

**THE TRANSFER OF TELEGRAPH TECHNOLOGY TO THE  
OTTOMAN EMPIRE IN THE SIXTH CENTURY**

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**Bahri Ata**

**Boğaziçi University**

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The thesis of Bahri ATA is approved by :

Prof. Dr. Zafer TOPRAK.....

(Thesis Supervisor)

Prof. Dr. Selçuk ESENBEL.....

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Hakan ERDEM.....

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Bahri ATA

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## ABBREVIATIONS

|               |                                       |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>BOA</b>    | <b>Basbakanlık Osmanlı<br/>Arsivi</b> |
| <b>HR.MKT</b> | <b>Hariciye Mektubi<br/>Kalemi</b>    |
| <b>I-D</b>    | <b>Irade Dahiliye</b>                 |
| <b>I-H</b>    | <b>Irade Hariciye</b>                 |
| <b>I-MM</b>   | <b>Irade Meclis-i<br/>Mahsus</b>      |
| <b>I-MV</b>   | <b>Irade Meclis-i Vala</b>            |
| <b>PTM</b>    | <b>Posta Telgraf<br/>Mecmuasi</b>     |
| <b>H</b>      | <b>Hicri Takvim</b>                   |

## THE ARABIC MONTHS

|           |                       |
|-----------|-----------------------|
| <b>M</b>  | <b>Muharrem</b>       |
| <b>S</b>  | <b>Safer</b>          |
| <b>Ra</b> | <b>Rebiyulevvel</b>   |
| <b>R</b>  | <b>Rebiyulahir</b>    |
| <b>Ca</b> | <b>Cemaziyelevvel</b> |
| <b>C</b>  | <b>Cemaziyelahir</b>  |
| <b>B</b>  | <b>Recep</b>          |
| <b>Sa</b> | <b>Saban</b>          |
| <b>N</b>  | <b>Ramazan</b>        |
| <b>L</b>  | <b>Sevval</b>         |
| <b>Za</b> | <b>Zilkade</b>        |
| <b>Z</b>  | <b>Zilhicce</b>       |

## **ABSTRACT**

The Transfer of Telegraph Technology to the Ottoman Empire in the XIXth Century

by

Bahri ATA

The purpose of this study is to investigate how the telegraph technology was transferred to the Ottoman Empire. The internal and external forces that lie behind the transfer of telegraphic technology are examined.

Compared to the European countries, the introduction of the telegraphic communication to the Ottoman Empire was realized approximately ten years later. However, the Ottomans were quick to realize the importance of this new device of communication. The first lines were laid by the British and French during the Crimean War. At that time, some concessions were made to two enterprising persons, the Frenchman A. De la Rue and the Ottoman citizen Mr. Blacque for the establishment of the first public lines. Later on, after the completion of Edirne-Şumnu line, the government terminated their contract and began to fulfill the establishment of telegraphic lines.

The junior clerks of the Office of Translations at the Sublime Porte had a distinguished place in the establishment of the Ottoman Telegraph Administration. Mehmet Efendi, the first director of Telegraphs and Mustafa Efendi, the inventor of the Turkish Morse code and the trainer of the first group of Turkish telegraph operators and also Feyzi Bey, the first Turkish communications officer and the others all came from the Office of Translations at the Sublime Porte.

After 1856, in the course of time, with the return of the French officials back to their countries, the Turkish apprentices were settled in their places. In fact, the ottomanisation of the administration of telegraphs occurred in 1871, when most of the foreign officials had already returned to their homelands.

It seems that the manufacturing mechanical framework of telegraph goes back to the clock making period in the Medieval Age. Even, in the Ottoman government, the clockmakers among the Ottoman citizens were employed as telegraph mechanics. One of them, Mr. Mikail, an Ottoman citizen and clock maker, dealing with repairing the telegraph instrument in the telegraph office of Varna, invented a sort of native telegraph instrument. Interestingly enough, Alexander Bain, who designed the automatic telegraph, was also a Scottish clockmaker.

The cooperation of the people with the Ottoman government to establish the telegraphic line can be attributed especially to the Rumelian part of the Ottoman Empire, except the inhabitants of Bursa.

With the treaty of 1864, The Ottoman government pledged a guarantee to the English to provide a quick-telegraphic communication between Europe and India by the route of Üsküdar via Baghdad and Basra

Like the private telegraph companies in the European continent, that adopted new technology either to set up their own systems apart from rivals or for economical reasons, the Ottoman administrators grasped the importance of adopting the newly-designed telegraph technologies, namely the Hughes instrument.

By the accession of Abdulhamid, a greater part of the Empire was linked to the capital by a network of telegraphic communications. There was a vast expanse of network of telegraphic communications covering the whole of the Empire.

## ÖZET

### 19. Yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluđuna Telgraf Teknolojisinin Transferi

yazan

Bahri Ata

Bu alıřmanın amacı telgraf teknolojisinin Osmanlı imparatorluđuna nasıl transfer edildiđini, kısa zamanda telgraf ađının Osmanlı topraklarına nasıl yayıldıđını arařtırmaktır.

Batılı lkeler ile karřılařtırıldıđında, Osmanlı İmparatorluđuna telgraf iletiřiminin giriři yaklaşık olarak on yıl gecikmiřtir. Bununla birlikte, Osmanlılar, iletiřimin bu önemli aracının önemini abuk kavramıřlardır.

İlk hatlar, Kırım Savařı boyunca İngiliz ve Fransızlarca askeri amaçlı olarak ekilmiřtir. Fransız Orman Memuru Bay A. de la Rue ve Osmanlı tebasından Bay E. Blacque’a savař sırasında sivil hatları ekme imtiyazı verilmiřtir. Edirne-Şumnu hatının tamamlanmasından sonra Osmanlı hükümeti bunların kontratlarını iptal etmiř, bir telgraf komisyonu oluřturulmuř, daha sonra da telgraf müdürlüğü kurularak bu iři kendisi üstlenmiřtir.

Osmanlı hükümeti ve halkının telgraf hat ekilmesindeki yardımlařması, Bursa hari, Osmanlı devletinin batı yakası için özellikle söylenebilir.

Bab-i Ali deki tercüme odası memurlarının Osmanlı telgraf idaresinin kurulmasında önemli bir yeri vardır. Telgraf idaresinin ilk müdürü, Mehmet Efendi, Türke Mors kodlarının mucidi ve ilk telgraf muhabere memurların eđiticisi Mustafa efendi ve de ilk tüke Muhaberat memuru Feyzi Efendi ve diđerleri Tercüme odasından gelmektedir.

1856'dan sonra, Fransız ve İngiliz memurların yavaş yavaş memleketlerine dönüşü ile boşalan kadrolara Türk memurlar yerleştirilmeye başlandı. Kelimenin gerçek anlamıyla Osmanlı telegraf idaresinin Osmanlılaştırılması 1871 gerçekleşti.

Telgrafın mekanik aksamı Ortaçağ saat yapımına kadar inmektedir. Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda da saat yapımcısı Osmanlı tebasından telegraf tamircisi olarak yararlanıldı. Bunlardan birisi olan Bay Mikail ilk yerli telgraf makinasını icat etti. Yeterince ilginçtir ki, otomatik telegrafı bulan Alexander Bain de İskoç asıllı bir saatçidir.

Uluslararası ve bire bir antlaşmalarla komşu ülkeler ile telgraf hatlarının bağlantısını temin eden, Osmanlı hükümeti özellikle 1864 antlaşması ile Avrupa-Hindistan telgraf hattında çabuk muhabereyi sağlamak için garanti vermektedir.

Osmanlı yöneticileri, Avrupadaki özel telgraf şirketleri gibi, rakiplerinden ayrı bir sistem oluşturma veya ekonomik sebeplerden dolayı, Morse makinasından daha ileri düzeyde olan Hughes makinasının önemini kavramıştır.

Sultan Abdülhamit'in tahta çıkmasına kadar, imparatorluğun başkenti telegraf iletişimi ağı ile bağlandı. Bütün imparatorluğu kaplayan geniş bir telgraf ağı vardı.

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## INTRODUCTION

Many historians have mostly dealt with the political aspects of the Tanzimat Period(1839-1876), including the reforms and the institutions. But the Tanzimat period can not be considered simply as a phase of political reforms. It also includes the Ottomans' contacts with the western technology, such as the telegraph, the railroad system, the photography, especially during the Crimean War and the years after.

The invention of telegraph and its use was perhaps the most important technological innovation in the first half of the 19th century. Because telegraphy has been supplanted by telephone, radio, and television in the twentieth century, little thought is given to it in our time. Yet in the 19th century electric telegraph played a crucial role in the industrializing countries of Western Europe and North America<sup>1</sup>. Above all, the telegraphy was the first science-based technology, transferred between industrial nations and developing countries. According to Russel, the telegraph was a powerhouse increasing the centralization inevitably. Its utilisation had two outstanding results. The first was the rapid-dispatch of news. The second was that it provided the detailed control of a large organization from a center so that it caused

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<sup>1</sup> Israel, P. B. & Nier, K. (1991). The Transfer of Telegraph Technologies in the Nineteenth Century. In D. J. Jeremy (Ed.), **International Technology Transfer, Europe, Japan and the USA, 1700-1914.** Brookfield: Edward Elgar Publishing Company. p.95.

the increase in the central supervision and also upset the personal desire of notables in the provinces<sup>2</sup>.

In the 19th century, when compared with the situation in the past, even the Ottoman Empire increased its mightiness and capability by using telegraph and railroads, that formed the basic foundations of the newly-organised administrative structure of the State<sup>3</sup>.

The subject-matter of this study is the transfer of the telegraph technology to the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the Ottoman telegraphic communication. The researches on the subject of the Ottoman Telegraphy can be classified into two categories. The first was the works of the officials from the Administration of Posts and Telegraphs and the publications of the Post and Telegraph Administration, including *Telgraf ve Posta Mecmuası* in French and Turkish languages in 1880's and *Posta ve Telgraf Mecmuası* from 1901 and also the books written by Mustafa Hami, Salih Zeki and Mehmet Ali for professional training. The works of Asaf Tanrikut, Aziz Akıncan, Sekip Eskin and A. Baha Gökoğlu can be given as an example for the first category. Unlike the others, the work of Asaf Tanrikut is the collection of the documents related to the subject. On the other hand, the articles of Mehmet Ali in the *Posta ve Telgraf Mecmuası* related to the history of the Ottoman Telegraphy and the articles of De Lusson in *Telgraf ve Posta Mecmuası* are invaluable. However, while reading the articles written by

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<sup>2</sup> Russel, B. (1976). **Bilimin Toplum Üzerine Etkileri**. tran. Erol Esencay, Istanbul : Ozgun Yay. pp. 31-32.

<sup>3</sup> Ortaylı, İ. (1985). **Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Yerel Yönetim Geleneği**, Istanbul: Hil Yay. p. 29

Mehmet Ali in the *Posta ve Telgraf Mecmuası*, the kinship between the author and Izzet Efendi<sup>4</sup>, the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, must be taken into consideration, because Mehmet Ali overrated the period of Ministry of Izzet Efendi and his reforms in detail and exaggerated what Izzet Efendi did for the Ottoman Telegraphy. He was extremely proud of Izzet Efendi's accomplishment<sup>5</sup>.

The book by Elhac Mustafa Hami called "Telgraf Risalesi", published in 1857 was perhaps the first translation about the Telegraphy<sup>6</sup>.

In the text-book for the School of Artillery Officers, Salih Zeki mentioned the history of Ottoman telegraph and the reasons behind its late coming to the Ottoman territories.

Besides the articles in PTM, Mehmet Ali remarked upon the short history of electric telegraph in his book, "Telgrafçılık"<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> For the autobiography of Izzet Efendi, see Mehmet Ali. (1915). *Posta ve Telgraf Naziri Merhum Izzet Pasa Hakkında*. **PTM**. 166. p. 1953. In this autobiography, Mehmet Ali claimed that the era of Izzet Efendi was the golden age of Ottoman telegraphy.

<sup>5</sup> Mehmet Ali. (1915). *Posta Mebahisi; Osmanlı Telgraf Tarihinden (Mabaad ve Hitam)*. **PTM**. 166. pp. 1949-1952.

<sup>6</sup> He was an official at Mekteb-i Tibbiye (Medical School). In this book, he gives an information about the electricity and the principle beyond the operation of the telegraph instrument.

<sup>7</sup> Mehmet Ali. 1893(H. 1311). **Telgrafçılık**. Dersaadet: Matbaa-i Osmani, pp. 4-11. In fact, he reorganized the book written by Mr. Mirkadiye, a teacher of telegraphy in

The second group of research studies consists of the academic writings of Nesimi Yazıcı and an M. A thesis done by Mustafa Kaçar<sup>8</sup> on this subject. Moreover, Enver Ziya Karal, Roderic H. Davison<sup>9</sup>, Bernard Lewis<sup>10</sup> also cited the transfer of telegram in their works.

If we do not take the first and the second attempts to construct the telegraphic line in 1839 and in 1847 into consideration, the Ottomans started the first telegraphic communication in 1854. The reasons for late-coming of the telegraphic communication was under discussion in the writings of Mehmet Ali, Sekip Eskin and Salih Zeki, but the quick-expansion of the telegraphic line on the Ottoman territories is an undeniable fact. According to Mehmet Ali and Sekip Eskin, the reason of the late-coming of the telegraphic communication was the anxiety of the Ottoman administrators on the protection of the telegraphic line. It was emphasized that the English established the first line along the railroad line in 1841 and the French , also, established the electric line in 1844. In other words, the non-existence

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Polytechnic School in Paris and it was used to train the French telegraph officials to the Ottoman Telegraphy by some additions.

<sup>8</sup> Kaçar, M. (1986). **Osmanlı Telgraf İşletmesi.** Istanbul Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tarih Bölümü, (unpublished M. A. thesis), Istanbul. Later on, it was published as an article, under the name of “ Osmanlı Telgraf İşletmesi”. In E. Ihsanoğlu (Ed.), **Çağı Yakalayan Osmanlı.** Istanbul: İrcica. pp. 45-120.

<sup>9</sup> Davison, R. H. (1963). **Reform in the Ottoman Empire 1856-1876.** Princeton: Princeton University Press. pp. 76-78.

<sup>10</sup> Lewis, B. (1961). **The Emergence of Modern Turkey.** London: Oxford University Press. p. 180-183.

of the railroad line was seen by Mehmet Ali and Sekip Eskin as an indirect reason of the late-coming of the telegraphic communication to the Ottoman Empire<sup>11</sup>.

Salih Zeki, in his book "Telgraf ve Elektrik Telgrafi" written for the sixth class of the Hendesehane-i Berr-i Hümayün (The School for the Artillery Officers) tried to explain the reason why the introduction of the telegraphic communication to the Ottoman Empire was ten years late<sup>12</sup>. He tried to answer the claim of certain European writers that if the Crimean War did not emerge, the Ottoman administrators would not take the Telegraph into account. Firstly, Salih Zeki insisted that the Ottoman administrators take a decision on the establishment of the telegraphic communication before the Crimean War. Secondly, the quick-expansion of the electric line on the Ottoman territories was seen as a reflection of the Ottoman administrator's interest in the Telegraph. Thirdly, Salih Zeki, also, emphasized that the electric wires were stretched along the railroad line in France and in England so that the English and the French provided the protection of their lines. However, in the Ottoman Empire, the telegraphic communication was realized before the

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<sup>11</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1914). Posta Mebahisi; Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf Tesisinin Tarihcesi. PTM. 164. pp.1920-1921 and Eskin, T. (1942). Posta, Telgraf Tarihi. Ulusal Matbaa. p.56.

<sup>12</sup> Compared to the European countries, even Mehmet Ali emphasized that the introduction of telegraph to the Ottoman Empire was realized ten years later. (Mehmet Ali, (1914). Posta Mebahisi; Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf TesisininTarihcesi. PTM. 164. p.1919.)

construction of the railroad system<sup>13</sup>. On this point Nesimi Yazici also tried to show that the Ottoman administrators of Tanzimat period agreed to bringing every kind of means to develop the Ottoman society<sup>14</sup>. Mustafa Kaçar agreed with the interpretation of Nesimi Yazici on this point. He stated that it should not be thought that the administrators favoring the innovations of Tanzimat Period were against the telegraph<sup>15</sup>.

In his book, entitled " Reform in the Ottoman Empire (1856-1876)" Roderic Davison mentioned the western influence upon the advent of the telegraphic communication between Istanbul and the Western Europe. Of course, the only important force behind the introduction of telegraphic communication was not the diplomatic pressures exerted by the Great powers. The Ottoman statesmen were also conscious of the necessities of modern life. However, the real reason of the establishment of the telegraphic communication was to provide the quick communication with Europe so that the Sultan Abdülmecit in his first telegram asked that what the news from Europe was. Later on The Ottoman rulers realized its administrative, financial and military significance. The interpretation of Davison related to the coming of telegraph seems to me more close to the reality than that of Bernard Lewis and Mustafa Kaçar. As it will be seen in the thesis, the desire of European powers can be clearly detected in the Ottoman archival documents.

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<sup>13</sup> Salih Zeki, 1893 (H.1311). **Telgraf ve Telgraf Elektriki**. Istanbul: Hendesehane-i Berr-i Humayun Matbaasi, pp.11-12.

<sup>14</sup> Yazici, N. (1981). Türkiye de İlk Telgrafi Abdülmecit Çekti. **Yıllarboyu Tarih**. July, vol. 7, p. 25.

<sup>15</sup> Kaçar, M. (1995). p.47.

Moreover it can be said that the desire of English to provide a telegraphic communication with India accelerated the establishment of the Anatolian line.

Davison mentioned that the Polish and Hungarian refugees, who came to the Ottoman Empire after the revolution of 1830 and 1848, helped to build the telegraph lines. However I could not trace any information on this claim in the Ottoman archival documents<sup>16</sup>.

In his book " The Emergence of The Modern Turkey ", Bernard Lewis emphasized the introduction of telegraphic communication to the Ottoman Empire as an effort to increase the power of the central government<sup>17</sup>.

In this thesis, I try to present how the Ottoman Telegraph system was transferred by the French and by the English and how it was ottomanized in 17 years. I try to show the contribution of Junior clerks of the Office of Translation to the development of Ottoman Telegraphy. The contribution of inhabitants of Rumelian districts, including non-Muslim and Muslim merchants to the establishment of telegraphic network in the Ottoman territories will be dealt with in later chapters of this work. I try to present the close relationship between the trade of clockmakers and the telegraphy by giving an example from the establishment of Ottoman Telegraphy, which are supported by the original documents.

In this thesis, I referred to the Ottoman archives and to other documents and books written in the Arabic script, including the articles published in the Posta ve Telgraf Mecmuası. Moreover, referring to the Mecmua-i Muahedat, the connection

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<sup>16</sup> Davison, R. (1963). p.76.

<sup>17</sup> Lewis, B. (1961). p. 180.

of the Ottoman telegraphic line with the Western and Eastern lines has been presented.

# CHAPTER 1

## THE EVOLUTION OF TELEGRAPHY IN WESTERN EUROPE AND IN THE UNITED STATES

The history of communication is as old as the history of mankind. The following four factors have played a significant role in the evolution of communications in the history of man. They are the ability to speak languages, the ability to write (the invention of writing), the emergence of printing press and the use of electronic communication facilities, eg. starting with telegraph in the last century and coming to satellites in our times. It is difficult to realize in the age of information that the electric telegraph has been the most surprising invention of the earlier ages. Until the advent of the telephone, it became the only rapid means of communication. No single individual can justly claim the distinction of having been the inventor of the electric telegraph. Indeed, it can not properly be said to have had an inventor. It was, in fact, a growth rather than an invention, the work of many brains and of many brains and of many hands<sup>18</sup>. However, because of the national feelings, each writer of history of technology exaggerated, generally the contribution of his own nation to the technology. These can be seen also in the improvement of the telegraph instruments. It is difficult for us to reach an exact information about the degree of interaction on the works of the telegraph and also to determine the dimension of their contribution to the evolution of the telegraphy. On the other hand, the rivalry among the European States for military and economic reasons resulted in the development of various kinds of telegraph instruments operated on the same theoretical principle,

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<sup>18</sup> Israel, P. B. & Nier, K. (1991). p.97.

that is, electromagnetism. In spite of all these, in the following pages, the evolution of telegraphy can be divided into three stages. The first stage was optical telegraphs. The second stage was the growth of scientific knowledge on the electricity and its application to the electric telegraph. The third was the laying of the submarine telegraphic cable because this increased the influential area of the electric telegraph all over the world. In the following pages, the widespread of adoption of the Morse Telegraph and the establishment of Telegraph Unions will also be taken into account.

### 1.1. THE OPTICAL TELEGRAPHS

Two optical telegraphs were of particular importance. They were built for the governments; the first was the visual semaphore of Mr. Claude Chappe<sup>19</sup>. The second was the shutter telegraph of Mr. Murray. Claude Chappe (1763-1805), a French engineer and a cleric, invented the system of two arm semaphore in 1791<sup>20</sup>. His brother, Ignace Chappe, was a member of the legislative Assembly during the French Revolution. He supported the invention of his brother, Claude for using military purposes. Even in France, the Claude's system was used in the line between Paris and Lille, near the war front. Claude Chappe built a series of towers on hills between the two cities. Each tower was equipped with a pair of telescopes, one pointing in either direction and with a two - arm semaphore. Each arm of the

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<sup>19</sup> For more information about Claude Chappe, See Gökoğlu, A. B. (1935). **Batı ve Doğuda Telgrafçılık Nasıl Doğdu?** Istanbul : Bozkurt Matbaası. pp. 10-17.

<sup>20</sup> In the terminology of the Ottoman telegraphy, it was known as “Havai Telgraf”, see A. B Gökoğlu, 1935, p.9.

semaphore could assume seven clearly visible angular positions, making possible 49 combinations that were assigned to the alphabet and a number of the other symbols.

Sekil girecek

### **A. Chappe Semaphore**

In August, 1794, his instrument brought the news of the capture of Conde-sur L'Escout from the Austrians to Paris in less than an hour. The other line was established between Paris and Toulon. The name of telegraph engineer was given to the instrument, but the rivals contested the priority of his invention, he committed suicide in 1805. However, his system was soon widely copied elsewhere in Europe. After 1794, variations of Chappe's semaphore appeared in Russia, Sweden and Denmark and eventually in Prussia, India and Egypt<sup>21</sup>. In his book entitled "Bati ve Dogu'da telgrafcilik Nasil Dogdu?", A. Baha Gokoglu mentioned the attempt for the establishment of Claude's semaphore telegraph in the Ottoman Empire. According to him, in 1830, the Ottoman government imported a Claude semaphore

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<sup>21</sup> Brittanica, 1985, vol.3, p.95

instrument from France because of the insistence of the Ottoman Ambassador to Paris. As it was seen, the arrival of Claude semaphore instrument to the Ottoman Empire was rather late. In addition, the Ottoman administrators did not benefit from this instrument because of the disorder in the internal provinces<sup>22</sup>.

The second attempt for the Semaphore telegraph came from the British to construct it in the Ottoman Empire on 14th May, 1854 (H. 16 Sa 1270). The British made two proposals; one for the establishment of electric telegraph and one for the semaphore telegraph. In the document, it was emphasized that the expense of semaphore telegraph was less than that of electric telegraph, however, the administration of Semaphore telegraph was quite expensive. The English recommended that the using of the Semaphore telegraph in the time of war was better than the other. The writer of this thesis could not reach the documents to see what kind of semaphore telegraph was proposed by the British to construct for the Ottoman administrators<sup>23</sup>.

The second optical telegraph was the shutter telegraph of Mr. Murray. In 1795, George Murray, an English bishop, established the shutters each independently rotatable 90 degrees on a central horizontal axis, arranged in the three - by- two pattern shown. When his telegraph came to the United States, it was first used by merchants on the line between New York and Philadelphia until 1846 <sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> Gökoğlu, A. B. (1935). p. 22.

<sup>23</sup> HR. MKT 76/94, see Appendix: 1

<sup>24</sup> Ency. Britannica, 1985, vol.3, p.485.

Sekil Girecek

### **B. Murray six - shutter semaphore**

Until 1830's, semaphore telegraphs were already in extensive use by the government bureaucracies on the Continent. Especially, in France, after 1845, the electric telegraph eventually replaced the semaphore telegraph of Chappe as an agent of government communication and control<sup>25</sup>.

## **1.2. THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH**

After the discovery of electricity, the new methods for using of electricity in the communication were applied in Europe, England and USA. The works of Gilbert (1540-1603), Otto von Guericke (1672), Picard (1620-1682) and E.G. von Kliest on the electricity are worth mentioning. The experiment by Franklin (1706-1790) with a kite was interesting. The invention of battery by Volta (1745-1817) as a means of producing electricity brought the electricity as a source of power, influencing the man's life.

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<sup>25</sup> Alemdar, K. (1981). **Türkiye'de Çağdaş Haberleşmenin Tarihsel Kökenleri**.

Ankara: Ankara İktisadi ve Ticari İlimler Akademisi. p.92.

Until the XX<sup>th</sup> century, man used water, wood and the fossil fuels as sources of power. The experiments carried out by Georges Louis Lesage in Geneva (1774), Soemmerring (1809), Gauss and Weber (1883), Wheatstone for the invention of telegraph were worthwhile efforts. In 1809, one of them, Samuel Soemmerring, a German doctor and a member of the Royal Academy of Sciences in Munich, worked in the hope of producing a communication system, that might rival the French mechanical semaphore telegraph and discovered the effect of electrolytic decomposition to devise an electric telegraph<sup>26</sup>. Nonetheless, the earliest attempts to develop an electric communication system grew directly out of research in electrostatics and electromagnets in scientific laboratories. Although Germany led the early experimental phase of development, Great Britain and the USA took the lead in practical application. In 1837, an American painter called Samuel F. B. Morse distinguished himself by developing his own system in science in USA since he had obtained substantial information about the works of A. M. Ampere who was a French scientist in electromagnetism. When the early display of the instrument to the public took place in 1838, he persuaded the Congress to connect Washington and Baltimore by cables. As a result of this initiative, the telegraphic line between Washington and Baltimore was installed in 1843.

In the beginning, there was no single electric telegraph; several systems emerged essentially simultaneously. There were six types of electric telegraph used on land lines during the XIX<sup>th</sup> century. They were Needle Telegraph, Morse Telegraph, Dial Telegraph, Automatic Telegraph, Printing Telegraph and Multiple Telegraph. However, they shared some common characteristics. For example, each

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<sup>26</sup> Israel & Nier (1991). p.97.

required a power source, a transmitting device, a transmission channel, a receiving device and a device to translate ordinary language into electric signals.

The first commercial system in England was based on the needle designs of German experimenters. Later on, in England, dial and automatic systems were developed. In the USA, the printing telegraphs were introduced by rivals of Morse. The American Western Union Telegraph Company completed the construction of its transcontinental wires in October, 1861 so that the famous pony express came to an end.

### **1.3 THE SUBMARINE TELEGRAPHIC CABLE**

The telegraph was used in a few countries to send messages in Morse Code between important towns along the railways, which then also new; but it could be used in land only , and not in water. The only form of communication between overseas countries was performed by the ship. It took the fastest of ships at least four weeks to sail from England to America and back again. It seemed unlikely that the telegraph would ever be used at sea. Most engineers thought that electricity would not work under water, but Charles Wheatstone, a professor of experimental philosophy at King's College in London in 1844, proved that it was possible to develop the telegraph for use at sea. A number of British engineers tried to lay a cable under the English Channel to start telegraph communication between England and France. A race began between the engineers for the honor of laying the world's first sea cable. Jacob Brett, one of the English engineers and his brother John Brett, obtained permission from the Governments of both England and France to lay their cable from Dover, on the South coast of England to Calais, on the French coast. They argued that the Channel telegraph would help the English and the French to do

business with each other and improve relations between the two countries and also reduce the danger of any more wars between them.

On August the 28th, 1850, they succeed in laying this cable. It was broken shortly after communication had been established, but was successfully followed the next year by another, between Dover and Calais. Then in 1854, cables were laid in the Mediterranean to join Europe with Africa. According to Israel and Nier, the commercial interests found the telegraph technology essential to the conduct of business by 1850s, especially since submarine cables then began to connect the international markets<sup>27</sup>. In 1857 C.W. Field, an American businessman formed the Atlantic Telegraph Company to lay an Atlantic cable from the Island of Valencia, near the west coast of Britain to Newfoundland, in Canada, a distance of nearly two thousand miles. He employed an Englishman, Charles Bright, as his Chief Engineer. On 5 August, 1858 the Atlantic cable had been laid. But, in October, the first Atlantic cable had failed.

In July, 1866, the second attempt to lay the Atlantic cable was utterly successful. By 1870, six thousand miles of cable had been laid from Britain, through the Mediterranean to India. In the following 60 years, the earth-encircling telegraph cable network became fully established.

#### **1.4 THE WIDESPREAD ADOPTION OF THE MORSE TELEGRAPH IN THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TELEGRAPH UNIONS**

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<sup>27</sup> Israel & Nier. (1991). p. 107.

The inventors of telegraphs turned their attention to the governments for support in developing and introducing electric telegraphy because the manufacture of telegraph instruments would return little profit until an extensive system came into use. In the 1830s and 1840s few institutions possessed resources necessary to erect transmission lines, to equip offices and to train employees in the use of the new telegraph technology.

Morse had first brought a version of his telegraph system to France in 1838, its adoption in France was spurred in early 1850s by treaties that established the use of Morse ink-recording instruments and the International Morse code on international lines. In fact, despite the Steinheil's needle system, the widespread adoption of the Morse in Germany and Austria laid the basis for a major change in the conditions affecting further transfers of telegraph technology in Europe. In 1849 Prussia and Austria agreed to build a line between Berlin and Vienna, using the recently adopted Morse system. In 1850 Prussia, Austria, Saxony and Bavaria created the Austria-German Telegraph Union. By 1851, the Union decided that international traffic would use the Morse apparatus and the modified International Morse code. The German- Austrian example was imitated by France, Belgium, Switzerland, Sardinia and Spain which by 1855 had formed the West European Telegraph Union. In 1865 most European states agreed to sign the first International Telegraph Convention and formed the International Telegraph Union (ITU). Government messages took precedence on international lines, controlled by ITU treaties as well.

In sum, the growing use of the Morse system during the 1850s and 1860s was a direct product of the increasing importance of international traffic on the European

Continent. Under these circumstances, Mr. A. de la Rue and Mr. Cooke tried to transfer the Morse system to the Ottoman Empire.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE COMING OF THE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH TO THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

#### 2.1. The first attempt to obtain a patent for the newly-invented telegraph from the Ottoman Empire in 1839

As was stated in the book entitled “ Among the Turks”, written by Cyrus Hamlin, the director of Robert College, Mr. Chamberlain, of Manie, an associate of Professor Morse, having a set of newly-invented instruments, came to Istanbul. He set it up in the study room of Cyrus Hamlin, because he had a galvanic battery. However, the early results of this instrument were not satisfactory. It was suggested to Mr. Chamberlain that he should make various improvements by employing the best workmen in Vienna <sup>28</sup>. After making an entirely new set of instruments, he decided to return and talk to the Ottoman government officials. Unfortunately, his boat was capsized in the Danube and Mr. Chamberlain, with five others, lost his life.

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<sup>28</sup> Hamlin, C. (1878). **Among The Turks.** London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington, p. 185. and also for the Turkish translation of Cyrus Hamlin’s memoir, related to the telegraphy, See the issue of **Aksam**, dated 30.4.1948 and also Tanrikut, A. (1968). **Türkiye Posta ve Telgraf ve Telefon Tarihi ve Mevzuatı Eğitim Notları.** Ankara, pp. 533-537. And also Yazıcı, N. (1992), Tanzimat Döneminde Osmanlı Haberleşme Kurumu. In H. D. Yıldız (Ed.), **150. Yilinda Tanzimat.** Ankara: TTK Yay. p. 179.

Because of this event, the first attempt to introduce the telegraph to the Ottoman government failed <sup>29</sup>.

## **2.2. The second attempt to introduce the telegraph to the Ottoman Empire in 1847**

In 1847, the second attempt was made by Prof. J. Lawrence, employed by the Ottoman government as geologist to establish a School of Mining Studies. He ordered a set of instruments from America to take a concession of establishing some telegraphic lines from Istanbul to a neighboring city. They first put up the telegraph in a seminar-room to do practice upon it. This instrument was more skillfully made than the one in the hands of Mr. Chamberlain. Above all, it was gratifying to Cyrus Hamlin and to other American citizens to know that an American gentleman, Prof. Smith should have the honor of introducing it in the Ottoman government <sup>30</sup>. In his book, Cyrus Hamlin talked about their reception to the yellow Palace of Beylerbeyi in detail. Mr. J.P. Brown, the Secretary of the American legation, accompanied them as an interpreter. Prof. Smith explained the alphabetical signs to Sultan Abdülmecit, who, after having seen it with his own eyes, remarked that it could be applied in any language. He also added that it would be more advantageous for the Ottomans as they had twenty-two letters in their alphabet<sup>31</sup>. One telegraph station was set up at the upper end of the throne-room, the other in a corner room of the palace. Mr. Brown, arranging the instrument, asked the Sultan Abdülmecit for a message, and he

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<sup>29</sup> Hamlin, C. (1878). p. 186.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 186.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p.188.

responded “Has the French steamer arrived? and What is the news from Europe?” When he heard the same words from Prof. Smith, the Sultan was overjoyed and praised it . Later on, Sultan Abdülmecit asked Prof. Smith when he could show it to the Sublime Porte. The next day at nine o’clock, the demonstration was repeated for the Assembly of whole Sublime Porte at the Palace, in front of the Sheikh-ul-Islam, the Chief Justices of Rumelia and Anatolia, the Grand Vizier, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Ministers of War and the Navy and all the other dignitaries of the Sublime Porte<sup>32</sup>. There is satisfactory amount of information related to this demonstration in the Ottoman official documents, dated 10 August, 1847 (H. 27 Sa 1263). According to this document, a set of telegraph instruments was sent from America through the channels of American Embassy. This instrument was displayed in operation at *Mabeyn-i Humayun*. It was accepted as a worthy for spectacle and a material, causing facility to the system of communication . It was assumed to be a spectacular device, highly facilitating the communication system. It was regulated that further, operational demonstrations should also be performed to acknowledge the other ministers of the Sublime Porte<sup>33</sup>. When sultan Abdülmecit proposed to extend the line as far as Edirne, all the dignitaries became extremely delighted. The top Ottoman officials assumed that the expenses for its establishment was highly inexpensive.

After this demonstration, the Sultan sent a message by his secretary Prof. Smith to express to them his gratitude; a purse of gold money or a decoration. Prof. Smith asked him to let it be for Prof. Morse, the inventor of telegraph. An Imperial

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 191.

<sup>33</sup> I-H 7919, see Appendix :2

berat or diploma and a decoration in diamonds were sent to Mr. Morse<sup>34</sup>. Like the Sultan, many other Ottoman statesmen sent decorations and orders to him<sup>35</sup>.

Prof. Smith received a decoration, but the telegraphic line was not built. According to Cyrus Hamlin, the pashas united against the establishment of

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<sup>34</sup> Hamlin, C. (1878). p. 194.

<sup>35</sup> However, in fact, the Great Powers, including The Ottoman Empire offered a reward of 400000 Franc to Prof. Morse, because of his invention of telegraph instrument in 1858. On 23 August, 1858 the representatives of all European States in which there were their own telegraphic lines met at Paris to discuss the partition of reward, offered to Mr. Morse. The Ottoman government accepted to pay 5374 Francs 24 centimes to Mr. Morse for the first year. This amount would be 21494 Francs 96 centimes in later years<sup>35</sup>. From the official report, dated 28 August 1858( H. 18 M 1275) it was seen that the Ottoman Empire was also associated with the European powers to give Mr. Morse a reward. Haydar Efendi, as a representative of the Ottoman Government, participated in the meeting in Paris. He issued a statement, including the result of this meeting on 15 September, 1858 (H. 15 Safer 1275). It was decided to pay a reward of 400.000 Francs to Prof. Morse in four years. The amount of share for a reward was determined according to the number of telegraph instruments owned by the Great Powers. Having 69 instruments, the Ottoman government would pay 21.496.9 Francs to Mr. Morse. On 15 September, 1858 Mr. Morse sent a letter to express gratitude to the Sultan, by means of Haydar Efendi, Chargé d'affaires of Turkey to France. The first installment of the reward that would be paid in four years was paid on 13 January 1859 (H. 8 C.1275), in other words, on 13 January 1859, the reward of Mr. Morse was put into practice. For more information, see ( **I-H 8512, I-H 9131 and I-H 38587**)

telegraphic line because they wanted no such tell-tale to report their doings everyday , while in the distant interior<sup>36</sup>.

As it is understood from the writings of Cyrus Hamlin , these two efforts to introduce the American telegraph into the Ottoman Empire were unimportant. In fact eight years later, during the Crimean War, the first telegraphic line was established by the English and the French in the Ottoman territories.

### **2.3. The Military Uses of Telegraph by the English and by the French during the Crimean War (1854- 1856)**

The establishment of the Ottoman Telegraphic lines coincided with the Crimean War that had continued between 1854 and 1856. Russia invaded the territories of Moldavia and Wallachia in an attempt to take advantage of the continuing riot that made the Ottoman Empire an easy prey. In 1854, France and then Britain came to the aid of the Ottomans by invading Russia's Crimean Peninsula. The British had laid the Submarine cable that would serve to bind Balaklava to Varna for a direct communication between London and the firing line in Crimean Peninsula.

On the otherhand, in addition to the military uses of Telegraph in the Crimean War, the English, for the first time, tested Moorsom Projectiles designed for the Naval War. Moreover, Minié rifles were distributed to soldiers on a vast scale. Among the new technical equipments used in the Allied army, there were telegraph

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<sup>36</sup> Hamlin, p.194.

instrument and photography. The Electric Telegraph Company proposed to use telegraph on this front to the English government<sup>37</sup>.

The English military units were installed in the barracks of Selimiye, at Üsküdar on the eastern coast of Istanbul. The Ottoman army under the supreme military command of Ömer Pasha was installed in Varna. In April of 1854, the French and British military units came together in Gelibolu. The Allied powers fortified Gelibolu against a possible attack from the Russian navy. On June 28, 1854, when the Russian army abandoned their siege in Silistre, the Allied powers strengthened their armies in Varna.

In the Spring of 1854, the telegraphic communication services were provided for 12 hours, because of a line of telegraph established between Varna and Burcharest. On September 10 th, 1854, the first civil telegram message sent by William Howard Russell known as the first war correspondent of the Times Journal, was about the fortifications of Sebastopol. From then on, his telegrams were published in the Times. When Florence Nightingale read the telegrams sent by W.H. Russell about miserable situation of the British soldiers, because of the cholera, she came to Üsküdar to relieve them of their agonies. On 10 September, 1855 the Allied powers captured Sebastopol, the basis of Russian navy in the Crimean peninsula. The first message sent by the channels of the Ottoman telegraph line from Şumnu via Edirne to Istanbul and from Istanbul to Europe stated “Allied forces have entered

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<sup>37</sup> Kaylan, A. (1975). (Ed.), **Kırım Savaşı**. Istanbul : Milliyet Yay. p.68.

Sebastopol”<sup>38</sup>. The navy of Allied powers was in the harbor of Balaklava. At the same time, it was a place of concentration for ammunition and provisions. It was also used as a basis of reinforcement during the attack of the Allied powers towards Sebastopol.

In her memoir, Mrs. Drand de Fontmagne remarked that Mr.Thouvenel, a French Ambassador was furious with the invention of telegraph because he was receiving instructions from his state against his policies that followed the Crimean War<sup>39</sup>.

She also wrote that when the ambassadors in Istanbul took the telegram, including the instructions from their state, which were against their policies, they neglected the telegram pretending that they never read it or received it. Possibly, one of them was Lord Stratford de Redcliffe(1786-1880)<sup>40</sup>. However, he did his best to win the contract for the establishment of the electric telegraphic line in the Ottoman Empire on behalf of British Telegraph Company. Mrs Drand de Fontmagne emphasized that Mr. Thouvenel was so honest and devoted to his country that he

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<sup>38</sup> Lewis, B. (1961). p. 181. According to Salih Zeki and Gökoğlu, A. B., this message was sent on 10 September, 1855(R. 29 August 1271) (Salih Zeki, p.14; Gökoğlu, A. B. (1935). p.56 ; Mehmet Ali, (1893). p.8).

<sup>39</sup> Durand de Fontmagne (1977). **Kırım Harbi Sonrasında İstanbul. (Unse'jour l'Ambassade de France A Constantinople)**. trans. Gülçiçek Soytürk, İstanbul: Tercüman 1001 Temel Eser. p.92 and p.211.

<sup>40</sup> The establishment of telegraph line by the British was realized in the second term of Ambassador Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to Istanbul between 1842-1858.

would never behave like this. However, Mr.Thouvenel cursed the invention of Telegraph on the grounds that it restricted his authority and it caused him to wait for the orders<sup>41</sup>.

### **2.3.1 The laying of the Submarine Cable between Balaklava and Istanbul via Varna by the British**

The information on the establishment of telegraphic line between Balaklava and Varna has been taken from one of the English Journals of that period<sup>42</sup> and the Ottoman journal, Ceride-i Havadis, dated, 19 May 1855(H. 2 N 1271and also 30 July 1855(H. 15 Za 1271) )<sup>43</sup>. According to the news given by the English journal, the submarine electric telegraph was laid from monastery of St. George on the coast to the cape of Kaliacra near Varna. It was Captain Spratt of Spitfire who directed all the technical works. The cable with the length of 377 miles was laid by means of two British ships, named the Argos and the Terrible under guidance of the ship Spitfire. On 10th April, these two ships quitted the Cape of Kalicra and arrived in Sevastopol in the evening of 12 th April. On 13 th April, they laid the electric cable to the Monastery of St. George<sup>44</sup>. At that time, the telegraph from the Allied armies in Crimea was sent to Paris and London in four hours. When the Balaklava-Varna

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<sup>41</sup> Durand de Fontmagne, (1977). P. 211

<sup>42</sup> The name of the English Journal was not given by Geoffroy de Lusson in his article (1877). La Télégraphie électrique en Turquie. Bulletin Télégraphique 5. p. 84,

<sup>43</sup> Ceride-i Havadis, N. 741 and N. 750

<sup>44</sup> Gökoğlu, A. B. (1935). p.47.

line was completed, the telegraphic communication could be made in one moment. On 14th April, 1855 telegraphic lines were extended to the trenches. This telegraph cable was produced by R.S. Nevval and Comp. in London. It functioned for 9 months. On 12 May 1855 (H. 24 Sa 1271), Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, the British ambassador, presented an official statement regarding the laying of Varna-Istanbul line to the Ministry of the Internal Affairs<sup>45</sup>.

On 29 May, 1855, the desire of British Embassy, related to the laying the telegraphic line between Varna and Istanbul was referred to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Telegraph commission to be discussed. At the beginning, the Ottoman government stated that the English could communicate with London by the way of Edirne - Şumnu after the completion of Edirne -Şumnu telegraphic line<sup>46</sup>.

As it is understood from the official report dated 23 June, 1855. (H. 7 L. 1855), it appeared that the British government insisted upon the laying of the submarine telegraph cable between Varna and Istanbul in order to facilitate communication. It was emphasized that its expense would be paid by the British government and later on, it would be left to the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans gave the permission to the British government to lay Varna - Istanbul telegraphic line<sup>47</sup>. The news about this line was given in one of the issue of Ceride-i Havadis dated 6 August, 1855 (H. 22.Za. 1271) <sup>48</sup>.

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<sup>45</sup> I-D 20723, see Appendix: 3

<sup>46</sup> I-H 5978

<sup>47</sup> I-D 6031

<sup>48</sup> Ceride-i Havadis, N. 751

The same news relating to this issue also took place in one later issue of Ceride-i Havadis dated 30 July, 1855. It seems that this news was translated from an English newspaper. Interestingly enough, the Ottoman newspaper called Ceride-i Havadis gave this news nearly three and half months later. Balaklava-Varna telegraphic line provided quick communication between headquarters of Lord Raglan in Crimea and Sydney Herbert, Minister of War in London<sup>49</sup>.

The issue of Ceride-i Havadis dated 28 January, 1856 (H. 20 Ca. 1272) gave the news about the damage of the submarine cable between Varna and the Crimea and also stated that the broken point on the cable was found by engineers<sup>50</sup>.

On 27 January, 1857 (H. 27 Ca 1273) the Telegraph Commission stated that Mr. Vervin, a British engineer of submarine cable, wanted 100 liras as a travel allowance in order to bring their family to Istanbul. The Ottoman government granted his request because there was no other engineer except him to repair the submarine cable between Tarabya and Varna. Moreover, the government wanted to use him to construct the other submarine line<sup>51</sup>.

On 20 February, 1857 (H. 25 C. 1273), the British government proposed the sale of the submarine telegraphic cable between Varna and the barrack of Selimiye , at Üsküdar, the eastern coast of Istanbul to the Ottoman government. It was underlined that the expense of this line cost 25.000 the British sterlings , but the War Office of Britain abided by a decision to sell this line to the Ottoman

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<sup>49</sup> Ceride-i Havadis, 30 July, 1855(H. 15 Za 1271) N. 750., see Appendix: 4

<sup>50</sup> Ceride-i Havadis, N. 774, see Appendix: 9

<sup>51</sup> I-H 7424

government at a cost of 7500 sterlings <sup>52</sup>. On 15 March, 1857 (H. 18 B. 1272), after the completion of the submarine telegraphic cable between Istanbul and Varna the remaining telegraphic instrument, including the sea cable and the land cable were purchased by the Ottoman government with a cost of 2703 sterlings 25 shilling 15 pence, in order to use for repairing this line as the need would arise or for the establishment of other submarine telegraphic line <sup>53</sup>. The Nevval Company took upon itself to repair the cable between Varna and Istanbul, according to the Treaty of 25 July 1859 (H 24 Z. 75) The expense of their ship was to be paid by the Ottoman government <sup>54</sup>. In the official report, dated 7 April, 1860 (H. 16 N. 1276) the need for establishing a new line between Varna and Istanbul by land was expressed because the submarine cable between Varna and Istanbul was broken every now and then and in addition, the amount of telegraphic communication with Europe increased from day to day so that the line between Istanbul and Edirne had not sufficient capacity<sup>55</sup>.

From the official report, dated 17 March 1860 (H. 24 S. 1276) it was learned that at the beginning, the submarine line between the telegraph station at Galata and Varna was assigned just for ambassadoria correspondances. Later on, this privilege was also recognized to foreign merchants at Galata. The correspondences made by diplomatic corps and foreign merchants with Europe were conducted through by this line, but the breaking of the submarine cable caused delays in exchange of their

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<sup>52</sup> I-H 7343

<sup>53</sup> I-H 7383

<sup>54</sup> Mukavele Defteri, p. 162.

<sup>55</sup> I-H 9577

correspondences. This resulted in complaints by all those foreign missions to the Sublime Porte. By this official report, the directorate of new telegraphic line between Kilyos and Varna by land was opened. It was emphasized that necessary things like wires and instruments were present<sup>56</sup>. According to Salih Zeki and Mehmet Ali, the Varna-Balaklava line was utterly destroyed<sup>57</sup>.

### **2.3.2 The Establishment of Varna - Şumnu - Rusçuk -Bükreş Telegraphic Line by the French**

Mr. Benedeti, chargé d'affaires of France, offered an official report, dated 27 December, 1854 (H. 6 R. 1271), regarding the establishment of telegraphic line between Varna and Rusçuk to the Sublime Porte. In this report, Mr. Benedeti declared that the expense for Varna - Rusçuk line would be paid from the French Treasury and later on, it would be left to the Ottoman government<sup>58</sup>. The aim of this line was to provide quick communication between the Crimean and European capitals for military purposes. The French government asked the Ottoman government to assist them to give instructions to the head officials of a district around Rusçuk and Varna to provide the necessary items, firewood and workers<sup>59</sup>.

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<sup>56</sup> I-H 9577

<sup>57</sup> Salih Zeki, p. 15 ; Mehmet Ali, (1914). Posta Mebahisi; Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf Tesisinin Tarihcesi. **PTM.164**, pp.1919.

<sup>58</sup> I-MM 116

<sup>59</sup> I-MM 116

On 2 January, 1855 (H. 12 R. 1271) the Sublime Porte sent an official report concerning the establishment of telegraphic line between Varna and Rusçuk to Ismail Pasha, the commander in chief of Rumeli and to the governor of Silistre and to head officials and to director of the financial administration of Varna . The Sublime Porte asked them to provide workers, timbers and other essential articles and also to obtain suitable houses for French officials and straw for their animals<sup>60</sup>.

According to the official report dated 20 June, 1855 (H. 4 L.1271) a building in a suburb of Rusçuk, belonging to a merchant, Marvidi ?, was hired at a price of 1000 piasters<sup>61</sup>. On 14 September, 1855 (H. 2 M 1272) 12 officials from France were transferred for the establishment of Istanbul-Şumnu line<sup>62</sup>. On 8 January, 1856 (H. 29 R 1272) the telegraph commission composed of Afif Bey, Mehmet Kabuli, Kamil Bey, Mehmet Emin and Rustem, wrote an official report dated 8 January, 1856, (H. 29 R 1272) providing the details about the salaries and travel allowances of 12 French officials, who were employed at the telegraph stations in Istanbul, Varna and also Şumnu. From the report, dated 11 January, 1856 (H.3 Ca 1272) we learn that Mr. de Lusson, a bookkeeper in the telegraph station of Istanbul and Mr.Tiyeri, a telegraph clerk in Şumnu requested the renewal of their contracts or asked a permission to return to their country. The total amount of their salaries was 5833 piasters. Above all, the increase in the communication by the Turkish language caused the taking of an official into service at the telegraph station of Edirne. Ömer Efendi, Ahmet Hulusi, Nesib Efendi, Nahit Efendi and also Mr. Canoveh were taken

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<sup>60</sup> HR-MKT. 97/91

<sup>61</sup> I-H 6026

<sup>62</sup> I-D 21373

into service. Ömer Efendi, Ahmet Efendi and Mr. Canoveh received a salary of 800 piasters each. Nesib Efendi and Nahit Efendi were paid a salary of 400 piasters. Mr. Selamiti was settled in the place of Mr. de Lusson as a chief book keeper at the telegraph station<sup>63</sup>.

In addition to the salary and travel allowances, according to the requirements of the contract, it was also decided to pay them yearly allowances. The total amount of their yearly allowances and their travel allowances was 30.000 piasters. On 25 January 1856, (H. 17 Ca 1272) the subject was discussed at the Sublime Porte. From this report, we learn that Mr. de Lusson and Mr. Tiyeri were on the way of returning to their home <sup>64</sup>.

The salary of Arif Efendi, chief bookkeeper of the communication by the Turkish language were raised from 2000 piasters to 2200 piasters. The salaries of Feyzi Bey<sup>65</sup> and Zemci Bey<sup>66</sup> were raised from 800 piasters to 1000 piasters. On 26 January, 1856 (H. 18 Ca 1272), the Sublime Porte decided to reorganize the new appointments by sharing out the vacant salaries of Mr. de Lusson and Mr. Tiyeri among the Turkish officials on the above - mentioned manner<sup>67</sup>.

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<sup>63</sup> I-H 6885

<sup>64</sup> I- H 6880

<sup>65</sup> Later on, he became Minister of Telegraph twice between 1868-1871 and 1872-1873) and Perfect of Istanbul (Osman Ergin, 1977, vol. 2, p.621).

<sup>66</sup> Zemci Bey was taken in the Ottoman Foreign Ministry and became the Ottoman ambassador to Madrid.

<sup>67</sup> I-H 6885

On 30 December, 1856 (H 3 Ca 1273) the two buildings to be used as a telegraph station and as a residence in Bükreş were hired by the Ottomans for the telegraph officials for 5 months, extending from 4<sup>th</sup> May, 1857 to 21<sup>st</sup> October, with 11.712 piasters. This amount was taken from Mr. Halkon, a banker<sup>68</sup>. On 23 January 1857 (H. 27 Ca 1273) After buying the Varna-Bükreş line, the Ottoman administrators decided to employ the needed number of French officials that was 17 persons. The others were sent back to their country. Among them, the highest salary, that is, 3200 piasters was paid to Mr. Busevariye by the Ottoman Empire. The lowest salary was 100 piasters. There were nine French officials working at Bükreş Telegraph station. The distribution of other French officials working in different parts of the Ottoman territories was as follows: one in Rusçuk, two in Şumnu, and two in Varna and three were appointed to the other telegraph stations. The total amount of money paid to French officials in salary was in the region of 34250 piasters<sup>69</sup>.

A building in Bükreş was hired to be used as a telegraph station with a price of 350 Hungarian gold for a year. This amount was borrowed as credits from Mr. Halkon, a banker, on 1 November, 1857 (H. 13 R 1274)<sup>70</sup>. However, on 9 March 1858 (H. 23 B 1274) the Ottoman telegraph station at Bükreş was cancelled, because of its lower income<sup>71</sup>.

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<sup>68</sup> I-D 25327

<sup>69</sup> I-H 7424

<sup>70</sup> I-H 7795

<sup>71</sup> I-H 7904

The people of the Province of Vidin, especially the merchants signed a petition, to extend the telegraphic line from Rusçuk to Vidin by the way of the Danube to the Sublime Porte. They volunteered cover its cost from their own budgets<sup>72</sup>. The news about the official request of the inhabitants of Vidin was given in the issue of Takvim-i Vekayi dated 5 April, 1858(H. 20 Sa. 1274) <sup>73</sup>. The issue of Takvim-i Vekayi dated 7 July, 1858 (H. 25 Za 1274) stated that 54.000 piasters for the construction of the telegraph station in Tırnova was contributed by the people of the town<sup>74</sup>. In the same way, on 20 February, 1859 (H. 17 B.1859), the expense of the telegraph stations that were made of stone in Rusçuk and Vidin and of that were made of timber in Lom and Plevne amounted to 207.411 piasters. It was paid by the people of these districts<sup>75</sup>. The official statement of accounts and the design of telegraph stations made of stone were offered to the director of financial administration of Vidin on 16 March, 18 59 (H. 11 Sa 1275)<sup>76</sup>.

### **2.3.3. How Mustafa Efendi and Vulitch were entrusted with training the telegraphy on Varna - Rusçuk telegraphic line and The Conversion of the Morse Alphabet into the Ottoman Script**

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<sup>72</sup> I-H 8092, See Appendix: 5

<sup>73</sup> Takvim-i Vekayi, 5 April, 1858(H. 20 S1274), N. 561

<sup>74</sup> Takvim-i Vekayi, 7 July 1858( H. 2o Za 1858), N. 563

<sup>75</sup> Takvim-i Vekayi, 3 April 1859(H. 29 Sa 1275), Num. 569.

<sup>76</sup> I-D 28321

During the establishment of Varna -Rusçuk line, Mustafa Efendi(1834-31 January 1896)<sup>77</sup> and Vulitch from the Office of Translation at the Porte were sent to accompany Mr. Le Comte Angles, chief inspector of Varna and Bükreş line to be trained in operation of telegraph instrument and management of the telegraph organization<sup>78</sup>. On 12 February, 1855 (H. 24 Ca 1271) They were granted 1500 piasters of salary. The cost of their horses would be paid by the Financial Office<sup>79</sup>. On 4 June, 1855, Mustafa Efendi completed his duty in Bükreş. He returned to Istanbul and submitted a report to Afif Bey, head of the government chancery office and head of the telegraph commission about the possibility of Turkish communication by the Morse instrument<sup>80</sup>. On 14 September, 1855 (H. 2 M. 1272) Arif Efendi, Mustafa Efendi and Vulitch from the Office of Translation were entrusted with training the manufacture of telegraph instrument and its administration again. In this case, Zemci Efendi with a salary of 1500 piasters was appointed to their companionships.

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<sup>77</sup> According to Gökoğlu, A. B., the retirement fund for the officials of Posts and telegraphs was established by Mustafa Efendi, For more information about the life of Mustafa Efendi and his contribution to the Turkish telegraphy, See Gökoğlu, A. B. (1933). **Telgrafcilikta Ana Dilimiz ve Mustafa Efendi.** Istanbul: Güneş Matbaası, p. 20.

<sup>78</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1893). p. 9. and also Mehmet Ali, (1906). Telgraf Elektriki Tarihinden Mabaad **PTM. 63.** pp.70.

<sup>79</sup> I-H 5765 and I-H 6556

<sup>80</sup> Gökoğlu, A. B. (1933). p.28

Until the 4th May, 1856 (H.28 S 1272), the telegraphic communication was operated by foreigners, using the Latin Alphabet and the French language. The reason is that the French officials employed at the Ottoman telegraph stations did not speak the Turkish language. Above all, it was claimed by the French engineers that the telegraphic instruments were not suitable for telegraphic exchanges in the Arabic script<sup>81</sup>. However, they offered the project to Afif Bey, head of the government chancery office about the conversion of the Morse Alphabet into the Ottoman Script<sup>82</sup>. Mustafa Efendi and Mr. Vulitch from the Office of Translation adapted the Morse Alphabet into the Turkish language seven months later than the beginning of the telegraphic communication in the French language. Of course, the possibility of sending telegram in the Turkish language increased the traffic in the telegraphic communication.

On 4 May, 1856 (H.28 K 1272), the first telegram with 128 words in Turkish was sent from Edirne to Istanbul by Mustafa Efendi in Edirne<sup>83</sup>.

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<sup>81</sup> Çıglıdağ, N. (1962). İlk Türkçe Telgraf ve Telgrafçı Mustafa Efendi. **PTT Yıllığı**. Ankara, p. 22.; Gökoğlu, A. B. (1933). p.14 ; Eskin, Ş. p.56.

<sup>82</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1915). Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf Tesisinin Tarihçesi Mabaad. **PTM. 165**. p. 1935 and Ergin, O. (1977). p.621.

<sup>83</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1893). p.10. and also Mehmet Ali, (1906). Telgraf Elektriki Tarihinden Mabaad **PTM. 63**. pp.71-72. On this point, like Osman Ergin, Korkmaz Alemdar, stating that the turkification of telegraph language occurred after than 1861, gives wrong date about the event. See Ergin, O. (1977). p.621; Alemdar, K. (1981). p.106.

Fevzi and Zemci Bey recruited as apprentices into the telegraph station taught the telegraphic communication in the Turkish language. Mr. Fevzi, a member of the Translation Office at Sublime Porte is considered to be the first Turkish operator. Mustafa Efendi and Vulitch were the trainers of the first group of the Turkish telegraph operators. Mustafa Efendi taught them the telegraph code, known as “Mustafa Alphabet”. However, for some reason or others, this alphabet was known as the Alphabet of Mustafa Efendi. Omitting of the role of Vulitch Efendi, the role of Mustafa Efendi was exaggerated too much. For example, A. Baha compared the role of Mustafa efendi with Tonyukuk<sup>84</sup>.

According to Sekip Eskin, the Arabic language prevented the progress of the Turkish telegraphy because the telegraph instruments, printing the language with 428 letters had not been invented yet<sup>85</sup>.

Izzet Efendi had realized that the return of the French officials to France would be possible on the condition that the Turkish officials learned the Latin Alphabet. In the Ministry of Sagir Ahmet Bey, a brother of Mehmet Nedim Pasha, on 23 September 1871, cancelled the contracts of foreign inspectors, charged in Ankara, Sivas, Diyarbakir under the pretext that they did not know the Turkish language. After this decision, Turkish officials were appointed to take their posts.

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<sup>84</sup> Gökoğlu, A. B. (1933). p. 10

<sup>85</sup> Eskin, T. ( 1942). p. 59.

Nahid Efendi was the first Turkish inspector appointed to inspectorship of the Danube<sup>86</sup>.

In time of his directorship of telegraphs in Galata, Izzet Efendi reorganized the Code of Mustafa Efendi and developed his own code, known as the Code of Izzet Efendi. After 1877, the Izzet Code in the Ottoman telegraphic communication was initiated<sup>87</sup>.

## **2.4. The Establishment of the Telegraphic Line by the Ottoman Government in the Rumeli and the Istanbul-Belgrad Telegraphic line**

### **2.4.1. The Formation of Telegraph Commission**

There were 4 different proposals for the establishment of telegraphic line between Istanbul and Belgrad. The three of them were put forward by the British engineers, whose names were Mr. Lyon, Mr. Cook and Mr. Wilkins. The other was made by the Frenchman Mr. A. de la Rue and Mr. Blacque, the Ottoman citizen. In the time of the Grand Vizierate of *Kıbrıslı* Mehmet Pasha, to evaluate these

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p.57; Mehmet Ali, (1915). Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf Tesisinin Tarihcesi Mabaad **PTM. 165.** p. 1937

<sup>87</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1915). Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf Tesisinin Tarihcesi Mabaad" in **PTM. 165.** p.1935.

proposals, a telegraph commission was established. A proposition for the introduction of telegraphic communication was referred to a commission composed of several Ministers of state and other dignitaries of the Sublime Porte in 1854. In fact a similar commission for the construction of railways in the Ottoman Empire had been formed at the Sublime Porte in 1852. However, as Nesimi Yazici stated, there were two telegraph commissions<sup>88</sup>. The first commission consisted of Ali Galip Pasha, Ethem Pasha, Dervis pasha, Mustafa Pasha, Halil Pasha, Ahmet Pasha and Halis Bey, the Dragoman of Imperial Divan . This commission was gathered under the head of Ali Galip Pasha<sup>89</sup>. However, for political reasons, this commission was dissolved before they had completed their official report<sup>90</sup>. With the Imperial prescript dated 16 October, 1854 (H. 23 M.1271) Afif Bey, head of the government chancery office was entrusted with a duty of supervision of telegraph and its administration<sup>91</sup>.

In the year 1855, under the chairmanship of Afif Bey, head of the Imperial Chancery of Office, the second telegraph commission, composed of Kamil Bey, Master of Ceremony for Foreign Office and Kabuli Pasha, Secretary of Foreign Office and Arifi Pasha, the Dragoman of Imperial Divan and also Rustem Pasha, the director of foreign correspondence was formed in the Sublime Porte in order to investigate newly-established telegraphic line, according to the contract and to

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<sup>88</sup> Yazıcı, N. (1992). p.189

<sup>89</sup> Gökoğlu, A. B. (1935). p.49.

<sup>90</sup> I-H 5446, see Appendix : 6-b

<sup>91</sup> Tanrikut, A. ( 1968) p. 610

supervise its bookkeeping and to receive the telegraphic equipments<sup>92</sup>. This telegraph commission carried out its duty for several years. The official report, dated 4 February, 1855 (H. 16 (a 1271) informed the meeting at the Ministry of Civil List (Hazine-i Hassa). Before the construction of line between Istanbul via Edirne to Şumnu. *Billurizade* Mehmet Efendi from the Translation Office of the Sublime Porte was appointed with a salary of 5000 piasters to investigate the electric telegraph line according to the articles of agreement. After its completion, he was appointed as the first director of Telegraphs. In other words, the Directorate of the Ottoman Telegraph Administration was established on 29 March, 1855 (H.10 B 1271) . At the beginning, the proposals, given by the English and the French was evaluated by the Telegraph commission, not by the Directorate of Telegraph Administration. According to the official document of 9 July, 1854 (H.13 N 1270), it was stated that the ambassadors of the Great powers reminded and delivered a message about the introduction of the telegraphic communication to the Imperial Ottoman dominions. Furthermore, the Crimean war made the construction of a line necessary. The ambassadors of the Great powers expressed their views verbally about the necessity of the establishment of a telegraphic line between the Imperial Army in Şumnu and Istanbul<sup>93</sup>. The proposals made by three British, Mr. Lyon, Mr. Cooke, Mr. Wilkins and by a French, Mr. A. de la Rue to construct a telegraphic line between Istanbul and Varna were evaluated by the Ottoman statesmen together. But, the assessment of the writer of this study about these proposals will be separate.

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<sup>92</sup> Gökoğlu, (1933). p.28; Gökoğlu, (1935). p.60,

Salih Zeki, p. 14; Mehmet Ali, (1914). *Posta Mebahisi*; *Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf Tesisinin Tarihcesi*. **PTM**. 164. pp.1919. and also de Lusson, 1877, p. 86.

### **2.4.2.The Proposal by Mr. Lyon, a British Engineer In January, 1854 (Kanun-u sani 1854)**

Mr. Lyon, a British citizen, offered a proposal concerning the establishment of the telegraphic line between Istanbul, via Edirne to Şumnu, emphasizing the importance of telegraphic communication to the Sublime Porte in terms of civil service, military and commerce. The telegraph company agreed to give the first part of the revenue of 2000 purses to the Ottoman Empire <sup>94</sup>. According to the contract. the remaining part of the revenue was to be shared between the Ottoman Treasury and the Telegraph Company later on. When the term of the contract terminated, the telegraphic line would be the property of the Ottoman Empire without making any investment. In accordance with a memorandum made by Mr. Lyon, the line would take place between Istanbul and Edirne and these two cities would be linked to each other by two separate branches.

While the first branch would extend to Vidin via Sofya, the second branch was stretched to Şumnu. All expense of this establishment was defrayed by the Telegraph Company, but the telegraph posts would be provided by the Sublime Porte. Mr. Lyon asked the concession of this line for 20 years from the Sublime Porte in the name of the Telegraph Company. As it was seen, the total expense of the line was to be covered by the Telegraph Company. However, the Ottoman government approved to give only 2000 purses of gold for to the Telegraph Company a year. The Ottoman government did not accept his proposal because she

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<sup>93</sup> Andrew, W. P. (1857). p. 188

<sup>94</sup> I-H 5446, see Appendix: 6-a

did not want to pay 40.000 purses of gold for the concession of 20 year to the company and also did not share the income of telegraphic system. And also Mr. Lyon did not account the salaries of guards, who would be taken into service for the protection of the line. In reality, Mr. Lyon was of the opinion that the establishment of railway system and of telegraphic system would be realized at the same time and so that the salaries of guards as well <sup>95</sup>.

### **2.4.3. The Proposal by Mr. Cooke<sup>96</sup>, an other British Engineer**

After the proposal presented by Mr. Lyon to the Sublime Porte, Mr. Cooke also submitted an account book including the expenses of its establishment<sup>97</sup>. As it was stated that Mr. Cooke tried to convince the Ottoman statesmen that the establishment of a line, not to Şumnu and Vidin, but as far as Belgrad was necessary. Mr. Cooke proposed to establish a line between Istanbul and Belgrad via Edirne, Sofya, Niş and also a line from Edirne to Şumnu. He offered to use Serbian soldiers, whose salaries were to be paid by the Ottoman Empire, to guard the telegraphic line. According to his memorandum, the total expenses of posts,

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<sup>95</sup> I-H 5446, see Appendix: 6-a

<sup>96</sup> Perhaps he was Sir William Fothergill Cooke (1806-1879) who worked with Charles Wheatstone in developing British needle telegraph system. In 1837 they were granted their first patent. Wheatstone is generally considered the more important of two in the history of the telegraph, but Cooke contributed a superior business ability(Britannica, vol. 3, p. 599).

<sup>97</sup> I-H 5446, see Appendix: 6-b\ 6-c\6-d

engineering works and equipment for a line of 150 miles were around 2112 sterlings<sup>98</sup>. He was in favor of laying two electric wires to be used for political and commercial affairs separately. He set a price of 32 sterlings for a mile. For a line of 1000 miles, it was to amount 32.000 sterlings (44 yük 800 piasters). The expenses of foreign officials settled in Istanbul, Varna, Şumnu and Belgrad were 10 yük. The protection of telegraphic posts and wires was given in the responsibility of gendarme stations along the line. The expense of guards was accounted as 5 yük. The total expenses of this construction was to amount 60 yük (12.000 kese akçe) to the Ottoman government. Unlike the proposal of Mr. Lyon, the Ottoman government favored the suggestion of Mr. Cooke because the total revenue of telegraphic system would be left to the Ottoman Treasury. Furthermore, it was learned that most of the existing telegraphic line was laid in Europe by Mr. Cooke. However, as Mr. Pizani, Chief Dragoman of the English Embassy, stated, Mr. Cooke had gone to London recently. According to an official document dated 9 July, 1854, (H. 13 N1270), the Ottoman government tried to communicate with Mr. Cook by means of the English Embassy

#### **2.4.4. The proposal of by Wilkins and Mr. William Bellington, Two British Engineers.**

On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1854 (H. 7 L 1270) Mr. Wilkins and William Bellington offered the establishment of a new telegraph instrument known as "Wilkins" after inventor to the Ottoman government<sup>99</sup>. It had three advantages. The first was that it

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<sup>98</sup> In that years, 1 Sterlin=140 Ottoman piasters, 1 Yuk= 2000 Ottoman purses

<sup>99</sup> I-H 5446, see Appendix: 6-e

needed only one wire. The second was that it printed the signals on the paper. The third was that it operated faster than the others. They wanted to establish this system on the condition that they would be paid 5 sterlings for a mile each year and also its utilisation would be under the supervision of the Ottoman Empire. if the Sublime Porte accepted it, they would provide the necessary equipments without delay. According to the official document dated 13<sup>rd</sup> July, 1854 (H. 17 L 1270), the Telegraph Commission founded his memorandum superficial and short and stating that Mr. Wilkins did not estimate an exact price for the establishment of the line, because of that he was in Europe at that time. Due to this uncertainty, the Ottomans decided to ask Mr. A. de la Rue and Mr. Blacque to give them more details about the telegraph developed by Mr. Wilkins. Those two telegraph experts told the Ottomans that it was a newly-invented device, so it would be faster and more beneficial than the others. They also claimed that they had the know-how to install the same telegraph in the ottoman territories if they were required to do so <sup>100</sup>.

#### **2.4.5. The proposal made by the Frenchman, Mr. A. de la Rue and the Ottoman citizen, Mr. Blacque<sup>101</sup>**

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<sup>100</sup> I-H 5446, see Appendix: 6-f

<sup>101</sup> “Edouard Blacque ( 1824-1895) son of Alexandre Blacque, assumed a duty in the Office of Ottoman Foreign Affairs. As the first Ottoman ambassador, he was appointed to Washinton.” Koloğlu, O. (1994) “Blacque, Edouard” in **Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi**, vol. 2, İstanbul, , p.261 and also see Munir Aktepe “ Dunku Fransızlar Blak Bey ve oğlu” **Tarih Dergisi**, 1980/1981, num. 33, pp. 255-270.

Mr. A. de la Rue, a forest guard, on a business trip to Istanbul on 5 July, 1854 to investigate the Ottoman forests proposed the construction of this line by omitting the line between Rusçuk and Varna in cooperation with Mr. Blague, a Ottoman citizen. They estimated that its expense would amount to 8247 francs. They stated that it would be constructed at the expense of 1000 purses per year. Mr. A. de la Rue undertook to pay the expenses from his budget, in case that the expense of its establishment would exceed 8000 purses. He also estimated that omitting the line between Niş and Vidin would save 60.000 francs of expense of total amount. Mr. A. de la Rue and Mr. Blacque were engaged to establish this line before the beginning of the winter. However, Mr. A. de la Rue emphasized that he had come to Istanbul for three months and also the time of his residence permit would come to an end in 8 or 10 days. He renewed his visa from France by the way of the French Embassy or the Ottoman Embassy in Paris<sup>102</sup>.

Mr. A. de la Rue chose 7 centers for the location of telegraph stations along the line. They were Istanbul, Varna, Şumnu, Sofia, Niş, Vidin and Belgrad. The labour for the measurement which took 270 hours cost the Ottoman Empire 4 million 720.570 piasters, or 9400 francs<sup>103</sup>. He proposed the protection of the telegraphic line by the Ottoman soldiers. In his opinion, 540 soldiers and 135 corporals were to be required from the Imperial Army. This military corps would be divided a squadron, consisted of 4 soldiers and a corporal. The total salary of soldiers and corporals for this service would amount to 972.000 piasters. 12 French officials were transferred from France with a salary of 2000 piasters, but the director of

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<sup>102</sup> I-H 5446, see Appendix: 6-d\ 6-h\ 6-i

<sup>103</sup> I-H 5446, see Appendix: 6-g

Telegraphs would receive a salary of 4000 piasters a year. These officials would train the Ottoman apprentices. All equipments were to be exempted from duty. There was an a great difference between the calculations of Mr. A. de la Rue and Mr. Cooke who set a price of 9000 purses by considering the measure of land on which the telegraphic wires would be stretched 1000 miles<sup>104</sup>. Above all, Mr. Cooke was in London. The Ottomans had no time to wait for his return to Istanbul to have an interview with him again. The awarding this contract to Mr. A. de la Rue and Mr. Blacque would hasten the construcion of this line<sup>105</sup>.

According Mr. Cook, there was a need of 3500 telegraphic posts for a 1000-mile construction. Considering three miles as an hour, he engaged to contract a telegraphic huts for half an hour. The Ottomans did not come agreement with him on the structure of telegraphic huts and also did not add the expense of tents. In short, his being in London prevented him from entering into this contract with the Ottoman government to establish this line.

#### **2.4.6. The Establishment of a Telegraphic Line Between Istanbul and Belgrad by Mr. A. De La Rue and Mr. Blacque**

A project about the construction of a telegraphic line between Istanbul and Edirne was offered to Meclis-i Vâlâ on 14th May, 1854 (H. 16 S 1270)<sup>106</sup> and

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<sup>104</sup> I-H 5446, see Appendix: 6-g

<sup>105</sup> I-H 5446, see Appendix : 6-h

<sup>106</sup> I-H 5765

later on, it was presented to Ali Galip Bey on 5 June, 1854 (H. 9 N1270)<sup>107</sup>. In this project, the list of necessary items and instruments and their expense for performing the telegraphic communication was given to the Telegraph Commission. According to this project, the establishment of this line would cost 3624 sterlings for the Ottoman government. Mr. A. de la Rue and Mr. Blacque presented a report dated 5 July 1854, regarding Istanbul-Belgrad line to the Telegraph Commission. According to this report, seven telegraphic centers would be chosen in Istanbul, Edirne, Şumnu, Filibe, Sofya, Niş and Belgrad. It would cost the Ottoman government 728.143 francs in total<sup>108</sup>. According to the Takvim-i Vekayi, the official newspaper of the Ottoman government, dated 14 May, 1855 (H. 26 Sa 1271), there were two reasons for the establishment of the electric telegraph in the Ottoman dominions. The first was to facilitate and to accelerate the communication with European countries. The second was that it would be useful for the commercial affairs. From this newspaper, we learn that Mr. A. de la Rue, who undertook to establish the telegraphic line between Istanbul and Edirne, was a forest guard in France. It was also written that Mehmet Efendi from the office of translation was appointed as the director of Telegraph in order to supervise the construction of telegraphic line and its administration<sup>109</sup>.

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<sup>107</sup> HR MKT 76/94, see Appendix : 1 , According to Gökoğlu, A. B., the head of first telegraph commission was Ali Galip Pasha.

<sup>108</sup> I-MV 13516, and also see Yazıcı, N. (1981). p.1649

<sup>109</sup> Takvim-i Vekayi, 14 May, 1855, N. 523, see Appendix: 7

### 2.4.7. The Construction of The First Telegraph Station

Afif Bey, head of the government chancery office presented an official statement concerning the determination of a stone building around the Mosque of Hagia Sofia for temporary settlement of telegraphic equipment's to the Minister of Finance on 10 December, 1854 (H. 19 Ra 1271)<sup>110</sup>. On 15 December, 1854 (H. 24 Ra 1271) the workshop of Darulfunun was endowed for telegraphic instruments for 15 or 20 days<sup>111</sup>. At the same date, an Italian architect, Fossati, and Mr. Blacque, a contractor of telegraphic establishment investigated the tower between the Gate of Soğukçeşme and Alay kosku and they prepared also the design of the new building on 19 December, 1854 (H. 28 Ra 1271). This design and a note were offered by Afif Bey to the Ministry of Commerce<sup>112</sup>. On 30, December, 1854 (H. 9 R. 1271) it was decided that the construction of stone building used as a telegraph station was given to Mr. Fossati<sup>113</sup>. On 30, January 1855 (R. 18 Kanunsani 1270 ) after returning to Turkey, Mr. A. de la Rue began to have the Soğukçeşme telegraph station built<sup>114</sup>. Semavi Eyice, in his article entitled "İlk Telgrafhane-i Amire" tries to discover that the person who constructed this building Gaspare Fossati or his younger brother, Giuseppe Fossati. As he wrote, they were two brothers. The elder brother, Gaspare

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<sup>110</sup> HR. MKT 94/85

<sup>111</sup> HR. MKT 95/76

<sup>112</sup> HR. MKT 96/26

<sup>113</sup> I-D 20038

<sup>114</sup> Gökoğlu, A. B. (1935). p.51; Mehmet Ali, (1914). Posta Mebahisi; Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf Tesisinin Tarihçesi. **PTM.** 164. p. 1921.

Fossati(1809-1883) constructed the building of the Russian Consulate between 1838-1849. He was also entrusted with the restoration of the Mosque of Hagia Sofia in 1847. However, as Semavi Eyice emphasized, the construction of the first Telegraph Station was referred to Mr. Fossati Giuseppe (1822- 1891), the younger brother of Mr. Fossati Gaspare<sup>115</sup>. The photographs showing the Telegraph Station at Soğukçeşme taken by Abdullah Brothers (Mr. Kevork and Mr.Visen, two Ottoman citizens) can be found in the Museum of Posts and Telegraphs in Ankara. This building became the central office of Directorate of Telegraphs.

On 31 August, 1855 (H. 17Z.1271), Ismail Afif Bey, head of the government chancery office, informed the completion of the construction of the telegraph station at Soğukçeşme and also the completion of the station in Edirne. He offered to inscribe the Sultan's monogram on the gate of telegraph station to the Sublime Porte<sup>116</sup>.

On 23 January 1856 (H. 15 Ca 127 2), The directorate of Telegraphs asked for coal for the offices of telegraph station from the Ministry of Finance<sup>117</sup>. From the official report dated 7 January 1856 (H. 19 Ca 1272), it was learned that at the beginning the first telegraph station near the Gate of soğukçeşme was constructed as a two store bulidings. Later on, one floor was also added because it was not big enough for officials. The total expense of its construction cost 107.850

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<sup>115</sup> Eyice, S. (1984). İstanbul'da İlk telgrafhane-i Amire'nin Projesi (1855). **Ist. Ed. Fak. Der.** p. 61.

<sup>116</sup> Tanrıkut, A. (1968). p.613

<sup>117</sup> I-D 22199

piasters<sup>118</sup>. As it can be seen from the official report, dated 1856, adding the third floor of the Telegraph Station was added in 1856, not in 1866/67, as asserted by A. Baha Gokoglu and Semavi Eyice<sup>119</sup>. On 20 February, 1856 (H. 13 C.1272), the cost of its furniture, including the bench and the stove amounted to 36.841 piasters. Its price was paid from the furniture expenses of the years of 1855<sup>120</sup>. In 1866 - 67 the telegraph station was enlarged towards Alay Köşkü<sup>121</sup>.

During the period of Abdulhamit II, according to Mehmet Emin (Kalmuk), Soğukçeşme telegraph station was the most important one with its technical and communicative capacity<sup>122</sup>. On 1 November, 1900 (8 B 1318), The Central station

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<sup>118</sup> I-D 22201

<sup>119</sup> Eyice, S. (1984). p.67 and Gökoğlu, A. B. (1935). p.52.

<sup>120</sup> I-D 22360

<sup>121</sup> Gökoğlu, A. B. (1935). p.52; Mehmet Ali, (1914). Posta Mebahisi; Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf Tesisinin Tarihçesi. PTM. 164. p. 1921.

<sup>122</sup> According to Mehmet Emin (Kalmuk) and Aziz Akican, one of the famous directors of telegraph station at Soğukçeşme was Mustafa Enver Bey, father of A. Süheyl Ünver. He was born in Tırnova where in 1876 he was taken as an apprentice (Sakird) to the telegraph station. Later on, he was appointed to Şumnu telegraph station with a salary of 400 piasters. During the Ottoman -Russian war between 1876-1877, he worked as a telegraph operator. In 1879 he was appointed to Istanbul to do same job with salary of 200 piasters. He could speak French, Arabic and Persian languages. At the same telegraph station, Ali Riza Bey, father of Hasan Ali Yucel worked as an telegraph inspector in 1894. For more information, see Ahmed

of Telegraphs was moved to Military High School at Soğukçeşme. On 13 May, 1905 (H. 8 Ra 1323), Hasan Pasha's residence was hired at a price of 14000 piasters because the station at Soğukçeşme was not big enough to serve as a central station. In July, 1909 (H.1325), it was moved again to the building of Grand Post Office. As Asaf tanrikut wrote, in 1911 (H. 1327) during the arrangement of the Park of the Great Palace (Gulhane Parki), Dr. Cemil Topuzlu, prefect of Istanbul, had the former telegraph station at Soğukçeşme demolished<sup>123</sup>.

#### **2.4.8. The Establishment of Telegraphic line between the Central Office of Telegraph at Soğukçeşme near the Sublime Porte to Yedikule**

The first line was established from the Soğukçeşme Telegraph Station, via the city's wall to Yedikule, because of the fear of fire<sup>124</sup>. This line passed from Yedikule via Küçük Çekmece, Büyük Çekmece, Kumburgaz, Bogados, Silivri and

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Guner Sayar, **A. Suheyl Unver Hayati, Sahsiyeti ve Eserleri**, Eren Yay., Istanbul, 1994, pp. 31-35 and p. 63.

<sup>123</sup> Asaf Tanrikut, pp. 612-613.

<sup>124</sup> Tanrikut, A. (19689, p.610 ; Mehmet Ali, (1914). Posta Mebahisi; Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf Tesisinin Tarihçesi **PTM. 164.** p. 1921. According to the statistics about the number of fires in Istanbul, mentioned by Munif Pasha in his article. Between 1859 and 1864, the recorded number of fires was 160. As a result of this, 2844 houses and 1246 shops and also 23 inns were burnt down. For more information , see Münif Pasha, 1864 (H.1281). Harik-i Istanbul. **Mecmua-i Fünun**, Cemiyet-i Ilmiye-i Osmaniye Matbaasi. vol.3, pp. 148-156.

Eregli to Edirne . An official report dated 10 January, 1855, about the appointment of a gendarme with a duty of assisting the engineer to prevent possible opposition from hosts was offered to the Ministry of Police because during the establishment of the first line between Soğukçeşme and Yedikule, the engineer, whenever necessary, would enter houses along the city walls, so that an officer was entrusted to deal with incidents that might come from opposing people. Furthermore, a guard (Kavas) from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs was sent to accompany to the engineer<sup>125</sup>.

On 19 December, 1857 (H. 2 Ca 74) it was decided to establish the second line from the Soğukçeşme telegraph Station to Yedikule because in the case of break down, it was necessary to enter the houses along the city-walls in order to repair the first line, but the engineer of telegraphs met with the opposition from the house owners during this process<sup>126</sup>. As G. de Lusson wrote, after establishing the second line between Soğukçeşme and Yedikule, the first line was still preserved<sup>127</sup>.

#### **2.4.9. Istanbul - Edirne Telegraphic Line**

On 25 September, 1854. ( H.2 M 1271), Arif Efendi from the Office of Translation and Mr. Ogust who was dragoman were given in the company of Mr. A. de la Rue who undertook responsibility for constructing the electric telegraph line. However, until that time Arif Efendi and Mr. Ogust were assigned various tasks to perform concerning telegraphic affairs without any payment. This situation was corrected by giving a job to these gentlemen. Arif Efendi's salary now was 2000

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<sup>125</sup> HR.MKT 99/22, see Appendix : 8

<sup>126</sup> I-D 20038

<sup>127</sup> De lusson, p.86.

piasters and Mr. Ogust was earning 1000 piasters<sup>128</sup>. On 26 September, 1854 (H.3 M 1271) in which Mr. A. de la Rue presented a report on 26 September, 1854 (H. 3 M 1271), he asked one or two officials to be appointed to deal with the affairs of the Telegraphy emphasizing that the Sublime Porte send those two officials to the construction of the line by the French between Varna and Şumnu. This job was given to Mustafa Efendi and Vulitch Efendi. Afif Efendi from the Office of Translation was taken into the service of the Telegraphy on temporary basis. Mr. A. de la Rue suggested that Arif Efendi and Mr. Ogust be taken into service permanently<sup>129</sup>. On 29 September, 1854 (H. 6 M 1271), after the Sublime Porte evaluated the request of Mr. A. de la Rue, Arif Efendi and Mr. Ogust were dispatched to Edirne and Şumnu<sup>130</sup>. On 15 October 1855, a mounted guard and two cavalymen were appointed to the Directorate of Telegraph.

They were paid a travel allowance of 1100 piasters<sup>131</sup>. It can be learned from the official memoranda dated 19<sup>th</sup> November, 1854 (H. 27 S 1271) that the line was established from Istanbul to Edirne. From there, the first branch would be stretched to Şumnu and the second branch to Belgrad by Mr. A. de la Rue and Mr. Edouard Blacque. According to this document, a guard with a salary of 290 piasters and two officers with that of 260 piasters were appointed under their supervision

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<sup>128</sup> I-H 5884-c

<sup>129</sup> I-H 5884-a

<sup>130</sup> I-H 5884-d

<sup>131</sup> I-D 21712

until the completion of this line<sup>132</sup>. On 10 December, 1854 (H. 19 Ra 1271) Mr. A. de la Rue informed the Sublime Porte that the construction of telegraphic line was making considerably a rapid advancement and there was need for one or two more people, having a good command of French and Turkish languages to study the telegraph alphabet. The report gave the information that from the start of the construction of the line, Arif Efendi from the Office of Translation operated the instrument temporarily. Mr. A. de la Rue asked the appointment of Arif Efendi to this place permanently. Moreover, he demanded that Mr. Ogust should be taken into the service of telegraphy with a well-paid salary by the Sublime Porte<sup>133</sup>. According to a document dated 12 December, 1854, the need for the erecting the towers and employing officers in there to protect the telegraphic line and the telegraph posts were emphasized because most of the towers were ruined and timbers for telegraph line were stolen<sup>134</sup>. The telegraph poles, imported from Bolu, were transported to the ports of Büyük Çekmece and Silivri by the ship of the firm of Hazine-i Hassa<sup>135</sup>. The Sublime Porte paid 100.000 francs to Mr. A. de la Rue to buy the telegraphic instruments from Paris. In the issue of Ceride-i Havadis, dated 30 July, 1855 (H. 15 Za 1271), the news about the completion of Edirne -Istanbul

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<sup>132</sup> HR.MKT 95/18

<sup>133</sup> I-H 5884-b

<sup>134</sup> HR. MKT 97/18

<sup>135</sup> HR. MKT 99/83

line was given. According to Mehmet Ali, the Istanbul -Edirne telegraphic line was completed on 3 August, 1855<sup>136</sup>.

On 16 August, 1855, the Edirne telegraph station was opened for the communication<sup>137</sup>. In fact, in time of Rüstem Pasha, governor of Edirne, the telegraph station in Edirne was built outside the city centre<sup>138</sup>. According to Akıncan, because of the fear of inhabitants of Edirne, the first Edirne telegraph station was built outside the center of city<sup>139</sup>. But Edirne-Istanbul line was opened for the communication on 10 September 1855 (R.29 August 1271)<sup>140</sup>. Moreover, in September, 1855, Mustafa Efendi was appointed as the director of telegraph station in Edirne.

#### 2.4.10. Edirne-Şumnu Telegraphic line

It was written that during the time of the construction of the first branch from Edirne to Şumnu, since the Balkan mountains were rocky and woody, it was rather

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<sup>136</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1914). Posta Mebahisi; Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf Tesisinin Tarihcesi. **PTM. 164.** p.1919.

<sup>137</sup> Gökoğlu, A. B. (1933). p. 15.

<sup>138</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1914). Posta Mebahisi; Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf Tesisinin Tarihcesi. **PTM. 164.** p. 1922.

<sup>139</sup> Akıncan, A. (without publishing date), **Türkiye’de Posta ve Telgrafçılık**, Ülkü Basımevi p. 5

<sup>140</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1893). p.8.

troublesome to continue with the work, so the establishment lasted for 14 hours<sup>141</sup>. Furthermore, towers were built and watchmen were settled in order to protect the telegraph poles and wires. The reporter of this news hoped that the people would be pleased to protect the telegraphic line so that there would be no need for towers and watchmen, because the telegraph as a beneficial work concerned the general interest of people<sup>142</sup>. In spite of this hope, for the establishment of telegraphic line between Istanbul and Şumnu, mounted guards and guards were changed with observing this line on 18 October 1855 (H. 6 S 1272)<sup>143</sup>. From Edirne to Şumnu, the line was stretched on the straight line by the way of Karinabad. However, as Geoffery de Lusson emphasized, the telegraph communication was cut off frequently because of the storms over the Balkan mountains<sup>144</sup>. On September of 1856, the telegraph line from Istanbul, via Edirne, to Şumnu was set for the official and unofficial communication. However, at the beginning the prices were too high. For example, a telegram with 25 words from Istanbul to Edirne was 33 Mecidyе piasters. From Istanbul to Şumnu it was 29 piasters<sup>145</sup>. In spite of this, as we learned from the letter, dated 1 November, 1855, sent by G. de Lusson to Fuat Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, an astonishing success was achieved at this small network consisted of just three stations<sup>146</sup>. In his letter, he gave the total number of received and

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<sup>141</sup> De Lusson, (1877). p.86.

<sup>142</sup> Ceride-i Havadis, 30 July 1855(H. 15 zilkade 1271), N. 750

<sup>143</sup> I-D 21561

<sup>144</sup> De Lusson, p. 87.

<sup>145</sup> De Lusson, p. 87

<sup>146</sup> De Lusson, loc. cit.

exchanged telegrams from the first day of the line of the Ottoman Telegraph to 31 October. The number of dispatched telegrams was 173 and the number of received telegrams was 204. The revenue of the telegraphic communication between Istanbul and Şumnu was 8876 piasters. The income for communication between Istanbul and the foreign countries was 3070 francs. Both the inhabitants of Istanbul and also those of Edirne realized the importance of the telegraph for their commercial transactions. After the completion of Istanbul - Şumnu line by the manner of the government money of the contract, made with Mr. A. de la Rue and Mr. Blacque was canceled on 2 October, 1855 (H.20 M 1272) However, it was set up to pay 8000 francs to Mr. A. de la Rue under the name of the Sultan's gift. This amount was paid from government money in the hands of Mr. Bereke and Mr. De Four in Paris. The remaining sum of 2318 Francs 55 centime was delivered to the Ottoman Treasury<sup>147</sup>. In this way, the necessary instruments were imported from France with Mr. Bereke's efforts for the establishment of the Edirne-Istanbul line<sup>148</sup>. Moreover, the telegraph officials of foreign origin were trained and appointed by Mr. Bereke<sup>149</sup>. The French government gave great support for the import of these instruments to the Ottoman territories<sup>150</sup>.

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<sup>147</sup> I-H 6630

<sup>148</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1893). **Telgrafçılık**, Dersaadet: Matbaa-i Osmani. p.7; Salih Zeki, p.13 ; Gökoğlu, A. B. (1935). p.50.

<sup>149</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1906). Telgraf Elektriki tarihinden Mabaad. **PTM. 63.** pp.69.

<sup>150</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1893). p. 8. and also Mehmet Ali, (1906). p.70.

#### 2.4.11. The Establishment of The Telegraphic Line From the Telegraph Station to the Bourse at Galata

In a letter, dated 1 November, 1855, written by G. de Lusson to Fuat Pasha, Minister for Foreign Affairs, it was proposed to establish of a telegraphic line between the Bourse at Galata and the central Telegraph station in Istanbul<sup>151</sup>. The issue of Ceride-i Havadis, dated 28 January 1856 gave the news about the establishment of telegraphic line between the Bourse and the telegraphic station in order to make it easy for the commercial transactions of merchants<sup>152</sup>. In the Book “Telgraf Risalesi”, dated 1857, Mustafa Hami emphasized the importance of telegraph for merchants who were in need of goods from distant places urgently and to learn the currency of the money<sup>153</sup>. Mrs. Durand de Fontmagne categorized the people of Galata, into three groups. The first one was the merchants and bankers. They were in constant communication with London and Paris. The second was the diplomats and foreign representatives. The third was adventurers<sup>154</sup>. Moreover, after the opening of the Istanbul-Edirne-Şumnu line, Fuat Pasha, Minister of Foreign affairs, sent the telegram message, concerning that Allied powers captured

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<sup>151</sup> De Lusson, pp.87-88.

<sup>152</sup> Ceride-i Havadis, 28 January 1856 (H. 20 Ca. 1272), N. 774, see Appendix: 9

<sup>153</sup> Mustafa Hami, (1857). p. 6

<sup>154</sup> Durand de Fontmagne, p.108.

Sevastopol on 10 September, 1855 to the Ottoman Ambassadorship to inform Bourses of London and Paris<sup>155</sup>.

On the other hand, it can be seen that six British officials were employed at the telegraph stations in Galata and Tarabya. The highest salary, 2400 piasters was given to Mr.Vervin, an engineer of the submarine cable. Total amount of those six British officials' salary was 11.100 piasters. The Ottoman government paid all the foreign officials 45350 piasters in total<sup>156</sup>.

#### 2.4.12. Edirne -Aleksinaç Telegraphic Line

The construction of Istanbul -Edirne -Şumnu line was given to Mr. A de la Rue and Mr. Blacque by contract at a lump sum price. His line did not show firmness so that the Ottoman administrators decided to Edirne- Aleksinaç line by the way of entrusting to Mr. Skolasky<sup>157</sup>.

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<sup>155</sup> Gökoğlu, A. B. (1935), p.56 ; Mehmet Ali, (1914). Posta Mebahisi; Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf Tesisinin Tarihçesi. **PTM.** 164. pp.1920.

<sup>156</sup> I-H 7424

<sup>157</sup> I-H 6961; in accordance with the application of entrusting system (Emanet Usulu), the administration itself either carried out with the construction without transferring its rights to any contractors or the constructions were realized by dividing the task into parts and giving each piece of task to different secondary contractors(taseron) (Ilkutlu Gönülali, (1991). **Devlet İhale Kanunu.** Ankara : Adım Yayıncılık p.191)

As can be learned from the official report, dated 10 January, 1856 (H. 2 Ca 1273), Selim Efendi from the Sublime Porte and Hakki Efendi from the Ministry of Finance were entrusted with a duty of supplying the telegraphic posts for the line between Edirne and Aleksinac and also the line between Niş and Vidin. These lines were constructed under the inspection of Mr. Skolosky, an engineer of this telegraphic line. Its expense was covered from government's account<sup>158</sup>. On 23 January, 1856 (H. 15 Ca 1272) from the report of telegraph commission, composed of Afif Ismail, Mehmet Kabuli, Kamil Bey and Mehmet Emin, we learn that the telegraphic wires imported from Marseilles to Istanbul and the remaining wires after the construction of the line between Istanbul and Şumnu were used to establish the telegraphic line between Edirne and Aleksinaç. In this way, in addition to Istanbul-Bucharest line, the Ottoman administrators wanted to establish the second telegraphic communication with European countries by the route of Edirne, via Aleksinaç to Belgrad. The line between Belgrad and Aleksinaç would be established by the Sirbians. By means of land transportation, the distance between Edirne and Aleksinaç was 85 hours. The Ottoman administrators decided to realize its construction by the means of "Emanet Usulu", not by the fixed price (maktu)<sup>159</sup>. On 14 September, 1856. (H. M 1273) from the report, we learn that the Sirbians established a line between Belgrad and Aleksinaç. The Serbs gave 10.000 purses to the Ottomans for the construction of the line between Edirne- Aleksinaç in order to

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<sup>158</sup> I-D 24229

<sup>159</sup> I -H6961

connect with the Serbian telegraphic line. This line would be the main one for the telegraph station in the southern Rumelia, including Salonica<sup>160</sup>.

On 3 November, 1856 (H. Ra 1273), there emerged the need for calling two French officials from France to be employed in the communication in the French language. Because there occurred rapid increase in the telegraphic communication with European governments. A new contract was signed with Mr. Luklar and Mr. Noren with a salary of 2250 piasters. The Ottoman government paid them 2000 francs in total as their travel allowances. On 3 November, 1856, this matter was submitted to the Sublime Porte by the Telegraph Commission<sup>161</sup>.

On 28 February, 1857, the necessary instruments were imported from France by the means of Mr. Bereke for the establishment of the line from Edirne to Aleksinaç and the line from Niş to Vidin. Their cost was 7068 Francs 50 centimes<sup>162</sup>.

On 1 March, 1857 (H.5 B 1273) Ömer Fevzi, the Chief of Commission of the Danube offered a report about the expense of his telegrams to the Sublime Porte. From the period between November and February, his expense of telegrams was 10.233 piaster <sup>163</sup>. On 6 September, 1857 (H.16 M 1274) for the establishment of the line between Edirne and Aleksinaç, Salim Efendi and Hakki Efendi were changed with inspecting the construction of this line by Mr. Skolasky. According to a report

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<sup>160</sup> I-H 6961

<sup>161</sup> I-H 7147

<sup>162</sup> I-H 7420

<sup>163</sup> I- H 7428

by Ibrahim Ethem, head official of Sofia, dated 6 September, 1857(H. 16 M 1274), the notables of Sofia accepted to pay the expenses of telegraphic posts and daily wages of workers during the establishment of telegraphic line in the borders of district of Sofia. The inhabitants of Sofia regarded this assistance as a glorious service (hizmet-i muftehire) **164**.

Takvim-i Vekayi, dated 16 February, 1858 (H. 29 Ca 1274) disseminated some news that the establishment of telegraphic line between Edirne and Aleksinaç was rescripted. 3000 piasters were transferred from the account of province of Edirne to this line. Moreover, the construction of telegraph stations were realized at the public expence **165**.

On 19 December, 1857(H. 2.Ca 1274) after the construction of Edirne - Aleksinaç line, the Ottoman administrators decided in favour of the establishment of a new telegraphic line from two branches. The first main branch would extend from Istanbul via Tekirdag to Selanik, in accordance with the demands of inhabitants. From Tekirdag, one of the branches would be stretched to Edirne. The other would extend to Selanik, Gelibolu and Kale-i Sultaniye. The second main branch would extend from Rusçuk , Tırnova and via the Danube to Vidin. One of the branches would extend from Rusçuk to Silistre. The establishment of these two branches at the same time resulted in the appointment of many officials<sup>**166**</sup>. On 21 March, 1858 (H. S 1274) according to the official report by Mehmet Salih, head official of

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<sup>164</sup> I-H 7715

<sup>165</sup> Takvim-i Vekayi, N. 560

<sup>166</sup> I-H 8003

Tırnova, dated 21 March, 1858 (H. S 1274), we learn that the inhabitants of Tırnova were ready to meet the expenses of workers and posts. At the same time, Salim Efendi from the office of Translation was charged with a duty of inspecting the construction of the line between Rusçuk via Tırnova to Vidin and of the line between Rusçuk and Silistre. The construction of stone building to be used as telegraph station in Tırnova cost 50.000 piasters. The inhabitants of Tırnova gathered among themselves 54.401.5 piasters for its construction<sup>167</sup>.

#### **2.4.13. Filibe -Yenimahalle Telegraphic line**

The inhabitants of Filibe , both Muslims and non-Muslims informed that they were ready to pay the expense of 800 posts on 10 January, 1856 (H. 2. Ca 1273)<sup>168</sup>. On 3 March, 1857, (H. 7 B 1273), the inhabitants of Haskoy in the district of Filibe, including Muslims and non-Muslims applied to the Sublime Porte, in order to get permission for the establishment of a telegraphic line in their sub-district. They also agreed to meet the expenses of workers, posts and vehicles<sup>169</sup>.

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<sup>167</sup> I-H 8153

<sup>168</sup> I-D 24229

<sup>169</sup> I-D 24734

#### 2.4.14. Gelibolu - Selanik Telegraphic Line

On 13 December, 1859 (H. 18 Ca 1276) The telegraph station in Selanik was inaugurated<sup>170</sup>. On 10 July, 1860, the line from Gelibolu arrived in Kavala. Hakki Efendi, who was companion official of the telegraph station in Tekirdag, was appointed as the director of Gümülcine with a salary of 1000 piasters<sup>171</sup>. From Gelibolu to Kavala, eleven guards were changed to protect the line with salary of 400 piasters. Two servants were also appointed to the telegraph office in Gumulcine with a salary of 200 piasters. On 26 July, 1860 (H. 8 Z.1276), the part of Selanik line extending as far as Kavala was completed. The telegraph officials were appointed to the telegraph station in Kavala, Drama and Serez.

The telegraph directors were appointed there with a salary of 1000 piasters and their accompanying-officials with a salary of 500 piasters. Because of the outstanding location of Selanik, Celal Bey was appointed as the director of this city with a salary of 1500 piasters. Three Frenchmen (Mr. Marton, Mr. Zaharyadi and Mr. Pizannik) were changed to operate in the French language. Seventeen guards were entrusted with the task of protecting the line between Kavala and Selanik with a salary of 400 piasters.

Three servants were taken into service for the telegraph station in Selanik with salary of 250 piasters. Also two servants were employed in Kavala, Drama and Siroz with a salary of 200 piasters<sup>172</sup>.

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<sup>170</sup> I-D 30421

<sup>171</sup> I-H 9688

<sup>172</sup> I-H 9708

### 2.4.15. Niş - Priştine Telegraphic Line

From the official report, dated 10 July, 1860 (H. 21 Za 1276), it was learned that the telegraphic line between Niş and Priştine was on the way to be completed so that Asaf Bey who was an operator at the Telegraph Office in Filibe was appointed to the directorate of telegraph station in Priştine with a salary of 1000 piasters. Ahmet Şükrü Efendi was given in his companionship with a salary of 500 piasters. Naim Efendi as an operator was appointed to the telegraph station of Niş with a salary of 500 piasters. Eight guards were changed with protecting the line between Niş and Priştine with a salary of 300 piasters. A chief guard, dwelling in Priştine, was entrusted with a duty of their supervision. Moreover, two servants were taken into service with a salary of 200 piasters<sup>173</sup>. On 2 January, 1863 (H 11 B 1279), the line between Priştine and Prizren was completed. The telegraph station in Yenipazar on the line between Priştine and Sarajevo was opened on the March of 1866 (H. 16 L 1282) <sup>174</sup>. The total amount salaries paid to officials at the telegraph stations in Tirhala, Galos and Yenişehir was 42.585 piasters for July and August<sup>175</sup>. According to the Regulation of Provinces, in 1864, the province of Danube, including the districts of Varna, Tulca, Rusçuk, Tırnova, Vidin, Niş and Sofya was reorganized in the time of the governorship of Mithat Pasha.

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<sup>173</sup> I-H 9688

<sup>174</sup> I-D 34069

#### **2.4.16. Girit - Otranto Telegraphic Line**

On 17 December, 1873 (H. 26 L 1290), a concession for laying the submarine cable between Crete and Otranto was given to a company that also had a concession for laying the submarine cable between Crete and İskenderiyye under the condition that in the case of war, the Ottoman Empire was to have a right to forbidden the telegraphic communication<sup>176</sup>.

### **2.5. The Establishment of Telegraphic lines on posts by the Ottomans and the British between Istanbul via Asia Minor and Bağdad and also Basra towards India.**

#### **2.5.1 The British Policy Of Telegraph To Connect Telegraphic System Of Europe With That Of India**

On this subject, W.P.ANDREW in his book "Memoir on the Euphrates Valley Route to India" gives substantial amount of information. This book was an outstanding source because of two reasons. The first was that it was written in 1857, that is, it was a product of an eyewitness. The second was that W. P. Andrew, author of the book , was the Chairman of European and Indian Junction Telegraph Companies.

It was intended by the European and Indian Junction Telegraph Company to carry the electric wire along the Euphrates Valley and connect the Telegraphic

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<sup>175</sup> Cevdet Nafia. 867

<sup>176</sup> İmtiyaz Defteri, I, p. 63.

system of Europe with that of India<sup>177</sup>. As he wrote, the British policy of Telegraph can be taken into account with that of Railways to connect Europe with India for political and commercial purposes. For Britain, the possession of an alternate short route to India was very important. Above all, the British preferred the Persian Gulf rather than the Red Sea because the traffic by the route of the Red Sea must always be confined to large and powerful steam vessels, being impeded by rocky islands, coral reefs and, the nature of the prevailing winds; however, the Persian Gulf was suitable for vessels of all classes<sup>178</sup>. At this juncture, Fav, the last station of Üsküdar- Basra line was chosen at the head of the Persian Gulf. The telegraphic line would be laid by the Persian Gulf to Kurrachee or Bombay where it would junction with the Indian Telegraphic System. According to a letter from Major-General Chesney, Chairman of English Scientific Commission to the Euphrates Valley, dated 5 March, 1856, to W.P. Andrew, he desired to establish telegraphic communication along the Valley of the Euphrates and the Persian Gulf, to meet at Kurrachee<sup>179</sup>. Lord Stratford Redcliffe, the British ambassador in Istanbul used his distinguished official position to facilitate the negotiations for the Firman of the Sultan in establishing the line of both railways and telegraph via the Euphrates to Basra. Mr. William Ainsworth represented the interests of the European and Indian Junction Telegraph Company at the Sublime Porte. In reality, the Austrian Telegraph Company gave priority to the British Government and the East India Company over

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<sup>177</sup> Andrew, W. P. (1857). **Memoir on the Euphrates Valley Route to India.**

London: W.M. H.Allen and Co. p.176.

<sup>178</sup> Andrew, 1857, p. 179.

<sup>179</sup> Andrew, (1857). p. 195.

the public in transmitting their messages because it laid down a submarine Electric Telegraph to İskenderiyye and there by Jafta and Beyrut to Seleucia. The European and Indian Junction Telegraph Company Limited was established to continue the electric communication from Seleucia, along the line of the proposed railway by Halep, Caber Kalesi and the Valley of the Euphrates, to the head of the Persian Gulf<sup>180</sup>. In this way, the same management and protection might suffice for both undertakings. The Mediterranean Electric Telegraph laid an electric cable between Cagliari in the Island of Sardinia and Malta and Corfu. From Cagliari, the French and the Sardinian Governments would have direct telegraphic communication with İskenderiyye. The East India Company had determined to lay a telegraph cable from the Persian Gulf to Kurrachee. According to a project, when the submarine and Indian systems met at Seleucia, the connection between the East and West would be complete. The Austrian Government desired to maintain its position as the medium of communication between other nations by undertaking the completion of such a large portion of the line. The British Government and East India Company would take the power of control in their hands by the Telegraph<sup>181</sup>. Above all, the grand source of revenue would be derived from the telegraphic communication. The merchants and the ship-owners grasped its importance for their interest.

On 17 June, 1856 General Chesney and others took the necessary steps towards obtaining the sanction of the Turkish Government for laying electric wires in Asiatic Turkey. They submitted a proposal for a line from Seleucia via Jabber

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid., p. 230

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., p. 231

Castle and the Valley of the Euphrates to Kornah in continuation of the submarine cable, laid down in the Mediterranean by Mr. Brett.

W.P. Andrew proposed the laying of the electric wire from Basra, via Halep, Jabber Castle to Seleucia at which point it would form a junction with Mr. Brett's submarine cable. According to him, this was the best and safest telegraphic route to India because there existed no physical obstacles<sup>182</sup>. The country was throughout comparatively level, easy for access, with most of the materials of labors at hand. It also was suitable for both the prolongation of a line of railway and that of line of telegraphic communication. According to William Ainsworth, a geologist and mineralogist to the Euphrates Expedition, the difficulties originated from the semi-barbarous condition of the people, inhabiting the country was very generally exaggerated. W. Pinsworth proposed that the British government should provide the support of the Ottoman Government and of the Arabic Sheiks, which could be obtained by a very trifling subsidy, to be paid so long as the wire remained intact and to be withdrawn or forfeited when it was injured. Moreover, he accepted that in case the system of subterranean wires was adopted, it would require the same precautionary measures to be taken as in the case of a line upon posts, but it is evident that the wires would be for less exposed to accidents. As a geologist and mineralogist, the writings of Mr. W. Ainsworth showed us that a line on posts or to a subterranean cable came on the agenda for the establishment of this line. In a letter, dated on 1 October, 1856 from W.P. Andrew to Mr. James Wilson, W.P. Andrew wrote that the Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire and Mr. Musurus, the Turkish Ambassador, regarding the establishment of railway and telegraphic communication

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid., p. 234.

between the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf in order to obtain the formal concession for the railway and the telegraph, to the companies of which he was chairman. Moreover, he proposed to take advantage of the experience gained by Mr. O'Shaughnessy in erecting telegraphs in India and to associate this zealous and scientific office in the construction of the line proposed by the Company. In October, 1856 Lord Stratford Redcliff, the British ambassador in Istanbul had already introduced Mr. Robinson to the Ottoman Government, with a view to his entering into negotiations, regarding an Electric Telegraph between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf. From a letter, dated 20 November, 1856 written by P. Andrew, it was learned that the European and Indian Junction Telegraph Company had opened negotiations with the Sublime Porte for the necessary permission to put through the Ottoman territory.

### **2.5.2. The Ottoman Interest for the Establishment of Telegraphic Line between Üsküdar and Basra**

The Ottoman administrators were interested in the project of the British for the construction of telegraphic line from Üsküdar via Bağdad to Basra, because of military, economic and also administrative reasons. In this way, the Ottomans desired to establish strict control mechanism upon the Arab tribes rebelling frequently<sup>183</sup>.

As W.P. Andrew emphasized, the establishment of telegraphic and railways communication in Anatolia would exercise a decisive influence upon the future of

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<sup>183</sup> Yücel, Y. (1984) Midhat Paşa'nın Bağdat Vilayetindeki Alt Yapı Yatırımları.

the Ottoman Empire, which had its real basis in Asia. Bringing industry and commerce to this part of country would consolidate the power of the Sublime Porte. The Ottoman government would then find abundant resources to restore its finances. Industrialization and betterment in trade would enable the government to restrain the tubelence created by the Arab tribes in the imperial territories; to watch over the administration of the pasha, who was too prone to disobedience; and to keep Persia in check<sup>184</sup>. The Ottoman authorities were prepared to undertake the construction of a line of telegraph between Kurrachee and the Ottoman territory. There was reason to believe that the Electric Telegraph was used to convey the messages of the Sultan.

Bernard Lewis in his book, "The Emergence of Modern Turkey" explained the reason for wide expansion of telegraphic system on the Ottoman territories by emphasis upon the centralized policies of the Ottoman Sultans. To support his idea on this point, he quoted the following from Sir Charles Elliot, "little as the Turks like railways, they are great patrons of telegraph, because it is the most powerful instrument for a despot who wishes to control his own officials. It is no longer necessary to leave a province to the discretion of a governor, and trust that he will come home to be beheaded when that operation seems desirable. With the telegraphy one can order him about, find out what he is doing, reprimand him, recall him, instruct his subordinates to report against and generally deprive him all real power."<sup>185</sup>.

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid, p.225.

<sup>185</sup> Lewis, (1961), p. 183.

The Ottoman Empire had five kinds of interests in the establishment of the telegraphic system. Of course, the control of officials in the periphery was the first one. The second was providing the communication of the Ottoman citizens. The third was preventing the sedition in the communicational affairs. The fourth was providing the development of commerce. The fifth was assuring a source of revenue for the treasury so that the Ottomans would attach great importance to the establishment of telegraph stations in commercial cities such as İzmir, Selanik and Bursa. Above all, the Ottoman Muslim and non-Muslim merchants desired to do business with each other and also with Europe which accelerated the quick-expansion of telegraphic system in the Ottoman Empire.

### **2.5.3. The Establishment of The Üsküdar and Basra Telegraphic Line**

According to the terminology of the Ottoman Telegraphy, it was called "Fav Line" or "the Indian Line". Fav, at the head of the Persian Gulf was the last point of the Üsküdar-Basra line. On 21 April 1858, the contract was signed between Kostaki Bey, the Ottoman ambassador to London and Mr. Bidolf, an artilleryman in the British army for the construction of the line between Bağdat and Basra. As Kostaki Bey emphasized in the official report offered to the Sublime Porte, Mr. Bidolf was chosen with the unofficial proposal of the British government. In the translation of Kostaki's report, the occupation of Mr. Bidolf was described as a cavalry lieutenant colonel. His salary of 800 sterlings per year would be paid by the Ottoman government. For his travel allowance, the Ottoman government would make a lump-sum payment of 200 sterlings including the cost of return ticket<sup>186</sup>. According to

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<sup>186</sup> I-H 8297

the contract, dated 21 April, 1858, Mr. Bidolf engaged to construct the line between Bağdad and Basra in a year<sup>187</sup>. Thence by the Telegraph, communication would be linked with all ports of India. To establish the telegraphic line between Üsküdar and Basra, seven British officials were transferred by Mr. Bidolf's mediation, chief engineer of this line, because the preceding officials were not sufficient. On 14 September, 1858 (H. 5 S 1275), three of them (Mr. Kimukalim?, Mr. James William and Mr. Sercan?) were assigned with a salary of 2500 piasters, two of the others (Mr. Kaplotmoboli? and Mr. Koblomos?), were assigned with a salary of 1500 piasters. Mr. Karali and Mr. Thomas took a wage of 1000 piasters<sup>188</sup>.

On 10 July, 1860 (H. 21 Za 1276) after the completion of the telegraphic line, Zühtü Efendi who was a director of Telegraphs in Ankara, was appointed as the director of Telegraphs in Mardin with a salary of 1500 piasters. Emin Efendi, who was assisting employee at the telegraph station in Istanbul, was appointed to his companionship with a salary of 750 piasters. Six guards were changed to protect the line between Diyarbakir and Mardin with a salary of 350 piasters. However, a chief guard would take a salary of 500 piasters. Two servants were also appointed to the telegraph office in Mardin with a salary of 200 piasters<sup>189</sup>.

The works on the Bağdad Line during the Governorship of Midhat Pasha (1869-1872) progressed quite well. Midhat Pasha was appointed to the governorship of Bağdad in 1869. Roderic Davison stated that among the foreigners under the

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<sup>187</sup> I-H 8297

<sup>188</sup> I-H 8532

<sup>189</sup> I-H 9688

protection of Midhat Pasha, a suitable number of Polish refugees worked as telegraph employees<sup>190</sup>. In his article, Yasar Yucel gives much information about the infrastructure works of Midhat Pasha in the province of Bağdad by using the Journal of Zevra, a contemporary Journal with the time of Midhat Pasha. Midhat Pasha grasped very well the importance of the line from Halep, via Musul and Bağdad to Basra. Midhat Pasha took the establishment of telegraphic line seriously. The first attempt to lay the submarine cable between Basra and Bağdad under the Tigris River, came from the British<sup>191</sup>. Midhat Pasha ordered the construction of reserve telegraphic line between Bağdad and Halep along the Euphrates because the former line of European-Indian telegraphic communication was under constant attack of the Arab tribes. There were two rival companies against the Ottoman Telegraph administration. Russia erected a telegraphic line from Iran to India. The British erected the submarine cable by the route of Aden to India. However this line was very expensive. During three years' works of Midhat Pasha in Bağdad, the network of telegraphic communication was well-established in the province of Bağdad. During his period, in addition to Bağdad-Basra line, the second line on the posts from Bağdad, via Iran to India was erected<sup>192</sup>. Midhad Pasha imported great number of Morse instruments and equipments from Britain. The newly-established Morse system cost too much for the Ottoman government because it was having defects too frequently and also the Arabs who rebelled against the Ottoman rule were

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<sup>190</sup> Davison, R. H. (1963). p.154.

<sup>191</sup> Yücel, Y. (1984). p. 181

<sup>192</sup> Ibid, p. 182.

causing too much harm to the administration damaging the telegraphic lines<sup>193</sup>. In 1857, the Eastern Indian Company erected the telegraphic line between the Persian Gulf and Syria. In 1860, in the time of the governership of Ahmet Tevfik Pasha, a telegraph administration was established in Bağdad. In 1861 for the first time a telegram from Bağdad to Istanbul was sent. In 1865, the work on the construction of the telegraphic line between Bağdad and Basra was completed. The European and Indian telegraphs via Anatolia and Iraq were united at Fao. As Yasar Yucel stated, this line provided the income of 150.000 francs for the Ottoman government<sup>194</sup>. The project formed by Izzet efendi to improve the lines to Bagdad and to India attracted a great deal of importance and ha gained success in improving this line known as Indian line, which pleased the British goverment so much so that they congratulated him by sending a diplomatic note on 2r July, 1876. Indeed, the line from Avlonya on the border of Italy to Fao was well-operated and also the greater part of the telegraphic communication was returned to the Ottoman telegraphic company. In the time of Oskan Efendi, the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, the Indian line was re-ordered<sup>195</sup>.

#### **2.5.4. Istanbul - Bursa Telegraphic line**

On 1 March 1857 (H. 5 B 1273), the merchants of Bursa, both Muslims and non-Muslims offered an official petition about the establishment of a line of

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., p. 181.

<sup>195</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1915). Posta Mebahisi; Osmanli Telgraf Tarihinden (Mabaad ve Hitam). **PTM. 166.** p. 1950.

telegraph between Istanbul and Bursa via Mudanya or Kurşunlu<sup>196</sup>. It was stated that they would be pleased to pay the cost of telegraphic posts, amounting to 50.000 piasters. As it was understood from this document, the Ottoman merchants grasped the importance of telegraphic communication for the commercial affairs. They emphasized that the amount of commercial affairs in Bursa held an outstanding place in the Ottoman territories. Interestingly enough, unlike the other documents, this document presented us the influence of the Ottoman merchants on the expansion of newly-established Ottoman Telegraphic system on the Anatolian side of the Empire. In the document, dated 3 March 1857 (H. 7 B 1273), it was also clearly stated that the expenses of this line would be met by the merchants of Bursa including both Muslims and non-Muslims. With the report, dated 22 March 1857 (H. 26 B 1273), this issue was referred to the telegraph commission by the Sublime Porte<sup>197</sup>.

### **2.5.5. Diyarbakır - Halep Telegraphic Line**

In the official report dated on 16 December, 1862 (H. 23 C 1279), it was stated that the establishment of line between Diyarbakır and Halep was began and also a part of the line was completed between Urfa and Birecik<sup>198</sup>. On 14 August, 1863 (H. 28 S 1280) Ömer Efendi was appointed to the inspectorship of telegram stations in Beyrut, Şam and Halep<sup>199</sup>.

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<sup>196</sup> I-D 24648, See Appendix: 10

<sup>197</sup> I-D 24648

<sup>198</sup> I-H 11211

<sup>199</sup> Cevdet Nafia 281

On 30 December, 1863 (H. 8 B 1279), the telegraphic line between Birecik and Halep was completed. On 1 January, 1863 (H. 10 B 1279), the telegraph station in Halep was opened for the telegraphic communication. It was informed that the telegraphic line towards Şam would be completed in 8 days. Ironically, the telegram dispatched by the governor of Halep about the completion of Birecik- Halep line was received by the Sublime Porte for 3 days later<sup>200</sup>.

### **2.5.6. The Other Lines in Anatolia**

On 28 December, 1865 (R. 16 Kanun-u Evvel 1281), Mehmet Emin, the governor of Erzurum informed that the telegraph station in Kars was opened for the telegraphic communication. The telegram sent by Mehmet Emin reached to the Sublime Porte on 3 January, 1866. (H. 15 S 1282)<sup>201</sup>.

On 1 May 1867 (H. 26 Z 1283), the telegraphic line between Trabzon and Rize towards Batum, between Samsun and Sinop was began. According to the demand of Agaton efendi, The directors of that telegraph stations were appointed to there<sup>202</sup>.

On 18 February of 1868 (H. 23 L 1284), the guards who would protect the lines linking Kastamonu, Tosya and Çankırı; Bitlis and Van; Adana and Tarsus and Samsun and Sinop were recruited. Owing to the high cost of grains, a salary of 348 piasters was given to the guards on the line of Kastamonu, Tosya and Cankiri. The

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<sup>200</sup> I-D 34069

<sup>201</sup> I- D 37885

<sup>202</sup> I-D 13164

other guards received 300 piasters<sup>203</sup>. In August 1876, Aydın was also connected to the network.

### **2.5.7. The Establishment of the Submarine Electric Cable between Istanbul, via Hellespont and İskenderiyye and the Red Sea to India.**

By the mediation of the British Embassy, the British citizen, Mr. Lionel Gizborne proposed to the Sublime Porte to construct a telegraphic line between Istanbul and İskenderiyye via Gelibolu in 18 months. According to the official report dated on 16 November, 1854 (H. 24 S 1271), the Ottoman government was interested in this project. However, the members of Meclis-i Mahsus found some articles in the proposal made by Lionel Gizborne unacceptable. The first was the appropriation of private telegraphic communication between Istanbul and Egypt to him for sixty years. The second was the payment of 6000 sterlings to him for 21 years. As it was made for the case of construction of the telegraphic line between Istanbul and Belgrad, the Sublime Porte decided to gather a new commission, consisted of experts and men of learning in order to discuss the articles of this proposal. In fact, the Ottoman government tried to remove the grieves of British, because the contract to install the telegraphic line between Istanbul and Belgrad was awarded to the Frenchman, Mr. A. de la Rue, not to the British citizen Mr. Cooke, who was proposed as a reliable man by the British Embassy, especially by Mr.

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<sup>203</sup> I-H 13506, See Appendix: 11

Pizani, the premier dragoman of the British Embassy<sup>204</sup>. The contract concerning the laying the submarine electric wire between the cape of Helles and İskenderiyye was signed on 23 April, 1855 (H. 6 Sa 1271). The Ottoman government awarded a contract for laying this line via Sakız and Rodos to Mr. Lionel Gizborne. This line would be finished in 18 months. The Ottoman government made a concession for a period of 50 years to him paying 4500 sterlings per year for 20 years after the end of construction of this line. If the Ottomans wanted, they could buy this line from him in the period of 50 years<sup>205</sup>. And also the other contract, dated 5 January, 1856 (H.26 R.1272) related to the establishment of the telegraphic line from İskenderiyye to Red Sea was signed between Mr. Lionel Gizborne and the Sublime Porte. According to the Article no. 16 of this contract, the line between İskenderiyye and Seddulbahir work would completed in two years<sup>206</sup>. Mr. Nevval and his partners made a formal demand for the renewal of this concession because this line was one of branches of London -Indian telegraphic line. The Sublime Porte renewed the concession by the contract, dated 4 February, 1856 (H. 27 Ca 1272) according to which, they would lay the submarine electric wire from the cape of Helles<sup>207</sup> to İskenderiyye via the Island of Sakız and Girit in 6 months. The concession for the

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<sup>204</sup> I-MM 95

<sup>205</sup> BOA, Mukavele Defteri, pp. 62-65

<sup>206</sup> BOA, Mukavele Defteri, pp. 9-12.

<sup>207</sup> Hellespont: "Sea of Helle" variously named in classical literature: Hellespontos, Hellespontum, Pelagur and Fretum Hellesponticum the ancient name of Dardanelles. It was taken from Helle, the daughter of Athamas, who was drowned there. **Enc. Britanica**, 1966, vol. XI p.334.

operation of this line for 50 years was given to this company. If the Ottoman government asked this company to establish new branches in the great harbor of Selanik, Midilli, İzmir, Rodos, Kıbrıs and Beyrut to join these new branches to the Hellespont-İskenderiyye line, they had to abide requirement. The Ottoman government was to give 1500 English golds to this company per year for 20 years, after the end of construction of this line. The company had to allocate their four hours of service dispatching the official telegrams of the Ottoman government every day. They would charge no money for this service. However, in the case of exceeding 4 hours, this free service of dispatching the Ottoman telegrams was to bind to the ordinary price list. On 27 February, 1856 (H. 20 C. 1271) the governor of Egypt granted the necessary permission for laying a telegraphic line between İskenderiyye and the Suez Canal and the construction of a telegraph office in Cairo. The Sultan confirmed this permission by issuing an imperial edict on 6 May, 1856 (H. 1N 1272). According to the third article of this contract, dated 24 December, 1856, the Ottoman government made a concession for a period of 99 years. This line, passing via Jiddah and the Island of Kamarun and Yemen would join India. Telegraphic instruments were exempt from taxes. 5 p.c. of the profit coming from this line would be given to the Ottoman government every year in accordance with the Article no.13 of this contract. Both this line between İskenderiyye and Sedd-ul bahir and the line of the Red Sea towards the Island of Kamarun and Yemen were to be finished in two years. The construction of the later would begin after the opening of İskedreyye - Sedd-ul bahir telegraphic line. On 1 July, 1856 (H. 15 Z. 1275), Mr. Lionel Gizborne left his concession of laying the submarine electric wire between the cape of Helles and İskenderiyye to Mr. Nevval and his partners, so that the contract

between the Ottoman government and the company of Nevval was renewed<sup>208</sup>. On 25 July, 1859 (H. 24 Z 1275), the contract concerning the laying of the cable between the cape of Helles and Istanbul was renewed between the Ottoman government and Mr. Nevval and his partner. This company took upon itself to lay the submarine cable between the Bay of Sigacik in the south of İzmir and the Island of Sakız<sup>209</sup>.

The Ottoman government made a treaty with Mr. Vorti Delamor, an agent of Mr. Nevval and his partner for laying the telegraphic line between the Cape of Helles and Istanbul and also the Bay of Sigacik and İzmir<sup>210</sup>. In 1862, the cable between the Cape of Helles and Girit was broken. The agreement was renewed to establish new branches between the Island of Sakız and Midilli by Arif Efendi, Director of Telegraphs and Mr. Edvar Bilyoni, an agent of the Company<sup>211</sup>.

## **2.6. The Connection of Ottoman Telegraphic lines with the Eastern and the Western Telegraphic Lines<sup>212</sup>**

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<sup>208</sup> BOA, Mukavele Defteri, p.88

<sup>209</sup> BOA, Mukavele Defteri, p. 162

<sup>210</sup> BOA Mukavele Defteri, p. 162

<sup>211</sup> BOA Mukavele Defteri, p. 286

<sup>212</sup> For the telegraphical and postal conventions of the Ottoman Empire with the European powers between 1857-1910, See Baron de Testa, **Recueil Des Traités de la Porte Ottomane avec Les Puissances Etrangères**, Tome Onzième, Ernest Leroux, Paris.

On 27 September, 1854 (H. 4 M. 1271) Mr. Benedeti, chargé d'affaires of France offered an official report, concerning a treaty of junction of Istanbul-Belgrad line with the European lines. By this report, The French government asked its ottoman counterpart to give permission and full authority to its ambassador in Paris to reach a mutual agreement<sup>213</sup>. After being informed about the establishment of telegraphic line between Istanbul and Belgrad, Baron Berok, the Austrian Ambassador sent an official letter dated on 13 November, 1854 to Resit Pasha giving the details about the Austrian government's proposal to give assistance to the Ottoman Empire to connect the Ottoman telegraphic line with theirs in the context of International procedures. In this report, the Austrian government stated that she made similar treaties with Italy, Germany. In the same way, the Prussian state signed a treaty with Belgium and France. In this report, the Austrian government stated that she was ready and prepared to facilitate the efforts of the Ottoman stateman to join the Ottoman Telegraphic system to the European network<sup>214</sup>. On 28 November, 1854 (H. 7 Ra 1271), the Meclis-i Mahsus considered it acceptable for making a treaty with Austria and France to write the Ottoman telegraphic line with the European lines so that they would accelerate and facilitate the communication with Europe. One of the members of the investigating group of Istanbul-İskenderiyye line was sent by the Sublime Porte to discuss the articles of the treaty<sup>215</sup>.

On 21 January, 1857(H. 25 Ca 1273), in the time of Abdülmecit, the treaty for the telegraphic communication was signed between Ibrahim Ethem, the Minister

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<sup>213</sup> I-MM 100

<sup>214</sup> I-MV 100

<sup>215</sup> I-MV 100

of Foreign Affairs and Mr. Baron Antuvan?, the Austrian ambassador who signed also this treaty in the name of the Germanic states<sup>216</sup>.

According to the treaty, dated 19 April, 1859 signed by Fuat Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Edward Ciyoni?, the Sicilian Ambassador Extraordinary, the Ottoman government undertook to establish the telegraphic line to Avlonya, at the Venetian Gulf and from there to İşkodra in which it would unite with the Austrian line. The Sicilian government engaged to construct the telegraphic line between Avlonya and Otranto<sup>217</sup>.

According to the treaty dated 29 July, 1859, in the time of Sultan Abdülmecit, the Ottoman Government gave a permission to the Greek government to bind their line with the submarine cable, extending from the Cape of Hellez via the Island of Sakız to İskenderiyye<sup>218</sup>. On 5 March, 1860 (H. 19 S 1277), in the time of Sultan Abdülaziz, the treaty was renewed between the Ottoman and the Greek governments on the basis of the treaty, dated 30 June, 1858, signed amongst Belgium, France, Prussia and the Ottoman Empire at Brussels<sup>219</sup>.

On 2 April, 1861, in the time of the Sultan Abdülmecit, the treaty was signed between Mehmet Ali Pasha, the deputy-minister of Foreign Affairs and Sir Henry Lyon, the British Ambassador Extraordinary. It was approved by the Sultan on 28 April, 1861. According to this treaty, the Ottoman Empire accepted the request

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<sup>216</sup> Muahedat Mecmuasi, vol.3, 181-195.

<sup>217</sup> Muahedat Mecmuasi, vol.2, pp.82-95.

<sup>218</sup> Muahedat Mecmuasi, vol.2, pp.295-300

<sup>219</sup> Muahedat Mecmuasi, vol. 2, pp.300-301

of the British for laying the submarine cable between the Island of Malta and İskenderiyye. If the British government would refer the establishment and administration of this line to a company, the Ottoman government was to give a concession of 85 years to this company<sup>220</sup>.

On 16 January 1862 (H. 15 B 1278), in the time of Sultan Abdülaziz, the treaty for the telegraphic communication was signed between Mehmet Emin, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Marsil Croni?, the Italian Ambassador. The treaty was approved by Sultan Abdülaziz on 28 April, 1862. According to this treaty, it was understood that the Ottoman line was linked with the Italian line by the route of Avlonya. The Italian king undertook to hold the submarine telegraphic cable between Avlonya and Otranto ready for the communication. Both the Ottoman Empire and the Italian government were to accept reorganizing the telegram fees, according to the treaty of Brussels, signed on 30 June, 1858<sup>221</sup>.

According to the protocol dated 1 November, 1863 between Britain and the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman government accepted to extend the Bağdad line to Basra and also to establish the line from Bağdad to Hankin on the border of Iran<sup>222</sup>.

On 29 November, 1863, in the time of Sultan Abdülaziz, the treaty was signed between Ali Pasha, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Mirza Huseyin Han, the Iranian ambassador. The place, namely “Hankin” on the Ottoman and Iranian

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<sup>220</sup> Muahedat Mecmuasi, vol.2, pp. 286-289.

<sup>221</sup> Muahedat Mecmuasi, vol.1, pp.142-144

<sup>222</sup> Muahedat Mecmuasi, vol.1, p 295.

border was accepted as a center for the junction of the Ottoman line with the Iranian line<sup>223</sup>.

On 13 May, 1864(H. 6 Z 1280), the treaty for telegraphic communication was signed between Mehmet Namik, the governor of Bağdad and Mirza Huseyin Han, the Iranian Ambassador. The Ottoman government established a telegraphic line up to Kale-i Samil between Kasr-i Sirin and the town of Hacı Kara<sup>224</sup>.

On 7 August, 1864, the place, namely “Sorpa?” on the border of Greece was accepted as a center of the telegraphic communication. The treaty dated the 30<sup>th</sup> 1858 in Brussels was accepted by both the Ottoman Empire and Greece<sup>225</sup>.

On 13 September, 1864 (H. 2 R1281), the treaty was signed between Mehmet Emin Ali Pasha and Sir Henry Lyon, the English Ambassador. It was approved on 20 September, 1864. The Ottoman government stretched the line between Uskudar and Bağdad to Şad-ül Arab. This line was connected with the Iranian line in Hankin. And also, the Ottoman line joined with the Indian submarine cable in Şad-ül Arab. The security and the repair of this line was under the responsibility of Indian Telegraphs Administration. The Ottomans gave a permission about the construction of a telegraph station by the British at the strait of Şad-ül Arab. The officials of this telegraph station would not exceed 50 employees. The Ottoman government gave a guarantee for providing quick-telegraphic communication between Europe and India by the route of Üsküdar-Bağdad and Basra. The telegraph operators using the

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<sup>223</sup> Muahedat Mecmuası, vol.3, p. 8-11.

<sup>224</sup> Muahedat Mecmuası, vol.2, pp.11-12.

<sup>225</sup> Muahedat Mecmuası, vol.2, pp. 301-304

English language should be employed by the Ottoman government. They were to obey the requirements of the treaty dated 30 June, 1858 signed in Brussels<sup>226</sup>.

On 5 December, 1864 (H. 5 B 1281), the treaty was signed between Mehmet Ali Pasha and Huseyin Han for the unification of Bağdad line with Kirmansah Line<sup>227</sup>.

On 12 April, 1866 (H. 26 Za 1282), in the time of Sultan Abdülaziz, the treaty for the telegraphic communication was signed between Mehmet Ali, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Connet Joseph Garabi?, the Italian Ambassador which was approved by the Sultan on 11 May, 1866 . They accepted the articles of the treaty for telegraphic communication signed in Paris on 17 May, 1865<sup>228</sup>.

A treaty regarding the junction of the Ottoman telegraphic line in Anatolia with the Russian line was signed on 12 June, 1869 (H. 2 Ra 1286). Both of them were to abide by the requirements of the treaty concerning the International communication, signed on 14 May, 1865 in Paris and also adjusted and rectified in Austria in 1868<sup>229</sup>.

The return of the foreign officials back to their home countries left the Ottoman telegraphic system in great disorder. In the year of 1876, in the time of Ministry of Izzet Efendi, all lines were repaired and new lines were constructed. He

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<sup>226</sup> Muahedat Mecmuasi, vol. 1, pp.289-295.

<sup>227</sup> Muahedat Mecmuasi, vol.3, pp.8-11 and pp.12-13

<sup>228</sup> Muahedat Mecmuasi, vol.1, pp.144-146.

<sup>229</sup> BOA, Mukavele Defteri, pp. 373-375

also agreed with Ismail Pasha, an Egyptian Khedive, to establish a station for the Ottoman Telegraphs in Egypt. A submarine cable was also laid to Jeddah, to provide a telegraphic communication with Hicaz and Yemen<sup>230</sup>.

## **2.7. Hughes Telegraph against Morse Telegraph in the World and the Adoption of Hughes Telegraph by the Ottoman Empire**

Besides the Morse system, the other system was developed in the USA by a Welsh-born music teacher, David Edward Hughes( 1831-1900). In 1855, he obtained a U. S patent for a type of printing telegraph instrument.

The search for faster instruments again led the European governments to adapt the Hughes printing telegraph.

He synchronized sending and receiving instruments through acoustical principles. The Hughes printer achieved higher speeds by pressing an inked type of wheel. Its speed was described as “twice as fast as Morse”. The Hughes telegraph also required less battery power and less complex mechanism. He brought his printing telegraph to Paris in 1860. In France, the Hughes instrument began to replace the Morse on major lines. After 1867 the Hughes had gained prominence on international lines. In the succeeding ten years, it came into extensive use throughout Europe, gaining for its inventor numerous honors and prizes<sup>231</sup>.

Because of the rivalry with the European telegraph Companies on the Indian telegraphic line, the Ottoman government had an inclination towards adopting the

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<sup>230</sup> Eskin, T. (1942). p.58.

<sup>231</sup> Britannica, 1985, VI, p. 123.

newly-designed telegraph technologies, especially the Hughes instrument. The adaptation of the Hughes system stirred up the Ottoman government to adopt it. In 1867 the head of French telegraph claimed that 5020 word messages per hour could be sent by the Hughes, in comparison with 20 of the Morse <sup>232</sup>. Interestingly enough, a similar report dated 22 May, 1867, was offered by Agaton Efendi, a director of Telegraphs concerning the buying of Mr. Hughes instruments for the similar claims. In his report, he compared Hughes system of telegraph to the other telegraphs. The speed of up to 60 words per minute could be achieved by skilled operators in using the Hughes' instrument. Moreover, it was stated that the certain telegraph administration, adopting this new technology entered into rivalry with the Ottoman Telegraph Administration on the line of Indian communication by reducing the price list of telegram sent to India. It was necessary for the Ottoman telegraphs to rival with the other telegraph administration on the line of Indian communication. According to this report, the USA took its patent with the payment of 560000 Francs. The French government paid 300000 Francs. Russia took its patent at 200000 Francs. Prussia took it by 150000 Francs. The Austrian government took it by 100000 Francs. While receiving the concession of Hughes' instrument cost 60000 Francs for the Ottoman Government, the four sets of Hughes instrument cost 6000 Francs for them. This instrument began to be used first on the line between Belgrad and Viyana via Bosnia<sup>233</sup>.

Sekip Efendi and Mehmet Ali stated that Izzet efendi invited Mr. Hughes to Istanbul. In the time of his ministry, the Turkish operators learned how to use the

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<sup>232</sup> Israel & Nier, (1991), 106.

<sup>233</sup> I-H 13195, See Appendix : 12

Hughes instrument<sup>234</sup>. Fehmi Efendi designed a Hughes instrument in the Arabic alphabet. Cemil Efendi, an apprentice of Fehmi Efendi designed a Hughes instrument in the Latin alphabet. However, because of alphabet problem, the Ottoman telegraphers continued to operate the Morse instrument<sup>235</sup>. According to Akinan, the first Hughes instrument was used at Galata telegraph station in 1897. Before the Revolution of 1908, besides Morse system, the method for telegraph communication with Hughes machines was taught to the telegraph officials, who were graduates from Darüşşafaka<sup>236</sup>. The Hughes instruments with Arabic script were installed for communication between Istanbul and Selanik in 1914<sup>237</sup>.

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<sup>234</sup> Eskin, T. p. 58; Mehmet Ali, (1915). Posta Mebahisi; Osmanli Telgraf Tarihinden (Mabaad ve Hitam). **PTM. 166.** pp. 1949

<sup>235</sup> Eskin, T, (1942). p.59

<sup>236</sup> Ergin, O. (1977). p. 625

<sup>237</sup> Akinan, A. p. 11.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE OTTOMAN TELEGRAPH ADMINISTRATION

#### 3.1. The Establishment of Directorate of the Ottoman Telegraphs

The first and second telegraph commission was attached to the Grand Vizierate directly. However, the Ministers of Finance and of Commerce signed the contract with Mr. A. de la Rue and Mr. Blacque together. On 16 November, 1854, because of the density in the affairs of Ministries of Finance and Commerce, the administration of Telegraphs was given to *Beylikci Afif bey*, one of the officials from the Sublime Porte<sup>238</sup>. Mr. Tolson, an English engineer was in charge of controlling the technical aspect of administration of telegraph <sup>239</sup>.

The Directorate of Ottoman Telegraphs was established on 29 March, 1855 (H. 10 B 1271) before the construction of the line from Istanbul via Edirne to Şumnu. *Billurizade Mehmet Efendi*, a member of the Translation Office of the Sublime Porte, was appointed with salary of 5000 piasters to investigate the electric telegraph line according to the articles of agreement. After its completion, he would deal with its administration. He managed the administration of telegraphs between 14 May, 1855 (H. 26 Sa 1271) and 16 September, 1860 (H. 29 S 1277). During the time of

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<sup>238</sup> Yazıcı, N. (1992). p.188. ; Mehmet Ali, (1917). *Telgraf Umuru Müdüriyeti Hakkında Muhtasar Bir Tarihçe*. PTM. 196. p. 95.

<sup>239</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1917). p. 95.

his administration, an important network of telegraph in Anatolia and Romelia was established. In additon to that work, the telegraph regulation dated 11 November, 1859 (H. 15 Ra. 1276) was prepared in his period<sup>240</sup>.

After the period of Mehmet Efendi, Davut Efendi(1860-1861), Franko Efendi(1861), Arif Bey (1861-1862), Kamil Bey(1862), Diran(1862/1864-1867), Aleko(1862-1863), Agaton(1867-1868), Feyzi(1868-1871/1872-1873), Sağır Ahmet (1871-1872), Salim(1873-1875) and Yaver(1875-1876) became the directors of the administration of Telegraphs<sup>241</sup>.

In the year of 1868 (H.1285), the Directorate of telegraphs was directly responsible to the Ministry of Public Works. In 1871, When Sağır Ahmet Pasha, who was Mahmut Nedim Pasha's brother, was appointed to the post of Ministry, the Directorate of telegraphs merged with the Administration of ottoman Posts. Later on, it became the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs<sup>242</sup>.

### **3.2. The Central Organization of the Ottoman Telegraphs.**

According to this regulation, dated 2 January, 1861. there were 52 officials working in Soğukçeşme telegraph station, 20 in Galata Telegraph station and 10 Üsküdar telegraph station. In total, there were 82 officials in the central

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<sup>240</sup> I-MV 18564 and also see Gökoğlu, A. B. (1935). pp.63-72.

<sup>241</sup> Gökoğlu, A. B. (1933). p.10. ; Eskin, Ş, p.61

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., p 56 ; Mehmet Ali, (1914). Posta Mebahisi: Osmanli Postalari Tarihinden; Posta ve Telgraf Idarelerinin Tevhidi. **PTM. 161.** p. 1866.

organization<sup>243</sup>. They consisted of a director and his assistant, telegraph operators, bookkeepers, mechanics, postmen, caretakers, guards, pupils. According to the regulation dated 1859, the number of pupils learning telegraphy without wages, was determined as 12 in Dersaadet<sup>244</sup>. The number of pupils for the telegraph communication in French language was 6. They were accepted just for the telegraph centre in Dersaadet. In 1863, there were 6 telegraph operators at telegraph station in Soğukçeşme and telegraph station in Galata<sup>245</sup>.

As it is understood from an official report dated 1 October, 1862 (H. 6. R.1279), the uniforms of telegraph officials showing their duties was proposed by the Directorate of Telegraphs. They were divided into five classes. According to this report, its expense wasn't defrayed by the Treasury because the expenses of uniforms would be paid by the telegraph officials themselves. It was emphasized that the telegraph officials in Europe were also wearing a sort of uniform. Essentially, at the time of establishment of Directorate of Telegraphs according to the article 48 of the Regulation of Telegraph, the telegraph officials had to wear a special uniform in order to prevent their private visits to inappropriate quarters and their revelations of secret matters<sup>246</sup>. As Akinan stated, the uniform of telegraph operators attracted

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<sup>243</sup> For the detail list of telegraph officials in Istanbul, See Yazıcı, N. (1992). p.192.

<sup>244</sup> the application of training a pupil without salary (usul-u sakirtlik) was abolished in 1913.

<sup>245</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1915). " Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf Tesisinin Tarihcesi Mabaad. PTM. 165. p. 1936.

<sup>246</sup> I-MV 21855

the attention of children and encouraged them to become a telegraph operator in their future lives<sup>247</sup>.

### **3.3. The Provincial Organization of the Ottoman Telegraphs**

By 1862, there were already 49 telegraph stations in the provinces. The number of telegraph officials depended on the closeness of the telegraph station to the commercial centres or its closeness to the European countries. The telegraph inspectors were in charge of controlling the regular operations of telegraph stations in the provinces. For this duty, English and French inspectors were also appointed to Ankara, Sivas and Diyarbakir. But in 1871, in the time of Sağır Ahmet Pasha, their contracts were canceled. In 1877, after the unification of Administrations of Posts and of Telegraphs, instead of inspectorships in the provinces, general directors were appointed to the provinces. At telegraph stations in the provinces, generally there was a director in charge of both administrating and a telegraph operating in Morse Alphabet. In bigger commercial centers, there was a telegraph operator, speaking at least a foreign language. There was also a postman, who according to the regulation dated on 26 October, 1859 (H. 29 Ra 1276), had no authority or right to ask for tip. In some big stations, there was a mechanic to repair the broken telegraph instruments. There was a pupil learning the telegraphy without pay. According to the regulation in 1859, there were two pupils in each province. Also there was a

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<sup>247</sup> Akıncan, A. p.4. Moreover, it was evident that during the Abdulhamit period, while the other officials were taking their salary for three months, the telegraph officials took their salary regularly for each month. This increased the economic and social comfort of telegraph officials in the Ottoman society. ( Sayar, A. G. (1994). p.63)

mounted guard and a foot guard to repair the broken lines. Especially they were selected among the retired army people and talented men<sup>248</sup>. According to the regulation in 1859, the mounted guards were forbidden to ask for fodder for their animals from the people free of charge. If they did so, they were fired for committing this deed. Moreover, there were caretakers to look after the telegraph station.

### 3.4. The Telegraph Factory

In accordance with the proposal made by Mr. A. de la Rue for the establishment of the telegraphic line between Istanbul and Şumnu, all the telegraph instruments and their spare parts were imported from France. The French officials were employed with high salaries to repair the instruments and parts. For example, according to the official document dated 24 June, 1856 (H. 29 L 1272), after the resignation of Mr. Ruzek, Mr Agtbaro? was taken into service with the salary of 2250 piasters. A French mechanic was employed to repair the instruments with a salary 2250 piasters.

However, Mr. Mikail, an Ottoman citizen and a clock maker, dealing with repairing the telegraph instrument in the telegraph office of Varna, developed new Ottoman telegraph instrument<sup>249</sup>. He went to Edirne and Şumnu for two months in order to repair the broken instruments. Alexander Bain who designed the automatic telegraph was a Scottish clockmaker<sup>250</sup>. As a matter of fact, the mechanical frame work of telegraph goes back to the clock making times in the Medieval Age. On 9

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<sup>248</sup> I-D 23547

<sup>249</sup> I-H 9364, See Appendix: 13

<sup>250</sup> Israel & Nier, (1991). p. 99

November, 1856 (H. 11 R 1273), The Telegraph Commission emphasized that the employment of foreign officials was a costly business for the Ottoman Treasury. In the report, it was stated that these two Ottoman citizens could be taken into service with more reasonable salaries. They should be given under the companionship of a French mechanic to learn how to repair the instruments. A man who had trade of a maker or repairer of watches could learn how to repair the telegraph instrument easily. Two Ottoman citizens who were for this affair a salary of 500 piasters<sup>251</sup>. The cost price of this instrument amounted to half-price of the instrument, imported from Paris. with an increase of 600 piasters as a reward, Mr. Mikail's salary became 1000 piasters. Since Mr. Onyar's contract, a French telegraph mechanic, was due on 31 March, 1858, he asked for a pay rise in his salary of 2250 piasters, or also to be freed from his job and return to his country. Mr. Perikl's salary of 250 piasters, a French communication operator, was given to Mr. Onyar as an addition to his salary. On 12 April, 1858 (H. 27 S 1274), his contract was renewed<sup>252</sup>.

On 10 November, 1859 (H. 14 R. 1276). Mr. Mikail, an Ottoman Morse, was changed with repairing the telegraph instruments in Rusçuk, Zıstovi, Plevne, Vidin, Tırnova, İslimye, Şumnu was chosen as a proper place for his dwelling<sup>253</sup>. There has been no evidence, presenting the widespread using of Mikail's telegraph.

In the year of 1868, during the time of the Ministry of Feyzi Bey, the Ottomans attempted to open a small factory near the Military High School at

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<sup>251</sup> I-H 7218

<sup>252</sup> I-H 8165

<sup>253</sup> I-H 9364

Soğukçeşme. Feyzi Bey regarded this factory as a laboratory of the telegraph school<sup>254</sup>. According to the document dated on 11 October, 1869. (H. 5. B 1286), the instruments, used in the Rumelian and Anatolian telegraph stations, were imported from France at a cost of 400 francs. It was reported that those instruments stopped working properly after a short time. In 1868, a small factory was established near the telegraph station at Soğukçeşme. In this factory, 100 units of telegraph were manufactured. It was confirmed that this home products were better quality than those made in Europe by the French engineers of Technical Office at the Directorate of Ottoman Telegraphs. Above all, those instruments cost 250 francs only. The Ottoman government would make a profit of 150 franc per telegraph instrument. Suleyman Efendi, Cemal Bey, Besim Efendi were gratified for their achievements by raising in their ranks<sup>255</sup>.

In the time of Ministry of Izzet Efendi, it was reported that the repair shop in the building known as “Terzihane” near the Military School of Soğukçeşme did not meet the need. So, one of the floors in the mansion opposite the tomb of the Sultan Mahmut used as a Telegraph School was allocated for Telegraph Factory. Raif efendi, the assistant of Emile Lacoine exerted himself the development of Telegraph

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<sup>254</sup> Ergin, O. (1977). p. 622

<sup>255</sup> I-D 41921

Factory<sup>256</sup>. Later on, the Factory was transferred to a building near the center of telegraph station in the wall of the Imperial Palace at Soğukçeşme<sup>257</sup>.

The manufactures of this factory were displayed at the Electric Exhibition in Vienna in 1884, in Chicago in 1893 and in Haly in 1901. Moreover, the first electric lighting at the Theater of Verdi at Galata in 1883 was arranged by the telegraph machinist at the Telegraph Factory<sup>258</sup>.

### **3.5. The Technical School of Telegraph (Fünun-u Telgrafiye Mektebi)**

#### **3.5.1. The Training of Telegraph Operators before the Opening of the Technical School of Telegraph**

At first the telegraph was operated by foreigners, using the Latin alphabet and the French language<sup>259</sup>. It was necessary to train the telegraphing clerk who operate the instrument in Turkish, because the network of Ottoman telegraphic line was developing day after day. After the completion of the line between Niş and Vidin, there was an increasing need for the Turkish operators in the Directorate of

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<sup>256</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1915). Posta Mebahisi; Osmanli Telgraf Tarihinden (Mabaad ve Hitam). **PTM.** 166. pp.1950- 1951.

<sup>257</sup> Eskin, T. (1942). p. 60

<sup>258</sup> Ibid., p.60 and Mehmet Ali, (1915). Posta Mebahisi; Osmanli Telgraf Tarihinden (Mabaad ve Hitam). **PTM.** 166. p. 1951.

<sup>259</sup> Lewis, B. (1961). p. 182

Telegraphs. Until that time the occupation of telegraphy was taught in the relationship between master and apprentice in the telegraph station of Istanbul and that of Edirne. As it can be learned from the official report dated on 15 September, 1856 (H. 15 M.1273), the apprentices trained in Istanbul received higher salaries than apprentices trained in Edirne. Men of letters in Edirne were chosen by the Great Assembly (Meclis-i Kebir) in Edirne. After teaching how to operate the telegraph instrument, they were appointed as telegraphing clerks to telegraph stations with reasonable amount of salary. On September 15th, 1856 H.15 M 1273) The official report from the Telegraph commission consisted of Ismail Afif, Mehmet Kabuli, Mehmet Kamil, Mehmet Emin, Rustem Efendi to the governor of Edirne was written about the employment of required number of telegraphing apprentices in the telegraph station of Edirne<sup>260</sup>.

The members of Telegraph commission were well-informed that the telegraphic communication in the Turkish language would facilitate the commercial affairs of merchants who did not speak French in Istanbul and in the provinces and also provide the increase in the revenue of the telegraphic communication. Feyzi Bey and Zemci Bey from the office of translation were charged to study this method with a salary of 800 piasters. Mr. Ogust was employed as a telegraphing clerk operated in the French language with a salary of 1000 piasters. Saffeti Efendi had a salary of 600 piasters. On May 28<sup>th</sup>, 1856 (H. 23 N 1272) a salary of 2000 piasters was paid to Mehmet Efendi, the director of Telegraphs on 18 July, 1856 (H.14 L 1272).

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<sup>260</sup> I-D 23547

This document shows us that saving in the adjustment of officials' salaries was the most important concern of the Ottoman statesmen<sup>261</sup>.

On 9 November, 1856, the Telegraph Commission offered the report about the assignment for salaries to Tevfik Efendi, Tevfik Bey, Baha Bey, Mehmet Efendi who were the Telegraph apprentices, studying the telegraphic communication by the Turkish language the Telegraph station in Istanbul in order to arouse other apprentice's appetite for the telegraphy. On 5 January, 1857 (H. 9 Ca 1273) salary of 250 piasters was assigned to them<sup>262</sup>. As it can be learned from the official report, dated 10 February, 1857 (H. 15 C 1273) the telegraph regulation, including 12 articles, about the Telegraph apprentices who learned the telegraphic communication by French and Turkish was prepared by the Director of Telegraph. It was accepted on 17 February 1857 (H. 22 C 1273) by the Sublime Porte. According to the regulation, the age of apprentices for both the French and the Turkish communication would be between 18 and 30. They must have good knowledge on a Arithmetic and on a Geometry. The number of apprentices did not exceed from 5 persons for the French communication. However, the number of apprentices for Turkish communication did not exceed from 12 persons. According to the European hour, for each day, they would study the Telegraphy from 11 o'clock at the morning to 12,30 <sup>263</sup>. Until their appointment to the newly opened telegraph station, they studied the Telegraphy without salary<sup>264</sup>. From the article 49 to the article 61 in the telegraph regulation,

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<sup>261</sup> I-H 6739

<sup>262</sup> I-H 7218

<sup>263</sup> I-H 7337

<sup>264</sup> I -H 7337

dated 25 August, 1859 (H.26 M 1276) was separated for the apprentices , trained as a telegraph operators in the Telegraph Stations. According to the Regulation, the age of apprentices would be among 18 and 30. The Telegraph apprentices should have capable of reading and writing adequately and also know the Arithmetic. The testimonial of two the well-esteemed persons for his honesty would be necessary. The number of the telegraph apprentices was not to exceed from 12 persons in the telegraph station in Istanbul and 2 persons in the provincial telegraph stations. The number of telegraph operators, used in the French communication was not to exceed from 6 persons. The persons who was not the Ottoman citizen were not taken into service. All apprentices should prove their proficiency in the exam, in which their teachers were present in the presence of the director of Telegraph. In the case of need, they would acquire the salary. According to their ability, they were appointed to the provincial telegraph stations. As it was understood from the regulation, during the time of apprenticeship, they did not take any wage. In the summer, they were preoccupied with teaching and learning from 12 o'clock at the morning until 4 o'clock toward evening. In the winter, the time of learning and teaching was arranged between 3 o'clock at the morning to 11 o'clock toward evening. As it can be learned from the official report, dated 10 February, 1857. (H. 15 C 1273) offered from the Telegraph Commission to the Grand Vizier, the course for the telegraphic communication in order to train the telegraph operators, in the French and the Turkish was opened. In the time of Izzet Efendi, a director of Telegraphs, the regulation, including 12 articles, was prepared for training the telegraph operators.

### **3.5.2 The Opening of the Technical School of Telegraph ( Fünun-u Telgrafiye Mektebi )**

As we learned from the Telegraph Regulation, dated 2 January, 1861 (H. 9 C 1277), the Technical School of Telegraph was opened at Soğukçeşme. The salary of student was 250 piasters per month<sup>265</sup>. Under the supervision of the assistant director, in this school, the telegraph theories and the practical performances of telegraphy was instructed. Every day, except Friday and Sunday, from a hour before the noontime to the noontime, the telegraph theories including the shortened history of the Telegraphy, the introduction to the Electricity, the using and the choosing and also the protecting the electric batteries, kinds of the telegraph instrument and the electromagnetism, the using of the instrument in the Morse code, the repair of the telegraph instruments and wires, the good-using of the telegraph instruments, and the laying of the submarine telegraph cable were trained. On Thursday and on Thursday, the practical performances of the Telegraphy were trained from the noontime to the lesson of sending the message by the technical communication and the instruction of the Telegraph Administration Each week on Saturday and on Thursday and the lesson of bookkeeping, and also the instruction of the present and future Regulation of telegraphs and the arrangement of registration and the instruction of the price list of telegram<sup>266</sup>. For unknown reasons, after two semesters, the school was closed. In 1871, the school was re-opened. Moreover, in 1872, the courses, related to the Telegraph technology was added to the curriculum of Galatasaray Lycee.

According to Mehmet Ali, the School of Telegraph was opened in 1867 at the building, known as “Tailor’s Shop” near the former military school of Soğukçeşme.

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<sup>265</sup> I-H 10062, and also Ergin, O. (1977). p.621

<sup>266</sup> For the curriculum of The Telegraph School, see also Ergin, O. (1977). p.622-623.

Later on, it was transferred to the Mansion of Said Bey at Cemberlitas. The appropriation of 10000 piasters was given to the School. The students were classified into three classes. The salaries of 30, 60, 120 were given to them. Because of the Ottoman's war with the Russia between 1877-1878, the students were sent to the front and the school was closed<sup>267</sup>.

In the time of the second ministry of Izzet efendi in 1879, the need for the telegraph personnels were seen, and it was decided to employ the graduates from Darüşşafaka so that the school of Darüşşafaka had an outstanding place in training the technical staff for the Ottoman Telegraph administration at the last two semesters, the lessons, concerning the electricity and the telegraph were put in the curriculum of Darüşşafaka<sup>268</sup>. In the year 1881, Emile Lacoine, a director of technical department in the administration of Posts and Telegraphs were appointed to Darüşşafaka as a teacher of these courses. Raif Bey was also appointed as the assistant official of Emile Lacoine<sup>269</sup>. Successful graduates from Darüşşafaka such as Salih Zeki and Mehmet Emin (Kalmuk) were sent to Paris for more advanced instruction<sup>270</sup>. In 1892, this application ceased, because a number of student were

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<sup>267</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1915). Posta Mebahisi; Osmanli Telgraf Tarihinden (Mabaad ve Hitam). **PTM. 166.** p. 1951.

<sup>268</sup> Ergin, O. (1977). p.623.

<sup>269</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1915). p. 1951.

<sup>270</sup> Eskin, T.(1942). pp. 61-62; Ergin, O. (1977). p.623.

participated in a young turk political demonstration<sup>271</sup>. In 1908, the administration of posts and Telegraph closed its gate to the graduates of Darüşşafaka<sup>272</sup>.

### 3.6. The Price List of The Telegram

in August, 1855, after the opening of telegraph station in Edirne, the administration of Ottoman telegraph accepted the unofficial telegrams for the Şumnu and Dersaadet, because the Austrian goverment did not begin to accept the unofficial telegrams. The price of a telegram with 25 words between Dersaadet and Edirne was 33 piasters. However, with the sending of the telegram to the house of owner, it amounted to 38,5 piasters. The price of telegram with 25 words between Dersaadet and Şumnu was 52 piasters. The sending a telegram between Edirne and Şumnu coasted to 29 piasters<sup>273</sup>.

The price list of telegram in the telegraph stations of Rumelia was adjusted and renewed in accordance with the administration of European telegraphs. However, in Anatolia, the situation was quite different. The merchants in the Anatolia felt no desire for corresponding by telegraph, because the price of the

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<sup>271</sup> Lewis, B. (1961). p.182.

<sup>272</sup> For more information about the contrubition of graduates of Darüttafaka to the Ottoman Telegraphy, See Ergin, O. (1977). vol 2, pp. 487-490 and 625-626. After the Revolution of 1908, the school of Posts and telegraphs was opened. For its curriculum, see Posta Ve Telgraf Mektebi Talimati. (1910, February). **PTM.** 106. pp. 958-968.

<sup>273</sup> de Lusson, (1877). p.87; Mehmet Ali, (1915). Memalik-i Osmanide Telgraf Tesisinin Tarihcesi Mabaad. **PTM.** 165. p. 1937

Anatolia was too much than in the Rumelia. The directorate of Telegraphs was asking for the application of Rumelia price list of telegram to the Anatolian telegram from Meclis-i Vâlâ <sup>274</sup>.

In the year 1859 the price of telegrams was reorganized. For a distance of a hour, 20 paras were taken from the telegram with 20 words. According to this account, 45 piasters were taken from the telegram, sent from Istanbul to Ankara, 140 piasters to Diyarbekir and 240 piasters to Bağdad<sup>275</sup>.

According to treaty, dated 13 September, 1864 between the English Ambassador and the Ottoman deputy, the price of each telegram, sent from Istanbul to Basra did not exceed from 27 Francs, 50 centime. The price of each telegram, sent from Istanbul to Hankin did not exceed from 22 Francs 50 centime <sup>276</sup>. The price of telegram, sent from the Rumelia and Sicilian states was 15 Francs. The price of telegram, sent from Rumelia, via the Sicilian states to the European states was 12,5 Francs<sup>277</sup>.

On 10 April, 1865 (H. Za 1281) The French government proposed the Ottoman government for the meeting at Paris to discuss and adjust the price-list of telegrams. Agaton Efendi, director of Telegraphs as are representative of the Ottoman government; participated in the meeting <sup>278</sup>. On 26 September, 1865 (H. 5

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<sup>274</sup> I-M 25195

<sup>275</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1915). p. 1938

<sup>276</sup> Mecmua-i Muahedat, vol.1. p.292.

<sup>277</sup> Mecmua-i Muahedat, vol., p.84.

<sup>278</sup> I-H 12284

Ca 1282) After his return from Paris, Agaton Efendi offered his official report, dated on 26 September, 1865 (H. 5 Ca 1282), including his desire for the payment of his expenses in Paris by the Sublime Porte.

His expense was 10.954 francs. He asked to take this amount from the treasury of telegraph office. The expansiveness in Paris and treatment of the other representatives were emphasized as a reason of his expense. Moreover, at the absence of Agaton, Fevzi Bey became deputy-director of Telegraphs. The half-salary of Agaton was given to him<sup>279</sup>.

In 1866(H.12839 the price of telegram with 20 words for the first distance of 20 hours was 10 piasters. For following distance of 20 hours was 5 piasters.

On 2 November, 1868, (H. 5 B 1285), in the time of YavefEfendi, a director of the Imperial Post Office, the map, c showing the net of Ottoman telegraphic lines and the price - list were prepared<sup>280</sup>.

In the second ministry of Izzet Efendi, the price of a telegram with 10 words was 10 piasters. The price of words, exceeding 10 words was 1 piasters<sup>281</sup>. In the year 1900(H.1318), the price of a telegram with 20 words in the border of Province was 7,5 piasters. The price of a telegram with 10 words sent from a province to other province was 10 piasters<sup>282</sup>.

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<sup>279</sup> I-H 12512

<sup>280</sup> I-D 40522

<sup>281</sup> Eskin, T. (1942), p. 58; Mehmet Ali, (1915). p. 1938.

<sup>282</sup> Sekip Eskin, p. 58

## CONCLUSION

On the European Continent, governments introduced and managed the system of electric telegraph. For example in France, in a short time, instead of the system of semaphore telegraphs, the electric telegraph communication was accepted as the instrument of administrative control of the centralized French state in 1845<sup>283</sup>. For the Continent, according to Israel and Nier, the economic dimensions of initial telegraph technology transfer are less clear. Often the decision to introduce telegraph technology was based less on immediate and direct economic returns than on long-term national development or for reasons of governmental efficiency<sup>284</sup>. Compared to the rest of Europe, in Great Britain, the telegraph was initially introduced there by business interests through joint stock companies. These telegraph companies found their first customers along the private railway companies, which quickly recognized the usefulness of the new technology for controlling railroad traffic, but they also began to transmit parliamentary and general news as well as government messages. Great Britain developed its electric telegraph system under private enterprise but later nationalize it. In 1868, Britain created a more universal telegraph system by transferring all land telegraph lines to the Post Office.

In contrast, the first electric telegraph line in the USA was erected and operated by the government funding, but was quickly turned over to private enterprise development. In USA, businessmen became the principal users of the

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<sup>283</sup> Gökoğlu, A. B. (1935). p.40

<sup>284</sup> Israel &Nier, (1991). p. 95.

telegraph. The business use of the telegraph constituted about 80 per cent of total traffic<sup>285</sup>.

Compared to the European countries, the introduction of the telegraphically communication to the Ottoman Empire was realized approximately ten years late<sup>286</sup>. However, the Ottomans were quick to realize the importance of this new instrument of communication. The first lines were laid by the British and French during the Crimean War. When the war was over, a concession was given to two enterprising persons, the Frenchman A. De la Rue and the Ottoman citizen Mr. Blacque for the establishment of the first civil lines. Later on, after the completion of Edirne- Şumnu line, the government canceled their contract and began to fulfill the establishment of telegraphic lines<sup>287</sup>.

The cooperation of the people with the Ottoman government to establish the telegraphic line can be mentioned for the Rumelian part of the Ottoman Empire. I found no document about asking of the Anatolian people for the construction of the telegraphic communication, except the inhabitants of Bursa<sup>288</sup>. Moreover, the undertaking of people of Balkanian vilayets to give a help to erect the telegraph line in their boundaries prepared the way for the development of telegraphic communication on all over western part of the Ottoman Empire<sup>289</sup>.

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<sup>285</sup> Isreal & Nier, (1991). p. 110.

<sup>286</sup> Salih Zeki, (1894). pp.11-12

<sup>287</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1906). Telgraf Elektriki Tarihinden Mabaad. **PTM. 63.** p.72.

<sup>288</sup> I-D 24648

<sup>289</sup> Karal, E. Z. (1988). **Osmanlı Tarihi** vol.7. Ankara: TTK. p. 273.

The Junior clerks of the Office of Translations at the Sublime Porte had a distinguished place in the establishment of the Ottoman Telegraph Administration. Mehmet Efendi, the first director of Telegraphs and Mustafa Efendi, the inventor of the Turkish morse code and the trainer of the first group of Turkish telegraph operator and also Feyzi Bey, the first Turkish communications officer and the others came from the Office of Translations at the Sublime Porte. After 1856, in the course of time, with the return of the French officials, one by one, the Turkish apprentices were settled in their place. The vacant of the French officials who went back to their country were shared out among the Turkish apprentices. The salaries of the French officials were too high. For example, the Ottoman government was paying a salary of between 2000 and 3000 piasters to them. However, the Turkish apprentices were employed with a salary of between 400 and 800 piasters. In 1871, in the time of Sağır Ahmet Pasha, the contract of English and French officials were canceled. But, after their returning to home, the Ottoman telegraph organization began to work disorderly until the reforms of Izzet efendi in 1877<sup>290</sup>. In fact, in a real sense of word, the ottomanisation of the Administration of telegraphs occurred in 1871, in that time most of the foreign officials went to their home.

It seems that the mechanical frame work of telegraph has reached for back to the clock making in the Medieval Age. Even, in the Ottoman government, the clockmakers from the Ottoman citizen were employed as a telegraph mechanic. One of them, Mr. Mikail, an Ottoman Morse and clock maker, dealing with repairing the

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<sup>290</sup> Mehmet Ali, (1915). *Posta Mebahisi; Osmanli Telgraf Tarihinden (Mabaad ve Hitam)*. **PTM**. 166. pp. 1949.

telegraph instrument in the telegraph office of Varna, invented a sort of the native telegraph instrument<sup>291</sup>. Interestingly enough, Alexander Bain who designed the automatic telegraph was also, a Scottish clockmaker.

With the treaty of 1864, The Ottoman government gave a guarantee for providing quick-telegraphic communication between Europe and Indian by the route of Üsküdar- Bağdad and Basra to the English<sup>292</sup>.

Like the private telegraph companies on the European continent, that adopted new technology either to set their system apart from rivals or for reasons of economy, the Ottoman government had an inclination towards adopting the newly-designed telegraph technologies, especially the Hughes instrument.

According to Kazgan, the telegraph increased the European financial capital and also influenced the Ottoman society. As a result of rapid communication, European news gave daily information about the economic and financial situation in the Ottoman territories. The western influence was immediately felt in the Ottoman society. The telegraph caused the emergence of new style of consumption in the Ottoman society. The catalogs were sent by the grand shops in London and Paris to Istanbul. The persons from the Palace and the families of high officials using these catalogs began to order fashionable things by means of telegraph<sup>293</sup>. The number of people, using of knives, forks, chairs and bedsteads in the seaboard cities were

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<sup>291</sup> I-H 9364, See Appendix: 13

<sup>292</sup> Mecmua-i Muahedat, vol. 1, pp. 289-295

<sup>293</sup> Kazgan, H. (1995). **Osmanlıda Finans Kapitali**, Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yay. p. 136.

increased. According to Davison, Parisian or alafranga modes and manners which had already found imitators before the Crimean War, now caught on more rapidly<sup>294</sup>. The Ottoman minorities, marketing the agriculturèl products began to show their superiority of life style and income in the provincial areas. After the telegraph, the Ottoman Empire began to collect the cattle tax (agnam vergisi) and tithe tax (asar vergisi) not by the means of contractors (multezim) but by means of officials from the Ministry of Finance <sup>295</sup>.

By 1864 there were already 76 telegraph stations , with 267 leagues of line in use and 304 more under construction<sup>296</sup>. In the year 1875, as Hobsbawn stated, “probably the only other by-product of modern technology, the net of telegraph-lines on their endless succession of wooden poles, about three or four times as great in length as the world’s railway system, was more universally known.”<sup>297</sup>. This also was valid for the Ottoman Empire. By the accession of Abdulhamid<sup>298</sup>, the greater

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<sup>294</sup> Davison, R. (1963). p. 69.

<sup>295</sup> Kazgan, H. (1995). p.137.

<sup>296</sup> Karal, (1988). p.273; Lewis, (1961). p.182.

<sup>297</sup> Hobsbawn, E. J. (1987). **The Age of Empire 1875-1914.** London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson. p. 27.

<sup>298</sup> According to Niyazi Berkes, during the period of Abdulhamit, the telegraph line, with 30000 length was established on all over the Empire. However, interestinly enough, the telegraph, that gave a service to the regime of Abdulhamit faithfully , became ,later on, the first instrument, helping to the dethroning of Abdulhamit, by

part of the Empire was linked to the capital by a network of telegraphic communications. There was a vast network of telegraphic communications, covering the whole of the Empire and centred on Istanbul

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sending news, concerning the Revolution of 1908 in a short time.(Berkes, N. (1981).

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