

**T.C**

**ISTANBUL MEDENİYET UNIVERSITY**

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**

**INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**INTERNATIONAL OTTOMAN STUDIES**

**ETHEM RUHİ AND THE *BALKAN* GAZETTE**

**MASTER THESIS**

**HATİCE KAMALI**

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## BİLDİRİM

Hazırladığım tezin tamamen kendi çalışmam olduğunu, akademik ve etik kuralları gözeterek çalıştığımı ve her alıntıya kaynak gösterdiğimi taahhüt ederim.

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DOÇ. DR. GÜNEŞ IŞIKSEL

## İMZA SAYFASI

Hatice KAMALI tarafından hazırlanan ‘Ethem Ruhi and the *Balkan Gazette*’ başlıklı bu yüksek lisans tezi, Uluslararası Osmanlı Araştırmaları Anabilim/bilim Dalında hazırlanmış ve jürimiz tarafından kabul edilmiştir.

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## INTRODUCTION

Nikolay Bobrikov, the Russian governor-general of Finland, was assassinated by a Finnish nationalist on June 16, 1904. The very next day, June 17, hundreds of newspapers from European cities as well as Mexico City, Honolulu, and San Francisco, reported the shooting of the governor. The rapid spread of the Bobrikov assassination provides important clues about how international news flowed in the early 20th century. Within a week, various readers throughout the World could read of this murder in Finland, for Europe, America, and East Asia were already connected by telegraph and railroad lines. Numerous telegraph cables running from Europe to South Asia or under the Atlantic Ocean ensured wide distribution of news at the end of the 19th century. In parallel, newspapers hired their own correspondents in various cities. Specialized correspondents reported news from different continents to the European news centers. Similarly, newspapers were distributed internationally. Readers could thus reach newspapers published in France, England, Moscow, etc., all over the World.<sup>1</sup>

With the globalization of news and the widespread distribution of newspapers, the way was paved for journalism to develop as an industry with its own deontological codes and standards. As Jean Chalaby suggested, journalism in the second half of the 19th century had mainly two separate directions, epitomized by Anglo-American and French journalism. In England, by the end of the century, journalism was seen as a recognized profession, a full-time occupation with a deontological code of conduct. English journalists had gained their autonomy from other professions, but French journalists, like other journalists in many countries as well as in the Ottoman Empire, pursued their strong political and literary boundaries. In this "partisan-discursive" style, reporting news and facts was not the journalists' main concern. Instead, journalists-most of whom were simultaneously engaged in literature-aimed to explain, analyze, or advocate their own ideas through long editorials or polemical articles.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mila Oiva, Asko Nivala, Hannu Salmi, Otto Latva, Marja Jalava, Jana Keck, Laura Martínez Domínguez & James Parker, "Spreading News in 1904", *Media History*, (2019), p.4.

<sup>2</sup> Jean Chalaby, "Journalism as an Anglo-American Invention: A Comparison of the Development of French and Anglo-American Journalism, 1830s-1920s", *European Journal of Communication*, (1996), pp. 303–326.

This study attempts to examine Ottoman journalism in light of this context summarized above. Such an approach is significant because current literature, mostly dominated by the modernization paradigm and focusing on issues such as press censorship and the 1908 press boom, is mostly concerned with the political-ideological and literary engagement of Ottoman newspapers. Accordingly, Ottoman press historiography lacks adequate studies on the development of journalism in the Ottoman lands as a profession. Apart from a few studies, the current literature does not offer comprehensive studies that place Ottoman journalism in a broad context. Thus, topics such as the journalistic standards of the Ottoman press, the interactions of Ottoman newspapers with each other and with World newspapers, and the alternative relationships between government and journalists still await detailed studies.

In traditional Ottoman press historiography, Ottoman journalism started with *Takvim-i Vekayi*, which was published as the official organ of the Ottoman state in 1831. The publication of *Takvim-i Vekayi* was not described as a demand that came from the society itself, instead it was considered as an enterprise of the Sultan with the ideas of modernization. This modernization paradigm is largely applied to the emergence of private journals that began to appear from 1860 as well. According to the traditional approach the genesis of the Ottoman newspaper had no relation with the demand for information or news, but it appeared as a means for Ottoman elites to enlighten and modernize society.<sup>3</sup>

This approach could be first found in Ahmet Emin Yalman's dissertation "The Development of Modern Turkey as Measured by Its Press", which he defended in 1914 at Columbia University. With this study, Yalman became the first scholar to address the Ottoman Press. He not only offered an overview of Ottoman journalism, but also provided his own observations as a journalist of the time. Divided into three main chapters, namely "The Era of Genesis", "The Hamidian Period", and "The Present Era (1908-1913)" this dissertation examines the Ottoman modernization process from the perspective of the press. The themes offered by Ahmet Emin Yalman and the characteristics he gave for each period have become common themes of Ottoman press history.

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<sup>3</sup> Gül Karagöz Kızılcı, "Osmanlı/Türk Basın Tarihi Yazımı Üzerine Eleştirel Bir Değerlendirme", *Ankara Üniversitesi İlel Dergisi*, 3 (2016), 71-90.

One of the most repeated themes was the Hamidian press regime, or more specifically the censorship. In both academic and popular opinion, censorship practices are specifically associated with the Hamidian period. In fact, however, censorship was not a unique application of the Hamidian Era. Even in the pre-Hamidian period, various regulations were imposed on the press. Notably, in 1867, a comprehensive press regulation was enacted. *Kararname-i Ali* described the duty of the press and warned against "hostile publications against the general interests of the country." However, as parallel to the various anecdotes are the unusual restrictions placed on journalists, the peculiarities of Hamidian press policy cannot be ignored. As Ebru Boyar notes, "just as Abdulhamid's regime created its own education and communication system, it also created its own press system.". In 1888, with the *Matbaalar Nizamnamesi* (Printers' Regulations), pre-censorship became common. Every publication had to deliver the forthcoming issue to the appropriate authorities. These were the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the daily press and the Ministry of Education for books. The rules of censorship were not well-settled, however, and the fate of newspapers depended directly on the views of the censors (officials), even if they were "unreasonable".<sup>4</sup>

It is hard to say, however, that these intensive efforts by Abdulhamid were completely successful. Ahmed Emin Yalman, noted how the banned publications were still being smuggled into the Ottoman Empire. The main obstacle against censorship was the Young Turk press emerging in Europe. They managed to reach Ottoman readers with the help of foreign post offices in the empire. The Young Turk journalists in exile found opportunities to openly address and criticize social problems.

After the promulgation of the Second Constitution, the Hamidian press policy was perceived as the "most evil," tyrannical "three and a half years of dictatorship," or the "age of the Inquisition," etc. Although this "bloody" image of the sultan was first produced in Western Europe, it also corresponded to the discontent within the empire. In order to delegitimize the Hamidian regime, this image was again disseminated and produced in the Republican era, and even today - with the antagonist *Ulu Hakan* vs. *Kızıl Sultan* - the repressive control of the press and intellectuals by Sultan

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<sup>4</sup> Ebru Boyar, "The Press and the Palace: The Two-Way Relationship Between Abdulhamid II and the Press, 1876-1908", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol 69, 1-issue 3, (October 2006)

Abdulhamid is probably the most obvious motif of this image. Hamidian Era is described by Server İskit as "the time when the press endured a life of inquisition because of the despotic regime of the Sultan." The view of İskit, who was one of the journalists of that period and also the director of the press during the Republic, about the Ottoman press can be accepted as the official view of the Republic about the Ottoman press. Moreover, Server İskit's studies on the history of the press are among the most widely used sources in Ottoman Turk press historiography. Therefore, his approach represented the dominant understanding in the current literature.<sup>5</sup>

Together with this anti- Hamidian discourse, the most peculiar feature of the Second Constitutional Era - "Golden Age" for the Ottoman press, as it is assumed in the current literature, was the incredible increase of published materials. Almost everyone who had an idea to express was anxious to publish a journal. For this reason, Constitutional Press is better described by the term "press boom." In this unbridled atmosphere, the press began to split into different ideological viewpoints and opposing biases. Each journal represented an ideology, some of them were radical, others liberal, still others conservative.<sup>6</sup> Thus, beginning with the establishment of the Second Constitution in 1908, this vibrant press landscape became a popular focus of Ottoman press historians.

By following Ethem Ruhi, an enthusiastic member of the Young Turks and publisher, through his journalistic career in four different cities (in Geneva, Folkestone, Cairo and Plovdiv), this study attempts to provide an overview of Ottoman journalism beyond these recurring themes. It focuses mainly on Ethem Ruhi's changing journalistic understanding and his long-lived *Balkan Gazette*, published between 1906- 1919, in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. The aim is to illustrate the wide news and distribution network of this journal and its position on the internal developments of Bulgaria and the global crises.

Three main points make the *Balkan Gazette* worthy of investigation. First, its editor, Ethem Ruhi, was an active member of the Committee of Union and Progress until he came to Bulgaria. In 1897 he joined the editorial board of *Osmanlı*, the official organ of the Geneva branch of CUP. There he collaborated with İshak Sukuti and Abdullah Cevdet. Later, *Osmanlı* continued to be published under the direction of Ethem Ruhi

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<sup>5</sup> Server İskit, *Türkiye'de Matbuat İdareleri*, 107.

<sup>6</sup> İbid; Orhan Koloğlu, *1908 Basın Patlaması*, (İstanbul: Bas-Haş Türkiye Gazeteciler Cemiyeti Yayınları, 2005)

in London, Folkestone, and Cairo. Ruhi was also known for an unsuccessful assassination attempt on Abdulhamid.<sup>7</sup> Second, the *Balkan Gazette* remarkably presented itself as "an impartial Turkish newspaper." Finally, it announced in its first issue that it would be a news-oriented publication because people "want to read news rather than scientific or sensational articles."<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, the *Balkan Gazette* has been the subject of only a few studies. Most of them are dissertations. The oppositional character or Anti Abdulhamid stance of the newspaper is one of the topics they deal with. In addition, the studies claim that *Balkan* became the voice of Bulgaria's Muslims, it helped the Muslim Turks to preserve their national identity and stood up for their rights and also discussed the disputes within the Muslim community on its pages. Another interpretation, referring mainly to the period after 1908, is that *Balkan* was the propaganda organ of the Committee for Union and Progress. Since the abundance of letters to the editor is one of *Balkan's* most characteristic features, most studies have focused on the content of these letters. However, the literature given does not provide an explanation for the three main points mentioned above. Therefore, this study attempts to answer the following questions in order to provide an original explanation for *Balkan Gazette*: Is an alternative approach possible to explain *Balkan's* attitude? What did it mean to be news-oriented and *bitaraf* (impartial)?

Since there was a strong continuity in journalistic practices until World War I, the *Balkan Gazette* was treated with the developments of the second half of the 19th century. In this sense, the secondary objectives are to place Ottoman journalism in a broader context (including publishing languages, the relationship between the state and the press, journalistic standards), to revisit Ottoman Journalism in the journalistic aura of the second half of the 19th century, to place Ottoman newspapers in the popular journalism discussions of the Era, e.g. Discourse Style and News Style.

Most of the data used in the study was collected through a meticulous examination of the 50 issues of *Balkan Gazette* published between 1906 and 1907. These copies were obtained from the periodicals collection of Atatürk Library (*Atatürk Kitaplığı*.) In addition, the stylistic features of *Muvazene*, *Ahali* and *Tuna* newspapers published in

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<sup>7</sup> Hasan Bal, "Ethem Ruhi Balkan ve Filibe'de Yayınladığı Balkan Gazetesi", *Balkanlarda İslam Medeniyeti Milletlerarası Sempozyumu Tebliğleri*, (İstanbul: İRCİCA Yayınları 2002)

<sup>8</sup> Balkan, "İfade-i Meram", 22 July 1906.

Bulgaria were studied in order to make a proper comparison. Similarly, some issues of *İkdam*, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat*, *Sabah*, predominant publications of the Hamidian Era, were examined both in terms of content and style. Finally, articles on journalism published in other journals between 1906 and 1907 were also examined. Other important sources used besides newspapers are the memoirs of journalists of the time, such as Ahmet İhsan Tokgöz, Ahmet Rasim, and Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın. These memoirs are of great importance in understanding the press life of the time through the eyes of journalists.

### **Literature Review**

Studies of journalistic types of the 19th century are based primarily on Jean Chalaby's article titled "Journalism as an Anglo-American Invention." In his article, Chalaby argues that the development of journalism as a profession, with its rules of conduct and economic concerns, occurred in the United States and United Kingdom and later spread throughout the world throughout the 19th century. Furthermore, he noted two co-existing journalistic styles of the 19th century embodied by British journalism and French journalism. Accordingly, British journalism was practiced in a perfected market environment, therefore allied itself with American principles and was able to develop an "objective" journalistic discourse. Whereas French journalists were strongly literary-political and did not perceive journalism as an objective / independent profession. Chalaby's work has inspired other studies that have explored the different perceptions of journalism in different countries in the 19th and early 20th centuries.<sup>9</sup>

Although Ottoman journalism has not been studied through Chalaby's perspective, Ottoman newspapers have usually been explained by scholars in terms of their ideological or literary engagements. In particular, the Young Turk press has often been studied in order to track the political activities of the Young Turks. Şerif Mardin examines Young Turk publications in his book *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri 1895-1908* as he seeks to understand the mentality of the Young Turks.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, Şükrü Hanioglu, one of the predominant scholars who have studied the Young Turk press, cites many Young Turk publications and evaluates their context in his books such as

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<sup>9</sup> Jean Chalaby, "Journalism as an Anglo-American Invention: A Comparison of the Development of French and Anglo-American Journalism, 1830s-1920s", *European Journal of Communication*, (1996), pp. 303–326.

<sup>10</sup> Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri 1895-1908*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 1994)

*Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902-1908, The Young Turks in Opposition.*<sup>11</sup> In addition to these broad studies on the Young Turks, there are some monographs focusing on the Young Turk press in certain cities, such as Muammer Göçmen's *Cenevre'de Jön Türk Basını*, Cavid Orhan Tütengil's *İngiltere'de Türk Gazeteciliği*, Servet Tiken's *Mısır'da Jön Türk Basını*.<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, the *Balkan Gazette* has not been given as much attention as the *Osmanlı* and the *Mizan*. There are few works written exclusively about *Balkan*. Halil Bal is one of the few scholars who have studied *Balkan Gazette*. In his article on Ethem Ruhi and *Balkan Gazette*, he has comprehensively profiled Ethem Ruhi by examining his publications including his memoirs, books and articles published in other newspapers. He argues that *Balkan*, which supported the ideas of modernization and the Young Turk movement, helped Bulgarian Muslims preserve their national identity as effectively as *Muvazane*, another Turkish newspaper published in Bulgaria in 1896-1905. According to Bal, *Balkan* became the most influential journal during this period for Bulgarian Muslims. After the Young Turk Revolution in 1908, *Balkan* continued to be published in Plovdiv, but its aims and style were changed according to the expectations of the *Committee for Union and Progress*, which recommended Ethem Ruhi to stay in Bulgaria in order to propagate constitutional ideas in the Bulgarian Muslim community.<sup>13</sup>

Theses written about the *Balkan Gazette* have mostly dealt with the similar aspects that Halil Bal mentions. First, in pointing to the identity of Ethem Ruhi as an ardent CUP member, each study has focused on *Balkan's* anti Abdulhamid policies. In his

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<sup>11</sup> Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902-1908*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Şükrü Hanioglu, *The Young Turks in Opposition*, Oxford University Press, 1995.

<sup>12</sup> Muammer Göçmen, *İsviçre'de Jöntürk Basını ve Türk Siyasal Hayatına Etkileri (1889-1902)*, İstanbul, 1995 ; Cavit Orhan Tütengil, *İngiltere'de Türk Gazeteciliği, 1867-1967*, (İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2011); Servet Tiken, *Mısır'da Jön Türk Basını ve Edebiyatı*, Fenomen Yayıncılık, 2017.

<sup>13</sup> Halil Bal, "Ethem Ruhi Balkan ve Filibe'de Yayınladığı Balkan Gazetesi", *Balkanlarda İslam Medeniyeti Milletlerarası Sempozyumu Tebliğleri*, Sofya 21-23 Nisan 2000, s.371-372. Apart from *Rumeli* and *Balkan*, Ethem Ruhi published *Eyyam* (1.8.1912-30.9.1912), "a political daily newspaper published in Turkish" in Plovdiv. Also, Halil Bal gives references to *Mecmua-ı Ruhi* (Şimdilik iki haftada bir çıkar ilmi mecmua) which was published in İstanbul by Ethem Ruhi, after his escape from Bulgaria. In addition to his publications, Bal uses Ethem Ruhi's only biography written by Altan Deliorman: *Kırık Kanatlı Jön Türk*. Other resources he got information about Balkan, they were the studies on Committee of Union and Progress and the comprehensive studies made on the Turkish press in Bulgaria: A.R. Karagöz, *Bulgaristan 'da Türk Basını, 1879-1945*, İstanbul Üniversitesi yay., İstanbul 1945; İ. H. Tefvîk Okday, *Bulgaristan 'da Türk Basını*, T.C. Turizm ve Tanıtma Bakanlığı Basın-Yayın Genel Müdürlüğü yay. (İstanbul, 1980?), M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *Bir Siyasal Düşünür Olarak Doktor Abdullah Cevdet ve Dönemi*, Üçdal Neşriyat, İstanbul 1981.

master's thesis examining the 1906 issues of *Balkan*, Uğur Yılmaz claims that Ethem Ruhi could generously make known his dissatisfaction with the Hamidian regime and the Hamidian censorship policy. However, the Ottoman government was unable to suppress his opposition because *Balkan* appeared in Bulgarian Principality, an autonomous state.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, Yılmaz refers to the abundance of news about the conflict between Russian Tzar and the Russians, who demanded a constitutional regime, and the proclamation of the constitution in Iran. While reporting on these developments, *Balkan* explicitly praised the constitutionalists. In particular, the transformation of Iran, another Muslim country, was presented as a significant example for the Ottomans to follow. As a reformist Muslim ruler, the Shah of Iran was also frequently praised by *Balkan* editors. Thus, the death of the Shah was announced with regret: "Although the last telegrams announce the death of the Shah, exact news has not yet arrived ... Indeed, there has been no such ruler as the Shah, who was noble, wise and a true Muslim." It can be observed that *Balkan* draws a contrast between the "reformist and civilized" Shah and the "cruel despot" Abdulhamid II.<sup>15</sup>

In his dissertation entitled "Doğu Rumeli Türklerinin Sesi *Balkan* Gazetesi", Sabit Akin Zaimoğlu agrees with the oppositional nature of *Balkan*. He notes that the events concerning the pro-constitutional movements were framed with attractive titles and reported on behalf of the opponents of the Hamidian regime.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, Ethem Ruhi published editorials that sharply criticized the authoritarian regime of Abdulhamid. For example, in the article "Ya Kanun-ı Esasi Ya Mahvımız Mutlak" he wrote: "Abdulhamid's thirty-year administration failed significantly in protecting the Ottoman lands, as was the case in Crete where the Ottoman soldiers were victorious over the Greeks on the battlefield, but the Ottoman administration still gave it to the Greeks."<sup>17</sup> It is interesting that Zaimoğlu takes the news about the Sultan's health as an indication of the anti-Abdulhamid attitude of *Balkan*. From August 1906 onwards, it can be observed that the news about Abdulhamid's declining health remarkably caught the attention of editors of the journal. The news of the sultan's "incurable illness" was reported by their reliable sources, so editors of the journal obviously wanted the news

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<sup>14</sup> Uğur Yılmaz, *Balkan Gazetesi (1906)*, MA Thesis (Konya: Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi, 2013), p.61.

<sup>15</sup> Uğur Yılmaz, p.62.; "Zavallı Şah", *Balkan*, 10 Aralık 1906.

<sup>16</sup> Sabit Akin Zaimoğlu, "Doğu Rumeli Türklerinin Sesi *Balkan* Gazetesi", PhD Thesis, (Gaziantep: Gaziantep Üniversitesi, 2019), p.46-48.

<sup>17</sup> Sabit Akin Zaimoğlu, p.48.

to be true. In the same issue that first reported Abdulhamid's illness, there was an editorial by Ethem Ruhi, discussing the possible scenarios after Abdulhamid's death.<sup>18</sup>

In parallel with his reformist ideas, Ethem Ruhi also promoted modernization. Therefore, another topic on which the studies on *Balkan Gazette* focused is the attempts of Ethem Ruhi to enlighten Bulgarian Muslims and support the modernization process. Accordingly, *Balkan* published many editorials, reports or letters to the editor on education, most of which made accusations about ignorance, illiteracy, lack of schools, etc.<sup>19</sup> For example, *Balkan* published many articles calling for the increase of girls' schools. Ethem Ruhi and his colleagues valued girls' education, unlike the newspaper *Tuna*, as *Balkan* claimed, because "only in this way Ottoman Empire could be a part of the modern civilization."<sup>20</sup>

Examining the issues between 1907-1908, Ozan Batuhan Atıcı has observed the increase in content about the cultural activities that took place in Bulgarian cities. Accordingly, *Balkan* reported about operas, musicals, and plays that were performed in Bulgaria. Most of the cultural events reported in *Balkan* were the performances of Ottoman theater groups visiting Bulgaria during their tours. Especially Güllü Agop and his Ottoman Drama Company were mentioned in *Balkan*. Their performances were commented on with compliments. Ethem Ruhi often expressed his admiration towards the artists and actresses of the ensemble.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, *Balkan* praised the cultural events organized by Turks of Bulgaria. For example, in an article titled "Aferin Yavrular", Ethem Ruhi expressed its appreciation for a play performed by thirteen "intellectual Turkish teachers" and their "poor Turkish students" in Silistra.<sup>22</sup>

Another common assessment of the studies is that *Balkan* aimed to be the voice of Turkish-Muslims minorities and advocate for their rights. The newspaper also frequently addressed disputes within the Muslim community. Similarly, Ethem Ruhi constantly reported or commented on muftis who were appointed as local

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<sup>18</sup> Sabit Akın Zaimoğlu, "Doğu Rumeli Türklerinin Sesi Balkan Gazetesi", PhD Thesis, (Gaziantep: Gaziantep Üniversitesi, 2019), p.53-54.

<sup>19</sup> Mustafa Aslan, *Balkan Gazetesinin Transkripsiyonu ve Değerlendirilmesi*. MA Thesis. (Gaziantep: Gaziantep Üniversitesi, 2013), p.31

<sup>20</sup> Mustafa Aslan, p.29-31.

<sup>21</sup> Ozan Batuhan Atıcı, *Ethem Ruhi ve II. Meşrutiyet Öncesi Balkan Gazetesi*. PhD Dissertation. (Konya: Selçuk Üniversitesi, 2019), p. 81-83.

<sup>22</sup> Ozan Batuhan Atıcı, p.84.

administrators of the Muslim community in Bulgaria. *Balkan* editorials questioned the misdeeds of muftis and other administrators of Muslim foundations.<sup>23</sup>

Since every local issue that affected the Muslim community - such as mufti appointments, cultural-intellectual events, and rumors - was closely followed by the editors, *Balkan* was able to gain a considerable readership among Muslims of Bulgaria. Yılmaz claims in his dissertation that *Balkan's* circulation reached 30,000. This argument could be proven by letters to the editor that *Balkan* received from various Bulgarian cities, including İstanbul, Bursa, etc. It is noteworthy that the letters to the editor sometimes turned *Balkan* into a forum where Bulgarian Muslims argued with opposing ideas. In such situations, *Balkan* took on the role of an "impartial" moderator.<sup>24</sup>

Sabit Akın Zaimoğlu examines these letters in four categories: Letters from Bulgarian cities, letters from İstanbul and Bursa, (city) letters from readers in Plovdiv, and open letters published in *Balkan*. Open letters, which were mostly polemical in nature, were usually written by the editors to defend the point of view of *Balkan Gazette* and its editors, or occasionally to make recommendations on a social problem.<sup>25</sup> An alternative approach to letters to the editor in *Balkan* is proposed by Ayşe Feride Yılmaz, who evaluates letters to the editor with the concept of "watchdog journalism" and highlights their role as ideological tools.<sup>26</sup> Her MA thesis entitled "The Ottoman *Balkan Gazette* as an Agent of Empire within the Bulgarian Nation-State 1910-1911" argues that *Balkan Gazette* as CUP's propaganda organ that attempted to mobilize Turkish Muslims against the Bulgarian state signifies the pursuit of preserving the Ottoman imperial network within Bulgaria. According to Yılmaz's definition, watchdog journalism refers to "a newspaper's investigation and criticism of a group considered hostile and harmful to the interests of the people the newspaper advocates and speaks for." Accordingly, *Balkan*, as a newspaper of an ethnic minority in the wider society, wanted to be a "watchdog" against the Bulgarian government or local

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<sup>23</sup> Mustafa Kemal Sincer, "Ethem Ruhi ve Balkan Gazetesi (1907-1908)", MA Thesis. (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi, 2018), p.89-90.

<sup>24</sup> *Balkan*, 4 Temmuz 1323. *Biz bitaraf bir gazeteci gibi muarızın da müdafin de mektuplarını neşr eyleriz. Bunlardan birincisine cevap verdik. Baladaki ikinci mektuba cevaben de birkaç söz söylemekten kendimizi alamayacağız. Bizce her iki mektup sahibi de meçhuldür. Hiçbirini şahsen tanımıyoruz.*

<sup>25</sup> Sabit Akın Zaimoğlu, "Doğu Rumeli Türklerinin Sesi Balkan Gazetesi", PhD Thesis, (Gaziantep: Gaziantep Üniversitesi, 2019)

<sup>26</sup> Ayşe Feride Yılmaz. "The Ottoman Balkan Gazette as an Agent of Empire within the Bulgarian Nation State", 1910-1911. MA Thesis. (Budapest: Central European University, 2013).

administration to protect the interests of Muslim/Turkish minorities. In this context, especially letters to the editor expressing the problems and outrage from Bulgarian Muslims helped *Balkan* to fulfill the tasks of watchdog journalism.<sup>27</sup>

## Organization of the Study

With the aim of presenting the existing practices of Ottoman journalism in the second half of the 19th century, the first chapter of this study provides assessments of the general characteristics of Ottoman Press. After a brief description of the economic structure on which the Ottoman press functioned, the ideas of Ottoman journalists about their profession and the general standards of Ottoman newspapers are discussed. Secondly, since the Ottoman press cannot be limited to the Ottoman-Turkish publications, the languages of Ottoman newspapers and the interaction between newspapers in different languages such as Ladino, Armenian, Karamanlidika are examined.<sup>28</sup> Finally, the thirty -year Hamidian press regime is evaluated in light of recent studies suggesting an alternative relationship between journalists and the Palace.<sup>29</sup>

Chapter 2, “Ethem Ruhi’s Journalistic Experiences: Geneva, Folkestone, Cairo”, examines the journalistic training of Ethem Ruhi, the *Balkan* owner, by focusing on his experiences in different cities. To develop a better understanding about Ethem Ruhi’s changing attitudes towards journalism and publishing that ended up in *Balkan*, each city is described with its own characteristics and journalistic practices. Against this background, the following chapter examines Ethem Ruhi’s arrival in Bulgaria and compares his expectations and the existing conditions in Bulgaria. This chapter also discusses *Balkan*’s position on the issues that preoccupied Muslim community of Bulgaria, as well as on Macedonian Crisis and Bulgarian domestic politics.

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<sup>27</sup> Ayşe Feride Yılmaz, p.23-24.

<sup>28</sup> Ziyad Ebuzziya, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Türkçe Dışındaki Basın” in Türkiye’de Yabancı Dilde Basın, (İstanbul: İÜ BYYO Yayınları, 1985); Murat Cankara, “Çifte Maduniyet, Çifte İşlev: Ermeni Harfli Türkçe Basında Dil ve Kimlik”, *İlef Dergisi*, (sonbahar 2015), p.105-130; Evangelia BALTA, *Gerçi Rum İsek de Rumca Bilmez Türkçe Söyleriz Karamanlılar ve Karamanlıca Edebiyat Üzerine Araştırmalar*, (İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2018) ; Sarah Abrevaya Stein, *Making Jews modern: the Yiddish and Ladino press in the Russian and Ottoman Empires*, (Bloomington: Indiana University, 2006)

<sup>29</sup> Ebru Boyar, “The Press and the Palace: The Two-Way Relationship Between Abdulhamid II and the Press,1876-1908”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol 69, 1-issue 3, (October 2006)

The last chapter is devoted to the news and distribution network of *Balkan Gazette*. This newspaper used its advantageous position in Plovdiv and obtained its news from various sources. These sources are categorized and explained in detail with direct examples from the newspaper. Similarly, Plovdiv was located on the important railway lines and benefited from the postal network.<sup>30</sup> Thus, the newspaper was able to reach readers even from distant cities in Bulgaria, Romania and Salonica. The most accurate indication of this was the abundance of the reader's letters that the newspaper received.<sup>31</sup> With that in mind, this chapter outlines the distribution network of *Balkan Gazette* based on direct references from the newspaper.

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<sup>30</sup> Kaloyan Stanev, Eduard Josep Alvarez-Palau & Jordi Martí-Henneberg "Railway Development and the Economic and Political Integration of the Balkans, c. 1850–2000", *Europe-Asia Studies*, 69:10, (2017),1601-1625

## ÖZET

Bu çalışma Plovdiv’de Ethem Ruhi tarafından çıkarılan Balkan Gazetesi’nin haber ve dağıtım ağlarını ve mesleki tutumunu incelemektedir. Bulgaristan Türklerinin uzun ömürlü yayınlarından biri olan gazetenin başarısı mevcut literatürde, hakim paradigmaların izdüşümü olarak, Ruhi’nin Jön Türk karakterine bağlanmaktadır. Buna göre “Türklerin haklarını savunan” Ethem Ruhi halka modernleşmeci fikirleri aşlamak için uğraşmış ve gazeteciliği de bu uğurda bir araç olarak kullanmıştır. Ancak bu çalışma Balkan Gazetesi’nin başarısını farklı bir açıdan değerlendirmektedir. Çalışmada iddia edildiği şekilde, halkın habere talebi sonucu ortaya çıkan *Balkan*, yine bu talebi karşıladığı ölçüde yayınlanmaya devam etmiştir. Dolayısıyla Balkan Gazetesi’nin en dikkate değer özelliği geniş haber alma ve dağıtım ağıdır. Ayrıca Ethem Ruhi’nin Balkan öncesindeki gazetecilik kariyeri, farklı şehirlerde edindiği deneyimler ve bu deneyimler sonucu değişen gazetecilik anlayışı da incelenmeye değerdir. Böylesi bir inceleme Osmanlı basın tarih yazımına da farklı bir bakış açısı sunacaktır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Balkan Gazetesi, Jön Türk basını, fikir gazeteciliği, haber, bitarafılık

## ABSTRACT

This study examines one of the longest-lived newspapers of Bulgaria's Muslims, the daily *Balkan Gazette*, published by Ethem Ruhi in Plovdiv. It proposes an alternative explanation for *Balkan Gazette's* success. It argues that high circulation and wide news network of this journal enabled it to gain a substantial readership throughout Bulgaria. Moreover, Ethem Ruhi 's changing attitude towards journalism played an important role in this success. Therefore, his journalistic experiences and the breaking points he had during his journalistic career are worth investigating. Such an investigation would also be helpful in developing an alternative approach to the Ottoman press.

**Keywords:** *Balkan Gazette*, Young Turk journalism, opinion journalism, news, objectivity

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## CHAPTER 1

### CONTEMPORARY JOURNALISM IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

In the second half of the 19th century, technological developments allowed journalism to grow as an industry. Nevertheless, perceptions toward newspapers and the image of journalists varied in different societies as an evaluation of Anglo-American and French journalism would contribute to a further understanding of this argument. By the end of the century, journalism in England was already a respected profession, a full-time occupation with a code of deontological conduct. English journalists stood out from other professions, while their French counterparts, like other journalists in many countries, had to fight for their autonomy in relation to the political and literary spheres.<sup>32</sup>

The differences between the cultural, political, and economic structures of these two countries led to the emergence of different standards for the press. On a cultural basis, prominent French literary figures were more often than not associated with the press. Journalism was occasionally seen as a short-term occupation and, it was considered the first step in a successful literary career. In this 'literary-dominated sphere', the fact-oriented, informational practices of Anglo-American journalism were not exempt from criticism. In 1888, Emile Zola, a prominent example of French novelist-journalists, expressed dissatisfaction with the new practices that were "killing off the great articles of discussion and giving more and more importance to news reports, trivial news, and reporters' articles."<sup>33</sup> Polemical articles, which were directed in an aggressive tone against a politician or a political party, and the commentary section, in which journalists analyzed the news from their political or moral orientation, were two important journalistic genres of French newspapers.<sup>34</sup>

Other important causes that led the developments of Anglo-American and French journalism in different directions are related to political factors. First, the two-party system in the late 19th century allowed England to keep political struggles at bay.

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<sup>32</sup> Lenore O'Boyle, "The Image of the Journalist in France, Germany and England, 1815–1848", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 10 (1967–1968), pp. 290-317.

<sup>33</sup> Jean Chalaby, "Journalism as an Anglo-American Invention: A Comparison of the Development of French and Anglo-American Journalism, 1830s-1920s", *European Journal of Communication*, (1996), pp. 303–326.

<sup>34</sup> Chalaby, "Journalism as an Anglo-American Invention", p.315.

However, during the same period, French journalists found themselves in a more violent and complex political environment. Since ideological factions were numerous and political positions more diverse, it was quite difficult to assert "neutrality." Certain newspapers became organs of political doctrines. Immediately before the First World War, about 40 out of 46 newspapers published in Paris openly espoused their ideological tendencies.<sup>35</sup>

French partisan journalism was exemplary of journalism practiced in most countries. Anglo-American principles were not yet widespread enough in the late 19th century. Given the political and literary commitment of journalists, Ottoman journalism also shared similar patterns with French journalism. Since the private Ottoman newspaper press that developed from 1860 onwards was mostly dominated by the Young Ottomans who advocated the establishment of the constitution, the early Ottoman newspapers were seen as effective propaganda tools. Thus, the initial aim of the first Ottoman journalists was to express political criticism.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, journalists also assumed the responsibility of being the voice of society. According to the pioneers of the Ottoman press, the newspaper was an instrument that expressed the demands, grievances, and inconveniences of society. In this regard, Namık Kemal, a leading Ottoman journalist and novelist, claimed that newspapers could be an instrument to restore the balance between the state and society that had been destroyed with the abolition of the Janissaries.<sup>37</sup>

In addition, newspapers aimed to inform and educate society about political and economic developments. Ottoman journalists drew attention to the strong relationship between newspapers and civilization. Newspapers were seen as a means of enlightening and civilizing Ottoman society. For example, Şinasi, another pioneer journalist, highlighted this relationship between the press and civilizing at the first issue of *Tasvir-i Efkar*, the second private opinion newspaper in Ottoman Turkish. According to him, being informed about the developments all around the world with

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid, p.319

<sup>36</sup> Uğur Akbulut, "Osmanlı Basın Tarihine Bir Katkı: Gazetelerin Yayınlanma Amaçları Üzerine (1831-1876)", *Turkish Studies*, Volume 8/5, (Spring 2013), p. 31-57.

<sup>37</sup> Gül Karagöz Kızılca, "Osmanlı/Türk Basın Tarihi Yazımı Üzerine Eleştirel Bir Değerlendirme", *Ankara Üniversitesi İlel Dergisi* 3 (2016 ), 71-90. According to Namık Kemal, after the abolition of the Janissaries, there were no other actors left to balance the state's policies.

help of the newspapers was a must to get civilized. Accordingly, *Tasvir-i Efkar* adopted a simple language to address all segments of the society.<sup>38</sup>

The economic system also played a crucial role in the emergence of certain types of press. Since the press in Ottoman-Turkish was often not able to finance themselves, newspapers relied on financial support from politicians or other private actors like prominent and/or notable personalities. In this regard, it can be said that Ottoman newspapers, with the exception of the Second Constitutional Era period, always depended on other sources of finance in addition to their income from sales and advertisements. Consequently, the publication of newspapers that were predominantly associated with political criticism or advocacy was common practice.<sup>39</sup> Negotiation between newspapers and the government was also a common phenomenon in the Hamidian Era, when journalists were highly dependent on government subsidies to continue their publishing activity.

The endorsement by and negotiation with the palace as a parallel to Abdulhamid's press policy to create their own press provided them with many privileges. These were extended in terms of technical equipment for publishing.<sup>40</sup> However, this reciprocal relationship between the palace and the journalists rendered the press market an uncompetitive environment. Erol Baykal shows that the concept of *ragbet* (demand) had less importance in sustaining the press than in the post-revolutionary period. A few newspapers justified their existence by increasing demand.<sup>41</sup> In this sense, publishers had to ask permission from the Sultan to continue their activities. Sometimes, however, permission to publish a newspaper was granted by the palace, as was the case with Ahmet Rasim's periodical *Ihsan*. Rasim recorded the beginning of the publication of *Ihsan* in his memoirs. After expressing his opinion on a subject heard by a palace member, Rasim was invited to an audience at the palace. *Mabeynci* offered him the opportunity to publish a new newspaper while guaranteeing to pay all expenses.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Uğur Akbulut, "Osmanlı Basın Tarihine Bir Katkı", p.42-43.

<sup>39</sup> Gül Karagöz Kızılca, "News Publishing as a Reflection of Public Opinion: The Idea of News During the Ottoman Financial Crises", in *The Press in the Middle East and North Africa, 1850-1950*, (The Edinburg University Press, 2017), p.47.

<sup>40</sup> A. Emin Yalman, "The Development of Modern Turkey as Measured by Its Press", (Phd Dissertation, New York, Columbia University, 1914), p. 82-83.

<sup>41</sup> Erol Baykal, "The Ottoman Press (1908-1923)", (Phd Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 2013), p.137.

<sup>42</sup> Ahmet Rasim, *Muharrir Bu Ya*, (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları, İstanbul, 1989), p.428.

Unlike the previous era, when journalists put their desire to use newspapers as a means of expressing their own ideological viewpoints before economic concerns, journalism in this era was seen as a capital-driven sector. Mihran Efendi was one of the new figures representing the new capital-driven environment of the Ottoman Press. Born in Kayseri, Mihran Efendi (Mihran Nakşayan) came to Istanbul and learned to write. After working as a typesetter for many years and saving the money he earned, he set up his own printing press and hired some journalists to take over the editorship of *Sabah*, one of the few Ottoman newspapers that survived the Hamidian Era and was still being published in the Second Constitutional Era.<sup>43</sup>

It was possible to publish the newspapers in other printing houses, but as Ahmed Emin Yalman shows, after 1871 most of the newspapers had their own printing houses that published other materials such as cartoons, announcements, pamphlets, books, etc. in addition to the newspapers.<sup>44</sup> The printing presses were thus an important source of income for the publishers. In the second half of the 19th century, Ottoman publishers continued to rely on the technique of typography in publishing. Thus, providing the equipment for typography, such as types of target languages and box frames, hiring a typesetter, and finally owning a printing press were the minimum requirements for running a newspaper.<sup>45</sup> Some fully-fledged printers used other printing techniques. For example, Serkurena Osman Bey, with nine platen printers and nine lithographic presses, was able to use multiple printing techniques such as typography, stereotype, lithography, photography, holography, iksilography, and galvanoplasty, and had all the equipment necessary to publish materials in both Eastern and European languages.<sup>46</sup>

However, as mentioned, only a few journalists were able to obtain the equipment without difficulty. Including paper, most printing materials and machinery were imported from Europe, making it very costly for publishers to print a newspaper of reasonable quality.<sup>47</sup> The publication of journals with pictures was especially unusual for the Ottoman press, both in terms of economic and technical difficulties. Ahmet

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<sup>43</sup> Enis Tahsin Til, *Gazeteler ve Gazeteciler*. (haz.) İbrahim Şahin, (Ankara : Bilge Kitabevi, 2004), p.1-2.

<sup>44</sup> Emin Yalman, "The Development of Modern Turkey as Measured by Its Press", p.47.

<sup>45</sup> Cavit Orhan Tütengil, *İngiltere'de Türk Gazeteciliği, 1867-1967*, (İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2011), p.10.

<sup>46</sup> Fatih Damlıbağ, "Hamidiye Kağıt Fabrikası", *OTAM*, 37/Bahar 2015, 19-60, p.25.

<sup>47</sup> Fatih Damlıbağ, "Hamidiye Kağıt Fabrikası", p.25.

Ihsan Tokgöz, editor of *Servet-i Fünun*, a prominent and longstanding Ottoman scientific and literary journal, recounted the difficulties he faced in publishing a weekly newspaper with pictures.<sup>48</sup> At some point, he made a trip to Europe to explore modern printing techniques and obtain the necessary printing materials to pursue the publication of the illustrated *Servet-i Fünun*.<sup>49</sup>

An important part of the newspapers' budget was spent on covering staff wages. The staff of an average newspaper consisted of typesetters, machinists, lithographers, an editor-in-chief, editors, correspondents, translators, clerks, distributors, etc. Apart from the cost of materials and staff, publishers also had to factor in stamp duty, for which the newspaper had to set a stamp that cost 2 *para*. This was abolished in 1900, and Hüseyin Cahid has recorded that newspaper owners had to raise a lot of money thanks to it.<sup>50</sup> There was also a cost for information sources. There were two types of information sources; these were other newspapers, either European or national, and the telegrams from news agencies - these were Havas, Reuters and Wolff.<sup>51</sup>

Due to structural challenges, the newspaper industry in the Ottoman Empire could not be directly controlled by market forces. However, important examples can be observed that demonstrate newspapers having commercial interests and marketing strategies. Special sections such as knowledge tests, puzzles and competitions increasingly occupied more space on the last pages of the magazines to attract readers' attention.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, the publication of serialized novels in newspapers became a journalistic tradition because it proved to be a remarkably successful means of getting readers'

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<sup>48</sup> Ahmet İhsan Tokgöz, *Matbuat Hatıralarım*, (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2012), p.74.

<sup>49</sup> Gürbey Hiz, "Servet-i Fünûn'da Toplumsal Mekânın Anlatılar İle Üretimi:Tahayyüller, İnşalar Ve Deneyimler Atlası (1891-1910)", (Phd Dissertation, İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi, 2020), p.79.

<sup>50</sup> Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, *Edebi hatıralar* (1875-1957), (İstanbul: Akşam Kitaphanesi, 1935), p.111. "O zamanlar gazetelerin başında bir de pul derdi vardı. Her gazeteye iki paralık bir pul yapıştırılırdı. İmtiyaz sahipleri Mabeyne baş vura vura sonunda yolunu bulmuşlar, bu pul vergisini bağışlatmayı başarmışlardı. Mihran, yazar ve çevirmenlerin hakkından on para kesebilmek için nasıl dört gözle fırsat ararsa Abdullah Zühtü de imtiyaz sahibinden beş on para vurabilcek fırsatları hiç kaçırmazdı. Pul vergisinin kaldırılmasını işte böyle fırsatlardan biri saydı. Mihran'ın cebine bu yüzden oldukça para girecekti."

<sup>51</sup> Ceren Uçan, "The news agencies in the Ottoman Empire: Havas, Reuters and the Ottoman Telegraph Agency (1862-1914)", (Phd Dissertation, Bilkent University, 2019)

<sup>52</sup> Ahu Selin Erkul Yağcı, "Turkey's reading (R)evolution: A study on books, readers and translation (1840-1940)", (PhD Dissertation, Boğaziçi University, 2011), p.141.

attention. A study that examined the issues of *İkdam* between 1894-1904 showed that this journal published 20 translated and 32 original serial novels in a decade.<sup>53</sup>

In light of this information, some observations can be made about the cost of the newspaper market to both demand and suppliers. In the second half of the 19th century, journalism was a matter of capital, but the Hamidian regime's attempts to create a controlled press did not allow for the emergence of a proper newspaper market. Although they were free to face economic pressures in the non-competitive atmosphere of the Hamidian press, unlike the second constitutional era, it was difficult to survive without subsidies and endorsement from the palace.

Nevertheless, efforts at professionalization can be seen even before the second constitutional era. Journalists who practiced another profession in addition to journalism were gradually replaced by newspaper employees who devoted themselves full-time to journalism. Accordingly, journalism took on a new meaning in the eyes of journalists that transcended its political and literary boundaries. For example, Mehmet Tahir, columnist of *Malumat*, expressed that journalism requires integrity: "Journalism does not go hand in hand with ignorance. It is an art that only conscious people can do. If malice and ill will were involved, then it would be a betrayal."<sup>54</sup> In the same vein, journalists often commented on the meticulousness of their profession. Writer of *Mecmua-ı Edebiye* stated, "Journalism is one of the most meticulous professions whose members can hardly become wealthy."<sup>55</sup> The journalists also followed the new journalistic trends from around the world. They compared how French, English and American journalism was practiced, discussed new methods such as the interview, issued new developments on journalism education, etc.<sup>56</sup>

Over time, newspapers developed their own common standards. As described by Ahmet Emin Yalman, Ottoman newspapers were similar in terms of format. All newspapers had long editorials that occupied their first pages. Ömer Turan, who examined twenty-two Ottoman-Turkish newspapers published in Bulgaria, has also shown that these newspapers paid as much attention to the editorial as the newspapers

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<sup>53</sup> Ali Serdar, Reyhan Tutumlu Serdar, "Tradition of Serial Novels in Ottoman/Turkish Literature", (Athens: ATINER'S Conference Paper Series, 2014), p.7.

<sup>54</sup> Mehmet Tahir, "Sahib-i İmtiyaz-ı İkdam ve Gazetecilik", *Malumat*, 23 April 1903.

<sup>55</sup> Mehmed Ekrem, "Bir Bahtiyar Gazeteci", *Mecmua-i Edebiyye*, 29 March 1900.

<sup>56</sup> Hâki, "Yeni Gazetecilik: Enter Viyov", *Mektep*, 1 May 1896; M.Sadık, "İleride Gazetecilik", *Servet-i Fünun*, 29 July 1892; Mahmut Rıza, "İngiltere'de Gazetecilik", *Servet-i Fünun*, 26 October 1908.

in Constantinople.<sup>57</sup> The editorials were followed by domestic and foreign news quoted from European newspapers or local newspapers, and before the notices/advertisements on the last pages there were letters from readers, or short news items about cultural issues, interesting events abroad, new books, crimes, etc.<sup>58</sup>

While journalism went on like this, in 1906-1907, two years before the Second Constitutional Era, Ottoman newspaper readers had only four dailies in *Tercüman-ı Hakikat*, *Sabah*, *İkdam* and *Saadet*, which were all published in Constantinople.<sup>59</sup> They were sold for ten paras per copy. *İkdam* did not accept subscribers within İstanbul, but for the provinces a subscription, including postage, cost 90 *kuruş* for six months, 180 *kuruş* for a year; and it was 20 francs for six months, or 38 francs a year for those living abroad. *Sabah*'s subscription cost almost the same: 95 *kuruş* for six months', 180 *kuruş* for a year for the provinces and İstanbul; 22 francs for six months, and 40 francs a year for those living abroad. Both newspapers did not accept subscribers for a three-month period.

These four dailies had almost no differences in content and format. The editorial was followed by the *Tevcihat* section, which reported on the medals or promotions awarded by the Sultan; *Askeriyye* contained news from the army; and *Tebligat* announced any official decisions. All three newspapers devoted much space to news about the construction of the Palace, especially news about the construction of the Hejaz Railways. They mostly reported non-political, incidental news such as, "the wedding of the King of Spain", "a strange hotel in America ..." or some developments from faraway countries such as "Conflict between the governments of San Salvador and Guatemala", "Manchurian trains ...". On the following pages there were columns like "Stock exchange news", or detailed price tables of some products, mostly vegetables. The last pages were always reserved for advertisements, which contained large headlines and drawings.<sup>60</sup>

The catalog of Ottoman Turk Periodicals, published by Hasan Duman between 1828-1928, lists 63 periodicals published at least twice a month between 1905-1908. A

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<sup>57</sup> Ömer Turan, *The Turkish Minority in Bulgaria (1878-1908)*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1998), p.288.

<sup>58</sup> A. Emin Yalman, "The Development of Modern Turkey as Measured by Its Press", p.,123.

<sup>59</sup> Uygur Kocabaşoğlu, *Hürriyet'i Beklerken: İkinci Meşrutiyet Basını*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), p.36.

<sup>60</sup> *İkdam*, 7 December 1906, 5 October 1906; *Sabah*, 28 December 1906, 21 July 1906, 10 December 1907; *Tercüman-ı Hakikat* 17 July 1906, 31 October 1906, 26 December 1907.

considerable part of them consisted of the official organs of the state institutions *Ceride-i Askeriye*, *Ceride-i Bahriye* and *Ceride-i Tibbiye-i Askeriye*, as well as the official publications of the provinces *Edirne*, *Kastamonu* and *Kahire*. 5 periodicals appeared in Arabic and Turkish, 2 in Arabic, 3 in French and Turkish. 30 of these publications called themselves a "newspaper" and only 12 of them were dailies. Most of the weekly or fortnightly newspapers stated that they "currently" publish in this way. A possible reason for this statement could be that the publishers intended to increase their publication frequency according to their financial situation. Not only Constantinople, Plovdiv and Smyrna, but also Lebanon and Cairo were important centers of Ottoman Press.<sup>61</sup>

Similar to their counterparts in İstanbul, early Lebanese journalists placed more emphasis on expressing opinions and informing readers about cultural and scientific developments than on conveying facts. Butrus al-Bustani, an important Lebanese intellectual, explained this preference in his educational journal *al-Jinan* (1870-1886). According to him, there were enough Arabic journals that provided news, but more publications were needed "to disseminate universal knowledge - scientific, cultural, historical, industrial, commercial ... and the like-as in foreign lands, where their usefulness has become obvious."<sup>62</sup> Indeed, from the 1850s onwards, several Arabic journals were published, and as Ami Ayalon notes in his detailed study of journalism in the Arab Middle East, some of them were able to achieve considerable circulation in a short time. In particular, journals published in Beirut, the first center of private Arab journalism, such as *Hadiqat'ul Akhbar*, *Al- Jawaib*, *Al- Jinan*, and *Al- Muqtataf* reached readers from "Fez to Baghdad, from Beirut to Aden, from Cairo to Bombay, as well as in Europe."<sup>63</sup> Thanks to the intense activity of missionary groups for the country's education and printing, Lebanon came into contact with Western ideas earlier than elsewhere in the Middle East. As a result, Lebanon was the scene of an intellectual movement in the mid-19th century that aimed to enlighten Arab society with modern concepts while reviving its own heritage. In this context, Lebanese intellectuals viewed the newspaper as an effective tool for transforming society.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Hasan Duman, *Osmanlı-Türk Süreli Yayınları ve Gazeteleri Bibliyografyası ve Toplu Kataloğu (1828 – 1928)*, (Ankara: Enformasyon ve Dokümantasyon Hizmetleri Vakfı, 2000)

<sup>62</sup> Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East*, (Oxford University Press:1st edition, 1995), p.35

<sup>63</sup> Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East*, p.147.

<sup>64</sup> Basiliyus Bawardi, "First Steps in Writing Arabic Narrative Fiction: The Case of *Ḥadīqat al-Akhbār*", *Die Welt des Islams* 48 (2008), 170-195

*Ḥadīqat al-Akhbār* (1858-1911), edited by Khalil al-Khuri, is considered one of the most influential Lebanese newspapers and inspired other aspiring Arab journalists. The twice-weekly newspaper had many similarities in format, regularity, and content with contemporary European newspapers read by the Lebanese elite. Reports on political developments from Beirut, Syria, Egypt, Istanbul as well as Europe, summaries of the Ottoman and international press, as well as reports from its own correspondents appeared on the four pages of *Ḥadīqat al-Akhbār*.<sup>65</sup> It was the newspaper with the largest circulation in the Syria-Lebanon region, however *Ḥadīqat al-Akhbār* did not manage to cover its expenses from sales alone. The newspaper was financed by a wealthy businessman, and it also received a subvention from the Ottoman government. Thus, commercial news from Beirut, the Ottoman Empire, and Europe, as well as official decrees from the Ottoman government, formed important parts of the newspaper's content. In addition, the newspaper devoted considerable attention to issues of Arabic language and literature, and also published numerous translations of French works of fiction, novels, and short stories.<sup>66</sup>

Although state regulation of journalism in the Ottoman Empire began in the 1850s, journalists in Lebanon and Syria, unlike their counterparts in İstanbul and Anatolia, still had flexible conditions until the 1880s thanks to their distance from the capital.<sup>67</sup> However, the strict press policy of Abdulhamid did not exclude Lebanon. Lebanese newspapers began to be carefully monitored by the Ottoman administration, just as many İstanbul newspapers were controlled. Despite the tentative censorship, those who carried out their journalistic activities in Beirut took remarkable risks to publish their thoughts or facts. Occasionally, editors refused to submit newspapers for censorship or published content that had already been omitted by the censors. For example, most Beirut newspapers reported extensively on the Egyptian crisis, a sensitive issue for the Ottoman administration, despite the warnings and blockings; and some newspapers reported directly from their correspondents in Cairo and Alexandria.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East*, p.32.

<sup>66</sup> Basiliyus Bawardi, "First Steps in Writing Arabic Narrative Fiction: The Case of *Ḥadīqat al-Akhbār*", *Die Welt des Islams*, 48 (2008) 170-195, p.174, 180.

<sup>67</sup> D. Cioeta, "Ottoman Censorship in Lebanon and Syria, 1876–1908", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 10(2), (1979). 167-186, p.170-172.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, p.176.

As a result of the increasing repression of the press in Lebanon, most Lebanese journalists began to emigrate to Egypt, Europe and North Africa, and from the 1880s to South America. Between 1880 and 1908, there were nearly 297 Lebanese newspapers, but only 68 were published in Lebanon. Egypt, in particular, received many Lebanese and Syrian journalists who invested their talent in journalism in Egypt; and Cairo and Alexandria replaced Beirut as the center of Arab journalism.<sup>69</sup>

After this succinct overview, it can be safely assumed that newspapers published in different regions were distributed throughout the empire. Moreover, not only the newspapers published within the borders circulated in the Ottoman lands, but also important European newspapers such as the *Times*, *Le Temps*, *Kölnische Zeitung*, and *Neue Freie Presse*, among others, were read by Ottoman readers. Despite the strict censorship policy of the Hamidian regime, the Ottomans were able to reach the banned publications, which were mainly the Young Turk newspapers from Geneva, England, Cairo and Bulgaria. According to Ahmet İhsan Tokgöz, the Turkish newspapers from Plovdiv and Sofia were in great demand in the Empire and were sold in large quantities.<sup>70</sup> Banned publications were smuggled into the Empire by various methods. Some newspapers published in very thin papers were sent to İstanbul in envelopes.<sup>71</sup> Moreover, most of the post offices opened by European states allowed the "undesirable" publications to be smuggled into the Ottoman countries, as the Ottoman Government could not hinder the foreign post offices that enjoyed the privileges.<sup>72</sup>

Several autobiographical sources from this period, according to Benjamin Fortna, reflect the pride of being a subscriber to various newspapers and magazines. These accounts also show how the number of journals subscribed to became a theme of displaying intellectuality and being well-educated. One such memoir belongs to the poet and novelist Halide Nusret, which traces her "beautiful memories" of reading newspapers with her mother:

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<sup>69</sup> Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East*, p.50. "From 1880-1908, a period equal in length, Beirut produced 42 private papers —an increase of some 60 percent over the previous period— but Cairo and Alexandria together yielded an astonishing 627 newspapers and journals (514 and 113 respectively)"

<sup>70</sup> Ahmet İhsan Tokgöz, *Matbuat Hatıralarım*, (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2012), p.163.

<sup>71</sup> İpek K. Yosmaoğlu, "Chasing the Printed Word: Press Censorship in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1913", *Turkish Studies Association Journal*, 27, (2003), 15-49, p.28.; BEO.000651.048818.001 (Posta ile kapalı zarfta ve kuşaklar içinde gelen Ali Şefkati'nin İstikbal gazetesini)

<sup>72</sup> Server İskit, *Türkiye'de Matbuat İdareleri ve Politikaları*, (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basın ve Yayın Genel Müdürlüğü, 1943), p.92.

After the midday meal we would stretch out together on the bed and read the newspaper *İkdam*. In those days only a few families bought newspapers, but we had a subscription, the paper arriving every morning. My mother had become accustomed to it since my father's time. In those days, together with the morning paper *İkdam* we subscribed to Servet-i Fünûn, *Musavver Malûmât* and *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*<sup>73</sup>

Although newspaper sales were not very high, as Halide Nusret noted, the audience did not consist of a few specific groups. Newspapers targeted different segments of society, such as bureaucrats, officers, peasants, merchants, townspeople, villagers, etc. In parallel, there were more and more places like coffee houses where people could reach the reading material. The coffeehouses, which mushroomed all over the Empire from the 16th century onwards, were the most important places of public socialization. They functioned as meeting and communication places where current developments, news and rumors were discussed. Moreover, with the development of the press in the 19th century, coffee houses read both provincial and metropolitan newspapers, which the owners made available to their customers. It was common for these newspapers to be read aloud to the uneducated public.<sup>74</sup>

Thus, the press had the opportunity to extend its influence to different groups in society. François Georgeon notes that more and more people visited the coffee houses to read or listen to newspapers. A survey conducted just before World War I found that 22 out of 46 people frequented coffee houses to read or to listen the public reading of newspapers.<sup>75</sup> Interestingly, "reading salons" or reading houses, a new type of coffeehouse known in Turkish as *kıraathane*, flourished in the second half of the century. Unlike the earlier ones, these places were primarily devoted to reading, and so the latest copies of several newspapers in different languages were laid out for the free disposal of visitors.<sup>76</sup> As publishers targeted more readers from different groups, the question arose as to whether readers became a defining element in the practice of journalism. Were readers aware of different tone of reporting in different newspaper

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<sup>73</sup> Benjamin C. Fortna, *Learning to Read in the Late Ottoman Empire and the Early Turkish Republic*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p.194-195.

<sup>74</sup> Cengiz Kırılı, "Kahvehaneler: 19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Kamuoyu", in *Osmanlı Kahvehaneleri: Mekân, Sosyalleşme, İktidar*, (KitapYayınevi, 2009), p.112.

<sup>75</sup> François Georgeon, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Son Döneminde İstanbul Kahvehâneleri", *Doğu'da Kahve ve Kahvehaneler*, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1999), 43-86.

<sup>76</sup> *İbid.*

titles? Were the differences in reporting style significant enough for readers? Did members of different political factions or different social groups identify with different newspapers?

### 1.1. Languages of the Ottoman Newspapers

The multilingual and multiethnic character of the Ottoman Empire was reflected in its press, which consisted of many periodicals published in many different languages as well as different alphabets. Therefore, it is difficult to define which periodicals are considered "foreign press" and to distinguish them from the "Turkish/Ottoman press". Various periodicals have been considered as foreign press. Ziyad Ebuzziya classifies them under the following subcategories: 'Those published in the Ottoman Empire by Ottomans', 'Those published in non-Ottoman areas by Ottoman subjects or the Ottoman government', and 'Those published in Ottoman areas by foreigners such as diplomats or merchants'.<sup>77</sup> The most controversial sub-category includes publications by Ottoman subjects in languages other than Ottoman Turkish. To consider these publications as "foreign" would be to ignore their overlaps and interactions with the Ottoman-Turkish journals. Murat Cankara points out that this categorization also leads to a misperception that attributes "using Turkish" only to Turk Muslims and excludes non-Muslims from the Ottoman Turkish press.<sup>78</sup>

The newspapers were in constant dialog with one another. They quoted each other or argued about journalistic principles. This interaction sometimes manifested itself in collaboration. For example, young Ottomans first published their articles in the *Courrier d'Orient*, a French magazine that appeared in İstanbul. After observing the reactions for a few days, they published the same articles in their newspapers as if they were quoting them.<sup>79</sup> In addition, the journalists followed the news and developments that were relevant to the other newspapers and their editors. For example, the Armenian *Asia* newspaper followed the case of Namık Kemal's *İbret* newspaper closure and reported extensively on this case in its pages.<sup>80</sup> Interactions could also

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<sup>77</sup> Ziyad Ebuzziya, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Türkçe Dışındaki Basın" in *Türkiye'de Yabancı Dilde Basın*, (İstanbul: İÜ BYYO Yayınları, 1985).

<sup>78</sup> Murat Cankara, "Çifte Maduniyet, Çifte İşlev: Ermeni Harfli Türkçe Basında Dil ve Kimlik", *İlel Dergisi*, (sonbahar 2015), p.105-130, p.109.

<sup>79</sup> Ziyad Ebuzziya, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Türkçe Dışındaki Basın", p.31

<sup>80</sup> Murat Cankara, "Çifte Maduniyet, Çifte İşlev: Ermeni Harfli Türkçe Basında Dil ve Kimlik", p.123.

occur as polemics about professional ethics between two journalists. An example of such a polemic took place between the editors of *Vatan* and *Anatoli*, which appeared in Karamanlidika, a Turkish newspaper with a Greek alphabet. Anatoli took *Vatan*'s criticism and responded by arguing that journalism is not only about reporting, but that journalists should criticize those who maltreat the country and also praise those who serve the country well. In this regard, according to the editor of *Anatoli*, "journalists are almost the informants of the government."<sup>81</sup>

Greek was an important language for the Ottoman Press. Evangelia Balta states that in one decade between 1840-1850, 14 journals were published in Greek. According to the Ahmet Emin Yalman data, in 1876, among the 47 journals published only in İstanbul, 9 were in Greek, while among the Turkish journals there were 13.<sup>82</sup> The first periodicals in Greek appeared in İzmir with the publication of *Filos Ton Neon* (1838), which, however, did not manage to be published for a long time. In the same year, however, another Greek newspaper, *Amalthia*, appeared and was published with great circulation and impact until 1922.<sup>83</sup> Although considerable Greek newspapers appeared, the Greeks, who did not know Greek and lived mainly in Central Anatolia, could not read them. Since they spoke Turkish but wrote it in their own alphabet, they created a unique form of press language, the Karamanlidika, Turkish in the Greek alphabet (*Rumiu'l huruf Turkiü'l ibare*).<sup>84</sup>

Evangelia Balta, who has conducted extensive studies on the Karamanlidika press, suggests that the Karamanlidika press was created out of necessity. According to her, the Turkophone Rums, craftsmen and merchants, demanded news from the empire and the world. They could not read the Ottoman newspapers, which were written in the Arabic alphabet. Since they did not know the Greek language, they could not understand Greek journals such as *Neogolos*.<sup>85</sup> Thus, Karamanlidika Press responded to the needs of these Turkophone Greeks, to receive news and present themselves. Moreover, the Karamanlidika press tried to strike a balance between Ottoman and

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<sup>81</sup> Stefo Benlisoy, "19. yüzyıl ortasında Osmanlı'da "Sorumlu" Gazetecilik Tartışması Anatoli ve Vatan Kavgası", *Toplumsal Tarih*, (236, 2013), p.53.

<sup>82</sup> A. Emin Yalman, "The Development of Modern Turkey as Measured by Its Press", p.41.

<sup>83</sup> Evangelia Balta, *Karamanlı Yazınsal Mirasının Ocaklarında Madencilik*, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2019), p. 238-240.

<sup>84</sup> Şehnaz Şişmanoğlu Şimşek, "Osmanlı Tefrika Çalışmalarında Göz Ardı Edilen Bir Kaynak: Karamanlıca Anatoli Gazetesi", *Kebikeç*, (44, 2017), p.148.

<sup>85</sup> Evangelia Balta, *Gerçi Rum İsek de Rumca Bilmez Türkçe Söyleriz Karamanlılar ve Karamanlıca Edebiyat Üzerine Araştırmalar*, (İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2018), p.247.

Greek identity.<sup>86</sup> By showing different types of relationships their editors had with different groups in society, Balta argues that these newspapers were careful about their tone and style when reporting news.<sup>87</sup>

Evangelinos Misailidis, an important pioneer of the Karamanlidika press, began publishing *Anatoli* in Izmir in 1840. After moving to Constantinople in 1850, *Anatoli* continued publishing with some interruptions and structural changes until 1923.<sup>88</sup> *Anatoli* provided its readers from Constantinople and many Anatolian cities such as İzmir, Bursa, Çarşamba, Ereğli, Mersin, Niğde, Adapazarı and Lefke, Adana, Adapazarı, Bafra, Samsun, Ürgüp, Ünye, Şebinkarahisar and Konya, with both domestic and international news.<sup>89</sup> It also included sections on Anatolian Greeks' intellectual activities, biographies of the important figures, changes, literature, etc. Many other Karamanlidika journals such as *Ahteri* (1886-1887), *Şafak* (1887), *Terakki* (1888), and *Asya* (1908-1912) were published but these did not stick around like *Anatoli*. Most of them had financial problems and depended on the support of their readers.<sup>90</sup>

Another important language of the Ottoman Press was Armenian. Zakarya Mildanoglu lists 844 Armenian periodicals between 1794-1915, most of which were published in Ottoman lands. These journals reached readers from very distant places. For example, *Arsaluys Araradyan*, the first Armenian periodical published in Smyrna in the mid-19th century, reached readers from the Caucasus, India, and Iran. Thus, its editors were able to accumulate considerable capital and succeeded in establishing their own publishing house.<sup>91</sup> Moreover, a careful examination of the Mildanoglu catalog reveals the common interests of the editors of these journals with those of the Ottoman Empire. Even though some journalists tried to "be the voice of the Ottoman Armenians

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<sup>86</sup> Şehnaz Şişmanoğlu, "The Anatoli Newspaper and the Heyday of the Karamanli Press", in *Cries and Whispers in Karamanlidika Books*, (Harrassowitz Verlag-Wiesbaden, 2010), p.109-124

<sup>87</sup> Evangelia BALTA, *Gerçi Rum İsek de Rumca Bilmez Türkçe Söyleriz*, p.303.

<sup>88</sup> Şehnaz Şişmanoğlu, "Osmanlı Tefrika Çalışmalarında Göz Ardı Edilen Bir Kaynak: Karamanlıca Anatoli Gazetesi", p.152.

<sup>89</sup> Şehnaz Şişmanoğlu Şimşek, "Osmanlı Tefrika Çalışmalarında Göz Ardı Edilen Bir Kaynak", p.164.

<sup>90</sup> Evangelia Balta, *Gerçi Rum İsek de Rumca Bilmez Türkçe Söyleriz*, p.256.

<sup>91</sup> Zakarya Mildanoglu, *Ermenice Süreli Yayınlar 1794-2000*, (İstanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2014), p. 21

and express their difficulties", as did the editors of *Orogir g. Bolso* (1869-1878), they supported the idea of preserving the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>92</sup>

After noting their inhomogeneous nature and ideological differences, Hasmik Stepanyan cites 119 periodicals in Turkish between 1840-1947 with the Armenian alphabet. Just like the Armenian periodicals, the Armeno-Turkish periodicals also reached various different readers. They had many subscribers especially in Constantinople.<sup>93</sup> According to Cankara, the Armeno-Turkish journals advocated harmony between the "Ottoman" and "Armenian" identities of the Armenian community. In addition, they aimed to integrate Turkish-speaking Armenians and also to protect them from misinformation. In 1909, the Armenian newspaper *İzmirli* explained its project of publishing half in Turkish as an attempt to help its co-religionists, the Turkish-speaking Armenians. In this way they could be well informed about what their Turkish neighbors were discussing and reading in other newspapers.

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Another ethno-regional group that contributed to the Ottoman press were the Ottoman Sephardic Jews, who lived mainly in Salonica, Smyrna, and Constantinople. They published many periodicals in Ladino and in Hebrew, which was less frequently preferred. Ziyad Ebuzziya stated that the Ottoman Jews published a total of 86 Spanish and Ladino newspapers.<sup>95</sup> Constantinople, Smyrna and Salonica were the centers of Jewish journalism. Salonica in particular, where more than 100 Jewish newspapers were published from 1864 to 1941, as claimed by Sarah Abrevaya Stein, became the "undisputed center of publication" of the Ottoman Jewry.<sup>96</sup> The first Ladino newspaper, *La Buena Esperansa*, was published by Aharon Hazan in İzmir in 1871. A year later, *El Tiempo*, edited by David Fresco, appeared as the first daily newspaper of the Jews of İstanbul. In addition to these two initiatives that began in İzmir and Constantinople, Ladino *La Epoca* (1879) and *Al Avenir* (1897), published in Salonica, should also be mentioned.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Zakarya Mildanoglu, *Ermenice Süreli Yayınlar 1794-2000*, p.42.

<sup>93</sup> Hasmik Stepanyan, *Ermeni Harfli Türkçe Kitaplar ve Süreli Yayınlar Bibliyografyası (1727-1968)*, (İstanbul: Turkuaz Yayınları, 2005)

<sup>94</sup> Murat Cankara, "Çifte Maduniyet, Çifte İşlev: Ermeni Harfli Türkçe Basında Dil ve Kimlik", p.117.

<sup>95</sup> Ziyad Ebuzziya, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Türkçe Dışındaki Basın"

<sup>96</sup> Sarah Abrevaya Stein, *Making Jews modern: the Yiddish and Ladino press in the Russian and Ottoman Empires*, (Bloomington: Indiana University, 2006), p.65.

<sup>97</sup> Gad Nassi(ed.), *Jewish Journalism and Printing Houses in the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, (İstanbul: İsis Yayıncılık, 2001).

The first daily newspaper of the Ottoman Ladino speaking Jews of Constantinople was *El Tiempo*, which not only provided internal news, but also informed Jewish society about contemporary political and moral principles. It not only gained importance within Jewish society in Constantinople, but also managed to have a wide circulation and reach readers from Salonika, Cairo, Smyrna, Jerusalem, etc. Moreover, *El Tiempo* created a journalistic standard. Many Ladino newspapers published in different cities referred to *El Tiempo* and entered into discussions with it. One of the most important features of this journal was its supportive position towards Ottomanism. As stated in the motive statement of the first issue, the editors were grateful to the Sultan for allowing the publication of the journal. They also made a point of using fluent Ottoman Turkish since "they were under the Ottoman government" and planned "a section written in Turkish and transliterated into Hebrew."<sup>98</sup>

Ottoman Ladino/Jewish newspapers throughout the Empire carefully tracked each other and were in constant contact or even competition. Moreover, this careful follow up was not limited to the Ladino press; their editors also read and quoted from Turkish newspapers. As a result of this constant competition, Jewish journalism was able to create journalistic standardization in terms of content, style, and material. As the example of *La Epoca* shows, the Ladino newspapers had editorials on the first page, usually dealing with local and international politics, and on the following pages there were reports on developments in the city, crimes, summaries of the Turkish and Greek press, and announcements.<sup>99</sup>

As for their other functions, they held discussions on languages and identities of the Ottoman Jewry. As French culture had become more prevalent among Jews, especially through the schools of *L'Alliance Israélite Universelle*, more Jews preferred to publish in French. The *Journal de Salonique*, one of the dominant French-language newspapers of Ottoman Jews, served to popularize French culture and language.<sup>100</sup> In some cases, it also functioned as a school of journalism. For example, Sam Levy, who once worked for the *Journal de Salonique* and then became editor of Ladino *La Epoca*,

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<sup>98</sup> Sarah Abrevaya Stein, *Making Jews modern*, p.55.

<sup>99</sup> Rifat Bali (ed.), *Jewish Journalism and Press in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey*, (İstanbul: Libra Kitap, 2016)

<sup>100</sup> Yvette Bürki, Rosa Sánchez, "On Verbal Hygiene and Linguistic Mavens: Language Ideologies in the Ottoman and New York Judeo-Spanish Press.", in *Jewish Journalism and Press in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey*, (İstanbul: Libra Kitap, 2016), p.22-23.

adopted the former as his school.<sup>101</sup> Thus, between the influences of two cultures, language became an issue of identity for the Ottoman Sephardic Jews. Many prominent journals of different ideologies, such as *La Epoca* and *Al Avenir*, supported the idea that Ottoman Jews had to accept Turkish as one of its languages within the influence of French.<sup>102</sup>

The French journals within the Ottoman Empire can be divided into three periods with different characteristics. The first period started with *Bulletin de Nouvelles* and *La Gazette Française de Constantinople*, which were published by the French embassy in Turkey to explain the revolutionary ideas mainly to the French citizens within the empire. The second period began in İzmir from 1824 with the publication of Levanten French newspapers, which allowed the representation of Ottoman interests and thus the Ottomans. In the third period, writing in French appeared as a Turkish Ottoman phenomenon. After the 1870s, more and more Turkish editors began to publish in French, so that the Francophonie of the Ottoman press became a conscious choice that belonged directly to the Turkish-Ottoman context.<sup>103</sup>

One of the main reasons for preferring French was the French Revolution and its influence on journalism. In particular, political journalism, which became a predominant tool of the Young Ottomans, had its heyday in the Third Republic.<sup>104</sup> Secondly, French was considered the language of business and politics during this period. British newspapers such as *Levant Herald*, *Impartial* and *Staumbol* were also published in French.<sup>105</sup> The number of French newspapers was 98 just before 1908, which shows the importance of French to the Ottoman Press

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<sup>101</sup> Sarah Abrevaya Stein, Making Jews modern; Olga Borovaya, “Le Journal de Salonique”, in: *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World*, Executive Editor Norman A. Stillman. Consulted online on 27 May 2021 <[http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1878-9781\\_ejiw\\_SIM\\_000282](http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1878-9781_ejiw_SIM_000282)>

<sup>102</sup> Sarah Abrevaya Stein, “Creating a Taste for News: Historicizing Judeo-Spanish Periodicals of the Ottoman Empire”, *Jewish History*, (2000), Vol.14, No.1, pp. 9-28, p.12,14.

<sup>103</sup> Gérard Groc, İbrahim Çağlar, *La Presse Française de Turquie de 1795 à nos jours*, (İstanbul:Isis,1985), p.17.

<sup>104</sup> Ali Budak, “Fransız Devrimi’nin Osmanlı’ya Armağanı Gazete: Türk Basınının Doğuşu”, *Turkish Studies*, 3(7), (2012), 663-681

<sup>105</sup> Gerard Groc, “Türkiye’de Fransızca Basını”, *Türkiye’de Yabancı Dilde Basın*, (İstanbul: İÜ BYYO Yayınları, 1985), p.61-65.

## 1.2. Hamidian Regime and the Ottoman Press

The state played a crucial role in the relationship between readers and publishers of the Ottoman Press. In particular, Abdulhamid's regime was considered a "dark age" in this respect, the worst period for Ottoman Journalism. In his book, *Constantinople aux Derniers jours d'Abdul-Hamid*, Paul Fesh recorded his observations during his stays in Constantinople and reported the "terrible" situation of the Ottoman newspapers. He also noted that the newspapers preferred death to living their lives without any power and extremely restricted by the Sultan's wishes.<sup>106</sup> Despite the timid suppression from the "cruel and ignorant" palace, the press made considerable progress in publishing techniques; on the other hand, journalism lost its appeal as a respectful profession with all its concerns about content, style, and ethics. Since newspapers were allowed to write as long as they met the sultan's expectations and drew their information from the palace's preferred sources, they stayed away from politics and focused on cultural and scientific issues.<sup>107</sup>

The irregular application of censorship made the journalists pay attention not only to the content, but also to the "words" that were associated with the revolutionary ideas and personalities, such as Midhad Pasha, *Hürriyet* (freedom); or that were connected with the regime and the state, such as *Istibdat*; finally, the words that have possible negative connotations with the personality of Abdulhamid, such as *Yıldız*, *Burun* (nose), etc. Apart from the choice of words, some typos made unintentionally could have fatal consequences for the newspapers. For example, *Takvim-i Vekayi*, the official publication of the Ottoman state, was shut down because of a typo between two letters that turned *hasbelicab*, meaning "with reason," into *hasblaicab* meaning "without reason."<sup>108</sup> Ahmet Emin Yalman explained that the increase in the number of banned words forced journalists to hide intended meanings between the ambiguous lines and create a new language whose words represented different meanings than those that were intended.<sup>109</sup>

To complement press censorship, all telegraph lines and posts were kept under control. As a result, it was impossible to get reliable news most of the time, as all news that

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<sup>106</sup> Paul Fesh, *Constantinople aux derniers jours d'Abdul-Hamid*, (Paris: M. Rivière, 1907), p.50.

<sup>107</sup> Server İskit, *Türkiye'de Matbuat İdareleri ve Politikaları*, p. 247.

<sup>108</sup> Ahmet İhsan Tokgöz, *Matbuat Hatıralarım*, p.111.

<sup>109</sup> A. Emin Yalman, "The Development of Modern Turkey as Measured by Its Press", p.82.

reached readers was censored and distorted according to the palace's favor. According to some scholars, these obstacles to receiving true information created some social problems within Ottoman society. First, due to the restricted news, people considered inaccurate narratives and rumors to be at least as reliable as the news published by the journals. Moreover, historians of Ottoman journalism linked this disastrous atmosphere of Second Constitutional Journalism to Abdulhamid's repressive press regime. As they suggest, the countless newspapers published in the 1908 Press Boom by anyone who had ideas to express reflected both the thirty years of silence and the yearning for freedom of expression.<sup>110</sup>

Although the censorship paradigm still dominates Hamidian-era journalism, there are some revisionist approaches. In her article "The Palace and the Press, Two-Way Relationship Between Abdulhamid II and the Press," Ebru Boyar attempts to reevaluate Abdulhamid's relationship with the press outside of the censorship paradigm and offers a revisionist approach to the Hamidian system of the press. While accepting the fact that Abdulhamid needed a controlled press to protect the image of the powerful sultan, she argues that the press also needed the palace for its survival. Therefore, it is misleading to claim that the relationship between the administration and the press was based only on oppression by political power. Instead, there was a mutually beneficial arrangement.<sup>111</sup>

The Palace's position in this reciprocal relationship was motivated by two main concerns. First, Abdulhamid wanted to restore the absolute legitimacy of Ottoman rule, as well as the traditional relationship between the *Reaya* and the Sultan, which was based on unconditional kingship.<sup>112</sup> The importance given to channels of communication such as the telegraph and railways was part of this policy. Telegraph lines had become an important political tool. During his reign, Abdulhamid had established an effective communication network with more than 30,000 km of new telegraph lines. These new telegraph lines were not only used for communication between Yıldız and his agents but were seen by the population from remote places as a means of direct communication with the Sultan. Yakup Bektaş reports that some

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<sup>110</sup> Orhan Koloğlu, *Osmanlı'dan 21. Yüzyıla Basın Tarihi*, (İstanbul: Pozitif Yayınları, 2018), p.87.

<sup>111</sup> Ebru Boyar, "The Press and the Palace: The Two-Way Relationship Between Abdulhamid II and the Press, 1876-1908", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol 69, 1-issue 3, (October 2006), 417-432

<sup>112</sup> İpek Yosmaoğlu, "Chasing the Printed Word: Press Censorship in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1913", 15-49, p.47.

people from cities such as Diyarbakır, Ankara, Sinop, Trabzon, Sivas, and Kayseri thought that their demands did not reach Constantinople because of the officials, and therefore marched to the telegraph houses to be able to speak directly with the sultan.<sup>113</sup>

In this way, the press was seen both as a danger that had to be kept under control and as a powerful tool to reinforce the Sultan's image and maintain harmony in the "well-protected areas". The press was encouraged to publish on certain topics that benefited the palace. Among them, news about violent acts from the European states were preferred, which could create a contradiction between the merciful Sultan and cruel Europe. Moreover, the decrees, views and undertakings of the Sultan reached the subjects through the pages of newspapers with very solemn phrases. Occasions such as the Friday prayer ceremony (*cuma selamlığı*), which were meant to reflect the sultan's political and religious power, were reported by the newspapers with detail.<sup>114</sup>

Second, the Palace's relationship with the press was strongly linked to the palace's public relations. In order to protect his image as the legitimate sultan, the palace not only banned any mind-boggling publication from entering the country, but also kept a close eye on the European newspapers. The special press office of the Yıldız Palace was quick to respond to any articles which contained negative comments about Abdulhamid and his regime.<sup>115</sup> Since Abdulhamid was very sensitive about his image, he paid close attention to the comments of the European newspapers about the Ottoman Empire. In addition to following the European newspapers through the press office established in the Yıldız Palace, he tried various methods for successful image management.

Abdulhamid had personal contacts with many correspondents of various European newspapers. Ottoman diplomats in Europe also rendered good services in this regard. By studying the activities of the Ottoman diplomat Karatodori in Belgium, Houssine Alloul and Roel Markey have shown that Ottoman diplomats became the individual agents of Abdulhamid's press administration abroad. Thanks to his profound knowledge of the political and ideological tendencies of the Belgian press, Karatodori

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<sup>113</sup> Yakup Bektaş, "The Sultan's Messenger: Cultural Constructions of Ottoman Telegraphy, 1847-1880", *Technology and Culture*, Vol. 41, No. 4 (October 2000), p. 669-696., p.694-695.

<sup>114</sup> Ebru Boyar, "The Press and the Palace: The Two-Way Relationship Between Abdulhamid II and the Press, 1876-1908", p.424.

<sup>115</sup> Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire 1876-1909*, (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 1998), p.137

was able to negotiate with the editors of Belgian journals in favor of the Ottoman Sultan. He also benefited from the Belgian government's intentions to trade with the Ottoman Empire.<sup>116</sup>

As another way of preventing hostile publications, the Palace subscribed to many European newspapers and tried to lure some of them with regular payments or various gifts.<sup>117</sup> Among the newspapers subscribed to were copies of the same newspaper in different languages. The most prestigious newspapers such as *Journal des Débats*, *Times*, and *Neue Freie Presse*, all of which had a large distribution network, were cultivated with extreme attention. For example, *Le Journal des Débats*, one of the most influential French newspapers of the 19th century, was paid regularly every month. Even when the allotments for the other newspapers published in Paris were cut and only a few newspapers could be subscribed to, *Journal des Débats* continued to receive regular allotments from the Ottoman Palace.<sup>118</sup> Abdulhamid also did not fail to recognize journalists who published commentaries or news stories on their own initiative in favor of the sultan or the Ottoman Empire, as was the case with Sidney Whitman, the *New York Herald's* Turkey correspondent charged with covering developments in the "Armenian problem." Whitman recorded in his memoirs that he received a special invitation from the Sultan because he reported on 40 Ottoman officers killed by Armenians. This report was translated and published in almost all Turkish newspapers.<sup>119</sup>

While the Hamidian administration depended on the press to protect the legitimacy of the powerful sultan and manage its image in the court of public opinion, the press needed regular relations with the palace to survive. It was difficult to continue publishing without being paid by the palace. Newspapers did not manage to cover their expenses only through their sales. Ahmet İhsan Tokgöz mentions in his memoirs that *Servet-i Fünun*, a popular literary-scientific journal, with the exception of the *Edebiyat-ı Cedide* period, was able to cover its expenses thanks to the publishing

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<sup>116</sup> Houssine Alloul and Roel Markey "Please Deny These Manifestly False Reports": Ottoman Diplomats and the press in Belgium (1850–1914)", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 48:2, (2016), p. 267-292.

<sup>117</sup> Alpay Kabacalı, *Başlangıcından Günümüze Türkiye’de Basın Sansürü*, (İstanbul: Gazeteciler Cemiyeti, 1990), 48-82.

<sup>118</sup> BEO.002638.197776.002

<sup>119</sup> Sidney Whitman, *Turkish Memories*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914), p.30.

activities of the printing house and the allocations of the ministry Interior Affairs.<sup>120</sup> In his letter published in the second issue of *Saadet* newspaper, Ahmet Mithat Efendi described the facilities granted by Abdulhamid to the press and stated that *Saadet* began its publishing life with the help of the Sultan.<sup>121</sup> In fact, this journal was favored by the Palace. Although its allocation was suspended when its publication ceased, it was paid again on the condition that it would continue its activities in the future.<sup>122</sup> Not only journals published on Ottoman Turkish but also other local publications in other languages received subsidies from the palace.<sup>123</sup>

Some journalists used this mutual relationship between the palace and the press as an opportunity. The owner of *Sabah*, Mihran Efendi profited perfectly from this pattern of events. He even did not hesitate to mention bluntly in one of his petitions to the palace that "his newspaper, which worked for the interests of the palace, was in danger of being closed down" in order to receive additional payments from the palace.<sup>124</sup> The titles and medals awarded to journalists can also be interpreted as Hamidian public relations policy, which was seen by Ahmet Emin Yalman as a characteristic feature of the Hamidian press regime.<sup>125</sup> Press control did not follow fixed rules but was irregular and dependent on the respective interpretations of the censor officers. Journalists were able to manipulate this ambiguity and irregularity in favor of their interests, as Frierson and Yosmaoğlu noted. Moreover, in addition to accepting the patronage of the Sultan, becoming the mouthpiece of the palace was another way to profit from this "mutually beneficial relationship."<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Ahmet İhsan Tokgöz, *Matbuat Hatıralarım*, p.87.

<sup>121</sup> Ertuğrul Aydın, "Saadet Gazetesi'ndeki Edebi Faaliyet Üzerine Bir Araştırma", (PhD Dissertation, İstanbul University, 1999), p.26.

<sup>122</sup> DH.MKT.01082.00028.001; BEO.002829.212169.001

<sup>123</sup> BEO.003042.22811.003.

<sup>124</sup> Ebru Boyar, "The Press and the Palace: The Two-Way Relationship Between Abdulhamid II and the Press, 1876-1908", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol 69, (issue 3, October 2006), 417-432, p.430.

<sup>125</sup> A. Emin Yalman, "The Development of Modern Turkey as Measured by Its Press", p.83.

<sup>126</sup> İpek Yosmaoğlu, "Chasing the Printed Word: Press Censorship in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1913", *Turkish Studies Association Journal*, 27, 15-49, p.26; Elizabeth Frierson, "Unimagined Communities: Educational Reform and Civic Identity Among Late-Ottoman Women", *Critical Matrix*, (9:2, Fall 1995), p. 57-92.

## CHAPTER 2

### ETHEM RUHI AND HIS EXPERIENCES

#### 2.1. Short Biography of Ethem Ruhi

Ethem Ruhi (Balkan) was born in Fatih, İstanbul, in 1873. He graduated from Fatih Military Middle School and then from Kuleli Military Medical High School. In 1897, when he was in the third grade of Imperial Medical College, he was exiled to Tripolitania because of his political activities. With the help of the governor of Pro-Young Turks Ottoman and the Trablus branch of the Committee, he managed to escape to Geneva. There he joined the editorial staff of *Osmanlı*, which was published by İshak Sükuti and Abdullah Cevdet as the official organ of the Young Turks.<sup>127</sup> After İshak Sükuti was appointed as a doctor to the embassy in Rome and Abdullah Cevdet to the embassy in Vienna, Ruhi took over the management of the newspaper alone. He continued to edit the newspaper, which was transferred to England in 1900 under the auspices of Damat Celaledin Pasha together with Hüseyin Siret and Prince Sabahattin.<sup>128</sup>

Nevertheless, the newspaper ran into financial difficulties as two of its sponsors, Celaladdin Pasha and İshak Sukuti, died one after the other. In addition to these financial difficulties, Ethem Ruhi had serious disagreements with Prince Sabahattin, so he went to Egypt to revive the newspaper. With the support of Egyptian Halim Pashas, he began publishing *Osmanlı* in Cairo on August 15, 1903.<sup>129</sup> He frequently reported on issues such as terrorism, bloodshed, etc., and adopted a sharper, anarchist rhetoric in his last years in Cairo.<sup>130</sup> During these years, he also plotted to assassinate Abdulhamid. However, the assassination attempt failed.<sup>131</sup> He then returned to Geneva where, together with Abdullah Cevdet and with the support of Said Halim Pasha, he

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<sup>127</sup> Halil Bal, “Ethem Ruhi Balkan ve Filibe’de Yayınladığı Balkan Gazetesi”, Balkanlarda İslam Medeniyeti Milletlerarası Sempozyumu Tebliğleri, Sofya 21-23 Nisan 2000

<sup>128</sup> Hans Lucas Kieser, *Türklüğe İhtida*, p.89.

<sup>129</sup> Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902–1908*, p.53.; Ethem Ruhi Balkan, *Canlı Tarihler: Ethem Ruhi Balkan Hatıralar.ı*

<sup>130</sup> Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902–1908*, p.53-55.

<sup>131</sup> Ethem Ruhi Balkan, *Canlı Tarihler: Ethem Ruhi Balkan Hatıralar*, (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1944), p.29.

founded the Ottoman Union and Revolution Society and republished the *Osmanlı Gazette* as the organ of this organization. However, as a result of the Palace's diplomatic attempts, the newspaper was closed down by the Swiss government and Abdullah Cevdet was expelled from Geneva.<sup>132</sup>

After all these unsuccessful attempts Ruhi made a confession to the ambassador of Paris Münir Pasha and in return was employed as a clerk in the Ottoman Imperial Commissioner at Sofia. However, he was forced to resign the following year after being summoned to Istanbul in connection with the Yıldız assassination.<sup>133</sup> With the payment he was granted to return to Istanbul, he settled in Plovdiv and established a printing press. He published *Rumeli Telgrafları* in Plovdiv on 13 January 1905, the *Rumeli* on 1 July 1906, and the *Balkan* on 22 July 1906.<sup>134</sup>

After the proclamation of the constitution, the Committee wanted Ruhi to stay in Plovdiv and continue publishing *Balkan* as the propaganda organ of CUP. Accordingly, during the Constitutional Era Ruhi made propaganda for the principles of the Committee with his articles in favor of the CUP and also published articles in which he sharply criticized the attitude of the Bulgarian government towards the Turks. For this reason, he was arrested in 1911, but later released.<sup>135</sup> Between August 1 and September 30, 1912, he published another newspaper called *Eyyam*. During the Balkan War he was arrested again and sentenced to nine months in prison. After the war he joined the Bulgarian National Assembly (*Narodno Sibranie*) as a deputy for Thrace. In 1914 he again began publishing the *Balkan*, this time in Sofia.<sup>136</sup> On March 14, 1917 he published the *Resimli Balkan*, on January 14, 1919 the *Çiftçi Bilgisi*, and on March 15, 1919 again the *Balkan Gazette* in Plovdiv. Being accused of high treason against Bulgaria, Ethem Ruhi had to leave Bulgaria and flee to Turkey in 1920. Ruhi studied law at Istanbul University and began practicing law. In 1946, he became politically active again and led the formation of the *Türkiye İşçi ve Çiftçi Partisi*. Three years later, while he was the chairman of this party, he died in Istanbul.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Muammer Göçmen, *İsviçre'de Jöntürk Basını ve Türk Siyasal Hayatına Etkileri (1889-1902)*, İstanbul, 1995, p.179 ; Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p.58.

<sup>133</sup> Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p.55.

<sup>134</sup> Halil Bal, "Ethem Ruhi Balkan ve Filibe'de Yayınladığı Balkan Gazetesi", *Balkanlarda İslam Medeniyeti Milletlerarası Sempozyumu Tebliğleri*, Sofya 21-23 Nisan 2000

<sup>135</sup> Ayşe Feride Yılmaz, "The Ottoman Balkan Gazette as an Agent of Empire within the Bulgarian Nation State", 1910-1911. MA Thesis. (Budapest: Central European University, 2013), 30-31.

<sup>136</sup> Halil Bal, "Ethem Ruhi Balkan ve Filibe'de Yayınladığı Balkan Gazetesi", 370.

<sup>137</sup> Halil Bal, "Ethem Ruhi Balkan ve Filibe'de Yayınladığı Balkan Gazetesi", 371-372, 376.

## **2.2. Ethem Ruhi's Experiences in Journalism: Geneva, Folkestone and Cairo**

Prior to his arrival in Bulgaria, Ethem Ruhi had practiced journalism in various places. Ethem Ruhi 's earliest journalistic engagement was in Geneva, where he became a member of the editorial board of *Osmanlı* in 1899. Later he practiced journalism in Folkestone and Cairo respectively.<sup>138</sup> His professional career represents an example of Young-Turk journalism, which was mainly focused on and directed against the Hamidian regime. However, his style, editorial preferences and deontological code differed from one city to another. Therefore, it is important to examine his training in this craft by focusing on his experiences in these cities, each of which had its own characteristics.

### **2.2.1. Geneva: Destination for Revolutionaries and Students**

Given the political and social activities of various ethnic communities, this important Swiss city seemed to be a meeting place for various diasporas when Ruhi arrived there. Indeed, from the late 19th century onwards, Geneva had become a popular destination for the Eastern European and Middle Eastern emigrants - the latter were mostly subjects of the Ottoman Empire. There were two main reasons for immigration to Switzerland. First, at the turn of the century, the major Swiss cities such as Geneva, Bern, Zurich became important educational centers for foreign students. The latter often joined their compatriots, especially in Geneva, where they had great freedom to express their political ideas and pursue their opposition to the administrations. Although they remained in their own national environment, the diaspora members in Switzerland lived in a very international milieu. They were politicized and animated by the idea that one day they could "save" and reappropriate their countries. Thus, Switzerland seemed an attractive destination because it offered all diaspora members a safe political refuge, a place for "free ideological expression and agitation."

The *Académie de Genève*, which had been founded by Calvin in 1559, was renamed as the *Université de Genève* when the medical school began accepting students in 1876. Since this long-established institution significantly expanded several other

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<sup>138</sup> Halil Bal, "Ethem Ruhi Balkan ve Filibe'de Yayınladığı Balkan Gazetesi", *Balkanlarda İslam Medeniyeti Milletlerarası Sempozyumu Tebliğleri*, Sofya 21-23 Nisan 2000, 371-372.

departments after its reformation, it became a prestigious destination within three decades, even for non-Swiss students. Thus, in the early 1870s, the *Académie* had only 120 students, while 40 years later, in 1913, 1355 students were enrolled at the *Université de Genève* - and 1078 of them were foreigners. Russians, whose total number in 1913 was no less than 580, formed the great majority among these non-Swiss students.<sup>139</sup>

The Russian students were part of a very active Russian community in the city, as were their fellow Oriental students - Bulgarians, Persians, Poles, Romanians, Serbs, Turks who were also heavily involved in internationalist or nationalist political movements.<sup>140</sup> It was also in this city that the first Russian Marxist group was founded in 1883. After that, Geneva had become an important meeting place for Russian "revolutionaries". The opponents of the Tsar lived mainly in the *Rue de Carouge*, which was called "Karoujka" or *La Petite Russie*. In this street they also published many socialist periodicals. Significantly, *Iskra* (Sparkle), the official organ of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP), was published there from 1903.<sup>141</sup> Vladimir Lenin, the first leader of Soviet Russia, was among the dominant figures of the Marxist opposition who had remained in Geneva for a time.<sup>142</sup>

Similarly, Geneva had become a major immigration destination and an incredibly important center for the Ottoman-Turkish diaspora. At the turn of the 20th century, there were so many Ottomans living in Geneva that the street known as *La Petite Russie* also became a small Ottoman neighborhood. Armenian, Arab, Slavic and Turkish subjects of the Empire formed dynamic communities in this Swiss city. Not only were they in close communication and interaction with each other, but they also shared many common experiences with the immigrants who came from Western Europe, the newly established Balkan states, and last but not least from the Russian Empire.

Towards the end of the 19th century, Geneva had already become an important educational center for Ottoman subjects. The students, who mainly studied medicine

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<sup>139</sup> Ladislav Mysyrowicz, "Université et révolution: les étudiants d'Europe orientale à Genève au temps de Plékhanov et de Lénine", *Revue suisse d'histoire*, 25 (1975), pp. 514-562.

<sup>140</sup> Ladislav Mysyrowicz, "Université et révolution", p.522.

<sup>141</sup> Fayet Jean-François, "Les Révolutionnaires russes et polonais installés en Suisse pendant la Première Guerre mondiale", in *La Suisse et la Guerre de 1914-1918*, Genève, Slatkine, (2015), pp. 387-403.

<sup>142</sup> Fayet Jean-François, "Les Révolutionnaires russes et polonaise installés en Suisse pendant la Première Guerre mondiale", p.390. He sojourned in Geneva in 1900, 1903-1905, and 1908.

and law, formed the majority of the "Turkish" community there. Tunalı Hilmi, one of the students who had a bachelor's degree from the *Université de Genève*, prepared a guide for the upcoming Ottoman students who planned to stay in Geneva, stating that this city was "one of the most favorable places to receive an education for a Turk, a student coming from the Orient." <sup>143</sup>

Geneva was not only a haven for partisans of the Russian anti-Czarist movement, but also harbored many opponents of the Abdulhamid's at the turn of the century. All the Ottoman inhabitants of Geneva, who had different confessional and ethnolinguistic backgrounds, shared the same goal, namely the political reform of Ottoman Empire and the abdication of the Sultan. <sup>144</sup>

While the popularity of Geneva was increasing among the Young Turks, the main center of CUP in Europe was still in Paris, under the leadership of Ahmed Rıza. However, the arrival of Murad Bey, the owner of *Mizan*, in Paris in 1896 changed the balances in the committee. Shortly after his arrival, Murad Bey was appointed as the new head of the committee by notable Young Turk figures who had serious divergences with Ahmet Rıza due to the latter's positivist approach and anti-religious stance. Moreover, this new faction, under the leadership of Murad Bey, decided to republish *Mizan* as the official organ of CUP instead of Ahmet Rıza's *Meşveret*.

These first cracklings within the community turned into a real separation in April 1897 when the *Mizan* was relocated in Geneva by the majority led by Murad Bey. From this moment, Geneva formed an alternative to Paris represented by Ahmed Rıza's non-violent opposition which was neither propitious to the Islamic discourse because of its positivist tenets nor had the capacity to attract sufficient number of young supporters.<sup>145</sup> *Mizan*'s Islamic discourse was prone to get a wider readership. As a result, in a short period, Geneva became the heart of the Young Turk movement and publication as well. Moreover, considering the fact that the French government changed its attitude negatively towards the Young Turks and their publications after the Sultan's constant diplomatic efforts, it was more convenient in Geneva than in Paris to pursue opposition to Abdulhamid.<sup>146</sup> Remarkably, even after Murad Bey had a deal

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<sup>143</sup> Hans-Lucas Kieser, *Türklüğe İhtida*, p.68.

<sup>144</sup> İsa Blumi, "Hitmen, Diplomats, and Dreamers", p.310.

<sup>145</sup> Servet Tiken, *Mısır'da Jön Türk Basın ve Edebiyatı*, Fenomen Yayıncılık, 2017, p.80.

<sup>146</sup> Muammer Göçmen, *İsviçre'de Jöntürk Basını ve Türk Siyasal Hayatına Etkileri (1889-1902)*, (İstanbul: Kitabevi Yayınları, 1995), p.121-122.

with Abdulhamid and left Geneva in the mid-1897, Young Turks of Geneva did not attempt to unite with the Paris branch. Instead, they continued to represent a separate unit of the Committee.<sup>147</sup>

#### **2.2.1.1. Journalism in Geneva at the turn of the 20th century**

The flourishing of the Young Turk press in Geneva was closely connected with the main journalistic currents in Switzerland. Indeed, it is more useful to consider this affinity in the general context of the journalistic developments of the century. At the turn of the 20th century, the gap between the reflexive/discursive journalistic style and the news style became evident. The first style, the older one, was represented at the time by partisan journalism, whose aim was to inform and educate the public from a particular, often explicit, political or ideological point of view. In this opinionated journalism, as alluded to in the first chapter, reporting the news was not considered as important as analysis, which represented a particular discourse. Moreover, literary figures and techniques were always associated with partisan journalism. On the other hand, news style was applied in the United States from the 1870s. It focused on the purported "facts" rather than ideological bias. In this journalistic style, bias, analysis, and discourse were tended to be replaced by news values, news cycle, and supply, among others.<sup>148</sup>

This "new American journalism" caught on worldwide in the early 20th century. However, European journalism, which mainly represented the partisan and discursive style, initially resisted the "Americanization" of journalism for a long time. Even British journalists, who were quicker than their European counterparts to embrace American norms, could not completely break away from the practices of party-oriented journalism.<sup>149</sup> Especially in countries such as France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Belgium, where the press was based on political and literary engagement, fact-oriented, informative practices were often criticized.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri 1895-1908*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 1994), p.141.

<sup>148</sup> M. J. Broersma, "Form, Style and Journalistic Strategies. An Introduction", in M. J. Broersma (ed.), *Form and Style in Journalism. European Newspapers and the Representation of News 1880-2005*, Groningen Studies in Cultural Change; No. XXVI, 2007, pp.9-29.

<sup>149</sup> Broersma, "Form, Style and Journalistic Strategies. An Introduction", p.17-18.

<sup>150</sup> Jean Chalaby, "Journalism as an Anglo-American Invention: A Comparison of the Development of French and Anglo-American Journalism, 1830s-1920s", *European Journal of Communication*, 1996, p.315.

Swiss journalism also represented biased journalism. As the study Alain Clavien showed, the two main newspapers in French-speaking Switzerland (Romandie), the *Journal de Genève* and the *Gazette de Lausanne*, were remarkably linked to the Liberal Party and its political activities. Moreover, despite their ideological proximity, there was a competitive relationship between these two dominant newspapers of *Suisse Romande*.<sup>151</sup> Moreover, Swiss intellectual life moved around the press. Being a journalist did not imply any other identity than being an intellectual, because these two identities seemed to be pretty much the same. Moreover, and this fits with the picture painted so far, the literary commitment of these newspapers was incredibly strong, as literary articles and reviews occupied an important place.<sup>152</sup>

The partisan nature of the Swiss press was in line with political activism, which had increased significantly towards the end of the nineteenth century. As briefly mentioned earlier, the important Swiss cities, especially Geneva and Zurich, had become headquarters of oppositional activities by various immigrant groups, ranging from lobbying to the use of violence to the publication of propaganda and agitational publications.<sup>153</sup> *Iskra*, was published in Geneva.<sup>154</sup> The Armenian community also effectively used the press for its propaganda purposes. Founded in Geneva, in 1887 by seven Armenian students of the *Université de Genève*, Social Democrat Hunchakian Party published its official organ, *Hentchak*, in 1887-1892. The journal frequently discussed issues such as class conflict and oppression. Another important Armenian organization, Armenian Revolutionary Federation (*Dashnaktsutyun*), published 60 periodicals in Geneva between 1894-1916. *Drochak*, the official organ of ARF, appeared between 1892-1914 and was a typical propaganda journal distributed through illegal ways to the Ottoman Empire and Russia.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Alain Clavien, *Histoire de la Gazette de Lausanne: le temps du colonel, 1874-1917*, Vevey, Editions de l'Aire, 1997.

<sup>152</sup> Alain Clavien, *Grandeurs et Misères de la Presse Politique. Le Match Gazette de Lausanne-Journal de Genève*, Lausanne, Éditions Antipodes, 2010.

<sup>153</sup> Isa Blumi, "Publishers, Hitmen, Diplomats, and Dreamers: Switzerland's Ottoman-Albanian Diaspora, 1899-1920", *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte/Revue Suisse d'Histoire*, 52, pp. 309-320, 2002.

<sup>154</sup> Jean-François Fayet, "Les Révolutionnaires russes et polonais installés en Suisse pendant la Première Guerre mondiale", in *La Suisse et la Guerre de 1914-1918*, Genève: Slatkine, 2015, p. 387-403

<sup>155</sup> Huseyin Bektaş, "Organisations, circulations, réseaux: la jeunesse arménienne universitaire à Genève et à Lausanne entre 1887 et 1926 comme vecteur de lien entre les peuples suisse et arménien" Unpublished Master Thesis, Univ. Genève, 2018, p. 27.

### 2.2.1.2. Young Turk Publications in Geneva

Like the Russian anti-Czar partisans, the anti-Abdulhamid opponents were very eager to use the press for their own purposes. These opponents of the Sultan began zealous propaganda and agitation through journalism between 1885-1905.<sup>156</sup> Despite their different orientations and political viewpoints, all editors of the Ottoman publications of Geneva called for the political reform of Ottoman Empire and the abdication of the Ottoman Sultan.<sup>157</sup>

The first newspaper that can be called a Young Turk publication was *Hizmet*, which was published in 1893 by two Ottoman immigrants, Emrullah Efendi and Tevfik Nevzad. However, their publication could not last long due to economic difficulties and the fact that its editors were accused of committing vile crimes.<sup>158</sup> Later, Tarsusizade Münif, a political immigrant who left İstanbul when he was a student at *Mekteb-i Mülkiye*, started re-publishing *Hakikat*. This newspaper provided important clues to understanding the Young Turks' motives for choosing Geneva as one of their centers. In an article announcing that the newspaper would continue to be published in Geneva, the editors stated:

Henceforth, the permanent publishing center of *Hakikat* is in Geneva. Geneva has always been the origin of freedom, knowledge, science, and art, a good example of civilization, at the service of the humanity at each condition; so, for all these reasons, this city has an exceptional position.<sup>159</sup>

However, these first attempts encountered technical difficulties in publishing an Ottoman newspaper in Turkish in a foreign country. Among these may be enumerated the difficulty of finding suitable types, casques and fonts, moreover, of employing a typesetter who knew Turkish. *Hakikat* must have had problems with his workers. At one point, the editors apologized to their readers for the errors and delays: "As our workers had not lithographed the given typesetting correctly due to their ignorance of our language, the second and third pages of the last issue were misplaced."<sup>160</sup> The

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<sup>156</sup> Hans-Lucas Kieser, *Türklüğe İhtida*, p.68.

<sup>157</sup> Isa Blumi, "Publishers, Hitmen, Diplomats, and Dreamers", p.310.

<sup>158</sup> Muammer Göçmen, *İsviçre'de Jön Türk Basını ve Türk Siyasal Hayatına Etkileri*, (Kitabevi, İstanbul, 1995), p.145.

<sup>159</sup> Muammer Göçmen, *İsviçre'de Jön Türk Basını*, p.149

<sup>160</sup> Cavit Orhan Tütengil, *İngiltere'de Türk Gazeteciliği, 1867-1967*, İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2011, p.10.

newspaper cited criticism of the Hamidian arrangement. It also announced the new publications of the Geneva branch of the Young Turks as well as its other branches. For example, the publication of *Mizan* in Geneva was announced in the pages of *Hakikat* in this very enthusiastic and lively manner:

Great news! *Mizan* owned by Murad Bey who is the glory of our nation and splendid sun of the patriotic zeal will be published starting with this week. It will bear the Committee's name. <sup>161</sup>

Geneva was the third place of publication of the *Mizan*. Mehmed Murad Bey began publishing in Istanbul from 1886. In the beginning, the newspaper was considered a pro-Hamidian publication and was favored by the palace. However, as the years passed, the owner's disagreements with the palace grew and he was forced to leave Istanbul in 1895.<sup>162</sup> Although he spent some time in Paris, he was not as welcomed as he had expected by other Young Turks, especially Ahmed Rıza. As a result, he decided to publish *Mizan* in Egypt under English protection. Thus, on December 29, 1895, *Mizan* began its second publication period in Egypt. This new period was characterized by Murad's revolutionary tone instead of his earlier calm and didactic manner. *Mizan* tried to portray Abdulhamid as an illegitimate ruler by invoking verses from the *Kur'an* or sayings of the Prophet (*hadiths*).<sup>163</sup>

In 1896, Murad Bey traveled to Paris again, and this visit coincided with a growing dissatisfaction with Ahmet Rıza, the leader of the Paris group and editor-in-chief of *Meshveret* (the official organ of the Committee). Ahmet Rıza's radical and secular ideas, which he espoused in the pages of *Meshveret*, had provoked the reaction of the Young Turk groups.<sup>164</sup> Thus, shortly after his arrival in Paris, an opposition group formed around Murad Bey, which included notable Young Turk figures such as İshak Sükuti, Süleyman Nazif, Çürüksulu Ahmed Bey. As a result, in a conference held in November 1896, Murad Bey was appointed as the new head of the committee, moreover, in the same conference, the committee decided to republish *Mizan* as the official organ of CUP.<sup>165</sup> After conflicts arose between two Young Turk groups, Murad

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<sup>161</sup> Muammer Göçmen, *İsviçre'de Jön Türk Basını ve Türk Siyasal Hayatına Etkileri*, p.149.

<sup>162</sup> Birol Emil, *Mizancı Murad Bey: Hayatı ve Eserleri*, (İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Basımevi, İstanbul, 1979), p. 115

<sup>163</sup> Birol Emil, *Mizancı Murad Bey: Hayatı ve Eserleri*, p.144-145.

<sup>164</sup> Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, p.106. Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p.84.

<sup>165</sup> Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p.84.

Bey decided to bring *Mizan* to Geneva. Thus, the Geneva years of *Mizan*, the third phase of publication, began in Geneva (from the 19th issue) on May 10, 1897.

However, the transfer of *Mizan* to Geneva did not end the conflict between the two Young Turk groups. A final development led to the dismissal of Ahmet Rıza from the committee. On May 15, 1897, an article signed by G. Ümid (Aristidi Efendi) was published in the *Meshveret* on the Cretan War. This article was found not suitable for the Ottoman-Turks' interests and provoked an extreme reaction from the Geneva branch. Dissatisfied with the management of all these conflicts within the committee, Murad Bey resigned from its leadership and turned to Istanbul after reaching an agreement with the Hamidian regime.

As a result of the agreement reached between Abdulhamid and Murad Bey, the Geneva branch stopped publishing its official organ, the *Mizan*. The committee was now left to the leadership of İshak Sükutî, Abdullah Cevdet, and Tunalı Hilmi, who did not hesitate for long and published a brand-new journal called *Osmanlı*.<sup>166</sup> This new "organe de la Jeune Turquie" resembled the previous ones in terms of topics and style. However, compared to *Mizan* and *Meşveret*, *Osmanlı* had a rather strong and very critical language, with activist themes. Muammer Göçmen attributes the differentiation of style to the military background of the editors.<sup>167</sup>

The new editors relied on simple language to appeal to different social classes. This choice of language could explain the abundance of letters to the editor from rural areas, which was not the case with *Mizan*, for example. As these letters to the editor show, *Osmanlı* could be read in public places and thus reached people from rural areas. Another factor that contributed to *Osmanlı* reaching a considerable readership was the topics it covered. Unlike the earlier official organs of the Young Turks, the editors of *Osmanlı* did not provide sophisticated analyzes, and their articles did not deal with very specific issues. Instead, propaganda formed an important part of the newspaper.<sup>168</sup>

Obviously, *Osmanlı* did not tolerate movements or arguments that contradicted the idea of Ottomanism. While supporting pro-constitutional activities, *Osmanlı* expressed

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<sup>166</sup> Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri 1895-1908*, p.144.

<sup>167</sup> Göçmen, *İsviçre'de Jön Türk Basını*, p.176-185

<sup>168</sup> Muammer Göçmen, p.189.

its opposition to nationalist claims against the Hamidian regime. This attitude was particularly evident in the articles on the Balkans:

The Macedonian question, which is considered one of the most important questions of our homeland, has flared up again in these days.

The discontent (seed) sown in the name of Orthodoxy and the idea of independence has remained for twenty-five years under this Sultanic administration... Today, everywhere in Macedonia, one encounters political officials who have introduced themselves as commercial agents, people who commit mischief by disguising themselves as clergymen, metropolitan bishops who are only engaged in politics. These men are trying to confuse the minds of society and ruin its future. The real goals of these vagabonds who pretend to act for freedom are to serve the interests of others and drag these poor people into another bondage after freeing them from one. If these men/guys had some values as human beings, they would have called people to demand justice from the government; they would not have worked to make enemies of the Christian communities that are under the suzerainty of Turkey." <sup>169</sup>

The Ottoman Empire's relations with the great powers were among the most discussed topics of the *Osmanlı*. These articles were written with an Islamic tone that was even more evident than in the articles published in *Mizan*. In this sense, the articles often mentioned an ongoing conflict between the East and the West, "the crescent and the cross," while commenting on the international developments of the nineteenth century. In this Islamic discourse, however, there was a particular focus on the Turkish

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<sup>169</sup> *Osmanlı*, 15 March 1900, "Vatanımızın ecza-yı mühimesinden ma'dud olan Makedonya meselesi bugünlerde alevlenmeye başladı. Makedonya sikkani beynine ortodoksluk namına saçılan tohum-ı nifak fikr-i istiklal yirmi beş seneden beri malum olan idare-i mal'ume-i şehinşahi ile takvit bulmaktadır. Seyyi'atı şahaneden dolayı doksan üç muharebe-i ma'lumesinin kaybedilmesi üzerine Rusların arzusıyla nail olan, ez-zaman zarfında say ve gayretle vatanlarını her türlü terakkiyata mazhar eden ve bugün Balkan'da (Panslavizm) pişdarlığı vazifesini ifa eyleyen Bulgar ve Sırp hükümetleri siyasiyünün Makedonya hakkında besledikleri amal-ı mütezadelerini kuvveden fiile getirmek üzere Abdülhamid-i saniyi kâh tehdit, kâh ona karşı icra-yı nümayişle amellerine muvafık oluyorlar. Bugün Makedonya'nın cihat-ı müte'addidesinde tüccar vekili namı altında siyasi memurlara kisve-ruhbaniyete bürünmüş erbab-ı fesada, sırf siyaset ile müştegil metropolitlere tesadüf olunuyor. Bu herifler ahalinin fikrini ifsada istikballerini berbat etmeğe çalışıyorlar. Hürriyet namına ortaya atılan bu derbederlerin amalı başkasının menfaatine iş kurmak biçare ahaliyi bir esaretten kurtarıp diğer bir ikinci esarete sokmaktır. Eğer bu heriflerin insaniyetten nasibi olmuş olsaydı ahaliyi hükümetten taleb-i hukuka davet ederlerdi. Yoksa Türkiye idaresinde bulunan Hristiyan ahaliyi Sırpılık, Bulgarlık namına yekdiğerine hısm- ı can etmeye uğraşmazlardı."

speaking *Hanefite* subjects of Ottoman Empire, which seems to be the distinguishing feature of the journal. *Osmanlı* editors frequently mentioned the "miserable position" of Turks among other ethnic groups living in the empire.<sup>170</sup>

Şerif Mardin points out, however, that this special interest in Turks should not be confused with the later chauvinist sentiment echoed by the CUP but should be evaluated in its own context. According to Mardin, the Young Turks who published the *Osmanlı* newspaper, were ardent supporters of Ottomanism, and valued the Turkish element because, according to them, "the Turks were the founders of the Ottoman nation and therefore had a special significance within the empire."<sup>171</sup> In a March 1, 1898 article, for example, the Turks were portrayed as protectors of the "crescent" in the war between East and West. Since "the West was still afraid of the Turks, it could not muster enough courage to oppose the Crescent.

This we know: In the Age of Invasions, it was us who were perturbing Europe, but in the age of decline, Europe is disturbing us. However, it has been ages, the Cross could not confront the Crescent yet. What was the reason for it?

The phrase, "The Turks are coming."... No one knows who the Ottomans are, no one recognizes them. And yet the whole world knows who the Turks are. When this word is uttered, the world trembles. The Ottoman state has fallen so much that it cannot recover on its own. But the Turkish fear remains in the heart of Europe, and it will.<sup>172</sup>

In *Osmanlı*, European countries and their statesmen were often labeled "hypocrites" when it came to their attitude toward the East.<sup>173</sup> But while the Geneva group represented anti-European ideas and Ottoman interests, it also had to take European public opinion into account. Thus, *Osmanlı* chose a strategy to gain the sympathy of European public opinion by trying to create a peaceful and liberal image. Since the

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<sup>170</sup> Hans Lucas Kieser, *Türklüğe İhtida*, p.78.

<sup>171</sup> Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, p.153-154.

<sup>172</sup> *Osmanlı*, 1 March 1898. "Biliyoruz: Devr-i istilada biz Avrupa ile, devr-i inhitatda ise Avrupa bizimle uğraşiyor. Fakat seneler değil, adeta asırlar geçti de salib yine hilalin karşısına çıkamadı. Sebeb ne idi?"

"Türk geliyor" sözü ...olmuştu. Osmanlı nedir, kimdir, bunu kimse tanımıyor. Hala da öyle, fakat türk bunu cihan biliyor. Bu kelime telaffuz edilince cihan titrer. Devlet-i Osmaniye düşmüş, kendi kendine kalkamayacak bir hale gelmiş... Gelmiş ama Avrupa'nın yüreğinde Türk korkusu baki.

<sup>173</sup> Göçmen, *İsviçre'de Jön Türk Basını*, p.189-210.

Armenian conflict provoked so many reactions in Geneva within the Empire, their attitude towards the issue was of utmost importance for the existence of the Young Turks in Geneva. In order to avoid the negative reactions of Geneva society, the editors of *Osmanlı* cautiously reported the Armenian problem in the German and French supplements of *Osmanlı* but blamed the "cruel and despotic regime of Abdulhamid for all the evils endured by the Ottoman subjects."<sup>174</sup>

Like the other emigrant publications of the Young Turks, *Osmanlı* was among the "enemy" publications that were banned from entering the empire, although *Osmanlı's* target audience were Turks living in the "Well-Protected Domains". Despite all the suppression and the ban on entry, *Osmanlı* could be smuggled into Ottoman territories with the help of foreign post offices or through other means. İbrahim Temo helped send publications coming from Geneva to İstanbul via Plovdiv or the port of Constanza.<sup>175</sup> Potential readers of the *Osmanlı*, however, were mainly Turks living in the newly established Balkan states. Thus, the editors of *Osmanlı* often directed their articles to Balkan Turks. Moreover, news from the Balkans made up the bulk of the *Osmanlı's* news sources, and editors often referred to the Balkan-based newspapers *Muvazene*, *Gayret*, *Sada-yı Millet*.<sup>176</sup>

Nevertheless, it can be observed that *Osmanlı's* anti-Abdulhamid propaganda could not be easily supported by the Turks living in the new Balkan states, especially in the early period. Therefore, *Osmanlı* gradually chose a softer publishing strategy to avoid the negative reactions of Balkan Turks.<sup>177</sup> This tendency can be seen in the instruction

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<sup>174</sup> Hans Lucas Kieser, *Türklüğe İhtida*, p.76.

<sup>175</sup> Muammer Göçmen, *İsviçre'de Jön Türk Basını*, p.136.

<sup>176</sup> Göçmen, *İsviçre'de Jön Türk Basını*, p.203.

<sup>177</sup> As a matter of fact, the pro-Abdulhamid attitude of Balkan Turks remained as a challenge for a Young Turk publication when Ethem Ruhi began to publish *Balkan* in Plovdiv. Ethem Ruhi repeatedly mentioned the negative reactions he received from the society, such that once he described this attitude of Plovdiv 's Muslim community as the most tough struggle of his life. *Balkan*, 15 July 1907: "Zindanlara atıldığım zaman henüz on altı yaşında idim... Kendi efrad-ı milletimden görmüş çekmiş olduğum fenalıklar yanında zerre kadar ehemmiyeti kalmadı. Şu Filibe'de kendi milletim efradından kendi milletimden ah neler neler görmedim." (When I was thrown into the dungeon, I was only sixteen years old... But compared with the evil I had suffered at the hands of my own people, it was of no consequence. I went through so much at the hands of my own people, my own nation in Plovdiv.) Similarly, Young Turks were perceived as "unfaithful" by Muslims of Bulgaria. Ruhi recorded in his memoir that the negative reaction regarding the "religiousness of Abdulhamid opponents" made impossible even to sojourn in some Bulgarian towns for opponents. *Ethem Ruhi Hatıraları*, p.31. "Bizleri mürted sanarak hepimize 'Con' diyorlardı. Bulgaristan'ın bazı yerlerinde bulunmak o kadar imkansızdı ki bunu bir misal ile izah edecek olsam şaşakalırsınız. Taşa tutuluyorduk!" (They regarded us as apostates, and called us all 'Con.' It was so impossible to remain in some parts of Bulgaria that you will be surprised if I explain it by example. We were castigated.)

given to Tunalı Hilmi, who went to Cairo in 1898 to establish the new branch of the journal there: 'Write about religion in the newspaper. Don't criticize Abdulhamid too harshly, because we have seen that these kinds of actions attract the hatred of the people.'<sup>178</sup>

Be that as it may, the magazine failed to make a profit from its sales. Thanks to donations from Young Turk sympathizers, funding from some Ottoman statesmen, or contributions from other members of CUP, it could barely cover its expenses, except for the income from some short-term missions that the editors received. Moreover, the editors - the Geneva branch of CUP - occasionally negotiated with Abdulhamid to obtain financial support, as had been the case with the Young Turks' earlier publications. Following a similar agreement, Abdullah Cevdet and İshak Sükuti were appointed as doctors to the embassies of the Ottoman Empire in Rome and Vienna, respectively, as was Tunalı Hilmi to the post of secretary at the embassy in Madrid. As a result, the former Young Turk group in Geneva was gradually disbanded, and the administration of the *Osmanlı* passed to Ethem Ruhi - which until these days lagged behind the more influential opposition figures.<sup>179</sup>

### 2.2.2. England

Geneva lost its central position in the Young Turk movement for a while after Abdullah Cevdet and the departure of İshak Sükuti in 1899. However, with the arrival of Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha, the sultan's son-in-law, and his sons-one of whom was Prens Sabahattin, who was in Geneva in 1900-activities regained momentum. *Osmanlı* began to be published under Celaleddin Pasha's ownership, and İshak Sukuti provided his salary for the publication of *Osmanlı*.<sup>180</sup> However, when the diplomatic attempts of Hamidian Regime to stop the hostile publication turned into violence and more concrete interventions such as sending spies and even assassins, the welcoming attitude of the Swiss government towards the Young Turks changed.<sup>181</sup> Thus, on May 18, 1900, they received a warning stating that the editors of *Osmanlı* and Pasha and his sons would be expelled from Switzerland if they engaged in "political agitation"

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<sup>178</sup> Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, p.172.

<sup>179</sup> Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri*, p.172.

<sup>180</sup> Ethem Ruhi Balkan, *Canlı Tarihler: Ethem Ruhi Balkan Hatıraları*, (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1947), p.27.

<sup>181</sup> Isa Blumi, "Publishers, Hitmen, Diplomats, and Dreamers", p.316.

again. After this clear statement from the Swiss government, Pasha decided to move *Osmanlı*'s publication to England. Therefore, *Osmanlı* continued to be published for a short time in London and later in Folkestone, a small port town in the southeast of England.<sup>182</sup>

While *Osmanlı* was published in Folkestone, Ethem Ruhi was responsible for the administrative and financial affairs of the journal and also wrote articles, while the poet Hüseyin Siret was the editor-in-chief. Siret Bey came from a different background than Ethem Ruhi and other *Osmanlı* writers with military backgrounds. He was a graduate of the *Mekteb-i Mülkiye* and began his writing career with *Servet-i Fünun*.<sup>183</sup> Hüseyin Siret, who was portrayed as the most esteemed figure of the *Edebiyat-ı Cedide* movement, was exiled to Adıyaman because of his actions against Abdulhamid.<sup>184</sup> After spending a year in exile, he fled to Paris in 1901 and joined the Comittee of Union and Progress branch there. He later settled in Folkestone, where he collaborated with Ethem Ruhi for the publication of *Osmanlı*.<sup>185</sup>

The publishing conditions were more favorable in Folkestone. This was because neither the government's press policy nor the concerns of public opinion exerted pressure on the *Osmanlı* editors. Once, Ruhi says, he learned to admire the freedom of expression that prevailed in England after an experience. For example, when they were guests of the city's police director for dinner, they were threatened to be careful because they would be watched by the officers. However, when they consulted a lawyer, he gave an answer that made a great impression on Ethem Ruhi: "You are political refugees, you have the right to write what you want. If the Sultan had a complaint, he would have to come here in person or send a representative and sue you."

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Indeed, British journalism in the early 20th century was more familiar with the idea of freedom of the press and professionalism. Moreover, British journalism was quite

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<sup>182</sup> Hans Lucas Kieser, *Türklüğe İhtida*, p.89.

<sup>183</sup> Turan Karataş, *Hüseyin Siret: Bedbaht bir Muhalif, Kırgın bir Şair, Sırlı bir Derviş*, (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2011), p.22-23

<sup>184</sup> Ahmet İhsan Tokgöz, *Matbuat Hatıralarım*, p. 135. The incident that led to the exile of Siret Bey was a letter written by a group of Young Turks to the British Embassy in the hope of gaining British support for the anti-Abdulhamid movement. The letter congratulated Britain's victory in Boer War in South Africa. Written in a totally pro-British/anglophile style, this letter was transcribed by Hüseyin Siret. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Bir Siyasal Örgüt Olarak Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti ve Jöntürklük* (1889-1902), (İstanbul:İletişim Yayınları, 1986), p.335-337.

<sup>185</sup> Turan Karataş, *Hüseyin Siret* , p.39.

<sup>186</sup> Ethem Ruhi Balkan, *Canlı Tarihler*, p.26.

different from Swiss journalism in terms of journalistic practices and values. By the time Ethem Ruhi settled on England, British journalism had already evolved into a full-fledged profession with its own deontology and protocol. Being a journalist required full commitment; it was considered a distinct and socially respected profession.<sup>187</sup>

As the main subject of the Americanization of journalism in Europe, British journalists preferred advertising and the publication of news to articles that espoused a particular ideological or literary point of view. This preference was made possible by the emergence of a new readership that wanted to read business news as well as political issues. The vast majority of this readership came from the middle class that had formed as England developed industrially. Thus, even without political or literary involvement, an English newspaper could reach enough readers and attract enough advertisers so that it could support its expenses on its own.<sup>188</sup>

As commercialization could also be mentioned, the development of English journalism was closely linked to the wealth of publishers. The large "respectable" English newspapers, represented mainly by *The Times*, paid their reporters and editors high salaries so that journalists could maintain their lives in a certain petit-bourgeois segment within Victorian society without pursuing any other profession.<sup>189</sup> This wealth also brought with it the division of labor and differentiation of roles. The tasks that the editor oversaw evolved. Reporting, commentary, and design were assigned to different people whose duties were clearly defined. This kind of specialization was an important feature of British journalism, because in other European journalistic traditions the roles of journalistic professionals usually overlapped. It was usually the same person who did the commentary and reported the news.<sup>190</sup>

Another distinguishing feature of British journalism was the abundance of local papers and the decentralized structure of journalistic activity. As Andrew Hobbs notes in his study of the provincial press in England, almost every town had "a miniature version of Fleet Street, the London center for newspaper publishing." From the end of the 18th

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<sup>187</sup> L.O'Boyle, "The Image of the Journalist in France, Germany, and England, 1815–1848", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 10(3), 1968, 290-317.

<sup>188</sup> Jean K Chalaby, "Journalism as an Anglo-American Invention"

<sup>189</sup> L. O'Boyle, "The Image of the Journalist in France, Germany, and England, 1815–1848"

<sup>190</sup> Jürgen Wilke, "Journalism", in *European History Online (EGO)*, Leibniz Institute of European History (IEG), Mainz, 2013.

century, more newspapers were published in the provinces than in London. The gap between the number of provincial newspapers and London newspapers had widened remarkably by the end of the century. London published 499 newspapers, while the number of local newspapers reached 1340.<sup>191</sup>

Moreover, the content of local newspapers was not only about local developments. Since readers wanted to read not only local news but also national news, provincial newspapers also provided their readers with national or international news. Thus, the popularity of the provincial press could be attributed to its broad content and speed of news delivery. The provincial press was also preferred because it drew on and created regional identities at the same time. In this respect, provincial newspapers had some "localist" characteristics that set them apart from the objective style of journalism. According to Andrew Hobbs, the adoption of localist discourse emerged as a requirement for local publishers due to the constraints of the local market. This contradicts the argument of Jean Chalaby, that British journalism was practiced in a perfected market environment, therefore allied itself with American principles and was able to develop an "objective" journalistic discourse:

Chalaby's decline of the political publicist and the emergence of an "objective" journalistic discourse in Britain also does not fit with the majority of newspapers in the provinces, where smaller local markets dictated a localist rather than an objective journalistic style.<sup>192</sup>

Thus, *Osmanlı* continued to be published in a country where different types of journalism, local/national, news-oriented/political, were practiced and the principle of freedom of the press was relatively developed. As a result, the publication of *Osmanlı* among these hundreds of newspapers did not attract the attention of the local administration and the people of the city. So much so that Ethem Ruhi expressed in

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<sup>191</sup> Andrew Hobbs, *A Fleet Street in Every Town: The Provincial Press in England, 1855-1900*, Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2018, p.6.

<sup>192</sup> Andrew Hobbs, *A Fleet Street in Every Town: The Provincial Press in England*, p.24. Another case that contradicts Chalaby's argument is the "unstamped press" that was political to a large extent. Edited by lower classes, the "unstamped" press mainly aimed to be the voice of the laboring class that complained about suffering from the unwell living conditions created by the rapid industrialization. For the editors of the workers' publications, the press was only an instrument to protest and to organize. Thanks to these newspapers, freedom of the press transformed one of the main concerns of the laboring class. However, their understanding of the freedom of the press quietly differed from the writers of the other newspapers. In the sight of the labor class, freedom of the press was protection from being suppressed for criticizing the government; and getting rid of the taxes that increased the prices of the newspapers, after which the workers could not buy them.

his memoirs how unusual he found it that their establishment in this small town and the publication of a strongly hostile publication against Abdulhamid, a foreign state leader, did not arouse interest in the town.<sup>193</sup>

Moreover, criticism of Hamidian Regime and the tone of the paper became visibly harsher in England as the years went by. The influence of Prens Sabahattin, Mahmud Pasha's son, on the issues and ideological viewpoints of the journal became explicitly clear. Counting on the image of the new sponsor Damat Mahmut Celaleddin Pasha, *Osmanlı* developed a stronger opposition to the Hamidian regime. On January 1, 1901, *Osmanlı* published a fatwa legitimizing the dethronement of Abdulhamid. On the other hand, the newspaper gave space to the articles on philosophical issues, which was probably penned by Prince Sabahattin, an unusual type of content in the Geneva period of the newspaper.<sup>194</sup>

*Osmanlı* did not survive long in Folkestone. After the death of its two main supporters, İshak Sukuti and Mahmud Celaleddin Pasha, respectively, the newspaper ran into serious economic difficulties and could not survive. Therefore, this short and relatively ineffective publishing adventure ended. Nevertheless, *Osmanlı* continued to be published in Cairo. Having disagreements with Prens Sabahattin because of its decentralist stance, Ethem Ruhi decided to leave Folkestone and revive *Osmanlı* with the help of Egyptian Muhammed Halim Pasha in Egypt, where he was employed by an English company as a translator and started doing proofreading for an English newspaper. Be that as it may, the main factor that made the publication of *Osmanlı* possible was Egyptian Pashas' patronage.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> Ethem Ruhi *Balkan Hatıraları*, p.25.

<sup>194</sup> Şükrü Hanioglu, *The Young Turks in Opposition*, Oxford University Press, 1995, p.153-155

<sup>195</sup> Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902–1908*, p.53.; Ethem Ruhi *Balkan Hatıraları*. “I contacted with Egyptian Sait Halim, Abbas Halim, and Mehmet Ali Pashas, three brothers. Abbas Halim Pasha had a pavilion in Cairo, which was known as <Daire-i Mahsusa.> Frankly I harbored there, I got under their protection. Do not interpret my words as shamelessness. All the three Pashas behaved friendly in manner to me. Even more, through Mehmet Ali Pasha, I met Khedive Abbas Hilmi Pasha, who passed away recently. What a need to say much, certainly you understand. *Osmanlı* newspaper was able to be published in Egypt. The Pashas’ pro-constitutional opinions and the fact that they found me companionable made the *Osmanlı*’s publication possible.” (*Mısırlı Paşalar, yani Sait Halim, Abbas Halim ve Mehmet Ali Paşaları -üçü de kardeştir- buldum. Abbas Halim Paşa’nın Kahire’de bir kasrı vardı. <Daire-i Mahsusa> adıyla meşhurdu. Açıkçası buraya yanladım. Tabirimden yüzşüzlük manası çıkarmayın... Üç Paşa da bana karşı güler yüz gösterdiler. Hatta Mehmet Ali Paşa’nın delaletiyle, geçenlerde vefat eden Hidiv Abbas Hilmi Paşayla dahi görüşmeye muvaffak oldum. Uzun söze ne hacet tabii anlamışsınızdır: Osmanlı gazetesi Mısır’da çıkabilecekti. Paşaların hürriyete taraftar oluşu, benim de onlara munis gelişim Osmanlı’nın devam-ı intişarını temin etmişti.*)

### 2.2.3. Egypt

Ethem Ruhi was not among the early examples of journalists who fled to Egypt to escape Hamidian censorship. Beginning in the early 1880s, the economically and intellectually favorable conditions in Egypt attracted many journalists. Egypt had become the hub of Arab journalism as well as an important center of Young Turk publications. The attitude of the English governor Lord Cromer towards the press was instrumental in making Egypt a haven for journalists. Cromer regarded freedom of the press as both a principle and a very practical tool. Nevertheless, the press was still far from being completely free; interference and censorship were occasionally the case - especially when publications were damaging to the British presence in Egypt. Nevertheless, it can be said that Egypt experienced a reasonable "golden age" for journalism during the British occupation.<sup>196</sup>

In the second half of the 19th century, Egypt's popularity was not limited to the journalistic sphere. Egypt became an important cultural and economic center for Europeans, as well as for Arabs and Ottomans. In particular, the port city of Alexandria took the form of a cosmopolitan city, welcoming many immigrants and transients of different nationalities such as British, Greek, French and Maltese.<sup>197</sup> Examining Alexandria, the multicultural social structure in the 19th century, according to Will Hanley, "is a cosmopolitan dream." Written in four different languages, the documents interestingly show that people could testify in a language other than their own. "The testimony of Maltese people was written down in Italian. The testimony of four Englishmen was taken down in French, although their interrogator bore the distinctly non-Gaelic name Percy Bagwell. The testimony of an illiterate twenty-four-year-old Austrian barmaid was taken in Arabic."<sup>198</sup>

Under British occupation, Ottoman culture and influence on Egypt declined, while European culture became more prominent. However, there was a notable gradual increase in publications in Turkish during this period. The supportive attitude of the British towards the anti-Ottoman/Hamidian political activities played an important

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<sup>196</sup> Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East*, Oxford University Press; 1<sup>st</sup> edition, March 23, 1995, p.52.

<sup>197</sup> Will Hanley, *Identifying with Nationality: Europeans, Ottomans, and Egyptians in Alexandria*, Columbia University Press, 2017, p.28.

<sup>198</sup> Will Hanley, *Identifying with Nationality*, p.27-28.

role in this increase. CUP 's Egypt Branch was established in 1895, and publications began with Murad Bey's *Mizan*.<sup>199</sup> Within the process that began with *Mizan*, Egypt became a convenient place for Abdulhamid's opponents to freely publish newspapers expressing their disapproval.

The Young Turk supporters residing in Egypt, however, did not form a unified structure, and this was reflected in the press. Significantly, although the Egypt-based Turkish publications opposed the Sultan and advocated for a constitution prior to the 1908 revolution, they represented the ideological fragmentation within the movement itself. Because of this ideologically fragmented structure, the Egyptian Young Turk press can be examined by dividing it into different groups, in terms of effective political changes and thoughts. With this in mind, Servet Tiken examines the Young Turk press in Egypt in five different categories, namely pioneer publications, publications by ulema - Islamic scholars that appeared before the 1902 Young Turk Congress, publications after the 1902 Congress, and satirical writings.<sup>200</sup>

As a Muslim country that had a rooted Islamic scholar/ulema tradition and influential scholars/ulema, Egypt had a prominent importance for the Committee within the overall movement. After attempts to gain the support of the ulema, CUP succeeded in establishing cooperation between the committee and the ulema.<sup>201</sup> In this success, Murad Bey and its revolutionary newspaper *Mizan*, which was previously published in İstanbul, played an important role. Murad Bey 's approaches and the Islamic discourse of the newspaper brought the participation of the ulema in the Young Turk movement. Moreover, this led to the emergence of its own type of Young Turk journalism, which differed from other Young Turk newspapers published in Europe due to its Islamic references and content.<sup>202</sup>

Şeyh Alizade Hoca Muhyiddin Efendi was an important figure representing the Young Turks from the Ulema. He began publishing *Kanun-i Esasi* in Cairo in 1896. While he pursued opposition to the Hamidian Regime, the newspaper generally reported Islamic content. Abdulhamid was criticized for not behaving according to Islamic rules. By

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<sup>199</sup> Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, *The Turks in Egypt and Their Cultural Legacy: An Analytical Study of the Turkish Printed Patrimony in Egypt from the Time of Muhammad 'Ali with Annotated Bibliographies*, American University in Cairo Press, 2012, p.219-220.

<sup>200</sup> Servet Tiken, *Mısır'da Jön Türk Basın ve Edebiyatı*, Fenomen Yayıncılık, 2017, p.75.

<sup>201</sup> İsmail Kara, "Ulema-siyaset ilişkilerine dair önemli bir metin: Muhalefet yapmak/Muhalefete katılmak", *DİVÂN: Disiplinlerarası Çalışmalar Dergisi*, 1998/1.

<sup>202</sup> Servet Tiken, *Mısır'da Jön Türk Basın ve Edebiyatı* p.,80.

supporting their arguments with hadiths and verses from the *Kuran*, the newspaper's articles suggested that revolting against the Sultan was the religiously correct action.<sup>203</sup>

Islamic discourse was the hallmark of Young Turk publications in Egypt until the 1902 Young Turk Congress, which was held to resolve issues between the Young Turks but led to a concrete split within the committee. After the congress, the group organized around Ahmet Rıza *Terakki and İttihad Cemiyeti*, who advocated positivist and more nationalist arguments, while Prens Sabahattin and his followers organized *Teşebbüs-i Şahsive Adem-i Merkeziyet Cemiyeti*, which advocated a liberal point of view.<sup>204</sup> The Young Turks' publications were also divided between Ahmet Rıza and Prens Sabahattin supporters.

The results of the Paris Congress of 1902 had their effects on the Young Turk press in Egypt as well. As the influence of the Committee in Egypt declined, so did the number of Young Turk newspapers. Especially the newspapers that sided with Ahmet Rıza created a Turkist discourse, and over time nationalist themes became prevalent among the Young Turk newspapers in Egypt. Nevertheless, the Young Turk branch in this country continued to publish important newspapers such as *Şura-yı Ümmet, Türk, İctihad*, which represented Turkish nationalist discourse. Similarly, the *Osmanlı*, which was brought to Egypt by Ethem Ruhi at this time, gradually adopted a parallel discourse while operating in Cairo.

During the Cairo years, under the leadership of Ethem Ruhi, the *Osmanlı* did not have a unified intellectual approach. The journal's themes and style changed in parallel with the changing political viewpoints of Ethem Ruhi.<sup>205</sup> For example, in the years when Ethem Ruhi supported more radical and decisive actions for Abdulhamid, the journal began to report more frequently on anarchist issues. At this time, *Osmanlı* explicitly praised terrorist acts and the spilling of blood. Similarly, Ruhi's nationalist discourse notably reflected to the articles of the journal. Moreover, the journal's attitude towards European states hardened. Hanioglu notes that its comments on "European fanaticism" had a similar rhetoric to Ahmet Rıza's discourse.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Servet Tiken, *Mısır'da Jön Türk Basın ve Edebiyatı*, p.89.

<sup>204</sup> Servet Tiken, p.112.

<sup>205</sup> Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu, *The Turks in Egypt and Their Cultural Legacy*, p.261.

<sup>206</sup> Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902–1908*, p.53-55.

Overall, Ethem Ruhi had gained experience in journalism in several important cities. Although his style and professional codes differed according to the characteristics of each city, his professional experiences, which were mainly related to opposition to the Hamidian regime, were exemplary of Young Turk journalism in all areas. Şükrü Hanioglu distinguishes between the journals of the Young Turks that were published as the official organ of the principles of a particular organization and those that were published on personal initiative. He says: "The first type explains the views of the organization on various subjects, tries to set forth the basic principles on which its opposition is based and the state of mind of the organization through various articles and translations. The second type, on the other hand, constantly tries to place a particular individual opposition - usually only for a short time and with repetition of the same topics."<sup>207</sup> A comparison of *Osmanlı's* Geneva and Cairo periods can clearly show this difference. In the Geneva years, *Osmanlı* mainly represented the ideas and goals of the Committee Geneva branch as a whole, while the Cairo newspaper became a propaganda organ that conveyed the personal opinions of Ethem Ruhi.

#### **2.2.4. Bulgaria**

Despite all these different adopted discourses and significant characteristic changes, the Osmanlı represented a certain journalistic style in all its three different periods. Like all other Young Turk publications, it focused on opinion, analysis, and especially propaganda rather than news. It was to be expected that Ethem Ruhi would strive for this propaganda-opinion journalism in Bulgaria as well. In any case, the Turks in Bulgaria were not unfamiliar with the publications of the Young Turks; there were already some precursors of Ethem Ruhi, which appeared in Bulgaria.

İbrahim Temo, a graduate of the Military Medical school and a founding member of the Committee, was one of the most important figures involved in spreading Young Turk ideas in the Balkans. In November 1895, Temo left Istanbul to avoid imprisonment and fled to Romania. After some time, he became the real leader of the Young Turk movement in the Balkans. He succeeded in organizing new Young Turk branches in both Romania and Bulgaria, which included both Turks and Albanians like

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<sup>207</sup> Uğur Gündüz, *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Basın ve Modernleşme*, (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, Ocak 2018)

himself.<sup>208</sup> Later he also published a journal, *Sada-yi Millet* (Voice of the Nation), which declared itself not to be directly affiliated with the Committee. However, it represented the Young Turk ideology and therefore attracted the attention of the palace. Due to pressure from the Ottoman government, it was closed by the Romanian authorities after its 9th issue.<sup>209</sup>

Later, Ali Fehmi continued its activities to gain support for the Young Turk movement. He published an important newspaper called *Muvazene*, which presented itself as an "impartial newspaper" that "did not belong to any domestic or foreign party." This impartiality marked the position of Ali Fehmi between the Cairo, Geneva and Paris branches, which certainly appeared as separate entities after the Young Turk Congress of 1902. Hoping to be supported by all Young Turk members, Ali Fehmi declared its impartiality within the movement. This may have been one explanation for his journal becoming the organ of all Young Turk sympathizers in Bulgaria.<sup>210</sup>

The fate of Ali Fehmi's *Muvazene*, a successful and typical Balkan Young Turk publication, was the same as that of İbrahim Temo's *Sada-yı Millet*. After an interrogation initiated by the Bulgarian authorities to comply with the demands of the Ottoman representatives, Ali Fehmi transported the publication activity from *Muvazene* to Plovdiv on January 21, 1903. During the Plovdiv years, the newspaper adopted a Turkist discourse. Şükrü Hanioglu attributes this to attacks by Bulgarian and Macedonian nationalists. One of these attacks eventually led to the closure of the newspaper. In March 1905, some Bulgarian nationalists from Vurkhovist Committee set fire to *Muvazene*'s headquarters; subsequently Ali Fehmi was exiled by the Bulgarian authorities. This is probably the reason why the publication of one of the most important Turkish newspapers in Bulgaria, *Muvazene*, ceased.<sup>211</sup>

Ethem Ruhi had started publishing *Rumeli*, his first attempt at publication in Plovdiv, only two months before *Muvazene* was discontinued. He probably aimed to continue journalism as he had practiced it until then. The first article of *Rumeli*, in which Ethem Ruhi expresses his understanding of journalism and sets out his intentions, is worth

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<sup>208</sup> George Gawrych, *The Crescent and the Eagle: Ottoman Rule, Islam and the Albanians, 1874–1913*, New York: I. B. Tauris, 2006, p.141-142.

<sup>209</sup> Şükrü Hanioglu, *The Young Turks in Opposition*, Oxford University Press, 1995, p.123.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid, p.123, 165. *Muvazene* describes itself as "a weekly impartial newspaper based on the principle of the defense and protection of personal and public rights."

<sup>211</sup> Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 74. After Ali Fehmi's deportation from Bulgaria, his brother Mehmed Sabri tried to replace *Muvazene* with another newspaper called *Ahali*

revisiting. This introductory article begins with an interpretation of a Quranic verse about jihad, the "struggle for the cause of God." According to Ethem Ruhi, jihad does not fundamentally mean the shedding of blood. Instead, the term implies the pursuit of "perfection in knowledge, good manners, and virtues." But Muslims "failed to understand the essence of Shariah rules and fell behind Christian nations that had advanced in science, technology, and other fields."<sup>212</sup> In this new age, which had made great strides, the press had great importance. The press was the "gateway of faith, the eloquent voice, the link to knowledge" of the existing civilization.

The present age of civilization has enlightened mankind with the light of education and made them prosperous. Schools and universities have been established all over the world... The knowledge and education that inspired the human mind and intelligence for research by imparting the truth invented steam engines, trains, telegraphs, telephones, medical sciences. Thus, they provided people with economic and political relations and thus happiness.

...It is the press, the publications, that make the Western world, even the mixed people of America, sad and touched because of the blood of human freedom shed in Russia, because of the groans of the Jews massacred in Moscow and its environs, because of the frequent hostilities and struggles that prevail in the East. It means, then, that the press is the gate of the present civilization to the faith, its eloquent voice, and its link to lore.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Rumeli, 9 December 1905. "Kur'an-ı Kerim <ve cahedu fi sebilillahi>, yani Allah yolunda, Hak yolunda cihad ediniz buyurdu. Hak yolunda cihaddan murad ilahi ve şeri', Allah rızasıçün kan dökünüz demek değildir. Ayet-i celilede işaret buyurulan emr-i cihadın şümülü (melülü), İlmen, adaban faziletten ahrar-ı kemaletle sai' olmaktır. Yani Kuran-ı kerim ilmen edeben ve faziletten tealiye veasılmertbe-ikematat olmağa cihad edin ki saadet-i dünyeviye ve uhreviye idrake mazhar olunuz buyurdu.

Bir asr-ı kemalet içindeyiz ki bu ayeti celilenin meal-ı hikmet-i iştimali, akvam-ı medeniyenin rehberi feyz ve necatı baas-ı feyz-i hayatı oldu. Şimdi her milletin mezaya-ı medeniyesi, seyfi fazilet ve maarifetinde tecelli ediyor. Biz Müslüman olduğumuz halde bunca evamir-i ilahiye ve ahkam-ı şeriyenin mezayasına vakıf ve salık olamadığımız için maddeten ve manen milel-i saireden geri kaldık. Akvam-ı hristiyanıye ilmen, edeben, faziletten içtihad ile vasil-ı mertebe-yi kemalat oldular."

<sup>213</sup> Asr-ı hazır-ı medeniyet ilm-i insaniyeti nur-ı maarifile tenvir ve feyziyab etti. Cihanın her tarafında darülfünunlar mektebler açıldı. Ben-i beşr için medar-ı feyz ve ... olan ulum ve fünun, ului aliye ve a'liye ulum-ı tabbiye bir vüsat-ı diğer ve inbisad kesb etti. Deha ve dimağ-ı beşeri taharrive telkin-i hakayıkla perver ve feyziyab eden ilm ve maarif, buhar makineleri, şimendiferler, telgraflar, telefonlar, fenn-i tıbaati ihtira suretiyle cihan-ı insaniyetin münasebet-i iktisadiye ve siyasiyesini ve bu suretle saadet-i medeniyesini temin eyledi. Bugün mağrib-i aksada veya aksa-yı şarkta vukubulan bir hadîse-i meşumeden bunun Avrupa'yı haberdar eden nasıl muhaberat-ı havaîye ....Rusya'da dökülen hun-ı

Ethem Ruhi also explained his reasons for publishing a newspaper. In his opinion, the Muslims in Bulgarian Principality and even in Plovdiv did not have an adequate organ to orient themselves, while all other communities in Bulgaria had an abundance of periodicals. So Ethem Ruhi strove to be the voice of the Muslim community:

Today in Europe, even in Bulgaria, whose establishment as an autonomous administration separate from ours was less than 30 years ago, there are hundreds of newspapers, pamphlets, magazines in Bulgarian, Greek, Aromanian/Vlah, enlightening and enlivening their respective communities. What a need to look far! Especially in Plovdiv, even the Greeks, who are a small community compared to the Muslims, have two newspapers, a daily and hebdomadal.

But except for a tiny newspaper called Tuna, the wretched Turks have not a single strong organ, competently written with a sincere and gentle expression, that can be read throughout Bulgaria... This is the reason why we have become the most miserable community in the world... We are glad and proud to present Rumeli to the honorable readers as an interpreter of the sincerity and the lore of our Muslims fellows living in Eastern Roumelia.<sup>214</sup>

Later, he started publishing *Balkan* as a daily supplement, which was to receive a wider audience compared to *Rumeli*. As this daily supplement succeeded in gaining a considerable readership, Ruhi continued his publishing life with *Balkan*, which was to become one of the longest-lived newspapers of the Muslims of Bulgaria. This success is certainly due to the development of the newspaper in parallel with Ruhi's conception

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*hürriyet-i beşerden misalen Moskova ve etrafında katliam edilen Yahudilerin enin ve figanından ve alelasker havali-i şarkiyede hükümran olan bu muhasamat ve mükatelatden cihan-ı garbi ve hatta Amerika kıtasındaki ben-i nevamizi müteessir ve dilhun eden esbab-ı medeniye, neşriyattır, matbuattır. Demek olur ki asr-ı hazır-ı medeniyetin bina-ı imanı, natika-ı lisanı, rabita-ı irfanı matbuattır."*

<sup>214</sup> *Bugün Avrupa'da ve hatta bizden ayrı bir idare-yi müstakile ve mülkiye tesis edileli otuz seneye varmayan Bulgaristan dahilinde Bulgarca, Rumca, ...Ulahça, Fransızca, yüzlerce gazeteler, risaleler, mecmualar, halkın efkârını tenvir ettiği gibi mensub oldukları milletleri bir hal-i intibahta bulunduruyor. Uzağa gitmeye ne hacet. Bilhassa Filibe'de ahali-yi İslamiyeye nisbetle daha az bir cemaat teşkil eden Rumların bile biri haftalık ve diğeri yevmi olmak üzere iki gazeteleri var. Halbuki bedbaht Türklerin bugün koca Bulgaristan'da ele alınacak halkın irşad-ı ruh ve efkârına hizmet edebilecek Tuna isminde ufacık bir gazeteden maada samimi mutedil bir ifadeyle vakıfane yazılmış, hissiyatlı, metin bir vasıta-ı neşriyatı bile yok. bu yüzdendir dünyanın en bedbaht kavmi olduk.... "Rumeli" mizi Rumeli-i şarkiyeye'de mütmekin ihvan-ı dinimizin bir tercüman-ı lisan-ı safvet ve irfanı gibi karin-i muhteremeye takdim ile beyan-ı fahr ve sürur eyleriz."*

of journalism. Parallel to the preferences of the society, this new journal focused mainly on the news of current affairs and less on the scientific and sensational articles:

We saw that our people wanted to read mostly news and less scientific or sensational articles. Although we tried to publish a supplement called *Rumeli Telgrafları* to satisfy this demand, it could not find sufficient acceptance in society because of the frivolity of the developments and the lack of funds. Since then, we have worked too much to either hire qualified typesetters or to procure sufficient material and moral strength. At last, thank God, we have succeeded in bringing into existence this newspaper which reports in its pages all the important developments in the world and thus finds favor in the eyes of the readers.<sup>215</sup>

With this attitude, it differs from the Turkish newspapers that have appeared in Bulgaria so far. Nevertheless, it can be observed that *Balkan* drew inspiration from the journalistic standards of its predecessors. Like *Muvazene*, *Balkan* also distinguished the newspaper's interpretations from the reported news. Moreover, *Balkan* had a similar sequence of columns as *Muvazene*, *Ahali*, and *Tuna* newspapers (1905-1910): an editorial about Bulgaria or world politics, followed by domestic news about Bulgaria, then foreign news, followed by various letters about education and letters from readers. The last pages were devoted to notes and advertisements.

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<sup>215</sup> İfade-i meram: Görüyoruz ki ahamız ekseriyetle makalat-ı ilmiye ve hissiyeden ziyade havadis okumak istiyor. Bundan evvelce bu ihtiyaca göre Rumeli Telgrafları namıyla bir ilave neşrine çalışmış isek de gerek vukuat-ı cariyenin ehemmiyetsizliği matlub derecede revaç ve rağbet hasıl etmedi. İşte o günden beri gerek mürettibler yetiştirmek ve gerek sair esbab-ı maddiye ve maneviyye temin ve izhar için elden geldiği kadar çalıştık ve elhamdülillah Rumeli'ye ilave-i mahsusa olmak ve dünyanın en mühim havadisleri hülasasını neşr ile karilerin rağbet ve teveccühünü celb eylemek üzere şu gazeteciği tesis eyledik. Her halükarda gayret ve halis niyet bizden, Tevfik ve Nusret Allah'tandır."

## CHAPTER 3

### WHY DID ETHEM RUHI CHOOSE BULGARIA?

Ethem Ruhi revitalized *Osmanlı* in Cairo in 1903 with the help of Muhammed Halim Pasha, Egyptian prince (grandson of the Khidive Mehmet Ali Pasha), who became Ruhi's patron. During his Cairo years, Ethem Ruhi began to support more radical and critical actions against the Hamidian regime, and the journal began to report more frequently on anarchist issues.<sup>216</sup> This desire for extreme activism even went so far as to outline a plan to assassinate Abdulhamid, and Ruhi's first visit to Bulgaria happened as part of this plan, in 1904. When Ruhi was in Bulgaria to prepare, he also met some important members of the Young Turks who lived in various cities in Bulgaria, such as Vidin and Ruse.<sup>217</sup>

However, the plan ended up as a failure. Ethem Ruhi later explained the whole plan and its consequences when he confessed to Munir Pasha at the Paris Ottoman embassy in 1905:

When he was working as his private secretary, Muhammad Ali Halim Pasha had encouraged Edhem Ruhi and goaded him on by saying, “There is no blood flowing in the veins of the Turks, and feelings such as patriotism, sacrifice, zeal, and love of fatherland are all gone; all of them are poltroons like women. Swaggering is all they know, and in reality they cannot do anything, least of all in the field of action.” In response, Edhem Ruhi had asserted that the Turks were ready to sacrifice themselves. . . . One day, when they were again debating and perversely opposing each other, the pasha told him, “If you can prove to me, in deeds, that what you have been saying is true, then I will help you [financially] as much as you ask.” Upon this, Edhem Ruhi remembered Ârif Hikmet (who went by the pseudonym Ali Şakir), whose courage and wisdom he trusted. He took money from Muhammad Ali Halim Pasha and went to Bulgaria to coax Ârif Hikmet, who was then residing there. Ârif Hikmet was of Circassian

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<sup>216</sup> Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902–1908*, p.54.

<sup>217</sup> Ethem Ruhi Balkan, *Canlı Tarihler: Ethem Ruhi Balkan Hatıralar*, (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1944), p.29.

origin and had previously fled to Bulgaria. At that time he was teaching at a school in Tutrakan. While these events were taking place, [Muhammad] Ali [Halim] Pasha was travelling in Europe along with the khedive of Egypt. Therefore, Edhem Ruhi took Ârif Hikmet to Europe to discuss the proposed action among themselves. In sum, they decided to obtain dynamite from Bulgaria and to smuggle it to Istanbul with the help of two or three persons, to assassinate some ministers and palace officials, to blow up some of the imperial offices with dynamite simultaneously, and by capitalizing on the panic which might ensue—we take refuge with God!—even to venture a greater and more execrable assassination [i.e., to liquidate the sultan.]<sup>218</sup>

During the preparations for the assassination, Ethem Ruhi had another attempt that became relatively successful, namely the republication of *Osmanlı* with Abdullah Cevdet in Geneva, its birthplace. As Muammer Göçmen notes, the journal began to appear in Geneva with its 136th issue on July 5, 1904. The last issue appeared on December 8, 1904, in which the editors apologized for the delay in publication due to the poor health of their typesetter.<sup>219</sup> In reality, however, this was a result of the palace's attempts to suppress the novel Young Turk movement in Geneva. The Ottoman consul in Geneva, Haydar Bey, convinced the typesetter Manas Efendi to resign, and he also filed a lawsuit against *Osmanlı*, citing his offensive language as the reason. After all these attempts, the lawsuit ended in favor of the palace, *Osmanlı* was closed down, and Abdullah Cevdet was expatriated from Switzerland.<sup>220</sup>

Ethem Ruhi did not mention this Geneva adventure in his memoirs. According to his notes, he was in Egypt when the failure of the assassination became certain.<sup>221</sup> He may still have been there when *Osmanlı* was banished by a Swiss court in Geneva in December.<sup>222</sup> Later, he decided to leave Cairo "to pursue terrorism," and he thought that Bulgaria was the most suitable place for his purposes. This was because Bulgaria

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<sup>218</sup> BOA. Y. EE. 15-73. Cenevre'de bulunan Ethem Ruhi Bey'le yaptığı mülakata dair Paris Sefiri Münir Bey'in Mabeyn'e mufassıl arzı, translated by Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p.55.

<sup>219</sup> Muammer Göçmen, *İsviçre'de Jöntürk Basını ve Türk Siyasal Hayatına Etkileri (1889-1902)*, İstanbul, 1995, p.179. "Mürettibimizin rahatsızlığı sebebiyle gazetemiz miadından birkaç gün sonraya kalıyor. Bundan dolayı muhterem karilerimizden itizarı vazife biliriz."

<sup>220</sup> Şükrü Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p.58.

<sup>221</sup> Ethem Ruhi, *Canlı Tarihler: Ethem Ruhi Balkan Hatıralar*, p.30.

<sup>222</sup> In the same confession made to Münir Pasha, Ethem stated that the assassination was scheduled on 21 September 1904. So, the newspaper could endure even after the plan failed.

was close to İstanbul, i.e., in an advantageous position that made it possible to smuggle banned publications into the capital and also offered dynamic news dissemination.<sup>223</sup>

Moreover, Ruhi thought that he would have a strong network there, as he had been able to make important acquaintances during his previous trip to Bulgaria, visiting several Bulgarian cities and meeting important members of the CUP. Contrary to his expectations, Bulgaria was not as comfortable as Cairo in terms of its political and social-cultural situation.<sup>224</sup> At that time, Cairo was the center of Arab journalism as well as the publications of the Young Turks who opposed the Hamidian regime. Under the auspices of Muhammed Ali Pasha, Ruhi could run his publication without economic and political worries.<sup>225</sup> However, conditions in Bulgaria were difficult. The newly established country was in a state of upheaval in both the political and social spheres, accompanied by a political, economic and social crisis that had been ongoing since the proclamation of the autonomous Bulgarian state in 1878.

Ethem Ruhi believed that resistance to Abdulhamid would be easy in Bulgaria, which was an autonomous principality, but this was not the case. The Bulgarian government behaved strategically about its relations with the Ottoman Government and also with the Sultan. Since the country was still under Ottoman suzerainty, the Bulgarian Principality avoided being tough on the Sultan, contrary to Ruhi's assumptions.<sup>226</sup> Ruhi himself later stated on record that the situation in Bulgaria was different from what he had expected: "Things did not go as I had planned. Since Bulgaria was only a principality under Ottoman suzerainty, it did not dare so easily to oppose the Sultan." Moreover, Bulgaria often had to negotiate with the Ottoman government, especially when its policies came into conflict with Russia, whose influence in Bulgaria had grown remarkably since Ottoman control in the region began to weaken.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Hasan Bal, "Ethem Ruhi Balkan ve Filibe'de Yayınladığı Balkan Gazetesi", *Balkanlarda İslam Medeniyeti Milletlerarası Sempozyumu Tebliğleri*, (İstanbul: İRCİCA Yayınları 2002), 363-379.

<sup>224</sup> Ethem Ruhi, *Canlı Tarihler*, p. 30, "Fakat evdeki hesap çarşıya uymadı! Bulgarlar o tarihte tam istikballerine kavuşmamışlardı. Başlarındaki prens daha Kral olmamıştı. Emaret idaresi, Sultan II.Abdulhamid'e açıktan açığa kafa tutamıyordu...(Bulgaristanlı Türkler) Bizleri mürtet sayarak hepimize "Con" diyorlardı. Bulgaristan'ın bazı yerlerinde barınmak o kadar imkansızdı ki bunu bir misal ile izah edecek olursam, şaşakalırsınız. Taşa tutuluyorduk!"

<sup>225</sup> Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East: A History*, (Oxford Univ. Press, 2011), p.73-75.

<sup>226</sup> Ethem Ruhi, *Canlı Tarihler*. "Evdeki hesap çarşıya uymadı. Bulgaristan henüz prenslik olduğundan sultana rahatça kafa tutamıyordu."

<sup>227</sup> Barbara Jelavich, Charles Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States, 1804-1920*, (University of Washington Press, 2000), p.158.

Stefan Stambulov, the Bulgarian prime minister elected in 1877, advocated a policy that rejected Russian domination of Bulgarian national interests. Therefore, during his tenure, Bulgaria sought to establish better relations with the Ottoman Empire.<sup>228</sup> Most notably, when Russia refused to recognize the Catholic Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg, a former officer who served as a cavalry general in the Austro-Hungarian army, Stambulov made profound negotiation efforts to get the Ottoman Government's support in this crisis. As part of this policy, he visited İstanbul and met Abdulhamid II. Although the Ottoman government avoided the actions that would bring the Ottoman Empire into diplomatic conflict with Russia, the results of Stambulov's efforts were successful in establishing favorable relations between Bulgaria and its sovereign state.<sup>229</sup> Even after Stambulov's premiership, Bulgarian statesmen remained on good terms with the Sultan, so much so that the new Prime Minister Stoilov and Finance Minister Naçoviç were honored with medals by Abdulhamid in 1894.<sup>230</sup>

### 3.1. The Macedonian Question

The relations between the Ottoman state and the Principality of Bulgaria could be characterized by the negotiations that led to mutual compromises, and the Macedonian Question was one of the significant issues that often-brought Bulgaria and its sovereign state together to compromise. Bulgarian foreign policy was mainly dominated by this international conflict, which involved the three newly established neighboring states in the Balkans - Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece - at the end of the 19th century. Since Macedonia was still under Ottoman rule, the Ottoman state had also an important part of this conflict.<sup>231</sup>

By the end of the 19th century, the borders of this "problematic" region extended as far as Albania to the west and as far as Thrace to the east. Although a significant part of it was ceded to Bulgaria at the Berlin Congress, the important Balkan cities such as Bitola and Salonika in Macedonia remained under Ottoman rule. In terms of

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<sup>228</sup> Glenn E. Curtis and Library of Congress. Federal Research Division. *Bulgaria, a Country Study*, 2nd ed., (Washington, D.C.: FRD, 1993), p.24-25.

<sup>229</sup> Erol Çetin, "Bulgaristan Prenslığı ve Osmanlı İmparatorluğu arasında Siyasi İlişkiler (1878-1908)", *Unpublished PhD Dissertation, İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Uluslararası İlişkiler Bilim Dalı*, p.165-166, 178.

<sup>230</sup> Erol Çetin, "Bulgaristan Prenslığı ve Osmanlı İmparatorluğu arasında Siyasi İlişkiler (1878-1908)", p.182-184.

<sup>231</sup> Jelavich, Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States*, p.195.

demographic structure, it was highly divided both in terms of ethnicity and religion. Nine ethnic groups lived in Macedonia: Albanians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Gypsies, Jews, Kutzo-Vlachs, Macedonians, Serbs, Turks and the Vlachs.<sup>232</sup> In addition to this divided demographic structure, defining clear lines that separated nationalities, i.e. determining legitimate nationality as the dominant group, was a challenge.<sup>233</sup> Thus, scholars like linguists and historians of the various Balkan nationalities put forward numerous arguments to historically justify their countries' claims to the region.<sup>234</sup>

Until the establishment of the Bulgarian national church, the Bulgarian Exarchate, in 1870, Greece held the strongest position in terms of cultural dominance. This influence was made possible mainly by the help of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, which supported Greek national interests. Since the authority of the patriarch had no equivalent alternative in Macedonia before 1870, the claims of the Greeks could hold their own in any competition with Bulgarians and Serbs.<sup>235</sup> Two subsequent developments, however, changed the balance of power against Greece. The first was the establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1870, which also created a division between the Slav Orthodox *millet* and the Greek Orthodox *millet*.<sup>236</sup> As a recognized Ottoman institution, the Bulgarian Exarchate possessed the same privileges as the patriarch. This meant, therefore, that the (Slavic) Bulgarian Exarchate emerged as a strong challenge to the cultural dominance of the Greek Patriarch over Macedonia.<sup>237</sup>

The second triumph of the Bulgarian national movement was the establishment of an autonomous Bulgaria in 1878, and this was a serious turning point for the Macedonian Crisis. As the Macedonian crisis appeared as the most critical foreign policy agenda of the Principality, the Bulgarian government found itself in a propaganda war in Macedonia.<sup>238</sup> The Principality's goal was to promote "a Bulgarian consciousness in Macedonia" and its first strategy was to create this consciousness through education. The Exarchate was charged with spending the financial resources intended for schools

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<sup>232</sup> François Georgeon, *Sultan Abdulhamid*, (İstanbul: Homer Kitabevi, 2006), p.419.

<sup>233</sup> İpek Yosmaoğlu, *Blood Ties: Religion, Violence and the Politics of Nationhood in Ottoman Macedonia, 1878-1908*, (London: Cornell University Press, 2014), 131-168.

<sup>234</sup> Curtis, Glenn E. and Library of Congress. Federal Research Division. *Bulgaria, a Country Study*

<sup>235</sup> Jelavich, Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States*, p.209.

<sup>236</sup> Andrew Rossos, *Macedonia and The Macedonian: A History*, (Hoover Institution Press, 2008), p.87.

<sup>237</sup> Andrew Rossos, *Macedonia And The Macedonian: A History*, (Hoover Institution Press, 2008), 87.

<sup>238</sup> R. Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, p.94.

and supervising the teachers sent to Macedonia to propagate Bulgarian influence. In this sense, one of the greatest attempts of the Exarchate was the Boys Gymnasium, opened in Salonika with the help of the local Bulgarian community in 1880: St. Cyril and Methodius Bulgarian Boys' Gymnasium of Thessaloniki.<sup>239</sup>

After the Berlin Congress of 1878, which led to the creation of Balkan nation-states, the claims of these nationalists to Macedonia were strengthened. The primary goal of each state was to annex Macedonia as a whole, although Serbia and Greece also considered partitioning the region as a stopgap measure.<sup>240</sup> Thus, the first strategy that the states used was to make propaganda through churches, schools, or other types of cultural organizations that they established in Macedonia. Education was indeed the most effective propaganda tool. Many young Macedonians received scholarships to continue their studies in Athens, Belgrade, Sofia, or the prestigious schools in Macedonia such as the Bulgarian Exarchist Gymnasium of Salonika. The more the national ideology and culture of their host countries was imposed on them, the more receptive they became to Serbian, Bulgarian, or Greek culture, which they regarded as "superior culture."<sup>241</sup> In addition to education, the competing states also used the press and tried to impress the Macedonians by offering them help or other needed services. Thus, Macedonia became the scene of a propaganda war in which each of the adversaries tried to bring the inhabitants of Macedonia into its cultural sphere.<sup>242</sup>

However, by the end of the nineteenth century, antagonistic nationalist movements increasingly began to resort to violence just as it became certain that Russia - the main supporter of Slavic nationalist movements - would not intervene in Macedonia.<sup>243</sup> Thus, at the turn of the century, the earlier propaganda campaigns were replaced by terrorist activities and banditry. The activities of these armed gangs (*Chetas*) ranged from looting villages to kidnapping and ransoming, burning mosques or churches, robbing banks, and exciting train robberies." Even more, there were government-

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<sup>239</sup> Borche Nikolov, "Mro (Macedonian Revolutionary Organization) – A New Perspective on the "Millets" In Ottoman Macedonia", in *Osmanlı İdaresinde Balkanlar*, (Selçuk Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi ve Medeniyeti Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Yayınları 5, 2020), 71-100.

<sup>240</sup> Andrew Rossos, *Macedonia and The Macedonian: A History*, p.88.

<sup>241</sup> Ross, *Macedonia and Macedonians*, p.91.

<sup>242</sup> Rosos; Borche Nikolov, "Mro (Macedonian Revolutionary Organization) – A New Perspective on the "Millets" In Ottoman Macedonia". The propaganda means are not limited to the schools and churches. For example, the states also tried benefit from the lack of health workers in Macedonia and supported doctors or sent new ones to propagandize their national claims.

<sup>243</sup> François Georgeon, *Sultan Abdulhamid*, p.420.

backed organizations that did not hesitate to use violence to gain Macedonia and its people; and these organizations supported the activities of the gangs in the region. The Greek interest was represented by *Ethniki Etaireia* (National Society), founded in Athens in 1894, Serbia formed a special section called *Politicko prosvetno odelenie* (Political Education Department), and in Sofia *Makedonski vurkhoven komitet* (Macedonian Supreme Committee) was born in 1895 to deal with the Macedonian question.<sup>244</sup> On October 23, 1893, pro- Bulgaria Macedonians formed another committee in Salonika, which advocated an autonomous Macedonia and was led predominantly by Bulgarian elements of society. From 1902 the committee called itself the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (*Vatreshna Makedonska Revolyutsionna Organizatsiya -VMRO*).<sup>245</sup>

As violence increased in Macedonia, it also became one of the most difficult problems of the Hamidian Regime. To deal with this crisis, the Hamidian regime decided to exploit the conflict between these rival terrorist groups, which meant that the Ottoman state tried to keep the competition between the different *Chetas* alive in order to prevent the triumph of any one nationalist movement. In order to maintain this fierce competition and neutralize the ambitions of the different parties, Abdulhamid granted one community the right to build a cemetery or a religious building, while allowing another to open a school. For example, in 1897 the Serbian community was granted the establishment of a school in Macedonia, while the Bulgarians were allowed to appoint three more bishops in the region. (The Serbs would also appoint a bishop in Skopje the next year.)<sup>246</sup> Although Abdulhamid tried to appear equally generous to all parties, he was particularly tolerant of the activities of Greek bands in Macedonia. In this way he sought to block Bulgaria, which was seen as a potential threat after its annexation of the principality of Eastern Rumelia.<sup>247</sup>

European countries, on the other hand, did not intervene in the Ilinden Uprising triggered by the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization until 1903. It ended in failure and was violently put down by the Ottoman government. The consequences of this failed uprising were traumatic: many people - mainly peasants - were killed and

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<sup>244</sup> Ross, *Macedonia and Macedonians*, p.101-102.

<sup>245</sup> Vemund Aarbakke, *Ethnic Rivalry and the Quest for Macedonia 1870–1913*, (Columbia University Press, 2003), p.97.

<sup>246</sup> François Georgeon, *Sultan Abdulhamid*, p.421.

<sup>247</sup> Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks*, p.134.

many villages destroyed. The Ottoman state was also able to put down the uprising, and its aftermath significantly weakened Ottoman rule in Macedonia.<sup>248</sup> According to Vermund Aarbakke, the uprising was not planned as a "systematic destruction" against Ottoman rule, but its real goal was to invite the European Countries to intervene "by portraying the uprising as a Christian reaction to Muslim misrule." <sup>249</sup>

Whether or not it was the primary goal, as Aarbakke argues, the Ilinden Uprising led to European intervention in Macedonia. At a meeting in Mürtsteg in September 1903, Russia, Austria, and England agreed on a reform plan for Macedonia. According to this plan, special civilian commissioners appointed by Russia and Austria were to supervise Inspector General Hilmi Pasha during his application. This meant a clear encroachment on the sovereignty of the Ottoman state in Macedonia, but the Sultan could not resist the pressure of the European powers and accepted the plan. Thus, as prescribed in the Mürtsteg Plan, two civilian agents and twenty-five European officers were sent to Macedonia.<sup>250</sup>

### 3.2. The *Balkan Gazette's* perspective on the Macedonian Question

Unlike the other places visited by Ethem Ruhi, the Bulgarian Turkish-Muslim community was a predominant part of the country and remarkably intertwined with other elements of the society. Therefore, Turkish newspapers could not remain indifferent to local developments in which Turkish society was not involved. For example, ethnic conflicts between Bulgarians and Greeks and the Macedonian Crisis were topics that were frequently reported in the *Balkan Gazette*. As can be seen from the number of articles on Macedonian Crisis, the *Balkan Gazette* paid special attention to this international conflict and closely followed developments in the region. Most of these articles were penned by Ethem Ruhi and the anonymous articles may also have been written by him. They all reflected similar points of view.

Ruhi's observations were consistent with the general description scholars had previously provided. According to him, the church problem was the main reason for the enmity between Bulgarians and Greeks, the conflict igniting when the Bulgarians

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<sup>248</sup> François Georgeon, *Sultan Abdulhamid*, p.424.

<sup>249</sup> Vermund Aarbakke, *Ethnic Rivalry and the Quest for Macedonia*, p.111.

<sup>250</sup> Vermund Aarbakke, *Ethnic Rivalry and the Quest for Macedonia*, p.115.

established their own church, the Bulgarian Exarchate. In an article of 31 July 1906 Ruhi stated that the Greeks had treated the Bulgarians as enemies since the separation of the churches, however, he wrongly dated this to the Bulgarian liberation in 1878. Remarkably, it can be argued that the *Balkan* sided with Bulgaria:

It is already known to our readers that the most important question leading to enmity and resentment between Bulgarians and Greeks is the church question.

It is not a new matter, even the Ottoman government (*hükümet-i seniyye*) suffered a considerable loss because of this conflict. For example, since the beginning of the Bulgarian revolution, it was the desire of the Bulgarians to separate their own church from the Greeks. They also succeeded in doing. Before Bulgaria became an autonomous state, the Bulgarians did not have an independent church, that is, the Bulgarian and Greek churches were not separate.

When the Bulgarians gained their independence, they began to increase their nationalistic claims; and the separation of the churches was their first attempt.

The Bulgarians separated their church, but this became a serious damage especially to the Greek clergy. Since then, the Greeks have not refrained from quarrels or open hostile acts against the Bulgarians, on every occasion.

This hostility, however, has deepened in recent years. For example, these *Palikaria* gangs (Greeks who gathered in Athens) began to treat the Bulgarians living in Macedonia as viciously as they treated the Muslims in Crete.<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>251</sup> "Church conflict between Bulgarians and Greeks" (*Bulgarlar ve Rumlar arasında kilise kavgası*), *Balkan* 31 July 1906: "Karilerimizin ma'lumudur ki Bulgarlarla Rumlar arasında düşmanlığa, kırıgına sebebiyet veren en mühim mes'ele kilise mes'elesidir. Bu mes'ele yeni bir şey değil. Hatta hükümet-i seniyyenin dahî bu yüzden uğradığı zarar ve ziyân epeycedir, meselâ ta ilk Bulgar ihtilâlinde bile Bulgarların yüreklerinde parlayan emel, kendi kiliselerini Rumlardan ayırmak idi. Nitekim muvaffak da oldular. Bulgaristan henüz müstakil bir hükümet hâline girmezden evvel Bulgarların başlı başına kiliseleri mevcûd değildi. Yani Bulgarla Rumların kilisesi ayrı değildi. Vaktâki Bulgarlar istiklâl kazandı, vaktâki Bulgarlar Bulgarlık, millîyet iddi'âsını büyültmeye başladı; ilk işleri kiliselerini ayırmak oldu. Bulgarlar kiliselerini ayırdılar ama bu hareket Rumların husûsiyla Rum papazlarının âmaline büyük bir darbe oldu. İşte o zaman bu zamandır Rumlar nerede olursa olsun cüz'i bir fırsat

The rest of the article contains no further comments by the author, instead describing an anti-Greek meeting organized in Plovdiv and its aftermath. According to the article, angry Bulgarians attacked Greek property after the meeting, including shops, schools and churches. Even the Greek pharmacy, coffee house and printing house in Plovdiv were destroyed by angry protesters.<sup>252</sup> Moreover, the author ends the article by saying that "although it was reported that some similar demonstrations took place in Istanbul, a town three hours away from Plovdiv", they would publish their investigation on this issue the next day.<sup>253</sup>

As an Ottoman-Turkish journalist living in the Principality of Bulgaria, Ethem Ruhi's position on the Macedonian Question, one of the most challenging crises of the second half of the 19th century, was important. In general, Ruhi took on the role of "reporter" when reporting on developments. In doing so, however, he did not hesitate to express his hatred for the Greeks and portrayed the Bulgarians as the aggrieved side. This attitude could be related to the conflict between Greeks and Ottomans over Crete, which had been going on since the 1897 Greco-Turkish War.<sup>254</sup> For example, in the October 31, 1906 issue, the editor of *Balkan* made this comment after reporting news regarding Crete:

[Everyone is looking for his interests in this world.] They say that hatred against the Greeks is flowing into Bulgaria, Romania and so on. What now? These *palikarias* (Greeks) need Muslim blood to drink in Crete.<sup>255</sup>

In assessing the position of the Ottoman state in Macedonia, on the other hand, Ethem Ruhi shifts its focus from the Balkan states to the European states, i.e. the Great Powers. In the articles on the Balkans, England and later Russia and Austria were presented as the real rivals of the Ottoman state in Macedonia. It is clear that Ruhi

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*buldular mı Bulgarlar aleyhinde kavlen ve fi'len düşmanlıktan geri durmadılar. Fakat bu düşmanlık son senelerde pek şiddetlenmişti. Meselâ Atina'da toplanan Palikarya çeteleri Girit müslümanlarına yaptıkları alçaklıkları Makedonya'da yaşayan Bulgarlara da yapmağa başladılar"*

<sup>252</sup> *Balkan*, 31 July 1906. "Nümâyişçiler evvelâ Filibe'nin en mu'tena ve en güzîde bir çarşısı olan merkez yolu caddesinden başladılar. Rumların en zengin, en meşhûr mağazalarını, manifatura, bakkal, tuhâfiye dükkanlarını, hele merkez yolundaki Rum eczahânesini Rum kiraathânesini, Rum matbaasını müehharan Filibe etrâfında ne kadar Rum dükkanları varsa kâffesini mahv ve perîşan etdiler."

<sup>253</sup> *Balkan*, 31 July 1906.

<sup>254</sup> Nûkhet Adıyeke, "Osmanlı Kaynaklarına Göre Türk-Yunan İlişkilerinde Girit Sorunu (1896)". *Çağdaş Türkiye Tarihi Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 1(3), (1993), 335-346.

<sup>255</sup> *Balkan*, 31 October 1906. "Kap kapan dünyâsı bu, Bulgaristan'da Romanya'da bilâd-ı sâirede Rumlara karşı nefretler yağıyormuş; Kaç para ider? Palikaryalara Girit lâzım, Girit'de içilecek Müslüman kanı lâzım!"

passionately supported Ottoman sovereignty in Macedonia and criticized European countries for their intrusion into the region. According to him, Macedonia was a part of the Ottoman motherland (*vatan*), and it requires defending the rights of the Ottomans until "the Turkish soldier sheds the last drop of his blood there."<sup>256</sup>

No one can deny that the Ottoman government is not lacking in determination and diligence to resist these cruel aims [of European Countries]. But [now it is too late.] Having reached this point, such an attack and violation cannot be tolerated. Now, what the Ottoman government wants to say to Austria is that the Turks would withdraw from Macedonia, but certainly not before they have made Romelia a second Plevne and shed the last drop of their blood there. There is no other way, if it comes to that point. It's the motherland. For the motherland, the last drop of our blood is *halal*. At least we shed our blood like men and not tears like women. At least we do not live with humiliation, but we die with dignity.<sup>257</sup>

Ethem Ruhi also suggested that the fate of Macedonia depends heavily on negotiations between European countries. Thus, in an article titled "This opportunity is so important" (*Bu Fırsat Pek Mühimdir*) published on October 25, 1907, it was reported that European governments were in conflict over Macedonia because of the illness of Franz Joseph, the emperor of Austria-Hungary. Since Austria was a critical country that held all the problems of the East in balance, the declining health of its emperor worried the European countries, and it had the effect of them seeking a new policy. So, according to Ethem Ruhi, this was a great opportunity for the Ottoman government to exploit.

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<sup>256</sup> Balkan, 6 October 1907.

<sup>257</sup> Balkan, "Zilletle Yaşamaz İzzetle Ölüyoruz", 6 October 1907. "Babıali'nin bu gaddarana emeller karşısında metanet göstermek için cehd ve gayretten fariğ olmadığını kimse inkâr edemez. Fakat.... İş bu pereseye düşürülmemelidir. Fakat Medâ Mâ Medâ! Mademki iş bu pereseye düştü gayri tecaviüz ve teaddinin bu derecesine tahammül götürülmez. Babıali'nin şimdi Avusturya'ya karşı demek istediği şudur: Türkler Makedonyadan çıkar fakat şunu iyi bilin ki Türk askeri Rumeli'de ikinci bir Plevne kurmadan, kanının son katresini dökmeden zor çıkar. İş bu pereseye gelmiş olduktan sonra başka çare yok. Vatan vatandır. Vatan için kanımızın son katresi de helaldir. Bari kadın gibi gözyaşı değil erkek gibi kanımızı dökeriz. Bari zilletle yaşamaz, izzetle ölürüz."

The life of François Joseph means a great political node in the European balance. The importance of this node becomes clear only when he leaves Austria Hungary, the possible death of the emperor confirms and clearly shows this political truth. The intention of the King of England to visit İstanbul and the spreading of this news, which is increasing day by day, gives great comfort to the Ottoman government. If the government can make careful use of this opportunity, the political ambitions against the Ottoman government could not only be delayed, but they could also be completely eliminated. That is why this opportunity is so important.<sup>258</sup>

In addition to the sharp criticism of the European countries' attacks on Ottoman sovereignty in the region, Ethem Ruhi did not seem to be satisfied with the Macedonian policy of the Ottoman Government either. Thus, an article published on 25 February 1908 dealt with the inadequacy of the Ottoman government's policy for the Macedonian Question. In this article, Ethem Ruhi pointed out the unsuitability of the policies of the Ottoman government as the main reason for the loss of power of the Ottoman state. According to him, the solutions that the Ottoman government came up with were too superficial to deal with the profound problem that the Ottoman state had been facing for years. Most remarkably, at the end of the article, the constitutional system was offered as a way to make a more effective policy, i.e. to save the Ottoman state from European pressure:

Why couldn't the Ottoman Government (the Porte) free itself from the intervention of the Great Powers until now? Because it has tried to solve the biggest problems with fragile and fleeting solutions. When there is an ulcer in the body, the doctor cuts it opens with a knife and drains the dirty blood and pus in it to treat the ulcer. For the draining of the pus is the treatment. The political malaise we are in now can also be treated in this way. When the problem is treated from the depths, one can see its basis.

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<sup>258</sup> Balkan, "Bu Fırsat Pek Mühimdir", 12 October 1907. "Fransuva Josef'in hayatı Avrupa muvazenesinde büyük bir ukde-i siyasi teşkil ediyor. Bu ukdenin ehemmiyeti evvela Avusturya'nın Macaristanla iftirakı suretiyle tezahür edecek ki imparator-u hazirin mematı ihtimali bu hakikat-i siyasiyeyi pek yakın bir surette takrir ve tebyin ediyor, edecektir. Şu irade-yi İngiltere kralının İstanbul'a ziyareti niyeti ve bu haberin gün günden kesb ve sevk eylemesi hükümet-i Osmaniye büyük bir nefhe-i tesliyet bahş eyliyor. Eğer Babıali şu fırsatınderece-i kıymetine daha tedbirli davranabilirse hükümet-i Osmaniye için hazırlanmış hatre-i siyasi daha birkaç vakit için duçar-ı te'hîr olduktan başka ileride tamamiyle necat ve selamet ümidleri de yok değildir, herhalde bu fırsat pek mühimdir."

We say Macedonia is currently an Ottoman possession, we also say it is the Rumeli vilayet-i şahanesi. (The whole world knows the origins, reasons and consequences of the disorder that is taking place on this possession).

This corruption, this disorder could have perished. Yet why does it persist? Because the Ottoman government is unable to achieve a political power commensurate with today's political conditions. Why can't this political power be achieved? Because we have not promulgated the Constitution (Kanun-ı Esasi), we have not opened the Assembly, and we still want to row against the tide. Time has no mercy ... It always works against us. That is the reason why Macedonian Crisis is getting worse again.<sup>259</sup>

### 3.3. The *Balkan Gazette*'s Perspective on The Bulgarian Domestic Politics

In addition to fragile international balances, Bulgaria experienced radical transformations since liberation, accompanied by several crises related to internal conditions.<sup>260</sup> The most notable change happened in agriculture and peasantry. After 1878, the large estates that belonged to the large Turkish landowners were bought in small portions by Bulgarian peasants with little money. As a result, the large estates were divided up and almost every peasant owned small estates.<sup>261</sup> However, the acquisition of land ownership did not bring the expected prosperity to the Bulgarian peasants. Since the lands were already in small pieces, the division among the heirs and wrong agricultural methods gradually reduced the income. Moreover, the peasants

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<sup>259</sup> *Balkan*, 12 March 1908, "Makedonya Meselesi". "Babiali şimdiye kadar düvel-i muazzamanın müdahalatından yakayı niçin kurtaramıyor? Zira ta'zim etmiş, kökleşmiş en büyük mesaili pamuk ipliğiyle bağlamaya başlandığı içindir. Vücudun bir uzvundan bir çıban çıkar, hekim o çıbanı tedavi için bıçakla yarar, içindeki pis kanı, irini akıtır. Çünkü o irini akıtmak tedavidir. Bizim şimdi düş olduğumuz alam-ı siyasiye de böyle tedavi edilebilir. İş esasından, merkezinden tutulursa Faidesi görülür. Makedonya ki el-yevm Osmanlı mülküdür, Rumeli vilayet-i şahanesidir diyoruz. Böyle bir mülke (dâri) olan şuriş ve fesadın esbab ve menşeiini, netayic-i mülahazasını cihan biliyor. Bu fesad, bu şuriş, ... mahv ve zail olabilirdi. Niçin hala fesad bitmiyor? Zira hükümet-i Osmaniye kemalat-ı asriyeye muvafık bir kudret-i siyasiye ihraz edemediğinden! Bu kudret-i siyasiye neden (istihsad) edilemiyor? ..... şebih bir usul-i idare ile hükümet etmeye çabaladığımızdan, Kanun-ı Esasi'yi ilan ve meclis-i mebusanı küşad etmeyüb hala ve hala ceryan-ı tekamül-i tabiata karşı kürek çekmek istediğimizdendir. Zamanın da rahmi yok, elbette ... hep zararımıza çıkıyor. Onun için ki Makedonya meselesi yine fenalaşıyor."

<sup>260</sup> Curtis, Glenn E. and Library of Congress. Federal Research Division. *Bulgaria, a Country Study*, p.25.

<sup>261</sup> Michael R. Palaret, *The Balkan Economies*, (University of Edinburgh, 2003), p.175-176.

had difficulties with the high taxes.<sup>262</sup> Thus, peasant discontent grew for years, leading to a series of protests in 1899.<sup>263</sup>

The peasants were not the only dissatisfied group. Inspired by the Russian protests of 1905, Bulgaria became the scene of several protests and demonstrations organized by different social groups between 1905-1908. Workers, who had formed a new class when Bulgarian industry took important steps under Stambulov's protectionist policies, were another leading social group. In protest their difficult working conditions, they began to organize to defend their rights.<sup>264</sup> Moreover, in addition to the workers and peasants, the elites, who complained about the government's corruption, repression, and foreign policy, also participated in the protests.

Thus, when Ethem Ruhi began its publishing life in Plovdiv in 1905, Bulgaria faced internal problems to which the *Balkan* newspaper could not be indifferent. However, Ethem Ruhi's approach to Bulgaria's internal developments differed from the way he dealt with the Macedonian question; one can even say that he represented a different journalistic type. News from Bulgaria was reported under the rubric Domestic News without commentary or analysis. Most of them were not attributed to a specific author, instead, the source - the location of the reporter, the news agency or newspaper that provided the information, and the date of the news- was given.<sup>265</sup> Although Bulgarian newspapers published in Sofia were the main source of information for domestic news, *Balkan* also had its own reporters in Bulgaria.<sup>266</sup>

Nonetheless, *Balkan's* editors occasionally commented on the news, but these comments appeared under a new title that distinguished the newspaper's interpretations from the reported news. For example, the December 27, 1907 issue reported that the

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<sup>262</sup> Michael R. Palaret, *The Balkan Economies*, (University of Edinburgh, 2003), p.180.

<sup>263</sup> Jelavich, Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States*, p. 194

<sup>264</sup> R.Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria* (2nd ed., Cambridge Concise Histories). (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.111.

<sup>265</sup> For example.. "*Sobronya'nın resm-i küşâdında Prens hazretleri nâmına Reis-i Nüzzer Raço Petrof Efendi tarafından irâd idilen nutk-u iftitâhî tercümesidir...*" 31 October 1906; "*Sofya'da rezk olunacak heykelin Rusya'daki ihtilal sebebiyle tehiri ama bu ara gönderileceği*", "*Hükümet gazetesiyle anarşist hakkındaki kanun ilan olunmuştur.*", 2 July 1907.

<sup>266</sup> Editors of *Balkan* closely followed the Bulgarian newspapers published in Sofia. "*Drevnik gazetesinin 1751. Nüshasında Bulgaristan ile Sırbistan beyninin açıldığı yazıyor.*" (15 June 1907), "*Bu unvan ile Balkanski Tribuna ceridesinin yazdığı makalat-ı atıyyede şayan-ı tefekkür nikadî siyasiye bulubduğundan iktibas etmeyi münasib gördük.*", "*Viyana'dan Vecerna Posta ceridesine verilen malumata nazaran*", "*Prens hazretlerinin tehir hakkında çıkan tevaturat yanlışdır.*", "*Sırp matbuatı Bulgaristan aleyhine çok mübalağalı mülahazatta bulundularsa da Bulgaristan bu hücumlara ehemmiyet vermiyor.*"

officers of Bulgarian Foreign Ministry would donate some money for the poor and orphans. After reporting this news, *Balkan* editors left a commentary praising these officers. This comment also criticized the Turkish officers by comparing them to their Bulgarian counterparts - and this might have been the main motive for this comment.

The officers of the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry have agreed on collecting monthly a portion of the money which they usually use for excursions, and to donate this money to the orphans and poor.

How happy are these generous people!!! Ours can't keep up with filling their stomach.<sup>267</sup>

*Balkan's* most notable opinion on Bulgarian politics appeared in the March 14, 1907 issue. The editorial, titled "The Regret," expressed regret over the assassination of the Bulgarian prime minister, Dimitar Petkoff. In the article, the author said that they, the Turks, would only side with those who treat the Turks of Bulgaria kindly and justly. So, as long as the interests of the Turks are not at stake, the *Balkan Newspaper* had no intention of taking a stand on Bulgarian domestic politics. Moreover, this article provides some clues to understand what being *bitaraf* (objective) means from Ethem Ruhi's perspective:

We are Turks. A Turk cannot be a *Stambulist*, *Zankovist* or *Narodnok*. We can only be supporters of that government which treats Muslims, Turks kindlier and justly. But as an impartial Turk, commitment to truth is a must, a matter of conscience. Petkoff had a strong determination, a sharp mind...

We can only regret the death of a patriot who shed his blood for the future of his nation, for freedom. In the end, murder is murder. It cannot be dignified in any way.<sup>268</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> *Balkan*, 27 December 1907. "*Bulgaristan hariciye memurini aralarında bir karar üzere bir ay tenezzühe sarf eyleledikleri paradan mah be mah yirmi beşerlik ayırarak bir yere toplayacaklar ve bu parayı fukaraya, eytama dağıtacaklarmış. Ne mutlu böyle alicenap insanlara! Bizimkiler sade kendi işkembelerine doldurmaya yetişemezler.*" *Balkan* also considered making comment necessary when the news related to the Ottoman government. "*Sofya gazetelerinin birçoğu Selanik'de kışad edilen Mekteb-i hukuka 1400 talebe içinde imtihanı kabul edilen Hristiyanlar içinde yalnız altı kişi varmış. Bunlardan da hiçbiri Bulgar değilmiş... bundan dolayı beyan-ı teessüf ediyorlar. <Biz bu meselede ne hükümet-i Osmnaniyenin bir suifkri bulunduğunu kabul eder ne de Sofya matbuatının bir azam ettikleri kadar cay-i teessüf bir cihet buluruz.>*", 25 October 1907.

<sup>268</sup> *Balkan*, 14 March 1907. "*Biz Türküz. Bir Türk ne Stambulist, ne Zankovist ne de Narodnok olamaz. Fakat kim bize daha dost daha adil olursa onun tarafgiri olabiliriz. Fakat bitaraf bir Türk gibi hakikati*

Considering the topics and the language in which *Balkan Gazette* was published, the target audience of Ethem Ruhi was the Muslim community of Bulgaria. More specifically, it was Turkish-speaking Muslims. However, if we consider the newspaper reading practices of the time, such as reading aloud in a coffee house, we can assume that *Balkan* addressed all Muslims of Bulgaria, including those who did not speak Turkish. In this respect, various groups of Bulgarians - Pomaks, Gypsies, Tatars, etc. - were part of the *Balkan* audience. According to the 1905 census data, there were 603,867 Muslims living in Bulgaria, which was 14.9% of the total population, and the percentage of those who spoke Turkish as their mother tongue was 12%.<sup>269</sup> Roughly speaking, compared to the first decade of the Principality of Bulgaria, Muslim emigrations were reduced by 1905. As can be seen from the 1910 census data, the demographic characteristics of the Muslim community had not changed significantly. At 601,999 Muslims made up 13.88% of society. The distribution by ethnicity was as follows: 484,144 Turks and Tatars, 21,146 Pomaks, and more than 100,000 Gypsies.<sup>270</sup> Obviously, their living conditions were not very advantageous. The great majority of the community consisted of peasants or city dwellers with low incomes.

The Muslims could not form an organized community. This made their representation in Bulgarian society and politics difficult. After liberation in 1878, the administration of the Muslims remained an unsolved problem for a long time and for the local government and Muslim community. A decree of 1 July 1880 abolished the office of the *Kadı (Qadı)* and transferred its functions to the *muftis*. Thus, the *muftis* became authorities responsible not only for religious affairs but also for the administration of the Muslim community. According to the 1880 Ordinance, the *müftis* were appointed by the Bulgarian government after being elected by their communities. Although the Bulgarian government was responsible for paying the *müftis*, they were under the supervision of Seyhulislam and the Meşihat of İstanbul.<sup>271</sup> The chief mufti (Başmufti) was the final authority for the internal affairs of the Muslim community. The chief *müfti* and other *müftis* also had broad powers over the Islamic foundations; they and

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*itiraf da vicdana borçtur. Petkof metin bir azim, şiddetli bir zekâ sahibi idi...kendi milletinin istikbali için, hürriyet için kanını dökmüş bir vatanpervere nazar-ı teessüfle bakmaktan kendimizi alamıyoruz. Zira cinayet cinayettir. Hiçbir vechle, hiçbir suretle takdir edilemez”*

<sup>269</sup> Ömer Turan., Turkish minorities in Bulgaria, p.112.

<sup>270</sup> Alexandre Popovic, *Les Musulmanes des Balkans à l'epoque Post-ottomane: Histoire et Politique*, (İstanbul: The Isis Press, 1994), p.154.

<sup>271</sup> Bilal N. Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri: 1878-1985*, (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1986), p.66-67

their appointed managers were responsible for the administration, expenditures, and revenues of the Islamic foundations.<sup>272</sup>

The regulations on muftis brought about many polemical issues that preoccupied the Muslim community in Bulgaria in the post-Ottoman period. On the one hand, the Bulgarian government was largely interfering in the affairs of the Muslims. According to Berlin Treaty, the principality would not interfere in the internal affairs of the Muslim Community, but the regulations affecting Muslims resulted in the Bulgarian government taking control of the mufti appointments.<sup>273</sup> This influence exerted by the government on the internal affairs of Muslims soon led to discontent. Critics focused mainly on the incompetence of the appointed *muftis* and their abuse of office. These two issues were frequently raised by *Balkan*. In an article published in 1906, it was stated that the Muslim community of Plovdiv did not consider the newly appointed mufti competent, that he was abusing his office. In fact, many other problems had arisen in Plovdiv since his appointment. The same article said the problems with *muftis* and Islamic foundations were so common that "even a three-volume book wouldn't be enough to explain them."<sup>274</sup> In another issue, *Balkan* reflected on the distrust of the mufti:

In Plovdiv there is neither a mufti, nor a municipal or religious court, nor an endowment administration. All that is governed by two imams. Who are these two imams? They have both created unrest in the society. They are in charge of every office, they are the administrators of Islamic endowments, muftis, judges, scribes and everything. This situation should be reported to the local government.<sup>275</sup>

As presented by *Balkan Gazette*, the problems related to the *muftis* were not only the concern of the editors. Several letters to the editor published in the newspaper pointed out the lack of training as well as the incompetence of the *muftis* and *naibs* who were not fulfilling their responsibilities.<sup>276</sup> In connection with the *muftis*, corruption in the

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<sup>272</sup> Ömer Turan., *Turkish minorities in Bulgaria*, p. 176.

<sup>273</sup> Levent Düzcü, "Balkan Gazetesinin Yazar ve Okur Köşesinden Bulgaristan Türklerinin Sorunları (1906-1908)", *Karadeniz Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 4/5, pp.33-81.

<sup>274</sup> Levent Düzcü, *ibid*, p.52.; *Balkan*, 9 Agoust 1906.

<sup>275</sup> *Balkan*, 1906. "Filibe'de ne müftü vardır, ne cemaat, ne şer'i mahkeme, ne evkaf idaresi. Bunların hepsi iki imamın hükmündedir. Bu iki imam kimdir? İkisi de ahaliyi ifsâd etmiştir. Evkaf-ı İslamiye idaresinde hâkimde, müftüde, müsvedde kâtibi de bu imamlardır. Bunların durumunun mahalli hükümete anlatılması gerekir."

<sup>276</sup> Levent Düzcü, "Balkan Gazetesinin Yazar ve Okur Köşesinden Bulgaristan Türklerinin Sorunları"

administration of the Islamic foundations was another problematic issue that was widely reported by *Balkan*'s editorial staff and addressed in letters to the editor. Ethem Ruhi wrote numerous articles criticizing the administrators of the *waqfs* (Islamic endowments). The editorial of September 6, 1906, stated, "The dispute is over who is exploiting the income of the endowments, as a result of which the Muslims in Bulgaria are being humiliated day by day and are sinking into misery... These abused endowments were inherited from the ancestors for charity, they are a trust of Allah, and every orphan had a right to them. And although people are aware of this corruption, they go on talking about religion and God." <sup>277</sup>

All Muslim institutions that met their expenses with the money from the *waqfs* were affected by the corrupt practices related to the Islamic endowments. This was also true for the Muslim schools. Bilal Şimşir explains that the Muslim schools were remarkably poor. The misuse of *waqfs* property led to a significant decline in the financial sources of Muslim schools. Moreover, the local government did not provide sufficient funds for them. For example, for the year 1894/95, the amount of money paid by the Bulgarian government for the Turkish schools was 9,946 leva, i.e. 4% of the total amount of the annual expenditure of the Turkish schools, the rest being paid by the community itself. For the same school year, the average payment amount for each Turkish school was 208 leva, while this figure increased to 2485 leva/ per school for Bulgarian schools and 3007 for Greek schools in Bulgaria. These comparisons not only show the lack of finances of the Turkish schools, but also prove the poor economic standard of the Muslim community. In the school year 1907/1908 there were 15,666 teachers and 63,516 pupils in 1234 Turkish schools. Probably these numbers did not represent all children of school age.

The Ottoman state tried some projects for the education of Muslims in Bulgaria. Some students who graduated from the *rüşdiye* (middle school) received scholarships from

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<sup>277</sup> *Balkan*, 26 September 1906. "Ya'ni "vakfi sen yiyeceksin, ben yiyeceğim" gavgasıdır ki, Bulgaristan'da ahâli-yi İslâmiyeyi günbegün zilletten zillete, zillet-i inkırâz ve perîşâniye düşürüyor... Vakfullah ki, emânet-i Allah'dır Huzûr-u şeriât'da yetim mahyla birdir. Biz ise bu Allah emânetlerini taammüden mahv ediyoruz. Veya mahv olduklarını görüyoruz da, yine Allah'dan, dinden, hayâdan, nâmusdan bahs ediyoruz. Daha ilerüsü var. Daha müdhîşi var. Millet in mürşid-i agâhı, mürebbî-i hissiyâtı olmağla muvazzaf, verese-i enbiyâ olduklarını söyleyen ve hakikatde birer şeytân-ı ahrasdan farkları olmayan birtakım hacılarımız, hocalarımız, müftülerimiz, imamlarımız, bu hizb-i edânînin ser-âmedânını teşkil ider. Ânların ömürlerini vakıf yimege, hırsızlık, ya'ni ırsızlıkla idâmeye hasır ider. Ânların ya bizzat veya dolayısıyla vakfa ihânetinden, hırsızlığa âlet olmakdan utanmazlarsa, şuna buna, câhil gürûhuna ne kalır ki?"

the Ottoman government to pursue their higher education in İstanbul, Bursa, Edirne, Manastır (Bitola) and other cities. In 1904, 44 students were sent to Ottoman cities for this purpose. These students were to return to Bulgaria after completing their education to lead the Turkish community of Bulgaria in agriculture, engineering and politics. However, most of the students did not return to Bulgaria.<sup>278</sup> The result was that, although the goal was to raise the intellectual level of the Muslim community, the community was faced with new intellectual losses, in addition to the previous ones caused by the emigrations.

The mass emigrations that happened especially in the first decade of the principality, had a significant impact on the demographic, socio-economic character of the Muslim population. During and after the war, several wealthy and intellectual Muslims left Bulgaria. Those who remained were mostly poor and illiterate. According to the 1905 census data, 11.75% of Muslims living in the cities were literate, while in the villages this percentage dropped to 2.03%. In concrete terms, there were 22,170 Muslims registered as literate. Compared to the record of 1900, there were 2000 fewer literate Muslims in 1905. It can be inferred that the intellectual level of the Turkish Muslim minority has declined over time, while the percentage of literacy of other ethnic groups has increased compared to the situation in the society as a whole.

Although it is not possible to estimate exactly how much of this literate population read newspapers, there were about 22,170 potential readers among the Muslim community in 1905, but Ömer Turan estimated that the potential number of regular newspaper readers among Muslims did not exceed 3000. This is because he excluded women from regular readers by claiming that educated women were unlikely to buy newspapers themselves. Moreover, according to him, educated peasants should be counted among the irregular readers because "they could buy newspapers only when they visited the cities."<sup>279</sup> However, both arguments contradict the fact that *Balkan* employed many peddlers in various Bulgarian towns to distribute the newspaper, and these peddlers probably visited the villages as well. Apparently, *Balkan* created an audience in the Bulgarian villages, because the newspaper received letters to the editor

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<sup>278</sup> Ömer Turan, *Turkish Minorities in Bulgaria*, p. 238.

<sup>279</sup> Ömer Turan, *Turkish minorities in Bulgaria*, p.282.

from the villages and also published news reported from the rural areas.<sup>280</sup> Finally, considering the collective reading practices during this period, the newspapers may have reached many more people than they were sold to by being read aloud in a coffee house or at a village meeting, etc. Thus, many Turkish newspapers were published during the 30 years of the principality, even if they could not endure as much as the *Balkan* newspaper.<sup>281</sup>

Financial difficulties, caused by the small circulation, could have been a reason for their short existence. Apart from the economic reasons, the Turkish newspapers had struggles with the Bulgarian government and these struggles sometimes ended up in the closure of the newspapers. For example, the publication of *Tuna*, *Uhuvvet*, *Rumeli* and *Ahali* newspapers were ceased by citing the new press laws and some of them were even closed.<sup>282</sup> *Balkan* was one of the newspapers suspended by the government. When it resumed publication after five weeks, *Balkan* explained the reasons for the suspension and pointed out the importance of the suspended Turkish newspapers for the Muslim community:

As of today, our newspaper has a license in accordance with the new regulation issued and implemented by the local government. This authority is a great strength and comfort for us. For let us consider... In this great Bulgaria there are six million new aggressors of Islam, while we have only two or three newspapers trying to explain the world to the people more or less. (Now, with the closure of these Turkish newspapers), the poor Muslims of Bulgaria have been left like a mute and lifeless person.<sup>283</sup>

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<sup>280</sup> "A Letter to the Editor from Dobrich," *Balkan*, 14 November 1906; "Written from Silistra," *Balkan*, 28 November 1907; "A Letter from Balchik," *Balkan*, 17 July 1907. "It is reported from the scene [from the village of Avradalan]", *Balkan*, 2 July 1908.

<sup>281</sup> Türker Acaroğlu, *Bulgaristan'da Türk Gazeteciliği (1865-1985)*, (İstanbul: Gazeteciler Cemiyeti Yayınları, 1990). Acaroğlu records 50 newspapers that were published in Bulgaria between 1878 and 1908.

<sup>282</sup> Popovic, *Les Musulmanes des Balkans*, p.159.

<sup>283</sup> "İstikbalimiz ümittir: Geçen yıl 181 numaralı nüshamızda gazetemizin birkaç gün tatil-i neşriyat edeceğini haber vermiştik. O günden beri beş hafta geçti. Bu müddet zarfında hükümet-i mahalliyyenin vaz ve ihdas eylediği yeni matbuat nizamnamesi mucebince gazetemiz müdür-i mesulünün esvaf-ı tazime-i kanuniye haiz bulunduğunu isbata çalıştık ve nitekim bir buçuk ay evvel çıkan geçen nüshamızda yazmış olduğumuz "biz bu ruhsat-ı resmîyyenin istihсалıyçün her fedakarlığı ihtiyar edeceğiz ve zaten muvaffakiyetimizden eminiz." sözünün nasıl bir azim ve kuvve-i halisane ile söylendiğini er geç ne hal ise gazetemizi bugün yine ihyaya muvaffakiyetle isbat etmiş oluyoruz.

In another article, the editor of *Balkan* stated that the Turkish community was in mourning and despair because of the closure of Bulgaria's Turkish newspapers. However, the society's reactions to the closure of *Balkan Gazette* made the editor incredibly happy. Ethem Ruhi expressed exuberantly that although Muslims in Bulgaria had not known what a newspaper meant until recently, they now demanded to have newspapers:

In Bulgaria there are six hundred thousand Muslims. These six hundred thousand people did not even know what the newspaper was until a few years ago. However, we must admit that the weekly newspapers Muvazene and Tuna have succeeded in getting the Muslim society used to reading newspapers, to such an extent that our poor people have been sad and almost hopeless for the last few months because the daily newspapers have been closed. This, in our opinion, is a great hope, a great advance, and we hope that our society will be able to bring out an abundance of new dailies besides the Balkan. May our souls and minds always find exhilaration thanks to the opportunity to express opinions - let us take advantage of what is our due as human beings.<sup>284</sup>

However, it must be remembered that Bulgarian Muslims, especially the Muslim society of Plovdiv, did not accept Ethem Ruhi and his ideologies. When Ethem Ruhi started his publishing life in Plovdiv, the Muslim community already had innumerable problems to solve. Ruhi had come to Bulgaria with the idea that he could carry out his anti-Abdulhamid propaganda without difficulty, but the problems that divided Muslims made this goal difficult. Although he claimed to be unbiased, his position in the debate was clear most of the time, so Ethem Ruhi sometimes faced negative

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*Bugünden itibaren gazetemiz hükümet-i mahalliye'nin vaz ve tatbik eylediği yeni nizamname mucebince ruhsat-ı seniyyeye haizdir. Bu selahiyet-i kanuniye bizim için büyük bir kuvvet, büyük bir ümid-i teselliyattır. Zira bir kere düşünelim. Şu koca Bulgaristan'da altı yüz yeni mütecevizi İslam var. Millete az çok dünyayı anlatmaya çalışır, çürük çarık her ne hal ise iki üç gazetemiz var idi. Zavallı Bulgaristan Müslümanları dilsiz cansız bir insan gibi kaldı."*

<sup>284</sup> Balkan, "...Bulgaristan'da altı yüz bin Müslüman var. Bu altı yüz bin ahali daha birkaç sene evveline kadar gazete ne olduğunu bile bilmiyordu. ....itiraftan kendimizi geri alamıyoruz ki ol vechle haftalık "Muvazene" sonrasında Tuna gazeteleri milletimizi gazete okumaya olsun alıştırdılar. O derecede ki geçen aylar yevmi gazetelerimizin cümlesi kapandığından dolayı zavallı ahalimiz adeta meyus ve mahzun oluyorlardı. Demek oluyor ki milletimizin gazete okumak ihtiyacı hissetmiştir. İşte bu, bizce büyük bir ümid, büyük bir terakkidir. Temenni eyleriz ki milletimizin yalnız Balkan değil yevmi birkaç tane taraf taraf sağnaklı yağmurlar gibi gazeteleri intişar etsin, maneviyetimiz yükselsin. Ruhlarımız, dimağlarımız, mutala sayesinde daima inşirah bulsun. Biz de insanlığımızdan layık olduğu kadar istifade edebilelim."

reactions from some groups in society.<sup>285</sup> The vast majority of the Turkish community in Plovdiv also supported Abdulhamid, as Ruhi judges, "Muslims themselves made themselves hostile to the idea of freedom." They were so alien to his ideas that Ruhi was labeled a *mürted* (apostate) by society."<sup>286</sup> Despite all these difficulties, Ruhi succeeded in publishing one of the few long-lived newspapers of the Muslims of Bulgaria. This success is certainly due to the development of the newspaper in parallel with Ruhi's conception of journalism.

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<sup>285</sup> Balkan, 15 July 1907, "*Gafllet ve Cehalet Bilyeleri: Zindanlara atıldığım zaman henüz on altı yaşında idim... Kendi efrad-ı milletimden görmüş çekmiş olduğum fenalıklar yanında zerre kadar ehemmiyeti kalmadı. Şu Filibe'de kendi milletim efradından kendi milletimden ah neler neler görmedim.*"

<sup>286</sup> Ethem Ruhi Hatıraları, p.31. "*Bizleri mürted sanarak hepimize 'Con' diyorlardı. Bulgaristan'ın bazı yerlerinde bulunmak o kadar imkansızdı ki bunu bir misal ile izah edecek olsam şaşakalırsınız. Taşa tutuluyorduk!*"

## CHAPTER 4

### NEWS MAKING of *BALKAN GAZETTE*

#### 4.1. News Network of *Balkan Gazette*

In 1906, when Ethem Ruhi began to publish *Balkan*, Europe, America, and East Asia were already deeply connected via telegraph and railway lines. Thanks to numerous cables like the one lying from London to India or passing under the Atlantic Ocean, even news from the most remote places of Europe or Asia could be widely circulated at the end of the 19th century.<sup>287</sup> Simultaneously, newspapers began to establish their own network of correspondence. Specialist correspondents transmitted fresh news from all around the world to European news centers. As a result of this instant flow of news thanks to telegraph lines, it was possible to encounter detailed coverage about international conflicts such as the Franco–Prussian War of 1870–71, the two Boer wars (1881 and 1899–1902) and the Russo–Japanese war (1904–5) in European newspapers.<sup>288</sup>

Examining the news network of *Balkan Gazette* would be a good example to demonstrate how news circulated in the early twentieth century. Seizing upon its advantageous position in Plovdiv, *Balkan* acquired its news from diverse sources. For the most part, telegrams received directly or indirectly from different places were pointed out as sources of news. The Balkans was an important center of the worldwide telegraphic network. The first telegraph line was built by British entrepreneurs between Crimea and Varna in 1854 to provide necessary information to European States that were involved in the Crimean War. After a while, telegraph lines connecting Varna to Constantinople and Varna to Bucharest were constructed again by the British enterprises.<sup>289</sup> Bought by the Ottoman government after the end of the war, these early lines were expanded rapidly. After 20 years of construction, the European part of the empire was connected by telegraph wires.

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<sup>287</sup> Mila Oiva, Asko Nivala, Hannu Salmi, Otto Latva, Marja Jalava, Jana Keck, Laura Martínez Domínguez & James Parker, “Spreading News in 1904”, *Media History*, (2019), p.4.

<sup>288</sup> Esperança Bielsa, “The Pivotal Role of News Agencies in the Context of Globalization: A Historical Approach”, *Global Networks*, 8, (2008), pp. 347- 366.

<sup>289</sup> Yakub Bektaş, *ibid.*

The Rumeli telegraph lines provided strong communication between Europe and the Ottoman lands, serving both the Ottoman state and the European countries that wanted to stay in constant contact with the Ottoman Empire. While the line Constantinople-Edirne- Shuman- Ruse reached Bucharest, another line, again starting from Constantinople, connected the Serbian lines through Sofia and Aleksinac. In the southern part, the line Constantinople-Salonica -Manastır, which was connected to the Iskodra lines, joined the Austrian lines via Menkovic.<sup>290</sup>

News telegrams appeared as the most valued news sources. The Balkans, in particular, used some telegrams to support its positions on contentious issues in the press. One of these issues was the Moroccan crisis, which was widely reported in *Balkan's* pages. Ethem Ruhi suggested reading *Matin* telegrams to get the truth, while most European newspapers were criticized for reporting false news about it.<sup>291</sup>

These telegrams could be first issued in other newspapers by their own correspondents. *Balkan* carefully addressed the suppliers and destinations while citing them as news sources. When all the information could be provided about the telegrams received or heard, it can be observed that *Balkan* used a more confident style while publishing the news. An explicit example appeared in the case of the rumors about the death of the Shah of Iran. On 10 December 1906, *Balkan* announced that "the latest telegrams tell of the death of the Shah" but expressed doubts about their accuracy. However, in the same issue, another piece of news was given with more confidence by stating that "A telegram coming from Tehran to *The New York Herald* published in Paris states that the Shah passed away. This news is kept very confidential."<sup>292</sup> In a similar vein, on 14 June 1907, readers of *Balkan* read the news about the alliance between England and Russia which "is reported in a telegram sent by a London correspondent of *Matin* newspaper, with proofs"

Occasionally the same telegrams were reported by more than one newspaper. In such cases, the editors of the *Balkan* newspaper reported by indicating the cities or regions

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<sup>290</sup> Diren Çakılcı, *Rumeli Telgraf Hatları 1854-1876*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2019)

<sup>291</sup> *Balkan*, 14 September 1907; Obviously, the credibility of telegrams cited from this newspaper was notably high on the eyes of *Balkan's* editors. They frequently gave references to *Le Matin* (*journal d'informations télégraphiques personnelles et vraies*), first French journal that embraced Anglo-Saxon model of journalism and provided 'factual information without commentary', Michael B. Palmer, *Des Petits Journaux aux Grandes Agences. Naissance du Journalisme Moderne*, (Paris : Aubier, 1983), p.96; Esperança Bielsa, *ibid*, p.6.

<sup>292</sup> *Balkan*, 10 December 1906, no:110, p.4. His actual date of death was January 8, 1907. Faruk Sümer, "Kaçarlar", *DİA*, XXIV, p.52-53.

where the correspondence took place. For example, telegrams sent from "Pekin to London newspapers", "to European newspapers", or "from Salonica to Sofia newspapers" were used as sources in different issues. Most interestingly, some news items were based on news telegrams from government agencies. Via one of these telegrams, sent from Ruse to the Interior Affairs Ministry of Bulgaria, *Balkan* reported in detail that trade activities on the Danube (Tuna) coast were being severely affected by the constant increase in grain prices, which caused uncertainty.<sup>293</sup>

As news became a commercial-industrial product from the mid-19th century, news agencies also emerged as important information providers for *Balkan's* news network. News agencies were private organizations whose primary motive was to gather information and sell it for profit. However, it is often argued that they were linked to their respective governments and represented their national interests. They were of great importance as a source of revenue and information.<sup>294</sup> Accordingly, around 1900, the headquarters of the most important global agencies were located in the wealthiest countries: France, Britain, and Germany. Founded in 1832, 1849 and 1851 respectively, French *Agence Havas*, German *Wolff (Continental Telegraphen Compagnie)* and British *Reuters* were the giants of the news market.<sup>295</sup> *Reuters* had become the most effective player in the global news market by the end of the 19th century, paralleling British investment in communications technologies such as the worldwide submarine cable system. Britain owned 66.3 percent of the world's private and government submarine telegraph cables in 1892. "Following the cables," *Reuters* opened offices in Alexandria in 1865, Bombay in 1866, Melbourne and Sydney in 1874, and in Cape Town in 1876.<sup>296</sup>

Havas, Reuter, and Wolff, major news agencies that competed against one another, formed a cartel that controlled the worldwide news market, along with the ever-emerging national news agencies. The members of this cartel divided the worldwide news market amongst themselves through periodic agreements. The first permanent agreement was signed in 1859. In it, members were allowed to gather news from any

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<sup>293</sup> *Balkan*, 3 October 1907, no:265, p.2.

<sup>294</sup> Oliver Boyd-Barrett, "Globalization of News Agencies", *The Globalization of News*, (Sage, 1998), p.23.

<sup>295</sup> Esperança Bielsa, "The Pivotal Role of News Agencies in the Context of Globalization: A Historical Approach", *Global Networks*, 8, (2008), pp. 347- 366.

<sup>296</sup> T. Rantanen, "The globalization of electronic news in the 19th century", *Media, Culture and Society*, 19: 4, (1997), 605-620.

territory they wanted but were forbidden to sell news to customers in each other's territories.<sup>297</sup> The 1870 agreement gave Reuters control of England, Holland and their colonies, while Wolff was given exclusive rights to Germany, Scandinavia, St. Petersburg and Moscow, and Havas to France, Italy, Spain and Portugal. By 1909, all regions of the world - except Alaska, Russia (not including Moscow and Petersburg), Arabia, Afghanistan, Persia, Siam, Abyssinia, and the Belgian Congo - were divided among the members of the cartel.<sup>298</sup>

A treaty signed on February 28, 1900, assigned Ottoman Lands to the *Korrespondenz Bureau, Havas- Reuter- Continental (Wolff)* cooperation. The Principality of Bulgaria was among the territories divided, as was the Ottoman Empire, where more than one agency could collect and sell news.<sup>299</sup> Therefore, *Balkan* published in an extremely advantageous place in terms of availability of various news sources. Its editors relayed news from the Bulgarian Telegraph Agency, Austria-Hungarian Korrespondenz Bureau and from the dominant global news agencies "directly" to readers.<sup>300</sup> However, the name of the agency was not always mentioned: 'For the past two weeks we have been reporting directly from agency telegrams that the Ottoman government is seriously preparing for war' ... "Agency telegrams report the declining health of the Sultan."

It can be argued that *Balkan* also invested capital in its network of correspondents. Some news was reported by *Balkan's* correspondents. In some cases, the beginning of the news item specifically noted, "*Balkan's* correspondent reports." Despite the absence of reporter names, other news items prefaced with the statements "as reported by," "as coming from," or "according to statements by..." may have come directly from *Balkan*. Remarkably, some of them were based on witness statements and came from the places where the events took place. *Balkan* readers could often get this kind of news from different places.

Mostly, the correspondents reported on the developments in Constantinople, news about Bulgarian domestic politics and some local news from different cities in

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<sup>297</sup> Oliver Boyd-Barrett, "Globalization of News Agencies", p.27.

<sup>298</sup> Rantanen, T. (1997) "The globalization of electronic news in the 19th century", p.617

<sup>299</sup> Ceren Uçan, "Endeavoring to establish an imperial news agency: the Ottoman Telegraph Agency", *Turkish Studies*, 21:5, (2020), 750-771.

<sup>300</sup> *Balkan*, 30 September 1906, 3 October 1907.

Bulgaria. *Balkan* had a special correspondent responsible for reporting news from Narodno Săbranie (the Bulgarian National Assembly), whose report on ongoing discussions about Bulgarian Muslims was published on 27 December 1907.<sup>301</sup> Besides Constantinople and cities of Bulgaria (Ruse, Nova Zagora, Shumen, Sofia), other correspondent cities appearing in editions of *Balkan* are Paris, Athens, Toulon, Berlin, Odessa, and Bucharest.

Another important source of information were the other newspapers. Domestic news relied mainly on Bulgarian newspapers published in Sofia, the capital, with extensive news quoted from European (German, Russian, French, and British) newspapers making up an important part of the columns of Foreign News. The news was translated and quoted from the European press, which Ethem Ruhi and his colleagues carefully followed. Most of the time the news was quoted without further evaluation, but sometimes objections to certain publications were expressed. For example, Ethem Ruhi adamantly criticized European newspapers for hiding the truth about the Moroccan Crisis, an international crisis between March 1905 and May 1906 that ended with the recognition of French influence over Morocco. However, some European correspondents and newspapers were praised for their truthful reporting. Charles Chanvin of the *Mercure de France* was one of those "few conscientious journalists" whom *Balkan* editors recommended following.<sup>302</sup>

Newspapers published in Constantinople were also important sources appearing in *Balkan* editions. Besides obtaining information from them, *Balkan*, or Ethem Ruhi personally, initiated polemical discussions with their editors. On October 1, 1908, an "open letter" to the editor-in-chief of the *İkdam* was published. In it, the *İkdam* newspaper was criticized for reporting "fake news", which was "so unacceptable that the publication of this letter and the warning to *İkdam* became a must."<sup>303</sup> Even more remarkably, local newspapers published in other Ottoman cities emerged as sources. For example, a full article from the *Ahenk* (1895-1930), a notable local newspaper in Smyrna, was quoted on the front page of the September 14, 1906 issue because "it perfectly addresses the current social situations, so it is really worthy of attention."<sup>304</sup>

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<sup>301</sup> *Balkan*, 27 December 1907, no:328, p.3.

<sup>302</sup> *Balkan*, 14 September 1907, no:251, p.1

<sup>303</sup> *Balkan*, 14 October 1908, no:569, p.4.

<sup>304</sup> *Balkan*, 14 September 1906, no:38, p.1.

**Newspapers mentioned as news sources in *Balkan* (50 issues between 1906-1907)**

| <b>Name of the newspaper</b>      | <b>City of publication</b> | <b>Name of the newspaper</b> | <b>City of Publication</b> |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Daily Telegraph</i>            | London                     | <i>Şura-yı Ümmet</i>         | Cairo- Paris               |
| <i>Times</i>                      | London                     | <i>Mercure de France</i>     | Paris                      |
| <i>Daily Mail</i>                 | London                     | <i>Dnevnik</i>               | Sofia                      |
| <i>Morning Post</i>               | London                     | <i>Kambana</i>               | Sofia                      |
| <i>Wiener Allegemeine Zeitung</i> | Vienna                     | <i>Balkanski Tribuna</i>     | Sofia                      |
| <i>Politishe Korrespondenz</i>    | Vienna                     | <i>Vecerna Pošta</i>         | Sofia                      |
| <i>Neue Freie Presse</i>          | Vienna                     | <i>Tuna</i>                  | Russe                      |
| <i>Journal Militaire</i>          | Paris                      | <i>Sada-yı Girit</i>         | Hanya/ Crete               |
| <i>L'Écho de Paris</i>            | Paris                      | <i>Asır</i>                  | Salonica                   |
| <i>Le Figaro</i>                  | Paris                      | <i>Ahenk</i>                 | Smyrna                     |
| <i>Le Matin</i>                   | Paris                      | <i>İkdam</i>                 | Constantinople             |
| <i>Le Temps</i>                   | Paris                      |                              |                            |



*Centers of Balkan's news network according to its source of information*



*Centers of Balkan's news network according to the subjects of the news*

#### 4.2. Distribution Network of *Balkan Gazette*

Readers in Plovdiv could easily get the daily *Balkan* at the kiosk in front of the "Cuma". However, the geographical distribution of *Balkan Gazette* was not limited to its place of publication. It was also delivered to other cities. The geographical distribution of the newspaper was parallel to the railway network on which Plovdiv was located. By the beginning of the 20th century, the total length of the railways network of the Balkans had reached 15,000 km. Cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants had connections to the railway lines.<sup>305</sup> In this network, Bulgaria had a remarkable position. In terms of the extent of the lines, data from the 1890s show that Bulgaria covered 14% of the approximately 5000 km of railway lines in the entire region.<sup>306</sup> More importantly, the most valuable stations of the trunk line Vienna-Belgrade-Constantinople were located in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. This line connected the capitals of the two empires of the regions operated by the Oriental Railway Company. Mostly known as the Orient Express, the Vienna- Constantinople line was the result of 20 years of efforts by the Ottoman Empire. In 1869, the Ottoman Empire had reached an agreement with a German entrepreneur, Baron Moritz von Hirsch, to grant him a concession to build a railway network of about 2500 kilometers. The main line was to run from Constantinople via Edirne- Plovdiv-Sofia - Nish-Pristina - Sarajevo-Sisak to the Austro-Hungarian border; including these four connecting lines: Edirne-Dedeagach on the Aegean coast, Plovdiv- Burgas on the Black Sea, Nish to the border with Serbia, and Pristina- Salonica. The Paris-based company *Société Imperiale des Chemins de Fer de la Turquie d'Europe* (Oriental Railways Company), commissioned by Baron Hirsch to build and operate this planned railway network, could not finish the construction of all the lines. However, the Ottoman government opened the main line between Constantinople- Edirne- Sarımbey (a town near Plovdiv) on 17 June 1873 with great celebrations.<sup>307</sup>

The year 1878 became a turning point for the development of the railway in the region. After the concession was handed over to Austrian entrepreneurs in October, the Treaty

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<sup>305</sup> Kaloyan Stanev, "A Historical GIS Approach to Studying the Evolution of the Railway and Urban Networks: The Balkans, 1870–2001", *Historical Methods: A Journal of Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History*, 46:3, (2013), 192-201.

<sup>306</sup> Kaloyan Stanev, Eduard Josep Alvarez-Palau & Jordi Martí-Henneberg "Railway Development and the Economic and Political Integration of the Balkans, c. 1850–2000", *Europe-Asia Studies*, 69:10, (2017), 1601-1625

<sup>307</sup> Vahdettin Engin, *Rumeli Demiryolları*, (İstanbul: Eren Yayıncılık, 1993), p.117

of Berlin changed the structure of the Balkans and brought new responsibilities for the newly established Balkan states and also for the Ottoman Empire. According to the following agreement of 1883, Serbia was obliged to build a line from Nish to the Austrian border through Belgrade, and in the meantime the Ottoman Empire would build the missing line between Belova and the Bulgarian border. Because of its political and economic interests, Austria also attached importance to the connection of the Ottoman lands with Europe. Therefore, Austria guaranteed the completion of the line from Budapest to Belgrade. After all the necessary lines had been put together, the Orient Express left İstanbul Sirkeci Gare directly for Vienna on August 12, 1888.<sup>308</sup>

As the heartland of this lineage, Bulgaria benefited greatly from the Orient Express, which provided a link to both Europe and its sovereign state, the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, after the recognition of Bulgaria as an autonomous country per the 1878 Berlin Treaty, the Bulgarian government had attempted to connect the entire newly established country with railways. By the mid-1890s, Yambol was already connected to Burgas and Pernik to Sofia, and the Bulgarian State Railways, responsible for railway construction, achieved a total line extension from 220 kilometers in 1880 to 1556 kilometers in 1900 and 2109 kilometers in 1912.<sup>309</sup> As a result of the efforts between 1878-1912, Varna had a railway connection that reached as far as Russia in the north, as far as Vidin in the west and as far as Burgas in the south; Burgas was connected to Pernik by a line that reached as far as Salonica and Sirkeci.

Thanks to this developed railway network, *Balkan* was spread throughout Bulgaria, as well as Greece and Romania. Letters to the editor, editorial announcements and advertisements on the last pages show that the newspaper built up a considerable distribution network. *Balkan* received many letters from towns and villages in Bulgaria, from Dobrich, Karnobat (Karin Abad), Balchik, Varna, Ruse, Kardjali (Kırcaali), Shumen (Şumnu), Silistra. Outside Bulgaria, Constanta (Köstence), Salonica, Bucharest, and Harşova were the top locations of readers sending letters to *Balkan*. According to an apology announcement published in the newspaper, these letters were so numerous that the editorial staff was unable to publish them all:

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<sup>308</sup> Vahdettin Engin, *ibid*, p.184

<sup>309</sup> R.J. Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria (Cambridge Concise Histories)*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.118.

'We have received so many letters, but we cannot publish them all because there are too many for our newspaper to reserve a space for each of them, and sometimes we find some letters irrelevant. For this we would like to apologize.'<sup>310</sup>

It is difficult to determine which criteria *Balkan* used to select the letters for publication. However, their content and the tone of the language are an important indication that *Balkan* was noticeably read by the Muslims of Bulgaria. It is noteworthy that the letters, which came from very distant places, contained topics and concerns that would normally be acknowledged in a local newspaper. For example, they mentioned the death of someone in Silistra<sup>311</sup>, a round table discussion on education organized by young students in Dobrich<sup>312</sup> requests for Friday sermons in different languages<sup>313</sup>, or tributes from people in Constanta to their local doctor.<sup>314</sup>

Similarly, articles, open letters, and editorial announcements show that the *Balkan's* audience included all Bulgarian Muslim-Turks. Any local issue affecting the Muslim community - such as mufti appointments, cultural-intellectual events, and rumors - was closely followed. The administration of the Muslim Endowments in Bulgaria was one of the main topics *Balkan* reported on extensively in its pages. The November 30, 1906 issue stated that *Balkan* would continue to investigate the state of the Muslim foundations, "Being the greatest opponent of those who corrupt these supreme institutions, as the Sharia and the law do, we will not cease to investigate every outrage of these traitors. We will expose every corruption that has happened" In another issue, the Plovdiv-based newspaper turned to the Shumen Muslim Endowments (Şumnu evkafı) leadership with sarcasm:

It is commendable that you keep Kalıbcızade Şükrü Efendi, who does not even send money to our newspaper, as the chief treasurer of Shumen

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<sup>310</sup> *Balkan*, 17 December 1907. "Birçok mektuplar alıyoruz. Bunları gazetemizin hacmiyle mütenasib olmadığından ve bazen de münasebet düşmediğinden derç edemiyoruz. Beyan-ı itizar eyleriz."

<sup>311</sup> *Balkan*, 28 November 1907, no:303, p.2.

<sup>312</sup> *Balkan*, 13 February 1908, no:364, p.3.

<sup>313</sup> *Balkan*, 30 August 1908, no:534, p.4.

<sup>314</sup> *Balkan*, 24 March 1908, no:398, p.4.

Foundations. We call the attention of the Shumen administration of Muslim foundations and also the local administration.<sup>315</sup>

It is doubtful whether it had any readership at all in Constantinople before the revolution of 1908. *Balkan* was among the hostile publications banned by Abdulhamid from entering Ottoman territories, and its owner, Ethem Ruhi, was sentenced to death for publishing this "harmful newspaper." Nevertheless, Ethem Ruhi may have smuggled it into Constantinople, as his colleagues were able to smuggle several banned publications into the empire using various methods. This was also the case with his first publication in Bulgaria, *Rumeli*, which was considered one of the "enemy" newspapers. In his memoirs he mentions how *Rumeli* was smuggled into Constantinople:

Rumeli was ahead of *Osmanlı* in criticism. I criticized the Sultan and the other statesmen more harshly. *Rumeli* was smuggled into the Empire via Kardjali and Cebel; I sent it everywhere with mules carrying loads.<sup>316</sup>

In addition to the railway lines, Plovdiv profited post offices network too. Most of the post offices opened by European states in the Ottoman Empire were in the Balkans. Austria, in particular, had established numerous post offices throughout the Balkans and in other Ottoman cities, the number of which reached seventy-eight. There were some in Avlonia, Beirut, Tenedos, Çeşme, Chio, Alexandroupoli, Edirne, Plovdiv, Gelibolu, Giresun, Chania, Haifa, İnebolu, İskenderun, İstanbul, Shkodra, İzmir, Heraklion, Kavala, Jerusalem, Lagos (Karaagac), Larnaca, Latakia, Laros, Mersin, Lesbos, Preveza, Rethymno, Rhodes, Ruse, Samsun, Salonica, Bitola (Manastır), Mitrovica, Prizren, Skopje, Sérres, Sinop, Sofia, San Giovanni (Sengin), Tekirdag, Tripoli, Trabzon, Varna, Samos, Vidin, Volos, and Janina. This allowed the penetration of "undesirable" publications into the Ottoman lands, as the Ottoman Government could not hinder those foreign offices that enjoyed the privilege.<sup>317</sup>

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<sup>315</sup> Balkan, 17 July 1907. "*Vaktile gazetemizin paralarını bile dolandıran Kalıbçızade Şükrü Efendi evkaş sandıklarınız bulunduğundan dolayı tebriğe şayansınız. Gerek Şumnu evkafının ve gerek hükümet-i mahalliye'nin nazar-ı dikkatini celb eyleriz*"

<sup>316</sup> Ethem Ruhi Balkan, *Canlı Tarihler*, p.33.

<sup>317</sup> Salih Kuyaş, "Posta Tarihi ve Kapitülasyon Postahaneleri", *Tarih ve Toplum*, (January 1984), 49-53; Aysegül Okan, "The Ottoman Postal and Telegraph Services in the Last Quarter of the Nineteenth Century", (Unpublished MA Thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2003), p.33.

Upon their arrival in the cities, the newspapers were distributed by newspaper vendors (*müvezzis*) who had a contract with the *Balkan* administration. This was a common practice in journalism of that era. Such a system of distribution, the profession of "müvezzi", had already developed in the 1870s in the Ottoman Empire. Under this system, the "müvezzi" carried numerous newspapers under his arm and delivered them to subscribers by selling them on the street, on the train, or in other public places.<sup>318</sup> Newspaper delivery was considered a profession reserved for children, especially poor boys. According to Reşat Ekrem Koçu, newspaper boys began to be employed from 1919 to save them from censorship under the occupation. Then it became a widespread practice that lasted until the 1960s. However, an examination of the images of müvezzis in early newspapers, including those in the Balkans, shows that newsboys were not always children. In addition to newspaper vendors (*muvezzis*) who were specifically responsible for selling newspapers, other peddlers might also occasionally sell newspapers.<sup>319</sup>

It is possible to observe images of *muvezzis* and their relationships with publishers in the pages of newspapers. One such record that deals independently with newspaper salesmen is Kemal Tahir's "Velinimetimiz Müvezzi". Although written relatively late, in 1937, it gives indications of general features of the profession. He describes how the *müvezzi*, "the most indispensable and devoted part of the newspaper publishing business," served:

'When he was not in the trams, on the ferries, in every nook and cranny of the city, shouting, 'The paper is out! Come, take one!', neither the toy seller from Eyüpsultan nor the lieutenant from Ortaköy came to buy newspaper.

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*Balkan* employed many *müvezzis* who were responsible for selling the issues sent from Plovdiv during the month. They were supposed to send the total receipts to the management at the end of the month. This system placed the *müvezzis* at the center of the newspaper's economic concerns. A job advertisement in the December 28, 1907 issue shows these concerns, "We need a *müvezzi* in Silistra. But he is not to bag the

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<sup>318</sup> Ersin Turan, "Yerel Basın ve Ulusal Dağıtım Kanallarındaki Yeri", *Türkiye'de Yerel Basın*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Yayınları, 2007), p.305.

<sup>319</sup> Derya Kılıçkaya, "Kemal Tahir'in 'Velinimetimiz Müvezzi' Hikâyesi Ekseninde Müvezzilere bir Bakış", *Akademik Hassasiyetler*, 3, (2016)

<sup>320</sup> Kemal Tahir, "Velinimetimiz Müvezzi", *Yedigün*, 2 June 1937.

revenue after the sale of the papers, as some peddlers do. Modesty is necessary."<sup>321</sup> Since they had difficulty in getting paid regularly, the editors had to keep exhorting the peddlers on the newspaper pages to send the monthly receipts along with the surplus copies. Sometimes the *müvezzis* were threatened to stop sending the paper:

This month will soon be at an end. Those *müvezzis* who have not yet sent the income, please do so by the beginning of next month! If not, do not feel offended by not receiving more copies of our newspaper for sale.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> Balkan, 28 December 1907.

<sup>322</sup> Balkan, 15 October 1907. "*Ayın nihayeti geldi. Ayın birinci günü hesabını postaya koymayan ayın üçüne kadar hesapları vasıl olmayan müvezzilerimize rica ederiz ki adem-i irsalatımızdan dolayı darılmasınlar. Zira canımız yanmıştır. Bazı müvezzilerimiz artan nüshaları iade etmiyorlar. Hesaplarla beraber ne kadar nüsha artıyorsa mutlak surette iadeleri rica olunur*"

## CONCLUSION

This study attempts to examine one of the longest-lived newspapers of Bulgaria's Muslims, the daily *Balkan Gazette*, published by Ethem Ruhi in Plovdiv. As a projection of the dominant paradigms in traditional Ottoman press historiography, this newspaper's success has been linked to the interpretation that Ethem Ruhi advocated for the rights of Bulgaria's Muslims. In this sense, studies of *Balkan Gazette* have argued that Ethem Ruhi, a staunch Young Turk - that is, an opponent of Abdulhamid's despotic regime - sought to spread his modernizing ideas and preserve Turkish identity in Bulgarian Principality through journalism. However, this study proposes an alternative explanation for *Balkan Gazette*'s success. It argues that high circulation and wide news network of this journal enabled it to gain a substantial readership throughout Bulgaria. Moreover, Ethem Ruhi's changing attitude towards journalism played an important role in this success. Therefore, his journalistic experiences and the breaking points he had during his journalistic career are worth investigating. Such an investigation would also be helpful in developing an alternative approach to the Ottoman press.

Although he mainly practiced Young Turk journalism for years, Ruhi had to adopt a new journalistic style because of the given conditions when he came to Plovdiv. Contrary to his initial expectations, there were great obstacles to making anti-Abdulhamid propaganda in Bulgaria. First of all, the Bulgarian government behaved strategically about its relations with the Ottoman Government and also with the Sultan. Since the country was still under Ottoman suzerainty, the Bulgarian Principality avoided being tough on the Sultan, contrary to Ruhi's assumptions. Besides, unlike the other cities he practiced journalism, Ethem Ruhi could not ignore local developments due to the fact that the Bulgarian Turkish-Muslim community was a predominant part of the society. Therefore, *Balkan Gazette* frequently reported on internal crises such as ethnic conflict between Greeks and Bulgarians, as well as international crises such as Macedonian Crisis in which Bulgaria was involved.

As an Ottoman-Turk publisher living in Bulgaria, Ethem Ruhi's assessments of Macedonian Crisis, one of the most challenging crises of the second half of the 19th

century, are worth revisiting. Remarkably, Ruhi assumed the role of a "reporter" in delivering developments in Macedonia. In doing so, he openly expressed his hatred for the Greeks and portrayed the Bulgarians as the aggrieved party. This reaction could be related to the ongoing conflicts between Greeks and Ottomans in the second half of the 19th century, especially over Crete. However, the focus of Ethem Ruhi shifted to the European states, i.e. the Great Powers, when it came to evaluating the position of the Ottoman state in Macedonia. In addition to harsh criticism of the interference of the European states in Ottoman sovereignty in the Balkans, Ethem Ruhi also expressed dissatisfaction with Macedonian policy of the Ottoman Government.

Second, when Ethem Ruhi settled in Bulgaria in 1905 to publish a newspaper, the principality was trying to cope with several internal crises to which an Ottoman Turkish newspaper could not be indifferent. However, when reporting on internal problems, Ethem Ruhi adopted a different approach, it could even be claimed that he adopted a different journalistic style. A special section called "Domestic News" was reserved for news from Bulgaria. These news items, reported without commentary or analysis, were not attributed to a particular reporter, but their source was given with details such as locations, news agencies, or newspapers that provided the information.

*Balkan's* position on Bulgarian domestic politics was clearly stated in the March 14, 1907 issue. It was the editorial entitled "The Regret" that was intended to express the regret of *Balkan* editors over the assassination of the Bulgarian Prime Minister Dimitrar Petkoff. After reporting the murder, the editor stated that the Turks "would only side with those who treat the Turks of Bulgaria kindly and fairly." So, "as long as the Turks' interests were not at stake", the editor said, the *Balkan Gazette* had no intention of taking a stand on Bulgaria's domestic politics. This article was also pivotal because it explained what it meant for Ethem Ruhi to be *bitaraf* (impartial/objective).

As can be seen from *Balkan's* topics and publication language, Ethem Ruhi targeted Bulgaria's Muslim community as its intended audience. However, it should be kept in mind that the Muslims of Bulgaria did not share the same ideas as Ethem Ruhi, more so, Ruhi's ideologies often contradicted with the pro-Abdulhamid position of Muslim Community. Moreover, when Ethem Ruhi started its publishing life in Plovdiv, the Muslim community already had some problems to solve. As these problems created

disputes within the Muslim community, the earlier aim of Ethem Ruhi, namely, to carry out anti- Abdulhamid propaganda, became difficult to achieve. Despite his claim to be impartial, his position was obvious in most debates, so he often faced negative reactions.

*Balkan* frequently carried news and analysis about mufti appointments and the administration of Islamic foundations in its pages. In the post-Ottoman period, muftis and their administration became the most problematic issues in Bulgaria's Muslim community. In this sense, the interference of the local government in the internal affairs of Muslims through mufti appointments soon provoked negative reactions. The main concerns of the critics were the incompetence of the appointed muftis and their abuse of office. Similarly, *Balkan* reported extensively on corruption in the administration of Islamic foundations. In addition to the numerous articles written by Ethem Ruhi, the newspaper published many readers' letters criticizing the administrators of the waqfs (Islamic foundations).

The most salient feature of *Balkan Gazette* is its wide news network. Examining the news network of *Balkan Gazette* would be a good example to show how news circulated in the early twentieth century. *Balkan* provided its readers with news that came from a variety of sources. Telegrams received directly or indirectly from various places were most often cited as news sources. Apparently, *Balkan* editors valued news telegrams the most. It can be assumed that *Balkan* also hired its own correspondents in various locations. Finally, news agencies and other newspapers were also frequently cited as *Balkan's* news sources. While domestic news was mostly based on information from newspapers published in Sofia, editors used European newspapers as sources to report on international developments. Parallel to this wide news network, *Balkan* must have been widely distributed. The letters to the editor and advertisements on the last pages confirm *Balkan's* wide distribution network.

Thus, as claimed in this study, the *Balkan Gazette* perfectly utilized the news and dissemination networks that existed at the beginning of the 20th century and delivered the news collected from various sources to its readers. This was the remarkable achievement of this journal. In other words, *Balkan* appeared in response to the demand of people who "wanted to read news rather than sensational or scientific

articles" and was published in Bulgaria as long as it met this demand. This situation contradicts the modernization paradigm, which usually excludes the concept of demand when studying the development of the Ottoman press. According to this paradigm, society was not an active, constructive element of the Ottoman press and therefore did not constitute a significant readership with demands. However, considering the content of *Balkan Gazette*, the numerous letters to the editor received and the meticulous attitude of the newspaper in its reporting, it is safe to say that Balkan appealed to an active readership and took their demands into account.

Similarly, as Ethem Ruhi's journalistic career perfectly illustrates, Ottoman journalists revised their editorial policies as necessary under the circumstances and adopted different journalistic practices. At the beginning of the 20th century, Ottoman journalists discussed the limits, necessities, and also difficulties of their profession. Journalists also followed the new journalistic trends from around the world. They compared how French, English and American journalism was practiced, discussed new methods such as the interview, issued new developments in journalism education, etc. Therefore, it would be an incomplete approach to limit Ottoman journalism to the ideological and political boundaries.

Overall, Ottoman press historiography, apart from some revisionist and holistic studies, remained within certain limits and could not develop into a cultural history. A large number of materials uncovered through many catalog studies are waiting to be examined with a new approach to Ottoman periodicals. For this, the readership as a party should be evaluated first. Possible questions that await further investigation are: "Who read printed newspapers, why, and how in the Ottoman Empire?", "Were readers concerned with the reporting styles?", "Did the readers read more than one newspaper at a time because differences in reporting style were significant enough to them?", "Did readers form different social groups identify with different newspapers?" In addition, Ottoman newspapers should be evaluated in the context of the debates and practices of journalism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and in the context of their interaction both with themselves and with the newspapers of the World.

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*Balkan*, no: 388, 12 March 1908.  
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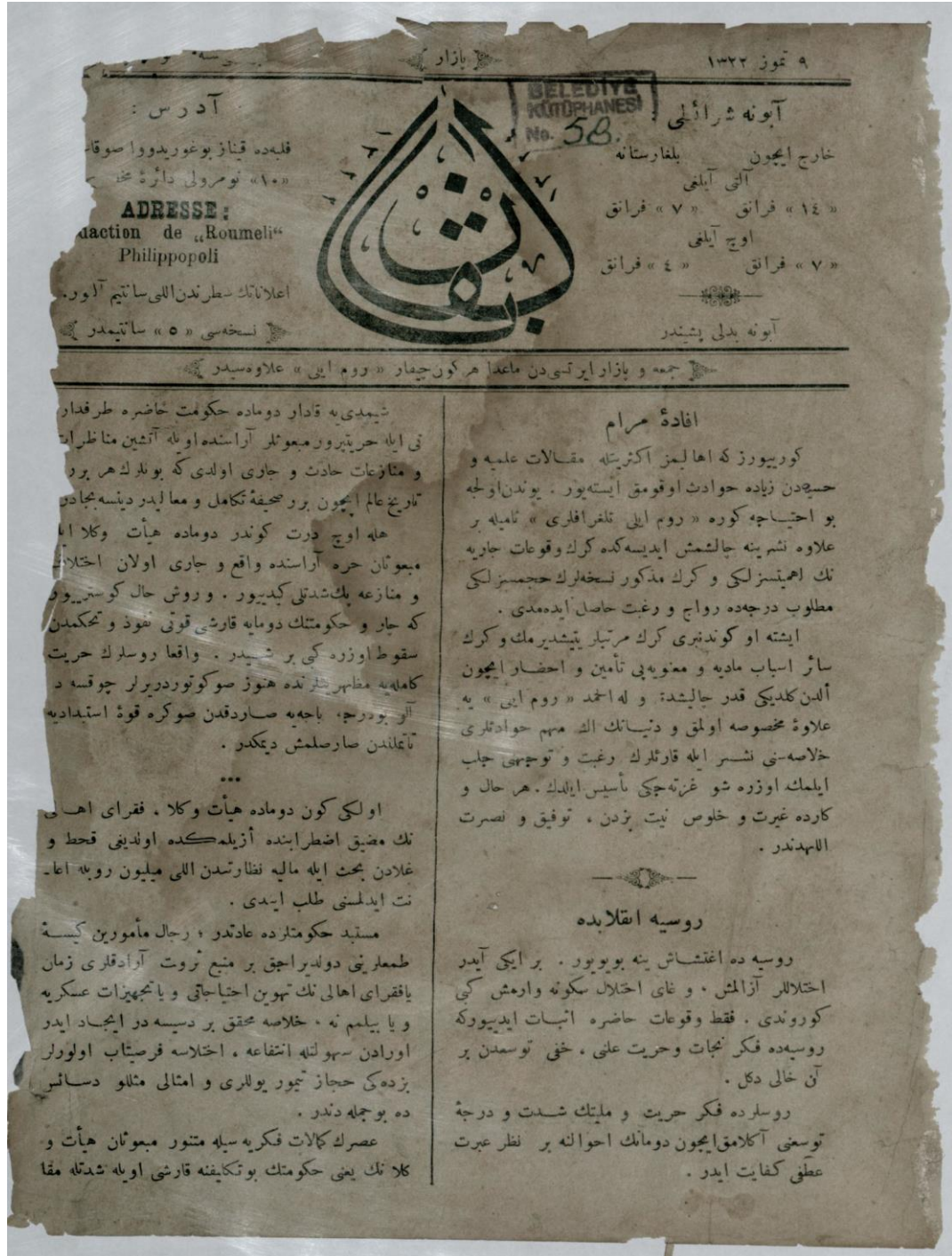
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## APPENDIXES

### APPENDIX 1



1.Balkan, no:1, 9 Temmuz 1322. ( from İ.B.B. Atatürk Kitaplığı)

۱۵۷ نومبر

آدرس :

فلبده ( روم ایلی ) اداره سی

**ADRESSE :**

Rédaction de "Roumelis"

Philippopolis

محررات اداره فلبده کونستانتین

شخصی بش ساندیر

عقیده



۱ مارٹ ۱۳۲۳

آبونه شرائطی :

خارج ایچون بلفارستانه

الی ایلی

۱۴۰ = فراتیق

۷۰ = فراتیق

۷۰ = فراتیق

۴۰ = فراتیق

آبونه بدلی یشندیر

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بازار ایرتسی دن ماعدا هر کون جیفار « روم ایلی » علاوسیدر

برنجیست

Брош 157

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**تأسف**

دولتی لستخیزده پتره اسمندہ بریتک دانه  
حرصیلہ منبستر خوبودین یتوقفک و قاتی خبر ویر -  
مستدک .

منبستر یتوقفک و قاتی « یالسکز » بلفارستان ایچون  
دکک . شون دالغان حکومتلری ایچون بیوک بر جاده در  
زیرا بلفارستان استقلالی ایچون « بلفارستانک استقلالی  
ادارہ سی توسیع و تأمین ایچون روسیه قوجاچه آتیمق  
بر ضرر اوله جتی . حکومت عثمانیه ایلہ حملت و قاتی  
اولمقدن اسلم بر طریق سیاست اولادینتی ایلک دفعه اده  
والک و اوساستی تعقیب ایدمکک بر فرقه سیاسی وجو  
ده کتیرن الله بیوک بلفار دیلوماتی استانبولونک دخی  
عینی قضا ایلہ و فاندتیری اوساستی تعقیب ایلہ استا -  
بولست فرقه سی یو کونه قدر پاشادان . و بر ایکنجی  
استانبولونک کی اداره حکومت موافق اولان « مشوقا  
یتوقفد .

یتوقفک یوککک بر تحصیل کورمیش اولمقده برابر  
بر فرقه سیاسی ریاستی احراز ایلہ اس حکومتده موقبل  
آویملر آنجمنیه اثبات ایلدندورک بیوک بر ذکا ایدی .  
بناء علیه او بیوک ذکا . ثابت متین . منعمول بر اخلاق  
ایلہ منتزع ایدی . ذاتاً یتوقفک موقبلری تأمین ایچون  
یالسکز ذکا کفایت ایدمیه چکی عزم و منانت اخلاق  
ده ایزم بولوندینی طریقی بر کیتند .

بر ترکیز . بر ترک نه استا بولست « نه زانقو -  
ویست . نه ده نارود قاتی خلاصه هیچ بر شی اوله من  
آنجنق مسلما نلره . ترکاره حالکی حکومت دها خبر

خواه « دها جلیل اولورسه اونک طرفکیری اوله یلیرن  
قطر بیطرف بر ترک کی حقیقی احترام ده و جداته بو  
رجد . یتوقفک متین بر عزم « شدتی بر ذکا صاحبی  
ایدی . بوله قوتی بر ذکا و قاتی نه اولورسه اولسون  
بلفارستان ایچون مطلقا بر سیاعد .

بعض فرق عقاید یتوقفک مستدک و بلفارستانه  
مضر اولمقده انهام ایدینورلردی . بر یو کا داور بر فکر  
در میان ایدمیه « ذرا اصلاحیتنم خارجنده بر کیتند  
آنجنق شون دییه یلچکز که یتوقفک فکر و عزمده تا -  
یت بر آدم اولدینر ایچون جدید ایدی . بوشدن هر  
کس بر صورتله تفسیر ایده یلیر . فقط بر شون اعتراض -  
فدن چکیمه بر که یتوقفک عزم صاحبی فداکار بر آدم او -  
لدینتی . کندی ملنک استقلالی اوغرنده شپنده قاتی  
دو کدیکی . قوئی قیردین کوندن اثبات ایشدور . بو  
یه بر آدم حریتن نه قدر اوزاقی اولسه . یته حریتی  
تقدیر ایتسون تمکن دکلور .

هر حالده یتوقفک و قاتنه « ادلرینه . کندی مستک  
استقلالی ایچون حریتی ایچون قاتی دوکش . و طایر -  
ورکی اظهار تأسفن « و جنایت واقعه نظر تأسفده  
یاقفن کندی قیزی آلمیز . بررا جنایت جنایتدور . هیچ  
بر وجهه « هیچ بر صورتله تقدیر ایدیمیز .

❖

**صوفیه وقعه جنایتیه سی حقیقه تفصیلات**

لیکن بازار ایرتسی کونی سورابه قیادقن  
سوزکره منبستر یتوقفک . کنادیف . ساووف و باباقوف  
بر لکده اوله قی بورس بجهسته دوعرو کزیمکه حیف

شماره ۶۰۵

۱۹ تشرین قانی ۱۳۲۴

آبونه شرافاتی :

خارج ایچون      بلقارستانه  
الهی ایلی  
۸۰۰ فراتیق      ۷۰۰ فراتیق  
۱۰۰ فراتیق      ۴۰۰ فراتیق  
آبونه بدلی بشیدر

۶۰۵

آدرس :

بلقارستانه [ باقار ] اداره خانه سی  
**ADRESSE :**  
Rédaction de „Balkan“  
Philippopol

صاحب و محرری : ادمم دوجی

( ۱۰۰ پارهدر )

اوجنی منه

بازار ایرتسی دن معدا هرکون جیقار بیطرف ترک ختمه سیدو

۶۰۵

ایشته مظفریت بودر :

اوستریا دهشت ایچنده ، انکتره مینل  
دولته دولته اوستریا ک باشه باطلایان  
قیاق ، بلقارستان مینللی صولده صفر  
براقدی ، اوروپا ک ، اوروپا دولتریک  
بتون ضیمری آشکار اولدی ، سولک صولک  
اوستریا ک مشکل بر موقده بولونیور .  
طدنا دگیزه دوشمش ییلانه صاولق ایسته  
بونر .

اوستریا شو بر قاج کون ایچنده  
اوله مددش بر آتش ایچنده قالدی که نلکه  
بر یون انکین قوجه نلسه دیلوماتلری  
نهایت انتمابه قرانه حکومتک بوسطنه  
مراجعت و استیاقه ، قرالسهیه آمانه  
دوشمک ، ( آمان قرالسهیه اولووسیه  
ستدن اولوز بزه افتداد ) دهک قیوتزل  
ایندیلر .

بو طریقی بر خالدر ، سیاست علنده  
هردلک دائم بولیدر ، ایشک زور طرفی  
کلیمی آماندن قولای شی بوقدر ، ایچق  
منفعت چیسوندنه اولورسه اولسون ؟

اوستریا ک بیوک بر دهشت ایچنده  
براقان یکی عتائلرک بوشو تازیدر . قوجه  
عتائلرک شکرندن قهوه بیله ایچمه مک  
ثبات ایندیکه اوستریا کون سکوندن آو  
الدی . زیسته ده ، ویا نه ده اهالی ، مجارلر ،  
بر جم غیر طرف طرف غایشه باشلادیلر .

اوستریا حکومت حاضر منه آتش یقدر بیور  
لر . هر کون مبلونلرله فراتیق زیانه  
کیرمک ، حقله دوشونولورسه بر حکومت  
و ملت ایچون بیوک بر صدمه اقراضدر .  
اوستریا بو بلایه نه منفعت مقابلنده  
کرتار اولدی ؟ بوسنه هرک ایچوننی ؟  
خالوکه اوستریا ک حرص و طمعنی  
قارتمش ، بوقدر بلایه سبب اولمش اولان  
اوکوزل قطعه اوستریا ده یار اولما بوج .  
چونکه ناصل اصله بقین بر کونده اعلان  
استقلالاری مطلق اولان عتائلر دیسار  
ارایه کله بوسنه هرک اوستریا ترک  
ایده مه حکمرانی رسمی ر لسانله ارق  
سویلدر . بودایسته ده مجار قارده سی  
دینسه کین کون مان بخیری سویلدرش .  
( بوسنه هرک اوزوریه اوستریا ایله  
مجارستان ارانده اختلاف ظهور ایده جکی  
هیچ امید ایچمه سکر ؟ ) دیش .

مجار دیلوماتی جوابا دییورگه : ( هیچ  
طم ایچم . قزرا بوسنه هرکک مجارستانه  
مایدنی غایت طریقی و محقق بر کفیندر . )  
جواب آچق دگی : یقنی اوستریا ک  
بوسنه هرککک امدنی قطع ایتمکدن باشقه  
جاردیمی بوقدر دیکه کتیر مورمی ؟

خلاصه اوستریا ک بیوک بر تش  
ایچنده قالدی . ترکا بوشونلرله قارشى  
اسکی وقارده یایدینی نهیدده دخی مراجعت  
ایتمک ایستندی . عتانی لیا نلرله حرب  
کیمی کونده حکم ده دیدی . فقط قارشو

سه عزرائیل ککی انکتره دوتمانک  
حقیقه جقنی اکلادیق کبی بوسله یی بشتون شا  
شردی .

جیمیرلنک بوسوزی مشهوردر :  
( دشمنک نه صورتله اولورسه اولسون  
آزیمه سی عینی عادات ، عینی نظردر ) .  
عتائلر حکومت مشروطه حاضره سنک ،  
یکی عتائلرک آهسته آهسته آتقده اولدینی  
سیاسی خطوه لردر که کرک اوستریا ک کرک  
اکا الت اولق ایسته نیلری بولم مشکل بر  
موقده براقدی .

زمانده مظفریت یا ککن قلیجه  
دگی ، سیاسته قازانیلور . اوله بر سیاسته  
که دشمنک جان دامارینه دوقوعه لی . یکی  
عتائلرک ، یکی عتائلر حکومتک شمدی  
یایدینی ککی ایسته مظفریت بودر :

ادمم دوجی

هرکون یکی بر حقیقت :

شمدی یه دگین ، صاحبتمزدن خوشلا  
نان ویا خود بر حسن چستجو ایله صوقیلان  
بلقارستان عقلاسیله کدوروشدیکه ترکارله  
بلقارلرک تأمین حسن معاشرته ، وفق  
اولق ایچون ، بلقار ادبیاتک ، بلقار  
صنعت عاشارلرک ، بلقار تاریخک ، قسم  
همی یک عادی افترا دن عبارت اولان  
مخالف انقلابیه سی صفه لردکی تفصیلک ،  
زمانک انسانیتک ، متلر اولانده مقا -

Balkan, no:605, 19 Teşrinisani 1324. ( from İ.B.B. Atatürk Kitaplığı)

## APPENDIX 4



Rumeli, no:1, 25 Teşrinisani 1321. ( from Beyazîd Kütüphanesi)