



2018-2019 FALL TERM

HIST-209

PROJECT PROPOSAL

**BARDEZAG HIGH SCHOOL: THE SELF-SUSTAINING
ORPHANAGE**

COURSE : HIST-209

SECTION : 3

GROUP NO. : 6

INSTRUCTOR : TARIK TANSU YİĞİT

GROUP MEMBERS

- 1) MUHAMMAD ARHAM KHAN, 21701848, CS
- 2) BILAL BIN KHALID, 21701834, CS
- 3) MOHAMAD FAKHOURI, 21701546, CS
- 4) ABDUL MOIZ AFTAB, 21701021, MBG
- 5) SEPEHR ELAHI, 21701442, EE

A) RESEARCH TOPIC

Of the many orphanages and schools the Christian missionaries established in Turkey, Bardezag high school was unique in its way of operation, expense management and teaching methods and this project will analyze these very methodologies and their advantages/shortcomings.

B) SCOPE AND AIM

The Bardezag high school, established in 1889 as a girls school and later turned into a boys orphanage after the big inflow of affected Armenian orphans from massacres in Constantinople (1896), was a major orphanage in the western Ottoman region of Bahçecik (near Istanbul). The school/ orphanage was led by Dr. Chambers (head of the protestant churches in Bittinia region) during the late 18th and early 19th century and hence, promoted Christian practices among its students. Initially, the orphanage was supported by donations from practicing Christians in England and America, but later, due to the wars and massacres in the region and decreasing monetary attention from the donors, resorted to unique ways of supported expenses while fulfilling needs of the orphans and training them for the world.

After the donations stopped, the orphanage experimentally started teaching children to work their own chores and produce for their own needs. Be it sewing uniforms, producing crops, cooking, cleaning, building the new academic block or any other thing that might've incurred labor or logistical cost to the orphanage, orphans at bardezag were trained to carry out all tasks themselves to avoid expenses. This way, the orphanage was able to sustain their students with minimal incomes and no debts. Another interesting outcome of this approach to education was that young children, instead of focusing on theoretical education, started seeking labor options on the orphanage or outside to earn money for the orphanage and improve their vocational skills.

This topic holds significance because although the Christian missionaries were involved in a number of educational activities across the region, bardezag stands out because of its unique approach to utilizing child labour for an institutions and its students sustenance and hence allows us to peek into what the life of orphans there was like and draw parallels between our current educational practices at orphanages or boarding schools. Furthermore, it

also allows us to compare the inclination of Christian orphans towards education with that of the Ottoman ones.

C) PRELIMINARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1- What was bardezag high school? how/ when/ where was it found? Who found it?
- 2- How was it run, who bore the costs, what was the curriculum like (initially)?
- 3- What caused an increased number of incoming male orphans in 1896?
- 4- What happened in the region resulting in severely reduced donations?
- 5- What counter measures did the orphanage administration take to maintain expenses?
- 6- How were the children brought to enjoy laboring for themselves?
- 7- What were the locals opinions on the orphanages operation and children's lifestyle?
- 8- How did bardezag compare with other orphanages in the region?
- 9- Is it ethical to promote labor among children from an early age?
- 10- How do the methods of bardezags operations compare with those of current orphanages or schools?
- 11- What was the curriculum like after the children started taking more interest in labor?

D) PRELIMINARY PRIMARY SOURCES

- 1- <http://www.dlir.org/archive/archive/files/997dd1fec74572a5a76ff070d92daff4.pdf>

A report from a lady worker (Sophia Newnham) at Bardezag to the ABCFM stating what her experiences/ observations at the orphanage in the year 1904 were and hence, it provides us an important insight from the administrations perspective into the life at bardezag. It also contains expense tables and finance records of the orphanage.

- 2- <http://www.dlir.org/archive/archive/files/7fcf764f0d751e3e05a58e49cc692982.pdf>

A published flyer by the orphanage comprising of an article by an orphan boy (Stepan) at the bardezag orphanage stating the their lives, the roles of important people at the orphanage and an insight into the curriculum of the orphanage.

- 3- (Reel 606) 0787-0788 - The Bardezag Orphanage for Boys, 1897-1898, 2 pages (T)

A transcript of the correspondence between Dr. Chambers (head of bardezag) and the ABCFM stating the current accomplishments of the orphanage and future plans

D) PRELIMINARY SECONDARY SOURCES

1-https://books.google.com.tr/books?id=N-fqBQAAQBAJ&pg=PA199&lpg=PA199&dq=bardezag+orphanage&source=bl&ots=jfLXKXQ0dc&sig=ZZV5_Voe8DKVgD-DfPIGrxALa0c&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjvuL6SxoPeAhXKw4sKHe0vB3gQ6AEwBHoECAMQAOQ#v=onepage&q&f=false

A book published in 1977 containing insights over the major orphanages in the Ottoman empire, which will allow us to compose parallels and differences between the bardezag orphanage and other normal orphanages all over the empire

2-https://www.academia.edu/5857246/Being_Saved_to_Serve_Armenian_Orphans_of_1894-96_and_Interested_Relief_in_Missionary_Orphanages

An article discussing an opposite side to the orphanage's labor approach claiming that they were being forced to work rather than they working willingly

3-<http://doctrinepublishing.com/showbook.php?file=66418-0000.txt>

Although in primary sources the orphanage claims that help from external sources had stoped from 1895, this document from red cross suggest that regular help from them was still going on while none of the expenses were being spent on the children. hence, this document strikes controversy.