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**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

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**A) RESEARCH TOPIC**

The Christian missionaries established many orphanages and schools in Turkey, but Bardezag High School was unique in its way of operation, expense management, and teaching methods. In this project, we will analyze these very methodologies, their advantages and shortcomings.

**B) SCOPE AND AIM**

Bardezag high school was first established in 1889 as a girls’ school, but was later turned into a boys’ orphanage after the big inflow of Armenian orphans who survived the massacres in the Constantinople (1896). It was an important orphanage in the western Ottoman region of Bahçecik, near Istanbul. The school was led by Dr. Chambers, the head of the protestant churches in Bittinia region, during the late 18th and early 19th century. Hence, the school 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, it resorted to efficient ways of paying for expenses while fulfilling the needs of the orphans and preparing them for the real world’s challenges. After the donations stopped, the orphanage experimentally started teaching the children to do their own chores and produce for their own needs. Whether it was sewing uniforms, producing crops, cooking, cleaning, building the new academic block or any other task that might have incurred labor or logistical cost, orphans at Bardezag were trained to carry them all out themselves. This way, the orphanage was able to sustain its students with minimal costs and no debts. Another interesting outcome of this approach to education was that instead of pursuing theoretical education, young children started started seeking labor options in the orphanage or outside to earn money for the orphanage and improve their vocational skills.

This topic holds significance because even though the Christian missionaries were involved in a number of educational activities across the region, Bardezag stands out because of its unique approaches to utilizing child labour for both the institution's and students’ sustenance, allowing us to peek into what the life of the local orphans was like. Additionally, it allows us to draw parallels between our current educational practices at orphanages and boarding schools and the practices that took place at Bardezag. Finally, it also allows us to compare the attitude of Christian orphans towards education with that of the Ottoman ones.

**C) PRELIMINARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1- What was the Bardezag High School?

2- How, when, where and by whom was Bardezag High School found?

2- Before resorting to new ways of education and managing costs, how was the orphanage run; what was the curriculum like and how did they manage their expenses?

3- What caused an increased number of incoming male orphans in 1896?

4- What happened in the region that resulted in severely reduced donations?

5- What counter measures did the orphanage administration take to maintain expenses?

6- How were the children brought to enjoy doing labor for themselves?

7- What were the locals’ opinions on the orphanage's operations and children’s lifestyle?

8- How did Bardezag compare with other orphanages in the region?

9- How do the methods of Bardezag operations compare with those of current orphanages and schools?

10- What was the curriculum like after the children started taking more interest in labor?

**D) PRELIMINARY PRIMARY SOURCES**

1. Newnham, Sophia. “BARDEZAG ORPHANAGE REPORT”, Bardezag, 1904. (http://www.dlir.org/archive/archive/files/997dd1fec74572a5a76ff070d92daff4.pdf)

A report from Sophia Newnham, a lady worker, 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.

1. Stepan, Will. “BARDEZAG: A GARDEN OF BOYS”, Bardezag, 1903. (http://www.dlir.org/archive/archive/files/7fcf764f0d751e3e05a58e49cc692982.pdf)

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

1. Chambers, Robert. “The Bardezag Orphanage for Boys”, 1-2. (1898)

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

1. Chambers, Robert. “Orphanage for boys, Bardezag (Ishmidt)”, 1. (1900).

A report by the orphanage’s head to the ABCFM stating the orphanages reduced expenses after their new policies related to laboring children and also some projected figures and ideas for the future of orphanage. Important to draw comparisons between the effectiveness of pre-change curriculum as compared to the new labor-inclusive curriculum and the expenses of orphanage

**D) PRELIMINARY SECONDARY SOURCES**

1. Maksudyan, Nazan. *Orphans and Destitute Children in the Late Ottoman Empire*. Syracuse, (Syracuse Univ. Press, 2014).

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

1. Maksudyan, Nazan. “ 'Being Saved to Serve': Armenian Orphans of 1894-96 and Interested Relief in Missionary Orphanages”, Turcica, 42, 2010. (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

1. Barton, James. “The Red Cross in Peace and War”, Barton, 1912. (http://doctrinepublishing.com/showbook.php?file=66418-0000.txt)

Although in primary sources the orphanage claims that help from external sources had stopped 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.

1. Dinçer, Sinan. “The Armenian Massacre in Istanbul”, 2013, En economische geschiedenis 10, Vol. 4. (https://www.tseg.nl/articles/10.18352/tseg.237/galley/237/download/)

A research paper that discusses the constantinople massacre in detail. Important to know the causes that led to an increased inflow of orphan Armenian children in Bardezag.

1. Dadrian, Vahakn N. *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus*. New York. ( Berghahn Books, 2008).

The book contains accounts of the massacres/ wars/ terror attacks in the Constantinople and Bardezag region which is essential to analyze the reason that caused the donations from America and United Kingdom to be diverted from the orphanage to their relief. Hence, it is essential to answer the crucial question of what happened that caused a severe reduction in incoming donations near the end of 19th century.