



# HISTORY STUDIES

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HISTORY

ISSN: 1309 4173 / (Online) 1309 - 4688 (Print)

Volume: 13, Issue: 6, December 2021

[www.historystudies.net](http://www.historystudies.net)

## *DIPLOMATIC INSTRUMENTATION OF THE CALIPHATE AUTHORITY IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THE TURKESTAN KHANATES IN THE 19TH CENTURY*

*19. Yüzyılda Hilafet Makamının Osmanlı Devleti ve Türkistan Hanlıkları İlişkisinde  
Diplomatik Olarak Araçsallaştırılması*

*Dr. Öğrt. Üyesi Asuman Karabulut*

Erzincan Binali Yıldırım Üniversitesi

[asuman\\_krbt@hotmail.com](mailto:asuman_krbt@hotmail.com)

ORCID ID: 0000-0003-2816-7286

Makale Türü-*Article Type* : Araştırma Makalesi-Research Article  
Geliş Tarihi-*Received Date* : 23.09.2021  
Kabul Tarihi-*Accepted Date* : 03.12.2021  
DOI Number : 10.9737/hist.2021.1062

*Atıf – Citation:*

Asuman Karabulut, "Diplomatic Instrumentation of the Caliphate Authority in the Relationship Between the Ottoman Empire and the Turkestan Khanates in the 19th Century", *History Studies*, 13/6, Aralık 2021, s. 1831-1851.





## DIPLOMATIC INSTRUMENTATION OF THE CALIPHATE AUTHORITY IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THE TURKESTAN KHANATES IN THE 19TH CENTURY

19. Yüzyılda Hilafet Makamının Osmanlı Devleti ve Türkistan Hanlıkları İlişkisinde Diplomatik Olarak  
Araçsallaştırılması

**Dr. Öğrt. Üyesi Asuman Karabulut**

### Öz

16. yüzyılın ortalarından itibaren Türkistan coğrafyasında bağımsız olarak yaşayan Buhara ve Hive Hanlıklarının yanı sıra, Hokand Hanlığı 18. yüzyılın başlarından itibaren bağımsızlığını ilan etmişti. Yani bu coğrafyada birbirinden bağımsız üç ayrı devlet kurulmuştu. Burada yaşayan Türkistan Türkleri üç ayrı hanlık arasında bölündü ve bölgede güçlü bir birlik yoktu. Doğu Türkistan'da ise 19. yüzyılda Yakub Bey'in önderliğinde ortaya çıkan ve Çin'e karşı savaşan Kaşgar Devleti vardı.

Bu bağımsız hanlıklar, Asya'da öncü bir devlet olarak nitelendirilemedikleri için, kendilerine önderlik etmelerini isteyecekleri güçlü bir devlete ihtiyaçları vardı. Bu nedenle, Türkistan yönünde ilerleyen Rusya'ya ve bölgedeki gücünü arttırmaya çalışan İngiltere'ye karşı zaman zaman halifeliği elinde bulunduran Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndan yardım istediler.

Türkistan hanlıklarının Osmanlı Devleti ile yazışmalarının sıklığı devir 19. yüzyıldır. Bu çalışmada 19. yüzyıl Osmanlı arşiv belgelerinin transkripsiyonlarından, Türkistan coğrafyası ve hilafet ile ilgili yazılmış kaynaklardan faydalanılarak Osmanlı Devleti ve Türkistan hanlıkları arasındaki siyasi, ilmi, ticari ve dini münasebetler analiz edildi. Araştırma yapılırken özellikle hilafet makamının bu ilişkideki yeri ve etkisi göz önünde bulunduruldu. Çalışmada, bahsi geçen yüzyılda hilafetin nüfuzunun hanlıklar üzerinde istenilen etkiyi tam anlamıyla veremediği savunulmaktadır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Hilafet, Osmanlı Devleti, Türkistan, 19. Yüzyıl.

### Abstract

In addition to the Bukhara and Khiva Khanates, which had been living independently in the Turkestan geography since the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, the Kokand Khanate had declared its independence from the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In other words, three separate states independent of each other were established in this geography. The Turkestan Turks living here were fragmented between three separate khanates and a strong unity was absent in the region. In East Turkestan, on the other hand, there was the Kashgar State, which emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century under the leadership of Yakub Bey and fought against China.

Since these independent khanates could not qualify as a pioneer state in Asia, they needed a strong state that they would want to be led by. Therefore, from time to time, they sought help from the Ottoman Empire, which was in control of the caliphate, against Russia, which was advancing in the direction of Turkestan, and against Britain trying to increase its power in the region.

The frequency of correspondence between the Ottoman Empire and khanates of Turkestan increased in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In this study, the political, scientific, commercial, and religious relations between the Ottoman Empire and the khanates of Turkestan were analyzed in light of the transcriptions of the documents of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Ottoman archive, as well as the sources on the geography of Turkestan and the caliphate. While conducting the research, the role and influence of the caliphate authority in this relationship were taken into consideration. It is argued that the caliphate's influence on the khanates in this period was not at the desired level.

**Keywords:** Caliphate, Ottoman State, Turkestan, 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## Introduction

Caliphate, derived from the root *half*, which means "to be behind", "to come after someone", "to replace someone", can be explained as a person who becomes the head of the ummah administration after the death of the Prophet.<sup>1</sup>

As known, after the death of the Prophet, the Age of Hulefâ-i Râşidin, that is, the Four Caliphs, began. The caliphate authority aimed to unite the Islamic society under the umbrella of conquest and jihad by providing a political structure with the four caliphs. With the spread of Islam to a wide region, the caliphate was used by some sultans in different times and places.<sup>2</sup>

After the reign of the four caliphs, the states that held the position of caliphate realized that they would have a form of political and spiritual leadership in the Islamic world. Islamic states such as the Umayyad, Abbasi, and Fatimid states, who wanted to gain this power, wanted to keep the caliphate alive under their protection and thus entered competition.<sup>3</sup>

As a result of the violent battles between Umayyads and Abbasids, the caliphate first passed to the Umayyads, then the Abbasids, and the Ottoman Empire during the period of Selim I. There are even rumors that Selim I had the title of "Hâdim al-Haramayn aš-Şarîfayn (servant of Mecca and Medina)" with the Ottoman domination of Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula. However, since there is no information in the sources of the period of Yavuz Sultan Selim that he took over the caliphate with a ceremony or with a certificate, this caused a collision among the historians about the transfer of the caliphate to the Ottomans. Feridun Emecen argues that the spread of this rumor was actually claimed during the Ottoman-Iranian struggles in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was perceived incorrectly.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, it is known that the Ottoman rulers used the title of caliph from time to time before Yavuz Sultan Selim. For instance, Fatih adopted the idea of world domination and carried the ideas of the caliphate in terms of Islam, khanate in the Turkish-Mongol tradition, and empire according to the Roman understanding. It is also known that he used the title of caliph in the preamble of his law. It was claimed by historian Ibn-i Kemal that Bayezid II also used this title.<sup>5</sup>

Although the opinion that the people from the Quraysh tribe could be caliphs is widely believed, the caliphate undertaken by the Ottoman rulers should be regarded as an understanding of the caliphate created by historical conditions.<sup>6</sup> This title can also be envisioned as a tool, a key determining superiority in the Islamic world. The Ottoman Empire tried to benefit from the functions of this tool by dominating the Hajj route, assuming the guardianship of Damascus-Hijaz, and defending the Islamic countries against the Christian world.<sup>7</sup> However, the Ottoman caliphate was accepted in different dimensions among different Muslim groups. For instance, it is known that there is hardly any acceptance among Arabs, who are the subjects of the caliph. Believing that the caliph should be chosen among the people coming from the Quraysh tribe, the Arabs thought that the caliphate was an institution seized from them. This was different for the

<sup>1</sup> Şemseddin Samî, "Kamûs-i Türkî," (İstanbul, 2005), 586; Ferit Devellioğlu, "Osmanlıca-Türkçe Lügât, Ankara," in *Aydın Kitabevi* (2005), 318. Süleyman Uludağ, "Halife," in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: 1997), 299-300.

<sup>2</sup> Azmi Özcan, "Hilafet (Osmanlı Dönemi)," in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (1998), 539-53; Ebu'l Âla El-Mevdudi, "Hilafet ve Saltanat," *Ali Genceli (çev.) İstanbul: Hilal Yayınları* (1972): 31-32.

<sup>3</sup> Özcan, "Hilafet (Osmanlı Dönemi)", 544.

<sup>4</sup> M. Feridun Emecen, *Yavuz Sultan Selim* (İstanbul 2017), 334.

<sup>5</sup> İlber Ortaylı, *Türkiye Teşkilat ve İdare Tarihi* (Ankara, 2017), 193; Uğur Demir, *Osmanlı Hilafetinin İlk Asırları* (İstanbul, 2019), 114.

<sup>6</sup> Halil İnalcık, *Devlet-i Aliyye: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Üzerine Araştırmalar*, vol. 1, (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2009), 146.

<sup>7</sup> Ortaylı, *Türkiye Teşkilat ve İdare Tarihi*, 193.

peoples of India and Maverahünnehir.<sup>8</sup> At the beginning of the Ottoman-Indian relations, Shah Cihan was described as "the Khan of the Muslim Sultans and the founder of the union among the Muslim Maliks, chosen by God for the position of a caliph".<sup>9</sup>

The 1774 Küçük Kaynarca Treaty, which was signed after the Ottoman-Russian War, is considered a turning point in the sultans' inclination to focus on the institution of the caliphate. With this treaty, Crimea became the first Islamic land to be separated from the Ottomans by private law. Also, the Ottoman Empire had not previously discussed the future of Muslims in a country that was once within its borders with any non-Muslim state.<sup>10</sup> However, this treaty is the first official document showing that a Western state recognizes the Ottoman sultan as "the caliph of the Muslims" outside its borders, and it is important in this aspect. With this treaty, the Russians acknowledged that the sultan was the religious leader of the Crimean Muslim people with the title of "caliph".<sup>11</sup> Ottoman rulers tried to show their willingness and determination to take advantage of the influence of the caliphate in resolving the crisis and strengthening the state.<sup>12</sup>

The 19<sup>th</sup> century can be regarded as the era in which the caliphate drew attention and began to be used as a diplomatic tool. One of the most important reasons for this interest was that Russia declared itself as the protector of Christians in the Ottoman Empire since the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and the other was that the British took over India in the 1840s and ended the Turkish states there.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, Iran, Afghanistan, and the Ottoman Empire remained as the Muslim states in the world. The fact that Afghanistan was under the influence of Russia and Iran because it was Shiite<sup>14</sup> and that it did not have the unifying element between Muslims made the Ottoman Empire the natural spiritual leader that Muslims needed.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, Indian Muslims, Southeast Asian Muslims, and African and Central Asian Muslims accepted the Ottoman Empire and its caliph as interlocutors in this regard.<sup>16</sup>

For these reasons, it is seen that the power of the caliphate, which was not realized until then, emerged spontaneously as a necessity of the period. With the caliphate, which was used as a means of balance, the religion of Islam moved away from the idea of simply submitting to God and began to be "instrumentalized" according to political conditions.<sup>17</sup> In other words, Islamism, which developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, caused the feeling of religious identity to gradually evolve

<sup>8</sup> M. Metin Hülagü, *Pan-İslâmist faaliyetler: 1914-1918* (İstanbul: Boğaziçi, 1994), 263.

<sup>9</sup> Mustafa Alkan, *Osmanlılarda Hilâfet: 1517-1909 "Geçişi, Tarihi Gelişme ve Tesirleri"* (İzmir: Çağlayan Yayınları, 1997), 160-5.

<sup>10</sup> Özcan, "Hilafet (Osmanlı Dönemi)," 547; Sina Akşin, "Osmanlı Padişahlarının Toprak ve Hilafet Uğruna Verdikleri Ödünler," *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi* 29 (1974): 131-41.

<sup>11</sup> J. Stanford Shaw, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu ve Modern Türkiye*, trans. Mehmet Harmancı, vol. 1 (İstanbul: e yayınları, 2008), 306.

<sup>12</sup> Namık Sinan Turan, *Hilafet: Erken İslâm Tarihinden Osmanlı'nın Son Yüzyılına* (İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2017), 321.

<sup>13</sup> Selim Deringil, *Simgeden Millete: II. Abdülhamid'den Mustafa Kemal'e Devlet ve Millet* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2007), 250.

<sup>14</sup> There have been rapid developments in Ottoman-Iranian relations in the last quarter of the XIX. century. The Ottoman Empire faced the threat of Russia by losing British support. The fact that Iran was the scene of the British-Russian struggle for influence brought these two Islamic states closer to each other, and it started to be talked about turning the religious brotherhood and friendship between them into a strong alliance. When the situation starts to return to normal, it is seen that the relations are broken due to watery reasons. Cezmi Eraslan, "İslâm Birliği Siyaseti Çerçevesinde II. Abdülhamid'in İlk Yıllarında Osmanlı-İran Münasebetleri (1878-1882)," in *Prof. Dr. Bekir Kütükoğlu'na Armağan* (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1991), 221-40.

<sup>15</sup> Mim Kemal Öke, *Hilafet Hareketleri* (İstanbul, 2005), 33.

<sup>16</sup> Kemal Karpat, *Türkiye ve Orta Asya*, trans. Hakan Gür (Ankara: İmge Kitapevi, 2003), 177.

<sup>17</sup> Şerif Mardin, *Türkiye'de Din ve Siyaset Makaleler 3* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001), 17.

into a political identity, moving away from being an understanding of justice stemming from divine order.<sup>18</sup>

In this study, the translation catalog study titled *Belgelerle Osmanlı-Türkistan İlişkileri (XVI-XX. Yüzyıllar)*, which includes the documents available in the Presidency State Archives with the code BOA, Mühimme Defteri, 21/598; BOA, Mühimme Defteri, 24/421; BOA, Nâme-i Hümâyûn Defteri, 10/288; BOA, Hatt-ı Hümâyûn, 36546; BOA, Hatt-ı Hümâyûn, 32100-D; BOA, İrâde Hariciye, 2206; BOA, A. AMD, 92/81; BOA, Y.EE, 42/79; BOA, Y.PRK. HR, 1/16; BOA, Nâme-i Hümâyûn Defteri 10/289; BOA, Y.PRK. MS, 4/91\_2; BOA, İrâde Hariciye, 2206\_2; BOA, MV, 163/36; BOA, Y.PRK. BSK, 60/73; BOA Y. EE, 42/79, was used. In addition, some original documents used in the study are included in the appendices.

### 1. Russia's Asian Policy and the Situation of Turkestan Muslims

As the world balances have changed after the industrial revolution, the foreign policy and diplomacy tools of the great powers have changed as well. With the spread of colonialism, the difference between underdeveloped countries and western countries began to diverge with clearer lines, causing the power-sovereignty relationship to change. In the eyes of the west, the East is backward, lazy, lethargic, and sinful. That is why the West thinks that it is superior to the east and has the right of guardianship over the eastern lands.<sup>19</sup> With this in mind, Western states began colonizing the regions where Muslims lived in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Russia's conquest of the Islamic regions around the Black Sea, the capture of Northern Azerbaijan from Iran, the occupation of Algeria by France, the establishment of the political dominance of England in India, and the spread of the Netherlands in South-East Asia all occurred in this century. As almost the whole of Europe united against and defeated Russia in the Crimean War, Russia assumed a nationalist structure and started Pan-Slavist activities. It tried to make its presence felt in a wide circle by trying to build a bridge with the Slavs outside the country. When Russia saw that the Middle East and European roads had already closed for the country, it turned to Asia. Russia wanted to seize the economic and commercial potential of Turkestan provinces and threaten Britain, which it could not defeat in the seas, through Asia to realize its ambitions. On the other hand, China had its eyes on this region both to exploit East Turkestan and to ensure the security of the western region against Russian invasion. Worried that Russia would threaten the Indian colony after the capture of Turkestan countries, Britain occupied Afghanistan twice to ensure the security of this region.<sup>20</sup>

While the policies of the great states are listed above, the fact that an authority that ensures political integrity could not be established with the collapse of the Timur State in Central Asia enabled Russia and Britain to seize the expected opportunity. In this process, independent small khanates and even principalities started to emerge all over Central Asia, in the Caucasus, and the north of the Black Sea. These small political entities were so immersed in their struggle against each other that they did not recognize the Russian and Chinese danger approaching. Besides, their immobility in the face of the Kalmyk invasion in Central Asia for about a century and a half was another factor that brought them closer to their end.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Kemal Karpat, *Ortaođu'da Osmanlı Mirası ve Ulusçuluk*, trans. Recep Boztemur (Ankara: İmge Kitapevi, 2001), 50; Deringil, *Simgeden Millete: II. Abdülhamid'den Mustafa Kemal'e Devlet ve Millet*, 57.

<sup>19</sup> For details, Edward W. Said, *Şarkiyatçılık; Batının Şark Anlayışları*, trans. Berna Ülner (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2010).

<sup>20</sup> Fahir Armaođlu, *19. yy siyasi tarihi (1789-1914)* (Ankara: TTK, 1997), 491; Ahmet Cevdet, *Tezakir 13-20*, ed. Cavid Baysun (Ankara: TTK, 1986), 89.

<sup>21</sup> Mehmet Saray, *Rus İşgali Devrinde Osmanlı Devleti İle Türkistan Hanlıkları Arasındaki Siyasi Münasebetler (1775-1875)* (Ankara: TTK., 2017), 3-4; Ahmet Taşađıl, "Türkiye'nin Orta Asya Türk Cumhuriyetleri İle İlişkilerinin Dünü, Bugünü ve Yarını," *Stratejik Araştırmalar Dergisi, Şubat*, no. 3 (2004).

With the declaration of independence of Bukhara, Khiva, which had been independent since the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and Kokand in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, three separate states were established in Turkestan. In this case, the Turkestan Turks were divided between three separate khanates and moved away from a strong unity.<sup>22</sup> These independent khanates lost their qualification to be the leading state in Asia due to their inability to understand what is happening around them and to take measures accordingly. Thereupon, trying to move in the direction of Central Asia, Russia posed a danger for Turkestan. After the Russians dominated the Idil-Ural region, they wanted to keep the trade routes in the region under control by taking advantage of their wealth and sovereignty within the framework of their expansionist policies. Also, preventing the strengthening of foreign powers in the region, particularly Britain, and ensuring the security of the southern borders were the basis of Tsarist Russia's policy towards the region.<sup>23</sup>

When Russia captured Kazan in 1552, it had a Muslim subject for the first time. After the occupation of Astrakhan in 1556, it had the opportunity to develop commercial relations with Turkestan and entered diplomatic relations with the khanates.<sup>24</sup> While the khanates were sending diplomatic delegations to Russia with commercial purposes, Russia was approaching this geography, seemingly with commercial intentions, but in reality, with colonial intentions.<sup>25</sup> In the instructions given to the Russian delegation, there were requests such as collecting information about the policy, economy, and military situation of the country visited, and the roads to neighboring countries. While Russia continued to work in this way until it captured Turkestan, the people of Turkestan did not attempt to gather information or spy on the Russian delegations that came to Bukhara and Khiva, although they did not believe in their sincerity. Since espionage, which was one of the most important duties of the state in the era of Genghis Khan and Timur, was seen as an immoral act, no one got to learn Russia's intentions in time. This simplified the other party's job, as Russia managed to enter Turkestan territory by acting without revealing its hostility.<sup>26</sup>

## 2. Relations of the Ottoman Empire with Turkestan Khanates and Caliphate's Gaining Importance

It is known that the first political relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Turkestan Khanates began in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. During the time of the Uzbek leader Muhammed Şeybani Khan (1451-1510), who ended the domination of the Timur State in Turkestan in 1507, the power of the Ottoman and Turkestan Turks united against the Safavids, which caused disintegration in the Islamic world. The first official contact between the parties began with a letter dated 1516 stating the Çaldıran Victory against the Safavids, which Yavuz Sultan Selim sent to the Uzbek Ruler Köçkünçü Khan (1510-1530), and the reply given to him. It is seen that the correspondence increased during the period of Kanuni (1520-1566). Uzbeks asked for help against Iran in his letters to Kanuni. According to the records of some authors, Kanuni responded positively to the

<sup>22</sup> Saray, *Rus İşgali Devrinde Osmanlı Devleti İle Türkistan Hanlıkları Arasındaki Siyasi Münasebetler (1775-1875)*, 15.

<sup>23</sup> İlyas Kamalov, *Türk Cumhuriyetleri'nin Bağımsızlıklarının 20. Yılında Rusya'nın Orta Asya Politikaları (Rapor)*, ed. Murat Yılmaz (Ankara: Hoca Ahmet Yesevi Uluslararası Türk-Kazak Üniversitesi, 2011), 8; Jean-Paul Roux, *Orta Asya Tarih ve Uygarlık*, trans. Lale Arslan (İstanbul: Kabalcı Yayınları, 2001), 408.

<sup>24</sup> İsmail Aka, *Türk Dünyası Tarihi* (İzmir: Ege Üniversitesi, 2009), 14.

<sup>25</sup> Emin Özdemir, "Rus İşgalinden Önceki Dönemde Türkistan'a Gelen Batılı Seyyahlar ve Türkistan Tarihine Kaynak Olarak Seyahatnameleri" *History 2* (2010): 2, 118.

<sup>26</sup> Baymirza Hayit, *Türkistan Rusya ile Çin Arasında: XVIII-XX. Asırlarda Ruslar ve Çinlilerin İstilaları Devrinde Türkistan Milli Devletleri ve Milli Mücadeleleri Tarihi*, trans. Abdülkadir Sadak (İstanbul: Otağ Yayınevi, 1975), 41-5.

request of the Uzbek ruler and sent 300 soldiers, cannons, and rifles. In return, the Uzbeks thanked the caliphate center.<sup>27</sup>

It is known that various ambassadors from the Kazakh steppes in the north of Turkestan came to Istanbul towards the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. These ambassadors were asking for help from the caliphate center against the Kalmyk invasion in their land. The Kalmyks stated that they wanted to be under the protection of the Ottoman Empire and meanwhile approached Russia with the same desire.<sup>28</sup>

During the last quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Turkestan khanates began to develop. The emphasis placed on the Ottoman caliphate during the Khanate's application to the Ottoman Empire for aid led to the emergence of the idea of an Islamic union led by the Ottoman Empire. The caliphate was reinterpreted and mobilized as the symbolic face of the new orientation.<sup>29</sup> Also, it was thought that there was unity and solidarity between the parties, so helping each other was needed. With this in mind, the Ottoman Empire asked the Bukhara Khanate<sup>30</sup>, where it had great prestige and influence, to open a front against Russia, to send spies there, and to start intelligence efforts. Bukhara Khan reported that they would always want to serve the caliph and sultan of the time and obey him. However, emphasizing that Iran posed a threat to them, he asked the Ottoman Empire for help. In the diplomatic correspondence, the request to send an Ottoman prince or an experienced provincial administrator to Turkestan to put an end to the conflicts in Turkestan and ensure unity among the Muslim population draws attention. By this, Turkestan Muslims wanted to be taken under the Ottoman rule in a way.<sup>31</sup>

The occupation movements of the Russians, Chinese, and British towards Turkestan countries and Afghanistan unavoidably caused a diplomatic movement between the Ottoman Empire, the Turkestan khanates, and Afghanistan. After the occupation of their countries by foreigners, the leaders of Turkestan, Bukhara, Kokand, Khiva, Kashgar, Afghanistan, and Turkmenistan applied to the Ottoman Empire with letters and ambassadors requesting help.<sup>32</sup> Arms and soldiers were at the forefront of the assistance requested by the Khanates. They wanted materials to produce cannons, rifles, gunpowder, and bullets and craftsmen who would manufacture them. However, it is seen that these requests for military equipment and officers were not answered positively towards Kokand, Bukhara, and Khiva in West Turkestan, except towards Kashgar. This was not because the troubles of the khanates were not taken seriously by the Ottoman government. On the contrary, the current problems of the khanates and their solution proposals were discussed in the Ottoman governments and a decision for aid was taken. But the threat of Iran and the Russians from the Caucasus did not allow them to send the desired military supplies. Apart from the aid of weapons and soldiers, an administrator request was made from the Ottoman Empire. Either an Ottoman pasha or an Ottoman prince was asked to be sent to the khanates. Besides, as he was the caliph of the Islamic world, the sultan was asked to ensure the security of the pilgrimage routes so that Turkestan Muslims could fulfill their pilgrimage. Subjects such as religious book assistance, textbooks, medicine, engineering, administrative, senior citizens, teachers experienced in the field of law, recommendation letters, and gift lists are also included in the correspondence.

---

<sup>27</sup> Saray, *Rus İşgali Devrinde Osmanlı Devleti İle Türkistan Hanlıkları Arasındaki Siyasi Münasebetler (1775-1875)*, 5; Ali Suavi, *Hive Hanlığı*, ed. M. Abdülhalik Çay (İstanbul, 1977), 70.

<sup>28</sup> Saray, *Rus İşgali Devrinde Osmanlı Devleti İle Türkistan Hanlıkları Arasındaki Siyasi Münasebetler (1775-1875)*, 12-3.

<sup>29</sup> Turan, *Hilafet: Erken İslâm Tarihinden Osmanlı'nın Son Yüzyılına*, 350.

<sup>30</sup> The Ottoman Empire mostly took the Bukhara Khanate as its main address in Central Asia. The term "Uzbek Khan" was used for the Bukhara Khan.

<sup>31</sup> Saray, *Rus İşgali Devrinde Osmanlı Devleti İle Türkistan Hanlıkları Arasındaki Siyasi Münasebetler (1775-1875)*, 22-7.

<sup>32</sup> Mehmet Saray, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Türkistan Siyaseti," in *Osmanlı* (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 1999), 573-80.

It is seen that the Ottoman Empire made an effort to fulfill its support in these matters. Emphasizing the caliphate authority from the Ottoman Empire, Turkestan khanates also requested diplomatic assistance. The Khanates stated that Russia attacked their country in disregard of international law and caused great material damage and human loss. They asked for the help of the Ottoman Empire and Britain to put an end to what was happening. However, it is seen that these requests of the khanates were not answered, other than the advice that they should get along with each other and be careful in their relations with Russia.<sup>33</sup> The reason for this is not because the Ottoman Empire did not care about the problems of the khanates, as stated before. On the contrary, the Ottoman government listened to and evaluated these problems as the leader and patron of the Islamic world. However, the Ottomans were at a time when they focused on solving their problems, as they were extremely worn and weakened. They tried to stop their decline with reforms in many areas while dealing with wars with Europe and Russia.

During the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Turkestan khanates struggled with each other, giving the Russians a great opportunity. While the Russians were asking for help from the Bukhara Khanate, they aimed to reach India under British rule. They tried to do this by using their influence over Iran.<sup>34</sup> Even though the shah of Iran helped Russia, he withdrew after a while.<sup>35</sup> The British wanted the Turkestan khanates to preserve their unity. The aim was to protect Afghanistan's independence and create a buffer zone between Russia and India. That is why they sent officers to Turkestan and Afghanistan who knew the political developments of the era very well. These officers dealt with the problems of the Turkestan khanates and advised that the only way out of the Uzbek states in Turkestan was to get along with and support each other. They stated that if they could not do this, Russia would destroy them. The imprisonment and murder of these officers, who were trying to improve relations, by Emir Nasrullah, the Emir of Bukhara, caused propaganda against Turkestan Muslims in England.<sup>36</sup> This incident enabled the Russians to enter Turkestan easily.

Russian Prince Gorchakov interpreted the situation of Central Asia in 1864 as follows:

*"Russia encountered semi-savage peoples without social organization in Central Asia. In such cases, more civilized states must look out for their own interests. We had to walk over Central Asia. Just like the United States did in North America, Britain in India, France in Algeria, and the colonies of the Netherlands."*<sup>37</sup>

According to Saray, these statements of Gorchakov do not reflect the truth. The Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Kazakh, and Turkmen Turks, who made up the people of the Central Asian countries, were not communities living a semi-wild, unorganized nomadic life. They had their national states such as Bukhara, Kokand, and Khiva khanates and the Turkmen Republic. If these khanates were made up of wild communities as claimed by Russia, they would not have requested help from the caliph of the time by appealing to the Ottoman Empire to keep up with the developments of the era and to attempt reforms. It is also not true that the Central Asian states consisted of peoples who only submit to brute force. To remind again, when Russia approached this geography for so-

<sup>33</sup> Saray, *Rus İşgali Devrinde Osmanlı Devleti İle Türkistan Hanlıkları Arasındaki Siyasi Münasebetler (1775-1875)*, 574; Saray, "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Türkistan Siyaseti," 574; Cevat Ekici and Kemal Gurulkan, eds., *Belgelerle Osmanlı-Türkistan İlişkileri (XVI-XX. Yüzyıllar)* (Ankara: Osmanlı Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü Başkanlığı, Arşivi Dairesi, 2005), 4, 14, 23, 25, 26, 41, 51, 53; Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya* (Kültür Bakanlığı, 1990), 95.

<sup>34</sup> Saray, *Rus İşgali Devrinde Osmanlı Devleti İle Türkistan Hanlıkları Arasındaki Siyasi Münasebetler (1775-1875)*, 39.

<sup>35</sup> Eraslan, "İslâm Birliği Siyaseti Çerçevesinde II. Abdülhamid'in İlk Yıllarında Osmanlı-İran Münasebetleri (1878-1882)," 222.

<sup>36</sup> Saray, *Rus İşgali Devrinde Osmanlı Devleti İle Türkistan Hanlıkları Arasındaki Siyasi Münasebetler (1775-1875)*, 52.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

called commercial reasons, the khanates did not take an aggressive attitude, although they did not believe in their sincerity, and even described it as immoral to place spies among the Russians. These examples render Russia's claim in these lands unsupported. Moreover, the invasion of the United States in North America and the British in India as justifiable reasons for their invasion of Central Asia is also open to discussion.<sup>38</sup>

Russia gradually completed its diplomatic preparations for the invasion of the Turkestan khanates in the military field and occupied Kokand in 1865, for reasons that Russia deemed justified. It was mentioned before that there were conflicts among the Khanates as well. Taking advantage of Kokand's situation, Bukhara Emir also occupied Kokand's Ora-Tepe, Khujand, and Kokand cities. Upon this, the emir of Kokand asked for help from the Ottoman Empire as a caliphate, but he stated that they could not help due to the distance. He advised that the conflicts among themselves were wrong and that the establishment of unity between Islamic states was necessary.<sup>39</sup> These recommendations were essentially a call for unity, a return to the core values of Islam, and in this way to ensure that the Islamic society would be revitalized and could continue to exist.<sup>40</sup>

The Bukhara emirate tried to find a solution through peace in response to the advance of Russia to its lands after Kokand. However, Russia did not accept any peaceful solution and suddenly attacked the lands of Bukhara on May 8, 1866. As Russia proceeded its own way, a commission was established in Central Asia. The newly occupied territories of Turkestan were turned into an independent region as the "General Governorship of Turkestan", the capital city of which was Tashkent. General Kaufman was appointed as head of the governor's office.<sup>41</sup> The Emir of Bukhara did not want to sign the text of the treaty that Russia wanted to dictate in some way and sent ambassadors urgently to Istanbul, Afghanistan, and Turkmens to ask for help. Besides, in the letters sent, it was stated that if the caliph sent a letter to Russia or a person away from the Muslims, his name would be remembered for good, and if these desperate Muslims were saved with the honor and help of the caliph, a great reward would be written in the book of deeds.<sup>42</sup>

In 1872, Mersin district governor Abdülkâdir Kemâlî, who was in the territory of Turkestan, presented a report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding Tatarstan, Bukhara, and the vicinity of the Aral Lake. In that report, he wrote that the Central Asian Muslims would not be able to get out of the plight of their own and that the Muslims in this region had been in disaster and calamity for a while and harboring the caliphate that could protect them. Moreover, he wrote that they would not say no to the Ottoman Empire and that they even had such an expectation. He added that many states in these lands were taking advantage of the weak situation of the Muslims and that the Ottomans should not stay away from this issue.<sup>43</sup>

When looking at the Khiva Khanate, it is seen that the state started to become active during the period of Muhammed Rahim Khan (1864-1920). Affected by the reform movements of Peter the Great in Russia and Mahmud II, the sultan and the caliph of Muslims in the Ottoman Empire, Muhammed Rahim Khan tried to bring a new order to his country. He formed the Meclis-i Ahkâm by turning the Khiva into the center of government and determined Fridays as the meeting day of the assembly. Apart from these, he developed a trade network with Russia and Bukhara by

---

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>40</sup> Karpat, *Türkiye ve Orta Asya*, 177.

<sup>41</sup> Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Rusya Tarihi Başlangıçtan 1917'ye kadar* (Ankara: TTK., 1987), 350; Hayit, *Türkistan Rusya ile Çin Arasında: XVIII-XX. Asırlarda Ruslar ve Çinlilerin İstilâları Devrinde Türkistan Milli Devletleri ve Milli Mücadeleleri Tarihi*, 84.

<sup>42</sup> Saray, *Rus İşgali Devrinde Osmanlı Devleti İle Türkistan Hanlıkları Arasındaki Siyasi Münasebetler (1775-1875)*, 86.

<sup>43</sup> Ekici and Gurulkan, *Belgelerle Osmanlı-Türkistan İlişkileri (XVI-XX. Yüzyıllar)*, 136.

establishing a royal mint, an armory, and a gunpowder factory.<sup>44</sup> Russia had been conducting expeditions to these lands for years and had the same ambitions for this place as it did on other khanates. However, the effort of Muhammed Rahim Khan to increase the welfare of his country and to stop the negative course is striking. Because, considering the situation of the khanates in general, a community that is inadequate in self-defense and development and in need of help from the caliph is at the forefront. The Khiva Khanate also believed in the influence of the caliphate and, like other khanates, awaited help from the spiritual power of the caliph against the Russian invasion.<sup>45</sup>

In his trip to Central Asia between 1861-64 disguised as a Sunni dervish, with the support of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Arminius Vámbéry, a Hungarian-born orientalist and Turcologist expresses how sacred the Khiva Muslims considered the caliph as follows:

*“...The Ottoman Sultan was regarded as the caliph of the Prophet in Khiva. For this reason, it was believed that both His Holiness the Sultan and the officials of the Mabeyn-i Hümayun and other officials were generally righteous, abid, zahid, and blessed people. The sultan was thought to be a man with a bushy and long beard, who wrapped a turban of fifty cubits on his head, and wore a garment reaching his heels...”*<sup>46</sup>

Vámbéry, who had been to Istanbul before, could not say that the sultan was not the person they thought, so he remained silent or confirmed their thoughts to protect his cover. Vámbéry continued the thoughts of the Muslims of Khiva about the caliph as follows:

*“...Some would like to learn how the sultan's food was brought from Mecca in every meal. Because they believed that Zat-ı Şahane's morning and evening meals were brought from the Kaaba and that it was a one-minute job to bring it.”*<sup>47</sup>

The information given by Vámbéry reveals how the Central Asian Muslims have deep love and respect for the caliph. So much so that those who believed in the caliph exaggerated this situation and envisioned him as a supreme being. This is actually an indicator of how the influence of the caliph affected the people in these lands. So why could the Ottoman Empire, which held the caliphate, not be able to use this diplomacy tool fully and effectively when faced with the Russian threat or when the Turkestan Muslims were in a difficult situation?

The fact that the caliphate, which is respected among the Turkestan khanates, failed to produce sharp results for both sides can be explained by several reasons. The first of these was that the other side claimed that the distance between them was an obstacle to help, whichever front the Russian threat was felt. Another is that the khanates could not be organized among themselves. The Turkestan khanates, struggling for superiority against each other, made it easier for Russia to realize its goals in this region. This caused the Ottoman Empire to lose trust in the khanates, which constantly advised them to get along with each other and to unite. Another reason is that the state, in a period of decline, was in an effort to save itself by reforming in many areas, as mentioned before. It also dealt with tensions with Europe and Russia. However, the caliphate position, which became active in this weak period of the state, succeeded in masking this weak image in the eyes of the khanates.

When diplomatic correspondence is examined, it is seen that Ottoman-Turkestan relations were not only political relations but also scientific, commercial, and religious activities.

In the letter sent to Istanbul in 1816 by the Judge of Bukhara, Mir Haydar Khan, first, the Caliphate was emphasized and praised, and then Haydar Khan requested that he be given a

<sup>44</sup> Suavi, *Hive Hanlığı*, 90.

<sup>45</sup> Ekici and Gurulkan, *Belgelerle Osmanlı-Türkistan İlişkileri (XVI-XX. Yüzyıllar)*, 81.

<sup>46</sup> Arminius Vambery, *Bir Sahte Dervişin Orta Asya Gezisi*, ed. Ahmet Özalp (İstanbul: Ses Yayınları, 1993), 115.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

government mandate to establish authority over the judges of Kazan and Harezm. He also stated that he was curious about the news of the invasion of Mecca and Medina by the Saudis and wanted to be informed. He stated that the religious books brought from India to his country were not sufficient in terms of content and therefore demanded new books from the Ottoman sultan. On the other hand, in Name-i Hümayun by Mahmud II, it is mentioned that the Saudis were defeated, Hejaz, Mecca, and Medina were saved, and a total of 32 of the religious books he wanted were sent.<sup>48</sup>

In 1847, Hundayar Khan, the judge of Kokand and Deşt-i Kıpçak, reported in his letter to the Ottoman Empire that the places that were seized treacherously by the ruler of Bukhara were taken back in 1847. He also stated that there were many precious metals such as gold, silver, ruby, turquoise, and tin, especially in Kokand, so he requested, if the caliphate approved, that two or three competent miners be appointed to Kokand as there were no craftsmen who knew of these works. The Ottoman Empire also had the imperial decree prepared, stating that the necessary actions would be taken for the desired miners.<sup>49</sup>

Apart from these, issues such as the removal of customs duty for cotton seeds to be imported from Central Asia, payment by the custody of the finance to those who went on a pilgrimage from Bukhara and China, the list of religious books to be sent to the ruler of Bukhara, and mushaf, cloth, horse, musk, etc. sent to the sultan by the ruler of Kokand are the subjects of the correspondence.<sup>50</sup> Also, it is noteworthy that the representatives of Turkestan Muslims had always taken care to refer to the caliphate in this correspondence.

The communication between the Russian Muslims and the Ottoman Empire took place thanks to the Ottoman diplomatic services, the exchange of information between local leaders, and the public (through visits and newspapers).<sup>51</sup> The interest of the Ottoman public in the Muslims of the world was great. It was seen that the newspapers were very eager to convey news about the Muslims of the world to the readers.

Since the first years of its publication, *Basiret* newspaper featured articles that drew attention to the idea of Ittihad-ı İslam. It was common to see reports that the Ottoman sultans were the caliphs of all Muslims and that one million Islamic soldiers could gather for the same purpose with one sign from him.<sup>52</sup> In 1893, in a newspaper named *Le Petit Journal*, some news were published, stating that the sermon, which had been previously performed on behalf of the Abbasid caliphs in Beijing, was performed on behalf of Sultan Abdulhamid for four or five years and that Islam was spreading rapidly in China.<sup>53</sup> In East Turkestan, Yakub Bey of Kashgar<sup>54</sup> was considered the herald and pioneer of the political and innovative awakening movement that started to form among Muslims. After ensuring stability in his country, he sent an envoy to the Ottoman Empire, which had historical and cultural ties and was the patron of the Islamic world. Yakub Bey requested help and protection from Sultan Abdulaziz Khan; he wished his state to be accepted as a part of the Ottoman Empire and stated that he had sworn allegiance to him. His request was accepted by the Ottoman Empire. Yakub Bey saw his desire to be the only leader in his country

---

<sup>48</sup> Ekici and Gurulkan, *Belgelerle Osmanlı-Türkistan İlişkileri (XVI-XX. Yüzyıllar)*, 14-20.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 48-52.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 25-6, 41-2, 110-1, 33-4.

<sup>51</sup> Kemal Karpat, *İslam'ın Siyasallaştırılması* (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2005), 526.

<sup>52</sup> Turan, *Hilafet: Erken İslâm Tarihinden Osmanlı'nın Son Yüzyılına*, 362.

<sup>53</sup> Ekici and Gurulkan, *Belgelerle Osmanlı-Türkistan İlişkileri (XVI-XX. Yüzyıllar)*, 113.

<sup>54</sup> Yakub Bey, who was a commander at the age of 27 in 1847, had a structure that did not hesitate to use any means to achieve his goal. He went to Kashgar in 1865 to weaken China's power, and he also intervened in the throne fights in Kashgar. After capturing cities such as Aksu, Kuçar, Kurla, Karaşehir, Urumqi, Turfan from the hands of the teachers who had a say in Turkistan and unified East Turkestan in 1871, he established the Kashgar State and made the city of Aksu its capital. After that, he took care to establish international relations wisely to strengthen his state. İklil Kurban, *Doğu Türkistan İçin Savaş* (Turk Tarih Kurumu Basmevi, 1995), 44-5, 83.

approaching the caliph. The right to be recognized as the Muslim leader of Kashgar and transferring this authority to his successors by the caliph of Islam in Istanbul meant to overshadow the rights of the gownsmen. Because, Yakub Bey was becoming certified by the highest Muslim official. In this way, the people would not follow different sheiks, dervishes, or gownsmen, and there would be a union in the country and an atmosphere of peace and security.<sup>55</sup> This shows that the power of the caliphate of the Ottoman Empire was effective in the eyes of Muslims, even if it was an imaginary one.<sup>56</sup>

It is seen that the Ottoman Empire started to behave more actively in East Turkestan politics in 1873.<sup>57</sup> Yakub Bey was supported by the Ottoman Empire in his struggles against China and demanded military equipment from Abdülaziz Khan, who was the sultan and caliph of the period, declaring that he was subordinate to him. By the positive response from the Ottoman Empire to Yakub Bey, a jeweled watch, a khilat, six pieces of cannon, ammunition, and two thousand rifles were sent.<sup>58</sup> The Ottoman Empire was trying to alleviate the sorrow of the aid that it could not send to the Muslims of Turkestan in order not to draw the reaction of Russia by helping Yakub Bey. Yakub Bey's commitment to the Ottoman Empire was related to his belief that they had a great influence in the international arena and would deter the Chinese from invading their lands.

At a time when the Russians invaded the Turkish states in West Turkestan one by one and approached the border of India, the emergence of the Kashgar State (1871-1877) in East Turkestan was a pleasing development for the British.<sup>59</sup> The British were trying to get closer to Kashgar for commercial purposes. Since Yakub Bey was aware of the friendship between the Ottoman Empire and the British, he thought that he would help the British establish their authority in Kashgar by procuring weapons and ammunition from the British to protect his state from the Chinese attacks. But his thought proved wrong. Because the British wanted to use this country as a buffer zone against Russia and China, just like Afghanistan, by increasing their commercial and political influence to process the natural wealth of East Turkestan. But then, when the British realized that the Russians did not have a policy towards this region, they lost interest in Yakub Bey and even the caliph. Later, Britain put forward the idea of "defending the Arab caliphate and revealing the invalidity of the Turkish caliphate" in the newspaper published by two Lebanese Christians in 1876, seeking ways to tear the Muslims who were close to the caliph from him.<sup>60</sup> A letter from Yakub Bey explaining his support for the sultan-caliph regarding this issue was published in Turkish newspapers. In his statement, the gatekeeper of Yakub Bey also stated that everybody in Turkestan, Afghanistan, and India, including the Magi, were ready for all kinds of support in favor of the caliphate. To suppress Pan-Islamism, Europe tried to initiate propaganda dividing the Islamic world with the Arab Caliphate campaign, but this propaganda did not give Europe the desired result.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Karpat, *Türkiye ve Orta Asya*, 175-8.

<sup>56</sup> Karpat, *İslam'ın Siyasallaştırılması*, 113-4.

<sup>57</sup> The reasons for this situation can be listed as follows; The Ottoman Empire could not help the Muslims of Turkestan to avoid the reaction of Russia, and they were upset about this. Since Yakub Bey was fighting in East Turkestan not against Russia, but against China, there was no harm in helping the Ottomans to Kashgar. In addition, although the Turkestan khanates were warned to get along with each other, they were constantly in conflict, which shook the trust of the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, Yakub Bey, as a talented and consistent statesman, managed to attract the attention of the sultan in his struggle against China and deserved to be supported. Another factor is that the British do not want the Russians to spread towards India. For this reason, they inspired the Ottoman Empire to strengthen Kashgar. Saray, *Rus İşgali Devrinde Osmanlı Devleti İle Türkistan Hanlıkları Arasındaki Siyasi Münasebetler (1775-1875)*, 103.

<sup>58</sup> Ekici and Gurulkan, *Belgelerle Osmanlı-Türkistan İlişkileri (XVI-XX. Yüzyıllar)*, 92.

<sup>59</sup> Kurban, *Doğu Türkistan İçin Savaş*, 84.

<sup>60</sup> Orhan Koloğlu, *Abdülhamid Gerçeği* (Eylül Yayınları, İstanbul 2002), 164.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 166-7.

After achieving stability in his country, Yakub Bey tried to maintain a balance policy towards Russia and Britain. However, he did not achieve this in his relations with China, since China claimed sovereignty over East Turkestan. Britain's changing mind in the face of this policy led to the occupation of Kashgar by China.<sup>62</sup>

The Ottoman caliphate formed a new foundation of solidarity during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II (1876-1909).<sup>63</sup> Sultan Abdulhamid tried to use the legitimacy of the caliphate on the Turkish, Afghan, Russian, and Turkestan khanates due to Islamic brotherhood and religious reasons.<sup>64</sup> Generally, the politics of this era aimed to unite the Ottoman society around Islam, to develop inner peace and solidarity using the caliphate as a diplomatic tool, and to follow a balance policy towards the great states of Europe, especially Britain and Russia. Besides, for the first time since the caliphate was taken over, it was effectively used as a threat to colonial states such as Britain, Russia, and France.<sup>65</sup>

Before the Ottoman-Russian war, Abdulhamid II was planning to put Russia in a difficult situation by helping the Turks and Muslims living in the Russian lands revolt. However, this was not possible under the conditions of that time. The Ottoman sultan had a great reputation in the Kazakh-Kyrgyz steppes in Turkestan and the Idil clan as the spiritual leader of Muslims, that is, the "caliph of the earth". But the respect nurtured in this way was not enough to attack the Russians.<sup>66</sup> Because, some of the Turkestan Turks were nomads and they were not in a position to stand against the modern Russian organization. The resident Turkish people of Turkestan, on the other hand, were religious fanatics. Also, they lost their ability to survive due to the mismanagement of the inns. Turkestan, which could establish the most perfect armies in the world during the Timurid era, housed a cowardly and loose mass of people in the 19th century. The weak military units of the Kokand, Khiva, and Bukhara khans could not be expected to succeed in the face of Russia's modern cannons, rifles, and regular military organization.<sup>67</sup>

After 1878, Abdulhamid II used the policy of Islamic unity as a weapon that would counterbalance Pan-Slavism in secret, as he tried to normalize his relations with Russia. Knowing the sensitivity of the British on India, Abdulhamid II paid special attention to sending sayyids, sheiks, and dervishes to these lands and connecting the Muslims in Asia to the caliphate without doubting the British.<sup>68</sup> Ottoman secret officials and consulates tried to protect the people of Crimea and Central Asia from the Russification policy by encouraging them to migrate to Turkish lands, taking care to protect their cultural and spiritual ties.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Saray, *Rus İşgali Devrinde Osmanlı Devleti İle Türkistan Hanlıkları Arasındaki Siyasi Münasebetler (1775-1875)*, 120-7. Ahmed Zeki Velidi Togan, *Bugünkü Türkili Türkistan ve Yakın Tarihi* (Enderun Kitabevi, 1981), 254.

<sup>63</sup> Selim Deringil, *İktidarın Sembolleri ve ideoloji: II, Abdülhamid Dönemi (1876-1909)*, (2002), 56.

<sup>64</sup> Hülagü, *Pan-İslâmîst Faaliyetler: 1914-1918*, 263.

<sup>65</sup> Cezmi Eraslan, "II. Abdülhamid'in Hilafet Anlayışı," in *Sultan II. Abdülhamid ve Devri Semineri (27-29 Mayıs 1992)* (İstanbul: İ.Ü. Ed. Fak. Tarih Araştırma Merkezi, 1994), 93-105. Vahdettin Engin, *II. Abdülhamid ve Dış Politika* (Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2005), 39.

<sup>66</sup> Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya*, 96.

<sup>67</sup> Kurat, *Rusya Tarihi Başlangıçtan 1917'ye kadar*, 353.

<sup>68</sup> İhsan Süreyya Sırma, *II. Abdülhamid'in İslam Birliği Siyaseti* (İstanbul, 1985), 46. P. Levon Dabağyan, *Osmanlı'da Şer Hareketleri ve II. Abdülhamid Hân* (İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2002), 569.

<sup>69</sup> Deringil, *Simgeden Millete: II. Abdülhamid'den Mustafa Kemal'e Devlet ve Millet*, 253; The policy of Russification aims to force the non-Russian ethnic nations living under Tsarism to cultural and religious assimilation. The supremacy of the Russian language was imposed by cultural assimilation and the forcible penetration of the Russian language into other nations was the method most used by Tsarism. With religious assimilation, it was aimed to impose the Orthodoxy sect on Catholic, Protestant, Muslim and Jewish nations through coercion. The 'Russification', that is, the Nation Policy of Tsarism, was tried to be implemented effectively by Tsarism from 1863 to 1905. The political approach of the Russian Tsarist towards Central Asia and Turkestan is somewhat different from other regions. Unlike Poland and the Baltic regions, Central Asia was seen as a colony. Russia has started to implement a serious modernization policy in this region. In order to modernize the region, railways were built and St. Petersburg,

In the Second Constitutional Monarchy, the international nature of the caliphate was tried to be protected, but its position in domestic politics was desired to be dispersed. With the declaration of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, some ideas were raised about the new legal situation. Accordingly, it was argued that the caliphate was a proxy and that it was the Muslim ummah or nation. Therefore, the power of the caliph was not over the nation, but the power of the nation that appointed the caliph was over him. With such approaches, the burden of the caliph on the country was tried to be reduced and institutions such as the parliament and constitution were to be strengthened. With the law enacted after the 31<sup>st</sup> March Incident, the rights and powers of the caliph were further restricted and this authority lost power. However, after a while, when the Islamic world started to react to this new situation, the Committee of Union and Progress started to refer to the institution of the Caliphate again both to prevent reactions, to maintain the loyalty of the Muslims to the state, and to ensure the support of the Muslim public opinion abroad.<sup>70</sup>

### Conclusion

The way to have political and spiritual leadership in the Islamic world was to have the caliphate seat. The Islamic states that wanted to gain this power fought against each other, wanting to keep a grip on the caliphate. The caliphate being undertaken by the Ottoman rulers, despite the fact that the opinion that people from the Quraysh tribe should become the caliph had been common in the Arab world, should be regarded as a result of the historical conditions. The Ottoman state tried to take advantage of this authority when needed. The 19th century, when the empire was in decline, was the period when the authority of the caliphate was most emphasized and instrumentalized. In this period, the power of the caliphate became a necessary tool. The caliphate was used as a counterbalance to states such as Russia and England. The khanates of Turkestan, which had tensions among themselves and with Russia, turned to the caliphate to remedy the difficulties they faced. When the correspondences of these khanates with the Ottoman Empire were analyzed, it was determined that the helpless khanates wanted the Ottomans to help in order to carry out their military, scientific, commercial, and religious activities. It is understood that the demands were not one-sided, as the Ottoman Empire used the power of the caliphate to demand from the khanates to open a war front against Russia from time to time. So, to what extent were these mutual demands fulfilled?

The research reveals three different results for the khanates of Turkestan, the Kashgar Khanate, and the Ottoman Empire.

1. When the influence of the caliphate on the khanates of Bukhara, Kokand, and Khiva was evaluated, it was determined that the demands could not be fulfilled as desired. When the khanates felt the Russian threat, they asked for help from the Ottoman Empire, but the Ottoman Empire claimed that the distance between them was an obstacle for help. The actual reason for not being able to provide this help is that the weak Ottoman Empire did not want to confront Russia. Another reason is that the khanates could not be organized among themselves. The khanates of Turkestan, which struggled for supremacy against each other, facilitated the realization of Russia's ambitions

---

establishing factories for industrial development in the region, increasing the number of cities by constructing them, reorganizing the agricultural policy, and ensuring the flow of Russian capital to the region began to be implemented in order to ensure Russian-centered modernization in the region. These first wave modernization policies appear as tools used to connect the inorodets (non-Russian peoples) and their lands to the Russian Tsarist. The region's acquaintance with the second Russification policy was with the resettlement policy of Russian settlers in Central Asia and Turkestan. The aforementioned Russian immigrants, who started to be settled in the region, directly became Russia's connections in the region and served the policy of Russification. According to the data of 1910, the number of Russian immigrants in Turkestan is around 382 thousand. Selim Öztürk, "Çarlıkta Ruslaştırma Siyaseti ve Sovyet Sonrası Dönemde Ruslaştırmadan Geriye Dönüş Politikaları", *AVRASYA Uluslararası Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Vol.7, March 2019, 1097-1110.

<sup>70</sup> Özcan, "Hilafet (Osmanlı Dönemi)," 471.

in this region. This situation caused the Ottoman Empire to lose confidence in the khanates, which constantly advised them to get along well with each other and to be united.

2. It was seen that the relationship of the Ottoman Empire with the Kashgar Khanate in East Turkestan was relatively more dynamic. As mentioned, the Ottoman Empire could not help the Muslims of Turkestan as much as possible in order not to provoke a reaction from Russia and used the distance as an excuse. However, since Yakub Bey was fighting against China, not Russia, in East Turkestan, the Ottomans did not see any harm in helping the Kashgar khanate. In addition, although the khanates of Turkestan were advised to get along with each other, they were in constant conflict. This situation shook the confidence of the Ottoman Empire. Yakub Bey, on the other hand, received more support from the sultan thanks to his struggle against China as a skillful and strong statesman. Another factor was that the British did not want the Russians to expand to India. Therefore, they suggested to the Ottoman Empire to help strengthen the Kashgar khanate. However, the support provided to the Kashgar khanate by the Ottoman Empire/the caliphate was still not sufficient to maintain the existence of the khanate.

Considering the situation from the Ottoman perspective, it is seen that the empire is in decline and striving to save itself. The authority of the caliphate, which became an important tool in this period, emerged as a force not by the will of the state, but automatically, as a necessity of that period. Russia undertaking the task of protecting the Christian communities in the Ottoman Empire and the British taking control of India and ending the existence of the Turkish states there caused the re-emphasis on the previously weak authority of the caliphate. The Muslims around the world needed a spiritual leader in such circumstances and they turned to the caliphate, that is, the Ottoman Empire. Although the caliphate, which was used as a balancing tool within the context of pan-Islamism, provided from time to time advantage against the British and the Russians, the Ottoman Empire's inability to keep up with the developments in Europe and its exhaustion after successive wars prevented the continuity of the policy followed by the state. Therefore, it was determined that although the Ottoman Empire was not completely indifferent to the wishes of the khanates, it was unable to offer a clear solution for these problems, either.

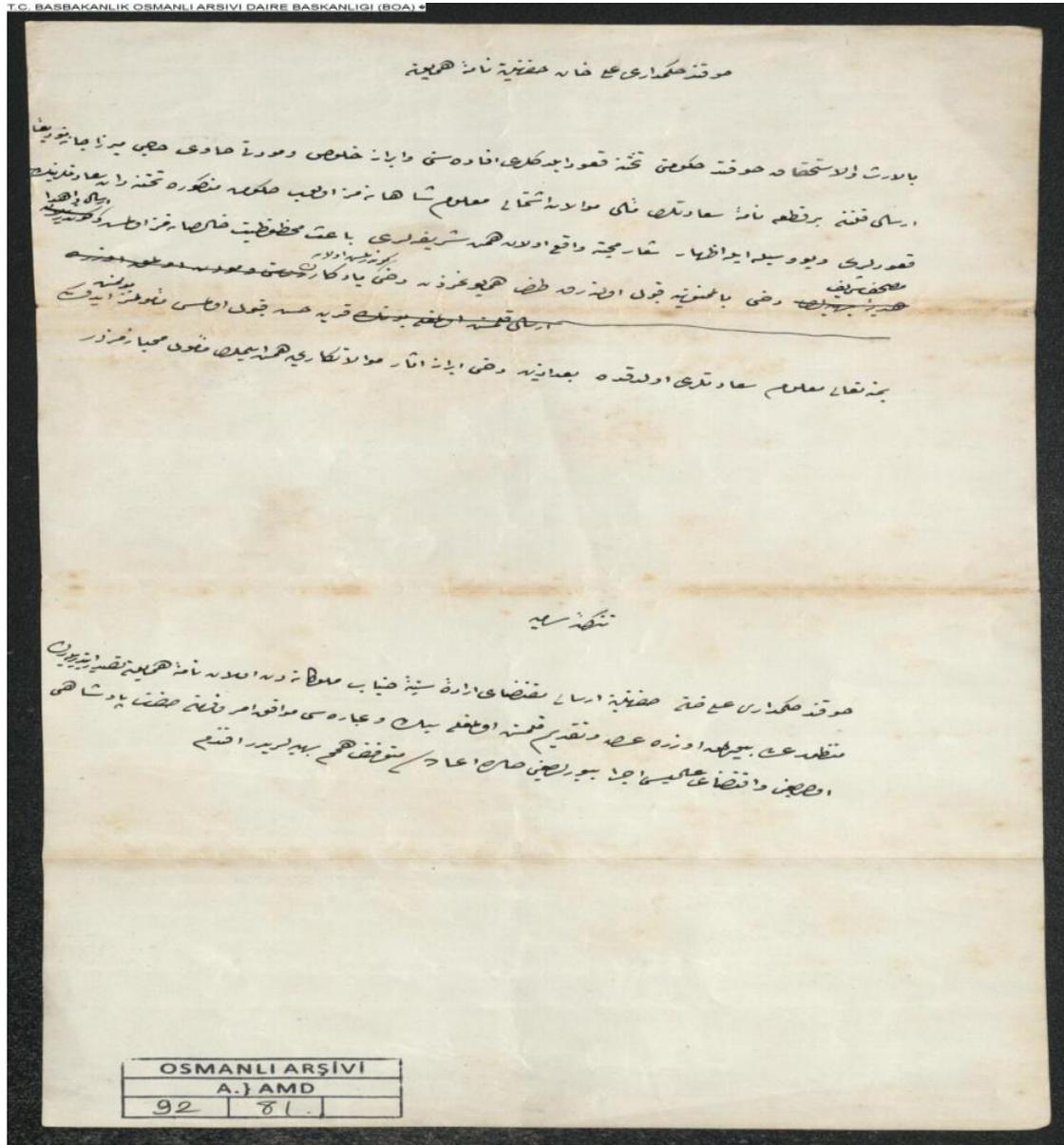
## References

- Aka, İsmail. *Türk Dünyası Tarihi*. İzmir: Ege Üniversitesi, 2009.
- Akşin, Sina. "Osmanlı Padişahlarının Toprak Ve Hilafet Uğruna Verdikleri Ödünler." *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi* 29 (1974): 131-41.
- Alkan, Mustafa. *Osmanlılarda Hilâfet: 1517-1909 "Geçışı, Tarihi Gelişme Ve Tesirleri"*. İzmir: Çağlayan Yayınları, 1997.
- Armaoğlu, Fahir. *19. Yüzyılın Siyasi Tarihi (1789-1914)*. Ankara: TTK, 1997.
- Cevdet, Ahmet. *Tezâkir 13-20*. Edited by Cavid Baysun. Ankara: TTK, 1986.
- Dabağyan, P. Levon. *Osmanlı'da Şer Hareketleri ve II. Abdülhamid Hân*. İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2002.
- Demir, Uğur. *Osmanlı Hilafetinin İlk Asırları*. İstanbul, 2019.
- Deringil, Selim. *İktidarın Sembolleri ve İdeoloji: II. Abdülhamid Dönemi (1876-1909)*. 2002.
- . *Simgeden Millete: II. Abdülhamid'den Mustafa Kemal'e Devlet ve Millet*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2007.
- Aydın Kitabevi. 2005.
- Ekici, Cevat, and Kemal Gurulkan, eds. *Belgelerle Osmanlı-Türkistan İlişkileri (Xvi-Xx. Yüzyıllar)*. Ankara: Osmanlı Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü Başkanlığı, Arşivi Dairesi, 2005.
- El-Mevdudi, Ebu'l Âlâ. "Hilafet Ve Saltanat." *Ali Genceli (çev.) İstanbul: Hilal Yayınları* (1972).
- Emecen, M. Feridun. *Yavuz Sultan Selim*. 2017.
- Engin, Vahdettin. *II. Abdülhamid ve Dış Politika*. Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2005.
- Eraslan, Cezmi. "II. Abdülhamid'in Hilafet Anlayışı." In *Sultan II. Abdülhamid ve Devri Semineri (27-29 Mayıs 1992)*, 93-105. İstanbul: İ.Ü. Ed. Fak. Tarih Araştırma Merkezi, 1994.
- . "İslâm Birliği Siyaseti Çerçevesinde II. Abdülhamid'in İlk Yıllarında Osmanlı-İran Münasebetleri (1878-1882)." In *Prof. Dr. Bekir Kütükoğlu'na Armağan*, 221-40. İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Tarih Araştırmaları Merkezi, 1991.
- Hayit, Baymirza. *Türkistan Rusya ile Çin Arasında: XVIII-XX. Asırlarda Ruslar ve Çinlilerin İstilaları Devrinde Türkistan Milli Devletleri ve Milli Mücadeleleri Tarihi*. Translated by Abdülkadir Sadak. İstanbul: Otağ Yayınevi, 1975.
- Hülagü, M. Metin. *Pan-İslâmist Faaliyetler: 1914-1918*. İstanbul: Boğaziçi, 1994.
- İnalçık, Halil. *Devlet-i Aliyye Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Üzerine Araştırmalar*. Vol. 1, İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2009.
- Kamalov, İlyas. *Türk Cumhuriyetleri'nin Bağımsızlıklarınının 20. Yılında Rusya'nın Orta Asya Politikaları (Rapor)*. Edited by Murat Yılmaz. Ankara: Hoca Ahmet Yesevi Uluslararası Türk-Kazak Üniversitesi, 2011.
- Karpat, Kemal. *İslam'ın Siyasallaştırılması*. İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2005.
- Karpat, Kemal. *Ortadoğu'da Osmanlı Mirası ve Ulusçuluk*. Translated by Recep Boztemur. Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2001.
- . *Türkiye ve Orta Asya*. Translated by Hakan Gür. Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2003.



- Kolođlu, Orhan. *Abdülhamid Gerçeđi*. İstanbul: Eylül Yayınları, 2002.
- Kurat, Akdes Nimet. *Rusya Tarihi Başlangıçtan 1917'ye Kadar*. Ankara: TTK., 1987.
- . *Türkiye ve Rusya*. Kültür Bakanlığı, 1990.
- Kurban, İklil. *Dođu Türkistan İçin Savaş*. Turk Tarih Kurumu Basmevi, 1995.
- Mardin, Şerif. *Türkiye'de Din ve Siyaset Makaleler 3*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2001.
- Ortaylı, İlber. *Türkiye Teşkilat ve İdare Tarihi*. Cedit Neşriyat, Ankara, 2017.
- Öke, Mim Kemal. *Hilafet Hareketleri*. İstanbul, 2005.
- Özdemir, Emin. "Rus İşgalinden Önceki Dönemde Türkistan'a Gelen Batılı Seyyahlar ve Türkistan Tarihine Kaynak Olarak Seyahatnameleri", *History*, 2: 2, 113-26, 2010.
- Özcan, Azmi. "Hilafet (Osmanlı Dönemi)." In *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 539-53, 1998.
- Öztürk, Selim. "Çarlıkta Ruslaştırma Siyaseti ve Sovyet Sonrası Dönemde Ruslaştırmadan Geriye Dönüş Politikaları", *AVRASYA Uluslararası Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Vol.7, 1097-1110, March 2019.
- Roux, Jean-Paul. *Orta Asya Tarih ve Uygarlık*. Translated by Lale Arslan. İstanbul: Kabalcı Yayınları, 2001.
- Said, Edward W. . *Şarkiyatçılık; Batının Şark Anlayışları*. Translated by Berna Ülner. İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2010.
- . İstanbul, 2005.
- Saray, Mehmet. "Osmanlı Devleti'nin Türkistan Siyaseti." In *Osmanlı*, 573-80 Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 1999.
- . *Rus İşgali Devrinde Osmanlı Devleti İle Türkistan Hanlıkları Arasındaki Siyasi Münasebetler (1775-1875)*. Ankara: TTK., 2017.
- Shaw, J.Stanford. *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Ve Modern Türkiye*. Translated by Mehmet Harmancı. Vol. 1, İstanbul: e yayınları, 2008.
- Sırma, İhsan Süreyya. *II. Abdülhamid'in İslam Birliđi Siyaseti*. İstanbul, 1985.
- Suavi, Ali. *Hive Hanlıđı*. Edited by M. Abdülhalik Çay. İstanbul, 1977.
- Taşađlı, Ahmet. "Türkiye'nin Orta Asya Türk Cumhuriyetleri ile İlişkilerinin Dünü, Bugünü Ve Yarını." *Stratejik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Şubat, no. 3. (2004): 19-44. Accessed 27.03.2013.
- Togan, Ahmed Zeki Velidi. *Bugunku Turkili Turkistan Ve Yakın Tarihi*. Enderun Kitabevi, 1981.
- Turan, Namık Sinan. *Hilafet: Erken İslâm Tarihinden Osmanlı'nın Son Yüzyılına*. İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2017.
- Uludađ, Süleyman. "Halife." In *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, 299-300. İstanbul, 1997.
- Vambery, Arminus. *Bir Sahte Dervişin Orta Asya Gezisi*. Edited by Ahmet Özalp. İstanbul: Ses Yayınları, 1993.

Attachments

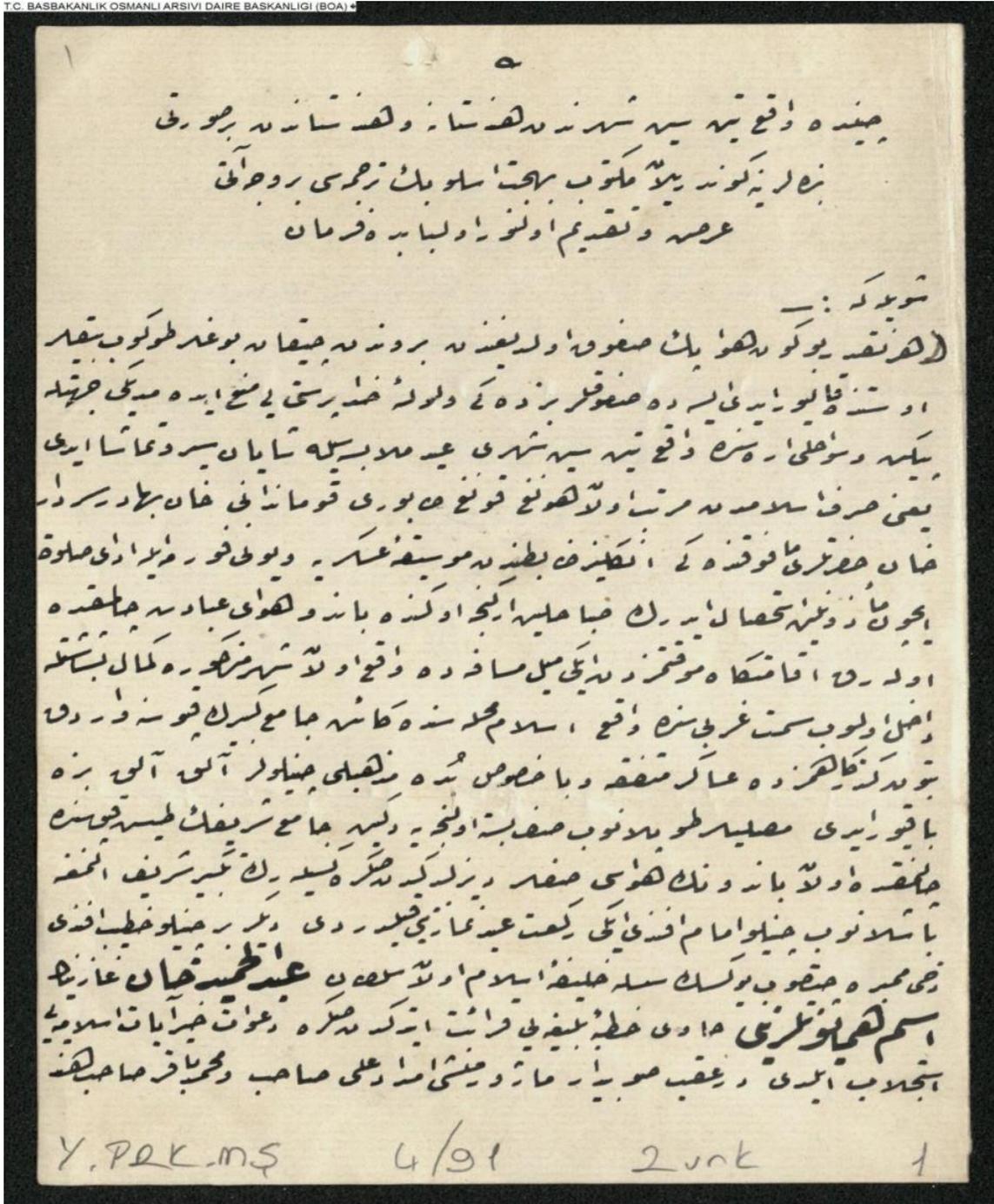


**Ek 1.** It is the document that the name of Ali Khan ascending to the throne of Kokand government was received and welcomed. (17 July 1860) BOA, A. AMD, 92/81.



Ek 2. It is the document regarding the translation of the letter sent by Yakub Khan regarding the sending of two thousand rifles along with a jeweled watch, a decorated robe, six pieces of cannon ammunition to Yakub Khan, the Emir of Kashgar. (November 1876) BOA, Y. EE, 42/79.

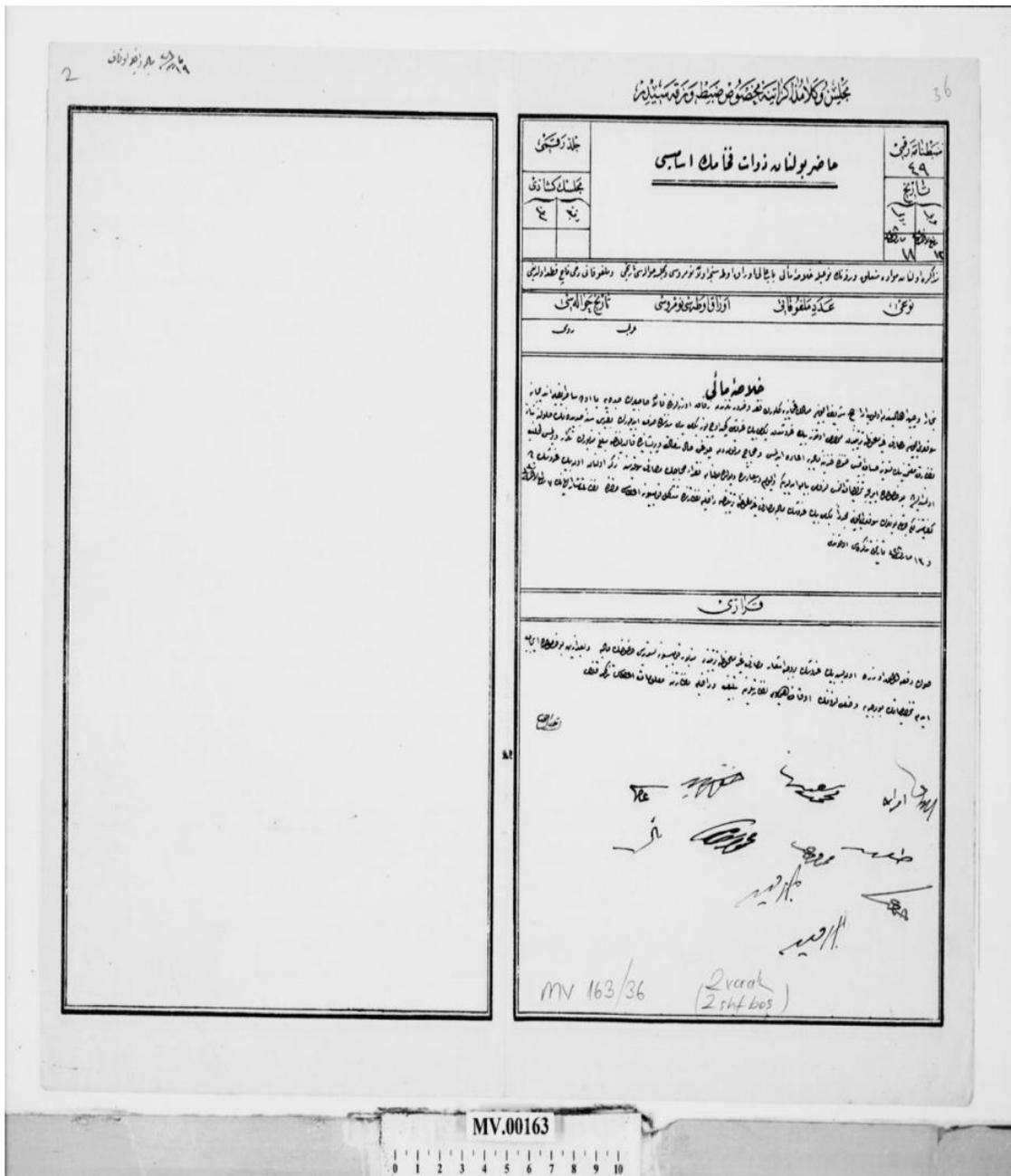
T.C. BASBAKANLIK OSMANLI ARSIVI DAIRE BASKANLIGI (BOA)



Y.PRK.MŞ.00004.00091.0.001

Ek 3. It is the document that the name of Abdulhamid Han began to be mentioned in the sermons read in China. (1893) BOA, Y. PRK. MS, 4/91\_1.





Ek 5. It is the document regarding the payment of the necessary amount for the sending of the pilgrims from Bukhara and China to their hometowns. (31 March 1912) BOA, MV, 163/36.