modernization. This study makes an important contribution to the research on the history of Ottoman education from the perspective of tribal schools, a perspective that has not been sufficiently explored before.

A review of studies on educational reforms in the late Ottoman period reveals not only works that examine the historical development of the institutions but also works that analyze these reforms from a multidimensional perspective, taking into account their political, economic, and social aspects. Many different aspects of education have been addressed, including identity formation, center-periphery relations, the new generation of intellectuals raised by military schools and tribal schools, and the deliberate implementation of education as a state policy.

[16] Michael Provence, *The Last Ottoman Generation and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).
[17] Mehmet Ali Neyzi, *The Imperial School for Tribes* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2023).

The question of how the educational reforms that facilitated such social mobility created an environment for student and teacher mobilization, and the outcomes of this educational mobility that also affected the post-Ottoman period, remains a gap in the literature. After the Tanzimat, the increase in schooling led to an educational mobilization within the Ottoman borders, essentially creating a flow of students and teachers between the center and the provinces. The Darülmuallimat, as a school, which is also addressed in this study, holds a particularly significant place in this context for both female teachers and female students. While there are studies on Darülmuallimat in the literature, the scarcity of these studies and the lack of research on student-teacher mobility, as far as can be determined, point to a gap in the literature in this regard.

One of the most significant works on Darülmuallimat is a yearbook publication, *Istanbul Kız Muallim Mektebi 1933: Darülmuallimat 1870*[18]. Its author(s) is/are unknown. The book documents the continuity and transformation of teacher training policies during the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic. Published in 1933, this work is based on archival records of the Istanbul Darülmuallimat. However, these archival documents do not provide a complete record of the Darülmuallimat, as most of the information about the students was lost in the 1919 fire[19]. The yearbook provides a detailed account of the institutional changes the school underwent since its foundation, its educational programs, and the employment processes of its graduates. In this respect, it stands out as a fundamental source of reference in studies on the history of education, especially on teacher training and mobility in education. Moreover, the use of documents collected after the fire during the preparation of the work contributes to the understanding of the educational policies and practices of the period. In these respects, the book is a reference work in the field of Darülmuallimat.

However, in the section on Leyli Darülmuallimat, the names of the students who graduated are included. The fact that the names of these female students, who came from present-day Libya to study at Darülmuallimat and are mentioned as graduates in secondary sources from Libya, are not found in this yearbook raises the possibility that the relevant documents may have been destroyed in the fire. This also highlights the

[18] *İstanbul Kız Muallim Mektebi 1933 - Darülmuallimat 1870* (İstanbul: Marifet Matbaası).
[19] Ibid., 65.

importance of conducting comparative studies with secondary sources from the region to address student mobilization.

The works of Ergin, Akyüz, and Ergün mentioned above also discuss Darülmuallimat. However, while these studies address the institutional structure and founding process of the school, the issue of the assignment locations of Darülmuallimat graduates, as well as the educational mobility that emerged among the students with the opening of the school's boarding section, has been overlooked in these works.

Yasemin Tümer Erdem's work *II. Meşrutiyet'ten Cumhuriyete Kızların Eğitimi (Girls' Education from the Second Constitutional Period to the Republic)*[20] provides detailed information on girls' educational institutions in the Ottoman Empire. The study thoroughly examines the institutional, legal, financial, and curricular foundations of girls' schools. However, this schooling appears as a narrative that is not fully associated with the socio-cultural structure of the period. The girls who studied in these schools were later appointed as teachers, and their contributions to schooling and education were very limited. Student mobility is not given any place in the study.

In conclusion, the increase in schooling during the Tanzimat period created new opportunities for student and teacher mobility across the Empire. The Darülmuallimat college, which played an important role in shaping the educational environment for women teachers and students, has not been sufficiently studied in the context of student and teacher mobility. There is also limited research on how this educational mobility affected the post-Ottoman period, particularly mobility between the center and the provinces. The existing literature highlights the importance of this issue, but more comprehensive studies are essential to fully understand the scope and consequences of these educational reforms. This study aims to contribute to the literature by focusing on the legacy of Ottoman educational policies through the teaching and educational activities carried out in Libya by graduates of the Darülmuallimat.

[20] Yasemin Tümer Erdem, *İkinci Meşrutiyet'ten Cumhuriyet'e Kızların Eğitimi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2013).

CHAPTER II

THE STATE POLICIES IN THE CASE OF GIRLS' EDUCATION

The implementation of compulsory education for girls created a demand for female teachers to staff these schools. In response, Darülmuallimat was established, and later, the addition of the boarding section aimed to facilitate the employment of teachers, extending coverage to the empire's remote provinces.

2.1. The Establishment of Darülmuallimat and Its Historical Context

Educational reforms in the Ottoman Empire initially began in the military field to meet the state's needs at the time. The primary aim of the military schools opened during the reign of Selim III (1789-1807) was to modernize the army and adapt it to the conditions of the era. During the reign of Mahmud II (1807-1839), educational reforms continued, with efforts to strengthen central authority. Accordingly, in 1824, a decree was issued making primary education compulsory. Although there was no specific provision for girls, the decree mandated that parents send their children to school[21]. With the Tanzimat Edict of 1839, modernization efforts in education gained momentum. During this period, the main goal of education was to train qualified civil servants in parallel with the bureaucratic changes initiated in state administration[22].

Before the modernization movements, sıbyan mektepleri consisted of education provided in neighborhood mosques. Here, boys and girls aged between 4 and 7 were given basic religious education[23]. Since the children were young, education was

[21] Mahmud Cevad, *Maârif-i Umûmiyye Nezâreti Tarihçe-i Teşkîlât ve İcraatı*, vols. 1–2 (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları); İbrahim Vehbi Baysan, "From the New Order to the Benevolent Event: Making Children's Education Compulsory in the Ottoman Empire, 1808–1826," *Osmanlı Medeniyeti Araştırmaları Dergisi* 21 (2024): 28–54.
[22] Halil İnalcık, "Sened-i İttifak ve Gülhane Hatt-ı Hümayunu," *Belleten* 28, no. 112 (1964): 615.
[23] İsmail Kara ve Ali Birinci, *Bir Eğitim Tasavvuru Olarak Mahalle/Sıbyan Mektepleri: Hatıralar, Yorumlar, Tetkikler*, 2. baskı (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2012), 25.

coeducational. In some neighborhoods, elderly women also provided education at home, covering religious and household tasks[24]. For children above the specified age range, there was no coeducational system due to societal dynamics. Another point to note here is the social benefit of education. Families did not view the participation of girls in coeducation favorably, and at the same time, boys continuing their education at older ages did not provide any significant benefit to the family. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to evaluate the reforms in education not through societal moral norms but based on the socio-economic conditions of the time.

With the establishment of Maarif-i Umumiye Nezareti (Ministry of Public Education) in 1857, bureaucratic unity was achieved in educational institutions, and steady steps began to be taken through the issuance of regulations[25]. In 1858, following the establishment of the Ministry, the first inas rüşdiyesi (girls' secondary school) named Cevri Kalfa Inas Rüşdiyesi was opened in the Sultanahmet district of Istanbul[26]. Thus, the continuation of girls' education after sıbyan mektebi was assured, and it also emerged as a state policy. One of the noteworthy points here is that the building chosen for this inas rüşdiyesi was located at the same site as the administrative center of the empire.

Although this school was a girls' school, families were uncertain about sending their daughters there. A probable reason for this was the lack of female teachers to teach most subjects, except for a few. Apart from embroidery classes, all other classes were taught by male teachers[27]. This situation caused unease among families, leading to a tendency, due to societal norms, not to send their daughters to these newly opened girls' secondary schools. In 1862, an article published in the semi-official Takvim-i Vekayi newspaper attempted to encourage families to send their daughters to these schools. The article emphasized that girls' education was as important as boys' education, and they should benefit from the right to education, which they had been

[24] Yahya Akyüz, "Osmanlıda ‘Kadın Öğretmenli Ev Sıbyan Mektepleri’ (Amerikan ve Fransız Eğitim Tarihinden Benzer Örnekler)," *OTAM: Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi* 15 (2004): 4, https://doi.org/10.1501/OTAM_0000000506.
[25] İbrahim Vehbi Baysan, *State Education Policy in the Ottoman Empire During the Tanzimat Period (1839-1876)* (PhD diss., University of Manchester, 2004), 135.
[26] Yahya Akyüz, *Türk Eğitim Tarihi M.Ö. 1000 - M.S. 2001* (Ankara: Pegem Yayınları, 2021), 164; Osman Ergin, *Türk Maarif Tarihi*, vols. 1–2 (Istanbul: Eser Matbaası, 1977), 457–458.
[27] Ibid., 458.

deprived of. It was stated that through the education they received, girls would learn religious and worldly knowledge, protect their modesty, and assist their husbands in household management. Men's peace and prosperity also depended on this. Additionally, it was explained that the girls' secondary school placed great importance on the education of girls. Teachers were trustworthy and moral individuals; education was conducted under the new system, and the school's administration had been made more orderly. Families were strongly encouraged to send their daughters to this school[28].

As mentioned above, the most significant step in Ottoman education, particularly regarding girls' education, was the Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi, published in 1869[29]. With this code, the Ottoman education system was organized from primary education to higher education into one comprehensive law[30]. The Code regulated public schools and the regulations to be applied in these schools. It consists of five main chapters. The first chapter covers the types and levels of schools, the second chapter the General Assembly of the Administration of Public Education, the third chapter examinations, certificates, and privileges, the fourth chapter teachers, and the fifth chapter financial matters[31].

With this Code, public education was divided into three main parts: Mekatib-i Sıbyaniye and Mekatib-i Rüşdiye, Mekatib-i Idadiye and Mekatib-i Sultaniye, and Mekatib-i Aliyye (Higher Level Schools). The section covering sıbyan and rüşdiye schools also includes regulations for female students. Under the subheadings of kız sıbyan mektepleri and kız rüşdiye mektepleri, there are provisions regarding institutions where female students would receive their education. In the higher education section, there are regulations concerning the girls' teacher training college, Darülmuallimat.

[28] *Takvim-i Vekâyi*, no. 649, 1278 (1862).
[29] Mahmud Cevad, *Maârif-i Umûmiyye Nezâreti Tarihçe-i Teşkîlât ve İcraatı* (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları), 406–407.
[30] Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy, and Discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 86; Mustafa Gündüz, *Osmanlı Mirası Cumhuriyet'in İnşası Modernleşme, Eğitim, Kültür Ve Aydınlar* (Ankara: Lotus Yayınevi, 2010), 106.
[31] Mahmud Cevad, *Maârif-i Umûmiyye Nezâreti Tarihçe-i Teşkîlât ve İcraatı* (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları), 404–439.

As stated above, new regulations made primary education compulsory for girls as well. As outlined in the conditions specified in the regulation, compulsory education for girls was between the ages of 6 and 10, while for boys, it was between 7 and 11 (Article 9). If there were two sıbyan mektebi in a neighborhood or village, one of them was to be allocated to girls (Article 15). In the case of a single school, boys and girls were to be educated in the same classroom but seated separately (Article 15). The fact that the regulation included specific provisions for the education of both boys and girls demonstrates that it carefully considered the social norms of the time, while also striving to encourage families to enroll their children in schools.

Just as in the case of the girls' secondary schools, the lack of female teachers in kız mektepleri necessitated the establishment of institutions to train women teachers. In this context, the opening of Darülmuallimat for the purpose of training female teachers was included in the new regulations[32].

As stated in the regulation, Darülmuallimat would consist of two departments: one for primary education (sıbyan) and the other for secondary education (rüşdiye) (Article 68). The primary department's program would last two years, while the secondary department's program would last three years (Article 69). Graduates of the primary department could, if they wished, they would work as secondary school (rüşdiye) teachers (Article 74). Education at Darülmuallimat was free of charge, and students received stipends. Primary (sıbyan) students received 30 kuruş per month, while secondary (rüşdiye) students received 60 kuruş (Article 78). The reason for this difference is unclear, but it may have been intended to encourage students to enroll in the secondary program. Graduates were required to serve a mandatory five-year term in return for their education and stipends. If they refused to serve or failed to fulfill this obligation for any reason, they were required to repay the full amount spent by the state on their education (Article 77). Female students wishing to enroll in Darülmuallimat needed only to present their diplomas from primary or secondary schools. Those without diplomas had to take a proficiency exam (Article 73).

[32] Mahmud Cevad, *Maârif-i Umûmiyye Nezâreti Tarihçe-i Teşkîlât ve İcraatı* (Ankara: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları), 418.

There seems to be no clear information in the archives about how the education fees were reclaimed from graduates who did not fulfill their mandatory service, although it has not been definitively found. However, one of the records obtained indicates that female teachers who graduated from the Darülmuallimat and were appointed to rural girls' schools upon their own request, failed to go to their assigned positions due to certain reasons they presented. They also refused to accept the temporary assignments given to them. The record further states that these teachers would not be appointed to any other service in Dersaadet (Istanbul) thereafter[33].

This situation can be seen as an approach by the state aimed at preventing disruptions in the education system and ensuring that teachers act with a sense of responsibility. By adopting such a serious stance towards teachers who did not fulfill their mandatory service, the state sought to maintain order and discipline within the educational system.

Ergün mentions that there were debates on whether the only sanction, which required the repayment of the education fees for teachers who refused their assignments, was sufficient. However, he does not provide detailed information about what these debates entailed. Many newly graduated teacher candidates either got married or declined assignments in distant provinces[34].

As it is still the case today, we observe that women who got married also withdrew from working life during that time. In this context, it remains a matter of research whether women's participation in working life can only be realized if they are unmarried. Women who refused to work as teachers after marriage did not contribute to the education of girls in these planned educational reforms. In a sense, it can be said that the education they received contributed to their roles as housewives, wives, and mothers. As a result, despite the training of new teachers, the demand for educators in newly opened schools remained unmet.

[33] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA). MF.İBT., 94/25, Hijri 1318 (1900), İstanbul. The translation guide of the Turkish Historical Society (Türk Tarih Kurumu) has been used as the basis for converting Hijri.
[34] Mustafa Ergün, *İkinci Meşrutiyet Devrinde Eğitim Hareketleri 1908-1914* (Ankara: Pegem Akademi, 2021), 373; Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT., 51/60, Hijri 1313 (1895), İstanbul.

Darülmuallimat was officially opened on April 26, 1870, one year after the announcement of the Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi. During the school's opening ceremony, the Maarif Nazırı (the Minister of Education) of the time, Saffet Paşa (d. 1883), delivered a speech, stating that with the establishment of Darülmuallimat, female teachers would now be trained and employed in girls' schools[35]. He emphasized that this would eliminate parents' concerns about sending their daughters to receive four years of secondary education, just like boys.

In his speech at the opening of Darülmuallimat, Saffet Paşa addressed the education of girls within a historical context and also referenced women's role as mothers. He linked the lack of education for girls solely to the insufficiency of available resources, thereby promoting an egalitarian perspective on education for both boys and girls.

> Women, as they deserve all kinds of respect and reverence due to their nature, their education, and their upbringing, are also matters that require reliable and careful attention. Because from the day a child is born until the day he or she starts school, he or she is completely under the upbringing of his or her mother. During this period, as children's minds are innocent, what they hear is registered in their minds. Therefore, it is clear that mothers play a significant role in the upbringing of children. Just as it is necessary for men to acquire knowledge and skills, women must also adorn their natural beauty with various forms of knowledge.36

He also places the necessity of women's education within a historical context, particularly regarding Islamic civilization, and highlights the current state of women's education by referencing the situation of women in Europe.

> During the early Islamic period, many female poets emerged who were highly skilled in literary expression. Their names were preserved in classical works, and they became renowned for their intellect, perception, and erudition. In Europe, there were many female poets and writers, and their precious books are still in circulation today.37

He emphasized the state's responsibility in women's education. The underlying message of his speech is to persuade families to continue their daughters' education. In doing so, Saffet Paşa seeks to establish an undeniable necessity by highlighting various social dynamics.

> Although men and women in Eastern societies possess the intelligence and capacity to excel in both the sciences and the arts, and to reach the highest levels in various professions, their

[35] *Takvim-i Vekayi*, no. 1217, 1287 (1870): 1.
[36] Ibid., 1.
[37] Ibid., 1.

> falling behind in these fields—especially the exclusion of women from access to knowledge—can be attributed solely to the lack of educational opportunities. Until recently, the Ottoman Empire had no secondary schools for girls. Most girls attended primary school only until the age of eight or ten and acquired just enough literacy to read printed texts. Some received basic religious education at home, learning to read the Qur'an and simple Islamic texts. However, due to the absence of formal schooling beyond that, their learning could not progress further.38

Families' reluctance to send their daughters to secondary schools where male teachers taught had, in a way, paved the way for the establishment of Darülmuallimat. In his speech, Saffet Paşa emphasized the necessity of girls' education from a religious perspective, stating that there was no harm in girls receiving an education and, on the contrary, it should be encouraged. He grounded his argument in religious terms by referencing a hadis-i şerif (a saying of the Prophet Muhammad) during his speech.

> However, nothing religious or legal prevents women from improving themselves by acquiring knowledge. On the contrary, just as it is natural for men to be encouraged to learn knowledge and science, the same encouragement applies to women. The hadith confirmed this: 'Learning knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim, male and female.39

After presenting these justifications, Saffet Paşa explained the reasons behind the establishment of Darülmuallimat based on societal dynamics. In a way, this demonstrated that the state did not ignore the needs of society and that it acted in harmony with societal values while implementing its policies.

> Since there were no special schools for girls in the Sultanate, these children were educated alongside boys. However, considering some concerns, it was decided last year to separate boys and girls. With the patronage of the Sultan and the efforts of the Ministry of Education, seven inas rüşdiyesi were opened in various parts of Istanbul. However, since the teachers at these schools were male, girls over the age of 9 or 10 could not stay at these schools for more than two years due to privacy reasons. During this time, it was clear that they would not acquire sufficient knowledge. Moreover, girls' ability to receive education at rüşdiyes for four years depended on the teachers being female. For this reason, it was deemed necessary to establish and operate a Darülmuallimat to train teachers for both primary and secondary schools. According to the provisions of the Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi, we are inaugurating this school today.40

The school attracted public interest and, according to the official records, 32 women took the admission test in the first year the school opened[41]. Between 1895 and 1896,

[38] *Takvim-i Vekayi*, no. 1217, 1287 (1870): 1.
[39] Ibid., 1.
[40] *Takvim-i Vekayi*, no. 1217, 1287 (1870): 1.
[41] *İstanbul Kız Muallim Mektebi 1933 - Darülmuallimat 1870* (İstanbul: Marifet Matbaası), 4.

with the appointment of Mehmet Hulusi Efendi as the director[42], Darülmuallimat gained a more systematic and established structure. Mehmet Hulusi Efendi introduced a set of talimatname (set of instructions) that brought reforms to administrative matters and the curriculum. Through these regulations, the duties of administrative and service staff at Darülmuallimat were defined, along with their reward and punishment criteria. Additionally, various aspects of education were reorganized, including the curriculum for each grade, the scope of subjects, examination procedures, and even holiday schedules[43]. These efforts played a significant role in the advancement of Darülmuallimat.

These efforts and the new policies put into practice reflect the state's insistence on girls' education. Each relative obstacle encountered was addressed with a new measure, and the goal of including girls in education was never abandoned. Situations such as a family's reluctance about sending their daughters to school led to new solutions, rather than resignation. In this respect, the efforts made by the bureaucrats of the period for the education of girls are commendable.

The prominent writer of the era, Ahmet Mithat Efendi, emphasized the importance of educating girls in nearly all of his works, making him one of the most significant advocates for women's education of his time[44]. Ahmet Mithat Efendi, who also taught at the Darülmuallimat, praised the school and its students in his article titled "Darülmuallimatımız (Our Female Teachers Training College)" published in the Sabah newspaper in 1910[45]. Based on his observations at the school, he expressed the school's and the students' success in detail in his article. He underlined that the students' level was generally excellent in his classroom observations. The main issue he criticizes is that the aid provided to these schools is lower than expected.

[42] Mustafa Şanal, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Kız Öğretmen Okulunda Görev Yapan Kadın İdareci ve Öğretmenler ile Okuttukları Dersler," *Belleten* Türk Tarih Kurumu, Aralık 2004, Vols. 68, Sayı 253, 649-670.
[43] Osman Ergin, *Türk Maarif Tarihi*, vols. 1-2 (İstanbul: Eser Matbaası, 1977), 677.
[44] İnci Enginün, "Ahmet Mithat's Still Relevant Advice: Educate Your Daughters," in *Merhaba Ey Muharrir*, ed. Nükhet Esen and Erol Köroğlu (Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press, 2006), 192-201.
[45] Ahmet Mithat Efendi, " Darülmuallimatımız," *Sabah*, 1326 Haziran, sayı 7472.

2.2. The Establishment of Leyli Darülmuallimat and the Boarding Education of Girls from the Provinces

The Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi of 1869 remained in circulation, with minor modifications, until 1913[46]. This implies that the foundational legal framework for education largely persisted into the Second Constitutional Period (1908-1920). The Young Turk opposition, which played a key role in establishing the Second Constitutional Period, was largely composed of graduates of the new government schools formed after the declaration of the Tanzimat decree[47]. This suggests that the educational system under Abdülhamid II (1876-1909) had a lasting impact on the mindset of individuals who would later be politically active during the constitutional period. Therefore, reforming public education continued to be implemented as a state policy during this period as well.

A significant reform to be implemented is the reorganization of the Darülmuallimat school with the opening of its leyli (boarding) section. As mentioned earlier, although the number of students and, consequently, graduates increased[48], there were difficulties with teacher placements. Teachers who graduated from the school refused to go to the provinces[49], and some even stopped teaching altogether after getting married. This created a significant gap in the appointments needed for girls' schools. This disruption in education brought with it the need for an urgent solution. It seems that it could be suggested that an attempt was made to find a solution to this situation, although no definitive result seems to have been achieved. Due to the reluctance of Darülmuallimat graduates to work in taşra (the provincial districts of the Ottoman State), it was requested that, each year, ten students from the orphaned and poor girls attending the schools that are called in general *taşra inas rüşdiyeleri* be selected in order to train teachers from the region who are familiar with rural life[50]. However, no information has been found so far regarding the results of this request.

[46] Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy, and Discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 89.
[47] Ibid., 120.
[48] Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, *Studies on Ottoman Science and Culture* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2021), 227.
[49] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT., 51/60, Hijri 1313 (1895), İstanbul.
[50] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKB., 65/29, Hijri 1312 (1894), İstanbul.

The solution brought by the then Minister of Education, Emrullah Efendi (1909-1911), to this problem was the establishment of the boarding section of Darülmuallimat. As outlined in this plan, girls who graduated from the rüşdiye schools in the provinces would receive boarding education in Istanbul and, upon graduation, they would be assigned to their hometowns. However, this proposed solution drafted by Emrullah Efendi to address the existing appointment crisis led to lengthy debates in the Meclis-i Mebusan (Chamber of Deputies).

The records of the Meclis-i Mebusan show that this issue was taken seriously, monitored, and addressed. There was an urgent need for girls' new schools. One of the main factors that prevented new schools from continuing to open was that most of the newly graduated Darülmuallimat students refused to assume their assigned positions. During the Meclis-i Mebusan session, Varteks Efendi, the deputy of the city of Erzurum, took the floor and addressed the Maarif Nazırı of the time, Emrullah Efendi,

> … I would take the opportunity and kindly request His Excellency, the Minister, to give importance to girls' schools. There are no girls' schools in the cities of Van, Bitlis, Erzurum, and their vicinity. If the mothers of a country are uneducated, no matter how abundant its economic resources or how high the living standards of its people may be, it is of no benefit. Let it be considered that these women are the future educators of the nation's children. Their moral development has a significant impact on the future of our homeland.51

This perspective links the understanding of social development with the role of women as mothers. As seen in Saffet Paşa's speech at the opening ceremony of the Darülmuallimat, the primary notion that Ottoman intellectuals of that period attributed to women's education was the raising of the new generations. The way to achieve this was through women's education due to their maternal qualities.

The solution proposed by the Maarif Nazırı, Emrullah Efendi, to this problem was to open a boarding section of Darülmuallimat. With this solution, schooling and educational activities in the provinces would be facilitated, and the issue of appointing female teachers would be resolved. This is because the graduate teacher candidates would return to their hometowns and begin their teaching careers.

> …Those who graduate from Darülmuallimat always remain here in Istanbul; even when they do, and even then, they are not enough for Istanbul. Because most of them do not choose to

[51] *Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi*, 25 Mayıs 1326, s. 70-71.

> become teachers, we have deemed it appropriate to establish a boarding Darülmuallimat. In this school, we will invite poor and honorable girls from villages and provinces, in other words, from all over the countryside, educate them, and then send them to teach in rural schools. They will not only be the children's teachers but also the village's educators.52

The most significant point highlighted here is the emphasis on being "fakir ve namuslu" (poor and honorable) in the selection of female students. While this perspective assumes that employment will be offered to those in need and that they will accept it, the phrase "poor and honorable" remains vague and ambiguous. Furthermore, it is observed that the majority of the girls who attend come from families in the upper levels of society[53].

Emrullah Efendi sent official letters to the educational authorities in the provinces, requesting that those female students be sent to the newly established school[54]. The documents specified that graduating from rüşdiye was a prerequisite for incoming students[55]. However, detailed documents related to these letters have not been found in archival sources. The likely reason for this is that some parts of the Maarif (Education) Archives are currently inaccessible.

Examining the Meclis-i Mebusan records reveals that Emrullah Efendi was criticized by Hüseyin Cahit Bey, the deputy of Istanbul, regarding the boarding of Darülmuallimat. Hüseyin Cahit Bey strongly emphasized that, although Emrullah Efendi's attempts to reform education based on the "Tuba Ağacı[56] Nazariyesi" (Tree of Tuba Theory) were theoretically well-founded, they were not successfully implemented in practice, particularly in the case of Darülmuallimat.

> … Because they likened the Ministry of Education to a tuba tree and said its roots were in the air. At first, we looked for the roots of education on the ground; now, we look for them in the air. Soon, we will look for it under the sea, but this is going to be a waste of our time. Possibly, he (Emrullah Efendi) may judge that it is necessary to start from the higher schools, which are necessary for improving our education. This idea may be correct, but that is another matter.[57]

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[52] *Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi*, 25 Mayıs 1326, s. 71.
[53] See Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion on this topic.
[54] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF. İBT., 284/19, Hijri 1328 (1910), İstanbul.
[55] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF. İBT., 293/42, Hijri 1328 (1910), İstanbul.
56 Ali Erbaş, "TÛBÂ", *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, accessed May 18, 2025, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/tuba#1. Tuba is considered the largest tree in Paradise in Islamic belief. Its root is said to be anchored in the Throne of God (Arş), and its branches hang downwards, extending from the heights of Paradise toward the ground so that the inhabitants of Paradise may easily gather its fruits. The tree is described as being inverted in form.
[57] *Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi*, 27 Kanunievvel 1326, sayfa 83.

It is evident that the foundation of the reforms Emrullah Efendi sought to implement in education lay in the “Tuba Ağacı Nazariyesi” (The Tuba Tree Theory). As proposed by this theory, implementing developments from the top down was considered more efficient[58]. Consequently, the first area to be addressed in education was higher education[59]. This was because spreading primary education would require at least three generations to pass. From Emrullah Efendi's perspective, however, reforms in higher education could not afford to wait. The country's development and progress urgently need well-trained young people at a higher education level. In this context, the urgent establishment of the Leyli Darülmuallimat can be linked to Emrullah Efendi's Tuba Ağacı Nazariyesi. Similarly, the criticisms directed at him by Hüseyin Cahit regarding the Leyli Darülmuallimat were also framed with reference to the Tuba Ağacı Nazariyesi.

The criticism brought by Hüseyin Cahit essentially revolves around the fact that the students were brought in before the construction of the boarding school building for the Darülmuallimat was completed. Approximately 60-70 female students who came to Istanbul were receiving education at the Kız Sanayi Mektebi (The Girls' Industrial School) during the day, but at night, since the building was not available, they had to go to a nearby house, accompanied by caretakers. He attributed this situation to Emrullah Bey's unsuccessful management.

> … When His Excellency Emrullah Efendi entered the Ministry with the desire to do many things and see to everything, he gave some orders to the provinces. ... After this order was given, this idea was probably abandoned until the provinces carried out the order and sent the children to Istanbul. The girls came to Istanbul to enter the Darülmuallimat, but there was no school, so it was necessary to place them somewhere; it was said that a special class should be opened in the boarding Girls‘ Industrial School, and the children should go there, but the purpose was achieved, the boarding Darülmuallimat was opened in Istanbul, that is, this was recorded in the book, the newspapers wrote it, it was known as such in the provinces, the notification was made, but there was no school for the children who came after that, they sent them to the boarding Girls’ Industrial School. However, the boarding Girls' Industrial School was located in a rented building. It had no dormitories, no beds, and nothing else. They said, "We cannot accommodate these children here; there is no space." These 60-70 girls, it seems, would have had to be accommodated somewhere. A house nearby was found. The children came to school and attended lessons together, and in the evening, after dinner, lanterns were lit, the janitors would walk in front of them, a procession was organized, and the girls would go to their homes and sleep there. The

[58] Osman Kafadar, *Türk Eğitim Düşüncesinde Batılılaşma: Vadi Yayınları*, 2. basım (İstanbul: Vadi Yayınları, 2016), 258.
[59] Mustafa Gündüz, *Osmanlı Mirası Cumhuriyet'in İnşası Modernleşme, Eğitim, Kültür Ve Aydınlar* (Ankara: Lotus Yayınevi, 2010), 138.

> following day, they would return to the Girls' Industrial School early in the morning in the same procession. This was the situation of the so-called boarding Darülmuallimat in Istanbul.[60]

The framework of the criticism raised here is somewhat unclear. Because the buildings where the girls were coming to Istanbul for their education would stay and study were already prepared. These female students attended their daytime classes at the Leyli Kız Sanayi Mektebi (Boarding Girls' Industrial School) located in Fatih, Çarşamba district of Istanbul. In the evenings, they stayed at a rented mansion near the school, the Ali Saip Paşa Konağı/Mansion[61]. As stated by Emrullah Efendi, these trips back and forth were accompanied by an assigned caretaker.

Perhaps the only potentially negative aspect could be that these activities are taking place in separate buildings. While it could be assumed that this criticism made by Hüseyin Cahit might stem from a protective instinct toward the girls receiving education here, the content of his speech suggests that this interpretation may not be entirely accurate. It seems more likely that the criticism is focused on Emrullah Efendi's policies regarding girls' education rather than the protection of the girls themselves.

It can be inferred from this that Hüseyin Cahit rebuked Emrullah Efendi. However, one point that is overlooked is that the process worked this way due to a lack of resources and financial impossibilities. The urgency to solve the issue made it necessary to implement the school in this way initially. We also understand from the records that the safety of female students was ensured, even though the buildings where they were educated and where they stayed were different.

Indeed, from Emrullah Bey's perspective, this situation was not a failure but rather an urgent solution to the existing circumstances. Since no additional budget had been allocated for the establishment of a boarding section of Darülmuallimat, it had not been possible to prepare a dedicated building. At this stage, Kız Sanayi Mektebi had served as a key solution to address the problem, especially with the beginning of the education of the Leyli Darülmuallimat students here.

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[60] *Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi*, 27 Kânunuevvel 1326, s. 84-85.
[61] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT., 334/63, Hijri 1329 (1911), İstanbul.

> ... We have a Leyli Sanayi Mektebi (Boarding Industrial School). Although the number of students attending this school has reached 1500 since its establishment, only 103 of them have received a certificate of graduation. We send them as instructors. I thought that if we teach them handicrafts and industrial works as well as the necessary knowledge and focus on training them to work with the poor girls we will send from the provinces, both purposes will be fulfilled, and we will train these teachers, which is our greatest need. In this year's budget, I propose organizing a boarding Darülmuallimat. Last year, I received the budget in a very short time. I couldn't analyze everything in detail. However, this was the intention. As many as 80 (78) girls from the provinces, graduates of rüşdiye, have arrived. As soon as they arrived, their schools were ready. Their cots were provided. Today, they are studying there, and I have also appointed teachers of competence and integrity because I realize that the knowledge we demand cannot be obtained from teachers alone. ... These girls will be trained here; they will study for one or two years and acquire practical knowledge. We will send these girls to the provinces to replace the graduates of Istanbul Darülmuallimat who are unable to go as teachers. Because this is their home country, they will teach there. They will train and educate their fellow countrywomen.62

Due to the fire in 1911 that destroyed the Darülmuallimat building in the Aksaray district of Istanbul, and as mentioned above, the need for a building for the Leyli section of the school, which previously had been opened in the rented Sakip Paşa Konağı, the Derviş Paşa Konağı in the Çapa district of Istanbul was purchased[63]. The Kız Sanayi Mektebi, located in the Fatih-Çarşamba district, where the Leyli Darülmuallimat students also attended, was closed, and the Darülmuallimat was merged with it[64]. Thus, all these schools, along with their boarding sections, continued their education in the Derviş Paşa Konağı[65].

With the establishment of the boarding girls' teacher school, the Ministry of Education issued a seven-article decree regarding the school's administration. As outlined in this decree, the school would have a principal and a vice-principal. The principal would be responsible for external affairs and purchases, residing in a building outside the school, and would not be involved in educational matters. The vice-principal would be in charge of education and teaching at the school. Additionally, the vice-principal was responsible for maintaining discipline at the school, along with the staff under her supervision. Only teachers, administrators, and janitors were allowed to enter the school. Teachers would live in a house outside the school with the principal, and they could only enter the school building to give lessons. A clerk would accompany them when they entered or left the classroom. Inspectors, however, were free to enter the

[62] *Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi*, 27 Kânunuevvel 1326, s. 85.
[63] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MV., 158/24, Hijri 1329 (1911) İstanbul.
[64] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT., 334/63, Hijri 1329 (1911) İstanbul.
[65] Mustafa Ergün, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Eğitim Hareketleri* (Ankara: Ocak Yayınları, 1996), 439.

school at any time[66]. From this decree, it can be understood that the aim was to ensure the safety of the female students who were receiving boarding education away from their families. The restriction on teachers' access to the school outside of class hours may also be related to the presence of male teachers who were providing education at the school.

Emrullah Efendi's new educational practice seems to have found support among the public, as evidenced by the girls who came to Istanbul to receive an education. While these students had aspirations of becoming teachers, it remains a question how many of them, coming from such distant provinces, decided to pursue boarding education. Given that these girls were graduates of the rüşdiye schools and considering the conditions of the period, it is likely that their families played a significant role in the decision-making process. While it is difficult to precisely determine the motivations that led families to send their daughters to a boarding school, one can draw some conclusions. Although it cannot be definitively stated that the Darülmuallimat graduates, who were appointed to teach these girls in rüşdiye schools, served as role models for the girls and their families, it can be suggested.

The names of the students who were called to Istanbul to study at the Leyli Darülmuallimat are not found in the archival records. It is highly likely that archival records are not yet entirely open. However, it is certain that future studies will uncover more detailed information. The available documents obtained from the archives include information on the place where the students will come from, the number of students, and the travel allowance to be paid[67].

As indicated by archival documents, students came from the majority of Ottoman provinces. This comprehensive list is the result of thorough archival research. In addition, the archival document lists future students and their travel expenses individually. One document lists 33 future students, while the other lists a total of 86 students[68].

[66] Mustafa Ergün, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Eğitim Hareketleri* (Ankara: Ocak Yayınları, 1996), 439.
[67] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF. ALY., 23/1, Hijri 1329 (1911), İstanbul.
[68] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF. ALY., 23/1, Hijri 1329 (1911), İstanbul.

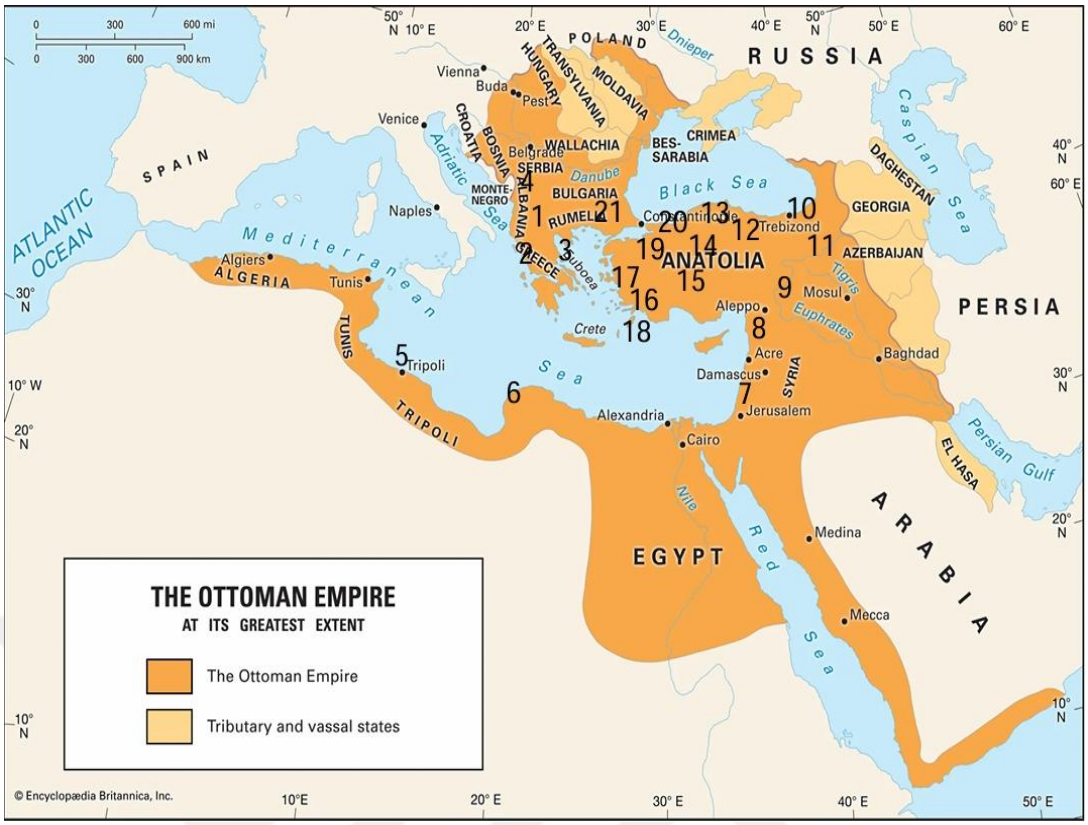


Figure 2.1. Female Student Mobilization between 1910 and 1911[69]

i. Manastır (Bitola)
ii. Yanya (Yannina)
iii. Selanik (Thessaloniki)
iv. Kosova (Kosovo)
v. Trablusgarb (Tripoli)
vi. Bingazi (Benghazi)
vii. Beyrut (Beirut)
viii. Haleb (Aleppo)
ix. Urfa
x. Erzurum
xi. Trabzon
xii. Amasya
xiii. Kastamonu

[69] Encyclopædia Britannica, *Ottoman Empire*, image, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, modified by Mine Atlı, accessed April 22, 2025, https://www.britannica.com/place/Ottoman-Empire/Classical-Ottoman-society-and-administration#/media/1/434996/94947.

xiv. Ankara
xv. Konya
xvi. Aydın
xvii. Izmir
xviii. Cezair-i Bahr-ı Sefi̧d
xix. Hudavendigar (Bursa)
xx. Izmit
xxi. Edirne

This study, which generally focuses on educational mobility through students and teachers, specifically aims to examine present-day Libya. As mentioned above, only a limited number of documents have been accessed regarding the students who were invited from the provinces to study at Leyli Darülmuallimat through the initiatives of Emrullah Efendi. The documents mainly provide information about the number of students and where they came from. Based on these, we know that two female students arrived from Bingazi. Unfortunately, there's no additional information available about who they were. Additionally, it is understood from the archival documents and secondary sources examined that, in the following years, more female students from the Trablusgarb province came to Leyli Darülmuallimat to receive their education[70].

In 1910, more and more female candidates actively sought admission to the Leyli Darülmuallimat[71]. These records also indicate that student enrollments continued in the following years[72]. Overall, it is fair to state that the Leyli Darülmuallimat was a successful implementation. From another angle, considering that girls from all corners of the empire took part in education, it is quite striking and remarkable when we take the conditions of the period into account. Even today, despite the availability of all transportation options, it is relatively difficult for families to send their daughters to distant places for education. In contrast, the families of that time could be described as courageous and determined in this regard.

[70] See Chapter 4 for a detailed discussion on this topic.
[71] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF. İBT., 284/23, Hijri 1328 (1910), İstanbul.
[72] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF. İBT., 343/50, Hijri 1329 (1910), İstanbul; Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT., 60/73, Hijri 1332 (1914), İstanbul.

Despite our efforts, unfortunately, it was not possible to find full internal disciplinary regulations at the school. However, there is a particularly striking point in the archival documents: orphaned students at the Leyli Darülmuallimat from the provinces were allowed to walk in the school's garden and leave the premises outside class hours for their mental well-being[73]. While there doesn't seem to be any clear indication that this rule applied to other students, it could be suggested that this practice might have been an exception for those who met the specified conditions in the decree issued by the Ministry of Education. This indicates that students' psychological state and academic success were considered directly related and that efforts were made to address their various needs.

Archival records note that boarding students at the Leyli Darülmuallimat were allowed to visit their families during school holidays[74], and their travel costs were covered[75]. This shows that the institution acknowledged the long distances many students had to travel and valued the importance of maintaining family ties without disrupting their education.

Covering travel costs also points to a form of financial support in addition to the moral consideration shown to the students. However, the existing documents do not specify how long these holidays lasted. As a result, questions remain about the duration and frequency of these visits. Future research and newly uncovered documents may offer more clarity on these points.

When evaluated in the context of today's educational conditions, it can be inferred that this approach, which can be described as modern, has a holistic perspective that supports both students' academic achievements and their emotional and psychological development.

[73] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.ALY, 38/33, Hijri 1331 (1913), İstanbul.
[74] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT., 324/93, Hijri 1329 (1911), İstanbul.
[75] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.IBT, 324/50, Hijri 1329 (1911), İstanbul.

As mentioned earlier, Ahmet Mithat Efendi also indicates in his article[76] that Darülmuallimat emerged as a thriving institution that trains female teachers. Afterward, the Leyli Darülmuallimat, which was established in order to eliminate some problems in appointments, started a mobilization movement in terms of teachers and students within the borders of the Ottoman state and paved the way for the formation of an educational activity whose effects also influenced the post-Ottoman period.

[76] Ahmet Mithat Efendi, " Darülmuallimatımız," *Sabah*, 1326 Haziran, sayı 7472.

CHAPTER III

THE STUDENT MOBILITY IN OTTOMAN LIBYA

With the Teşkil-i Vilayet Nizamnamesi (Regulations for Provincial Organization) of 1864, Trablusgarb became a province and an inseparable administrative part of the empire. In line with the centralization policy that began at that time, the appointment of governors ushered in a new era for Trablusgarb, during which numerous reforms, particularly in the field of education, were initiated.

3.1. A General Outlook of Trablusgarb Province

The Ottoman rule in Trablusgarb continued primarily with local administrators. However, by the 19th century, Trablusgarb had its share of administrative and centralization movements. These centralization movements brought educational reforms and paved the way for forming a new social structure after the Qaramanli period (1711-1835). Education served as a valuable apparatus for the state to include the people in the bureaucracy and change the structure inherited from Qaramanli[77].

As of 1835, parallel with the centralization policy, the administrative reforms started to take effect in Trablusgarb. Trablusgarb became an integral administrative part of the empire. As regionalism gave way to centralization, the effects of this change on the social structure were inevitable[78].

Centralization reforms brought with them the need for an educated civil servant class. In the 19th century, the foundation of educational reforms began in the Ottoman Empire after the Tanzimat was laid to meet this need. The existing cadres began to adapt to

[77] Ali Abdullatif Ahmida, *Forgotten Voices: Power and Agency in Colonial and Postcolonial Libya* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 7.
[78] Orhan Koloğlu, "500 Years in Turkish-Libyan Relations," *SAM Papers*, no. 1 (2007): 68.

the new system, and the efforts for reforms in the education system aimed to raise new generations and adapt them to the new bureaucratic structure.

For example, as noted by Anderson, the structure of provincial administration from the Qaramanli period constituted a transitional period in the centralization phase and continued to exist until the entire province was under control. The prerequisite for reforms to take place was establishing control throughout the province. With the suppression of rebellions by tribal leaders against the central government and tax increases, the new governors began establishing an orderly and systematic administration[79].

The Tanzimat Edict initiated concrete steps to reorganize the administration. Teşkil-i Vilayet Nizamnamesi of 1864 aimed to make the provincial bureaucracy more efficient[80]. In order to increase the effective administration of the provinces, instead of centralization that reduced the authority of governors, the powers of governors were increased with a new bureaucratic structure. The structure was reorganized in a hierarchical manner, with vilayet (province), sancak (county), kaza (district), nahiye (rural community), and karye (village)[81]. With these new regulations, a new bureaucratic structure was built by increasing the central authority in the provinces. The increasing authority of the provinces was aimed at preventing European expansion efforts[82].

The society was integrated into the administrative structure. Socially different, the Odjaklu, Kuloğlu, and Reaya were eliminated entirely. Participation of Muslim and non-Muslim people in administrative decisions was ensured as much as possible. A Provincial Council comprised the governor, deputy governors, and 16 representatives of the people, including two Jewish citizens[83]. This council organized weekly meetings and dealt with all the province's problems. In addition, Mukhtar's offices were

[79] Lisa Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya, 1830-1980* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 88.
[80] Ibid., 88
[81] Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 3rd ed. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 60.
[82] Lisa Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation*, 60.
[83] Orhan Koloğlu, "500 Years in Turkish-Libyan Relations," *SAM Papers*, no. 1 (2007): 88.

established to serve as an informative liaison between the administration and the people[84].

3.2. Educational Reforms in Practice: Bureaucratic Governance and Community Participation

The Province of Trablusgarb was established following the abolition of the old provincial system with the Teşkil-i Vilayet Nizamnamesi issued in 1864. Researchers in the field, such as Findley, pointed out that this regulation strengthened central authority by increasing the powers of governors. Bureaucrats based in Istanbul were appointed as governors, and administrative councils, mixed courts, and various commissions were also created. This new system was first implemented in the Danube (Tuna)[85] province and later extended to other provinces. Trablusgarb was subsequently incorporated into this new administrative structure[86].

This new restructuring, which began in Trablusgarb, marked the definitive end of the Qaramanli period and the start of the era of governors. In the case of Trablusgarb, these reforms aimed to reduce the influence of the existing tribal leaders on society while advancing the statehood process through policies that established the army, schools, courts, postal, and telegraph systems[87]. As a result, the education system in Trablusgarb was also shaped by the political, economic, and social systems prevailing in the country, as Ahmida also points out[88]. Therefore, the history of education in Libya should be understood within the context of these conditions.

Regional historians state that by the 19th century, primary education in Trablusgarb was provided in or around mosques or basic schools called ketatibs[89]. Education was

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[84] Orhan Koloğlu, "Libya, from the Ottoman Perspective (1835–1918)," *Africa: Rivista Trimestrale di Studi e Documentazione dell'Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente* 63, no. 2 (2008): 278, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25734505.
[85] Aşkın Koyuncu, "Tuna Vilâyeti'nde Nüfus ve Demografi (1864-1877)," *Turkish Studies - International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic* 9, no. 4 (Spring 2014): 675.
[86] Carter V. Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte and the Modern State, 1789–1922* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 182.
[87] Ali Abdullatif Ahmida, *Forgotten Voices: Power and Agency in Colonial and Postcolonial Libya* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 20.
[88] Ibid., 7.
[89] Rafet Ganimi El Şeyh, *Tatavvur al-Ta'līm fī Libya* (Benghazi: Dar al-Haqiqa, 1972), 64.

very traditional and limited in these schools. They provided children with basic religious knowledge. The core of the education provided here consisted of reading the Qur'an, learning the essential verses for prayer, reciting the prayers to be said during prayer, and engaging in basic writing practices[90].

With the reform movements following the Tanzimat, education became a central policy of the state. These educational reforms led to a rapid increase in schooling across the empire, reaching even the farthest provinces. One such province was Trablusgarb. In the middle of the 19th century, educational opportunities in Trablusgarb were almost nonexistent[91]. Public interest in education began to grow with the establishment of educational institutions by the state, and as a result, students who received their education in these institutions were also given the opportunity to continue their studies in the imperial capital.

As indicated in the 1869 Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi, the costs of the sıbyan and rüşdiye schools to be opened in remote provinces would be covered by local resources. However, the resources of Trablusgarb were insufficient, and its economy was in a poor state. Ahmida indicates that Libya's economy was negatively affected by the decline of the Sahara trade. The decline of trade, coupled with European colonial expansion and regional conflicts, led to a forced migration of rural populations, particularly from Trablusgarb and Fezzan, to urban areas or French Tunisia in search of employment opportunities[92].

Although the current situation in Trablusgarb was not encouraging in many respects, the governors who took office contributed to the province's development through various reforms. One of these reforms was the Trablusgarb newspaper, which started to be published in the province of Trablusgarb during the governorship of Mahmut

[90] Osman Ergin, *Türk Maarif Tarihi*, vols. 1-2 (İstanbul: Eser Matbaası, 1977), 86.
[91] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), HRT.h.., no 2819, Hijri 1275 (1858), İstanbul. Map showing the locations of schools such as Idadi, Rüşdiye, Darülmuallimin, and Agricultural School in the provinces and regions of Egypt, Tunisia, Benghazi, Trablusgarb, Yemen, Hejaz, and Basra. A.G.Y.T.T. EHT. (Scale: 1/10,000,000).
[92] Ali Abdullatif Ahmida, *Forgotten Voices: Power and Agency in Colonial and Postcolonial Libya* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 20.

Nedim Paşa (d.1883). This newspaper, which was published with the government's support, consisted of four pages in Turkish and Arabic[93].

The primary purpose of this newspaper, like other state-sponsored newspapers, was to spread reform initiatives to the provinces. In addition, it served to announce the actions of the local administration to the public and included news about the city's notables. The most significant news was the announcement of local support for education through the Trablusgarb newspaper and the creation of a competitive environment in terms of aid. This likely helped foster an environment of awareness and solidarity towards education in society, as people were encouraged to participate in educational reforms through their economic contributions.

In February 1881, a news article was published in the Trablusgarb newspaper stating the importance of organizing the primary schools in the province based on new principles whose benefits had been experienced. This article mentioned parallel practices in Istanbul, the governor's efforts were appreciated, and public support for education was requested. The importance of education was emphasized, primarily through the phrase "those who care about progress"[94].

Thus, those with higher income levels built new schools through charity associations, hired private teachers, and had books brought from Istanbul. In addition, the people of the four corners of Trablusgarb sent a petition to the Director of Education in the center of the governorate, demanding the opening of schools to educate children based on the current situation and to correct it [95].

Newspapers continued to publish the names of local donors who had built mosques and schools to encourage other local people to donate and give money to build schools. Al-Jawaib[96] newspaper issue 1066 thanked local merchant Haji Ramadan Mizran

[93] Lisa Anderson, "Nineteenth-Century Reform in Ottoman Libya," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 16 (1984): 330. Author's note: "Copies of the newspaper are available in the Tripoli Archives. It was published continuously until 1911."
[94] Rafet Ganimi El Şeyh, *Tatavvur al-Ta'līm fī Libya* (Benghazi: Dar al-Haqiqa, 1972), 71, quoted in *Trablusgarb Newspaper*, no. 463, 13th year.
[95] Rafet Ganimi El Şeyh, *Tatavvur al-Ta'līm fī Libya* (Benghazi: Dar al-Haqiqa, 1972), 71, quoted in Tripoli Historical Archives Department, Ministry of Education.
[96] Atilla Çetin, "el-Cevâib," *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, accessed April 3, 2025, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/el-cevaib.

Efendi. He had built a mosque, two schools, a classroom for Muslim children to learn the Holy Qur'an, a fountain in the countryside, and three cisterns inside Trablusgarb, for which he had donated real estate. The school building built by Mizran Efendi still exists today[97].

As indicated in the archival document, a certain Hüseyin Zeki Efendi, one of the notables of the neighborhood from Bingazi Sanjak, had built an ibtidai school (primary school) for zukur (boys) and inas (girls) in 1906. In the document, we see that the request for the opening of these ibtidais to be announced in newspapers was sent by telegram. As it is understood from this archival document, there was undoubtedly an attempt to create social awareness in the field of education and to create a competitive environment among the people by emphasizing the active participation of the public in helping educational activities[98].

One of the other methods used to collect donations was organizing festivals. On the second day of the Eid, a festival was organized in Trablusgarb, where the area was decorated, a military band was in charge, and games, wrestling, and dance performances were organized. The proceeds from the food served at the festival were used to raise a large amount of money to support the activities of the schools[99].

It can be inferred from the archive that the community also participated in the school openings. One class of the boys' ibtidai school, which consisted of three classes, was reserved for female students, as stated in the Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi (Article 15), and it is stated that the opening of these new classes was held with the participation of the community and prayers, as stated in the archive records. The opening of the girls' school in this way was expected to attract families to the school[100].

We observe that the first rüşdiye school was opened in Trablusgarb in 1857, before the Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi[101]. The rüşdiye schools were the highest educational

[97] Rafet Ganimi El Şeyh, *Tatavvur al-Ta'līm fī Libya* (Benghazi: Dar al-Haqiqa, 1972), 71, quoted in *Trablusgarb Newspaper*, no. 463, 13th year.
[98] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT., 180/93, Hijri 1324 (1906), İstanbul.
[99] Rafet Ganimi El Şeyh, *Tatavvur al-Ta'līm fī Libya* (Benghazi: Dar al-Haqiqa, 1972), 73, quoted in *Trablusgarb Newspaper*, no. 1337, 40th year.
[100] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT., 253/9, Hijri 1312 (1894), İstanbul.
[101] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), İ..MVL., 415/18147, Hijri 1275 (1858), İstanbul.

institutions at that time due to their well-educated and experienced teachers. The graduates of these schools constituted the educated class of the provinces[102]. The fact that the Trablusgarb province also started schooling with rüşdiye schools at this time can be interpreted as the beginning of the formation of an educated class among the people.

When the archival documents are examined, it is seen that there was a schooling movement that spread throughout Trablusgarb. Shortly after the opening of the mekteb-i rüşdiye, we see that the demand for schooling was also made in the sanjaks of Fezzan, Hums, and Jabal in Trablusgarb to save the bedouin population from illiteracy, as stated by the archive documents[103]. In another archival document dated to 1885, it is noted that a plot of land from the arazi-i emiriyye[104] was allocated free of charge for the construction of a school in Derne, with the construction costs to be covered by the benevolent people[105]. The community's contributions to schooling, participation in inaugurations, and requests for new schools demonstrate that they were in alignment with and enthusiastic about the state's policy.

The reform movements continued throughout the governorship of Ali Rıza Paşa (d.1876). Considering the economic structure of the people of Trablusgarb, the first step was in the economic field. In 1865, a new gate was opened in the city walls of Trablusgarb to promote the relationship between the city and the countryside, the postal system was reorganized, and in 1861, a telegraph line was established between Malta and Trablusgarb[106] and Bingazi and Trablusgarb[107].

Ali Rıza Paşa encouraged the public to donate to educational activities and issued a declaration. This declaration encouraged the local population to donate to a vocational

[102] Selçuk Akşin Somel, *The Modernization of Public Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1839-1908: Islamization, Autocracy, and Discipline* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 65-66.
[103] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MKT.MHM., 472/90, Hijri 1290 (1874), İstanbul.
[104] Bahattin Turgut, "Osmanlı'da Toprak Sistemi," *Diyanet İlmi Dergi* 36, no. 1 (January-February-March 2000): 92. The quote reads: "It refers to land whose ownership belongs to the state (public treasury), while the right of use is granted to certain individuals by the government."
[105] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 18/13, Hijri 1302 (1885), İstanbul; Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 18/23, Hijri 1302 (1885), İstanbul.
[106] Lisa Anderson, "Nineteenth-Century Reform in Ottoman Libya," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 16 (1984): 330.
[107] Rafet Ganimi El Şeyh, *Tatavvur al-Ta'līm fī Libya* (Benghazi: Dar al-Haqiqa, 1972), 49.

school for the homeless, orphans, and children. Ali Riza Paşa included the following statements in his declaration:

> Children will grow up with good morals, learn the Qur'an and their religion, and learn the crafts that are popular in the country. Thus, crafts will multiply and spread, and everyone will benefit. Teachers will assess the children's talents and direct them to the appropriate crafts. The government will cover the costs and clothing for the duration of the training. In return, the children will work and spend part of their earnings, while the rest will be saved. At the end of the training period, the child will pass the exam, and with the money he has saved, he will be able to buy his craft tools and earn a living in this way.108

As it is understood from this declaration, Ali Rıza Paşa personally encouraged educational activities. He aimed at social development by emphasizing the social benefit aspect of education. In cases where the state could not provide the necessary economic support, the efforts of local authorities to involve the people in development processes were inevitable. On the one hand, this situation increased the governor's position in the eyes of the center. On the other hand, the privileges of the people who participated in aid activities increased in the eyes of the public.

His successor, Ahmet İzzet Paşa (d.1876), was instrumental in the establishment of the first industrial school, Mekteb-i Sanayi, in Trablusgarb. In addition, during his time, he provided expanded public services such as a hospital for foreigners, repairing castles and fortifications, and establishing the Hamidiye Bazaar[109]. The activities of this industrial school continued in the following years. Archive records indicate that this industrial school manufactured and supplied the letters needed for the Trablusgarb printing press[110]. This situation suggests that Mekteb-i Sanayi not only trained students but also prepared them for economic life, even during their years as students.

The following governor, Ahmet Rasim Paşa (d.1897), was the longest-serving in Trablsugarb, with 15 years. His primary goal was to create a self-sufficient economy in the province. To this end, he took a new initiative and planted thousands of mulberry trees to encourage silkworm farming. In this way, economic self-sufficiency and new export materials could be provided. His investments in the field of economics were not

[108] Rafet Ganimi El Şeyh, *Tatavvur al-Ta'līm fī Libya* (Benghazi: Dar al-Haqiqa, 1972), 71, quoted in Tripoli Historical Archives Department, Ministry of Education.
[109] Ibid., 49.
[110] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), Osmanlı Arşivi, DH.MKT. 2465/53, Hijri 1318 (1900), İstanbul; Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), Osmanlı Arşivi, DH.MKT. 2433/100, Hijri 1318 (1900), İstanbul.

limited to this. Ahmet Rasim Paşa established the Chamber of Commerce in 1884. He banned the purchase of foreign currency in the province and fixed the value of the Ottoman currency. In addition, Ziraat Bankası (the Ottoman Agricultural Bank) and the Emniyet Sandığı (a loan institution) branches were also new institutions opened in Trablusgarb during his tenure[111].

It is possible to state that educational reforms would follow these initiatives. The most important achievement in education under Ahmet Rasim Paşa was opening a military school[112]. Graduates of this school continued their higher education in the Mekteb-i Harbiye-i Şahane (Imperial Military Academy) in Istanbul, thus enabling many officers of Trablusgarb origin to join the Ottoman army[113]. This also reflects student mobility between the provinces and the imperial capital.

The Military Academy in Istanbul was the last institution of higher education for students from the provinces. However, graduating from military schools was not the only valid option for entering this school. Graduates of the Aşiret Mekteb-i Hümayun (tribal schools) could also continue their higher education at the Imperial Military Academy in Istanbul[114].

The Aşiret Mekteb-i Hümayun was also an important educational institution providing student mobilization between Trablusgarb and the imperial capital. The education provided at this school was free of charge, and students were also given a monthly stipend of 30 kuruş. After graduation, the students would return to their tribes and work as teachers in the schools to be established in their hometown or be assigned to other suitable positions. As stated in the school's founding articles, the students were to return to their tribes after graduation and serve as teachers in the schools opened in their hometowns or in other appropriate positions. The purpose of the establishment of

[111] Orhan Koloğlu, "500 Years in Turkish-Libyan Relations," *SAM Papers*, no. 1 (2007): 89.
[112] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), Y..EE..,7/13, Hijri 1304 (1886), İstanbul.
[113] Lisa Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya, 1830-1980* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 74.
[114] Michael Provence, *The Last Ottoman Generation and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 27.

the school was to enable the tribes to benefit from education and, at the same time, to increase their loyalty and love for the caliphate and the sultanate[115].

The reform movements in education, which started with the Tanzimat, were gathered under a single roof with the Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi. It was possible to manage and direct educational policies from a single center. While setting aside the political events of the 19th century and early 20th century, looking at educational activities in terms of mobilization will take us to an entirely different perspective. Through these policies, schooling increased in the empire, and a significant level of student and teacher mobilization was achieved compared to the previous period. The impact of the transport resources of the period on this cannot be ignored. This mobilization undoubtedly had positive human mobility and cultural transfer outcomes. This study presents a general framework of this mobility and its impact on the social structure.

3.3. Mobilization of Students in Libya

3.3.1. Female Students

As mentioned earlier, Darülmuallimat was established in 1870 to train female teachers. Over time, however, the institution's intended purpose to send graduates to teach in taşra did not unfold as planned. Many alumni of the Darülmuallimat declined to work in taşra, and in some cases, they did not pursue teaching careers at all. Furthermore, a significant number of graduates chose to marry shortly after completing their education, rather than entering the teaching profession.

With the beginning of the II. Meşrutiyet (Second Constitutional Monarchy Period), it became clear that a radical change was necessary. The primary purpose of this change was that the existing system for appointing female teachers had become unworkable. Thus, Emrullah Efendi, one of the Ministers of Education of the II. Meşrutiyet realized a radical change by implementing an important policy change at Darülmuallimat.

[115] Mehmet Ali Neyzi, *The Imperial School for Tribes* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2023), quoted in Tercüman-ı Hakikat, September 20, 1892.

This new policy mainly aimed to bind the trained teachers to the Maarif Nezareti (Ministry of Education) and facilitate their appointment to provincial positions. To achieve this, it was decided to establish the Leyli Darülmuallimat. Female students were asked to come to Istanbul from taşra to receive training at the Leyli Darülmuallimat, with the expectation that they would serve as teachers upon returning to their hometown.

In this context, the Maarif Nezareti sent orders to the Maarif Idareleri (provincial education administrations) to invite students to the Leyli Darülmuallimat. However, due to limited access to the Ministry of Education's archives, it has not been possible to assess all of these documents. Since the documents used in this study are those that are currently accessible, the number of students referenced in this thesis may change as new archival documents become available for research.

Based on currently accessible archival records, 86 female students attended training at the Darülmuallimat. The number of students, as inferred from the document, varies across provinces. It is observed that travel expenses have also been paid in compliance with the directive issued[116].

The state would cover the travel allowance of the students who would come to the Leyli Darülmuallimat. Considering this opportunity, it is stated in the archive document that while there should have been a higher number of applications than expected, some provinces faced a lower number than expected, and some provinces did not receive any student applications at all. The reason for this is that the families were not fully informed about this opportunity offered by the state. For this reason, as indicated in the document sent by the Maarif Nezareti, the provinces were urgently requested to inform the students that they would be provided with travel allowance and that the girls studying at the Leyli Darülmuallimat would be appointed in their hometowns as soon as they graduated[117].

Since the research focus of this thesis is Trablusgarb province, archival documents specifically examine female students from the Trablusgarb province who attended the

[116] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF. ALY., 23/1, Hijri 1329 (1911), İstanbul.
[117] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKT., 1153/26, Hijri 1328 (1910), İstanbul.

Leyli Darülmuallimat. Based on archival records, four students came to Leyli Darülmuallimat for education. Two of them were from the Bingazi Sanjak. The other two are from the Trablusgarb Sanjak. However, when we evaluate the secondary sources from Libya, we come across one more student from the Trablusgarb Sanjak.

With the establishment of the Leyli Darülmuallimat, orders were sent to the Maarif Idareleri, and female students were invited to receive education at the Leyli Darülmuallimat. As per the archival records, the lists in the documents include the information of two students from Bingazi who joined the school[118]. The lists only contain information about the arrival of two students and the travel allowance to be paid to them. It is stated that these students are graduates of rüşdiye and fulfill the entrance requirement for the Leyli Darülmuallimat. While there is no information on the students' names, it is reported that 22 sim mecidiye[119] travel allowances will be given for each of them, 44 sim mecidiye in total. However, despite our efforts to conduct archival research, it was not possible to trace the names of these students. Considering that not all of the archival records of the Ministry of Education are currently available for research, it is more likely that future investigations will reveal more precise results. For this reason, a comparative analysis has been made in this study, considering secondary sources from Libya.

The secondary source examined states that in the first year of the opening of the Leyli Darülmuallimat, 22 students could pass to the second grade. It is stated that the education provided at the Leyli Darülmuallimat was 2 years and that 25 students graduated at the end of the second year. However, the source does not include the names of the students who enrolled in the first year. Only the names of the 25 students who graduated are included. Thus, the students' names from Bingazi could not be found among the graduates[120].

Hamide Hanım, later known as Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi, was one of the students who came from Bingazi to study at Darülmuallimat. She is an important figure in

[118] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKT., 1153/26, Hijri 1328 (1910), İstanbul.
[119] Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Paranın Tarihi* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2012), 225, quoted in "The coins issued in 1844 by the Darphane-i Amire, with a fixed silver ratio of 15.09, where one lira equals 100 kuruş."
[120] *İstanbul Kız Muallim Mektebi 1933 - Darülmuallimat 1870* (İstanbul: Marifet Matbaası), 42-43.

modern-day Libyan history, especially in the context of women's education, as indicated by secondary sources from Libya that Hamide Hanım was a graduate of Darülmuallimat. Although there is more than one document that can be associated with Hamide Hanım, the content of these documents makes it difficult to reach a definitive conclusion.

In another archival document, a student named Hamide came to Darülmuallimat to receive training. As stated in the document, her enrollment was later revoked, and she was sent back to Bingazi in 1913 with 800 kuruş provided for travel expenses[121]. Considering the document and its date, it raises the possibility that this student might be Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi. However, her biography and other secondary sources indicate that she graduated from the elementary section of Darülmuallimat[122].

In the archival document listing the students invited to Leyli Darülmuallimat, there is information about two students from Bingazi[123]. However, the document does not provide any details regarding the identities of the incoming students. It only lists the places they were coming from and how many students would be arriving. Although the dates of arrival for the students listed in the document coincide with the date Hamide Hanım is believed to have arrived, the absence of names is the most significant factor preventing a definitive conclusion. However, with the discovery of new archival documents, more reliable information may become available.

As stated in secondary sources, Bedia (Surur) Flayfala was the other student who came from Bingazi to study at Leyli Darülmuallimat. Bedia Hanım is also one of the leading figures in Libya regarding the education of girls. After completing their education at Darülmuallimat, Bedia Hanım returned to Bingazi and established a school for girls. Unfortunately, no information regarding Bedia Hanım has been found in the archival documents. The name Bedia is also not mentioned in the yearbook listing the graduates of Leyli Darülmuallimat[124]. The lack of overlapping information is most likely due to the fact that a large portion of the Darülmuallimat documents were lost in the fire of

[121] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.ALY., 36/25, Hijri 1331 (1913), İstanbul.
[122] See Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion on this topic.
[123] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF. ALY., 23/1, Hijri 1329 (1911), İstanbul.
[124] *İstanbul Kız Muallim Mektebi 1933 - Darülmuallimat 1870* (İstanbul: Marifet Matbaası, 1870).

1919, and as a result, she may not be included in the yearbook prepared based on the available data.

Hadice Hanım is another student who came to Leyli Darülmuallimat for education, as stated in archival records. Based on the document, she was admitted to Darülmuallimat in 1913 after graduating from the Inas Rüşdiyesi in Trablusgarb[125]. Although her enrollment in Leyli Darülmuallimat coincides with the year the school was opened, archival records do not reveal the name of any student from Trablsugarb.

Hadice bint-i Ahmed was another female student who attended Leyli Darülmuallimat. As indicated by archival records, she was an immigrant from Trablusgarb and enrolled at Leyli Darülmuallimat in 1914. Another noteworthy detail in the records is that she was admitted to the school "meccanen," free of charge, and as a boarder[126].

Cemile al-Izmirli was born in 1892 in Trablusgarb to the well-known and well-established al-Izmirli family with roots in Izmir. She graduated from the rüşdiye mektebi in the Ottoman lands, which are part of present-day Türkiye. Afterward, she continued her education at Şam Darülmuallimatı (Damascus Female Teacher Training College), graduated from this school, and received a teaching license[127].

One issue that cannot be traced through archival documents is the role of family decisions. Considering the conditions of the early 20th century, it is remarkable that families agreed to send their daughters to a boarding school located far from their hometown. Being invited to the capital of the state to receive education and the prospect of returning to their homes as teachers were likely their greatest sources of motivation. At this point, the role of female teachers appointed and taught in the provinces beforehand cannot be denied. They were certainly role models for their daughters in the eyes of their families.

[125] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT., 410/12, Hijri 1331 (1913), İstanbul.
[126] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKT., 1193/70, Hijri 1332 (1914), İstanbul.
[127] Hisham Tabib, "معهد جميلهـ," *Hisham Tabib's Blog*, accessed April 13, 2025, https://hishamtabib.wordpress.com. See Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion on this topic.

Many of these young girls were no older than fifteen when they left home and took the long journey to Istanbul to study at boarding teacher training schools. The experiences they gained there went beyond formal education. It was a process where they began to define who they were and what they aimed to achieve as teachers, such as Bedia Hanım, Hamide Hanım, and Cemile Hanım. They carried with them the hope of sharing the knowledge and values they had acquired in different parts of the Empire when they returned to their hometowns.

However, with the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, it remains unclear to what extent the expectations carried by these students were realized. After their graduation, their life stories gradually fade from the existing records. This not only highlights the limitations of archival document preservation but also how war, occupation, and political instability have made it difficult to document historical narratives about women. Today, we mostly have their names, appointment information, and some scattered records. However, even these gaps point to the fact that the contributions of the individuals concerned with education and social life should not be overlooked.

This study aims to examine these female students not only as names in the archives, but also as carriers of educational ideals shaped during the late Ottoman period. A single line in an archival document can contain important clues about the life of an individual who crossed the seas for the sake of knowledge, participated in a rural social structure, and contributed to the representation of women in the public sphere. In this respect, the silences and incomplete records reveal the need for a more careful and holistic assessment of the place of these individuals in the history of education.

3.3.2. Male Students

Archival documents suggest that historically, public schooling activities in Libya existed in the 1850s[128]. Local historians argue that in the early stages, people who were not aware of the social benefits of education were kept away from participating in these activities[129]. Another reason for this could be that the social structure is based on different economic foundations. In this case, practical benefit might be understood as

[128] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), İ..MVL., 415/18147, Hijri 1275 (1858), İstanbul.
[129] Rafet Ganimi El Şeyh, *Tatavvur al-Ta'līm fī Libya* (Benghazi: Dar al-Haqiqa, 1972), 66.

the economic advantage brought to the family. However, as the reform movements gained momentum and spread throughout the province, ordinary people also became followers and supporters of the reform movements[130]. This awareness, in turn, paved the way for mobilizing a significant number of students in the existing schools within the empire's borders.

Military preparatory schools (idadiye) began to be founded in 1845 to train students for the Military Academy[131]. For example, five students who were sent to Istanbul, and the expenses related to the uniforms made for their enrollment to Mekteb-i Idadi-i Şahane (The Imperial Military Preparatory School) can be found in the archives. The document's wording is particularly striking, as it offers these students the opportunity to partake in the honor of the military profession. The expenses of all the garments were also covered by Maliye-i Hazine-i Celile (the Imperial Treasury).

> …In order for the students of the Trablusgarb Vilayet-Rüşdiyesi (the Provincial Rüşdiye School of Trablusgarb) to share in the honor of military service, the price of the clothes made for five cadets sent to Dersaadet to enroll in the Mekteb-i Idadi-i Şahane (the Military preparatory schools) was 4260 kurus, and this amount was accepted and deducted from the Treasury of the Exchequer…132

These military schools were the first doors to a broader world for students from the provinces. With the education they began in these institutions, students were leaving their hometowns behind and experiencing a new life and culture, becoming part of something much more significant. On the other hand, these institutions were the first step for them to join the group formed by the Ottoman elite[133].

As noted by Findley, although these new schools could not fully meet the need for schooling, a new generation with its own ideals emerged with these new schools. The traces of the impact created by this new generation can be observed in the Republic of

[130] See Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion on this topic.
[131] Carter Vaughn Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2010), 91.
[132] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), İ..DH., 594/41328, Hijri 1286 (1869), İstanbul. "…Trablusgarb Vilayet-i Rüşdiyesi mektebi öğrencilerinin askerlik şerefinden hissedar olmaları için Mekteb-i İdadi-i Şahane'ye kayd olmak üzere Dersaadet'e gönderilen beş nefer şakird için yaptırılan elbisenin bahası 4260 bu kadar kuruşun Maliye-I Hazine-I Celilesinden Kabul ve mahsub…"
[133] Michael Provence, *The Last Ottoman Generation and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 11.

Türkiye and its foundation process[134]. This new generation not only includes other students who came to Istanbul for education from the geography of the empire. However, with the Ottoman Empire's collapse, it was impossible to observe and trace the effects of this generation of students who came to Istanbul for education in the lost lands. Indeed, this student mobility created by the students who returned to their homelands also had practical consequences in those regions.

In archival records, many documents can be found regarding the students who came from Trablusgarb to Istanbul to study at the Aşiret Mektepleri (tribal schools). However, since the subject of this study is student mobilization, some documents are included in the study to point out this issue. The Aşiret Mektepleri were opened during the reign of Abdülhamid II to provide a five-year education in the imperial capital for students aged between ten and sixteen who belonged to prominent tribes. As stated in an archival document, Abdüsselam, Muhammed, and Ammar Efendi, who were selected from the tribes of Trablusgarb, were sent to Istanbul to be enrolled in the Aşiret Mektepleri[135]. In another archive document, two students named Abdurrahman Velid Şeyh Muhammed Buseyf and Necm Velid Şeyh Buhdeyme from Bingazi were also sent to be enrolled in the Aşiret Mektepleri[136]. This shows that students were called from various regions in the province of Trablsugarb. The most important factor of the tribal schools in terms of the subject of this thesis is that the first graduates in 1898 were assigned to various provinces[137].

Graduates of the Aşiret Mektepleri would be able to attend the Imperial Military Academy in Istanbul. Thus, they could receive nine years of education in the Ottoman military education system without any cost to their families[138]. For instance, Hacı Abdüsselam Efendi, who came to Istanbul from Trablsugarb to receive education at the Aşiret Mektepleri, was enrolled in the Mekteb-i Harbiye (Military College)[139].

[134] Carter Vaughn Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism, and Modernity* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2010), 91.
[135] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKT. 656/41, Hijri 1320 (1902), İstanbul.
[136] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKT. 373/5, Hijri 1314 (1896), İstanbul.
[137] Mehmet Ali Neyzi, *The Imperial School for Tribes* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2023), 8.
[138] Michael Provence, *The Last Ottoman Generation and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 28.
[139] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), Y..MTV. 75/71, Hijri 1320 (1902), İstanbul.

Accordingly, it can be concluded that this student graduated from the tribal school and continued his higher education.

It can be observed that students who emigrated from Trablsugarb were also enrolled in various schools. The fact that the documents' dates indicate the years of 1330 (1912) and 1331 (1913) shows that this emigration coincided with the Italian occupation. It can be observed that the students displaced due to this occupation were provided education by the state in accordance with their own requests. These students, who were forced to leave Trablusgarb, settled in schools located in different places such as Manastir, Haleb, and Bursa. It is quite remarkable that these students later requested to transfer to different schools. This situation can be seen as an indication that the mobilization was understood by the students and that the state provided the opportunity for this. Miftah Efendi, one of the Trablusgarb muhajirs (emigrants) and a student of the Industrial School in Manastir, requested to be enrolled in the Industrial School in Haleb[140]. In another document, Ali, a resident of Bingazi who had come to Istanbul due to the martyrdom of his relatives in the Trablusgarb wars against Italy, requested to be admitted to the Leyli Bursa Sanayi Mektebi (Boarding Bursa Industrial School)[141].

Four students also emigrated from Trablusgarb to Beyrut in another document. The same record lists Mehmed Kamil, Ali Rıza, and Ali Rıza (two students bearing the same name) were enrolled in Beyrut Darülmuallimin. Another student, Mahmud bin Hacı Salim, was enrolled in the Rüşdiye Section of Beyrut Sultanisi. The fact that the document is dated 1331 (1913) suggests that this emigration to Beyrut was due to the Italian occupation[142].

In another archival document dated 1913, it is mentioned that information was provided to the authorities regarding the educational progress of the Bingazi students at the Adana Darülmuallimin (Male Teacher Training College). The directive issued

[140] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), DH.İD.. 26/35, Hijri 1331 (1913), İstanbul.
[141] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), DH.MTV. 40/50, Hijri 1330 (1912), İstanbul.
[142] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT., 412/27, Hijri 1331 (1913), İstanbul.

for the education of students coming from Bingazi also includes information about the provision of salaries to meet the special needs of the students[143].

Students who had to emigrate to other places due to the Italian occupation could continue their education without interruption. This shows that the state successfully implemented its education policies and responded to the educational demands of the students immediately. Some of these students were enrolled in boarding schools and even transferred to other schools based on their requests. This shows how accessible education is for students.

Darülmuallimin schools hold a very important place among the educational developments in the region. These institutions, which played a key role in teacher training, are crucial for understanding the educational reforms of the period. In addition, the documents provide information about the Darülmuallimin in Bingazi. Students who graduated from the Bingazi Darülmuallimin ibtidai section successfully passed the examinations, and licenses were prepared for them to teach[144]. Although it is impossible to determine where their appointments were made at the moment, more detailed information on this subject will be obtained with the new documents available in the Maarif Archives.

It is evident that the Darülmuallimin school was not only in Bingazi but also in Trablusgarb, as indicated in the archival documents. Considering the social structure of the Trablusgarb province at that time, the existence of two Darülmuallimin schools is striking. The following document provides further details on teacher appointments. It is stated that the graduates of Trablusgarb Darülmuallimin will be assigned to Bingazi[145]. In another archival document, it is revealed that Hacı Muhammed-zade Hafız Rıdvan, who graduated from Trablsugarb Darülmuallimin and received his teaching license, was appointed to the Trablusgarb Rüşdiye Mektebi[146]. This shows that education continued in the Darülmuallimin opened in distant provinces and that graduates, if they were successful in the examinations they took, were licensed and

[143] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 452/62, Hijri 1331 (1913), İstanbul.
[144] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKT., 946/10, Hijri 1324 (1906), İstanbul.
[145] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT., 261/64, Hijri 1328 (1910), İstanbul.
[146] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKB., 116/18, Hijri 1322 (1904), İstanbul.

began their teaching career. The fact that Darülmuallimin schools were not only centered in Istanbul but also opened in provinces far from Istanbul made a positive contribution to the educational life in those provinces regarding the appointment of teachers.

From a different perspective, student mobility can be interpreted as a strategy for continuing education across various regions within the framework of the educational reforms of this period. Archival documents show that male students were systematically assigned to schools in different locations after graduation. This mobility reflects an effort to create a broader educational network across the region.

The document shows that students were assigned to different schools in various locations to continue their education. Four students graduating from the Bingazi Merkez Rüşdiye Mektebi would be registered in Mekteb-i Sultani, Midilli, Izmir, and Beyrut Idadi schools[147]. Considering the age at which the students graduated from the rüşdiye school, a notable student mobility is observed, which includes female students as well, exceeding expectations. Based on the information in the archival documents, it can be inferred that the distance between the schools did not pose an obstacle for families regarding the continuation of education.

[147] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKT. 817/1, Hijri 1322 (1904), İstanbul.

CHAPTER IV

MOBILITY OF FEMALE TEACHERS

Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi set regulations for girls' education, and gradually, girls' education became a state policy. The opening of sıbyan and rüşdiye schools was followed by the establishment of Darülmuallimat school on April 26, 1870. This institution aimed to train female teachers and provide its students with stipends. However, in return for this financial support, the students were required to serve for five years in any region within the state's borders upon graduation.

Newly graduated female teachers from the Darülmuallimat were also assigned to the Trablusgarb province**.** However, the appointments exhibited considerable variety. For example, teachers were sent from Istanbul to Trablusgarb and appointed to Erzurum. Teachers also engaged in "becayiş" (mutual exchange) among themselves, as explained under the heading.

One of the most noteworthy aspects in this context is the acceptance by newly graduated female teachers of assignments to relatively remote regions of the empire. Given the conditions of the time, issues such as transportation, communication, safety, and social cohesion were critical and warrant further emphasis. Moreover, it is remarkable that the families of these teachers consented to these assignments and permitted their daughters to relocate.

4.1. Teacher Appointments in Trablusgarb Province

During the Ottoman period, the establishment of schools for girls in the Trablusgarb province was accompanied by the appointment of numerous female teachers who graduated from the Darülmuallimat. This development marked a significant advancement in women's education and the professionalization of teaching in the region.

Since not all Maarif Nezareti documents are publicly available, it is impossible to determine the exact date when the appointments began; however, archival sources show that appointments continued until 1911. Following this period, with the Italian occupation of Libya, teachers assigned to Libya returned to Istanbul in 1912. Archival documents indicate that these returning teachers were subsequently appointed to girls' schools in other regions of the state[148].

Careful examination of the relevant official documents confirms that female teachers who graduated from the Darülmuallimat and received their teaching certificates were appointed throughout the empire, regardless of distance or proximity, based on need. The appointment process of female teachers at the Trablusgarb province reveals to us this adventure that women teachers face in their professional lives. Considering the conditions of that period, the efforts of women teachers and their determination to continue their teaching profession are admirable.

One of the issues observed in archival documents regarding teacher appointments is called the “becayiş”, which means “the mutual exchange of teachers”. This practice allowed female teachers to relocate among themselves with mutual agreement, facilitating the reallocation of teaching personnel in response to varying needs within different regions. As derived from archival documents, muallime-i ula (the head teacher) of Usküb Inas Rüşdiyesi Şevket Hanım and muallime-i ula Trablusgarb Inas Rüşdiyesi (the name of the teacher is not specified in the document) had becayiş among themselves in 1900[149]. This constitutes a notably significant circumstance. Afterward, it is stated in the archive records that Şevket Hanım was sent to Trablusgarb with a travel allowance[150]. Thereafter, the opening of the Trablusgarb Inas Rüşdiyesi took place following the arrival of Şevket Hanım in 1901, as evidenced by archival documentation[151].

To begin with, considering the communication facilities of the early 20th century, it is truly impressive that these two teachers could communicate effectively enough to

[148] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 345/13, Hijri 1329 (1911), İstanbul.
[149] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), BOA MF.MKB, 101/44, Hijri 1318 (1900), İstanbul; BOA MF.MKT. 557/62, Hijri 1319 (1901), İstanbul.
[150] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), BOA MF.MKT. 568/8, Hijri 1319 (1901), İstanbul.
[151] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), BOA MF.MKT. 584/54, Hijri 1319 (1901), İstanbul.

agree on conducting the *becayiş* between them. Another striking point is that the requested *becayiş* is truly remarkable, even when evaluated from today's perspective. Although Usküb and Trablusgarb differ significantly in language, culture, and geography, these differences did not hold substantial importance for the women teachers of that era. It is admirable that they continued to fulfill their duties despite being assigned to such diverse and distant locations.

Since the sources analyzed are archival documents, we did not find any details on why these female teachers engaged in mutual exchange. However, although the first place that comes to mind in requests for mutual exchange is often their hometowns, it is observed that these teachers made transfers to distant provinces of the empire. Furthermore, the personal preferences they consider while making these decisions are also a subject of curiosity. It is noteworthy that, although male teachers were also briefly examined while assigning female teachers to the province of Trablusgarb, no transfer cases among male teachers were found.

During this period, teacher assignments and rotations were implemented to improve education across the country by distributing teachers to various regions. However, it is clear that some teachers who refused to comply with these assignments and resisted faced serious consequences.

In 1909, it was reported that Şevket Hanım was appointed to Kastamonu[152]; however, she refused to assume her post and was therefore classified as having resigned[153]. This information indicates that teachers who refuse to report to their assigned posts and decline alternative placements are considered to have resigned. This underscores the strict enforcement of teacher rotation policies at the time. The reasons behind her decision to refuse to go to Kastamonu and instead prefer to remain in Trablusgarb after being transferred there from her previous post in Usküb through a becayiş are a matter of curiosity. The reason for her preference to stay in Trablusgarb initially seems to be a personal choice. However, considering the conditions of the period, the persistence of a female teacher assigned to a distant province, to the point where her resignation was considered, presents an interesting case.

[152] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), BOA MF.İBT. 224/65, Hijri 1327 (1909), İstanbul.
[153] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), BOA MF.MKB. 180/103, Hijri 1329 (1911), İstanbul.

Afterward, the lack of teachers at the Trablusgarb Inas Rüşdiyesi led officials to reconsider Şevket Hanım's situation. Since Trablusgarb was a far and less preferred province, and low salaries made appointments difficult, she was reassigned to the school with a pay raise. Because she was already living in Trablusgarb, this solution made sense for her and the school's needs[154].

Teacher appointments and promotions during this period seem to have been based on both the qualifications of teachers and the needs of the regions. These assignments not only reflect the policies in place but also the personal decisions and challenges faced by the teachers.

The records show that another mutual exchange took place between the Trablusgarb Inas Rüşdiyesi muallime-i ula and the Kosova Inas Rüşdiyesi muallime-i ula in this matter. However, it is understood that for some special reasons, the Trablusgarb Inas Rüşdiyesi muallime-i ula resigned, and the document states that if she resigns, she is allowed to go to her new assignment in Kosova[155]. As indicated by the information in this document, the teacher's resignation was most likely accepted since she had completed the mandatory five-year term of office.

Another notable example in this context is Aliye Hanım, who was appointed as a teacher to the Bingazi Inas Rüşdiyesi. Records related to teacher rotations reveal that she was subsequently assigned to the Erzurum Inas Rüşdiyesi as a muallime-i ula, signifying a promotion. However, she declined this appointment and was instead assigned to the Isparta Inas Rüşdiye Mektebi as a muallime-i ula in the Konya province[156].

There are a few important points that need to be underlined in this appointment. Aliye Hanım had to return to Istanbul due to the Italian occupation that began while she was still teaching in Bingazi[157]. Therefore, teachers returning from Trablusgarb were immediately assigned to the schools in need based on the decision[158].

[154] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 285/5, Hijri 1328 (1910), İstanbul.
[155] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 99/14, Hijri 1319 (1901), İstanbul.
[156] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 358/77, Hijri 1330 (1912), İstanbul.
[157] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 358/48, Hijri 1330 (1912), İstanbul.
[158] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 345/13, Hijri 1329 (1911) İstanbul.

What stands out in this reassignment is that relocation from Istanbul to Bingazi was regarded as acceptable for work and living, whereas Erzurum was a reason for refusal. From a modern perspective, such decisions may reflect concerns about shared language and cultural values, but perceptions were quite different in the early 20th century.

Another notable point is that experienced teachers became a factor in preference and demand during appointments. The fact that appointments favored such teachers can be interpreted as an expectation for education to continue in a stable and qualified manner. As stated in the information contained in the archival document, it is stated that the Directorate of Darülmuallimat was informed that an experienced and competent female teacher had been selected for the position of muallime-i ula at the Trablusgarb Inas Rüşdiyesi and that the authorization document for this appointment had been sent[159].

The documents indicate that teacher appointments were also made to the sanjaks of the Trablsugarb province. While this shows the appointments made to schools within the province, it also reveals that new assignments were made to schools within the empire's territory, regardless of distance and proximity. In the conditions of that period, the efforts and endeavors of the women teachers who went to their duty stations based on these appointments are a dedication that is hard to believe even when viewed from today's perspective.

The case of Aliye Hanım is a clear example of this. While she was working as Bingazi Inas Rüşdiyesi muallime-i ula, Fatma Huriye Hanım, a muallime-i ula at Erzurum Inas Rüşdiyesi, was appointed to Edirne Inas Rüşdiye. Thus, Aliye Hanım was appointed to the vacant position in Erzurum[160]. Another archival record requests the appointment of teachers for a new inas mektebi (school for girls) to be opened in the Hums sanjak in the Trablusgarb province[161].

[159] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKB. 164/126, Hijri 1326 (1908), İstanbul.
[160] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 357/6, Hijri 1330 (1912), İstanbul.
[161] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKB. 143/123, Hijri 1325 (1907), İstanbul.

It is observed that teacher appointments not only responded to the educational needs of the region but also ensured that graduates from different schools were included in the education system. In addition, the differences in the appointment processes of graduates from various schools show how the education policies of the time were implemented according to the existing demand.

This is further demonstrated by the fact that graduates of the Leyli Kız Sanayi Mektebi who were appointed to Trablusgarb. As indicated by the archival document, Darülmuallimat graduates were appointed to Istanbul and the provinces as rüşdiye teachers. In contrast, graduates of the Leyli Kız Sanayi Mektebi were appointed to provincial schools that had no applicants from Darülmuallimat graduates[162].

Accordingly, it is stated that a letter of consent (approval document) was sent to the Trablsugarb Inas Rüşdiyesi to select a graduate of Darülmuallimat or the Leyli Kız Sanayi Mektebi to be appointed as a teacher[163]. The fact that Nazire Hanım, as the previous muallime-i saniye (assistant teacher) of Trablusgarb Inas Rüşdiyesi, was a graduate of Leyli ve Nehari Kız Sanayi Mektebi (Boarding and Day Girls' Industrial School) is a clear example of this practice[164].

The appointment decisions in these documents reveal the need for the Leyli Darülmuallimat. Although the documents indicate that appointments were made, many positions were rejected and remained vacant. Therefore, opening a Leyli Darülmuallimat was a rational practice that provided a proper solution to the problem.

Another noteworthy aspect of teacher mobility is that they come to Istanbul during vacations. This shows that distance is relative from today's perspective, and that these pioneering women teachers did not let geographical or social boundaries limit their mission. A teacher of Bingazi İnas Rüşdiyesi was permitted to come to Istanbul due to her mother's illness[165]. Similarly, a teacher who came to Istanbul on vacation was granted an extension of her leave upon request[166]. A further instance involved Şevket

[162] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 212/99, Hijri 1326 (1908), İstanbul.
[163] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKB. 169/26, Hijri 1326 (1908), İstanbul.
[164] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 566/49, Hjri 1334 (1916), İstanbul.
[165] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKT. 1060/57, Hijri 1326 (1908), İstanbul.
[166] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKT. 1080/15, Hijri 1326 (1908), İstanbul.

Hanım and Nigar Hanım, teachers at the Trablusgarb Inas Rüşdiyesi, who were sent to Istanbul on leave for medical treatment[167].

Transportation was undoubtedly provided by ferry for these travels. The ferry service between Istanbul and Trablusgarb started in 1853[168], and the travel time was fifteen to twenty days, as stated in the archival records[169].

It is also noted that teachers were permitted to travel to Mecca from their places of assignment to perform the pilgrimage. This demonstrates that the mobility of women teachers in that period extended well beyond social and physical boundaries. Their determination to pursue their goals served as their primary guide. The case of Muallime-i Saniye of Bingazi Inas Rüşdiyesi Seydiye Hanım can be cited as an example in this context. She was permitted to perform the pilgrimage[170]. Although the details of how the trip would be undertaken are not provided, it is noteworthy that teachers of the period could travel between regions separated by such great distances.

One particularly striking example of how the state recognized the contributions of women educators is the case of Fatma Şevket Hanım. As the muallime-i ula at the Trablusgarb Inas Rüşdiyesi, she was not only entrusted with a leading role in girls' education in one of the Empire's distant provinces but also honored with the Üçüncü Rütbeden Şefkat Nişanı (Third-Class Imperial Order of Compassion).[171] This prestigious medal, rarely bestowed on female educators, illustrates both her exceptional service and the state's acknowledgment of women's critical role in public service.

The mobility and dedication of women teachers in the late Ottoman period, especially those assigned to remote provinces such as Trablusgarb, reflect a remarkable story. Despite all the challenges of the social and geographical conditions of the period, these women teachers crossed not only physical but also social and professional boundaries.

[167] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKT. 863/3, Hijri 1323 (1905), İstanbul.
[168] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), A.}MKT.MHM. 50/76, Hijri 1269 (1853), İstanbul.
[169] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), A.}MKT.MHM. 502/18, Hijri 1308 (1890), İstanbul.
[170] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKT. 1025/74, Hijri 1325 (1907), İstanbul.
[171] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 132/93, Hijri 1321 (1903), İstanbul.

Their journeys were not just journeys to their assigned destinations but journeys of purpose, courage, and a sense of duty.

Teachers like Fatma Şevket Hanım, who continued their duties even in remote and under-resourced areas, were sometimes honored by the state with medals such as the Şefkat Nişanı.[172] This shows that their work's value was officially recognized at times, though their daily efforts often remained invisible in the more extensive history.

These examples point not only to teacher appointments but also to the existence of a generation of women teachers who were deeply committed to their profession. These voices, once lost in the far corners of the empire, reach us today through archival documents, reminding us that education was not just a duty but a dedication for them. This legacy still sheds light on our understanding of the human side of gender, service, and state policies.

4.2. Inadequacies of Teachers and Associated Investigations

In the context of late Ottoman educational administration, distance did not pose a significant obstacle to either the appointment of teachers or the monitoring of their performance and the quality of instruction.

Beyond geographical considerations, the professional inadequacy of teachers also played a significant role in appointment decisions. In this regard, archival documents reveal complaints filed against teachers, investigations conducted, and instances of undeserved appointments.

Some complaints against teachers were recorded in the archival documents for various reasons. One of the primary reasons for the complaints was the teachers' mistreatment of the students. The head teacher of Bingazi Inas Rüşdiyesi, Zekiye Hanım, mistreated the students beyond expectations. This led to a decline in student enrollment at the school, ultimately resulting in its closure in the year. No specific information has yet

[172] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 132/93, Hijri 1321 (1903), İstanbul.

been found in archival documents regarding the nature of this mistreatment, which ultimately led to the school's closure due to a decline in student enrollment[173].

The investigations conducted regarding Zekiye Hanım can be contextualized within the framework of the Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi. A key provision of this regulation was the prohibition of physical punishment, such as beating, as well as verbal abuse, including cursing and humiliation, as methods of disciplining students. Teachers who engaged in such behaviors were subject to immediate consequences[174].

Subsequently, an administrative procedure was initiated against Zekiye Hanım, which concluded with her dismissal, and she was replaced by Aliye Hanım, appointed at half salary[175]. The appointment of Aliye Hanım did not stop the complaints. This time, Aliye Hanım, who was working as an embroidery teacher at the school, was found to be professionally incompetent, and Zehra Hanım was appointed to her position[176].

This shows that the people of Trablusgarb province had expectations from education, and if these expectations were not met, they would follow the problem. Even though it was a province far from the imperial capital and relatively impoverished, the fact that the people of Trablusgarb province were closely involved in education is indeed noteworthy.

Teacher appointments during this period were made with a clear emphasis on the qualifications required for each position. It is clear from the documents that these appointments were not made arbitrarily, and that teachers' qualifications were always given priority. It can be inferred that if a teacher did not meet the required criteria, he or she was not appointed. The case of the appointment of Nigar bint-i Hacı Hilmi, a teacher in the ihtiyat sınıfı (reserve class) of the Trablusgarb Merkez Inas Rüşdiyesi, is an example of this issue. Her appointment as Muallim-i Saniye was on the agenda. However, due to her weakness in teaching handicrafts and hand skills, it was decided

[173] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 194/54, Hijri 1323 (1905), İstanbul.
[174] İbrahim Vehbi Baysan, *State Education Policy in the Ottoman Empire During the Tanzimat Period (1839-1876)* (PhD diss., University of Manchester, 2004), 181.
[175] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 255/78, Hijri 1327 (1909), İstanbul.
[176] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 299/93, Hijri 1329 (1911), İstanbul.

that she could not assist the muallime-i ula and was not appointed to the relevant position[177].

Unmerited appointments were also another issue, and it was carefully monitored. The appointment of unqualified individuals through favoritism or manipulation not only calls into question the credibility of the appointment process but also profoundly affects the quality of education. The appointment of Melek Hanım as a teacher at the Bingazi Inas Rüşdiye Mektebi is a striking example of this. This appointment has astonishing details regarding favoritism and disregard for merit beyond merely having sufficient qualifications. The appointment of Melek Hanım and the investigations launched in response to the complaints received afterward show that the matter was thoroughly examined and clarified.

Melek Hanım's appointment as a teacher at the Bingazi Inas Rüşdiye Mektebi was investigated due to favoritism. As stated in archival records, a complaint about Melek Hanım was filed by the head teacher of the Bingazi Sancağı Mektebi (Benghazi Sanjak School). Although she was a student at the Bingazi Mektebi Ibtidaisi (Benghazi Primary School), Melek Hanım was appointed as a teacher at the Bingazi Inas Rüşdiye Mektebi. The archival documents indicate that the mutasarrıf of Bingazi (the administrator of Benghazi) forged records to present 13-year-old Melek Hanım as 20 years old. Due to her young age and lack of qualifications, numerous complaints were lodged against her. Despite these complaints, the mutasarrıf in question later destroyed the relevant documents. The investigation was eventually initiated based on the records provided by the head teacher of the Bingazi Sancağı[178].

The investigation into Melek Hanım's appointment not only exposed favoritism but also emphasized the importance of transparency and accountability in teacher appointments. The distortion of information regarding Melek Hanım's age and qualifications demonstrated how easily the system could be abused if complaints are ignored.

Teacher appointments and the qualifications of educators were important elements of the education system during this period. While the aim was to ensure that only

[177] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 201/74, Hijri 1325 (1907), İstanbul.
[178] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKT. 1074/79, Hijri 1326 (1908), İstanbul.

qualified people were appointed to teaching positions, there were instances where people without appropriate qualifications were appointed. These irregularities exposed flaws in the appointment process and brought to the fore the problems created by the appointment of unqualified people as teachers.

It is observed that an investigation was initiated following a school teacher's complaint in this context. Hafız Ahmed and his wife were found incompetent by the teacher of the Bingazi Sancağı Inas Mekteb-i Rüşdiyesi, and a complaint was filed against them. It is understood from the document's content that Hafız Ahmed and his wife were also working at the Bingazi Sancağı Inas Mekteb-i Rüşdiyesi. Based on this complaint file, it was requested that diploma holders be appointed instead of the aforementioned people[179]. As indicated by this information revealed in the archival document, it is obvious that Hafız Ahmed and his wife were teaching without a diploma. However, no information has yet been found on how they got this position.

It can be seen from the documents that there are references to 'inappropriate' behaviors of female teachers. Although judgments were made regarding the teachers based on these behaviors, no information is provided about what these behaviors actually were.

The archival document concerns the embroidery teacher of the Trablsugarb Merkez (centre) Inas Rüşdiye Mektebi, who was dismissed due to her alleged impotence and immorality. The document provides no details about the behaviors described as impotence and immorality, so it is not possible to determine the exact reasons for these accusations. The document only states that Ortanca Hanım replaced the dismissed teacher[180].

Another example of complaints about teachers' inappropriate behavior is about Şevket Hanım, Nigar Hanım, and Nezaket Hanım, who worked at the Trablusgarb Inas Rüşdiye Mektebi. Although an investigation was initiated against them for these inappropriate behaviors, there is no information about what these behaviors were in the archival documents accessed. When the documents are followed, it is seen that the investigation requested that the teachers be replaced due to their inability to fulfill their

[179] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 178/35, Hijri 1324 (1906), İstanbul.
[180] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.MKB. 111/62, Hijri 1320 (1902), İstanbul.

duties properly and other bad behavior, and that the necessary investigation be carried out on them and the supervision be notified whether they could continue their duties. However, since the investigation revealed that the complaints were unfounded, the teachers were not kept in Istanbul but sent to their duty stations[181].

With the opening of the Darülmuallimat in the Ottoman Empire, female teachers officially began their professional lives, and the role of women in education became more visible. The appointments of female teachers to distant regions such as Trablusgarb and Bingazi show that education was not limited to the capital but spread throughout the empire. Although these appointments took place in remote geographies, they point to a process in which education was constantly monitored, and the public's expectations regarding education were taken into account.

Although these regions were far from the capital and relatively poor economically, the close monitoring of educational activities reveals the public's high interest in education. The processing of complaints and appeals from the local population shows that dissatisfaction with the quality of education is taken seriously, and improvements are made.

This process has not only been limited to the implementation of education policies but has also contributed to a greater social inclusion of women through the visibility of female teachers in society. With the education of girls, it was possible to pass on this legacy to the next generation, and these educational activities, especially in remote provinces such as Trablusgarb, made a significant difference in terms of the role of women in society.

[181] Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), MF.İBT. 167/104, Hijri 1323 (1905), İstanbul.

CHAPTER V

LIFE JOURNEYS: UNVEILING THE LIVES OF REMARKABLE WOMEN

Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi, Bedia Flayfala, and Cemile al-Izmirli are pioneering figures in the history of Libyan women's education in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As graduates or students of the Darülmuallimat, they represent Ottoman efforts to modernize women's education and expand their social roles. Their educational journey from Libya to Istanbul epitomizes the educational mobility between Ottoman provinces and the goal of training female teachers.

With the education they received at Darülmuallimat, these three women not only changed their own lives but also became role models and educational leaders for the girls of the period. Thus, the professional development of these women from the peripheral provinces of the empire, such as Trablusgarb, emerged in post-Ottoman Libya as a groundbreaking step in girls' education in the region.

As graduates of the Darülmuallimat, Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi, Cemile al-Izmirli, and Bedia Flayfala's most significant historical contribution was their service to the expansion of girls' schools in post-Ottoman Libya. Throughout their teaching careers, these women worked to expand the limited educational opportunities available to girls at the time, and their professional presence was not only confined to teaching but also helped establish the idea that 'women can be educators' in society. As silent yet determined pioneers in the struggle for girls' right to education, they opened doors for generations to come.

5.1. Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi

The information we have about Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi can be found in articles published online and in a biography written about her. The fact that this subject,

regarding the women pioneers in education, has not been extensively studied by local historians and researchers in Libya. Based on our findings from accessible sources, this presents a limitation for this study. However, the fact that these women became well-known figures in society and the information gathered through interviews with local people about them serves to confirm the details presented in this work.

Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi was born in 1892 in Benghazi to a Libyan family. However, Murad El-Huni, who has spoken at the Libyan-Italian Cultural and Arts Association and the Benghazi Heritage Foundation and conducted research on the history of foreign communities in Benghazi, states that Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi's family origins trace back to Crete (Girit)[182]. However, no information is provided regarding when they migrated to Benghazi. When examining archival documents, there are multiple references to families being relocated from Crete (Girit) to Benghazi, but no specific information has yet been found about Hamide Hanım's family background.

Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi came to Istanbul in 1910 to study at the Leyli Darülmuallimat. After staying in Istanbul for five years, she graduated from the rüşdiye section of Leyli Darülmuallimat. The article states that after receiving her teaching certificate with outstanding achievement, the institute administration selected her to continue her education with a scholarship at a university in France. However, Hamide Hanım's father refused[183]. No archival records have been found to confirm this information. Additionally, there are no records of other students in similar situations that could serve as a precedent for Hamide Hanım. This information is also absent from the biography of Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi. Future studies and newly discovered documents may help clarify this issue.

[182] Abdel Salam Al-Faqih, "Al-Houni Narrates the History of Foreign Communities in the City of Benghazi," *Al-Wasat*, April 25, 2018, https://alwasat.ly/news/art-culture/203706 (accessed April 28, 2025).
[183] Zaid Afrij Al-Basyuni, "A Lady from Benghazi," originally published in *Al-Kalima* (2012), republished on *TIEOB*, https://tieob.com/archives/10211 (accessed April 28, 2025).

From the available information[184], it can be understood that Hamide Hanım received a solid education in Istanbul. It is stated that she memorized the Qur'an and was fluent in Arabic, Turkish, French, Greek, Italian, and Armenian, and that she also played the oud. After returning from Istanbul in 1914-1915, Hamide Hanım married Abdülcelil al-Unayzi, one of the prominent families of Benghazi, and took his surname. As stated in her biography, with the support of her husband, she began working as a teacher.

Between 1918 and 1924, Hamide Hanım volunteered as a teacher at her home, and by 1924, with permission from the Italian colonial administration, she opened a school for girls where she taught Italian, Arabic, the Qur'an, sewing, and carpet weaving (using a loom). She later expanded her educational activities, opening more schools and allowing more girls to participate in education. The names of some of the female students who graduated from the schools she established and later became teachers at new schools are also mentioned in her biography. In addition to teaching, several prominent figures, such as the famous radio personality Hadice al-Cehmi, are noted to have graduated from her school and played active roles in Libyan social life.

With Libya gaining independence in 1951, the pressure of Italian colonial rule in education was lifted, and the conditions for education improved. After this, Hamide Hanım took on significant roles such as the Director of Female Education, Education Inspector, and the first principal of the girls' school in the post-independence period.

In the mid-1950s, while serving as the Director of Female Education, she advanced girls' education to higher levels and ensured the establishment of the Women's Teacher Training Institute, leading many girls to enroll in the institute. The training duration at the Women's Teacher Training Institute was set to two years after primary school. Monthly scholarships were provided to students for books and educational materials. Later, the duration was extended to four years, and after specialization, the students obtained teaching certificates. It can be said that the education model she implemented in this project was based on the training she received at Leyli Darülmuallimat.

[184] Hüseyin bin Amir, *Eminet. El-Mer'etu'l-Libiyye ve İbda' ve İş'a: Cidet el-Unberiyye ve Nısfu Karnin mine'z-Zahireti't-Ta'limiyye fî Libya* (Bingazi: Libya Ulusal Kütüphanesi [Darü'l-Kütübi'l-Vataniyye], 2005). The information following this note is quoted from this biography.

In addition to these, Hamide Hanım initiated several new projects, such as evening middle school and high school programs for girls and basic education programs for women who were illiterate. She became known for her struggle to convince families about the importance of educating girls and ensuring they completed secondary and university education, despite the constraints of societal traditions. Due to her significant role in society, she was the first woman to receive the highest medal from the late King Idris al-Sanusi[185]. She passed away on August 15, 1982, leaving behind a great legacy for the education of girls.

The main subject of this study is student mobilization during the Ottoman period. This student mobility was implemented almost as a state policy, with students being encouraged and supported to continue their educational activities. The primary aim of planning and implementing the idea of sending female students to the Leyli Darülmuallimat for education was for them to return to their hometowns after graduation and start teaching, thereby integrating girls into education. However, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire made it nearly impossible to track the results of this project. Despite this, the information obtained suggests that this policy was successfully implemented in Libya. Young female teachers like Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi, who received their education in Istanbul, returned to their countries and, as soon as they returned, opened schools where they included girls in education. These women went on to hold important positions in their countries and dedicated their entire lives to the teaching profession and the education of girls.

[185] "Ministry of State for Women's Affairs Celebrates the Anniversary of the First Girls' School in Benghazi," *Al-Menassa*, February 13, 2025, https://almenassa.ly/2025/02/13/وزارة-الدولة-لشؤون-المرأة-تحتفي-بذكرى/ (accessed April 28, 2025).



Figure 5.1. Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi [186]

5.2. Bedia Flayfala

Bedia Flayfala is one of Libya's leading female teachers. Like the other two pioneering women teachers discussed in this thesis, it is difficult to trace Bedia Hanım due to certain limitations. While secondary sources from Libya indicate that she was a graduate of Darülmuallimat, her name was not found in the Darülmuallimat documents. After the fire in 1919, her name was not included in the yearbook[187] created from the available documents. Despite this, the fact that Bedia Hanım is well known among the local population and that every online source emphasizes her graduation from Darülmuallimat provides a valuable clue for this study.

Bedia Flayfala and her colleague Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi were pioneers in the education of girls in Benghazi. A common aspect of these two educators, who dedicated their lives to the education of girls, is not only that they were both teachers but also that they were graduates of Darülmuallimat.

Bedia Flayfala was born in Benghazi in 1900 to a Libyan father of Sudanese origin and an Egyptian mother. Her father was an Ottoman soldier stationed at the Ottoman

[186] Hüseyin bin Amir, *Eminet. El-Mer'etu'l-Libiyye ve İbda' ve İş'a: Cidet el-Unberiyye ve Nısfu Karnin mine'z-Zahireti't-Ta'limiyye fi Libya* (Bingazi: Libya Ulusal Kütüphanesi [Darü'l-Kütübi'l-Vataniyye], 2005), 40.
[187] *İstanbul Kız Muallim Mektebi 1933 - Darülmuallimat 1870* (İstanbul: Marifet Matbaası).

barracks in Benghazi. In 1905, when she was still very young, Bedia Hanım moved to Istanbul with her mother and completed her entire education there. In 1922, she graduated from Darülmuallimat and returned to Benghazi with her mother in 1923[188].

Bedia Hanım is described in secondary sources as a very intelligent woman with a strong personality. In addition to Arabic and Turkish, she was also fluent in Italian, French, English, and Greek. Considering that she spent her entire education in Istanbul, it is likely that she learned these languages there. When she returned to Benghazi in 1923, she married Hüseyin Flayfala, who is also a teacher, and adopted her husband's surname[189]. It is stated that Bedia Hanım, who began her educational activities alongside her husband without interruption, started teaching Arabic. During the Italian occupation, under difficult conditions,[190] she and Hamide (Tarhan) al-Unayzi continued the education of girls as a sacred duty[191].

After World War II, she became the principal of al-Amira Secondary School in Benghazi. Bedia Hanım made great efforts to convince families to send their daughters to school, and she eventually succeeded in persuading them to do so. In 1951, she requested the establishment of a high school class for girls, as there were two graduating classes (1949 and 1950), but her request was not granted. As a solution to this challenge, she applied to the De La Salle School for Sisters, one of the Catholic missionary schools in Libya during the Italian colonial period, and arranged for a classroom to be allocated for her students. In this classroom, Bedia Hanım made sure that the girls could continue their high school education, even though she was unable to establish a formal high school. She also asked Egyptian male teachers to volunteer to teach the female students. Bedia Hanım, known for her ability to overcome every obstacle, ensured that the girls continued their education despite these challenges.

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[188] "المربية الفاضلة... الخوجة بديعة فليفلة رائدة تعليم المرأة في ليبيا" ["The Virtuous Educator... Hodja Bedia Flayfala: Pioneer of Women's Education in Libya"], *Alwasat News*, March 8, 2021. Accessed May 11, 2025. https://alwasat.ly/news/art-culture/281936.

[189] "المركز الوطني لدعم وتنمية القدرات الطلابية" [National Center for Supporting and Developing Student Abilities], Facebook, accessed May 9, 2025. https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=511252597841675&id=100068708178334&mibextid=oFDknk&rdid=VypJxzV738chO6lG.

[190] Ali Abdullatif Ahmida, *Forgotten Voices: Power and Agency in Colonial and Postcolonial Libya* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 41.

[191] "المربية الفاضلة... الخوجة بديعة فليفلة رائدة تعليم المرأة في ليبيا" ["The Virtuous Educator... Hodja Bedia Flayfala: Pioneer of Women's Education in Libya"], *Alwasat News*, March 8, 2021. Accessed May 11, 2025. https://alwasat.ly/news/art-culture/281936.

Among her students were women such as Amal Senib, Wadad al-Sakizli, Naime al-Mutardi, and Hatice Kanun, who are considered pioneers in various fields in Libya[192].

While providing education to girls, Bedia Hanım also gave them the experience of becoming educators at an early age. She encouraged students in the higher grades who continued their education at the school to volunteer as teachers for the first and second-grade girls. In this way, she successfully created a cycle in the field of education.

Bedia Flayfala, known as "Hodja Bedia" by the Libyans and more widely recognized by this name in addition to her surname, passed away on May 1, 1976, in Benghazi.

As a graduate of Darülmuallimat, it is clear from the stages of her life story that Bedia Hanım was deeply committed to her profession. We can see that she achieved her goal of becoming a teacher in Benghazi. From the professional lives of Darülmuallimat graduates in Libya, it is evident that the support of Ottoman bureaucrats for girls' education and their policies regarding the education of girls, which they upheld despite the difficult conditions the empire was facing, led to positive outcomes. It is clear that this policy, which allowed girls to come to Istanbul at a very young age to receive an education— a policy that would still be subject to criticism in certain contexts today— left a lasting impact far beyond expectations.

[192] "المركز الوطني لدعم وتنمية القدرات الطلابية" ["The National Center for Supporting and Developing Student Abilities"]. Facebook, accessed May 9, 2025. https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=511252597841675&id=100068708178334&mibextid=oFDknk&rdid=VypJxzV738chO6lG.



Figure 5.2. Bedia Flayfala[193]

5.3. Cemile al-Izmirli

It is very difficult to trace these pioneering women who completed their education in Istanbul and started educational activities in their hometowns due to certain limitations. Foremost among these factors is the fact that the Maarif archives were not fully accessible at the time of this thesis due to ongoing renovation work. Another factor is the difficulty in identifying the true identities of the students, as archival documents often include only their names. The other, and perhaps the most important factor, is that academic studies on these individuals by local historians were not found within the framework of our research. For this reason, although the information obtained was limited to online sources, some of it could be confirmed through interviews with the local people.

[193] Mohamed Buisier (grandson of Bedia Flayfala). Facebook post about Bedia Flayfala's educational legacy, March 8, 2021. Accessed May 11, 2025. https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=2385545494797657&id=100000266882200&mibextid=oFDknk&rdid=8JBnhpC0iuvDGGN8#.

The fact that these women were well-known in society ensured that the public had information about them. Further research in the Ottoman archives in Trablusgarb will provide valuable insights that will shed light on this historical period. However, the fact that these important women have been so scarcely studied can be seen as a significant loss for future generations.

Cemile al-Izmirli is one of these pioneering women. Al-Izmirli is the family name of Cemile Hanım[194]. Based on the information obtained, the al-Izmirli family, which is one of the prominent families of Trablusgarb, originates from the city of Izmir in present-day Türkiye. It is common in Arab culture for families to be named according to the place they come from, and Cemile Hanım's family name is an example of this practice.

Cemile Mustafa Sabri al-Izmirli was born in 1892 in the Ottoman province of Trablsugarb. Although it has not been possible to verify the information through historical documents, there is limited information about Cemile Hanım obtained from local and online sources. Based on this information, Cemile Hanım completed her rüşdiye education in the Ottoman lands, which are part of present-day Türkiye. While there is no information on which city she completed her education in, it can be inferred that, based on archival sources indicating that most students who came for education during that time went to Istanbul, Cemile Hanım likely completed her rüşdiye education in Istanbul. Later, she continued her higher education at the Şam Darülmuallimat. After graduating, Cemile Hanım returned to Trablusgarb, where she began educational activities for girls at the school that still bears her name. It is stated that the school where Cemile Hanım worked continues to exist as the Cemile al-Izmirli Institute.

Cemile Hanım, who is said to have devoted her life to the education of girls despite the social challenges of the period, worked as both a teacher and principal at a girls' school in Tripoli. After earning many certificates and promotions, she was eventually promoted to the rank of 'Chief Inspector.' It is also noted that Cemile Hanım was an

[194] Haj Markiz, "الرائدات الليبيات وبناء الدولة الحديثة" Accessed April 27, 2025. https://bit.ly/3taVVyN; Hisham Tabib, "معـهـد جميـلـة" Accessed April 27, 2025. https://bit.ly/3LG4iV9.

expert trainer in embroidery and carpet weaving, and she played the qanun (a traditional instrument).

Additionally, it has been noted that Cemile al-Izmirli, one of the prominent writers of the literary-humorous-sports bi-monthly magazine al-Mirat, published in the late 1930s and early 1940s, is recognized for her insightful articles on social topics such as education, morality, and justice.

When we look at Cemile Hanım's educational journey, we can see a level of mobility that would be difficult to undertake even today. After completing her rüşdiye education in the Ottoman lands, which are part of present-day Türkiye, she continued her higher education at the Darülmuallimat in Damascus, became a teacher, and then began her teaching activities in Tripoli. The last piece of information we have about her is that she passed away in Tripoli in 1965, leaving behind a lasting legacy. It is important to note, however, that the fact that these important women have been so scarcely studied can be seen as a significant loss for future generations.

Considering the communication and transportation conditions of the time, it is particularly remarkable that students had the opportunity to continue their education in different provinces, as this study discusses in relation to both female and male students. The fact that this option existed, and those students actively sought it, is significant. Education seems to have been constructed almost like a mobilized system from the very beginning. Families and students, with this presumption in mind, made the most of all available opportunities to continue their education.


لقاء

السيدة جميلة الأزميرلي

الفراشية ليست عائقا للمرأة في سيرها.. انشار المدارس ومجانية التعليم نصف

لنساء ليبيا ... لا تحاولي القفز حتى لا تتكسري

العمل المثمر يخلد صاحبه ويجعل اسمه بارزا في المجتمع دلالة على الجد والمثابرة

وحينما تنقب باحثين في سجل العاملين الخير نجد اسما يبرز لنا اسم عرف بالعمل بلا كلل ، والاعتماد على النفس في الاجتهاد لصالح الوطن ، ويتلفظ به كل انسان ، صغير كبير بحقه ، باحترام وتقدير لماضيه المشرف في حقل التعليم ..

وحينما ذهبت لوزارة المعارف ابحث عن معلومات تفيد القارئة في معرفة اسماء اللواتي خدمن المرأة الليبية في مجال المعرفة قال لي اكثر من واحد : السيدة جميلة الازميرلي هي الوحيدة التي تزودك بكل المعلومات التي تطلبها من الفتاة والتعليم في ليبيا، لانها ادرى من سواها بذلك .

وخرجت من مقر الوزارة باحثا عن (السيدة جميلة) التي سأحصل منها على ما اريد من معلومات .

وكان اللقاء ==

الزمن : شهر رمضان المبارك

والمكان : منزلها ==

ونحن جلوس في قاعة الاستقبال انا وهي والاستاذ بشير البوصيري زوجها .

وكان حديث طويل ، حديث دام ساعات عن التعليم والطالبات والمدرسات أيام زمان ..

حينما جاءت الى ليبيا من دمشق التي عاشت فيها زمنا طويلا لم تجد منهجا من صميم البيئة الليبية يمكن للطالبة من الاستفادة الحقة .. فاعتمدت السيدة جميلة على معلوماتها وعلى تجربتها في حقل التعليم حينما كانت مدرسة بـ دمشق .. وجندت كل خبراتها في وضع منهج دراسي يقوم عل

Figure 5.3. Cemile al-Izmirli [195]

[195] Hisham Tabib, "معهد جميلة" Accessed April 27, 2025. https://bit.ly/3LG4iV9.



Figure 5.4. The Cemile al-Izmirli Institute in Tripoli, Libya[196]

[196] Hisham Tabib, "معهد جميلة" Accessed April 27, 2025. https://bit.ly/3LG4iV9.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The Tanzimat period paved the way for reforms in education, leading to an educational mobilization within the borders of the empire. This mobilization created new educational opportunities for both female and male students, while, on the other hand, an unprecedented practice emerged with the assignment rotations of female teachers, which spread even to remote provinces.

Making education compulsory for girls revealed the need for female teachers, and as a solution to this, Darülmuallimat was established. The new teachers trained in Darülmuallimat began their careers by engaging in educational activities at the newly opened girls' schools. When examining archival documents, it can be seen that these female teachers went to serve as teachers in provinces far from the imperial capital. Considering the transportation, communication, and security conditions of that time, it is certain that the efforts of these women can be explained with a level of dedication far beyond teaching itself.

Although appointments continued, the fact that some graduates did not begin their teaching careers created a vacancy in the positions. Among the main reasons for this were the failure of those appointed to the provinces to go to their assigned locations, or their refusal to work after getting married. Even today, it is not uncommon to encounter women who leave their careers after marriage, and during that period, this situation was perceived by the bureaucrats as an urgent issue that needed to be addressed, prompting swift action.

With the addition of the boarding section to Darülmuallimat, female students from the provinces were invited to Istanbul, where they were provided with an education. The goal here was for the students who came from the provinces to return to their hometowns after graduation and begin educational activities. In this way, the issue of

appointments to the provinces would be resolved automatically, and vacant positions would be filled. Considering the political and economic conditions of the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the 20th century, it is truly remarkable how the bureaucrats of the time, without giving up, continued to pursue the same goal in matters related to the education of girls, developing practical solutions to the existing situation and trying to overcome difficulties. Another striking point is the importance they placed on girls' education. As can be understood from the content of the parliamentary minutes, it is clear that they assigned a social construction role to women's education. This perspective shows that, in the view of the period's bureaucrats, the education of girls was positioned in a very different place compared to the education of boys.

The situation of the female students who came to Istanbul for education is, in certain aspects, quite astonishing. Perhaps the most important point to address here is how the families were persuaded. It is certain that the Darülmuallimat graduates, who educated these girls in their hometowns, may have served as role models for them. However, the fact that they still took this step is surprising even when viewed from today's perspective. When assessed from the standpoint of today, the students who traveled a long way from distant provinces, such as Libya, to come here were, considering the communication conditions of the time, almost unknown to their families. Reaching them and establishing communication was, due to the circumstances, very limited compared to today. At first glance, all these conditions, which would generally be seen as negative, clearly were not considered unfavorable by the families who sent their daughters to Istanbul.

It is not very possible to determine the situation of the families and these girls, the processes through which they decided to send them to Istanbul, and how they coordinated with the local administrative authorities in this regard, through archival documents and secondary sources. While archival documents confirm the existence of this phenomenon, they do not provide sufficient information regarding the processes and personal experiences involved. Conducting oral history interviews with the family members of these women—who graduated as teachers and returned to their hometowns—will help reconstruct the lived realities and socio-cultural dynamics that remain absent from the official narrative.

Another point that should not be overlooked at this stage is the male students who came to Istanbul to continue their education. Considering that these students, like the female students, came to Istanbul after graduating from the rüşdiye, this decision can also be regarded as a bold one from the perspective of the families. At this stage, the possibility that this educational mobilization was implemented more widely and more extensively than identified in this thesis suggests that it has the potential to challenge the predictions made regarding the families. This will be revealed through extensive research and studies.

Female teachers assigned through rotation within the imperial borders are another aspect of this mobilization. Although some refused to go to distant provinces, it is evident from archival documents that a larger number of female teachers were appointed to these provinces. The most notable aspect of these appointments is that the locations were determined based on need. Vacancies in the positions were quickly filled, and it emerges from archival documents that the region in which the teacher or school was located was not a determining factor. Female teachers who wished to change their assignments found a practical solution through mutual exchange (becayiş). It is also worth noting that no such practice has been observed among male teachers in the scanned archival documents from that period.

When looking at the life stories of the female students who came from present-day Libya to Darülmuallimat for education, in relation to the student mobilization emphasized by this thesis, the positive results of the educational policies implemented by the bureaucrats of the time can be observed. However, following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, it has not been easy to trace the continuation of this situation. These female teachers, graduates of Darülmuallimat, returned to their hometowns and became pioneers in the field of girls' education. These teachers, who perceived girls' education almost as a cause, dedicated their lives to their profession and played a key role in raising the pioneering female generation of Libya.

As a result, the education of girls has maintained its importance throughout history and continues to hold a significant place in contemporary discussions. The rightful efforts of the Ottoman bureaucrats in this regard were successful despite all the challenges encountered, and they managed to transform this into a lasting educational policy.

Although only the example of Libya has been addressed among the teacher candidates who returned to their hometowns, Libya has been able to establish itself as a successful example of this policy for future studies.

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