

BEYOND PROTECTIONISM–FREE TRADE DICHOTOMY:
THE “NATIONAL ECONOMY” AND THE 1908 BOYCOTT MOVEMENT IN
THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

HAZAN SERTKAYA

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION

FEBRUARY 2024

Approval of the thesis:

**BEYOND PROTECTIONISM–FREE TRADE DICHOTOMY:
THE “NATIONAL ECONOMY” AND THE 1908 BOYCOTT MOVEMENT IN
THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE**

submitted by **HAZAN SERTKAYA** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of **Master of Science in Political Science and Public Administration,**
the Graduate School of Social Sciences of Middle East Technical University by,

Prof. Dr. Sadettin KIRAZCI
Dean
Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. H. Tarık ŞENGÜL
Head of Department
Department of Political Science and Public Administration

Prof. Dr. E. Attila AYTEKİN
Supervisor
Department of Political Science and Public Administration

Examining Committee Members:

Assist. Prof. Dr. Selçuk DURSUN (Head of the Examining Committee)
Middle East Technical University
Department of History

Prof. Dr. E. Attila AYTEKİN (Supervisor)
Middle East Technical University
Department of Political Science and Public Administration

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Y. Doğan ÇETİNKAYA
Istanbul University
Department of Political Science and International Relations

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last Name: Hazan SERTKAYA

Signature:

ABSTRACT

BEYOND PROTECTIONISM–FREE TRADE DICHOTOMY: THE “NATIONAL ECONOMY” AND THE 1908 BOYCOTT MOVEMENT IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

SERTKAYA, Hazan

M.S., The Department of Political Science and Public Administration

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. E. Attila Aytekin

February 2024, 160 pages

This thesis questions the relationship between the 1908 Boycott and the National Economy that the literature regards as the historical opposite of the “liberal” economy. In this way, it aims to open to questioning the dichotomies existing in the history of Ottoman economic thought. The history of Ottoman economic thought is based on an oscillation between *serbesti-i ticaret* and *usul-i himaye*. Following 1908, it turns to a dualism between “liberal” economy/*laissez-faire* and “national” economy/protectionism. Accordingly, scholars divide the 1908-18 period into two sections: the period of “liberal” economy (1908-1913/14) and the period of the National Economy (1913/14-1918). This thesis calls the scholars who apply a periodical and conceptual division between the “liberal” economy and the “national” economy and attribute specific qualities to the “national” that they do not attribute to the “liberal” the National Economy Thesis (NET), and it analyzes Zafer Toprak’s arguments as the pioneer of the NET. To question this dualism, it focuses on the 1908 Boycott that emerged at the dawn of the “liberal” economy period but that the existing literature regards as a manifestation of the “national” economy. Then, a discrepancy arises between the leitmotiv attributed to the 1908 Boycott and its timing. Interrogating this discrepancy, this study argues that the National Economy, in contrast to “liberal” economy/*laissez-faire*, does not present an appropriate economic framework to analyze the boycott. On the contrary, the boycott itself is related to liberal free-market economy at least in three

respects. First, the boycott had a concern for free trade. Second, despite protectionist demands, they never intended a longstanding state intervention. The role of the state was limited to the equalization of competition between Ottoman merchants and foreign merchants. Third, there was a controlling attitude towards the lower classes due to the fear that the mobilized lower classes could destroy the free market.

Keywords: economic thought, National Economy, protectionism, laissez-faire, 1908 Ottoman Boycott

ÖZ

HİMAYECİLİK-SERBEST TİCARET İKİLİĞİNİN ÖTESİNDE: “MİLLİ İKTİSAT” VE OSMANLI İMPARATORLUĞU’NDA 1908 BOYKOT HAREKETİ

SERTKAYA, Hazan

Yüksek Lisans, Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. E. Attila AYTEKİN

Şubat 2024, 160 sayfa

Bu tez, 1908 Boykotu ile, literatürün “liberal” iktisatla tarihsel olarak zıtlık içinde gördüğü, Milli İktisat arasındaki ilişkisini sorgulamaktadır. Bu yolla Osmanlı iktisadi düşünce tarihindeki yerleşik ikilikleri sorgulamayı amaçlamaktadır. Osmanlı iktisadi düşünce tarihi, serbesti-i ticaret ve usul-i himaye arasında bir salınım üzerine kuruludur. 1908’den sonra, “liberal” iktisat/*laissez-faire* ile “milli” iktisat/himayecilik arasında bir ikilik ortaya çıkar. Benzer biçimde kimi akademisyenler 1908-18 dönemini iki bölüme ayırır: “liberal” iktisat dönemi (1908-1913/14) ve Milli İktisat dönemi. Bu tez, “liberal” iktisat ile “milli” iktisat arasında dönemsel ve kavramsal bir ikiliği uygulamaya koyan ve “milli” iktisada, “liberal” iktisada atfetmediği belirli nitelikler atfeden akademisyenleri MİT (Milli İktisat Tezi) olarak adlandırır ve MİT’in öncüsü olarak Zafer Toprak’ın argümanlarına odaklanır. Bu ikiliği sorgulamak adına bu çalışma, mevcut literatürün “milli” iktisadın bir tezahürü olarak gördüğü ancak “liberal” iktisat döneminin hemen başında ortaya çıkan 1908 Boykotu’nu çözümler. Açık ki 1908 Boykotu’na atfedilen temel iktisadi motif ile boykotun zamanlaması arasında bir farklılık ortaya çıkar. Bu farklılığı sorgulayan bu çalışma, literatürün “liberal” iktisada/*laissez-faire*’ye tarihsel bir karşıtlık içerisinde ele aldığı Milli İktisat’ın, boykotun analizi için uygun bir iktisadi düşünce çerçevesi sunmadığını savunur. Aksine boykot, en az üç açıdan liberal serbest piyasa ekonomisiyle iç içedir. İlk olarak boykot serbest ticarete kayda değer ölçüde ihtimam gösterir. İkinci olarak

himayecilik taleplerine rağmen uzun süreli bir devlet müdahalesi asla hedeflenmemiştir. Devletin rolü, Osmanlı tüccarları ile yabancı tüccarlar arasındaki rekabeti eşitlemekle sınırlıdır. Üçüncü olarak, serbest piyasayı tahrip edip ortadan kaldıracağından korkulan alt sınıfların kendiliğinden hareketliliği sebebiyle, alt sınıflara karşı onları daima denetim altında tutmaya çalışan bir eğilim boykot süresince hakimdir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: iktisadi düşünce, Milli İktisat, himayecilik, laissez-faire, 1908 Osmanlı Boykotu

To Nurcan&Yusuf Sertkaya

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I should undoubtedly express my first thanks to my thesis supervisor Prof. E. Attila Aytekin for his endless patience and encouragement. I am really grateful for his trust in me.

I also would like to thank Assist. Prof. Barış Gençer Baykan for his sincere encouragement and helpful attitude.

I should also present my gratitude to TÜBİTAK BİDEB and its helpful personnel for financially supporting me through 2210 Fellowship Program.

Needless to say, I am most indebted to my parents, Nurcan&Yusuf Sertkaya. It would be impossible for me to embark on this academic journey without their trust and support.

Last but not least, I would like to express my special thanks to Emrah Dicle Kolbaşı. His patience, tolerance, compassion and love made the compelling times of my life much more bearable.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZ.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xii
CHAPTER 1.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. The Problematic	1
1.2. A Terminological Remark.....	6
1.3. Sources	8
1.4. Structure	9
CHAPTER 2.....	13
A DOMINANT THEME IN THE LATE OTTOMAN ECONOMIC THOUGHT: <i>USUL-İ HİMAYE</i> (PROTECTIONISM) VERSUS <i>SERBESTİ-İ TİCARET</i> (<i>LAISSEZ-FAIRE</i>)	13
2.1. Late Ottoman Economic Thought and Environment	13
2.2. Dichotomous Nature of Late Ottoman Economic Mentality: Seeming	19
Distinctions.....	19
2.2.1. <i>Serbesti-i Ticaret</i> (The <i>Laissez-Faire</i> / Free Trade Approach).....	20
2.2.2. <i>Usul-i Himaye</i> (The Protectionist Approach).....	22
2.2.3. Beyond Dichotomies	24
2.3. The Periodization in the Ottoman Economic History: In-between <i>Laissez-...</i>	28
<i>Faire</i> and Protectionism in the 1908-18 Period	28

2.4. Discussing the National Economy Thesis (NET)	39
2.4.1. Variants of the National Economy Thesis	41
2.4.2. A Challenge to the National Economy Thesis	49
2.4.2.1. The Historical Nature of the Duality	49
2.4.2.2. Centrality of the State and Individuals	52
2.4.2.3. The Separation of Economy-Society-Politics	59
CHAPTER 3	73
THE 1908 OTTOMAN BOYCOTT	73
3.1. Relative Silence of the Literature on the Boycott	73
3.2. The Story of the 1908 Boycott	82
3.2.1. First Sparks of the Boycott	82
3.2.2. Goods and Services of the Boycott and Early Demands for Economic... Protectionism	89
3.2.3. Concepts of the Boycott	103
3.2.4. The State and the People of the Boycott	107
3.2.5. Organizations of the Boycott	115
3.2.6. Respect for Free Trade	117
3.2.7. The Merchant and Esnaf of the Boycott	122
3.2.8. Termination of the Boycott	129
CHAPTER 4	134
CONCLUSION	134
REFERENCES	142
APPENDICES	149
A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET	149
B. THESIS PERMISSION FORM / TEZ İZİN FORMU	161

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CUP	: Committee of Union of Progress
NET	: National Economy Thesis
SST	: Strong State Tradition
WWI	: World War I

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Problematic

From the last quarter of the 19th century onwards, the history of Ottoman economic thought was based on an oscillation between *usul-i himaye* (protectionism) and *serbesti-i ticaret* (*laissez-faire*/free trade). The existing literature on the economic thinking of the late Ottoman era has evaluated this oscillation as an indication of Ottoman backwardness, patrimonialism, the copy-pasting of European debates or sociocultural flaws of Ottomans. Nevertheless, the Ottoman economy and economic thought was not the only one vacillating between protectionism and *laissez-faire*. The world witnessed the first crisis of capitalism in 1873-96. Stuck in Smithian capitalism, European countries had to search for new ways of sustaining their economies. Under the conditions of crisis of overproduction, they directed their attentions and resources from the international market to their internal market. They needed to protect the profitability of their economies within conditions of deflation, which necessitated pursuing protectionist economic policies. All this pointed to a paradigm shift in economics from Smithian *laissez-faire* policies to protectionist ones.

The Ottoman Empire was not immune to this change, either. The Ottoman economy and accompanying Ottoman economic thought, in the process of being a part of capitalist relations of distribution, also had to keep up with this paradigm change. Hence, the oscillation of the Ottoman economy between *usul-i himaye* and *serbesti-i ticaret* does not indicate Ottoman backwardness or its traditionalism; to the contrary, it is a sign of its close connection with European economic relations and the change that was simultaneously taking place. Ottoman economy was indeed part of the worldwide economic system, and the dual nature of Ottoman economic thought does not constitute an anomaly. In line with the worldwide paradigm shift, in the Ottoman

context the models of *serbesti-i ticaret* and *usul-i himaye* apparently differed in three main respects: the *degree* of state intervention, foreign trade and customs, and international division of labor. The proponents of protectionism were aware that the Ottoman economy did not have equal conditions of competition with merchants of powerful European economies. Influenced by the Listian ideas of protection, Ottoman intellectuals regarded the state help in the economy as a solution not to be swallowed by greater economies of Europe. The supporters of the *laissez-faire* approach, on the other hand, promoted competition unconditionally. Any attempt for state intervention in the economy would distort its functioning. Universal laws of free trade capitalism were as binding for the Ottoman context as for European countries. Nevertheless, these two approaches to economy substantially converged, at least in two respects. First, Ottoman protectionism never conceived of perpetual state intervention, as Fredrich List himself, from whom Ottoman protectionist intellectuals were influenced, asserts. As soon as the Ottoman economy reached an adequate competitive power in the international market, the state would withdraw from the economy. Thus, both models ultimately aimed at integration with free trade system. Second, while *serbesti-i ticaret* seemed to differ from *usul-i himaye* about the path to development by putting forward agriculture rather than industry as the main sector in order to keep up with European economies, it promoted agriculture only as a mid-phase before the transition to industry. When it came to economic policy, Ottoman policy-makers would inevitably adopt policies promoting industry following a period of agriculture. Both views searched for a way for participating in the international division of labor either through agriculture or industry.

This dual structure of the Ottoman economy became a legacy for the post-1908 process. There is a considerable literature that divides the post-1908 period into two sections called the “liberal” economy (1908-13/14) and the National Economy (1913/14-18), focusing on either the onset of WWI, the end of Balkan Wars or the 1913 coup d'état. This long-standing dualism existing in Ottoman economic thought contrasts the “liberal” / *laissez-faire* economy and the “national” / protectionist economy. The proponents of this periodical and conceptual dualism, pioneered by Zafer Toprak but followed later by prominent names from diverse schools, refer to two

distinct perspectives and two different periods, and the existing literature equates each period with a perspective. It defines the National Economy as a distinct alternative in the face of “liberal” economy and regards it as an outcome of national sentiments rather than as a response to deadlocks of capitalism. Therefore, the literature based on the dualism between “liberal” and “national” attributes the latter to a positive savior mission in that it rescued the country from the imperialist yoke imposed by foreign economies. From the dualist perspective, a *milli bourgeoisie* did not exist until the Unionists ‘intervened’ in the economy and ‘created’ it. Accordingly, the Ottoman class dynamics were relatively weak then. The argument is that in the National Economy period, Unionists contributed to the transition to capitalism by implementing protectionist policies from the top down. The National Economy refers to an active state intervention in the economy; thus, there would be a narrow space in this period for free trade, if any.

In this thesis, I call this line of thought, which divides the 1908-18 period into two sections as “liberal” and “national” and makes such assumptions regarding the National Economy, as the National Economy Thesis (NET). To avoid confusion, I should initially clarify a point: Throughout the thesis, the National Economy refers to a set of economic policies, while the National Economy Thesis (NET) means an academic argument about this set of policies. Although I discuss certain modified versions of NET, I basically focus on Zafer Toprak’s arguments as the pioneer of the NET. However, while regarding Toprak as the most prominent scholar of the NET and his arguments as the basics of the NET, this thesis never ignores the line of development and change in Toprak’s thought. He published several books on the National Economy from different publishing houses in different times with some modifications. From his early writings to late ones, the degree of periodical and conceptual contrast between *laissez-faire* and protectionism, or between “liberal” and “national” economy, diminishes. More obviously, in the book *National Economy-National Bourgeoisie [Milli İktisat-Milli Burjuvazi]* which was first published in 1995 by the printing house of *Tarih Vakfı Yurt*, the sharpness between two economic views and periods is more obvious. In his book the *National Economy in Turkey 1908-1918 [Türkiye’de Milli İktisat 1908-1918]*, on the other hand, Toprak relatively relieves the

contrast between two approaches and periods, and his study takes a more nuanced form. While the former book was based on a sharp periodical contrast, the latter draws a rising curve regarding the dominance of the National Economy from 1908 to 1918. In the former, he nearly evaluates the *serbesti-i ticaret–usul-i himaye* controversy as a representation of “liberty-despotism dilemma” (Toprak, 1995, p. 10), which means a sharp dualism. Based on the latter book, the *National Economy in Turkey 1908-1918*, it is possible to find out roots of the National Economy at the very beginning of the 1908 Revolution, while it is hardly possible in his book *National Economy-National Bourgeoisie*. Then, there is a change in his thought. Taking into consideration this gradual variance in his thought, this thesis prominently focuses on the latter book, the *National Economy in Turkey 1908-1918*. It represents less dichotomous picture of the “liberal”/ *laissez-faire* and “national”/protectionist economy than *National Economy-National Bourgeoisie*, but it still relies on a periodical and conceptual dualism.

The NET is pioneered by Zafer Toprak but he is not the only figure. Indeed, the NET refers to a broad spectrum of scholars from diverse schools. Feroz Ahmad, Sina Akşin, Şevket Pamuk and Murat Koraltürk, for instance, applied to the periodical dualism between the “liberal” economy and the “national” economy. Likewise, Çağlar Keyder, Ayşe Buğra, Şerif Mardin, Metin Heper, Erik J. Zürcher and several grand names of the literature persistently repeated the arguments of the NET. They regarded either the start of WWI, the end of Balkan Wars or the 1913 coup d'état as a turning point in economic policy. From the period of the National Economy (1913/14-1918) onwards, Unionists put into agenda the “project” to create a national bourgeoisie which they consider it to be never existent before. Beyond these names above, Toprak’s arguments spread over subsequent studies on the economic policies of the post-1908 period. As Toprak’s arguments gradually influenced the literature, those who were influenced by him relied their studies on a more dichotomous scheme of the 1908-1918 period than Toprak himself. In other words, as the pioneering role of Toprak increased in the literature on the National Economy, scholars following him under his influence caricaturized the “liberal” versus “national” economy duality more than Toprak did.

A group of scholars who absorb this dualism of the NET regarded a boycott at the da-

wn of the 1908 Revolution as an initial manifestation of the National Economy. Among these scholars studying on the 1908 Boycott movement, Doğan Çetinkaya, Mehmet Emin Elmacı, Şule Sevinç Kişi and Selim Ahmetoğlu regard the boycott as an embodiment of the National Economy. Yet, there are significant nuances among accounts of these scholars. Çetinkaya, for instance, presents the most comprehensive analysis of the boycott and this thesis has substantial overlaps with his analysis. There were also scholars like Erdal Yavuz and Hasan Ünal who do not conceptually use the National Economy but an equivalent term. Their difference from the first category of scholars is largely conceptual. Donald Quataert, on the other hand, differs from all the names in the sense that he does not equate the boycott with either the “liberal” / *laissez-faire* economy or “national” / protectionist economy. In this respect, he constitutes an exception within the literature on the 1908 Boycott. His account of the boycott is the least concordant with the NET while being the most suitable to the perspective that this thesis adapts.

The 1908 Boycott was organized as a response to Austria-Hungary’s annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the independence of Bulgaria. The boycott was a multi-actor movement involving the Unionists, workers, governmental actors, merchants, workers masses and the press. These actors all shared a common idea: Ottomans should avoid Austrian and Bulgarian goods and services and search for new alternatives to use them again. The repeat, there is a considerable literature regarding the boycott as a manifestation of the National Economy. In this way, it reproduces the dichotomy between “liberal” and “national” economy. Considerable enough, the 1908 Boycott, the literature almost wholly evaluates as part of the National Economy, took place in the first months of the “liberal” economy period. A blatant discrepancy, therefore, emerges between the timing of the 1908 Boycott and the economic leitmotiv attached to it. Based on the NET literature mentioned above that divides the 1908-18 era into two sections called the periods of “liberal” (1908-1913/14) and the “national” (1913/14-1918) economy, the boycott could not be a part of both the “liberal” and the “national”. In other words, from the mentioned dualist perspective, the 1908 Boycott could not possibly represent protectionism in economy on the one hand, and the *laissez-faire*, on the other.

Starting from this contradiction, I set about investigating the 1908 Boycott, to reveal a more nuanced understanding regarding the economic perspective that informed the boycott. In this way, I reconsider the assumption of the boycott literature that the 1908 Boycott has been a manifestation of the National Economy. Accordingly, I investigate the motivations instigating the boycott, its actors, objectives, and social and economic dynamics in detail. I argue that the National Economy does not present an appropriate economic model to analyze the boycott. Then, I question whether the “liberal” economy” which the conventional literature regarded as the historical opposite of the National Economy is suitable for the analysis of the 1908 Boycott. While arguing the economic framework of the boycott, I also aim to open the bifurcation of economic views and periods as “liberal” and “national” to discussion in the 1908-18 period. I ultimately hope that this inquiry will pave the way for questioning the established dichotomy assumed in studies of Ottoman economic thought between *serbesti-i ticaret* / free trade and *usul-i himaye* / protectionism.

In this thesis, I problematize the relation of the 1908 Boycott to the National Economy. To this end, I search for answers to the following interrelated questions: “What were the economic and political motivations behind the 1908 Boycott?”, “Who were the actors of the boycott and to what extent were they willing to participate in it?”, “What kind of economic demands did the boycott raise?”, “To what extent did the boycott promote demands for protectionism?”, “To what extent did the boycott interrupt the free trade?”, “How did the state react to popular mobilization caused by the boycott?”, “Why did the workers come side by side with the Unionists?”, “What were the social and economic dynamics that brought competing actors together around a boycott?” and ultimately “Considering the historically supposed contrast between the “national” economy and the “liberal” economy, what was the nature and content of the relationship between the 1908 Boycott and the “national” economy?”

1.2. A Terminological Remark

This thesis questions the assumed dichotomy between the “liberal” / *laissez-faire* economy (1908-1913/14) and the “national” / protectionist economy (1913/14-1918).

The assumed contrast between the “liberal” and the “national” makes clarification of these terms necessary. Thus, I make a terminological remark regarding my utilization of ‘national’ and ‘liberal’.

First, the ‘national’ corresponds to two words in Turkish: *ulusal* and *milli*. While *ulusal* refers more to the nation-state and the identity it created, *milli* bears a broader meaning encompassing traces of Ottoman nationalism and Islamism. *Milli* transcends the meaning of *ulusal*. Throughout the thesis, I employ the ‘national’ only with respect to *milli*, and I directly use *ulusal* without translation if necessary. In some sections, just in the section 3.2. The Story of the Boycott, I prefer to use *milli* in order to highlight the emphasis on the word choice.

Second, questioning the economic dualism between the “national” and the “liberal”, this thesis also bears a conceptual objection. The established contrast between the “national” and the “liberal” provokes the impression that the “liberal” and the “national” were mutually exclusive concepts, and the “national” cannot be “liberal”. Thus, while referring to parties of the assumed dichotomy, I use, if necessary, the terms with quotation marks in order to unfold the hesitation of this thesis about the use of these concepts. This thesis suggests the use of protectionism and *laissez-faire* / free trade instead of the national economy and the liberal economy. Yet, I also employ the concept National Economy with capital letters when I do not write down the term national with quotation marks, since the term National Economy corresponds to a settled literature and set of arguments within the late Ottoman-Turkish history of economic thought.

Third, in order to put my hesitation about naming of parties of the given dualism, I have said that I use the term ‘liberal’ with quotation marks. Yet, I also employ the word liberal without quotation marks, referring to a specific meaning. I am aware that there are different meaning of ‘liberalism’ and ‘liberal’ changing based on different time periods, contexts and viewpoints. Throughout the thesis, I employ the term liberal without disregarding the intertwined connection between liberalism and capitalism. It refers to a specific way for enforcement of capitalist relations of production, which

suggest a free-market economy and a limited degree of state intervention in the economy. Having theoretically a popular component, liberalism always bears a class fear. It fears that the voice of people is directed towards free trade and the bourgeoisie. In this respect, while arguing that the National Economy and the National Economy period (1913/14-1918) have substantial liberal roots, I also refer to their relation to capitalism, in addition to the hesitant intervention of the state in the economy. The term liberal without quotation marks correspond to such a content.

1.3. Sources

To answer these questions, my main primary source will be newspapers. This choice is based on two considerations. First, having read Çetinkaya's (2004) statement that official documents were not as beneficial as he had hoped, I choose to concentrate on the press. Second, the 1908 Boycott represents a popular movement that entailed different social groups and classes. Considering also that there was a boom in the number of newspapers after the 1908 Revolution, the newspapers could present a broad panorama of popular reactions. Hence, I utilize the following newspapers in this thesis: *Gave*, *Servet-i Fünun*, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, *Ahenk*, *Köylü*, *Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye Mecmuası*, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, *Beyanü'l Hak* and *Karagöz*. I also use three *Ticaret Layihası* (numbers 2, 3 and 4). In the selection of my primary sources, I have endeavored to ensure that they comprised publications which have received limited scholarly attention. In addition, considering that the boycott has relatively different timelines and involved different actors in different places, I have restricted the use primary sources to those pertaining to İstanbul and İzmir.

Gave is particularly important since it is the only official publication of the 1908 Boycott, the official publication of the Committee of Boycott in İzmir. *Servet-i Fünun* was a very influential newspaper in which liberal ideas flourished. It published the first call for the boycott; nonetheless, the scholarship on the 1908 Boycott has not examined it. Because of the role Unionists played in the boycott, there was a need to analyze an official publication of the CUP. *Şura-yı Ümmet* constitutes a prominent one among the Unionist publications. Likewise, I utilize *Ahenk* and *Köylü* since they also spoke for

Unionist concerns. *Köylü* is especially important since its target group was obviously peasants and workers. Besides Unionist publications, it has been necessary to analyze a newspaper relatively distant from the Unionist ideas in order to reveal reactions of different segments of the society. Therefore, I include *Beyanü'l Hak* as a source in this study. *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi* was one of the few newspapers published on commerce. Moreover, its columns constituted an arena for the dualism between “*usul-i himaye*” / protectionism and “*serbesti-i ticaret*” / free trade during and after the 1908 Boycott. It is also crucial to understand the reflection of the boycott on economic debates. *Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye Mecmuası* represents a scholarly circle including Cavid Bey who served as the Minister of Finance several times in the National Economy period. Thus, reactions in the journal to the boycott can help clarify the relationship between the 1908 Boycott and the National Economy. Since a plethora of humor newspapers emerged after the 1908 Revolution, it was necessary to include a humor newspaper in this analysis, *Karagöz*. Lastly, I have scanned *Ticaret Layihası* (numbers 2, 3 and 4) to find the echoes of the boycott outside the Ottoman territory.

1.4. Structure

Determined to reveal the economic leitmotiv of the 1908 Boycott and to criticize the dichotomy that the conventional literature established between the “liberal” economy / *serbesti-i ticaret*/free trade /*laissez-faire* and the “national” economy/*usul-i himaye* / protectionism in the Ottoman Empire during 1908-18, this thesis consists of 4 chapters.

Chapter 1 is the introduction. Chapter 2 problematizes the conventional literature that divides Ottoman economic history into binary perspectives or periods. It goes back to the mid-19th century to trace the distinction between *usul-i himaye* / protectionism and *serbesti-i ticaret* / free trade. Firstly, this study addresses the historical nature of late Ottoman economic thought and its dichotomous nature. Then, it claims that the seeming dichotomy between *usul-i himaye* and *serbesti-i ticaret* was not peculiar to the Ottoman context, but it resulted from a paradigm shift in a broader scale as a result of the 1873-96 Long Depression. Thereafter, in this chapter, I clarify *usul-i himaye* and *serbesti-i ticaret* with their historical roots and actors in order to reveal their

overlaps and distinctions and question whether a genuine dichotomy between two existed.

The section “A Periodization in the Ottoman Economic History: In-between *Laissez-Faire* and Protectionism in the 1908-18 Period”, applies this critical approach to the 1908-18 era. In this period, the distinction of the previous era between *usul-i himaye* and *serbesti-i ticaret* took the form of a dualism between “national” and “liberal” economies. However, since such naming assumes that the “national” and “liberal” were mutually exclusive, I either utilize these terms with quotation marks or replace them with ‘protectionism’ and ‘free trade / *laissez-faire*’.

In the next section “Discussing the National Economy Thesis (NET)”, I elaborate on the National Economy Thesis (NET). The NET is the line of thought in which scholars divide the 1908-18 period into two parts as the “liberal” and the “national” and attribute distinctive qualities to the National Economy. I delve into the NET’s assumptions which led the scholars to distinguish between the “liberal” and the “national”. I also question whether their liberally-loaded ontological assumptions, such as the perception of the world into distinct entities which sets the ground for, the politics-economy separation or the politics-society separation for instance, lead them to employ a dichotomy between “liberal” and “national” economy and attribute particular characteristics to the national but not to the liberal.

I begin Chapter 3 by inquiring why there are only a few studies directly on the 1908 Boycott, despite the economic significance which the limited number of scholars who have studied it attaches to the boycott. Thereafter, I try to understand the ways in which those scholars establish a connection between the 1908 Boycott and the National Economy. I divide the scholars of the boycott literature into three groups based on the relationship they have pointed out between the “national” and the “liberal” economies and the connection they have established among actors of the boycott.

After the literature on the 1908 Boycott, I move to the story of the boycott, which constitutes the core of this thesis. In this section, based on primary sources, I primarily

elucidate the commencement of the boycott, the goods and services boycotted, its scope and repercussions. Then, I delve into the details of the boycott, which would enable to answer the central questions of this thesis. Accordingly, I question the scope, content and limits of the early demands for protectionism in the boycott. I also problematize the moral concepts repeatedly used in the boycott and their prominence in economic opposition to the goods of Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria. In order to reveal how a broad coalition is formed around the boycott, I analyze the role of the boycott actors under different headings, from governmental actors to the Unionists, workers, merchants and *esnafs*. In the section “Respect for Free Trade”, considering the attachment of the 1908 Boycott to the National Economy, I question whether the boycott was genuinely distant from *laissez-faire* or ultimately promoted it.

The possible contribution of this thesis to the literature is twofold. First, only a limited number of studies have directly analyzed the boycott and most of them discuss it exclusively in relation to the National Economy. Thus, the boycott turns into a one-dimensional event and a moment in a linear path towards the National Economy. This study proposes a re-evaluation of the relationship between the 1908 Boycott and the National Economy. It also reconsiders the possibility that the boycott can be associated with the historical opposite of the National Economy, i.e., the “liberal” economy. Second, by interrogating this relationship, this thesis engages in a rare endeavor: It suggests re-evaluating the accepted dichotomies in the Ottoman history of economic thought between *serbesti-i ticaret* / free trade / “liberal” and *usul-i himaye* / protectionism / “national” economy. To avoid superfluous generalizations, the thesis primarily suggests rethinking the division between the National Economy and the “liberal” economy specifically in the 1908-18 period, and it proposes to reconsider the possibility that what the literature calls the “liberal” and the “national” was liberal. This thesis tries to demonstrate that the 1908 Boycott, which the literature largely regards as a significant manifestation of the National Economy, is a liberal movement indeed at least in three respects: First, it had a strong concern for free trade. Second, demands for economic protection of the state were not quite common, and such demands never aimed at a longstanding state protection, which only meant leveling the ground of competition between Ottoman merchants and foreign merchants. Third,

despite the boycott's objective to mobilize the masses, there was an oppressive and panicky attitude towards lower classes because of the fear that the mobilized lower classes could destroy the free market.

CHAPTER 2

A DOMINANT THEME IN THE LATE OTTOMAN ECONOMIC THOUGHT: *USUL-İ HİMAYE* (PROTECTIONISM) VERSUS *SERBESTİ-İ TİCARET* (*LAISSEZ-FAIRE*)

2.1. Late Ottoman Economic Thought and Environment

Although there is a well-settled idea in the literature on the late Ottoman economic thinking that Ottomans have never had an original economic understanding of the society in a modern sense; thus, they merely lied upon Western-adopted ideas inherently alien to Ottoman lands, recent studies reveal this is not the real story. The conventional scholars whose studies are based on a linear path of modern economic development on which the Ottoman state had to proceed point out that Ottoman intellectuals were characterized only by mere imitation and lack of a proper scientific mentality of economics, but not by adaptation, pragmatism and endeavor to come close to capitalist modernity just as all the beginners would do (Kılınçoğlu, 2015, p. 6). Indeed, Ottoman intellectuals' inclination toward imitation never refers merely to the copy-pasting of European ideas; their borrowing of ideas was rooted in their pragmatic needs and rational decision-making. Then, Ottoman intellectuals were not the first to adapt to the superior since it is the rule of how interaction and development occur. In addition, the conventional view asserts that modern economic ideas entered the Ottoman land just through Western influence as a moment in the Westernization path since Ottoman intellectuals were unaware of any conceptual structure of economics (Berkes, 1975, p. 328). Even when there is no word on economic Westernization in their writings, the questions they asked such as “Why Ottoman could not keep pace with economic developments in Western Europe?” (Genç, 2014, p. 11) encourage those who consider such questions to evoke in mind a Western developmental line. On the other hand, scholars like Eyüp Özveren (2001, p. 137), albeit emphasizing the “policy-

oriented” character” of Ottoman economic disputes, underscore the adaption of Western classic books not as a “translation” but as “transliteration” with some sort of original touches. Deniz Kılınçoğlu (2015) highlights relative pragmatic originality in line with the Western economic mentality even by imitating, copying and discussing.

In addition to the ‘backward’ character of Ottoman economic mentality, according to those scholars, the Ottoman intelligentsia could never come close to the current socioeconomic debates of the era. For a long time, intellectuals and state officials were unaware of mercantilist experiences in Europe. Since a physiocratic trend never existed in the Ottoman context, there was no room for mercantilism, too (Özveren, 2001). In parallel to absence of initial steps of economic thinking and mercantilism, as Niyazi Berkes (1975) and Çağlar Keyder (2014) would agree, capitalism has never existed in the Ottoman-Turkish context. Even the Smithian approach, when it could pervade among the intelligentsia, has a retarded, sporadic, non-complete and just “normative” character, rather than being “positive”. Similarly, because of their belatedness, Ottomans lacked analytical and theoretical knowledge and merely looked after “the reel” (Sayar, 2021, p. 394). They were just in a practical desire to “save their country from downfall” (Çakmak, 2011, p. 102).

The significance of such claims regarding the nature of Ottoman economic thought is that such a literature regards Ottoman intellectuals’ seeming inclination towards the practical rather than the philosophical / the theoretical and also their supposed mental isolation from the West as a significant reason for the oscillation between the two seemingly opposite lines of economic thought. Yet, such a particularistic evaluation of Ottoman economic thought turns a blind eye the worldwide economic conjuncture. Indeed, this vacillation between *usul-i himaye* and *serbesti-i ticaret* was never peculiar to the Ottoman context (Kılınçoğlu, 2015). This duality took several names and forms throughout 19th and 20th centuries: an oscillation between *usul-i himaye* (protectionism) versus *serbesti-i ticaret* (*laissez-faire*). I argue that they are not two exclusive and conflicting as much as the literature suggests.

According to Diren Çakmak (2011), Ottomans within a patrimonial tradition did not

regard economics as a serious endeavor, and they merely copied Western economists' thoughts without questioning. Thus, Ottoman intellectuals were experiencing a missing "evolution of Ottoman economic thought"¹. Hence, in the face of Ottoman "liberalism" adopted through French influence, the German Historical School could enable its Ottoman followers to emerge by copying the West. Likewise, earlier than Cakmak, Berkes (1990, p. 47) highlighted the "long-standing infertility of Ottoman imagination". Berkes who complains about "Turks who were accustomed to childminding [*lalalık*]" (p. 71) states that even when "intervention" entered the Ottoman economic system, it had no traces of rationality of Europe but of Ottoman confiscations (p. 91). Thus, Berkes adheres to the particularistic view of Ottoman history, which assesses the Ottoman economic development and economics in a vacuum, as if it were a uniquely backward moment in the flow of history. In a similar vein, Ahmet Güner Sayar argues, where there is no division between positive and normative economics, "brain confusion would be focused on *laissez-faire*-mercantilism conflict", which results in a copy-based economic policy (2021, p. 285).

Partly different from Berkes, Sayar and Cakmak who relate the given duality only to the backwardness of Ottoman economic thought and its internal practical responses, Ozveren (2001) emphasizes the Ottomans' policy-orientedness. To him, as the previous scholars argue, Ottomans did not have a theoretical economic foundation, either mercantilist or physiocratic. Nevertheless, the 1838 Anglo-Ottoman Treaty gave rise to the Classical Approach, and following economic policies indirectly led to the opposite "productionist focus", i.e., seeds of protectionism, which led up to the reinvention of the alternative "*alla turca*" (2001, pp. 136–138). Thus, he takes into account reasons other than Ottoman 'backwardness'. Like Özveren, Seven Ağır (2021, p. 68) who emphasizes the 1873-96 Great Depression with respect to the rise of protectionism, underscores "the Ottoman political elite's resentment of privileges...fueled by rising nationalism" due to economic concessions. She considers

¹ This is also the name of her book. He seems to use the term 'evolution' deliberately to connote a unique Western path of evolution towards a modern and unquestionably better economic understanding.

the relationship between the Great Depression as a crisis of capitalism and stirrings of rising nationalism. Just partly different from Özveren in terms of seeing mercantilist nuances in Ottoman economic history, Vedit İnal (2011, p. 18) similarly seems close to relating the free trade-protectionism debate to the 1838 Treaty followed by British economic dominance. On the other hand, in line with Ozveren, Agir and Inal did, while Toprak realizes “first stirrings of [protectionist] reactions to Western economic models” in the 19th century based on Listian ideas (2017, p. 28), he differently puts particular stress on the emergence of nationalism following the French Revolution, which ultimately led to the “National Economy as a reflection of nationalist discourse in the economic sphere” (2017, p. 28). Yet, he does not say any explicit word on the late 19th-century crises of capitalism.

Obviously, neither the evaluation of the protectionism-*laissez-faire* conflict as a result of Ottoman backwardness nor the assessment of this conflict as an *automatic* response to a West-related treaty –as if Ottoman state-society lived in a vacuum and the treaty somehow came to the Ottoman territory from somewhere outside with destructive effects– does present an adequate explanatory frame. Similarly, relating the debate predominantly to the nationalist influence and assessing it with retrospective glasses fails to consider the Ottoman transformation within a broader socioeconomic context.

I adopt a comprehensive approach in this study, locating the Ottoman in a European-wide picture. Although it is undeniable that Ottoman intellectuals were relatively weak in economic theory, I refuse to attribute the protectionism-*laissez-faire* conflict that characterizes Ottoman economic thought wholly and exclusively to the so-called innate sociocultural flaws of the Ottomans or their internal responses to external dynamics. In other words, in line with the changes in the broader worldwide picture, there existed more reasons for the emergence of this conflict, except ‘patrimonialism’, copy-pasting, shallowness, eclecticism, “policy-orientedness” or nationalism. One can hardly understand the *laissez-faire*-protectionism contradiction without regarding the Ottoman state as a part of world economic history and without the undeniable influence of the following Long Depression in the late 19th century [also called the Great Depression] that challenged almost all the European capitalist states. Indeed, it

is a must for any study on the late 19th-century economic thought to regard the Long Depression as a determinant “in the periphery as well as in the core” (Pamuk, 1984, p. 116). I assume such a broad approach from above would prompt those interested in Ottoman economic thought to conceive of the Ottoman experience of capitalism within all the experiences of capitalism in Europe. It enables us to overcome particularistic approaches that consider the Ottoman flow of history in a vacuum without any interaction with the outside. Yet, since this crisis of capitalism in the last quarter of the 19th century is not the primary focus of this study, it suffices to explain it briefly.

The period from the late 18th to the middle of the 19th century was an era of the highest inflation that has ever been experienced in the Ottoman context (Pamuk, 2021, p. 172). It was also “a period of deindustrialization” characterized by British economic dominance (Ağır, 2021, p. 56). Following the high inflation rates, debasements [*tağşiş*] in the silver ingredient were implemented several times. The Ottoman state was in acute need of currency to overcome the budget deficit with a high level of inflation in return. As Ozveren (2001, p. 134) highlights, the Anglo-Ottoman Commercial Treaty of 1838 enabled the Classical Approach to flourish in such an environment. Yet, the budget deficit caused by state-led industrialization propelled Ottoman intellectuals and state officials to face monetary losses caused by the classical approach (Kılınçoğlu, 2015, p. 43) and to interrogate it.

At the same time, the 1873-96 Long Depression, when Abdulhamid II appeared on the political scene, was an era of financial crises worldwide. During the years of the Long Depression, assumed to end the age of economic liberalism, the protectionist alternatives emerged as an efficient solution for Europe, including the Ottoman state, to live through economic crises. Now, the period characterized by “the search for new markets for British manufactured goods” which is “justified with liberal ideas” (Ağır, 2021, p. 49) was transforming into a new epoch for later-comer states. Within a deflationary trend, economically more robust countries embarked on the protection of the “profitability of their industries” and markets through higher customs walls, resulting in the “fracturing of the world market” (Kasaba, 1988, p. 107). “The tendency of monopolization on a world scale” gradually revealed protectionist economic

policies (Çelik, 2022, p. 388). Under the conditions of an overproduction crisis, especially the protectionist customs policies were efficient ways for countries like Germany, France and the USA to enable prices to stay high in order to protect their production capacities while leading to shrinkage in commodity export (Çelik, 2022, p. 345). In other words, as Muammer Kaymak (2010, p. 192) emphasizes, countries like Germany and the USA were trying to overcome the crisis of capitalism through protectionism and monopolization attempts under the powerful patronage of state intervention.

Obviously, following the Great Depression of the late 19th century, European countries of Smithian capitalism which could not fulfill their expectation in international trade shifted their routes towards their own internal markets and protectionist policies. In such conditions, Europe experienced a considerable paradigm shift in economics just as the Ottoman economic mentality did. As Hobsbawm (2021, p. 53) argues, protectionism was one of two economic reactions of capitalism to its own problems (the other being ‘scientific management’). All the developed countries –except Britain– adopted protectionist measures, while for countries on the periphery, these measures did not take place as directly as for the developed countries.

Emine Kıray points out, “for the countries which do not have the capacity of saving-investment enough, the Great Depression created the effect of financial crisis-debt crisis” (as cited in Celik, 2022, p. 347). Likewise, Şevket Pamuk (1984, pp. 116–118) adds that “the post-1873 Depression”, accompanied by the global decline in wheat prices, led to “the establishment of European control over Ottoman finances”. The Ottoman state which could not find a way for capital export from the West and had come gradually under the financial control of European countries (Kaymak, 2008) was trying to sustain its political existence through protectionist policies. Overall, despite some differences from the West, the Ottoman was not as immune from the world juncture –where a considerable paradigm shift occurs– as most scholars of the existing literature suggest.

As a result, to understand the emergence of the *laissez-faire* versus protectionism

debate –the foundational axis of the Ottoman-Turkish economic thought– rather than falling into the trap of ‘Ottoman backwardness’ and the seeming Ottoman isolation from the world conjuncture, I take the Great Depression into account within a broadscale environment of crises of capitalism because only such a perspective enables us to evaluate the long-standing protectionism-free trade or *usul-i himaye – serbesti-i ticaret* debate as a controversy embedded in the integration with capitalist relations of production. In other words, in line with the West, *laissez-faire* and protectionism were two responses to a crisis of capitalism in the Ottoman context, too.

2.2. Dichotomous Nature of Late Ottoman Economic Mentality: Seeming

Distinctions

From the middle of the 19th century to the end of World War I (and even today), the rivalry between *laissez-faire* and protectionist approaches to economic development characterized the history of late Ottoman economic thought. Then, the economically protectionist front set against “the monopoly of the *laissez-faire* approach at both theory and policy levels in the empire” (Kılınçoğlu, 2015, p. 42) just as in the global context. The *laissez-faire*-protectionism competition was the dominant theme in the intellectual debates (Aytekin, 2023).

Now, I explain two approaches briefly. Names and assumptions under two views are far away from being exhaustive. Indeed, I aim to clarify the roots of two approaches stretching to the revolutionary era. Hence, I selectively employed the intellectuals below to show the basic assumptions of the two. Also, because I suggest that *laissez-faire* and protectionist approaches are not two internally consistent lines of thought, I intentionally overlook slightly asserted or unique arguments for practical purposes. I rule out some influential names such as Namık Kemal who is assessed as a supporter of both *laissez-faire* (Çavdar, 1992) and protectionism (Toprak, 2017). I intentionally ignore Prens Sabahaddin, who is regarded as an influential name of “liberalism”, for the same reason. Yet, I do not overlook the existence of “ambivalences” in thoughts of the Ottoman intellectuals such as Ahmet Mithat or Akyığıtzade Musa who asserted more or less their adherence to *laissez-faire* of Adam Smith “in theory”, which is an

ambivalence already existing the worldwide context (Kılınçoğlu, 2015, p. 25). Taking into consideration that, first, inconsistencies have already existed in the ideas of Friedrich List, and second, these names ultimately pointed out the Ottoman need of protectionist policies “in practice”, I include them among protectionist names. Indeed, I only aim to show congruence between the two sides of the debate, and I argue that the competition between the two do not refer to a sharp division.

I argue that distinctions between protectionist and free trade approaches, called *usul-i himaye* and *serbesti-i ticaret*, can be classified under three interrelated subheadings: the degree of state intervention, foreign trade and customs, and international division of labor. I deal with the three below under the title of each approach.

2.2.1. Serbesti-i Ticaret (The Laissez-Faire/ Free Trade Approach)

The *laissez-faire* approach emerged in the Ottoman context almost sixty years earlier than the protectionist approach. The Ottoman affinity for Britain created an environment on the side of liberal *laissez-faire* ideas. Thereby, the Ottoman state “took a series of steps that favored markets and free trade” (Ağır, 2021, p. 58). From the 1830s onwards, the Ottoman three-legged economy –provisionalism, traditionalism, and fiscalism– met *laissez-faire* ideas. The Ottoman intellectuals now confronted the idea that the state was not an all-overarching state that would be able to control all the parts and segments of the state as in the Classical Age (Genç, p.84-85), if such a state has ever existed in history (Aytekin, 2023). All the three considerably lost their share in economy, although fiscalism sustained its prominent place throughout existence of the Ottoman state (Kılınçoğlu, 2015, pp. 17–18). Such realization of change which was accompanied by the entrance of modern economics into the Ottoman scene overlapped with the acceptance of *laissez-faire* economics as the only way. *Tanzimat* attempts towards *laissez-faire* principles following diplomatic reports of the reign of Selim III, in this sense, concurred with the rise of modern economic ideas in the Ottoman context. Interestingly enough, the earliest analysis on economics which promotes “new scientific discipline” (Kılınçoğlu, 2015, p. 26) –*Tedbir-i Umran-ı Mulki*– coincides with the 1830s being quite early for an original European-style work

of analysis to come up. Similarly, Serandi Arşizen and Alekko Sucu's adaptation-based books underpin the first free trade ideas that came up in the 1850s. David Urquhart, a British official, fostered the ideas of an international division of labor and the free market (Sayar, 2021, p. 191), favoring British economic interests in the same period. Yet, *laissez-faire* ideas became popularized primarily by popularizing some publications, especially newspapers such as *Takvim-i Vekayi* or *Ceride-i Havadis*.

No doubt, the first name of the *laissez-faire* view in its developed version is Sakizli Ohannes whose commitment to the ideas of Adam Smith is observed in the name of his book: "*Mebadi-i İlm-i Servet-i Milet*" meaning "Tenets of Science of Wealth of Nations"². As expected from a defender of the Smithian approach, he regards the state as an external institution to society and economics. To Ohannes, the state should never intervene in functioning of the market as it results in the malfunctioning of competition. State intervention prevents endeavors and enthusiasm of the people and weakens their ability to enterprise (Çavdar, 1992, p. 57). While he separates a limited room for state intervention for services like transportation, Ohannes does not regard state assistance to the poor in normal conditions as acceptable since he fears that financial help of state would pave the way for their idleness (Çakmak, 2011, p. 156). Cavid Bey, a follower of Sakızlı Ohannes, agrees in the non-interference of state and emphasizes the right to property as a driving force prompting people to work. For both, some Ottoman applications such as guilds, *gediks*, *yedd-i vahid* or other monopolistic policies are age-old practices leading to Ottoman underdevelopment. Both never regard the Ottoman case as an exception of competition and withdrawal of the state. Indeed, as Mikael Portakal emphasizes (Kılınçoğlu, 2015, p. 62), universal laws of *laissez-faire* capitalism were just as valid for the Ottoman state as they were for developed countries.

To *laissez-faire* supporters, competition had to be followed especially in external trade. There should be no barriers to the competitive functioning of international trade such as high tariffs or ant protectionist policies. Cavid Bey suggests that the protection of

² "*İlm-i Servet*" also means economics, which is one of the early versions of the term *iktisat*.

domestic industry leads to more expensive products in the internal market, which paves the way for profiting of a specific group of people at the expense of the rest in turn (Çavdar, 1992, pp. 66–67). Ohannes similarly points out that “[financial] premiums by customs [for the sake of domestic economy] may inspire misconduct” (as cited in Sayar, 2021, p. 367). The promotion of competition in the international market necessitates for them division of labor among different countries with different levels of development. In the debate over the specialization of the Ottoman state – either industry or agriculture–, free-trade supporters were on the side of agriculture (İnal, 2011, p. 24). Due to the Ricardian principle of comparative advantages, Ottomans had to specialize in agriculture for their sake. In this debate that is not peculiar to the Ottoman case³, *laissez-faire* advocates promoted a gradual engagement in industrialization as a way of development rather than rushing into industrialization.

2.2.2. Usul-i Himaye (The Protectionist Approach)

The distinctive side of protectionists is their acceptance of incomparable Ottoman underdevelopment in terms of the self-functioning of the market, as opposed to developed countries of Europe. Most names, many of whom were members of the Young Ottomans, agree that, without the helping hand of the state, the Ottoman merchants and artisans cannot fully compete as a powerful actor; thus, merchants and industrialists of developed countries would smash them. From their perspective, state intervention should exist but as an equalizing supportive power in the market for the benefit of domestic trade. In this vein, the protectionist approach does not aim to annihilate *laissez-faire* but contrarily attempts to set the ground for it. This competitively equalizing dimension of the protectionist approach also appears in the 1908 Boycott context in next pages.

Moreover, the role of the state was not restricted to internal trade but also related to external trade with specific tariffs, but without prolonged economic concessions. According to Ahmet Mithat, –contradictorily– since free import would prevent the

³ For the Russian case, see Kılınçoğlu (2015), p. 25.

establishment of industry by the hand of foreign capital, high level of tariffs on imported goods should be implemented. In addition, specific tariffs could be applied, being high for ornaments and low for products like machine (Berkes, 1975, p. 340). For Musa Akyigizade, since the production capacities of different countries are not equal, in the absence of state production, the weak could be crushed by the powerful (Toprak, 1985b, p. 636). Hence, without state protection, competition could never be sustained. Then, the state help was a power enabling equal conditions of competition in the market.

In this sense, Friedrich List's idea of protection of nascent industries came to the agenda as the only, but temporary, way for a higher level of economic competition and development. From Listian view, it was a stage "crucial for an economy in its early stages of development" (Ağır, 2021, p. 69). Yet, there was no evidence that it would be an inevitable stage for all the states. List regarded the nascent-industry argument as valid for latecomers. Furthermore, for List and also Akyigizade, the desire for protection was not overlong. After all, the aim of the Listian "national" economy was never autarky (Ince, 2015, p. 385), aiming at a self-sufficient economy. As soon as the Ottoman economy achieved a competitive power enough, it would withdraw from the *laissez-faire* market. Indeed, according to Onur Ulaş İnce (2015, p. 380), List assessed Britain –conventionally the home for *laissez-faire*– as "the prime example of successful economic development and a model to be emulated by late industrializers". Then, whether List himself was completely distinct from the *laissez-faire* approach or his protectionism constituted a complementary element for *laissez-faire* understanding should be reassessed in the existing literature.

For protectionists, industrialization which would prevent the Ottoman economy from being swallowed by other industrial countries with higher economic development, was the only way of Ottoman development, rather than agriculture. In this way, "national" interests could be sustained in the face of developed countries. Otherwise, as Akyiğitzade (as cited in Çakmak, 2011, p. 200) emphasizes, Ottomans could be dependent on other countries. To him, economic "liberalism" resulted from the economic policy defending the economic interests of British nation (Sayar, 2021, pp.

382–383). International division of labor, in this respect, restricting countries to specific roles would just impede the Ottoman economic development.

As the protectionist approach which has found its roots in *usul-i himaye* view of the 19th century flourished, it took the form of the National Economy [*Milli İktisat*] after 1908. No doubt, there were differences in the transition from *usul-i himaye* to the National Economy. There were also differences within the concept National Economy. After Balkan Wars, it shifted to a policy aiming at “the empowerment of Muslim/Turk subjects in the face of non-Muslims” (Çetinkaya, 2023a, p. 155), which included their replacement and dispossession. Yet, the core assertions, which were related to the role of the state, market relations, division of labor and so on, are more or less the same from *usul-i himaye* to the National Economy. Hence, I regard the National Economy as the prolongation of previous protectionist views within continuity. Considering this sequence, I primarily understand by the “national” of the National Economy the economic introversion.

2.2.3. Beyond Dichotomies

Following the Long Depression of 1873-96, most economies entered the new age of protectionism. While supply was soaring, demand stayed far behind supply, which resulted in an extensive deflationist period. Governments tended to take heed of those who demand protection of domestic producers in the face of import goods (Hobsbawm, 2021, p. 49). Yet, such a protectionist tendency resulted from the intention to ‘equilibrate’ demand and supply in the way of capitalist relations of production. After all, ‘equilibrium’ was still the core of economics, *laissez-faire* was still the dominant view, and the state would enable the ‘equilibrium’.

The Ottoman state was not outside the world conjuncture. As Pamuk (1984, p. 118) points out, in the period of the depression, “world economic forces were an important determinant of the performance of the Ottoman economy”. Indeed, in this age of conjunctural changes in which Ottoman trade volume with Europe was expanding throughout the 19th century and it gradually got dependent on giants of the world

economy (Kıray, 1995, p. 66), it was hardly possible to regard the Ottoman case as isolated from the rest of world, which makes emergence of a paradigmatic change inescapable for the Ottoman frame as well. Protectionism as a cure for the crisis of capitalism was also emerging in the Ottoman intellectual circle.

Yet, just as the way and the extent to which countries experienced capitalist crises differed based on their economic well-being, the Ottoman case had some distinctions and contradictions. For instance, the ideas of Ahmet Mithat or Musa Akyigitzade may surprise those who first studied the Ottoman economic thought since their ideas were aligned with not only Fredrich List but also Adam Smith. However, such contradictions were not peculiar to the Ottoman case. According to Kılınçoğlu (2015, p. 25), this was “a reflection of various dilemmas that intellectuals in the capitalist periphery had to face in the nineteenth century”. Furthermore, it was already questionable how far Listian protectionism were from *laissez-faire* ideas.

I go a step further and argue that the contradictions of the *laissez-faire* versus protectionism contest itself may not be specific to the “capitalist periphery” but intrinsic to capitalism. There was nothing against the free functioning of the market. The state is always an arena where social and economic relations occur. Since it is not an entity out of political relations, there was no such thing as state intervention that could come from outside and ‘intervene’ in the economy in the sense that protectionism suggests. Given the unending need of *laissez-faire* capitalism for state protection, it was never surprising to see implementers of protectionist measures as faithful followers of *laissez-faire* (Polanyi, 2001, p. 153) like Ahmet Mithat or Musa Akyigitzade. In other crises of capitalism as well, *laissez-faire* policies, which were held responsible for the crisis, were always followed by protectionist economic measures. For instance, in the 1930s when world economies increasingly adopted protectionist policies, these policies were “a response to the 1929 Great Depression” since only upon the adoption of protectionism, “industrialization would become possible to start” (Boratav, 2017a). So, I evaluate the Ottoman *laissez-faire* versus protectionism debate in the context of the reaction of the former to the crisis of capitalism cyclically. It is unsurprising to detect convergences between the free trade

and the protectionist views (Polanyi, 2001), both in the developed world and Ottoman territory.

In the Ottoman case, these two seemingly distinct approaches overlap in two main respects. First, Ottoman protectionist intellectuals never envisioned an everlasting state intervention. Indeed, whenever Ottoman economic development arrived at a sufficient stage of competition, the state would draw back from the economic sphere. In other words, according to protectionists, intervention in functioning of the economy would exist just for a limited time when the “self-regulating market system”, in Polanyi’s words, (2001) get distorted. Then, it is not astonishing to read Kılınçoğlu’s (2015, p. 50) words: “Ahmed Midhat is definitely a liberal” in terms of “monopoly, private property... and competition”. Furthermore, protectionists were heated defenders of ‘competition’. While they were worried that Ottoman merchants would stay far behind merchants from other nations so the competition may not function properly, advocates of *laissez-faire* defended that the *laissez-faire* market would find its equilibrium and competition be sustained if only the invisible hand is let to work without state interference. Then, their difference between defenders of *laissez-faire* and protectionism lies in the way in which competition is constituted, but not in its necessary existence. Similarly, their disagreement on state intervention was related to the ‘quantity’ of state intervention, rather than its ‘quality’. If there was an authentic distinction between *laissez-faire* and protectionism, then it would problematize the nature of the state or the state-economy relationship –i.e., the quality–, which is not the case.

Second, regarding their developmental goals, the two views were not walking totally on different paths. While both parties ultimately aimed at industrialization, they differed in its timing. While protectionists like Musa Akyigizade supported the immediate adoption of industrialization (Toprak, 2017, p. 154) without an agricultural period, proponents of free trade like Cavid Bey argued that if Ottomans give their attention primarily to agriculture and trade, the industry could emerge on its own later (pp. 155–156). Indeed, both parties intended to follow the “universal” path of industrialization, although protectionists claimed it openly.

The congruence of the two economic understandings should not surprise the protectionists who indicate their adherence to List whose ideas were “the ideological handmaiden of the British imperialism of free trade” (İnce, 2015, p. 381). Moreover, considering that List’s writings contain different interpretations of Adam Smith, and that List himself suggests just a compiling reading of Smith (Watson, 2012), there would be inevitable contradictions intrinsic to the Ottoman protectionist view of economy. Consequently, the distinction between protectionism and free trade lies in merely whether a transitional period of agriculture is needed, but not in their ultimate goal. The two agreed on integration with the capitalist world, but how it would take place was still ambiguous.

I have argued so far that the protectionism-*laissez-faire* conflict does not correspond to a genuine distinction since their main objective is the same: transition to capitalist relations of production through participating in, immediately or after a time, free market. Although scholars discerned at times the overlap between the two in the literature, they regarded it just as a midway, called in the Ottoman intelligentsia as “moderate protectionism” [*himaye-i makule* or *himaye-i mutedile*], (Kılınçoğlu, 2015, p. 195), rather than a manifestation of contradictory nature of the protectionism-*laissez faire* debate. İsmail Safa, championed “moderate protectionism” in *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*;⁴ however, he could call his protectionism “moderate” since he conceptualized *usul-i himaye* and *serbesti-i ticaret* in their purest form, in which the state intervention was either all dominant or totally absent.

The protectionist view took the name of the National Economy from the 1908 Revolution onwards. The free trade view intertwined more with the Ottoman ideal of ‘the unity of elements’ [*ittihad-ı anasır*]. The debate between the Listian and Smithian views of late Ottoman economic thought continued with similar claims. Core ideas of the *laissez-faire* and protectionist approaches and their extant dispute maintained far into the revolutionary period of 1908 and thereafter. I should underline once more: Albeit distinctions between two economic perspectives, it was not a genuine

⁴ İsmail Safa, “Usul-i Himaye ve Serbesti-i Ticaret”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 06.12.1908.

distinction envisioning different socioeconomic orders. Proponents of the two were aware that the world gradually integrated with capitalism. Hence, whenever protectionism versus *laissez-faire* conflict is reproduced, then transition to capitalist relations of production seems to be the only way out.

2.3. The Periodization in the Ottoman Economic History: In-between *Laissez-Faire* and Protectionism in the 1908-18 Period

I have suggested so far reconsidering a settled dichotomy in the literature on the history of Ottoman economic thought between *usul-i himaye* and *serbesti-i ticaret* or between “liberalism and protectionism in today’s terms” (Toprak, 2017, p. 121). The debate between two economic approaches did not come to an end when the 1908 Revolution took place. *Usul-i Himaye* which relies on Listian economic view was still there but with a new appellation, which is the National Economy. *Serbesti-i ticaret*, on the other hand, was at the target of defenders of the *usul-i himaye* as the responsible of Ottoman economic backwardness.

Based on this debate, there is a considerable literature that asserts a periodization from 1908 to 1918, regarding the first half from the 1908 Revolution to the end of Balkan Wars, the start of the WWI or the 1913 Ottoman coup d'état as the period of “liberal” economy and the other half as the National Economy. In this part, I narrow my focus from all the history of Ottoman economic thought to the 1908-18 period primarily in order to avoid reaching at overgeneralizing consequences by restraining the scale of the study.

The periodization of the given era in terms of dominant economic leitmotiv between 1908-1913/1914 and 1913/1914-1918 is rarely asserted loud and clear in the literature, while always exists in the background. This silence largely stems from a prevalent disregard for economic dimension of the revolutionary era immediately after 1908, which is clear in the recent literature on the centenary of the 1908 Revolution (Akkurt & Pamuk, 2008; Akşin et al., 2019; Çavaş & Demirel, 2018; Ergut, 2010; “II. Meşrutiyet ‘100. Yıl’ Cilt 1” 2008). Thus, publications either do not touch upon

economic relations immediately after the revolution or superficially mention the economic aspect. Yet, even when the literature touches on the economic dimension of the period right after 1908, it reduces the economic relations of the era to a progression from a “liberal” economy to “national” one. In this way, it overlooks the capitalist dynamics behind the change from the “liberal” to the “national” in economic mentality.

The periodization of the 1908-18 era is significant for this study in two respects. First, –in accord with the main argument of the thesis that the 1908 Ottoman Boycott should be evaluated neither through the *laissez-faire* nor its historical opposite, protectionism, but through their inevitable overlap that is liberalism–, the illusory division between two views cannot correspond to a historical period as opposed to what the literature asserts, which results in historical fallacy of the *laissez-faire*-protectionism dichotomy. In the following sections, accordingly, I present how the boycott as a case opens to questioning the inappropriateness of *laissez-faire* versus protectionism duality. Second, I analyze the 1908-18 era in this thesis to be able ask *how and why the 1908 Ottoman Boycott which scholars regarded as strictly linked to the National Economy could emerge in 1908 when the “golden age of “liberalism” newly started*. This questioning uncovers the inappropriateness of evaluating the boycott within the mere boundaries of the National Economy in the sense of a contrast to the “liberal” economy. Beyond the dualism between the National Economy and *laissez-faire* economy, I argue that the boycott represents the Ottoman integration with liberal capitalist economic relations.

To repeat, there is a settled literature evaluating the Ottoman economic history as “a vacillation like a seesaw between *laissez-faire* and protectionism” (Sayar, 2021, p. 394), which some mistakenly call the “liberal” and the “national”. Moreover, the literature periodizes the late Ottoman economic history based on this duality without placing the dispute into a worldwide economic perspective as if the Ottoman case was insulated from the rest.

Towards the 1908 Revolution, *laissez-faire* ideas, called “liberal” ideas by most schol-

ars as if the protectionist alternative was not “liberal”, came into prominence again. Obviously, a constitutional bourgeoisie revolution referred to new “class dynamics” through which existing “impediments to the increase in capital accumulation put by different segments of the bourgeoisie” had to be removed (Uslu & Aytekin, 2015, p. 108). In other words, the cadre of the new regime had to adjust the economy to the dynamics of the new regime. The revolutionary leadership was aware that the constitutional framework could succeed if and only it was supported by a new economic capitalist order other than the previous one (Kansu, 2017, p. 375). The revolution amounted to a change in the methods of the dominant segment of the bourgeoisie which could attain proximity to the political power. The discomfort of propertied classes from deadlocks of the previous economic order was a constitutive part instigating a bourgeoisie revolution. Thus, it is must to evaluate the 1908 Revolution as a key step in understanding the economic changes and capitalist development of Ottoman economy-state-society relations.

The post-1908 period was not economically exempt from the *laissez-faire*-protectionism dualism. “Whether there was a rupture or continuity between two eras divided by World War I (WWI)” constituted “one of the most heated debates of Turkish historiography” (Kansu, 2017, p. 4). Most scholars assess the period from the start of the revolution to the start of WWI, the 1913 Ottoman coup d'état or the Balkan Wars [1908-13/14] as a “liberal” period based on a pluralistic and mobilizing environment of the revolution, as if emancipation was not accompanied in a short time by oppressive policies and as if “the meaning of threefold discourse –equality, liberty and fraternity– has not already been filled from (even) 1789 onwards by the propertied classes” as in 1908 (Kansu, 2017, p. 377). On the contrary, the same scholars view the period from the start of WWI, the 1913 Ottoman coup d'état or the Balkan Wars [1908-13] to the end of WWI [1913/14-18]⁵ as the period of the National Economy.

Ultimately, a bipartite picture emerged, considering almost the first half of the 1908-

⁵ Although one can extend the latter year from 1918 to the Proclamation of the Republic in 1923 onwards, to be able to avoid from superficial generalizations, I prefer to limit the given period to 1918 being the end of the WWI.

18 period as economic “liberalism” and the second half as the National Economy. “The conditions of the war directed the country towards the National Economy” (Toprak, 2017, p. 37). Then, the “national” seems in contradiction to the “liberal”. No doubt, this periodical division also refers to the extent to which the Unionists hold the governmental power regarding whether it supervises or is in full power (Akşin, 1980). Nevertheless, this distinction does not correspond to a genuine division, characterized by being “liberal” or “national”, in dominant economic mentality. Both what is called “liberal” and the “national” are liberal and capitalist in the last instance. Diving the era and the dominant mentality into two exclusive parts impedes our realization of liberal capitalist mechanisms and practices disguised under the veil of the “national”.

Below, I present the scholars relying on the mentioned duality. These scholars constitute the first dominant group in my literature review regarding the 1908-18 periodization. Yet, there is no internal consistency within this group. Whereas –for instance– Zafer Toprak points out a sharp distinction between the 1908-14 and the 1914-18 eras, Sina Akşin highlights the “Economic Turkism” that existed in the former era but just is veiled. The diversity in the first group and the messiness of studies on the 1908-18 era stems from two main reasons. First, as I have asserted at the start of this section, the literature mostly overlooked the economic dimension of the 1908 Revolution and the period immediately after the revolution while it is focused more on its societal aspect. Thus, the given years rarely become a direct focus of a deep analysis in terms of dominant economic leitmotiv. Second, besides the reception of both *milli* and *ulusal* in Turkish as “national”, most scholars are not certain in what they really mean by *milli* and *milliyetçilik*. While different scholars pronounce nationalism [*milliyetçilik*] or the National Economy [*Milli İktisat*] –which appeared in the political discussions more following the Balkan Wars–, it is quite challenging to read between the lines to grasp what they meant by *milli*. In this line, it is complicated to understand to what extent their *milli* converges with either Ottomanism, Islamism or Turkism, which mostly reach an amalgamation of all (Çetinkaya, 2015, 2023b).

Indeed, while being also aware that the prevalent restriction of the “national” to one exclusive current of thought blocks the grasp of *milli*, too. One movement of thought

could hardly stand alone (Zürcher, 2000, pp. 186–187). For instance, Islamism could easily intertwine with Turkism. As I argue below, while some scholars mean Turkish nationalism by the National Economy with secular references and employ *milli* and *ulusal* interchangeably, others refer to Ottoman nationalism by it. On the other hand, what *milli* means rarely concerns scholars who treat it as taken-for-granted. Therefore, *milli* as an ambiguous concept floats in space, which is nearly impossible to be cleared up.

I need to strongly emphasize that this uncertainty is not a mere issue of coincidence or negligence. Contents of words have an ideological dimension and are subject to a political construction, too. Hence, one should read writings of those who employ *milli* and *ulusal* interchangeably and those who attribute ambiguous content to *milli* studiously in a way to reveal their underlying assumptions. Some other scholars with whom this study concurs take it in relation to Muslim nationalism. Nevertheless, the approach that regards *milli* as associated with Muslim nationalism bears always the risk that the overemphasis on its sociopolitical dimension might disguise the role of the *milli* in capital accumulation and class formation under the veil of Muslim nationalism. While keeping in mind the strong relation of *milli* to Muslim nationalism, I primarily mean by *milli* the economic introversion in the context of *Milli İktisat* since the major question of this study is the change in the Ottoman economic policy and mentality. Yet, I am also aware that the content of the National Economy changed significantly especially after Balkan Wars, it encompassed a meaning of dispossession of non-Muslims and appropriation of their wealth. Now, I move into approaches to periodizing the years 1908-18.

The prominent tendency in periodizing 1908-18, which is far more predominant, is clarified below. Yet, some implicit exceptions can be detected on the *laissez-faire*-protectionism duality. After looking into the first and most prevalent group of scholars who relies on a sharp contradiction of “liberalism” and the National Economy, I analyze the exceptions.

Feroz Ahmad (1986) is the scholar who puts forward the protectionism and *laissez-*

faire duality in a sharp way. To him, the economic battle was between what he called “liberals” and the Unionists representing the protectionist front, while he also gave space to the liberalness of Young Turks (1986, p. 79). From his angle, the dispute between “liberals” and the Unionists shaped the 1908-13 era, ending with the victory of the latter. Thereafter, the era of the National Economy started with a change in economic mentality. After all, “Turks” were aware of the need for a national economic recovery (1986, p. 55). Although I mostly understand his “national” to be related to Ottomanism, his interchangeable and cursory use of “Turk” and “Muslim” without clarification clouds our understanding. In addition, he states that “following the Balkan Wars, the policy of Ottomanism was replaced by Islamism and Nationalism”. If we were to consider the national in relation to Muslim nationalism, it remains unclear how to draw the line between Islamism and nationalism. So, Ahmad seems bewildered about the content of *milli*. All in all, despite confusions, Ahmad divides the 1908-18 era into two periods, one being “liberal” and the other “national”; hence, he ignores and conceals liberal-capitalist practices in both.

Zafer Toprak, like Ahmad, discovers “a fault line” dividing the two eras of the Unionists. The Balkan War, a “death decree of Ottomanism”, ended liberal inspirations and “the golden age of Ottoman liberalism”, leading to the emergence of Turkish nationalism (2017, pp. 36–40). He championed the National Economy as “the economic dimension of Turkish nationalism” (2017, p. 44). “The National Economy was based on protectionism” (toprak,86), and Turkish nationalism as the main pillar of the National Economy includes “anti-liberal elements” (toprak, 35). From his perspective, contrary to the West, nationalization did not go hand in hand with liberal thought in the Ottoman context (2017, p. 35). Although he emphasizes some “national” hesitations in the “liberal” era as well, Toprak highlights, the National Economy came to the agenda just following the end of WWI (2017, p. 96). Obviously, Toprak distinguishes “liberal” and “national” economic eras and views. However, he ignores both being liberals. Thus, he not only periodizes the 1908-18 era but also divides the period from 1838 Anglo-Ottoman Treaty to the end of one-party era into two sections (E. Akyol, 2023, p. 273). While the first period from 1838 to 1913/14/15 was dominated by “liberalism of Adam Smith”, the latter period, he called the stage of

“deglobalization”, from 1913/14/15 to was an era of “independent economic policy” characterized by “the National Economy of Friedrich List”. His use of “national” and “liberal” is also problematic. Toprak employs the National Economy sometimes in relation to Turkish nationalism (2017, p. 40) and sometimes to Muslim nationalism (2017, pp. 47–48) makes the subject of his narrative difficult to understand. Moreover, his interchangeable use of “*milli*” and “*ulusal*” blurs our mind. Due to the undeniable significance of his comprehensive study on the National Economy, it will be analyzed in detail in the following sections.

Compared to Ahmad and Toprak, Sina Akşin relies on a moderate duality. According to Akşin, the Unionists gave up neither Turkism nor liberal Constitutionalism (1980, p. 158) which reflects inevitably on their economic views. Despite his acceptance of Turkism as the “genuine political program of the Unionists” (1980, p. 159), only the 1913 Ottoman coup d'état which is followed by the abolition of capitulations enabled “the Economic Turkism” to begin (1980, p. 280) which is a term he uses as equivalent to the “National Economy” of Zafer Toprak. In this line, he divides the 1908-18 period into two called the Supervisory Government [*Denetleme İktidarı*] (1908-13) and the Full Government [*Tam İktidar*] (1913-18). Then, while Akşin relies on a periodical duality in 1908-18, the source of difference between the 1908-13 and 1913-18 is not only related to whether one period is “liberal” or “national” but also to the grip of power attained by the Unionists to realize their “national” ends. Yet, he does not recognize the “national” being liberal in the last instance. The “national” is distinct from the “liberal” in his thought in a contrast, and the latter leads to economic dependency while the former gradually coming to the forefront. Consistent with his argumentation, he employs “national” [*milli*] in a way only to mean Turkish nationalism, corresponding to *ulusal* in Turkish.

Murat Koraltürk who seems to put an alternative reading of the National Economy agrees with previous scholars on decisiveness of Balkan Wars in dividing the 1908-18 period. To Koraltürk, following the Wars of 1912-13, the “Turkification of Economy” became prominent in the economic life (2011, p. 28). After the failure of constitutional liberalism in creating Muslim entrepreneurs and accompanying negative results of the

Balkan Wars, liberalism which favored “non-Muslims” ultimately lost its seat. Accordingly, Turkish nationalism in the economic sphere increasingly came to the forefront against liberalism (2011, p. 30). In conceptual level, he seems to equate his “Turkification of Economy” with the National Economy of Zafer Toprak, although the relation between *milli* and *Türk* Koraltürk uses seems more ambiguous. Hence, despite his objections to the National Economy, he concurs with Toprak’s views in the sharpness of “liberal” versus “national” eras.

Although scholars I have covered so far do not point out a considerable distinction between 1913 and 1914 as the beginning of the “national” era in terms of economic policy, Şevket Pamuk is much more precise in that neither the 1908 Revolution nor the 1913 Ottoman coup d'état changed the dominant economic policy, which means liberalism was still preminent. Although economic nationalism rose since the Balkan Wars, only the beginning of WW1 in 1914 enabled the Ottoman policy to leave “liberal” policies and embrace protectionist ones (2018, pp. 157–158) which ultimately paved the way for the National Economy policy (2021, p. 227). Then, the contrast between “liberal” versus “national” economic eras exists in Pamuk’s approach, too.

So far, I have analyzed prominent scholars from different schools who rely on a sharp distinction between the “liberal” economy period of 1908-1913/14/15 and the “national” economy period of 1913/14/15-1918. The first objection of this thesis to these scholars is that all the names split the 1908-18 term into two intervals respectively as “liberal” and “national”; thus, they contribute to the reproduction of a well-settled “liberal” versus “national” duality as if the two were mutually exclusive. Although some of these scholars correctly qualify capitalist nature of the “national” period at times, they still ignore the liberal capitalist nature of the “national” period since they attribute liberal capitalist qualities only to the “liberal” / *laissez-faire* period. They disregard the companionship between liberalism and capitalism by disconnecting liberalism from capitalism; thus, authors evaluate only the latter period, i.e., the period of National Economy in connection with capitalism. Second, these scholars employ “National Economy” (also “national” and “nationalism”) without a

proper clarification, which leads to think the concept to be restricted to one current of thought among Ottomanism, Islamism and Turkism. Leaving aside its significance in terms of political thought, I employ the National Economy within its historical development considering its early roots in protectionism of the late 19th century in this thesis. Third, they overemphasize the role of the CUP in the given period. In a sense, the myth of the omnipotent Ottoman state seems to be replaced by the CUP. These scholars draw a continuity from the CUP to the future Kemalist state. Hence, they overlook the class and the state formation processes embedded in the society while drawing a linear progressive historical flow.

Below I present one full- and one semi-exception to the periodical dichotomy between “liberal” and “national” economies. The exceptional names below are not wholly free of the problems mentioned. Nevertheless, these two scholars are not as problematical as those who strictly rely on a sharp contrast between the 1908-1913/14 “liberal” and the 1913/14-1918 “national” eras.

The first exceptional scholar to “liberal” versus the “National Economy” periodization is Aykut Kansu who views the 1908-18 period as an almost whole liberal process. In the historiographic first article of his famous book, Kansu (2017), different from all the previous scholars, does not apply to a demarcation in the 1908-1918 since he regards the year 1908 itself as the milestone. He does not divide the given period into two. Indeed, he puts what are called by scholars “liberal” and “national” into the same bag of liberalism-capitalism and regards the whole period as liberal. It is neither because he keeps the 1908-18 period out of analysis as nothing occurred, nor does he see any difference between the pre-1914 and post-1914. To Kansu, aware of the effects of the 1913-14 events, there is a continuity in terms of embracement to “liberalism” at least up until 1923, although 1923 itself was not as path breaking as “dominant Turkish historiography” suggests (2017, p. 5). In addition, unlike previous scholars, he seems quite precise with concepts. He employs the term “liberal” precisely in relation to capitalism as this thesis totally agrees with, and he avoids using *milli* and *ulusal* imprecisely so that he could clarify our understanding of “national”. In this study, I strongly concur with Kansu on continuity of liberalism from 1908 to 1918 onwards

and hardly evaluate the period as a linear process towards the National Economy in the sense of a contrast to a “liberal” economy. Indeed, it is a whole liberal process in which relations of production necessitates either *laissez-faire* or protectionism as a way to capitalist relations, which the scholar of a settled literature above mistakenly calls “liberal” and “national”. Then, the controversy is not basically between the “liberal” economy versus the “national” economy –as if they were not historically intertwined– but the issue of two routes to liberalism-capitalism. They are two representations of capitalist mode of production in a historical moment which were uncovered by historical conditions of relations of production.

Second, the semi-exception to the dominant “liberal” versus “national” periodical dualism is Korkut Boratav and Tevfik Çavdar’s analyses. Boratav (2016, p. 24) discerns a parallelism between the two calls them as “two branches of bourgeois ideology in a road to economic policy”. Similarly, Çavdar (2003, p. 21) regards free trade and protectionism as just two different ways of transition to capitalist relations. Not applying to a periodical demarcation, Boratav (2016) evaluates the 1908-22 period and Çavdar the 1908-18 period in a continuum, too. Boratav regards the whole period as a “hesitant step towards a national [*ulusal*] capitalism” (2016, p. 21). Çavdar’s labelling of *serbesti-i ticaret* and *usul-i himaye* instead of the “liberal” and the “national” shows his proper consideration of them rightly as two liberal methods in the late Ottoman economic history. Both submit capitalist nature of protectionism as another road to capitalist relations of production obviously louder and clearer than all the scholars, and they accept liberalism as the dominant line of Turkish economic thinking (Boratav, 2016, p. 16). Then, according to Boratav and Çavdar, the Balkan Wars or the 1913 Ottoman coup d’état does not imply a milestone in transition from “liberal” period of state to “national” one. Nevertheless, they still constitute only a *semi-exception* SINCE, compared to Kansu, they still speak of two distinct epochs between which a transition was possible. In addition, their occasional use of “liberal” exclusively in relation to free trade approach gives the impression that, its historical opposite, i.e. the protectionist approach was, not liberal. There are also problems stemming from their use of both *milli* and *ulusal* interchangeably and imprecisely, which makes what they mean by them ambiguous to understand. While saying

defenders of both free trade and protectionism aimed at *ulusal* bourgeoisie, Çavdar neglects different implications of *milli* and *ulusal* in Turkish. In this respect, without ignoring differences between Boratav and Çavdar, there exist some traces of the given dualism in their analyses.

To conclude, it is obvious that –despite exceptions– there is a shared conviction among scholars from diverse schools that the Balkan Wars (the 1913 Ottoman coup d'état and/or the start of the WWI) divided the 1908-18 period as “liberal” and “national” economic eras. Even if the scholars could give different names to the periods, they share the underlying assumption based on “liberal” versus “national” duality. I suggest questioning this periodical contrast between the “liberal” and the “national”. If such an exclusive distinction exists, the scholars should clarify how the 1908 Ottoman Boycott –accepted as an initial step of the National Economy– could burst at the very beginning of the “liberal” 1908-1913 era. There seems an incongruity. The literature suggests that the National Economy started with Balkan Wars (Toprak, 2017, p. 37) or WWI (2017, p. 96) around 1913/14. Then, it is hard to understand how to evaluate the 1908 Boycott through lenses of the National Economy. Such evaluation of the boycott implies the exclusion of the “liberal” alternative, as if the “national” and the “liberal” economic alternatives were not intertwined. In fact, the boycott, in parallel to the acceleration of the transition to capitalist mode of production in the Constitutional Era, included class dynamics and contradictions, and it had a kind of nationalist moment as well in the sense of economic self-enclosure. Yet, it does not refer to a moment of “national” economic policy in respect to contrast to the “liberal”. There is no such major transformation from one mode of production to another, there is only a change in method. The boycott took place at a moment of liberal capitalist economic relations. Hence, I evaluate the 1908 Ottoman Boycott as a sample case for impossibility of a mutually-exclusive *laissez-faire*-protectionism duality, which is incorrectly called a liberalism-National Economy dichotomy. I am aware that the literature on the boycott is scarce, which stems from its evaluation merely through lenses of the National Economy. I wish this thesis would fulfill this gap.

Before ending this section, I also need to emphasize that I never suggest that there is

no change in economic policy during the years 1908-18. Similarly, I never ignore that the Balkan Wars set the ground for a new type of nationalism to emerge (Çetinkaya, 2023b). Accordingly, the content of the National Economy considerably changed and increasingly took on an emphasis on dispossession of non-Muslims and capital accumulation in his way. My point is that the economic transformation was not as bifurcated as scholars of the existing literature assert. The establishment of a “national” economy and “national” bourgeoisie does not characterize the periodization between the 1908-1913/14 and the 1913/14-1918 periods. In addition to the fact that titles of “liberal” and “national” which pave the way for the reproduction of an illusory distinction, the transformation does not refer to a radical change in the type of state from “liberal” to “national” which are fraternal twins. After all, both the free trade and the protectionist approaches, falsely called “liberal” and “national”, were faces of liberalism-capitalism and cannot overlap with a historical period.

2.4. Discussing the National Economy Thesis (NET)

By now, I have suggested the protectionism-*laissez-faire* contradiction was illusory, and each is a way of consolidating liberal capitalist relations. The literature has already approved the liberal capitalist nature of the Smithian *laissez-faire* view; thus, the same quality of the Listian protectionist approach in the Ottoman context should be revealed to prove both to have common capitalist connections. In the late Ottoman era, “classical liberalism” was followed by protectionist policies, and the National Economy as a “new type of neo-mercantilism” was based on protectionism (Toprak, 2017, p. 77). Again, I do not claim that *laissez-faire* and economic protectionism are exactly the same, but their difference does not mean a total change in economic relations as the existing literature suggests.

In this thesis, I regard The National Economy primarily as the name of protectionist policies after 1908. It represents a set of policies “emerged with the inspiration of Friedrich List in the last years of the Ottoman Empire and continued forcefully to the early Republican period” (Ağır, 2023, p. 115). The existing literature regards Ziya Gökalp, Yusuf Akçura and Tekin Alp as pioneers of the National Economy. It came

to the forefront, according to Toprak (1985b, p. 640), when Ottoman intellectuals inclined towards “*ulusçuluk*” after 1908 with the influence of German economic thought. They started to read List, Carey and so on instead of Smith and Ricardo. Ottoman intellectuals ‘invented’ the ‘nation’ as a political and economic reality.

Zafer Toprak is the name who studies the National Economy most comprehensively. Thus, first, I explain his understanding of the National Economy in this section. Then, I continue with other names or approaches. In his famous book the *National Economy in Turkey*, Toprak illustrates how economic understanding of the Unionists change from the second constitutional era to the Republic, focusing more on the 1914-18 National Economy period. Toprak’s assumptions can be summarized under 8 interrelated characterizing articles. While the first one is the prominent concern of this study, because of the need to reveal presupposition unfolding this first premise, I address the following premises, too.

1. From the 1908 Revolution to Balkan Wars, *laissez-faire* ideas Toprak calls “liberal” were dominant in the Ottoman economic context. Following the war, a new era of the National Economy policy showed up. Thenceforth, the “liberal” economic mentality of the Young Turk Revolution was left aside (Toprak, 2017, p. 37), and the National Economy declared its victory against “liberal” policies.
2. Based on a strict “liberal”-“national” duality, the 1913/14-18 period was the main step towards the establishment of a capitalist state. In other words, as soon as the National Economy took the stage in full sense in the face of the “liberal” economy, the transition to capitalism could be accomplished.
3. In line with the absence of capitalism in the “liberal” 1908-13/14 period, class dynamics were quite weak then. The national bourgeoisie was yet to emerge.
4. While he characterizes the “liberal”/ free trade economy with non-intervention of the state in the economy, he defines the “national” / protectionist economy with its active interference in the economy.
5. The National Economy policy was a “project” of the Unionists who “decided to save the country at all costs” (Toprak, 2017, p. 40). Other societal actors were recipients of the National Economy.

6. The Unionists ‘created’ the national bourgeoisie. Thus, the existence of bourgeoisie was dependent on the dominance of the Unionists.
7. The Unionists followed protectionist/ “national” economic policies instead of *laissez-faire*/ “liberal” ones for creation of a national bourgeoisie. In the face of the non-Muslim bourgeoisie, most of whom were merchants, the Unionist embraced *esnaf*.
8. There was a continuation from the 1913/14-18 era in which the CUP was in full power to the Republican era. The Republicans overtook the National Economy from the Unionist.

These are the main articles claimed by Zafer Toprak coming first to minds when the National Economy pronounced first. Throughout the thesis, I name this line of thought that includes these articles more or less as the ‘National Economy Thesis (NET)’. Indeed, the NET’s premises are so much prevalent that even names who read the history in absolutely different way from Toprak converges with arguments of the NET. Then, the NET refers to a background idea spreading across different strands of thought, rather than an individual way of thought. I analyze below not only Toprak but also several names from different schools or traditions so that the extent to which the NET premises are rooted in the historiography could be uncovered. Yet, due to multiple interpretations of the National Economy, after explaining diverse views, I lean my study completely on Toprak’s approach of the National Economy for practical purposes. By relying only on his view, I hope to avoid making unnecessary broad generalizations.

2.4.1. Variants of the National Economy Thesis

The NET is supported by influential scholars in different ways and versions to varying degrees. It is so much widespread that even names close to the Marxist way of analysis seem inclined to the NET arguments. The aim of this section is not to exhaustively cover all the scholars approximating to Toprak’s arguments, but to show how pervasive the NET is. Thus, certain dissimilarities among Toprak and mentioned scholars are not surprising. Among the NET arguments, I prefer to focus more on ones

related to the mentioned duality in economic thought between the “national” and “liberal” economies, i.e. between protectionism and free trade policy.

Çağlar Keyder (2014) investigates the Late Ottoman history through a rivalry between the state bureaucracy and the (non-national) bourgeoisie whose sources of power were outside the Ottoman land. This changed, yet, in the time of the WW1 with accompanying aims of the CUP for centralization. The policy of getting rid of non-Muslim bourgeoisie accelerated in the post-1914 process, which amounts to the victory of the bureaucracy in the face of the bourgeoisie. Since Keyder regards the bourgeoisie as merely composed of Armenians and *Rums* based on the ‘ethic division of labor’, this does not mean the defeat of the Muslim-Turk majority which were indeed non-existent. Moreover, it seems to Keyder that evacuation of the “comprador bourgeoisie” means distancing of the Ottoman context from capitalist economic relations. The empty space that was now evacuated from the non-Muslim bourgeoisie had to be filled by a new group of national bourgeoisie to be created. The Unionists aimed to become integrated with the capitalist world system through creating a national bourgeoisie. The 1908-18 period was an “experiment” of this integration which results in fallacy of nascent capitalism and the capitalist state. Hence, according to Keyder, in a rivalry between state vs. capitalism, bureaucracy vs. bourgeoisie or politics vs. economics, the formers always won. All in all, he approves the National Economy as the protectionist policy of the Unionists, who the literature nearly equalize with the state out of which the bourgeoisie is assumed to emerge. Yet, he pays little attention to the connection of the National Economy to the establishment of capitalist relations, which is his difference from Toprak who regards the full implementation of the National Economy as the start of capitalism. To him, capitalism stands as a dream that was never achieved.

Feroz Ahmad relies on rivalry between state bureaucracy and non-Muslim. After the abrogation of capitulations, the Unionists who left aside “liberal” policies embraced the creation of a national bourgeoisie. The omnipotent state engaged in rivalry with the comprador bourgeoisie and attempted to create a new national one. In “the 1908-18 era of competitive politics”, due to “lack of a class of national entrepreneurs” (1986,

p. 57), capitalism could not emerge in full power. Then, Ahmad approves the National Economy as a way to capitalism. Yet, he cannot put liberalness of the National Economy properly. In his approach, despite the conflict between the state (equated with the CUP) and the non-national bourgeoisie, the national bourgeoisie is regarded to emerge as an epiphenomenal corollary of the Unionists just as Toprak does in his study. Hence, Ahmad ignores the intertwined nature of the relationship between class, state formation and economic relations. His overemphasis on state restricts the subject of history to the state as a sole actor. Then, accepting the capitalist nature of the National Economy, Ahmad has significant overlaps with the National Economy.

Şevket Pamuk's (2021) understanding of the National Economy relies on a sharp distinction between "national" and "liberal" economic policies. The Unionists who gave up "liberal" policies embark on protectionist ones consistent with the rising nationalism. This policy change stemmed from the objective of the CUP administration to create a "Turkish bourgeoisie" (2021, p. 227) which were non-existent in the Ottoman era (2008). To this end, national companies and banks had to be established and small *esnaf* to be collectively organized. Then, Pamuk regards the CUP –standing for the state in the post-1913 period– as the 'subject' of the National Economy policies, leaving a narrow space for its 'objects', i.e., the people. Society, state and economy seem to be separate areas of analysis. Yet, unlike Toprak, Pamuk does not establish a direct relationship between the nation-state and the emergence of capitalism which he indeed dates back to the early days of the 19th century.

As exemplified in two scholars of the World System Theory –Keyder and Pamuk–, Ayşe Buğra (2013) in her prominent book *Devlet ve İşadamları* reproduces the mentality of the NET without any explicit pronouncement of the National Economy or its variants. Interestingly, she does that while opposing to the settled historiographic assertion that explains a lack of an entrepreneurial environment among Muslim Turks and their distance from trade through cultural reasons. Despite her appropriate rejection of a biased argument, Buğra converges with the main premises of the NET while stating that the traditional production was unable to handle European industry (2013, p. 65), evaluating non-Muslim Ottomans as intermediaries between Muslim

Ottomans and European merchants (2013, p. 66) and arguing the CUP policies to aim at creation of capital accumulation for Muslims who suffer from its lack (2013, p. 83). In accordance with the NET, she treats the state as an explanation of everything by overemphasizing its role in socioeconomic relations. Her acceptance of the state and market as totally separate entities and her evaluation of the Muslim bourgeoisie to emerge as a dependent object of state policies proves her approximation to the National Economy, too.

From a broader perspective, not only prominent scholars of the World System Theory but those who are adhered to the Strong State Tradition (SST) (Dinler, 2011) contributes to the reproduction of the NET arguments. Besides Buğra and Keyder as explained above, others such as Şerif Mardin and Metin Heper as faithful proponents of the SST make implicit contributions to the NET. This well-settled view argues that Ottoman-Turkish socioeconomic changes stem from the long tradition of the Ottoman state which pervade and control every sphere of life. It regards society and state as separate entities in a cause-effect relationship, which results in segregation of the political and the economic as if one emerged out of the other. The SST which does not have internal consistency intertwines with the NET in three salient intertwined respects, each being related to bourgeoisie, state and capitalism respectively.

First, in parallel to the separation of the political and the economic, the SST regards state and bourgeoisie as external to each other. To its proponents, the duality between the strong state versus the weak bourgeoisie enables to regard the state, which it assumes to overlap with the Unionist, as the mere agent and actor of history. In the Ottoman case, SST scholars' comprehension of the bourgeoisie as a "well-behaved child of the state as the father" (Dinler, 2011, p. 33) establishes a dependency relationship with the state. However, as Dinler criticizes, even in any stage of capitalism anywhere bourgeoisie was not a self-appointed class which is itself formed within the state. Indeed, just as in the NET, SST scholars conceived the bourgeoisie and state as external to each other, and just in that case, the dependency of the bourgeoisie to state could make sense. Yet, the state determined by material conditions of relations of production is never exempt from the formation of class relations

(Corrigan & Sayer, 1981) and accordingly from the bourgeoisie, which is the point that both the SST and the NET ignore.

Second, the SST underpins the NET by empowering the state as the mere agent of socioeconomic transformations. It conceives the patrimonial state whose officials were indifferent to trade capitalism as the only actor which would initiate capitalism. Therefore, it again ignores the Muslim bourgeoisie which was active especially in internal trade (Quataert, 1994) due to the dominance of state in economic sphere. Then, the state as an “instrument” of capitalist relations gets on the stage once again just as the NET argues and the state with a seeming “autonomy” serves as a veil concealing class dimension.

Third, in parallel to two premises, SST lies on a specific understanding of liberal capitalism on which NET relies, too. It views capitalism as independent of class relations, subordination, exploitation and primitive accumulation as an innocent process in accord with Weberian conception of capitalism (A. E. Akyol, 2022, p. 92). For both SST and NET, in parallel to the state being described not with its role embedded in social relations of production but with its instrumentality in legitimation, capitalism means a mere issue of progressive development and rational organization.

Overall, the SST share the similar arguments with empowers the NET to different degrees. Its importance for my study is it shows the spillover of the NET ideas. The close connection of the NET with the SST can be discerned more easily in Keyder (2014) and Buğra (2013) thanks to their direct emphasis on economic dimension and state, it can be read more between the lines in Mardin (1990) and Heper (1985) who focus more on sociopolitical dimension and underemphasize economic one. One should assess Heper’s prominent argument that the state is so much “transcendental” that it never makes any room for civil society and economy, and Mardin’s support for the overarching state controlling even the emergence of a capitalist class in terms of their relation to the NET.

The Kemalist historiography was not exempt from the discourse of the NET, too. Ac-

According to Sina Akşin (1980), after taking the government, the CUP adopted Turkish nationalism (*ulusçuluk*) in capitalist development. For him, capitalism was something helpful for the development of a country. In warfare, creating a new class of Turk capitalists and making room for their commercial activity was the ultimate goal (1980, p. 280). The bourgeoisie consisted of *Rums* and Armenians especially in Anatolia so far. Now, Muslims would fill their shoes. The Unionists were the actor promoting this process of replacement. Like Toprak, Akşin fails to put that it was more than a mere replacement, but rather an appropriation and primitive accumulation. He repeats the well-known argument that Muslim Turks distant from bourgeois ideology were not included in the Ottoman bourgeoisie. Akşin attributes the absence of Muslim-Turk bourgeoisie to cultural determinants, seeing Turks as unable to grasp Western capitalism rationally (1980, pp. 79–80). Again, the new class of Muslim-Turks, when invented, were emerging from policies of the CUP as a dependent and separate factor. The CUP was the mere actor of economic change. He says the capitalist transformation of the country, which Akşin attributes to a positive meaning that started with the CUP continued in the Republic.

Even scholars who challenge the Kemalist historiography such as Erik J. Zürcher are influenced by the NET, albeit not as much as the Kemalist historiography aiming to reproduce a discourse of economic victimhood does. According to Zürcher, the state under the protection of the CUP attempted to establish a new mighty class of national bourgeoisie (2000, p. 183). Zürcher points out the Unionists behind the National Economy. He ignores that it was never a policy isolated from class and power relations within the society. Indeed, the National Economy itself was formed through these relations including participation of the people. In addition, he assumes a continuity between the Unionists cadre and Kemalists of the Republic, of which both were either bureaucrats or soldiers above the society and economy. Ultimately, even Zürcher shares to an extent the discourse of the NET. Different from previous scholars, he makes a differentiation among “Ottoman nationalism”, “Panturkism” and “Turk/Muslim nationalism” (2000, pp. 188–189) which clears confusions.

The position of Korkut Boratav is more complex. Boratav evaluates the 1908-22 peri-

od as a whole liberal process while accepting some peculiarities of the years dominated administratively by the CUP. Moreover, he affirms that there are two branches of bourgeois economic policy and their ultimate capitalist nature: one being related to “national” capitalism and the other to free trade (2016, p. 24). In this respect, he significantly differs from the NET. Nevertheless, his acceptance of the National Economy school as the “symmetric opponent of liberal schools” (2016, p. 26) contributes to reproduction of the illusory distinction between the “liberal” and the “national” just as the NET promotes. To Boratav, the National Economy required the creation of a national bourgeoisie. The state was almost equal to the CUP. The weakness of the Turkish bourgeoisie necessitated a Unionist state policy towards its creation. After all, the “comprador (Ottoman) bourgeoisie” composed of *Rums*, Levantines, Armenians and Jews dominated the economic sphere especially in terms of external trade. In internal trade, on the other hand, there was a dependent group of *esnafs* with small capital (2016, pp. 23–24). To him, the weak national bourgeoisie stemmed not from competitive conditions but from special opportunities provided by state mechanism. Yet, due to the belatedness of a national bourgeoisie, it was always indebted its success to other classes or strata (2016, pp. 243–244). Then, just as in the NET, the bourgeoisie emerges as a dependent state-related class out of nothing, which is indeed a contrast to his criticism to Keyder’s approach (2017b). Moreover, his claim implies a cause-effect relationship between the political and the economic, of which separation amounts to falling into the trap of liberal analyses, which is the error Toprak also falls into. Then, the state, including the CUP identified with the state, is instrumentalized in the emergence of capitalism in full power. Yet, his allocation of at least a room for small-scale national bourgeoisie by accepting embourgeoisement of *esnafs* separates him from Toprak. Different from Toprak, he also explains the National Economy not as a mere issue of nationalism but appropriation and primitive accumulation. Hence, he does seem as firm as Toprak in promoting the NET.

Despite the dominance of the National Economy in the literature, there exists an alternative that criticizes the concept National Economy. Because diversion from the umbrella of the NET is quite rare in the literature, Murat Koraltürk’s (2011) view is worth analyzing in more detail albeit its problems. According to him, the Turkification

of Economy signifies a conceptual breakage. While the National Economy means that the Ottoman subjects take advantage of economy in the face of *foreigners*, the Turkification of Economy means that Muslim-Turks are favored against the *non-Muslim subjects*. In other words, the National Economy approach underemphasizes the intended hostility towards non-Muslims by hiding them under the name of “foreigner” and ignores discriminatory policies based on ethno-religious differences. Moreover, it conceals the genuine content of the National Economy policies which refers to a deliberate political choice to erase unpleasant memories from history. Hence, Koraltürk highlights that the National Economy relies on ambiguity of concepts such as “foreigner” which in return evokes the idea of the National Economy as a mere innocent process. The ambiguity of “foreigner” makes the “national” ambiguous, too. Hence, the varying core of the “foreigner” in the 1910s through the change in the content of nationalism from those who were not subjects of the Ottoman/Turkish state to non-Muslims is explained away. Its main objective is to create a new class of Muslim Turk entrepreneurs, the dosage of which increases from 1908 to the Republic in a continuum. To Koraltürk, this would be achieved by eliminating liberalism of the Constitutional Era.

His objection, at first sight, is a valuably rare challenge to deep-seated literature. Especially his detection of the elusiveness of the “foreigner” which concomitantly makes the “national” and the National Economy indefinite is eye-opening in that it enables to realize the dissimulation power of the CUP policy under the veil of the “national”. Yet, the Turkification of Economy has significant overlaps with the NET so much so that it cannot be regarded as an alternative to it. Instead, one is just an update of the other. Initially, Koraltürk’s approach determines the policy of the CUP as the creation of a “national” bourgeoisie out of nothing, whatever “national” means. Similarly, he regards the bourgeoisie as a dependent variable to state policy as if the state and bourgeoisie were separate in fact. In both conceptualization, there remains a narrow space for real subjects of history, i.e., the people. Koraltürk, although he makes a to-the-point inference that the National Economy dissimulates inner dynamics of discrimination towards non-Muslims, his labeling of these discriminatory policies as “ethnoreligious” leads to a disregard for class dynamics behind the policies. Hence,

the Turkification of the Economy set the ground for another level of concealment. It conceals the process of capital accumulation under a nation formation by veiling the connection between class formation and appropriation practices. Koraltürk evaluates the Turkification policy of the CUP as a continuous process from 1908 to 1923. Thus, just as Toprak, he fails to realize that the continuity is not about Turkification but embracement to liberalism and capitalism. Although Koraltürk presents at the beginning the Turkification of the Economy as an alternative to the National Economy, his approach is not more than a condensation of the National Economy in the 1920s.

2.4.2. A Challenge to the National Economy Thesis

Below, I present my theoretical opposition to the National Economy Thesis (NET) prominent advocates of which I have summarized above. The NET's arguments are so prevalent that scholars from opposing schools from Marxism and Kemalism to World System Theory embrace it as long as it fills an analytical gap in their framework. Since there is no internal consistency within the NET, I focus on Zafer Toprak's assertions. My theoretical objection clarifies the value-laden nature of the NET in favor of a liberal-capitalist view of the world and it reveals sources of the assumed contrast between the National Economy and the "liberal" economy. In addition to its underlying liberal premises, I touch on inconsistencies within the NET below. These inconsistencies reveal the inappropriateness of the periodization between the 1908-14 and the 1914-18 periods and the seeming division between the "liberal" and the "national". Before getting into my theoretical objection to the NET, I touch on the historical nature of the duality between the "liberal" and the "national", centering Toprak's arguments. It is the NET that reproduces this duality.

2.4.2.1. The Historical Nature of the Duality

The existence of separate alternatives as "liberal" and "national" is central to the National Economy Thesis. I argue that the two dominant approaches embedded in Ottoman economic thought do not represent disparate alternatives. Thus, while

arguing for the proximity between the “liberal” and the “national,” I prominently object to the principal argument of the NET. They are just two methods in the ongoing adoption of capitalist relations of production. Thus, both are liberal. Their difference lies not in one’s embracement to liberalism but methods while going on this road. The “national” never emerge as an alternative to the “liberal” following Balkan Wars. The war has undoubtedly created a breakage in socioeconomic order, but it did not break the market logic. Protectionism never amounts to refrainment from market economy.

However, from Toprak’s perspective, the story is different. In narrating the historical roots of the National Economy, he speaks of a completely disparate school of economics. He approaches these “liberal” and “national” views such that they seem opposite competing economic models in a zero-sum game. He characterizes the National Economy, the successor of the protectionist stance, by its novelty in the face of the “liberal” economy. While touching upon debates of the era between protectionism and *laissez-faire*, he regards the emergence of the former as dependent on the retreat of the other. Accordingly, he classifies prominent names of the era based on either of the two. He includes Musa Akyiğitzade and Ahmet Mithat solely in the protectionist camp while he incorporates Mehmet Cavid exclusively into the opposite “liberal” camp. Therefore, the reason Mehmed Cavid takes a vital role in the “national” fiscal policy of the early Republic seems impossible to explain.

There is two dividing line between the “liberal” and “national” views in the Ottoman context. First, whether industrialization or agriculture is to be adopted in the path of development differs between the two. Based on the adoption of industrialization or agriculture, the Ottoman Empire would assume a position in the international division of labor. The protectionist intellectuals have promoted industrialization while the supporters of *laissez-faire* have emphasized agriculture. The insistence of the supporters of free trade was based on that universal laws of economic had to be implemented by all including Ottoman Empire. Second, the role each view attributed to the state was different. The “national” protectionist stance prioritized the protection of the internal market and promoted the state to adopt policies beneficial for its national bourgeoisie or *esnafs* in the international arena such that its own bourgeoisie could

enter the global market with equal competition power. So, the state had to ‘intervene’ in the market somehow, for instance, by increasing customs walls. If and only in this case, would Ottomans be equal in market competition with foreign bourgeoisie. The “liberal” free-tradist view, on the other hand, have argued that competition is distorted if the state engages in underpinning its own market.

Thus, there was no gulf between *laissez-faire* and protectionism –falsely equated with the “liberal” and the “national”– as wide as the NET argues. Their difference lies initially in the sequence of the way the government is to follow for development and secondly in the *extent* of state intervention. The agriculture-industrialization debate does not refer to distinct modes of production. Likewise, one cannot distinguish the “liberal” or the “national” by the existence of the state intervention but by its dosage and timing. While the transition to the market economy is the common objective, the way this transition takes place differs. The positive and emancipatory content Toprak attributes to the “national” economic model does not emancipate it from the liberal market logic.

Accordingly, the “liberal” economy is not an alternative exclusively favoring the bourgeoisie whom Toprak equates with ‘imperial aims of the external forces.’ Likewise, the “national” does not represent an option backed by the non-bourgeoisie actors like *esnafs* or peasantry, to whom he attributes a positive saving mission. There is a more complex relationship than direct correlations. Their difference is also not the issue of the “national” bourgeoisie who desires state intervention in the economy in the face of the non-Muslim one. Because Toprak associates the bourgeoisie directly with liberalism, those whose relationship with the bourgeoisie is just not direct and explicit appear as something out of liberalism like for *esnafs*. Because he regards the bourgeoisie as composed only of non-Muslims, he assumes the national bourgeoisie is yet to emerge. Only after the start of “the era of capitalism” does it become possible to speak of a national bourgeoisie in the full sense of the word.

Since Toprak restricts liberalism to the bourgeoisie, the actors outside whomever the bourgeoisie is take on a “national” guise. Therefore, where he could not find the

bourgeoisie in the full sense of the word, he declares the end of liberalism but the first steps of nationalism. Then, in the absence of the bourgeoisie, the creation of the national bourgeoisie becomes inevitable. In other words, to the degree that Toprak regards liberalism as primarily and exclusively related to the floor on which the bourgeoisie and bourgeois values stand, the way other than the bourgeois becomes away from the “liberal” but related to the “national”. Then, the “national” - “liberal” contrast takes a natural shape. However, the concept of liberalism goes beyond the bourgeoisie and bourgeois interests. Indeed, “liberalism” necessarily encompasses “quite disparate social and economic forces –including small producers, shopkeepers, tradesmen and wage-earners as well as the *grande bourgeoisie* and its auxiliaries” (Blackbourn & Eley, 1984, p. 77). Which segment is to come to the fore is determined by the changing socioeconomic dynamics and “liberal movements’ national conditions of existence”(1984, p. 78). Ultimately, Toprak’s perception of liberalism-bourgeoisie relationships sharpens his conceptualization of the “liberal”-“national” contrast and its corresponding economic leitmotiv.

Considering these, I ask why Toprak treats two approaches that divide the 1908-1918 period into two as irreconcilable paths as “liberal” and “national” that never converge. This study argues that its reason lies in Toprak’s ontological and epistemological premises, which shows a tendency in favor of liberal distinctions.

2.4.2.2. Centrality of the State and Individuals

The first problem of the NET is related to the unit of analysis. It regards the state as an independent variable. Toprak makes the state so firmly the center of the analysis that he studies merely the nascent capitalist state, which is falsely assumed to be independent of socioeconomic formation in the Late Ottoman Period.

The problem with the centrality of the state as an independent variable is that the NET evaluates the state as one party of a dialectic duality. Toprak draws a struggle between the bourgeoisie and the state, the latter including members of the CUP. Then, he

regards the state –and the Unionists– as a class. However, apart from the problems within the concepts of the bourgeoisie and the state, a group associated with state cannot be a class. It is just a “social group or stratum” in which “a dialectical duality would be unnecessary” (Boratav, 2017b). On the other hand, even if we approve of his evaluations of the state as a class, he fails to establish a dialectical relationship between the state and the bourgeoisie. While Toprak regards the bourgeoisie as dependent on the state in one-way determination, the state and its associated group, mainly bureaucracy, seem isolated from the bourgeoisie and also all the class dynamics.

The centrality of the state as an actor and agent with its own agenda paves the way for two interrelated methodological weaknesses: (1) reification/abstraction fallacy and (2) methodological individualism. They prove problems in Toprak’s ontological and epistemological presuppositions, which enable questioning his conception of liberalism and capitalism ultimately. Below, I explain these problems in an intertwined manner.

Initially, Toprak evaluates the state as an ontological “thing” independent of social actors’ social and economic interests. Forgetting that it is an abstraction –rather than the reality one would observe through empirical methods–, he attributes an agency to the state, leading to its reification, which is a fundamental methodological mistake (Yalman, 2015, p. 77). In the abstraction process, the reality is “broken down into manageable parts” (Ollman, 2003, p. 60) to understand it properly. One dimension of a phenomenon temporarily comes to the forefront while other dimensions intentionally become excluded or secondarily evaluated. Yet, this dimension is not the reality itself, just an abstracted side of it. Falling into this trap, Toprak takes the outcome of the abstraction process as the reality itself; thus, he disregards mechanisms embedded in the empirical. The methodological downgrading of other aspects of the reality to one salient aspect of the state misrepresents the reality. He treats the state as the mere objective actor at the center of analysis; thus, he contributes it to “conceal the real history and relations of subjection...”(Abrams, 1988, p. 77).

As for the relationship between the state and nationalism, Toprak falls into this error.

He evaluates the state so predominantly intertwined with nationalism that it becomes reduced to a mere matter of nationalism, ultimately leading to the mystification of the state and its concealment as an ideological “construction” (1988, p. 77). His overstress on the nation-state stems from reducing a concept to one dimension of reality, too. The Unionists, governmental actors or any other societal actors seem restricted to their roles in this “national” process. The state becomes a concept reified and reduced to the empirical level, i.e., what is happening on the surface. This ‘surface’ amounts to nationalism or national sentiments in Toprak’s narrative. The state of the 1908-18 period seems a step in the path towards the establishment of a nation-state. Accordingly, Toprak evaluates the economic policies of the CUP in the 1914-18 period only as an outcome of nationalism. Economic policies of the state seem to emerge not from capitalist dynamics but from national sentiments. As he reduces the state to a mere issue of nationalist sentiments, other dimensions of the state and its policies, such as their embeddedness in the capitalist relations of production, become disguised under nationalism.

By now, I have explained the reason that the NET is state-centered. I have stated at the beginning that the reification/abstraction fallacy and methodological individualism are two intertwined weaknesses of the state centeredness of the NET. It can seem confusing –I prove it is not– how a state-centered approach is also adherent to methodological individualism that ontologically prioritizes individual human action over any association or institution.

The state of the NET stands between being a formal and concrete “set of institutions” as the sole actor and being an entity standing for a sum of individuals. In other words, it stands in liminality between the *liberal-individualist* and *institutionalist* views of the earlier discussions. Nevertheless, if I say that Toprak lies on the powerful state as an autonomous center of analysis and, at the same time, on individual-based historical narrative, it may raise question marks. Indeed, it is a discrepancy inherent in the NET. It renders the state so strongly the only subject of analysis that ultimately it takes the form of an empty signifier, which leads to its ontological replacement by individuals. If this replacement does not take place, then the very state becomes individualized.

Yet, it is still a question for the NET: How to reconcile ‘state’ and ‘individual’ in the analysis? Indeed, individual actors carry the state like ‘the wheels of a car’. These wheels enable the isolation of car –i.e., the state– from the (objective) ground. Then, the state, composed of individual actors, can go on its road without even touching upon conditions out of which the car emerged. In this way, one guarantees the reification of the state and its following isolation from social and economic relations. Consequently, the reified and isolated state goes hand in hand with individuals that is the focus of methodological individualism. Then, the NET relies on a particular understanding of the state, which is either a ‘thing’ composed of individuals or itself an individual.

Now, I clarify how the NET is methodological individualist, enabling one to understand the connection between reification and methodological individualism. However, I need to put my foundational assumption before: I take methodological individualism as the ontological basis of liberalism with reference to Yalman. Yalman (2015, p. 70) notes that while there are several liberalisms with different ontological bases, the liberalism that relies on methodological individualism has been dominant from the 19th century onwards. Hence, aware of liberalisms unconnected with methodological individualism, I take it as the ontological foundation of liberalism due to the prevalence of this specific conception of liberalism that Yalman emphasizes. Hence, I intentionally overlook distinct kinds of liberalism here. Yet, beyond its relation to liberalism, methodological individualism reveals ontological assumptions of the NET.

Toprak, the pioneer of the NET, puts the state at the center of his analysis as if it were a “thing.” Nevertheless, he does not attribute any explanatory power to the state. It becomes a postulate that cannot explain any historical reality independent of itself. Accordingly, Toprak explains why the CUP preferred Listian economic policies to Smithian ones with the help of ‘state interest’ without clarifying what the ‘state interest’ is, which factors constitute it or why it matters. He regards it as the source of all the policy choices, but since he takes it in a vacuum, the state cannot account for anything other than itself. As a result, the state becomes devoid of explanatory power enough. ‘Individuals’ or a specific group of ‘individuals’ whose individuality per se

characterizes the state take the form of an explanation of all the historical flow (Varel, 2020, p. 609). It is inevitable that the state as an isolated and unchanging entity could not explain the changing economic, social and cultural dynamics of society. Again, it is unavoidable that atomistic individuals and their motivations could necessarily fill the space emptied by the state. Yet, attributing acts of the Unionist individuals to the state, Toprak fails to clarify socioeconomic motives behind those individual actors considering state interest.

To the extent that the state cannot explain the historical reality, the state retreats from the analysis. Individuals seem to make history in full autonomy. The good or bad qualities of individual actors, their success or unsuccess and their vision or narrow-mindedness become carriers of history, just as in the *National Economy in Turkey*. Toprak depicts the National Economy as the outcome of Unionist or Kemalist individual endeavors, primarily of Ziya Gökalp's and sometimes Yusuf Akçura's and Tekin Alp's considerations. While he sees the roots of the National Economy in the late 19th century writings of other 'individuals' such as Namık Kemal, Ahmed Midhat or Musa Akyiğitzade (2017, p. 27), up until Gökalp, Toprak regards what they strived for not as the National Economy [*Milli İktisat*] but as "*ulusal* economy". Similarly, even these names themselves take their inspirations from mere 'individual' actors such as Friedrich List or influential 'individuals' like Gustav von Schmoller or Adam Müller, who replaced liberal 'individuals' such as Smith, Bastiat, Ricardo, Beaulieu, rather than changing global dynamics or internal changes. Thus, he overlooks globally simultaneous tendencies and the ever-repeating emergence of protectionism just after the crises of free-trade capitalism, as mentioned in the first chapter.

As for individuals other than the Unionists, the emphasis on the 'individual' actors is the same. In 1908, Young Turks united Muslims and non-Muslims against the "despotism of Abdulhamid II" (Toprak, 2017, p. 81). Similarly, the liberalism of the CUP resulted from the opposition to Abdulhamid II (2017, p. 41). Obviously, Toprak attributes the source of a regime to an individual; therefore, he insulates the subject of his analysis from external and internal socioeconomic changes. He ignores, for instance, that 1875-1914 was "the age of empire" (Hobsbawm, 2021) when

Abdulhamid II was on the throne. The age witnessed new economic relations of distribution shaped by imperialism and needed powerful emperors or emperor-like actors. Thus, despotism was an outcome of a broader worldwide frame so much so that one cannot restrict it to the personality of Abdulhamid II. However, owing to his methodological individualism, accompanied by his fallacy of abstraction, Toprak evaluates concepts, thoughts or events in relation to the motives of individuals, which is one root of his preference for a liberal analysis. Likewise, a literature influenced by the NET regards the 1908 Boycott as a movement organized predominantly by the Unionist individuals and it ignores that the boycott was also embedded in an “age of boycotts” in the worldwide conjuncture (Çetinkaya, 2004).

Toprak’s methodological individualism indirectly leads to the equation of the CUP with the state itself. He regards the Unionists, whose acts seem to be the acts of ‘state reason’, as the agent of the state. To him, the CUP whose members were aware that liberal thought cannot “save the country” (Toprak, 2017, p. 39) promoted the creation of a national bourgeoisie in the name of the state. He evaluates the state –of which name and content, albeit differ in time– in a continuum that devolves from the Young Turks to the Unionists and then to the Kemalists, as if the state had an unchangeable essential core undertaken by ‘individual’ actors. Moreover, once again, he reifies the state with an ontological essence as if it was the taken-for-granted of analysis while forgetting that the state without an ‘essence’ takes different forms based on social relations of production. Indeed, if one remembers that “the only plausible alternative to taking the state for granted is to understand it as historically constructed” (Abrams, 1988, p. 80), then no one can establish an equation between a specific group of elites –the Unionists or the Kemalists– and the assumed core of the state. In this way, the conceptualization of the state as “an essentially and formally unchanging...state as a phenomenon” (Çelik, 2022, p. 20) can disappear, which is the weakness that the NET also has.

In Toprak’s narrative, ‘individual’ actors seem in-between liberalism and “state tradition”. I put aside the ambiguity of terms like “state tradition, “Ottoman tradition” and even “state” itself. On the one hand, the Unionists strive to “save the country”, so

improve the “state tradition”; on the other hand, they challenge it by opposing Abdulhamid. In a sense, they oppose the “state tradition” for the sake of the “state tradition” and its interests. This stems from that Toprak contrasts liberalism with the state tradition (Toprak, 2017, p. 33). Moreover, the failure of the “liberal” resistance in 1908 in the face of the state tradition seems expected for Toprak. In his view (2017, p. 35), liberalism “developed” as an outcome of “centennial social transformations” in the West. In the Ottoman context, on the other hand, liberalism was an abrupt momentary event that fell from the sky into the lap of ‘individual’ Ottoman intellectuals. Besides the fact that he attributes a peculiarity to the relationship between liberalism and “state tradition” in the Ottoman context, once again, ‘individual’ intellectual actors stand as bearers of this peculiar relationship. Differentiating the Ottoman from the West, Toprak attributes liberalism to individuals, i.e., they ‘brought’ it to the Ottoman territory, but it did not develop in the socioeconomic environment of the era. In a sense, liberalism in the Ottoman context was free of socioeconomic transformations due to its ‘individual’ connections.

I have discussed so far that, where the state as the subject of analysis could not explain historical reality, ‘individuals’ replace the state, which refers to methodological individualism as the NET's ontological basis. Indeed, even where Toprak does not take the subject of analysis as ‘individual’ by allocating wider explanatory room for the state, he falls into the error of anthropomorphism. He attributes so many human-like characteristics to the state that the state eventually becomes personified and individualized. The state as a rational actor with a self-agenda can act, transform or decide whatever is necessary. Just like a human being who is born, lives and dies, the Ottoman state enters a period of “downfall”(Toprak, 2017, p. 31), amounting to the dying of a human being. Following the downfall, a new nation as a person/individual is about to be born. Just as he underscores individuals’ will in shaping history, he now emphasizes the state’s will as a person/individual.

Overall, the NET commences from methodological individualism. The NET which historically puts the National Economy against the “liberal” economy –as if the “liberal” and the “national” were in contrast– has particular ontological assumptions,

which I associate with liberalism indeed. The principal significance of the liberal basis of the National Economy Thesis for my study is indeed that it nullifies the periodical divisions assumed between the 1908-1913/14 and 1913/14-1918 periods. Toprak constructs his whole narrative on a liberal, ‘concrete’ and personified state composed of ‘individual’ actors –without a periodically-conceptual distinction–, thus, inevitably starts from a liberal ontological basis. In other words, what he does is not the analysis of the “liberal” state up until 1914 and then the “national” state. He wholly analyzes the liberal state instead. Then, what he examines in the “national” period is the analysis of the liberal state, not the “national” state promoting the National Economy. In other words, he literally studies the liberal state in a whole liberal period (1908-18) involving what he calls the “liberal” and “national”. There is no contrast between the “liberal” and the “national.” An analysis –that on the one hand has liberal ontological assumptions and relies on the “liberal”- “national” contrast on the other– fails to draw an appropriate demarcation between what is liberal and what is not.

2.4.2.3. The Separation of Economy-Society-Politics

As I have argued in the previous section, in Toprak’s narrative, the state that promotes the National Economy seems in isolation as if it could exist by itself. It comes from the outside and grasps the economy. This brings us to two other weaknesses: (1) *the separation of politics and economy* and accompanying (2) *the separation of politics and societal actors*. Indeed, I still speak of a failure in ontological assumptions. The world seems composed of distinct entities like society, economy and politics which Toprak assumes to be *inter*-related, never *intra*-related. In this part, I primarily hope liberal presumptions of Toprak would encourage us to question if what he called the “liberal” and “national” is appropriate to use, both relying on a liberal basis. In this way, my argument that his liberally driven presuppositions propel him to make a division between the “liberal” and “national” economies could be more understandable. Inconsistencies as well, I would show, contribute to our questioning. Firstly, the problem of the economy-politics distinction is its disregard for the emergence of the economy-politics separation as associated with the historical change

in the mode of production, i.e., the transition to capitalism. This distinction refers to the historical process of separation of direct producers from means of production. “As a result of forms of surplus appropriation peculiar to capitalist relations of production, formal differentiations like the politics-economy or state-society separations particular to capitalism is evaluated as the reality itself.” (Yalman, 2015, p. 82). Thus, the economy-politics separation Toprak applies to his thesis is value-laden in favor of liberal-capitalist distinctions. He considers an artificial differentiation between economic and political spheres as a natural condition of reality.

Then, the problem mentioned earlier reemerges: The capitalist state and artificial distinctions related to it seem the reality itself but not abstractions. Accordingly, he conceives of economy, state, and their relationship as single-dimensional distinct areas with one unchanging essence. Therefore, he reduces the contents of concepts –like economy and politics– to one dimension of reality while disregarding internal mechanisms and relations beyond each. In this vein, he restricts politics to the field of state and economy to the bourgeoisie. On the one hand, he overlooks that politics involves more than the state and its officials just as the emergence of social movements of 1908 exemplifies. Moreover, he goes one step further and identifies the state almost only with the Unionists and their acts or thoughts. Yet, the NET overlooks, for instance, that the field of politics expanded through mobilization of the masses in the 19th century (Çetinkaya, 2015). On the other hand, Toprak disregards sociocultural dimensions of the bourgeoisie as well (Eldem, 2014) that he restricts to the economy. Accordingly, he equates the economy-politics distinction one-dimensionally with the bourgeoisie-state differentiation, which means a disregard for intersections between them.

Indeed, the economy-politics separation relies also on a problematical relationship between politics and economy. Toprak regards the state as an instrument of the bourgeoisie. Yet, as expected from a state-centered analysis, what is good for the bourgeoisie is determined by the very state, and this situation intensifies the dependency of the national bourgeoisie on the state. As a result of a particular and dependent relationship between the state and the national bourgeoisie, as the Unionists

find a broader place in politics and state administration, the national bourgeoisie comes to the fore, and vice versa. According to Toprak (2017, p. 36), this is especially clear in the economic environment of the second five-year period of the Constitutional Era. While the Unionists were getting on the stage, the Muslim-Turk bourgeoisie that “seemed to never exist in the Ottoman reign” (Toprak, 2017, p. 102) began to rise. Moreover, since he regards the two as never-crossing groups, one of which emerges from the other, Toprak does not uncover the intertwined connections between the bourgeoisie and members of the CUP being agent of the state. Accordingly, he never questions whether the National Economy enriched the Unionist figures or enabled them to bourgeoisify. At this point, what Toprak does not assert –rather than what he does– characterizes his writing. There is no indication that he has included the Unionists in the national bourgeoisie. Considering the flexibility of boundaries of the bourgeoisie as a concept (Eldem, 2014), like those who have bonds in the Imperial Ottoman Bank or those who adopt Western cultural codes, the national bourgeoisie involves certain Unionist figures, as the 1908 Boycott proves in the next chapter since the economic boycott was not an outcome of Unionist or governmental attempts.

The very economy-politics separation lies under the instrumentalization of the state since only if one considers economy and politics separately can one become a tool for the other. The state unidirectionally creates, shapes, supervises, steers or, if needed, stops the bourgeoisie in its service. There seems to be nothing of a dialectic relationship. So, there remains no room for questioning, for instance, if internal class contradictions apart from ethnic ones existed within the bourgeoisie or if these contradictions contributed to the rise or fall of the state or the CUP. Silence prevails in his narrative once again. This instrumentalization of the state, resulting from the separation of economy and politics, has two considerable outcomes. First, the instrumentalized state that comes to the analysis somewhere outside disguises the overlap between class and state formations. Free of socioeconomic changes, the state becomes all above society and economy. It becomes something instrumental to be changed, reached or captured rather than an “area of class and other contestation” (Corrigan et al., 1980, p. 11) together which society and economy change, too. It becomes something concrete to be conquered while members of the CUP are

conquerors. Acts of the Unionists –conquerors– seem directed towards “saving the country” as if Unionist actors were free of liberal capitalist relations of production. Their personality seems free of their class interest. Second, as Toprak instrumentalizes the state, he attributes a considerable amount of “concreteness” to the state, too, while forgetting “the State... is an illusion” (Corrigan & Sayer, 1985, p. 7). This “concreteness” leads to ambiguity of the state and promotes “the notion of the state as a hidden structure” (Abrams, 1988, p. 74). He embodies the state in the form of the Unionists, for instance. Their acts seemingly stand for actions of the state reason. It seems a tangible instrument serving the creation of a national bourgeoisie. In the end, the instrumentalization of the state and the concreteness attributed to it leads to omitting the state and its inherently bourgeois practices as a mere “politically organized subjection” (Abrams, 1988, p. 63) that is never external to us but “works through us”(Corrigan & Sayer, 1985, p. 180).

The economy-state separation overlaps also with the liberal thesis that the state should not intervene in market relations; otherwise, the market would be distorted. This is the image he has in mind. Toprak who has such an understanding of liberalism regards any moment that the state intervened as out of liberalism. This assertion results from the external conceptualization of state and economy, in which, “at best, a spatially separate political power may *intervene* in the economy” (Wood, 1995, p. 21). Indeed, there can be such a thing as ‘state *intervention* in the economy’ only when one regards the state and economy as externally related, as Toprak does. State formation and its bureaucratic relations –somehow– never overlap with relations of production, class formation and fortification of individual class positions. The national bourgeoisie emerges outside the ground on which the nation-state emerged. The state first appears and then, aloofly, the national bourgeoisie does. Even while speaking of the state intervention in the Ottoman economy, Toprak does not consider that the bourgeoisie can find a place in the state cadres. Their roles and missions seem disparate. Yet, the bourgeoisie always needs ‘external’ help due to its inertia, which is the helping hand of an omnipotent state.

Then, a picture emerges: He renders the bourgeoisie and the state as two main variables

of the analysis to explain all the socioeconomic structure. Yet, he largely disregards that, while the bourgeoisie is a class, the state embodied in the form of the Unionists and other governmental actors amounts –at most– to a social group or stratum (Boratav, 2017b). The bourgeoisie refers to a party in relations of production, which is the party on the side of the appropriation of surplus. On the other hand, the state means an arena on which relations of production take place. Even if I accept that the state becomes embodied in the Unionist individuals as Toprak implies, it can, at most, refer to a part in the re-distribution of surplus. One can include it in the “relations of secondary distribution” (2017b, p. 275) which is about the allocation of surplus appropriated. In contrast to class relations, as Boratav points out, there is no need for antagonism when it comes to a group or stratum. Then, the state, in the sense Toprak means, does not need a binary opposite, i.e., the bourgeoisie, while the bourgeoisie does. Besides problems of supposing the bourgeoisie and the state as homogeneous groups with a fixed essence, one cannot give equal weight to two concepts from distinct categories as if the two had equal power in analysis. Accordingly, their relationship is not the major dynamic to explain the roots of a given socioeconomic formation. The problem is that, since the state is not a class category, it is not the antithesis of the bourgeoisie, too. Just as the relationship between the bourgeoisie and the state (and its “class fragment”) has not led to the decline of the empire (Göçek, 1996), it has not created the economy of a nascent nation-state either. They are not a couple whose economic relations shape history.

It is the mistake Toprak falls into. He attributes so much explanatory power to the contestation between the state and bourgeoisie –representing dissimilar and disparate categories– that their relation ultimately seems a class duality behind all the era's economic relations. From nuances –such as continuity Toprak draws between the Unionists and the Kemalist state–, I understand he uses the state as an umbrella primarily encompassing the Unionists. He explains all the economic relations in the 1908-18 period merely by contrasting the Unionists and the non-national bourgeoisie. It seems as if the state encompassing the Unionists was on the side that seizes all surplus value, and it was an actor granting it to either the national or the non-Muslim bourgeoisie. As he does not establish a proper framework of class and class

antagonism, however he uses class or class-related terms, Toprak's analysis seems free of class. It becomes, at most, a historical narrative in which 'interest groups' compete or collaborate. Thus, the struggle he draws between the state –embodied in the Unionists– and the bourgeoisie resembles a struggle between 'interest groups.' In such a liberal-lensed historical narrative, to the extent that he fortifies the separation of economy and politics, the state and class formations become separated, too. As the state-class formation relationship becomes weakened, Toprak's narrative comes close to a specific understanding of the state that he conceptualizes as free of social relations of production, which is a state that only a liberal historical narrative would envisage. Such an evaluation cannot properly grasp the differing power and competence of the bourgeoisie and the state and their positions in the appropriation of surplus. He evaluates the Unionist economic policies against the non-Muslim bourgeoisie as a state policy purely and simply oriented towards the rise of the Muslim bourgeoisie as a class against the non-Muslim one. Yet, it is correct to use predominantly the non-Muslim vs. national bourgeoisie contrast –he assumes the latter backed by the state and the Unionists– in explaining the economic leitmotiv of the era as if non-Muslim and national bourgeoisies were on the opposite side of the relations of production –without the one between the bourgeoisie and working classes. It is my point that one cannot read the years following WW1 through the lenses of the NET attributing the principal economic dynamic to the conflict between the Unionist-backed national and the non-Muslim bourgeoisie. It is indeed a mere intra-class conflict or, at most, a conflict among "interest groups." So, Toprak narrates the history through class-free assumptions, despite his concern for class.

In analyzing the "liberal" era (1908-14) or view, it may be plausible to be class-free. One can argue that the "liberal" era would be class-free anyway. However, it was class-free even after 1913-14, following which the Toprak assumes the National Economy to be in full effect. Then, a question arises: if he evaluates even the National Economy –which he related with the full establishment of capitalism– through liberal class-free lenses, how do we know where is the line dividing the "liberal" (1908-13) and the "national" (1913-18) periods? Or one should ask: Is there really a line between the "national" and the "liberal" contrary to the NET's assumptions? The main argument

of this thesis is based on the non-existence of such a line. Both periods and views – better to revise as *laissez-faire* and protectionism– are liberal, in fact.

The economic sphere that Toprak puts under isolation from the political sphere becomes the armor of capitalism. Although politics and political actors may change after WWI, the economic road to capitalism remains the same. Hence, the separation of economy and politics in the Ottoman context guarantees the survival of capitalist relations of production. I emphasize not only the separation of the economic dimension of capitalism from its political dimension but also the separation of actors of the economy from actors of politics. In the second half of the 1908-18 period, when Toprak even says the first steps of a nation-state to accompany capitalism, actors of the nation-state were hardly actor in the economy. It is impossible to see any Unionist names he included in the ranks of the bourgeoisie. Then, even in the era when state-politics convergence is at the highest level, the economy and politics accompany each other but as separate entities.

The economy-politics separation one more major problem: a problem in his specific understanding of capitalism and also liberalism (A. E. Akyol, 2022). He regards capitalism only as an economic matter related to capitalist accumulation while disregarding its social and political dimensions. To the extent that he restricts capitalism to a mere economic matter, he renders it free of exploitation, appropriation and dispossession or its repercussions on social and political life. He embraces the liberal valorization of capitalism as something progressive, enriching and modernizing. He overlooks its deeper roots in the Ottoman territory and limits it to specific historical moments. Again, silence dominates his narrative: Disregarding prior steps of capitalism in the 18-19th century, Toprak does not conceptualize capitalism as a process within its relationality. Such a view of capitalism misleads his understanding of liberalism, the state, the working classes and the bourgeoisie. As he regards capitalism predominantly in relation to capital accumulation as a mere economic matter, he looks at the National Economy era (1914-18) and relates it to capitalism due to the seemingly new accumulation of the national bourgeoisie. Then, the remaining “liberal” age (1908-14) and Ottoman liberalism emerged from capitalism. The

coupling of capitalism only with the national gives the impression that capitalism contrasts with liberalism. The “era of capitalism begins” only through “national” steps. This is the primary source of his mistaken separation between the “liberal” and the “national.” Only based on his understanding of capitalism and liberalism, devoid of capitalist content, the “liberal” and the “national” can become detached from each other. Thus, based on an artificial and liberally loaded distinction, one can divide the 1908-18 period into two exclusive periods as “liberal” and “national”, while disregarding both being liberal.

After elaborating on the economic-politics disjunction problem, I came to the second problem. Toprak’s establishment of the main contradiction either between the state and the bourgeoisie or between the national and the non-Muslim bourgeoisie has repercussions extending to the question of who the subject of Ottoman history is. I question whether lower classes are actor of history in the NET. Toprak’s narrative with rare references to the rest of the society gives the impression of the disappearance of all actors but given dualities. Now, I open the issue a little bit more. I hope his liberally based assumptions I show would enable to question presuppositions of his separation between the “liberal” and the “national”.

Toprak seems to have already driven the people out of the sphere of the state –let alone accept them as a part of the state being an arena of struggle. Only when dynamics among the state, the national and the non-Muslim bourgeoisie cannot explain the historical flow, they come to the agenda. Yet, when they are in question, Toprak deals with the events related to them within their singularity. Namely, these events seem spectacular occurrences to happen a few times in history. Their interrupting participation in history constitutes an exception restricted to a couple of movements like the labor movements of 1908, as if they had just started in 1908 without prior steps. Even when working classes get to the stage of history, Toprak does not put them in a class position by naming them always *mavnacı*, *salapuryacı*, *hamal*, *ekmekçi*, *arabacı* and so forth, but not worker or laborer.

While this shows hesitation in calling a prominent group an actor in his analysis, let a

class, it also refers to a problem in his definition of the working classes. He has a class image in his mind that he precisely looking for it, while analyzing Ottoman history. Toprak assigns the existence of classes to historical moments such as the transition to the nation-state in 1923; thus, he ignores sociopolitical changes and class dynamics before these moments. He looks for a class consciousness to be able to call them as a class but cannot find it. Accordingly, in the *National Economy in Turkey*, he renders class formation and capitalism an economic matter related to capital accumulation and nation-state formation –rather than being an issue of appropriation of surplus value and relations of production–, which overlaps with the liberal valorization of capitalism. Then, the relation between the appropriator and those whose surplus value is appropriated becomes absent. The disregard for this relationship results in the underemphasis on inequality, domination and exploitation embedded in class relations.

As Toprak establishes the contradiction either between the bourgeoisie and the state or between the national bourgeoisie and the non-Muslim bourgeoisie, there remains no room for the real one between the bourgeoisie and working classes. As he establishes a false contradiction, the working classes seem not to react to the National Economy.

Toprak who reduces the state to a mere administrative machine and a “triumph of concealment” (Abrams, 1988, p. 77) enables the concealment of exploitative and appropriative liberal practices in which working classes inescapably participate. Then, the sphere of the state becomes free of the working classes. All the changes, reforms or policies stem from the state. It becomes a ‘project’ put into practice by a group of enlightened men of the state. The rest whose participation never shapes the policy basically ‘receives’ the given. The ‘group interests’ of only the bourgeoisie and the CUP –rather than the ‘class interest’ of the bourgeoisie and the working classes– dominate politics. The history becomes the history written above.

Nevertheless, the National Economy is not a ‘project’ imposed above and received from the rest. It stems from economic and moral unrest in society due to the devastating

effects of WW1. As Çetinkaya (2015, p. 29) highlights, it is not a mere invention of nationalist intellectuals or a policy of state elites but a social movement involving different societal actors. Actors other than the governmental officials and the bourgeoisie are not passive recipients of the National Economy. In fact, this is a necessary outcome of the historical conditions of the era. The 1908 Revolution gave a new impetus to mass movements that promoted mass mobilization (Çetinkaya, 2004, p. 31). This refers not only to new techniques of administration invented by the Ottoman elite to recent political conditions but also to mutual interaction between elites and masses, too (2004, p. 16). Accordingly, the state and the National Economy mean an area in which mass mobilizations take place. Working classes within this area may not have directly participated in the policymaking process as directly as the Unionists do. Yet, they may have revealed their interests in disguise of national sentiments. But this situation never erases them from the arena of the state and National Economy. They are the real actors of history who neither unconsciously adopt the National Economy nor unconditionally submit to it. They read the policy from their own eyes and act accordingly. Hence, the National Economy is not either a pure class policy in the service of the bourgeoisie. However, it appears so, since the policy represents a sort of manipulation of class contradiction (A. E. Akyol, 2022, p. 209). Considering that it formed through social relations of production just as the state itself, the very National Economy is not something above and outside the society (2022, p. 368); thus, the National Economy cannot be assumed to passivate societal actors other than the Unionists or the bourgeoisie, which is the error Toprak makes. Once again, rather than his talking, silence shapes the analysis. The absence of societal actors, especially, working classes in the ordinary flow of history gives the impression that Toprak reserves the field of politics for the CUP and governmental actors who either cooperate with or contradict the bourgeoisie. As he associates the National Economy with the rise of the Unionists, the other actors that enable the emergence of the National Economy have only secondary importance. Then, the National Economy policies of the CUP seem to serve particularly and exclusively to the bourgeoisie. The participation of Ottoman workers in the formation of the National Economy, for instance, appears to be a matter of obedience rather than an articulation of class contradiction under national fanaticism, as in the instance of *Averof Zirhlisi* (A. E.

Akyol, 2022, p. 210). The National Economy and politics become separated from other societal actors.

One major source of exclusion of societal actors from the historical narrative is the evaluation of the “national” against the “liberal” and accordingly the overlap of the “national” with an exclusionary content. Toprak assumes that beneficiaries of the National Economy exclusively were those who have an interest in the “national” in the face of the “liberal.” The National Economy refers to favoring the protection of “national” interests against “liberal” imperial ones. The National Economy seems special to the national bourgeoisie and a Unionist group buttressing it. Yet, Toprak misses that the National Economy is not a mere movement of those who benefit from the “national” –not of the Unionists or the bourgeoisie– but of all societal actors. Hence, the participation of different societal actors in the policy opens to questioning its “national” emphasis. The oppressed segments of society who do not care much about “national” interests took part in the policy in accord with their interests in the disguise of nationalist sentiments. To illustrate, dock workers supported the insurrection against the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina to which reactions the existing literature evaluates as a start of the National Economy. Similarly, women searched for ways of contributing the 1908 boycott⁶. Likewise, in following years women participated in associations like *Müdafaa-ı Hukuk-ı Nisvan Cemiyeti* which served not only the supply of labor force in the absence of men by encouraging women to participate in the workforce but also enabled their economic independence (Toprak, 2014, p. 19). Likewise, *Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyeti* did not only ensure the energy of the nascent National Economy in war conditions; it necessarily engaged in the issue of subsistence and even survival of women (Karakışla, 2015).

Then we need to take into account interests disguised under the veil of National Economy. It is a liberal policy shaped through the participation of diverse actors and classes, so carries internal class contradictions and alliances. Each heterogeneous class

⁶ Meclis-i Tetkikat-ı Şer'iyye Başkatibi Said, “Makale-yi Mahsuse”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 02.11.1908; Fatma Mergube, “İttihad Edelim”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 26.10.1908; Fatma Mergube, “İslam Kadınları ve Moda” *Beyanü'l Hak*, 30.11.1908; “Kadınlar Boykotaja Niçin Ehemmiyet Vermiyorlar”, Köylü, 06.12.1908.

becomes a part of the National Economy and takes advantage of it. Then, it is not either an instrument of the bourgeoisie through which bourgeois relations grew fortified. Just like the state itself, the National Economy is an area of struggle in which different classes and interests compete. While Toprak largely stresses its bourgeois side and the exclusionary coalition of the national bourgeoisie and the Unionists, societal actors find a way to assert their interests.

The exclusion of societal actors from historical narrative is also related to a rooted opinion in the literature Toprak also shares: the civil society-state distinction. Having aware that there are various approaches to civil society, I adopt the conceptualization of civil society in the broadest sense as a sphere of individuals, liberties and private property. In the separation, one detaches civil society from the political sphere, and equates the latter with the state. To the extent that it is so, one conceptualizes the state as an area of oppression and obligations. Yet, there is a point overlooked: At the analytical level, this distinction is an outcome of the abstraction process, i.e., insulation of a concept from external relations for analytical purposes. One abstracts civil society and state from the social reality and conceptualizes it but mistakenly treats two upshots of the abstraction process as the reality itself. Likewise, Toprak (1985a) assumes a contrast between the two. He considers civil society to be under the political domination of the omnipotent state. Then, there exist two contrasting claims: First, state and civil society are separate entities. Second, in the Ottoman context, except for a brief period after 1908, the two have mostly overlapped. The crucial point is that they overlap but still be two separate entities of which the relationship is an inter-relation, not an intra-relation.

Where state and civil society become separate and accordingly the author engages in writing the history of the state, non-state actors become not accredited in the historical narrative (Çetinkaya, 2004, p. 24) or pushed out of the ordinary course of history. Once again, the state stands in a central position, while civil society on the opposite side. However, I assert the contrary of Toprak's claim: Civil society does not emerge in spite of the state but takes a shape along with the state. The separation is empirically impossible due to the impracticability of distinguishing civil society from the state

(2004, p. 24). The 1908 Revolution itself is an illustrative example that proves how civil society and the state feed on each other. On the one hand, the revolution promotes civil society by curbing the sphere of influence of the Hamidian state. On the other hand, “different ethnic, cultural, occupational, class-based groups” whom themselves emerge from the very civil society “attempts to destroy the state structure following the revolution” (Kansu, 2017, p. 367). The retreat of the state did not end up with the victory of civil society. As I explain in the next section, Kamil Pasha government did not take an opposing position against the popular mobilization of the 1908 Boycott. Contrary, as civil society expanded, new governmental practices expanded, too. Civil society flourished along with state. The issue now was not the right to use legitimate force or a divine rule but public opinion. Hence, the new basics of the state necessarily incited state intervention and empowered civil society to attain legitimation.

Then, historical reality does not necessarily overlap with his separation. It is an ideological choice and a liberally loaded distinction stressing civil society as a distinct entity in the face of a Leviathan state. When one approves this distinction, the state accordingly becomes “the political icing in the economic cake” as separate from economic relations in civil society, while one forgets it is the “most important ingredient” and “essential relation of bourgeois society” (Sayer & Corrigan, 1987, p. 73). Unlike Toprak, one cannot assume the state constructs civil society, but state and civil society are constructed together. Hence, the civil society-state separation which lies under Toprak’s view refers not only to an impossibility but also to a particular conceptualization of the state, which is the liberal state.

The significance of Toprak’s implicit state-civil society separation relying on a liberal conceptualization is its disclosure that he evaluates the “liberal” and the “national” from his liberal eyes. Then, there remains no considerable difference between the underlying premises of the two views or periods. How the state-civil society relations are in the “liberal” period (1908-13) does not seem different from the ones in the “national” period (1913-18). The extent of the state-civil society separation may change from one period to another, but the presence of this separation is absolute for both the liberal and the national view/periods. Likewise, the position of the state –and

its Unionist ‘individuals’– in the face of working classes does not change based on either “liberal” or “national” actors in Toprak’s periods. There is no substantial difference between the two regarding economic relations, too. While one suggests protectionist policies, the other does *laissez-faire* in the way of capitalist relations. As he attributes only an economic meaning to capitalism, restricts capitalism to the national and ignores the relation of capitalism to liberalism, Toprak misses out that the positive and savior mission he attributes to the national does not save it from being liberal. Based on a liberal conception of the state-civil society relation which lies behind Toprak’s exclusion of societal actors, one cannot conceptualize particular periods exclusively as “liberal” or “national.” Both are liberal. Only as long as one conceptualizes state and civil society as external to each other as Toprak does, can one speak of a “National” Economy in a sense of contrast to the “liberal” one.

CHAPTER 3

THE 1908 OTTOMAN BOYCOTT

3.1. Relative Silence of the Literature on the Boycott

Scholars of the conventional literature evaluate the late Ottoman economic thought within an oscillation between the “liberal” and the “national” views that correspond respectively to the 1908-13/14 and the 1913/14-18 periods. The 1908 Ottoman Boycott that took place at the very beginning of the “liberal” economy period is not exempt from this oscillation. Most scholars studying the 1908 Boycott evaluated the boycott as an extension of the National Economy. It seemed one of the initial steps of the creation process of a national bourgeoisie that has not emerged yet. They regarded the National Economy as distinct from free market capitalism. Thus, the National Economy seemed exempt from “liberalism”, i.e., an alternative to it. On the other hand, such an evaluation of the boycott has apparently contradicted the conventional conceptualization of the “liberal” 1908-13/14 and the “national” 1913/14-18 periods. Yet, no scholar has explained how and why a boycott, labeled “national”, could emerge at the very start of the “liberal” period of the economy.

For the reason of the disharmony between its timing and the leitmotiv attached to it, there is a relative silence in the literature as to the boycott, though few scholars repeatedly emphasize its importance in terms of the upcoming “national” economy. Nevertheless, analyses of these limited number of scholars rarely say more than a couple of words on its “national” significance, while not unfolding the ambiguous content of the “national.” They regard its “national” side as taken-for-granted and construct their study on this premise. As a result, a discrepancy emerges between the significance of the boycott that scholars of this limited literature attach to and the space that the boycott takes up in the literature. I assert that both relative silence on the

boycott and its “national” label contrary to its “liberal” timing are not a coincidence. Indeed, scholars are so loaded with conventional ideas –I have summarized under the title of the NET in the previous chapter– on the “liberal” and the “national” that they have missed out occurrence of a “national” boycott at the dawn of the “liberal” economy period.

Nonetheless, there are studies analyzing the scale, flow of events, participants, effects and consequences of the 1908 Ottoman Boycott. There also exist investigations illuminating the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria or the independence of Bulgaria. However, there is a limited number of studies relying directly on popular reactions to the given incidents. Since my focus is not the abovementioned annexation or the independence but the boycott, I intentionally overlook studies concentrating exclusively on ‘Ottoman reaction to the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina’ or ‘independence of Bulgaria,’ ‘Ottoman-Austria relations,’ ‘the importance of Austria on the Ottoman Economy’ and so forth, such as Filiz Çolak’s (2020) and Hasan Ünal’s (1998) articles. I also rule out studies that are silent on the economic aspect of the boycott as this thesis stresses its economic theme. Roderic H. Davison’s (1990), Zafer Gölen’s (1998) and Kudret Emiroğlu’s (1994) studies are three of such analyses. Yet, they are still beneficial in understanding the flow of events, actors and the historical environment.

I evaluate the existing literature on the boycott through two groups of questions that do not have a mere ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer. First, whether the author links the boycott exclusively with the National Economy or an equivalent concept is initially significant to understand on which side the author places the boycott in the seeming “liberal”-“national” duality. To this aim, it is crucial to understand whether the scholar employs the National Economy predominantly in contrast to a “liberal” alternative. In the case that the writer equates the boycott with the “national” side of the duality –overall dominant in Ottoman economic history– analyzing whether s/he loads it an emancipatory and anti-imperialist content is essential to comprehend what the author means by the “national.” Second, asking in what ways the scholar conceptualizes the relationship between the state, bourgeoisie and people is significant to understand the

motivation that leads the scholar to place the boycott under the National Economy. This relationship reveals the historical premises of the scholar hidden in the description of the boycott and discloses the extent to which they have a propensity to subscribe to the NET. To illustrate, given the conventional NET view that political and economic policies show continuity from the Young Turks to the later CUP cadres, understanding the state-bourgeoisie-people relationship can clarify if the writer assumes a certain level of parallelism between the economic leitmotiv of the boycott and the subsequent economic policies. My one argument is that the NET is the primary source of their evaluation of the boycott as a “national” movement in a way to reproduce the conventional distinction between the “liberal” and the “national” embedded in the Ottoman history of economic thought.

In the literature on the 1908 Ottoman Boycott, I have detected three distinct tendencies regarding the relationship between the boycott and the National Economy: the scholars (1) who link the boycott directly to the National Economy, (2) who do not attribute the boycott directly to the National Economy but an equivalent concept and (3) who associate the boycott conceptually with neither the “liberal” economy nor the “national” economy.

There are also studies of more senior scholars who do not directly investigate the 1908 Boycott but place it in a broad historical narrative. Since their direct focus is not the boycott, I do not include them in any of the three categories. Yet, due to their strong influence on later studies, I need to mention them. While Fahir Armaoğlu (1997) and Niyazi Berkes (2012) just touch upon the issue, Feroz Ahmad (1986, 1999) and Sina Akşin (1980) consider it more deeply, albeit in a piecemeal way. Ahmad directly uses the concept National Economy. Akşin, on the other hand, does not directly relate the boycott to the National Economy but to a concept similar to the National Economy, which is “economic Turkism” (1980, p. 280). In line with general tendency of the given literature, none of them delineates the boycott as a liberal instance. On the contrary, as Ahmad states, thanks to the boycott, “the economic dimension of the political conflict between the Unionists and the Liberals manifested itself” (1986, p. 32). To him, Liberals were different from the Unionists. Thus, just as senior names

mentioned, Ahmad shares the conventional division between the “liberal” and the other, i.e., the “liberal” and the “national.”

To Ahmad, the Austrian boycott was a part of the process of “promoting Muslim enterprise and entrepreneurs” like all the following boycotts in the face of “foreigners.” (1986, p. 110) In parallel to Ahmad who attributes a positive mission to the new economic model, Akşin (1980, p. 91) defines the boycott as “a mass movement with an economic content against an imperialist state.” Accordingly, the relationship that Akşin establishes between the boycott and the establishment of a native industry gives the same impression that the “national” mentality –brought to the agenda by the 1908 Boycott– is in a strict contrast to the previous one. Hence, considering the gist of their works, both authors rely on a strict contrast between the “liberal” and the “national.” Thus, one can easily evaluate Akşin and Ahmad as two names of the boycott literature being the most concordant with the NET, who constitute possibly the source of the literature assessing the boycott in line with the main NET arguments. For both names, moreover, the boycott was primarily a matter of national sentiments organized by the CUP. While allowing room for the impact of the popular support for the boycott, they largely emphasize the role of the Unionists. Workers were actors hauled by the CUP into the boycott rather than being actors consciously acting in line with their class interests. The Unionists, which both Akşin and Ahmad regard as the *de facto* constant core of the state from the 1908 Revolution to the Republican Era, were the leading actor of the boycott narrative.

I have summarized senior scholars, especially Ahmad and Akşin, who merely touch on the boycott, since they have constituted the foundation of the evaluations assessing the boycott exclusively with the National Economy. Both these scholars and three groups of scholars I deal with below share a common point: None of them considers that the boycott promoted free market capitalism; thus, none of them connects the boycott with the “liberal” economy. None of them even brings the word “liberalism” together with the boycott. In addition, none of them properly clarifies what “national” means in their writing. Apart from the problem that the “national” corresponds to both *milli* and *ulusal* in Turkish, the most frequently used word *milli* includes different

contents and connotations depending on the context, ranging from Ottomanism, Turkism and Islamism to their various combinations. Now, I move into the three approaches to the relationship between the 1908 Boycott and the National Economy. First, Doğan Çetinkaya (2004), Şule Sevinç Kişi (1996), Mehmet Emin Elmacı (1997a, 1997b, 2005) and Selim Ahmetoğlu (2022) evaluate the 1908 Ottoman Boycott as an instance of the National Economy. Yet, Çetinkaya, who makes the most comprehensive analysis of the boycott, differs from the three in several respects; thus, I need to review his study separately. Kişi, Elmacı and Ahmetoğlu all regard the boycott as a significant manifestation of the National Economy. According to Elmacı (2005), the economic awakening initiated by the 1908 Boycott developed into the National Economy policy in the WWI period. The boycott revealed the matter of *ulusallık* (national-ness) in the economy, which corresponds to the National Economy policy of the CUP (Kişi, 1996). The National Economy of which the boycott was a part has organized Muslim “*esnafs*” to ‘create’ a national bourgeoisie (Ahmetoğlu, 2022). After all, the 1908 Boycott that ushered in the following boycotts curbed the contribution of non-Muslims to the Ottoman economy, which in turn accelerated the retreat of non-Muslims from the economic sphere. Moreover, the merchants –Elmacı says most of them are Muslims– participating in the boycott received their “award” through the protection of the domestic bourgeoisie (2005). Non-Muslim merchants with strong relationships with the West were less reluctant to participate in the boycott. Furthermore, merchants who committees of boycott divulged for their violation of the boycott in İzmir were from either minorities or foreigners, which shows Muslim domination in the boycott (Kişi, 1996). From now on, “our” merchants would be the main actors in commercial relations.

She regards the boycott as “a first attempt in the character of uprising against imperialism (1996, p. 14). Then, Kişi attributes an emancipatory content to the boycott which ‘saves the country’ from imperial ties and “foreign” merchants. Elmacı (2005) goes further and equates the 1908 Boycott with the recent boycott against Italia for holding Abdullah Ocalan and the one against France. To him, in the 1908 Boycott as well, Ottomans were organized against an “external enemy,” which results from a strong “national” hatred stemming *only* from the Austrian occupation of a Muslim

Ottoman land. This is a curious interjection because it makes his argument that the National Economy and the boycott economically aimed the creation of national bourgeoisie void.

Because of the limitation of their texts, it is hardly possible to have a clear idea about whether they contrast the National Economy with the “liberal” one. Nevertheless, their emphasis on the novelty of the economic mentality prompted by the 1908 Boycott and also the positive mission they attribute to this ‘new’ economic understanding gives the impression that they have a distinction in their mind between the “liberal” and the “national.” Yet, none of three elaborates on the meaning of the “national”. Moreover, they employ the term in inconsistent meanings. Elmacı, for instance, uses it in relations to Islamism due to just occasional participation of non-Muslim merchants, while he also uses the term with ethnically Turkish references.

Lastly, all the three, while stressing the popular basis of the boycott, evaluate the boycott as an initiative of the Unionists. Porters, a primary group of actors, seem to participate in the boycott for their “national” sentiments rather than their class interests. Similarly, Kişi and Ahmetoğlu do not depict porters in the boycott as having a consciousness through which they strive to attain their class interests. Instead, they present workers and other participants of the boycott as isolated and free of class interests. In the same vein, although their description of Muslim and non-Muslim bourgeoisie –which they merely call “merchant”– may differ, they describe the bourgeoisie as independent of class interests and acting only through national sentiments. There is a picture, then, with three segments of the society in isolation: the Unionists, the bourgeoisie and the people. The top –i.e., the state and its bureaucrats– determines the actions of the below segments of the society. Overall, the first approach to the boycott represented by the three authors is the most compatible one with the National Economy Thesis (NET).

Although he agrees with Kişi, Elmacı and Ahmetoğlu on the identification of the boycott with the National Economy, Çetinkaya does not fully adhere to the NET. He has a relational perspective regarding the connections between the state (the CUP and

the government), the bourgeoisie and the people, which the NET does not. While he presents workers in the boycott as conscious actors who participated with specific aims, he also regards the boycott as a collective action of the Unionists, the people and merchants. Thus, neither the state nor the people appear outside the historical narrative. Unlike scholars mentioned above, Çetinkaya does not directly attribute an emancipatory and positive mission to the National Economy. He does not regard it as way out in the face of the imperialist aims of European countries, as Akşin (1980) claims. However, his approach to the “liberal”-“national” duality is still ambiguous. On the one hand, he does not necessarily place the National Economy against the previous “liberal” economy. In this sense, he takes the liberal dimension of the National Economy and of the boycott into consideration. He highlights, for instance, that the 1908 Boycott, which included “demands one could call core of National Economy”, always had a “respect for free trade (2004, p. 140). In addition, he describes the boycott as a “transition from principles of classical liberalism to *etatist* protectionist principles” (2004, p. 383). It is noteworthy in that he rectifies the problematic division between the “liberal” and the “national” as “classical liberal” and “protectionist.” This is an intervention that I agree with since such a statement provides space for deeming the “national” as liberal.

On the other hand, the contrast he draws between the National Economy and “classical liberalism”/ “economic liberalism”/ “liberalism” is so strict that the “liberal” and the “national” appear as irreconcilable. This strictness seems to stem from not emphasizing the liberal dimension of the “national” sufficiently. Hence, economic policies seem exclusively “liberal” or “national”, as well as specific actors. He identifies, for instance, Cavid Bey solely with liberalism. Having done so, his adding of “classical” or “economic” before “liberalism” does not prove to be sufficient to remove the contrast between the “liberal” and the “national.” Since Çetinkaya considers the 1908 Boycott as a manifestation of the National Economy and since there is considerable literature evaluating the Ottoman-Turkish economic history within a duality between “national” and “liberal”, his more refined analysis contributes to the duality between the “liberal” and the “national”. Çetinkaya’s usage of “national” should also be considered at this point. Çetinkaya clarifies what he means by the

“national” and the National Economy in another book (2015) with several examples but he does not do so in the *1908 Ottoman Boycott*. One can think that he uses the “national” of the National Economy in relation to Ottomanism based on the general argument of the book (Çetinkaya, 2004, pp. 47; 226; 382) and also his reasoning in another book (2015, pp. 18–19). Yet still the use of “national” contains two problems. Firstly, in the *1908 Ottoman Boycott*, Çetinkaya underemphasizes the immanence of a level of Islamic content in Turkish nationalism. Although he strictly underlines the relation of Islam to what we know as Turkish nationalism in his subsequent writings (2023b), his argument that “National Economy is the economic dimension of the rising Turkish Nationalism” (2004, p. 133) in the previous work gives the impression that, while speaking of “Turkish Nationalism,” there exists a distinct kind of nationalism exclusively associated with Turkism. Secondly, even when he considers the National Economy as directly related to Ottomanism or Ottoman nationalism, the existence of *both* ethnically Turkish (Çetinkaya, 2004, p. 149) and Islamic references in the boycott –Çetinkaya mentions– renders restricting it to one current of thought impossible. While indeed highlighting the impracticability of dividing late Ottoman strands of thought (2015, 2023b), he hardly applies this remark to his early work on the boycott.

Overall, there emerges a dual picture in terms of the given duality between the “liberal” and the “national” and the boycott: On the one hand, similar to what I strive to do here he aptly draws the line between the ‘protectionist’ and ‘free-market’ views without restricting liberalism to the latter; on the other hand, Çetinkaya in his more detailed accounts contributes to the dichotomy between the “liberal” and the “national”. He is aware of the strangeness of a “national” boycott taking place at the dawn of a “liberal” period (2004, p. 133), yet he does not investigate this rigorously. Hence, a gap emerges in the relationship between the 1908 Boycott and the “national” economic leitmotiv of the era. Considering the compelling arguments in his later writings, one can conclude that this gap in the *1908 Ottoman Boycott* stems from the fact that Çetinkaya discussed the boycott movement principally from the perspective of “modern social movements”, but not the National Economy. As a result, the work in question does not need to question the National Economy at the conceptual level. This will hopefully be one of the contributions of this thesis.

So far, I have dealt with the first approach to the relationship between the 1908 Boycott and the National Economy. Second, Hasan Ünal (1992) and Erdal Yavuz (1978) do not directly employ the National Economy at the conceptual level but prefer alternative terms that correspond to the same idea. Yavuz relates the 1908 Boycott to “nationalness in economy” [“*ekonomide ulusallık*”] while Ünal uses “economic nationalism” with quite similar content. Although it is hard for each to figure out whether they use their concepts in strict contrast to liberalism, their emphases on the novelty of the era or the economic mentality they highlighted lead us to think so. A duality in economic mentality and policies still seems to exist between the old “liberal” and the new “national” ones. As in the first group of scholars— their missing emphasis on the liberalness of this seemingly novel economic thinking gives the impression of a duality to exist. Both attribute a positive content to the “national” economic model which they declare as different from the previous one. Yet, Yavuz does not uncover the meaning he implied by “nationalness” [*ulusallık*], “nationalistic” [*ulusçu*] and “national” [*ulusal*]. Thus, one cannot comprehend what the ‘new’ economy brought about by the boycott is.

Ünal (1992, pp. 138–139), in the same vein, asserts that the boycott enabled the CUP to practice “economic nationalism,” which could interrupt the foreign control over commerce and industry. While emphasizing the “foreigner” against whom “economic nationalism,” was on the agenda, Ünal does not clarify who the “foreigner” of his “economic nationalism” was. Thus, it seems ambiguous whether one should understand by “nationalism” either “Turkish nationalism ... tinged with notions of racial superiority and Turanism” (1992, pp. 38–39) or another kind of nationalism loaded with “anti-Europeanism deriving from a belief that the Powers were out to destroy the political independence of the Ottoman Empire, the Moslem community and the Turkish nation” (1992, p. 48). While Ünal and Yavuz converge in several respects, they differ in the room they separated for the lower classes. While Yavuz assigns a significant role to the mobilization of masses, including the lighterman [*mavnacı*], boatman [*kayıkçı*], porters [*hamallar*] and the people mobilized by the CUP, Ünal evaluates the “annexation crisis” more from a strict institutional perspective in which the lower classes can find a limited space, if any. Accordingly,

whereas Ünal does not establish even a relationship between the 1908 Boycott, different actors of the boycott and “economic nationalism,” Yavuz adopts a more relational approach and includes the bourgeoisie and the workers in the boycott narrative, albeit still limited. Yavuz is also aware that “economic nationalism” was an outcome of “the relationship between cadres of the constitutional monarchy and certain segments of the capital” (1978, p. 172).

Third, Donald Quataert’s book section represents the last category of three approaches to the boycott. As he directly examines the 1908 Boycott, not mere diplomatic responses or its indirect influences, and he does not exclusively focus on its non-economic aspects, I put his work into the third category. He attaches the boycott neither to the “national” nor to the “liberal” economy. He does not even claim a ‘transition’ to occur between two economic models. As he does not rely on a duality, there is nothing to call the “liberal” that most scholars put against the “national”. Likewise, there is no “national” model to which one is to assign a positive meaning in the face of ‘imperial’ exploitative aims of great powers. At most, Quataert says that the boycott revealed the vulnerable position of the Ottoman Christians, who depended on Western economy but living in a Muslim society. From his perspective, there mainly existed a process of replacement between Muslim and non-Muslim merchants, which would reflect on the following boycott attempts. While emphasizing the instigating role of the Unionists, Quataert also includes workers –lightermen and porters– and merchants into his historical narrative. In all these respects, his narrative of the 1908 Ottoman Boycott is the most compatible with the approach of my thesis and obviously the least compatible with the NET. The only points to add is that he does not place much emphasis on the articulation of the boycott into liberal-capitalist economic relations, which is an outcome of his descriptive narrative of the boycott.

3.2. The Story of the 1908 Boycott

3.2.1. First Sparks of the Boycott

In this part, I describe the 1908 Ottoman Boycott. I aim to elucidate the flow of events,

actors of the boycott and various reactions of these actors to the boycott. Since the focus of this thesis is not the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina to Austria-Hungary, the independence of Bulgaria or the Ottoman bureaucratic reactions to two affairs, I focus on the boycott movement that took place in response to Bulgaria's and Austria-Hungary's policies in the society. The boycott lasted approximately 4-5 months from the beginning of October onwards.

In the story of the boycott, I have grounded my narrative on newspapers called *Servet-i Fünun*, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, *Ahenk*, *Köylü*, *Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye Mecmuası*, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, *Beyanü'l Hak*, *Karagöz* and *Ahenk*. I have also utilized three *Ticaret Layihası* (numbers 2, 3 and 4) to find out the repercussions of the boycott on the commercial arena. I have preferred these newspapers because scholars have rarely included them in their analyses of the boycott despite their significance. I have incorporated *Servet-i Fünun*, for instance, since no scholar studying the 1908 Boycott has ever examined it, although it is the newspaper that ignited the first sparks of the boycott. Nevertheless, there are newspapers that one or two scholars analyzed but I have dwelled on them again because of their significance.

The 1908 Boycott took place over a wide area. Although mapping the boycott necessitates another study on a broader scale, I think only names of the places in which the boycott occurred would help the reader imagine the prevalence of the boycott. The places I have come across in primary sources are Selanik, Trabzon, Yafa, Beyrut, Halep, Kahire, Şam, Trieste, Kavala, Dedeğaç, Fiume, Manisa, Denizli. Yet, according to newspapers, the boycott spread across places outside the Ottoman territory like Mısır, Suriye, Hindistan, Sırbistan, Karadağ and Romanya. Yet, its prevalence does not mean a constant timeline that has recurred everywhere. The intensity, the integration of actors and the goods boycotted changed to a certain extent based on socioeconomic balances of the given place. Therefore, I have restricted my investigation to İstanbul and İzmir in terms of primary sources. Nonetheless, I have incorporated news from other areas such as Selanik, Trabzon, Halep, Trieste and so on to the extent that they would help the reader to understand my utilization of the boycott and its details.

On October 5, 1908, Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina which was under its *de facto* control since the Treaty of Berlin (1878). The enunciation of Bulgarian independence followed it (Quataert, 2017a). Thus, public opinion regarded the two incidents as strictly associated. It was the common view that Austria-Hungary made Bulgaria an instrument of its own ambitions. The former was the natural “companion” of the latter.⁷ The rage of masses directed primarily towards the Austrian annexation. Despite the historical significance of Bulgarian land (Çetinkaya, 2004; Ünal, 1992), the larger trade relationship with Austria-Hungary made the latter the focus of the Ottoman Boycott. Austria-Hungary violated the Treaty of Berlin to which masses (or whom newspapers call masses) demanded observance.⁸ Bosnia-Herzegovina had belonged to “us” while under the interim control of “others”.⁹ Nevertheless, even those who strictly opposed the Austrian occupation were aware that Austria-Hungary had *de facto* control over it. The only difference of Bosnia-Herzegovina from an Austrian land was that it never sent a member to the Austrian assembly. Then, the annexation was not surprising for Ottomans (Çetinkaya, 2004). Both the Austrian annexation and the Bulgarian independence have meant an infringement of an international set of rules which, however, had already been infringed several times before. Both attempts never aimed to alter the *status quo* (Ünal, 1992). Nonetheless, the fact that the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Bulgarian independence took place just following the 1908 Revolution in which a new regime of constitutional monarchy attained power must have surprised masses. Therefore, newspapers wrote that masses evaluated attempts of Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria as directed against the new regime of constitutional monarchy.¹⁰

Less than two days after the declaration of the annexation, the boycott movement commenced to spread among Ottoman subjects. Although an article in *Servet-i Fünun* titled “An Instrument for the Peaceful Protection of Rights” [*Sulhen Müdaafa-yı*

⁷ “Bulgaristan İlan-ı İstiklalı”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 07.10.1908; “Bulgarlar”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 26.10.1908.

⁸ “Bulgaristan İşleri”, *Köylü*, 08.10.1908.

⁹ “Mesail-i Hazıra-yı Dahiliye”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 10.10. 1908.

¹⁰ “Harb-i İktisadi”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 18.10.1908.

Hukukun Bir Vasıtası]¹¹ was the first article on the boycott to call Ottomans to boycott Austrian and Bulgarian goods and services (Çetinkaya, 2004; Quataert, 2017a), a series of articles written by Hüseyin Cahid in *Tanin* incited the first sparks of the boycott largely. In his article, Horasani, the author of the article in *Servet-i Fünun* whose genuine name is Ubeydullah Efendi (Çetinkaya, 2004, p. 103), called Ottomans to “boycott goods of our enemies” and added to “take the oath within serenity not to buy goods of those who aim at injuring “our national constitutional government”. In line with the unfettered sociopolitical environment of the 1908 Revolution, the press that covered the issue continuously fanned the flames of popular reactions. Newspapers that announced the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary and the Bulgarian independence, as an assault on either the Ottoman *millet*, Islam or both of them, immediately mobilized the masses. The press drew such a provocative picture that one who read a newspaper at that time can forget that Bosnia-Herzegovina had already been under the actual control of Austria-Hungary for a long time.

Moreover, the rage of the masses intensified when realized that the Ottoman state was unable to undertake a military attack (Quataert, 2017a). However, on the one hand, the boycott –rather than a battle– seemed to be the only way to follow. On the other hand, the press disguised the popular preference for boycott under the name of war. In other words, the boycott appeared as a war. Its narration in the newspapers was similar to an account of a military operation. Austria-Hungary was our “enemy,”¹² and the boycott was a “weapon”.¹³ Accordingly, “economic war” [*harb-i iktisadi, muharebe-yi iktisadiye*¹⁴] or similar terms like “trade war” [*ticaret muharebesi*¹⁵] became as prevalent as the term “boycott” itself. Other names given to the Ottoman reaction such

¹¹ Horasani, “Sulhen Müdafaa-yı Hukukun Bir Vasıtası”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 07.10.1908.

¹² Horasani, “Sulhen Müdafaa-yı Hukukun Bir Vasıtası”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 07.10.1908; “Gazeteler ve Boykotaj”, *Köylü*, 06.12.1908; “Boykotaj Cemiyetinden...”, *Köylü*, 05.12.1908; “Boykotaj”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

¹³ “Gazeteler ve Boykotaj”, *Köylü*, 06.12.1908

¹⁴ “Memleketimiz Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı Muharebe-yi İktisadiye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 06.12.1908; “Avusturya Emtia-yı Sınaiyesinin Adem-i İştirası”, *Ahenk*, 13.10.1908.

¹⁵ “Harb-i İktisadi” *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 18.10.1908.

as *aforoz*¹⁶, *adem-i iştirâ*¹⁷ and *mukataa*¹⁸ were less frequent than the names emphasizing the boycott as a war. Those who were aware that boycott is not equivalent to a battle engaged in proving that a boycott would be more devastating for Bulgaria and especially Austria-Hungary than a battle¹⁹. Ottomans had a close relationship with Austrians; thus, avoiding Austrian goods would be a severely damage Austrian merchants and Austrian state.²⁰

Although the Unionists had a considerable effect on the continuation of the boycott, the extent of their influence in its outbreak is still ambiguous. According to Ahmad (1999), the first reactions to the current situation in the Balkans had a religious tone. The independence and the annexation created a proper opportunity for those who were unsatisfied with the new regime of 1908 to attack it. Had the conviction that the new constitutional order was incompetent in managing external affairs that the caliph would, *Kör Ali* and his companions walked to the Palace²¹ on October 7. Those who thought that the new government failed even in “the first serious crisis of the new regime” (Ahmad, 1999, p. 42) attempted to turn an external affair into a matter to evaluate the capability of the constitutional order. The annexation appeared to them as an insult to Islam or the Sultan (Quataert, 2017a). From Ahmad’s (1999), Akşin’s (1980) and Yavuz’s (1978) perspective, the CUP undertook the role to orientate masses towards a movement as a reaction to seemingly “reactionary” and “feudal-minded” figures who adopted the boycott (Akşin, 1980, p. 90) like *Kör Ali* and they would like not to give up to them the leadership of movement that would be beneficial for their political aims. Apart from the uncertainty on the initiators of the boycott, “reactionaries” or the Unionists, which is a problematic division frequently resorted in

¹⁶ “Mektubat: Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı Edilen Aforozun...”, *Ahenk*, 30.10.1908

¹⁷ “Avusturya Emtia-yı Sınaiyesinin Adem-i İştirası”, *Ahenk*, 13.10.1908.

¹⁸ “Zübde-i Siyasiye”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 30.11.1908; “Zübde-i Siyasiye”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 21.12.1908.

¹⁹ “Muharebe Ne Demektir? Muharebeye Ne Gibi Şeyler Sebeb Olur...”, *Köylü*, 14.10.1908; Avusturya Emtia-yı Sınaiyesinin Adem-i İştirası”, *Ahenk*, 13.10.1908; “Paramızı Düşmanlarımıza Kazandırmayalım”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 15.11.1908.

²⁰ “Yine Ahalimize, Vatandaşlarımıza”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 09.10.1908.

²¹ “Mecnun Nümayişçilerin Tevkifi”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 09.10.1908.

the Late Ottoman literature, Elmacı (2005) claims that the merchants²² of Selanik were the first group in İstanbul to initiate the boycott.

In short, neither the existing literature nor newspapers of the era present a clear description of the origin of the boycott. This thesis makes an attempt to draw attention to two points that enable us to reevaluate the debate on the source of the boycott. Firstly, the boycott itself was subjected to a political struggle. Just as the state itself, the boycott was “historically constructed” (Abrams, 1988, p. 80) and could not have an unchanging core attributed to a specific group of actors. Thus, actors from different segments of the society attempted to grasp the leadership of the boycott by claiming their role in the origin of the 1908 Ottoman Boycott. Thus, one should not attribute the start of the boycott to a mere event, article or one sector of society. Second, such a struggle cannot be exempt from relations of subjection; thus, it cannot be external to people but “works through” people (Corrigan & Sayer, 1985, p. 180). Accordingly, a search for an ‘organizer’—either reactionaries, the Unionists or merchants— leads one to ignore masses who were angry enough to be a part of boycott without need for a group of organizers (Quataert, 2017a). No doubt, Unionists had interests to gain from the boycott just as Kamil Pasha government had. Both were in a politically vulnerable position. Lower classes, especially workers continued to follow their class interest after the 1908 Revolution. Hence, I consider the 1908 Boycott as an outcome of a struggle among the concerns and interests of different actors in the late Ottoman era.

There were four main groups of actors in the boycott (Quataert, 2017a) whose reactions differed from each other: (1) the grand vizier (After Kamil Pasha’s resignation on February 14, 1909, Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha took office) and his cabinet, (2) the Unionists, (3) the merchants and (4) workers including lightermen [*mavnacılar*], porters [*hamallar*], freight waggoners [*arabacılar*] and all those

²² In this chapter, I employ the words “merchant” as the Turkish equivalent of “*tüccar*”. However, as I have explained in the section “3.3.7. The Merchant and the *Esnaf* of the Boycott”, I use the term merchant in a way not to exclude *esnaf* due to the overlaps or transitions between the two. To remember, Zafer Toprak makes an implicit distinction between *esnaf* and merchant, defining the latter with its international “capitalist” connections while relating the former with the National Economy. As noted in Section 2 of this chapter, there is a considerable literature influenced by Toprak.

employed in the delivery of Austrian and Bulgarian goods and services. Yet, I should note that these categories are not mutually exclusive all the time. There were Unionist merchants or workers (Elmacı, 2005), for instance. The press was the cement gathering their differing demands and interests. There was a strong theme shared by all: Bulgaria and Austria-Hungary violated legal rights of domination, and Ottomans, incapable of engaging in a battle, had to undertake a boycott to take its revenge.

The attitude of Kamil Pasha's cabinet was hesitation. While it never offered open support for the boycott, it also refused to hamper boycotters as long as their rage did not directly aim at Kamil Pasha and its cabinet. He was aware that the Ottoman Empire held "a weak diplomatic hand" (Ünal, 1992, p. 117). The council of ministers sent a diplomatic note to the states that had signed the Treaty of Berlin before (Çetinkaya, 2004), while hoping to solve this foreign crisis with Bulgaria and Austria-Hungary without resort to weapons. The reactions of foreign states to the annexation and the independence were important for the cabinet. For Kamil Pasha, aware that the government did not have economic and military power to set about a battle, European powers' support meant that his hand would be more powerful at the diplomatic table.

Accordingly, the general attitude of European powers towards the current situation in the Balkans took up considerable space in the newspapers, especially in the first days of the boycott. An optimistic atmosphere was dominant. *Ahenk* wrote that the world of civilization condemned the acts of Bulgaria and Austria.²³ England constituted a special place in columns. It was "our English friend" whose goods are allowed to purchase.²⁴ In the case of the continuation of Austrian threats, the English fleet would help the Ottoman state.²⁵ Demonstrations celebrating English support in the first days of the boycott in front of the Embassy of England²⁶ was a manifestation of trust in the help of English state. Kamil Pasha government, which desired to retain European diplomatic support, sent a deed of protest to the ambassador of Austria (Çetinkaya,

²³ "Siyasiyat", *Ahenk*, 11.10.1908.

²⁴ Fatma Mergube, "İttihad Edelim", *Beyanü'l Hak*, 26.10c.1908.

²⁵ "Telgraflar", *Köylü*, 01.12.1908; "Devlet-i Osmaniye" *Servet-i Fünun*, 30.11.1908.

²⁶ "İngiltere Sefareti Önünde Nümayiş", *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 07.10.1908.

2004) and it hoped for the convening of an international conference. Yet, even holding a conference turned into a matter of contestation between officials of Austria-Hungary and Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman government insisted on convening a conference to prove its apparent preference for peace.²⁷ If a battle emerges between two countries, the irreconcilable attitude of Austrian officials would be responsible for the conflict. On the other hand, Austria-Hungary's abstention from any concession²⁸ and laying down the termination of the boycott as a condition for the start of the conference²⁹ resulted in a deadlock between the two parties, and a conference has never been convened (Çetinkaya, 2004).

3.2.2. Goods and Services of the Boycott and Early Demands for Economic Protectionism

The prominent call of boycotters was to avoid Bulgarian and especially Austrian goods and services. Their goods were “rotten” [çürük]³⁰ and “dirty” [pis]³¹. Ottomans with patriotism [hamiyet]³² who were never willing to “funnel money to Austria”³³ had to boycott Austrian products. Ottoman merchants should have never engaged in trading with Austrian goods. Purchasing them meant financing the equipment that may hit the chests of Ottomans, which was an unpardonable offense.³⁴ Newspapers also included warnings towards porters and lightermen not to transport Austrian goods or not to

²⁷ “Zübde-i Siyasiye”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 09.11.1908; “Zübde-i Siyasiye”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 19.11.1908.

²⁸ “Zübde-i Siyasiye”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 07.12.1908.

²⁹ “Zübde-i Siyasiye”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 14.11.1908; “Müzakere-i İtilaf”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 09.12.1908.

³⁰ “Sebat Edelim”, *Ahenk*, 17.10.1908; “Paramızı Düşmanlarımıza Kazandırmayalım”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 15.11.1908.

³¹ “Boykotaj”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

³² I have translated *hamiyet* to English as patriotism. Yet, I need to highlight that, different from patriotism, *hamiyet* includes a powerful emphasis on collective interests against individual ones. In the boycott context, for instance, one's adoption of *hamiyet* means avoiding Austrian goods and services even if it harms one's personal interests. Moreover, the relationship between patriotism and nationalism is much stronger than the one between *hamiyet* and nationalism.

³³ Fatma Mergube, “İttihad Edelim”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 26.10.1908.

³⁴ “Boykotaj”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908; “Paramızı Düşmanlarımıza Kazandırmayalım”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 15.11.1908.

employ on behalf of an Austrian company. Boycott calls must have become successful. Less than two weeks after the start of the boycott, a columnist wrote that he gladly witnessed the decline of demands for Austrian goods. This was the very “Ottomanness” [*Osmanlılık*] that our *millet*³⁵ has newly realized and appreciated.³⁶ “Because of this very “patriotism” accompanied by “union” [*ittihad*] and “alliance” [*ittifak*],” the foreman of freight waggoners stated, “no merchant could get his goods from customs administration yesterday in İzmir”.³⁷ Although there were those who thought that the boycott could not become successful up until mid-November (Quataert, 2017a), the people including merchants and especially workers –porters and lightermen, freight waggoners, watermen and so on– clung to the boycott soon after the first sparks of the boycott. Ottoman workers repeatedly refused to evacuate Austrian ships.

Among the goods boycotted, sugar was a significant import item. To Quataert (2017a), sugar constituted thirty percent of the total imports from Austria-Hungary around the time of the boycott. The consulate of Trieste, an economically significant city of Austria-Hungary, wrote that sugar was the most prominent commodity exported from Trieste to Ottoman territories.³⁸ The tacit boycott coalition among the Unionists, Kamil Pasha government, merchants and workers repeatedly promoted to avoid purchasing this strategically important product imported from Austria-Hungary. Newspapers publicly exposed merchants who have insistently ordered sugar from Austrian producers,³⁹ among which were Franko, Veroplu, Bardakoğlu and Nişli Hacı Ali Ağa. Merchants without “patriotism” supplied one thousand five hundred sacks of sugar from Austria-Hungary, and they handed out it to grocery stores under Russian sugar. Their action was against “patriotism”. Yet, there were also “patriot” merchants

³⁵ Since translation of *millet* as ‘nation’ can lead to confusion, especially in this section of the thesis I prefer to keep it in original version.

³⁶ “Sebat Edelim”, *Ahenk*, 17.10.1908.

³⁷ “Boykotaj Cemiyetinden: İzmir Yük Arabacıları Ustabaşısı Tarafından Gönderilen Tezkere”, *Köylü*, 05.12.1908.

³⁸ “Trieste Şehbenderliğinin 1909 Senesine Aid Ticaret Layihasıdır”, Ticaret Layihası No:4, 1909 (1327).

³⁹ “Aydın Vilayeti”, *Ahenk*, 01.11.1908.

returning the sugar to its producer upon realizing that the sugar dispatched to small districts of İzmir was Austrian-origin.⁴⁰ Some found out a more drastic solution: Sugar produced from the crop of grapes could substitute for Austrian sugar.⁴¹ The *helva esnaf* of Gördüs district attempted to make their *helva* of sugar obtained from home grapes. Moreover, the people of Gördüs appreciated and gladly purchased these *helvas*. In the name of the Boycott Committee of Gördüs, an anonymous author presented his hope it to be a specimen for others. Around the same week, another newspaper discussed substituting the sugar obtained from watermelon for the sugar produced from beet and sugar cane.⁴²

Not only merchants but also Ottoman workers persistently participated in the boycott of Austrian sugar. Porters have rejected even the evacuation of Greek ships that might belong to Austria in the ports of Samsun, İnebolu, Trabzon and Ordu (Emiroğlu, 1994). Similarly, freight waggons dumped sacks full of sugar in the middle of a street that they had unknowingly loaded up.⁴³ Yet, to overcome such trade disasters caused by porters and lightermen, merchants resorted to various ways like deceiving customers by claiming that Austrian sugar originated in another European country (Kişi, 1996).⁴⁴ They became worried that the boycott of Austrian sugar they traded would bear disruptive results for themselves. Accordingly, some merchants said that they offered to the market their stocked sugar which they had imported before the boycott so that the Ottoman people could not be obliged to purchase the existing sugar in the market at even higher price (Emiroğlu, 1994). On the other hand, a search for a more permanent solution continued in Ottoman public opinion. From mid-October onwards, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi* –a prominent pro-protectionist newspaper on the

⁴⁰ “Aydın Vilayeti”, *Ahenk*, 12.11.1908.

⁴¹ “Gave Gazetesine: Gördüs Boykotaj Cemiyetinden”, *Gave*, 15 Ocak 1909.

⁴² “Karpuzdan Şeker Çıkarılır mı?”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 10.01.1909.

⁴³ “Boykotaj Cemiyeti’nden: İzmir Yük Arabacıları Ustabaşısı Tarafından Gönderilen Tezkere”, *Köylü*, 05.12.1908.

⁴⁴ İzmir Postahanesi Memurlarından Edremidli Ahmed, “Aynen: İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyet-i Muhteremesine”, *Köylü*, 01.12.1908.

Ottoman economy— argued several times how to produce “our own” sugar.⁴⁵ The newspaper applauded the opening of sugar factories in Karaman and Kırşehir districts.⁴⁶

Another important product subjected to the 1908 Boycott was the “Ottoman fez”. Although its share in the total Ottoman imports from Austria-Hungary was less than that of sugar, it became a public symbol of the boycott movement. Therefore, scholars have also named the 1908 Ottoman Boycott the Fez Boycott (Toprak, 1994). For those willing to prove their protest against Austria-Hungary, discarding fezzes has constituted a ceremony of “patriotism”. Popular rejection of wearing fez immediately turned into a collective demonstration in which a particular group of people simultaneously threw their fezzes on the floor. Around the middle of December, protestors splintered thousands of fezzes for eight days in Selanik (Quataert, 2017a). In İzmir, the forty people in Ahmed Efendi’s coffeehouse took out their Austrian-produced hats and wore home-produced felt *kulah*.⁴⁷ In the coffeehouse of Mehmed Efendi in Bergama, all customers cast their fezzes away and swore not to buy Austrian goods, which was publicly appreciated with the chants of “Long live their patriotism!”.⁴⁸ Similarly, “based on the popular hatred”, the people disdained to put on fezzes produced in Austrian factories; instead, they opted for fezzes produced in Bursa, Rumeli, Hereke or Feshane.⁴⁹ Furthermore, those who were not rapid enough to replace Austrian fez with home-produced hats were publicly protested. A child took fez of a man, the correspondence supervisor of Aydın who has not complied with the principle of “union”, and he harshly trampled on it.⁵⁰ While the man hit the head of

⁴⁵ “Memleketimizde Şeker Fabrikaları İhdası”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 22.10.1908; “Memleketimiz Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı Yaptığı Muharebe-yi İktisadiye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 06.12.1908; “Cevablar”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 10.12.1908; “Cevablar: Karaferye Terakki ve Uhuvvet Kulübü Heyet-i Muhteremesine”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 10.01.1909.

⁴⁶ “Memleketimiz Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı Yaptığı Muharebe-yi İktisadiye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 06.12.1908.

⁴⁷ “Aydın Vilayeti”, *Ahenk*, 01.12.1908; “Telgraflar”, *Köylü*, 01.12.1908.

⁴⁸ “Telgraflar”, *Köylü*, 05.12.1908.

⁴⁹ “Avusturya Emtia-yı Sinaiyesinin Adem-i İştirası”, *Ahenk*, 13.10.1908.

⁵⁰ “Fesler Hakkında: Dünkü Nümayiş”, *Köylü*, 08.12.1908.

boy, the boy never attempted to flee and told, “Hit me but never wear fez!”. Ignoring “patriotism”, the man sued the boy and insistently refused to forgive him. The man’s insistence made the masses angry. The anonymous author writing in the name of the Committee of Boycott threatened the man, “If people of Aydın boycott you just like an Austrian commodity, you cannot even become a sergeant of the municipality!”.⁵¹

In brief, there was solid popular support for the idea of Ottomans abandoning Austrian fezzes. This could be done in two ways: Ottomans could replace Austrian fez (1) either with a fez produced in domestic factories in Hereke, Feshane, Karamürsel⁵² or any home production site (2) or with a hat other than fez. While some strongly advocated the substitution of fez for home-produced hats called *kulah* or *kalpak*⁵³, others claimed that fez constitutes the mark of Ottomans as a national hat [*milli serpuş*] for decades and its replacements would lead to ridiculous results.⁵⁴ This cleavage is also drawn by the extent and the way parties supported the constitutional monarchy and the CUP. While those who insisted on wearing fez in general stood more distant from the Unionist and closer to traditional circles, others who advocated the abandonment of fez had closer relationships with the Unionists. For the newspaper *Beyanü’l Hak* – defending the former position–, the news that no one put on fez anymore has been nothing more than a rumor, and people wearing *kalpak* has never exceeded five percent.⁵⁵ From this perspective, fez was still “our *milli* garment”.

Nonetheless, even this five percent disturbed the group insisting on fez. When a student called Şevket came to the School of Law [*Mekteb-i Hukuk*] with an ordinary hat, he publicly suffered an affront in the school, which resulted from the fact that Şevket put on a hat without thinking about what impact a Muslim wearing a hat other than fez

⁵¹ “Gave’nin Bombaları: Aydın Tahrirat Müdürü Ebu El Ahir Efendi’ye”, *Gave*, 31.12.1908.

⁵² “İttihad ve İtidal”; *Ahenk*, 15.10.1908; “Harb-i İktisadi”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*; 18.10.1908; “Fes”, *Beyanü’l Hak*, 26.10.1908; Velieddin “Kasabadan Yazılıyor”, *Köylü*, 01.11.1908.

⁵³ “Fesler Hakkında: Dünkü Nümayiş”, *Köylü*, 08.12.1908; “İyi mi Kötü mü?”, *Köylü*, 05.12.1908; “Boykotaj”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908; “Mektubat”, *Ahenk*, 05.12.1908.

⁵⁴ “Fes ve Kalpak”, *Beyanü’l Hak*, 16.11.1908; “Fes ve Kalpak”, *Beyanü’l Hak*, 23.11.1908; “Fes”, *Beyanü’l Hak*, 26.10.1908.

⁵⁵ “Müteferrika”, *Beyanü’l Hak*, 28.12.1908.

would have on Muslims.⁵⁶ Nonetheless, people on the side of the replacement of fez seemed to be in the majority. A group of students from the same school with Şevket expressed their support for replacement of fez since fez caused Europeans to evaluate Ottomans as “savage”.⁵⁷ Similarly, merchants repeatedly emphasized economic, political and social reasons to wear *kalpak* or *kulah*.⁵⁸ *Esnafs* like Ali Haydar advertised his own-produced curly *kalpak* that he told to constitute our “national hat [*serpuş-u millî*].⁵⁹ The only exceptional group whom no one expected to replace their fezzes with home-produced hats was government officials. Since the issue of governmental officials and their participation in the boycott constituted one of the heated topics of the 1908 Boycott, it needs more clarification in the following pages separately.

From the perspective of the two groups who argued for wearing a fez or its replacement, there was a permanent solution only: transition to home production. It is the crucial point that the existing literature of the 1908 Boycott has associated it with the National Economy. There was a common idea in the public opinion that whatever the solution to the independence and the annexation crisis could be in the short run, domestic production had to be promoted in the long term so that “we” could get rid of our economic shackles. The reason was clear: Whether one could replace fez with home-produced *kalpak* or insist on wearing fez, there was no way to know in whose factory they were produced.⁶⁰ Those who strictly argued for the use of home-produced *kulahs* or *kalpaks* thought that the replacement of *fez* could enable to keep the money inside the country.⁶¹ Thus, Ottoman *esnafs* of home-produced hats called *arakıye* and *kalpak* in Arabian regions of the empire started to earn a considerable income as people

⁵⁶ “Müteferrika”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 28.12.1908.

⁵⁷ Mekteb-i Hukuk'tan Ömer Arslan, Mustafa Haydar, Davud Hikmet, Hasan Fehmi, Ali Fikri, İsmail Kadiri, “Boykotaj: Fes ve Kalpak”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 30.11.1908

⁵⁸ “Fes ve Kalpak”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 16.11.1908; Aynizade Hasan Tahsin, “Ticaret Şirketleri ve Menafii İktisadiyesi”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 02.11.1908.

⁵⁹ “Kıvırcık Kalpak”, *Ahenk*, 09.11.1908.

⁶⁰ “Elbisemiz ve Mamulat-ı Milliyemiz Hakkında”, *Ahenk*, 12.11.1908.

⁶¹ “İyi mi Kötü mü?”, *Köylü*, 05.12.1908; “Boykotaj”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

intentionally avoided fez. The losing *esnafs* and merchants of fez in İstanbul, at the same time, rallied in front of the Sublime Porte with the complaint that “they were harmed because of the boycott” (Elmacı, 1997b, p. 30). From this view, then, the protection of domestic factories producing hats other than fez seemed to be the only enduring solution to compete with Austrian factories. For those who persisted in fez, on the other hand, well-performing factories in our country can produce fezzes home. Ottomans just had to improve these factories, and the first step to come from merchants.⁶² According to proponents of fez, contrary to claims that our home-produced fezzes cannot ‘compete’ with Austrian fezzes, domestic fezzes could enter rivalry with ones produced in Austrian factories as long as the people kept their “union” and “patriotism”.⁶³ Then, for this party of the fez discussion, moral values of the boycott and promotion of home factories were helpful in ensuring the equal conditions of ‘competition’. In sum, both approaches to wearing fez agreed on promoting domestic factories, which would help Ottoman merchants in competition with their non-Ottoman counterparts. This was also valid for other products or services boycotted, such as sugar. People searched for domestic solutions such as the derivation of sugar from home-produced watermelon and grapes. In the absence of such solutions, limited state protection could become a way to produce “our own” sugar.⁶⁴

In the process of the protection, the boycott assigned two separate missions both to the government and the people. The mission attributed to the government was relatively smaller. It had to find a way of increasing customs for foreign merchants or remove crushing bureaucratic obstacles for *milli* merchants so that they could ‘compete’ with foreign merchants in equal economic conditions. Complaints that the previous government could not lay customs enough to protect domestic products and Ottoman merchants could not even compete with their foreign counterparts accordingly existed.

⁶² “Fes”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 26.10.1908

⁶³ “Fes ve Kalpak”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 16.11.1908

⁶⁴ İsmail Safa, “Serbesti-i Ticaret ve Usul-i Himaye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 25.03.1909.

This was the assumed reason behind that Ottomans gravitated towards cheap Austrian goods⁶⁵ instead of Ottoman products that were indeed of better quality.

Yet, demands for imposing high customs were not very common. The role of state as an actor in economy was still quite limited. When such demands existed, they served as an instrument of levelling the ground of competition for Ottoman merchants in the face of foreign merchants. The people, meanwhile, had to look for a way to establish “our own” companies and, individual capitals could be inadequate to this end. Thus, more than one domestic merchant had to come together in a “union” and set about establishing companies. The rich with “patriotism” should have become unified to set up companies.⁶⁶ In this way, they could provide the people whatever they needed, from sugar to hats and dresses. It was the only way to become victorious in the economic war with Austria.⁶⁷

Besides the protection of the domestic economy, imports from countries other than Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria seemed a way of combatting Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria economically. On October 10-14, “Ottoman-Turkish and *Rum* newspapers” revealed in İzmir the merchants who traded with Austrian shops and suggested the people to have dealings with “French, English and Armenian shops” (Quataert, 2017a, p. 112). A columnist warned the *esnaf* in İzmir that they should purchase products from England, France and other countries and sell them in their shops.⁶⁸ On the side of customers, they should acquire the necessary goods from Italy, England or France, if not Austria-Hungary. Yet, severe doubts about purchasing goods from even non-Austrian or non-Bulgarian shops followed. The situation “could not continue in such a way”.⁶⁹ Even if it seemed possible to use the goods produced by “our French or English friends” until we could produce them within the boundaries of Ottoman

⁶⁵ “Muharebe Ne Demektir? Muharebeye Ne Gibi Şeyler Sebeb Olur...”, *Köylü*, 14.10.1908.

⁶⁶ “Harb-i İktisadi”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 18.10.1908.

⁶⁷ Aynizade Hasan Tahsin, “Ticaret Şirketleri ve Menafii İktisadiyesi”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 02.11.1908.

⁶⁸ Velieddin “Kasabadan Yazılıyor”, *Köylü*, 01.11.1908.

⁶⁹ “Muharebe Ne Demektir? Muharebeye Ne Gibi Şeyler Sebeb Olur...”, *Köylü*, 14.10.1908.

territory, it would inevitably leave us in need of another country.⁷⁰ Then, the purchase of goods from other countries was limited to a period in which “we” could enhance the production of the goods that we never dealt enough.⁷¹ Whenever individual merchants gather adequate amount of capital together by adopting the principle of “union” to establish domestic factories, and the government could promote them to engage in home-production, then the people would immediately avoid purchasing the goods produced outside the Ottoman territory. The reason lay in a common fear: “If one day foreigners stopped supplying goods to us, we would stand bare-naked. Why would we put ourselves in such a ridiculous situation?”⁷² Then, merely boycotting Austrian and Bulgarian products was not enough.

Other commodities subject to the boycott also existed while their volume and prominence were less than sugar and fez. Cheese was a Bulgarian product boycotted.⁷³ Rolling paper, match, textiles and several kinds of products were among the Austrian goods boycotted. Just like for sugar and fez, an Ottoman had to search for either supplying them from non-Austrian and non-Bulgarian sources or providing them inside the country. People were advised to cut their demands from them, too. In İzmir, the supply of rolling papers from Austria in large amounts led to a tight boycott against this product (Elmacı, 2005). *Ahenk Yurdu* –the printing house in which *Ahenk*, one of the most influential publications of the boycott (Sevinçli, 2023), was printed– feared that the boycott would spread across itself, and indeed its fear come true in early December 1908.⁷⁴ It published an announcement in different versions from the first days of the boycott to at least the end of 1908 that, although the country of origin of most rolling papers in the Ottoman land was Austria, rolling papers produced in their printing house (called *Kuleli Sigara Kağıdları*) were the most noted and pure of

⁷⁰ Fatma Mergube, “İttihad Edelim”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 26.10.1908.

⁷¹ “Harb-i İktisadi”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 18.10.1908.

⁷² Velieddin “Kasabadan Yazılıyor”, *Köylü*, 01.11.1908.

⁷³ “Harb-i İktisadi”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 18.10.1908.

⁷⁴ “Gazeteler ve Boykotaj”, *Köylü*, 06.12.1908.

French papers.⁷⁵ People also had to avoid Austrian match, and merchants coming together should have also established new match factories. Accordingly, even as early as December 27, 1908, news about opening new match factories arrived in newspapers.⁷⁶ It was also a suggestion that Austria should have consented to regies for match, rolling paper and so on.⁷⁷

The boycott negatively affected ferries or ships operated by Austrian corporations as well, of which Llyod is the most prominent one. Under the principles of the boycott, every Ottoman had to avoid getting on Austrian ferries as a passenger. Porters, lightermen and boatmen with “patriotism” determinedly refused to unload their boats.⁷⁸ In fact, “in İstanbul, Selanik, Kavala, Dedeğaç and İzmir,” any Austrian ship could not unload passengers and their cargo.⁷⁹ It was the “patriotism” of “our” people that prompted them to avoid using Austrian ferries or working for them. Austrian boats coming from long distances had to leave without being able to put off their cargo.⁸⁰ The people of Trabzon came together with the sense of “alliance” not to transfer either Austrian passengers or cargo.⁸¹ Likewise, the people of Yafa forcefully hampered such an attempt to transport passengers and load through Austrian ferries.⁸² The boycott reached such a point that those who greeted the passenger, captain and crew of an

⁷⁵ “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 17.10.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 10.10.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 01.11.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 09.11.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 12.11.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 28.11.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 01.12.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 05.12.1909; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 06.12.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 24.12.1908; “Memleketimizde sürülen emtia ve eşyanın kısm-ı azamisi...”, *Ahenk*, 29.12.1908.

⁷⁶ “Memleketimiz Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı Muharebe-yi İktisadiye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 06.12.1908.

⁷⁷ “Osmanlı-Avusturya”, *Köylü*, 27.12.1908.

⁷⁸ “Harb-i İktisadi”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 18.10.1908.

⁷⁹ “Şehrimizde Boykotaj”, *Köylü*, 08.12.1908.

⁸⁰ “Şehrimizde Boykotaj”, *Köylü*, 08.12.1908; “Memleketimiz Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı Muharebe-yi İktisadiye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 06.12.1908; “Sebat Edelim”, *Ahenk*, 17.10.1908; “Trabzon’da İttifak”, *Ahenk*, 14.10.1908; “Neasmirni gazetesinin aldığı...”, *Köylü*, 10.12.1908.

⁸¹ “Trabzon’da İttifak”, *Ahenk*, 14.10.1908.

⁸² “Telgraflar: Ajans Nasyonel”, *Ahenk*, 17.10.1908.

Austrian boat were condemned. Even when one asked, “Are you even boycotting the greetings of people?”, the other replied “For sure, this is how a boycott works.”⁸³ In some cases, the boycott spread across boats of other countries. People boycotted a Greek ship on the claim that it transported Austrian commodities⁸⁴ to the ports of Samsun, İnebolu, Trabzon and Ordu (Emiroğlu, 1994). As for sugar and fez, until Ottomans established Ottoman shipping and ferry companies, they were strictly advised to use boats of those “who display a friendly attitude towards us” (Ünal, 1992, p. 141). Yet, during this brief period, I have not seen any news about establishing a *milli* shipping or ferry company or any intention of such an advancement in newspapers and secondary sources.

Austrian post offices, quite widespread in the Ottoman territory, were the target of boycotters, too. A “patriot” Ottoman should have never given to or received from Austrian post offices any post.⁸⁵ In some instances, the boycott of the Austrian post offices was accompanied by violent acts, and as in Yafa, an Austrian post office was ravaged.⁸⁶ The existence of Austrian post offices constituted a quite important heading so much so that it became one of the headlines of the negotiations between the Porte and the Austrian ambassador of İstanbul later.

So far, I have highlighted the goods and services that were subjected to the boycott. They were crucial for Ottomans, the replacement of which necessitated some changes in the economy in a way to ensure transition to a capitalist economy. The new regime established after the 1908 Revolution, in the meantime, was trying to strengthen its position economically as well as to maintain order. The repercussions of the 1873-96 Long Depression were still felt, too. Given such a socioeconomic picture, the boycott’s invigoration of a long-standing debate between *usul-i himaye* [protectionism] and

⁸³ “Kısm-ı Muhavele”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

⁸⁴ “Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı Boykotaj”, *Ahenk*, 09.11.1908.

⁸⁵ “Ahenk”, *Ahenk*, 15.10.1908; “Bank-ı Osmani”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 01.11.1908.

⁸⁶ “Telgraflar: Ajans Nasyonel”, *Ahenk*, 17.10.1908.

serbesti-i ticaret [*laissez-faire*], which I have discussed in the first chapter in detail, was not surprising.

Throughout the boycott, newspapers involved several articles arguing the economic model of the empire and the boycott together. In its most heated periods, there were articles discussing the protracted conflict between two economic understandings.⁸⁷ In *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, one of the few newspapers on commerce –even when the boycott did not exist in its columns–, there were successive articles discussing the long quarrel between the *laissez-faire* and the protectionist approach, the young’s approach to commerce, the production and commercialization of sugar and grapes, the establishment of [*milli*] trade companies, clubs of agriculture, commerce and industry and several others arguing the relationship among the state, trade and production. Columnists of other newspapers discussing the boycott alike did not evaluate the boycott as a singular case that exceptionally took place and passed away immediately. They placed it in a broader context in which they discussed the role of the state, the share of commerce in the Ottoman welfare and the effectiveness of Ottoman economic production. There was a strong vision of a “genuine boycott” (Çetinkaya, 2004). From such a perspective, the Ottoman boycott was never restricted to a moment of commercial avoidance of Austrian and Bulgarian goods. Ottomans had to look for a way to advance or create new home production opportunities in the long run. The persistence in alternatives to Austrian fez and sugar, I have highlighted above, resulted from such a search. Insistent calls for the establishment of domestic trade or manufacturing companies, rather than the temporary replacement of an Austrian good with a non-Austrian one, were similarly associated with the aims of extending the goals of the boycott to a broader economic scale.

In the eyes of the boycotters, the boycott represented the possibility of a socioeconomic alternative against the old Hamidian order in two respects. Because of

⁸⁷ İsmail Safa, “Serbesti-i Ticaret ve Usul-i Himaye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 22.11.1908; İsmail Safa, “Usul-i Himaye ve Serbesti-i Ticaret”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 01.12.1908; İsmail Safa, “Usul-i Himaye ve Serbesti-i Ticaret”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 07.03.1909; “Düşünelim”, *Ahenk*, 01.12.1908; “Telgraflar: İzmir Mamulat-ı Dahiliye Teavün Cemiyeti’nden”, *Ahenk*, 05.12.1908.

these two aspects themselves, the Unionists insistently attempted to grasp the leadership of the boycott. The two also flamed the popular grudge towards the Ottoman *ancien regime* in a way to extend the scale of the boycott to the entire Ottoman economic mentality. First, there was a widespread belief that the Hamidian regime followed a mistaken policy towards Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria, which resulted in the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the independence of Bulgaria. Unless the Ottomans threw out the Hamidian despotism, Austria-Hungary would continue to make several tricks in the Balkans. It was also the very “policy that those who plan to revive the Hamidian despotism would promote.” Yet, Ottomans now woke up from the “nightmare”.⁸⁸ For reversing the Hamidian policies, there needed a permanent blow to Austria-Hungary. A limited and short-dated blow to the Austrian state would eventually lead to the situation in which “we Ottomans” need Austrian “rotten” and “dirty” goods again. Second, in popular opinion, the Hamidian order was responsible for Ottoman economic backwardness since it had followed inadequate economic policies. In a sense, an equation emerged between the boycott and the new regime of constitutional monarchy. The boycott became an economic flag of those who supported the new order. Thus, the first issue of *Gave*, the official publication of İzmir Committee of Boycott (Sevinçli, 2023), published an article celebrating the opening of the parliament in its headline.⁸⁹ Now, Ottomans were free of despotism. The “ancien régime” was the government of “wastage” and “poverty,”⁹⁰ which Ottomans would dispose of. It did not even care about “our *millet*’s trade of industrial and commercial goods.” Contrarily, it levied the burden of high taxes on the people.⁹¹

Yet, despite views attributing the responsibility to the government and its high taxes, there were arguments that the people of the “ancien régime” were not able to engage in trade on their own; however, they always needed the helping hand of the government without being aware that the very government support was provided by

⁸⁸ “Ahval-i Siyasiye”, *Ahenk*, 31.10.1908.

⁸⁹ “Meclis-i Mebusan”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

⁹⁰ Fatma Mergube, “İttihad Edelim”, *Beyanü’l Hak*, 26.10.1908.

⁹¹ “Düşünelim”, *Ahenk*, 01.12.1908.

“our” taxes.⁹² The government was, on the one hand, the organ to which one attributed the responsibility in case of economic failure; on the other hand, it was the authority from which financial aid was expected. The boycott movement, therefore, did not include a consistent vision of the state. While everyone criticized the previous Hamidian regime, there were differing views on the economic mission of the state.

To reiterate, various inconsistent views existed on the government’s role in the functioning of the economy throughout the boycott. On the one hand, the government had to intervene in the economy by increasing customs walls on Austria-Hungary⁹³ and decreasing customs for home merchants trading with foreign countries.⁹⁴ On the other hand, it should have never interfered in the economic order such much so that any intervention in the boycott would mean an infringement of the law.⁹⁵ However, as I am going to discuss below, even the desired interference of the government in the boycott has ultimately included a hesitation towards the intervention. In other words, the economic help of the government –as mentioned in the newspapers of the era– did not aim at a long-standing interventionist economic policy but just equal ‘competitive’ conditions in which Ottoman merchants would be involved in free market. Public opinion represented by newspapers generally has been respectful of free trade (Çetinkaya, 2004) with a few exceptions. The fear of popular rage was similarly related to the possibility that their rage might damage free market. Even those who argued for a balance between the customs walls and the non-intervention of state shared the hesitation that customs laid on Austrian goods may spread through all the goods, which would have been “a serious economic mistake”.⁹⁶ State intervention was conditional on the establishment of “competition” which is a frequent in the time of the 1908 Boycott. The state was to be a ‘referee’ to the competition.

⁹² İsmail Safa, “Serbestii Ticaret ve Usul-i Himaye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 22.11.1908.

⁹³ “Muharebe Ne Demektir? Muharebeye Ne Gibi Şeyler Sebebe Olur...”, *Köylü*, 14.10.1908; İsmail Safa, “Serbestii Ticaret ve Usul-i Himaye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 06.12.1908.

⁹⁴ “Avusturya’da Gümrük”, *Ahenk*, 08.12.1908; “İngiltere’de Çekirdeksiz Üzüm”, *Köylü*, 05.12.1908; “İngiltere’de Çekirdeksiz Üzüm”, *Köylü*, 06.12.1908.

⁹⁵ “Kısm-ı Mukavele”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

⁹⁶ İsmail Safa, “Serbesti-i Ticaret ve Usul-i Himaye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 25.03.1909.

3.2.3. Concepts of the Boycott

Given that the Ottoman Boycott ignited the debate between *usul-i himaye* [protectionism] and *serbesti-i ticaret* [*laissez-faire*], it was more than being a mere historical moment of popular reaction to Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria; instead, it represented an overall reevaluation of the dominant Ottoman economic mentality. Ottomans must have understood there was a long way to a “genuine boycott”. To attain its long-standing outcomes, Ottomans had to follow the way of “perseverance” [*sebat*], “patience” [*sabır*], “fortitude” [*metanet*], “foresight” [*basiret*], “temperance” [*itidal*], “calm” [*sükunet/sükun*] and certain moral concepts emphasizing an enduring process of economic avoidance.

The boycott would reach the desired outcomes if only “we” displayed “perseverance”.⁹⁷ If “we” insist on this principle, the boycott would harm the “economic life” of Austria more than any kind of war would.⁹⁸ Austrians had asserted before that “Turks were devoid of perseverance”, and “we” had to prove otherwise.⁹⁹ It was “our perseverance” to mold Austrian goods left in Austrian factories. Newspapers publicly appreciated those who clung to “perseverance”¹⁰⁰, while condemning others not acting in accordance with the boycott.¹⁰¹ Ottomans had to face the negative results of the boycott with “fortitude”¹⁰² and “foresight”¹⁰³ and never back down from their decision. Insistent calls for strict obedience to such moral concepts come not only from open supporters of the boycott. Even Tefvik Pasha, the minister

⁹⁷ “Sebat Edelim”, *Ahenk*, 17.10.1908.

⁹⁸ “Aydın Vilayeti”, *Ahenk*, 01.11.1908.

⁹⁹ Edhem Nejat, “Gençler ve Ticarethanelerimiz”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 01.11.1908.

¹⁰⁰ Meclis-i Tetkikat-ı Şeriyeye Başkatibi Said, “Makale-yi Mahsuse”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 02.11.1908; “Debagat ve Bunun Memleketimizdeki Hali”, *Ahenk*, 29.12.1908; “Zübde-i Siyasiye”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 30.11.1908.

¹⁰¹ İzmir Postahanesi Memurlarından Edremidli Ahmed, “Aynen: İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyet-i Muhteremesine”, *Köylü*, 01.12.1908; “Aydın Vilayeti”, *Ahenk*, 01.11.1908.

¹⁰² “İttihad ve İtidal”, *Ahenk*, 15.10.1908; “Ahalimiz ve Vatandaşlarımız: Efkar-ı Umumiye'nin Ehemmiyeti”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 08.10.1908.

¹⁰³ “Mesail-i Hazıra-yı Dahiliye”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 10.11.1908.

of foreign affairs, highlighted in an interview that “we Ottomans should never give up ‘patience’ and ‘fortitude’”.¹⁰⁴ Obviously, the government had a class fear that the popular rage ultimately could target its existence.

In newspapers, these moral concepts enabled the organizing and strengthening of the manner and amount of injury given to Austria-Hungary. People with “perseverance” and “temperance” would boycott Austrian goods and services but avoid, at the same time, impertinent acts. Islam had commanded “calm” and “temperance,” and people had to leave the issue to the government. Ottomans should have never engaged in “overdoing” [*ifrat*], so there was no need for excessive demonstrations.¹⁰⁵ “Our” women alike would act through “fortitude” and never be inclined to “overdoing” by renouncing their ornaments.¹⁰⁶ If Ottomans follow “perseverance”, “fortitude” and “patience” that already existed in their nature, they would prove their bravery in the economic war just as in a tangible war.¹⁰⁷ Then, these moral concepts would economically damage Austria-Hungary, which the boycott targeted. Yet, the concepts aimed at not only guaranteeing and organizing the economic loss to Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria but organizing the Ottoman societal ‘equilibrium.’ Society should never overstep the mark. Limitations of popular reactions and demonstrations always existed. The role attributed to “public opinion” was the evaluation of existing situation through “foresight,” “temperance” and “calm”.¹⁰⁸ The wait for governmental action was the very manner expected from public opinion.¹⁰⁹ Ottomans had to comply with “the conservation of security and public order”; otherwise, they would be stuck in a troublesome situation.¹¹⁰ The government followed these moral premises as well, and Ottoman subjects had to act accordingly. The “temperance” of the Ottoman

¹⁰⁴ “Hariciye Nazırı Tevfik Paşa ile Tanin Muharririnin Mülakatı”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 08.10.1908.

¹⁰⁵ “Yine Ahalimize, Vatandaşlarımıza”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 09.10.1908.

¹⁰⁶ Meclis-i Tetkikat-ı Şeriyye Başkatibi Said, “Makale-yi Mahsuse”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 02.11.1908

¹⁰⁷ “Boykot Kimdir, Boykotaj Nedir?”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 30.10.1908; “Boykotaj”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908; “Paramızı Düşmanlarımıza Kazandırmayalım”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 15.11.1908.

¹⁰⁸ “Mesail-i Hazıra-yı Dahiliye”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 10.10.1908.

¹⁰⁹ “Ahalimiz ve Vatandaşlarımıza: Efkâr-ı Umumiyyenin Ehemmiyeti”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 08.10.1908.

¹¹⁰ “İttihad ve İtidal”, *Ahenk*, 15.10.1908.

government would prevent the ill ambitions of those who desired for a war.¹¹¹ Otherwise, as in the loss of *Kanun-i Esasi* because of a war in the absence of “temperance”, situations would become even deteriorated alike.¹¹² The Ottoman government followed a highly prudent policy with “foresight”,¹¹³ and Ottoman subjects had to assist the government in application of these principles.¹¹⁴

In line with the aims of the boycott to organize the Ottoman social order, all the press, the governmental actors and the Unionists suggested the people embark on “fortitude” but never resorted to violence. Acting with “outburst” [*galeyan*] –an ever-condemned concept– and violence was never appropriate for a noble tribe like the Ottomans.¹¹⁵ Just in parallel, the press appreciated the “good manners” [*terbiye*] and “temperance” of Ottomans who avoided appealing to socially aggressive or extreme ways of protesting, while condemning the people engaged in “inappropriate demonstrations” like *Kör Ali*¹¹⁶ or like protestors in Karadağ who burned the Austrian coat of arms in front of the Austrian consulate.¹¹⁷ People should have removed their Austrian fezzes, but it should have never reached a violent conclusion.¹¹⁸

Besides suggestions or appreciation for non-violent acts that all these moral concepts suggested, hesitations existed regarding the ‘wrong boycott’. In all the narratives of the boycott, a hesitant trust in popular reactions was obvious. Clear attempts existed to guarantee the way in which people practiced the boycott. Thus, the press engaged

¹¹¹ “Zübde-i Siyasiye”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 02.11.1908; “Protokol ve Layıha-yı İzahiye”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 07.03.1909.

¹¹² “Bulgaristan İstiklali ve Efkar-ı Umumiye”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 07.10.1908.

¹¹³ “Hariciye Nazırı Tevfik Paşa ile Tanin Muharririnin Mülakatı”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 08.10.1908.

¹¹⁴ “Yine Ahalimize, Vatandaşlarımıza”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 09.10.1908.

¹¹⁵ “Nümayiş”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 08.10.1908.

¹¹⁶ “Mecnun”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 09.10.1908; “Yine Ahalimize ve Vatandaşlarımıza”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 09.10.1908.

¹¹⁷ “Telgraflar”, *Köylü*, 14.10.1908

¹¹⁸ “Boykotaj”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

in serious endeavors to clarify the definition of the boycott¹¹⁹ to assure its ‘acceptable’ practices. In this attempt, it utilized simple and plain language. Yet, there were those who do not understand it correctly, some of whom, like the people of *Denizli*, dared to boycott the newspaper *Ahenk* and *Sedad*. According to *Köylü*, this resulted from the fact that “we Turks a bit of imitator”. These people accordingly just “imitated” what they know as a boycott without knowing properly what it means.¹²⁰ The other group who adopted the ‘wrong boycott’ was the boycotters who applied it superficially without finding out the necessary details of the boycott. Thus, newspapers included several announcements of those who sold or not sold Austrian goods to their customers. For instance, a clothing store warned its clients not to assume that all the stores are full of goods from Vienna.¹²¹ According to the clothing store’s statement, only fifteen percent of its goods was Austrian-made because the poor could afford them. Likewise, the printing house *Ahenk Yurdu* published a series of announcements that rolling papers produced in their workplace were never Austrian-made,¹²² just as a merchant called Samanlızade Abdulvahab published.¹²³ For the fear of a ‘wrong boycott’, Ottoman governmental officials and the Unionists warned the people not to act with “outburst” but “foresight”¹²⁴ even in the late days of the boycott.¹²⁵ Their class fear was apparently continuing then.

¹¹⁹ “Harb-i İktisadi”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 18.10.1908; “Boykot Kimdir, Boykotaj Nedir”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 30.10.1908; “Boykotaj”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

¹²⁰ “Gazeteler ve Boykotaj”, *Köylü*, 06.12.1908; “İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyet-i Muhteremesine Varid Olan İlanatnamedir”, *Gave*, 15.01.1909.

¹²¹“Vatandaşlar...”, *Ahenk*, 15.10.1908.

¹²² “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 17.10.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 10.10.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 01.11.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 09.11.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 12.11.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 28.11.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 01.12.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 05.12.1909; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 06.12.1908; “Sigara kağıdlarının terkibi ve kimyeviyesi itibariyle...”, *Ahenk*, 24.12.1908; “Memleketimizde sürülen emtia ve eşyanın kısm-ı azamisi...”, *Ahenk*, 29.12.1908.

¹²³ “Hürriyet ve Adalet Sigara Kağıtlarının Sahib-i İmtiyazı Samanlızade Abd-ul Vahab”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 21.11.1908.

¹²⁴“Hariciye Nazırını Tevfik Paşa ile Tanin Muharririnin Mülakatı”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 08.10.1908.

¹²⁵“Ahmed Rıza Beyle Mülakat”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 13.12.1908.

Besides “fortitude,” one of the most frequently-used words of the boycott narratives, “union” and “patriotism” constituted a considerable place in columns. “Patriotism”, which came to the fore in other boycotts of the world as well, meant in the context of the boycott the renunciation of personal interests in line with the necessities of the boycott (Çetinkaya, 2004, p. 130). In this line, public opinion condemned those who did not take off their fezzes¹²⁶, women who did not prefer home-produced goods¹²⁷ or merchants who sold their Austrian products under the title of a country other than Austria-Hungary¹²⁸ and several others because their manner was evaluated as their lack of “patriotism”, which is condemned. While “patriotism” principally took place in columns to fortify societal aspect of the boycott, “union” existed not only with a societal content but also an economic one. In other words, “union” aimed not only at societal actors like customers of Austrian products or workers employing in the service of Austrian companies, but also at small producers or *esnafs* and merchants. Beyond being the socially appropriate way of conduct for the boycott, “union” encompassed the ‘unification’ of small producers to constitute an adequate amount of capital for opening new factories or companies.¹²⁹ The Ottoman rich should have adopted the principle of “union” and set up new factories because of the “scarcity of [Ottoman] capital”. Otherwise, Ottoman factories would not produce all the goods European factories had and never competed with them.¹³⁰

3.2.4. The State and the People of the Boycott

In this section, I employ the concept of ‘state’ in a way to encompass both actors: the Unionists who undertook the success of the post-revolutionary era and also Kamil Pasha’s (and Huseyin Hilmi Pasha’s after his resignation) cabinet. In this way, this analysis can go beyond the equation of the state with an unchanging group of actors

¹²⁶ “Midilliden Yazılan bir Mektuptan”, *Köylü*, 01.12.1908.

¹²⁷ Fatma Mergube, “İttihad Edelim”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 26.10.1908.

¹²⁸ “Boykotaj Cemiyetinden...”, *Köylü*, 05.12.1908.

¹²⁹ Aynizade Hasan Tahsin, “Ticaret Şirketleri ve Menafii İktisadiyesi”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 02.11.1908; “Alem-i İslamiyet”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 25.01.1909.

¹³⁰ “Harb-i İktisadi”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 18.10.1908.

as a seemingly fixed ‘core’ of the state or with a specific model of the state in a historical moment. Moreover, this can pave the way for understanding the concept of the state not as immutable but as a transforming “concept in motion” (Çelik, 2022, p. 27). Given that the mobilization of masses mutually reshaped or deshaped the policy choices of the Unionists and the Sublime Porte, the state, conceptually, indeed should encompass all societal actors and their mutual relationships, too. Nevertheless, for practical reasons, I restrict the state to two group of actors in the boycott context while never disregarding societal actors like Ottoman workers or merchants.

The Committee of Union and Progress became a leading actor in the late Ottoman agenda after the 1908 Revolution. Both primary and secondary sources of the boycott accordingly attribute the organization and mobilization of masses to the Unionists, of which I have mentioned the problems in the section 3.2.1. Nonetheless, the Unionists played a considerable role in the direction of the boycott. Their active participation in the boycott also resulted from a politically tactical necessity, which the existing literature on the 1908 Boycott commonly ignored: The boycott commenced immediately before the parliamentary elections in November-December of 1908. The date that the existing literature argued as the start of the boycott was the day the CUP declared its election program to public opinion (Kansu, 2017, p. 232). The Unionists must have evaluated the boycott from the perspective of elections. The reason is that contrary to the general conviction that the CUP constituted the societal and political majority, its area of influence was indeed limited even at that time. However, the Unionists persistently tried to make it seem so, and they “mislead the public opinion” (Kansu, 2016). Even after the parliamentary elections, the Unionists could almost only take 54 of 281 seats (Kansu, 2017, p. 358).

Thus, the Unionists were a prominent actor involved in the boycott. The press, an instrument, was the most effective tool in the hands of the Unionists to influence public opinion. There was an explosion in the number of newspapers after the 1908 revolution. The Unionists took advantage of this environment, and newspaper constituted an instrument of their hegemony. Accordingly, the most heated newspapers supporting the boycott had clear Unionist connections like *Şura-yı*

Ümmet, Köylü, Ahenk, İttihad ve Terakki, Tanin and so on. Although the CUP declared not to support the boycott, it tacitly promoted popular reactions in newspapers (Elmacı, 2005). Yet, its support occasionally took a more explicit form.

Amid the boycott, Ahmed Rıza Bey, a prominent Unionist, stated that unless Austria-Hungary fixes the mistake it committed, the boycott would never disappear. He stipulated that the acceptance of concessions was necessary to terminate the boycott.¹³¹ Likewise, Unionists spoke in the name of not only the CUP but the people themselves. Similarly, when the Ottoman Navy members appreciated demonstrations directly held by the Committee of Boycott by starting firing cannons, members of the CUP in person congratulated the Ottoman Navy.¹³² The Unionists had a role even in the termination of the boycott. Rıza Tevfik, the deputy of Edirne as a member of the CUP, applauded and thanked “patriotic porters and lightermen” proving their “patriotism”.¹³³ Austrian officials as well realized the contribution of the CUP to the boycott. The Austrian ambassador of İstanbul, Marki Pallavicini, remarked that negotiating with a Unionist leader like Ahmet Rıza Bey would become more appropriate to solve the crisis (Davison, 1990, p. 17). Similarly, the general director of the Lloyd company went to Selanik to talk directly to the notables of the CUP (Çetinkaya, 2004, p. 181).

The CUP’s attitude towards the boycott was more than merely directing it; it also entailed controlling it. The grasping of the leadership of the boycott was a war of hegemony among different social and political actors, and the Unionists knew that the loss of organizational leadership would mean their failure in politics and undesirably spontaneous movements of the masses. After all, they were not in the majority.

The seizure of this spontaneity was always on the Unionists’ agenda until the definite termination of the boycott. The most obvious attempt to control the masses existed in the publications with close Unionist connections, as evident in columns of *Gave* –the

¹³¹“Ahmet Rıza Bey ile Mülakat”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 13.12.1908.

¹³² “Köylü”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

¹³³ “Boykotajın Ref’i”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 27.02.1908.

official publication of the 1908 Boycott–, *Köylü* and *Şura-yı Ümmet* I scanned and also *Tanin*, *İttihad*, *İttihad ve Terakki* that existed in secondary sources. Moreover, their hegemony in the boycott narrative affected columns of other pro-boycott newspapers. The creation of moral values in the boycott context, mentioned in the previous section, resulted primarily from such a desire to control spontaneity and their class-based mobilization. Masses had to be mobilized, but just to a limited extent. Accordingly, from mid-October of 1908 to January 1909, the tone of writings softened when the seeming necessity to control them diminished. Columns of Unionists publications, addressing directly “we Ottomans”, representing the war as a last but probable resort and inviting them to boycott the goods of the “enemy”, were replaced by the writings analyzing more the current political situation or negotiations between the Ottoman and Austrian states.

In addition, the Committee directly organized or contributed to the organization of the demonstrations against the Austrian annexation and Bulgarian independence. On October 8, *medrese* students, the CUP members and several other segments of the society rallied against Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria. The following day, *Tanin* –the prominent Unionist newspaper– published an announcement to “take the revenge of Turkey of the constitutional monarchy” towards patriot Ottomans (Quataert, 2017a, p. 193). Yet, demonstrations were immediately accompanied by call for “calm” and “temperance”. On the same day, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, another pro-Unionist newspaper, printed an article aiming to calm the people frightened by the possibility of chaos and the loss of constitutional monarchy, and it advised them “silence” and “temperance” as two commands of Islam.¹³⁴ On October 12, Dr. Ali Rıza Tevfik Bey [Bölükbaşı] delivered a speech to the masses in İstanbul that avoiding Austrian goods was enough for boycotting and the gathering of masses in front of an Austrian store unnecessary and absurd (Quataert, 2017a, pp. 105–106). Towards the end of the boycott, this man of the Unionists praised porters and lightermen for their peaceful termination of the boycott after accomplishing their mission.¹³⁵ Dr. Rıza Tevfik Bey was also the name

¹³⁴ “Yine Ahalimize ve Vatandaşlarımıza”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 09.10.1908.

¹³⁵ “Boykotajın Ref'i”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 27.02.1908.

who enabled the evacuation of goods of an Austrian company in İstanbul port despite workers' resistance (Çetinkaya, 2004, p. 292). In Trabzon where the Unionists overtook a more leading role, the Trabzon branch of the Committee of Union and Progress invited the merchants of the district and the general director of Trabzon Customs Administration in the early days of the annexation to discuss the roadmap of the boycott. When the Committee decided in the meeting that merchants would return goods they ordered before, there existed a definite warning by the Committee that traders should follow "good manner" and "kindness" (Ahmetoğlu, 2022, p. 168). Overall, the Unionists who organized some demonstrations also had a grip on the boycott.

I should point out once more that the Unionist attempts to capture the leadership and the spontaneity of the boycott should not cause one to assume that the 1908 Boycott was an outcome of the attempts of the Unionists. Likewise, no one should assume that it refers to a pure class politics promoted by the Unionists. The boycott itself was an arena of struggle in which competing social and political forces attempted to take a share. Moreover, the Unionists were not the only actors taking advantage of the boycott. While the Unionists employed the boycott to fortify the new regime after the revolution, Kamil Pasha aimed to solve the problem in a way to strengthen his position against the Unionist opposition. Yet, the two groups of actors had one point in common: controlling the masses. Both Kamil Pasha government and the Unionist figures feared that spontaneous popular movements may turn against themselves. It was a class fear as they knew that their spontaneity could target at them.

After the 1908 Revolution, the CUP did not have still a powerful governmental hand (Kansu, 2017). Thus, it is more probable that "the policy pursued from the outbreak of the [annexation] crisis through to the settlements of principle reached in January and February 1909" (Ünal, 1992, p. 240) were also of Kamil Pasha's influence. Thus, it becomes a mistake to underestimate the role of the Kamil Pasha government in the boycott process, which those who relate the post-revolutionary process exclusively with the Unionists often overlooked. Just as the Unionists attempted to do, Kamil Pasha and his followers must have taken advantage of Bulgaria's independence and

the Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina for their political interests. In an analogous way to the Unionists, Kamil Pasha's government shared the fear that the spontaneity of the masses could shake their position. For this very reason, they adopted a hesitant policy towards the boycott. Kamil Pasha and his bureaucrats were not among the organizers of the boycott. Yet, they did not hesitate to benefit from it. In the face of Austrian officials' complaints about the Ottoman government's inability to cease the boycott¹³⁶, it utilized the boycott as a matter of negotiation with Austria-Hungary. *Dersaadet* ambassador of Austria-Hungary Marki Pallavicini was the most known Austrian official who states Austrian complaints on the boycott. He conveyed objections¹³⁷ of both the government of Vienna and the Austrian merchants or companies. In most meetings with the Ottoman governmental officials, Pallavicini highlighted that a peaceful solution would become impossible unless the Ottoman government obviates the boycott.¹³⁸ In any instance that the government became unable to prohibit the mobilization of the masses on the other hand, it always resorted to the same response: The boycott stemmed from the "free will" of the people; therefore, the government can never interfere in their free choices in the market.¹³⁹ Upon Austrian middlemen's complaints on the boycott and the merchants promoting the boycott, the minister of *Zabtiye* Sami Pasha emphasized that the Ottoman *millet*

¹³⁶ "Müzakere-i İtilaf", *Servet-i Fünun*, 09.12.1908; "Fesler Hakkında: Dünkü Nümayış", *Köylü*, 08.12.1908; "Boykotaj Hakkında", *Servet-i Fünun*, 31.12.1908; "Devlet-i Osmaniye ve Avusturya Müzakerati", *Servet-i Fünun*, 30.12.1908; "Avusturya", *Köylü*, 29.11.1908; "Telgraflar: Viyana", *Ahenk*, 28.11.1908; "Ahval-i Siyasi", *Ahenk*, 01.12.1908; "Avusturya Sefaretinin Şikayetleri", *Servet-i Fünun*, 26.01.1909; "Boykotaj", *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

¹³⁷ "Avusturya Sefaretinin Şikayetleri", *Servet-i Fünun*, 26.12.1908; "Devlet-i Osmaniye – Avusturya-Macaristan", *Servet-i Fünun*, 24.01.1909; "Boykotaj", *Köylü*, 10.12.1908; "Müzakere-i İtilaf", *Servet-i Fünun*, 09.12.1908; "Telgraflar: Viyana", *Ahenk*, 28.11.1908; "Boykotaj ve Avusturya Sefiri Mösyö Pallavicini İfadatı", *Servet-i Fünun*, 26.11.1908; "Boykotaj Hakkında Müzakere", *Servet-i Fünun*, 20.12.1908.

¹³⁸ "Müzakere-i İtilaf", *Servet-i Fünun*, 09.12.1908; "Devlet-i Osmaniye – Avusturya-Macaristan", *Servet-i Fünun*, 24.01.1909; "Ajans Telgrafları", *Servet-i Fünun*, 21.11.1908; "Zübde-i Siyasiye", *Beyanü'l Hak*, 21.12.1908; "Matbuat-Avusturya ve Hükümet-i Osmaniye", *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 26.11.1908.

¹³⁹ "Avusturya Emtia-yı Sınaiyesinin Adem-i İştirası", *Ahenk*, 13.10.1908; "Boykotaj", *Köylü*, 10.12.1908; "Boykotaj ve Avusturya Sefiri Mösyö Pallavicini İfadatı", *Servet-i Fünun*, 26.11.1908; "Müzakere-i İtilaf", *Servet-i Fünun*, 09.12.1908; "Şehrimizde Boykotaj", *Köylü*, 08.12.1908; "Memleketimiz Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı Yaptığı Muharebe-i İktisadiye", *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 06.12.1908; "Boykotaj: Rüsumat Emanetinden", *Servet-i Fünun*, 30.01.1909; "Boykotajın Ref'i", *Servet-i Fünun*, 27.02.1908; "Boykotaj Hakkında Avusturya Sefirinin Beyanatı", *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 27.11.1908.

reached a consensus, and everyone was free to purchase or not to purchase any product they want. If and only if an assault on these middlemen occurs, the Ottoman security officials can intervene then.¹⁴⁰ Likewise, when the Austrian ambassador demanded the help of the government to unload the burden of an Austrian ferry, the governor of İzmir province highlighted that he could not force someone to carry the load ashore.¹⁴¹ Similarly, on the complaints of the Austrian minister of foreign affairs regarding the dock workers, Kamil Pasha replied with an official letter on November 28 that they are not government officials (Elmacı, 1997a; Emiroğlu, 1994). After all, Ottomans were ‘free’ to make commercial choices after the revolution. The Ottoman government seemed determined not to implement ‘state intervention’ in the boycott.¹⁴²

While the government repeatedly emphasized its inability to prevent the free actions of Ottomans in the face of Austria-Hungary’s objections, it also took considerable precautions to avoid popular mobilization. Yet, obviously, the government could not afford to hinder it as much as intended. At this very moment, the government tightened the measures and warnings towards the boycotters. The severity of governmental precautions increased as Austrian and Ottoman states approached a consensus. In the early days of the boycott, there existed, at most, governmental suggestions that there was no need for “outburst” and “violence” but “foresight” and “patience”.¹⁴³ Towards the mid-December, government became more active in the boycott. The Grand Vizier called the steward of the porters’ guild [*hamallar kahyası*] to warn porters to carry the cargo of Austrian ships¹⁴⁴ and commanded porters and lightermen to evacuate the goods in Austrian ships.¹⁴⁵ In January and February of 1909, the interference of the Kamil Pasha government in the boycott took a more severe form. In some cases that porters refused to work for Austrian companies, soldiers helped these companies to evacuate their load. Similarly, the governor of Beirut waited in the dock until porters

¹⁴⁰ “Avusturya Emtia-yı Sinaiesinin Adem-i İştirası”, *Ahenk*, 13.10.1908.

¹⁴¹ “Şehrimizde Boykotaj”, *Köylü*, 08.12.1908.

¹⁴² “Müzakere-i İtilaf”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 09.12.1908.

¹⁴³ “Hariciye Nazırı Tevfik Paşa ile Tanin Muharririnin Mülakâtı”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 08.10.1908.

¹⁴⁴ “Şehrimizde Boykotaj”, *Köylü*, 08.12.1908.

¹⁴⁵ “Köylü”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908; “Telgraflar: Harb-i İktisadi”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

unloaded the cargo of Austrian ships. Furthermore, the Grand Vizier authorized the governor of Halep district to use brute force if necessary.¹⁴⁶

Overall, towards the end of negotiations with Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman state gradually adopted restrictive policies toward the workers refusing to work for Austrian ships. In other words, while initially advocating that a governmental intervention in the boycott can result in damaging results, as soon as the government considered ‘the safety of life and property’ was in peril, the government began to intervene in the boycott. Indeed, the partially permissive attitude of the government itself at the beginning stemmed from pragmatic reasons. Again, the boycott had taken place in the immediate aftermath of the 1908 Revolution, just before the parliamentary elections. No doubt, insistent threats from the Vienna government played a considerable role in tightening the intervention of the Ottoman government in the boycott, too. Kamil Pasha’s government must have feared the interruption of negotiations. The Ottoman Empire had lost both Bosnia-Herzegovina and Bulgaria long before the current events but still tried to get some concessions (Ünal, 1992). Nevertheless, even if one disregards the influence of Austria-Hungary, considering the general attitude towards the Ottoman workers, it is appropriate to evaluate that the government would attempt to suppress workers in any way.

After the 1908 Revolution, the mobilization of workers gained momentum, and the number of worker strikes considerably increased (Yıldırım, 2012). Nevertheless, following a limited period of free mobilization, the government of the new regime attempted to restrict the acts of workers. The Ottoman government promulgated the Provisional Law of Strike [*Tatil-i Eşgal Kanun-u Muvakkati*] in the first week of October 1908, which the parliament officially ratified just in July 1909 (Toprak, 1981). The law gave the cabinet an extraordinary authority to enforce security and public order. Thus, the control of Ottoman workers has not been peculiar to the boycott but the typical pattern of the historical era. Their working conditions indeed became better after the revolution, but the government has never promoted the ‘extreme’

¹⁴⁶ “Hilmi Paşa ile Mülakat”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 20.02.1909.

mobilization of workers who revolt for their class interests. In parallel, studies on Ottoman workers in the late Ottoman era show that the mobilization of dock workers including porters and lightermen was not unique to the boycott moment. Independent of the boycott, a general environment of strike existed among workers. Indeed, the workers mobilized seemingly in response to Austrian annexation and Bulgarian independence were aware that the boycott meant more than a mere *milli* issue. They were aware that they could take advantage of the boycott for their class interests (Quataert, 2017b). In the face of gradually restricting policies of the government, the boycott constituted a free zone in to regain the rights they had lost before.

3.2.5. Organizations of the Boycott

The 1908 Ottoman Boycott enabled new boycott organizations to emerge. It was also an outcome of the proliferation of organizations and associations after 1908. I have stated before that the boycott was an arena of struggle in which different actors competed to attain leadership. This observation also applies to organizations of the boycott. I have come across three prominent boycott organizations called the Committee of Boycott [*Boykot/ Boykotaj Cemiyeti*], the Syndicate of Boycott [*Boykotaj Sendikası*] and the Committee of Economic War [*Harb-i İktisadi Cemiyeti*]. Based on existing sources on the boycott, there is no clear answer as to whether boycott organizations with different names refer to separate organizations with different people in charge or whether the same group managed all the organizations.

Indeed, what is more important than searching for a specific founder of each boycott organization is that organizations were multi-actor ones. The boycott itself was not imposed from above but emerged through the participation of different societal actors. Thus, it may be impossible to know precisely which organization was led by whom. Just as the leadership of the boycott never belonged to a particular group like the Unionists, boycott organizations did not pertain exclusively to a specific group of actors. As I have argued about the boycott and the state itself, the organizations were an arena of struggle through which the Unionists, merchants or *esnafs* and workers acted. Therefore, the İzmir Committee of Boycott could take pride in incorporating

both “heroic workers” and merchants¹⁴⁷. Likewise, while the committee felt itself responsible for granting a special certificate [*şhadetname*] to merchants showing their loyalty to the boycott, it has also claimed in its headline that its official publication *Gave* has been the defender of rights of “*esnafs* and workers.” The committee was controlled by neither *esnafs* or merchants nor workers but by the tacit coalition of various actors in which each actor attempted to have more power.

Despite the coexistence of various actors, the Unionists were more dominant within the organizations. The Unionist newspaper *Tanin* published the first call for the establishment of a boycott organization in İstanbul (Çetinkaya, 2004; Quataert, 2017a). Two prominent names of the İstanbul Committee of Boycott –Ziya Balcı and Kibar Ali– were also among the leading CUP members. The official publication of the boycott *Gave* was a supporter of Unionist ideas. This Unionist hegemony also brought the workers and the Unionists together. The committee appreciated *esnafs* and workers for their support of the boycott and called them to continue the boycott.¹⁴⁸ In some other cases, *Gave* –in the name of the Boycott Committee– regarded itself as a representative of workers and dealt with a long-standing conflict between freight waggoners and the municipality.¹⁴⁹ In January 1909, the humor newspaper *Karagöz* narrated that only when the Syndicate of Boycott guaranteed that the goods standing in Customs Administration were not Austrian goods, porters accepted unloading Austrian ships.¹⁵⁰

Boycott organizations were also concerned with merchants and *esnafs*. Along with giving a special certificate showing their compliance, the İzmir Committee declared the names of the merchants who could “prove their refusal to sell the goods of Austria-

¹⁴⁷ “İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyetinden Bircümle Osmanlılara Mühim Bir Tebşir”, *Gave*, 31.12.1908.

¹⁴⁸ “Boykotaj Cemiyeti’nden: İzmir Yük Arabacıları Ustabaşısı Tarafından Gönderilen Tezkere”, *Köylü*, 05.12.1908; “İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyetinden Bircümle Osmanlılara Mühim Bir Tebşir”, *Gave*, 31.12.1908; *Gave Gazetesine: Gördüs Boykotaj Cemiyetinden*”, *Gave*, 15 Ocak 1909.

¹⁴⁹ “Belediye ile Kahraman Arabacılar Beyninde Tahdis Edib Yıllardan Beri Süren İhtilafı *Gave* Halletti”, *Gave*, 31.12.1908.

¹⁵⁰ “Muhavere: Karagöz ve Hacivat Beraber Gümrüğe Girerler”, *Karagöz*, 25.01.1909.

Hungary through bills and documents.”¹⁵¹ It added that the committee was not sure about the attitude of other businesses who could not show their proof of loyalty. Determining who “patriotic” was under the control of boycott organizations. When a governmental official decided that a store be exempt from the boycott, the committee harshly responded: There was “committee of boycott to declare who would be exempt from the boycott if needed.”¹⁵² The İzmir Syndicate of Boycott, likewise, created problems for the merchants who refused to become its members (Çetinkaya, 2004). Boycott organizations spread over a wide area from the Balkans and Anatolia to the Arabian Peninsula (Elmacı, 2005). Considering that each center of the boycott had different combinations of actors and socioeconomic forces, the weight of actors within each organization must have varied. *Gave*, for instance, gives the impression that actors other than merchants were more dominant İzmir Committee of Boycott. On the other hand, the existence of a separate organization in İstanbul for merchants called the “Committee of Economic War” as different from the “Syndicate of Boycott” illustrates the dominance of merchants (Quataert, 2017a) within that organization.

3.2.6. Respect for Free Trade

One point regarding the 1908 Boycott deserves a special emphasis: Despite hesitant remarks on government’s contribution to functioning of economy, views emphasizing the minimality of the government and the respect for free trade always prevailed. In addition to the attitude of the government and the CUP in this direction, the press which represents public opinion has insistently emphasized that the government should have kept its hands off the economic decisions of the society. The people itself were the implementors of the boycott¹⁵³; thus, government officials could never assume the right to prevent popular preference to avoid Austrian goods and services.

¹⁵¹ “İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyetinden Bilcümle Osmanlılara Mühim Bir Tebşir”, *Gave*, 31.12.1908.

¹⁵² “İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyetinde Bu Kerre Neşr Edilen Beyanatname Suretidir”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

¹⁵³ “İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyetinde Bu Kerre Neşr Edilen Beyanatname Suretidir”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908; “Kısm-ı Muhavele”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908; “Zübde-i Siyasiye”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 21.12.1908; “Zübde-i Siyasiye”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 14.12.1908; “Boykotaj Hakkında”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 31.12.1908; “Avusturya”, *Köylü*, 29.11.1908; “Köylü”, *Köylü*, 29.11.1908; “Ahval-i Siyasiye”, *Ahenk*, 01.12.1908.

In this direction, *Gave* as the official publication of the boycott criticized the governor who regards the interference in the boycott among his momentous missions.¹⁵⁴ *Beyanü'l Hak* and *Ahenk* condemned the Austrian government which emphasized the termination of the boycott as a precondition for the continuation of bureaucratic negotiations.¹⁵⁵ The boycott was “a sign of outrage” of *millet*, in which the government intervention was never acceptable. Similarly, *Servet-i Fünun*, which praised itself for starting the boycott,¹⁵⁶ highlighted that the people of any government were autonomous in buying or not buying any good, except for violent attempts.¹⁵⁷ *Köylü* also wrote that *millet* is no longer as blind as before, so the boycott never took place on the advice of the government.¹⁵⁸ At best, the government could ensure that those who would come together for the unification of capital were honest.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, Kamil Pasha government and the Unionists shared the attitude of the newspapers, too: The people should have protested Austrian and Bulgarian attempts, but just to a limited extent. They should have always followed “temperance” and “calm,” enabling public order.¹⁶⁰ Boycotters were subject to the rule of *laissez-faire*. They could prefer not to purchase any Austrian or Bulgarian products. Yet, in any way, they should have avoided any attempt that would cause the government to associate with the boycott. For instance, the participation of those who work in the Customs Administration could mean the indirect involvement of the Ottoman state itself in the boycott.¹⁶¹ The exemption of government officials from the boycott accordingly was related to breaking a probable connection between the government and the mobilized masses.

All the people were free to make economic decisions in the ‘market’ except for gove-

¹⁵⁴ “Kısm-ı Muhavele”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

¹⁵⁵ “Ahval-i Siyasiye”, *Ahenk*, 01.12.1908; “Zübde-i Siyasiye”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 14.12.1908

¹⁵⁶ Ahmed İhsan, “Avusturya Politikası”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 12.11.1908; “Boykotaj Kalktı”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 25.02.1909.

¹⁵⁷ “Boykotaj ve Avusturya Sefiri Mösyö Pallavicini İfadatı”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 26.11.1908; “Müzakere-i İtilaf”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 09.12.1908.

¹⁵⁸ “Avusturya”, *Köylü*, 29.11.1908.

¹⁵⁹ Aynizade Hasan Tahsin, “Ticaret Şirketleri ve Menafii İktisadiyesi”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 02.11.1908

¹⁶⁰ “İttihad ve İtidal”, *Ahenk*, 15.10.1908.

¹⁶¹ “Boykot Kimdir, Boykotaj Nedir?”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 30.10.1908.

ment officials. Therefore, no one could suggest them to take their fezzes off, although wearing fez meant the absence of “patriotism”¹⁶² for most. Governors, district governors and the soldiers wearing a uniform all were exempt from the imperatives of the boycott.¹⁶³ As for porters and lightermen, there existed always the same response in the face of complaints from Austria-Hungary that the Ottoman government never commanded them not to work for Austrian ships: Porters and lightermen have not been government officials; thus, the government was never able to force them to work.¹⁶⁴ No doubt, in a period when the government did not refrain from interfering with the ‘excessive’ mobilization of workers through legal arrangements (Yıldırım, 2013), the newspaper articles on the alleged inability of the government was not convincing. Despite the change in the regime, oppression of lower classes was still there. Moreover, the acclamation of government officials in some instances for their conformity with the boycott –like preferring *kalpak* or *kulah* instead of *fez*¹⁶⁵ or newspaper articles written by them in favor of the boycott¹⁶⁶– constitutes a discrepancy in terms of their exemption from the boycott. Nonetheless, the government, the Unionists and the press all distinguished between government officials and independent workers. In this way, they highlighted not only the minimality of the government in the face of socioeconomic affairs but also the autonomy of the economy against society and politics. The government officials, who represent state and *politics*, could not behave as freely as workers, who represent the *economy*. Yet, even in the distinction between the two groups of participants, the views that the porters working only for an administrative office –like the porters in the Customs Administration– had to leave the boycott existed.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶² “Fesler Hakkında: Dünkü Nümayiş”, *Köylü*, 08.12.1908.

¹⁶³ “Memurlar ve Boykotaj”, *Köylü*, 09.12.1908; “Boykot Kimdir, Boykotaj Nedir?”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 30.10.1908.

¹⁶⁴ “Boykotaj”, *Köylü*, 10.12.1908; “Ahval-i Siyasiye”, *Ahenk*, 01.12.1908

¹⁶⁵ “Kalpak İktisası”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908; “İttihad ve İtidal”, *Ahenk*, 15.10.1908; “Fes-Kalpak”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 26.11.1908.

¹⁶⁶ Gümrük Memurlarından Hafız Ömer, “Boykotaj”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 01.12.1908; İzmir Postahanesi Memurlarından Edremidli Ahmed, “Aynen: İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyet-i Muhteremesine”, *Köylü*, 01.12.1908; Mekteb-i Mülkiye Müdürü Celal, “Vatandaşlarıma Teklifim”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 10.10.1908.

¹⁶⁷ “Boykot Kimdir, Boykotaj Nedir?”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 30.10.1908.

In the boycott, the government should have adopted minimal intervention because no one should have distorted *laissez faire* despite a few opposing views. In other words, rather than challenging the free trade, the 1908 Boycott ensured free trade. The government and the Unionists feared that ‘excessive’ government help in the boycott might distort free functioning of the economy [*serbesti-i bey’ü şira*]¹⁶⁸ and any distortion of free trade would ultimately mean the loss of ‘competition’. The boycott itself was expected to serve competition. In a purely free market economy, Ottomans could not compete with foreign merchants. Accordingly, customs duty did not refer to a direct government intervention but a balancing element between foreign and domestic merchants.¹⁶⁹ The role of the government was to organize and regulate competition. If the Ottoman state were able to levy customs duty on Austrian goods, the competition with Austria would become possible then.¹⁷⁰ Similarly, emphases on the unification of Ottoman merchants to establish new domestic companies aimed at the equalization of Ottoman merchants with foreign merchants in competition.¹⁷¹ Ottomans would be able to produce their own goods without resort to foreign ones then.

Yet, the idea that the boycott could disrupt free trade must have come to mind, and accordingly there was a response to it: Ottomans should not dare to purchase Austrian goods or services or work for an Austrian company but this could not mean distortion of the people’s rights to buying the goods or services they desire or to working in the service of a company they choose.¹⁷² In other words, one could suggest avoidance of Austrian goods and services but never force Ottomans to do it. The general respect of the boycott for free trade was most apparent in the objection of a columnist İsmail Safa of *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, a newspaper defending economic

¹⁶⁸ “Kısm-ı Muhavele”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

¹⁶⁹ İsmail Safa, “Serbestii Ticaret ve Usul-i Himaye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 22.11.1908; “Muharebe Ne Demektir? Muharebeye Ne Gibi Şeyler Sebeb Olur...”, *Köylü*, 14.10.1908

¹⁷⁰ İsmail Safa, “Serbestii Ticaret ve Usul-i Himaye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 06.12.1908

¹⁷¹ “Harb-i İktisadi”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 18.10.1908; Aynızade Hasan Tahsin, “Ticaret Şirketleri ve Menafii İktisadiyesi”, *Beyanü'l Hak*, 02.11.1908.

¹⁷² “Boykot Kimdir, Boykotaj Nedir?”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 30.10.1908; “Memleketimiz Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı Muharebe-yi İktisadiye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 06.12.1908.

protectionism¹⁷³, to Cavid Bey who unconditionally defended free trade in *Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye Mecmuası*. According to the former, rather than adopting unlimited free trade, government had to adopt a dual stance: It could partially adopt protection of products like sugar; however, Ottomans still had to import the goods impossible to produce inside. Any attempt should not have damaged free trade. The government was able to impose the 15 percent customs duty on Austria-Hungary; however, it should not have spread to other countries' commodities or the goods hard to produce home. Such a case would be “a serious economic mistake”.¹⁷⁴ The same columnist in his previous writings already emphasized the limitedness of government which is “only responsible for the internal and external security of the country”.¹⁷⁵

Then, even a harsh objection by a protectionist intellectual to defenders of free trade like Cavid Bey—mistakenly and exclusively called a “liberal” intellectual—ended up with the defense of free trade in the boycott context. The more interesting point regarding Cavid Bey is –despite İsmail Safa's protectionist disapproval of his stance—the existence of his writings that support the boycott (Çetinkaya, 2004, pp. 164–165). While I do not distinguish any mention of the boycott in his newspaper *Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye Mecmuası*, Çetinkaya detects some emphases on the boycott in *İkdam*: Austria had sold its products like fez without encountering any competition so far. Ottomans could not win *economically* the Austrian merchants who both professionalized in the production and owned a significant amount of capital, and the boycott constituted a “*non-economic* instrument” to overcome them. In this way, just as prevalent in the boycott process, through the regulating statements or moral concepts imposed, he separates the economic from the non-economic, and restricts the boycott to the latter. Cavid Bey's implicit support can be related to the hegemony of the nationalist ideology that the Unionists have strictly promoted. However, even the

¹⁷³ Although İsmail Safa calls his stance “moderate protectionism” [*himaye-i makule*], because I cannot realize a substantial difference between “moderate” and pure versions of protectionism, I prefer to utilize his “moderate protectionism” as merely protectionism. As this thesis argues, mere protectionism itself includes free market economy as a noticeable component.

¹⁷⁴ İsmail Safa, “Serbestii Ticaret ve Usul-i Himaye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 25.03.1909.

¹⁷⁵ İsmail Safa, “Serbestii Ticaret ve Usul-i Himaye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 22.11.1908

inconsistently supportive attitude of Cavid Bey who would become the minister of finance several times in the National Economy period (1908-14) is illustrative in showing the approximation between “liberal” and “national” economic views.

3.2.7. The Merchant and *Esnaf* of the Boycott

In this part of the thesis, I focus on the participation of not only merchants but also *esnafs* in the 1908 Boycott. Contrary to the conventional wisdom influenced by Zafer Toprak, merchants and *esnafs* are not mutually exclusive categories. The literature assumes the latter to be backed by the state and the Unionists and calls only the former the bourgeoisie. Indeed, they are two categories between which connections and transitions exist.

The growing Ottoman tendency towards a capitalist economy and commercialization in the 19th century made the Ottoman *esnafs* increasingly more integrated with the international market (Çelik, 2022), which ended up blurring the boundaries between the merchant and the *esnaf*. Just as the merchants who were engaged in international trade, *esnafs* who were more active in internal trade showed a tendency of embourgeoisement (Eldem, 2014). *Esnafs* did not die out in the face of competition with non-Muslim merchants, adapted to economic changes (Pamuk, 2021) and were exposed to capitalist transformation and embourgeoisement. Contrary to Toprak mentioned in the previous chapter that the National Economy empowered the *esnaf*, the boycott does not *necessarily* contribute to the empowerment of *esnaf*, assumed to transform later into *milli* bourgeoisie by the NET, in the face of merchants.

Yet, it does not mean I utilize merchant and *esnaf* as equivalent. I just point out the blurred boundaries between two group of actors, and the embourgeoisement of not only the merchant but also the *esnaf*. In the boycott context, accordingly, categories of merchant and *esnaf* are not necessarily exclusive. Yet, I still keep using the terms *esnaf* and merchant separately since my primary sources sometimes use *esnaf*. Moreover, the use of *esnaf* is more appropriate in some instances where it means a small retail store with only local connections. In the primary and secondary sources on the boycott,

I realized two usages of *esnaf*. First, newspapers used it almost as equivalent to workers. They called freight waggoners and dock workers *esnaf*.¹⁷⁶ Public opinion reportedly appreciated their “patriotism” for their determined support for the boycott. Yet, they had been also pursuing their class interests long before the boycott; thus, the tacit coalition of the Unionists, the Porte and the press had to keep them under control. Second, the newspapers used *esnaf* to refer to those who owned a retail store and were usually skilled in artisanship.¹⁷⁷

While the first meaning of the word *esnaf* is closer to the worker, this usage is related to the category of merchant. My concern with *esnaf* stems from this second meaning. In the newspapers, there was no clear differentiation between the merchant and the *esnaf* as a skilled owner of a retail store. Again, this unclear boundary was due to both the economic situation of the era –enlarging market and dominance of capitalist mentality in the Ottoman territory– and the rather uninformed and superfluous use of terms *esnaf* and merchant. Moreover, in line with the change in socioeconomic relations, the meaning of the terms was changing, too. Those who were called *esnaf* for a long time might be the merchants of the new era.

The encouragement in the newspapers urging the “merchants” to unify their capitals to establish companies¹⁷⁸ or attributing them the primary role to developing home-production units¹⁷⁹ are pretty illustrative. Based on these statements, the distinction between a “merchant” lacking sufficient capital and an international network who was

¹⁷⁶ “Boykotaj Cemiyeti’nden: İzmir Yük Arabacıları Ustabaşısı Tarafından Gönderilen Tezkere”, *Köylü*, 05.12.1908; “Boykotaj Cemiyetinin İzmir’de Naşir-i Efkarı -Gemici-Ateşçi-Kayıkçı-Vapur ve Mavna Amelesi-Hamal-Arabacı Vesair Esnaf ve Amelenin Müdafî-i Hukuku Olmak Üzere Haftada Bir Defa Neşr Olunur Osmanlı Gazetesidir”, *Gave*, 31.12.1908; “Boykotaj Cemiyetinin İzmir’de Naşir-i Efkarı -Gemici-Ateşçi-Kayıkçı-Vapur ve Mavna Amelesi-Hamal-Arabacı Vesair Esnaf ve Amelenin Müdafî-i Hukuku Olmak Üzere Haftada Bir Defa Neşr Olunur Osmanlı Gazetesidir”, *Gave*, 15.01.1909.

¹⁷⁷ Velieddin “Kasabadan Yazılıyor”, *Köylü*, 01.11.1908; “İttihad ve İtidal”, *Ahenk*, 15.10.1908; “Dahili Telgrafımız”, *Karagöz*, 19.10.1908; *Gave* Gazetesine: Gördüs Boykotaj Cemiyetinden”, *Gave*, 15 Ocak 1909; “Telgraflar”, *Karagöz*, 02.11.1908.

¹⁷⁸ “Harb-i İktisadi”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 18.10.1908; Aynizade Hasan Tahsin, “Ticaret Şirketleri ve Menafii İktisadiyesi”, *Beyanü’l Hak*, 02.11.1908; “Alem-i İslamiyet”, *Beyanü’l Hak*, 25.01.1909; “En Ehemmiyetli İşlerimizden Şirketler”, *Köylü*, 01.12.1908.

¹⁷⁹ “Fes”, *Beyanü’l Hak*, 26.10.1908; Aynizade Hasan Tahsin, “Ticaret Şirketleri ve Menafii İktisadiyesi”, *Beyanü’l Hak*, 02.11.1908.

encouraged to bring together this limited capital with other “merchants”, on the one hand, and an *esnaf*, on the other, is unclear. There is no reason, for instance, to assume that producers of leather and shoes¹⁸⁰ who do not have capital in substantial amounts and international connections are “*esnafs*” but not small merchants. Furthermore, in some cases, there can be an overlap of the two actors, where it is impossible to be sure about including a person exclusively to the category of either *esnaf* or merchant. For instance, “merchants” who ordered sugar to their store in a district but sent it back when they realized Austrian origin¹⁸¹ could be both merchant and *esnaf*. They ran their business in small districts with limited international connections, but they had enough capital to trade with the big merchants of port cities or to with international merchants.

The reason I devote a significant space to discussing the term *esnaf* is to enlarge the boundaries of the term merchant, to highlight that merchant might overlap with *esnaf* in some instances and ultimately to emphasize that the ‘bourgeoisie’ as a concept might encompass this broad conception of the merchant. In this vein, the merchants were not a uniform group but a one whose boundaries occasionally expanded or contracted; thus, intra-class conflicts or inconsistencies always existed. Hence, I propose to reconsider the role of merchants in a broader sense in the boycott, while not ignoring their role in the social formation as the bourgeoisie. Based on the extensive meaning of the word merchant, I aim to avoid the underrepresentation of merchants in the boycott in this thesis. In other words, I suggest that the role of merchants can be larger and also more contradictory than the literature has claimed so far. Based on this notion of merchant, one can say that there were both merchants who supported and did not support the boycott. There were merchants who both benefitted from and suffered from it. Merchants who did not follow the boycott were the merchants who were potentially damaged by it. After all, the popular aversion to Austrian goods threatened the interests of not only Austrian merchants¹⁸² but also some Ottoman merchants (Çetinkaya, 2004). In the face of such possibility, Ottoman

¹⁸⁰ Velieddin “Kasabadan Yazılıyor”, *Köylü*, 01.11.1908.

¹⁸¹ “Aydın Vilayeti”, *Ahenk*, 12.11.1908.

¹⁸² “Devlet-i Osmaniye ve Avusturya Müzakeratı”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 30.12.1908.

merchants resorted to legitimate or illegitimate ways to encounter the threat. The attempts to deceive the people by claiming Austrian goods to be French or English origin reflected a desire to minimize the threat they felt.¹⁸³ The merchant Samanlızade Abdulvahab's annunciation in *Servet-i Fünun* that he always followed the boycott, and the rolling papers produced in his factory were never Austrian-origin¹⁸⁴ was a manifestation of his willingness to alleviate negative results of the boycott on his business. The rally organized by the losing *esnafs* and merchants of fez in İstanbul (Elmacı, 1997b) was also the reaction of merchants who could not cope with the economic loss caused by the boycott. However, they do not share a common and consistent attitude. As for workers of the boycott, for instance, despite exceptions like those who work for services of Austrian companies¹⁸⁵, there is general compliance with the boycott. The same applies to the Unionists. The attitude of merchants towards the boycott, on the other hand, was more fragmentary, which results once more in their underrepresentation in both primary and secondary sources that I have analyzed. The lack of a common attitude among merchants to support or not to support the boycott created the illusion that merchants –call it the Ottoman bourgeoisie– participated in the boycott but just as a corollary of the Unionists. However, a more careful look at the merchants of the boycott reveals their genuine presence in the boycott and their varying decisions to join or not join the boycott. Their presence could be in the shape of not only 'support' for but also 'opposition' to the boycott albeit the latter position took a more implicit form. First of all, there is a good deal of news in the newspapers about porters refraining from carrying Austrian goods,¹⁸⁶ which I have previously discussed. In this way, the porters caused these products to go bad in ports or to be

¹⁸³ "Aynen: İzmir Boykotaj Cemiyet-i Muhteremesine", *Köylü*, 01.12.1908; Gümrük Memurlarından Hafız Ömer, "Boykotaj", *Servet-i Fünun*, 01.12.1908.

¹⁸⁴ "Hürriyet ve Adalet Sigara Kağıtlarının Sahib-i İmtiyazı Samanlızade Abdul Vahab", *Servet-i Fünun*, 21.11.1908.

¹⁸⁵ "Avusturya-Türkiye Münasebeti", *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 07.12.1908.

¹⁸⁶ "Boykotaj Cemiyeti'nden: İzmir Yük Arabacıları Ustabaşısı Tarafından Gönderilen Tezkere", *Köylü*, 05.12.1908; "Telgraflar", *Ahenk*, 17.10.1908; "Şehrimizde Boykotaj", *Köylü*, 08.12.1908; "Harb-i İktisadi", *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 18.10.1908; "Köylü", *Gave*, 17.12.1908; "Memleketimiz Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı Muharebe-yi İktisadiye", *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 06.12.1908; "Boykotaj", *Köylü*, 10.12.1908; "Boykotaj Elan Devam Ediyor", *Servet-i Fünun*, 09.02.1909; "Neasmirmi gazetesinin aldığı...", *Köylü*, 10.12.1908; "Boykotaj Kalktı", *Servet-i Fünun*, 25.02.1909.

sent back to their country of origin. These goods could be ordered to the Ottoman territory by one of two merchant groups: either the foreign merchants, such as the French or the English, who traded in the Ottoman territory with Austrian merchants or Ottoman merchants who owned considerable capital and had access to international networks to trade with their European counterparts. In either case, considering that there were several moments of confrontation in which workers refused to unload Austrian ships, there existed a significant number of merchants based in Ottoman territories who ordered Austrian goods and deliberately disobeyed the boycott. Each confrontation in ports between workers and officials of Austrian ships, then, meant an infringement of the boycott by merchants, which took place several times during the boycott. However, newspapers did not touch on the merchant violations of the boycott as lucidly as the workers' reaction to Austrian goods in ports. When porters did not unload the cargo of an Austrian ship and its cargo had to wait in the dock, newspapers held the Austrian ambassador Pallavicini responsible –but not the merchant whose order of the goods the porters rejected to unload.¹⁸⁷ Even after the termination of the boycott when merchants were allowed to order Austrian goods–, recommendations of newspapers to end the boycott were directed mostly to workers but not merchants.¹⁸⁸

Yet, the abovementioned invisibility of merchant foot-dragging by no means refers to their total non-participation in the boycott. Indeed, their invisibility might be the proof of their presence. In other words, the power of the merchants as a part of the bourgeoisie might come from disappearing rather than appearing in active politics (Uçar, 2013). Their dominance might be “most effective where it was most silent and anonymous” (Blackbourn & Eley, 1984, p. 204). After all, they witnessed the boycotts in other places of the world (Çetinkaya, 2004) and they must have learned from the bourgeoisies in these boycotts. In the 1905 Chinese Boycott, for instance, merchants had been the leading actors and united around the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce. Nevertheless, the attempts of merchants “to get rid of foreign competition and build

¹⁸⁷ “Boykotaj”, *Köylü*, 10.12.1908.

¹⁸⁸ “Boykotaj”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 03.02.1909; “Boykotajın Ref'i”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 27.02.1908; “Boykotaj”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 28.02.1909.

up a national industry” (Mckee, 1986, p. 166) ended up with their declaration of a “truce” (1986, p. 187), which means their acceptance of the defeat. Ottoman merchants who were aware of the Chinese Boycott¹⁸⁹ must have tried otherwise.

There were some momentary flashes of light, indicating merchants’ presence in the boycott. Although newspapers rarely mention the full names of merchants as active participants, except for disclosure of merchants by the committees of boycott, a writer of *Servet-i Fünun* spelled out the name Abud Efendi among “honorable merchants”.¹⁹⁰ The writer suggested that these “honorable merchants” compose a commission to inspect which middlemen ordered Austrian goods and which merchants sold them. In the same period, Abud Efendi, of whom I did not see any account or any sign of his participation in the boycott, was the head of Dersaadet Chamber of Commerce. On the one hand, he had been awarded the Pride Medal by Abdulhamid for his contribution to Hijaz railways (Gülsoy & Nazır, 2009); on the other hand, several years later, he gladly applauded the new regime of 1908 and added that the oppressive ancien régime was genuinely responsible for the ineffectiveness of chambers and the new regime would remove the obstacles towards entrepreneurial freedom (Koraltürk, 2002).

The columnist suggested two other names to compose a commission to oversee other merchants: “Nemlizadeler” and “Şamlı Mustafa ve Mahdumları”. Similar to Abud Efendi, a member of Şamlızade family, Şamlızade Mehmet, was a member of the Chamber. Likewise, although any member of the Nemlizade family did not take place in the executive of the chamber in 1908 when the boycott took place, from 1897 to 1919, multiple members of the family ranked among the senior executives of the Chamber (Gülsoy & Nazır, 2009). I should highlight that the executive committee of the Dersaadet Chamber of Commerce was not open to every merchant (and *esnaf*) who wanted to participate. The chamber classified merchants into four categories, and only

¹⁸⁹ Abidin Davud, “Vatanını Seven Osmanlılar”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 10.10.1908; “Harb-i İktisadi”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 18.10.1908; “Yine Ahalimize ve Vatandaşlarımıza”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 09.10.1908; Horasani, “Sulhen Müdafaa-yı Hukukun Bir Vasıtası”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 07.10.1908; “Şark Meselesi Hakkında”, *Şura-yı Ümmet*, 11.01.1909.

¹⁹⁰ Mekteb-i Mülkiye Müdürü Celal, “Vatandaşlarıma Teklifim”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 10.10.1908.

first-class and second-class categories, composed of wealthier merchants, could take part in the executive.

Yet, there may be situations where this invisibility did not necessarily benefit merchants. A newspaper claimed that “Franko, Veroplu, Bardakoglu and Nişli Hacı Ali Aga” brought one thousand five hundred sacks of sugar from Austria and distributed them to grocery stores under the name of Russian sugar.¹⁹¹ Then, these merchants, members of the bourgeoisie, were the names that lacked “patriotism”, whose goods Ottomans should avoid. Among these merchants who were expected to suffer from the boycott, Nişli Hacı Ali Aga was one of the grand merchants of İzmir so much so that he and the merchants around him established the İzmir Commodity Exchange (*İzmir Ticaret Borsası*, n.d.). Yet, except for this flash of light that we could see him, there was no news on how Nişli Hacı Ali supported or not supported the boycott, too. Unlike Abud Efendi –a writer of *Servet-i Fünun* promoted his economic interests by extolling him as an “honorable merchant”, and he probably benefitted from the boycott– Nişli Hacı Ali must have been among the losers.

The veiled visibility of merchants should bring to mind that merchants –the bourgeoisie– might be embedded in the boycott process, and they must have realized that they would achieve their interests through ways “other than heroic means or open political action” (Blackbourn & Eley, 1984, p. 16). Their invisibility or veiled visibility strengthened their hegemony and helped them defend their collective interests. In this way, the attempts towards equalizing the competitive power of Ottoman merchants vis-a-vis non-Ottoman merchants by creating obstacles to the latter could take a “natural” form. Likewise, people could purchase domestic products even if they were more expensive,¹⁹² which is “naturally” expected from them. “Patriotism” in an economic sense could become a “natural” and inevitable reaction of the masses, a popular response that had already been expected from them.

¹⁹¹ “Aydın Vilayeti”, *Ahenk*, 01.10.1908.

¹⁹² “Harb-i İktisadi”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 18.10.1908.

3.2.8. Termination of the Boycott

By January 1909, the news on the boycott had substantially diminished and they were immediately replaced by the news on negotiations between Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman state. Now, “a new era of agreement commenced”.¹⁹³ There were still stories that the boycott continued to instill severe damage to Austria-Hungary¹⁹⁴, and that the boycott spread new regions outside the Ottoman territory.¹⁹⁵ Apparently, even the termination of the boycott was a matter of contention among the actors of the boycott.

On January 18, 1909, the government sent an official document to the Customs Administration stating that the boycott should not continue since negotiations with Austria were in motion and that the administration would take necessary measures if it continued.¹⁹⁶ This contradicted the previous claims of the government that it had no role in the boycott as it now got involved in the boycott to terminate it. When porters refused to unload the Austrian ships, it did not hesitate to summon soldiers to make sure that Ottoman trade relations with Austria-Hungary were safe.¹⁹⁷ After all, the role of the government was to protect and be sure of the well-functioning of the free market, if necessary, through security forces. Moreover, Hilmi Pasha, the fresh Grand-Vizier, gladly praised the precautions, some of which necessitated brute force, that the government took to end the boycott. The government also gave the Boycott Commission an order to terminate the boycott.¹⁹⁸ After this “order”, a group composed of the members of the “Syndicate of Boycott” went to the Customs Administration and asked “patriotic” porters and lightermen to leave the boycott.¹⁹⁹ Rıza Tevfik, Unionist Edirne deputy, also delivered a speech to convince them to cease the boycott.

¹⁹³ “Türkiye-Avusturya”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 10.01.1909.

¹⁹⁴ “Avusturya’nın Teklifi”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 12.01.1909; “Ajans Telgrafları”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 17.01.1909; “Boykotaj”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 09.01.1909

¹⁹⁵ “Müteferrika”, *Beyanü’l Hak*, 18.12.1908; “Alem-i İslamiyet”, *Beyanü’l Hak*, 25.12.1908

¹⁹⁶ “Boykotaj: Rüsumat Emanetinden”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 30.01.1909.

¹⁹⁷ Hilmi Paşa ile Mülakat”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 20.02.1909; “Boykotajın Ref’i”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 27.02.1909.

¹⁹⁸ “Boykotaj Kalktı”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 25.02.1909.

¹⁹⁹ “Boykotajın Ref’i”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 27.02.1909.

The government was not the only actor demanding an end to the boycott, this was the goal the CUP shared now. Accordingly, unlike in the last three months of 1908, the boycott and Unionist names rarely appeared side by side in the newspapers. Unionists were also unhappy with the uncontrollable mobilization of the masses, especially workers. Actors of the bourgeoisie revolution of 1908 feared the mobilized classes. In Trabzon, after the governor made the Austrian-Ottoman agreement published in local newspapers, Unionists ordered an end to the boycott, and lightermen followed this command (Quataert, 2017a). The new regime of 1908 had to stay on the right track. Just a few months later, the 31 March Incident would take place. However, the workers did not wish to end the boycott just yet. Although there were news stories that the porters welcomed its completion,²⁰⁰ ambassador Pallavicini's persistent complaints to the government around the same days suggest otherwise. He complained that, although negotiations were continuing, the boycott did not come to an end,²⁰¹ which means that workers continued to embrace the boycott. Even in early March, Pallavicini complained that the boycott was still in force, and he intended to leave İstanbul, but "temperance and seriousness of the Ottoman government dissuaded him".²⁰² A newspaper story published on February 9 used the heading "The Boycott is Still Continuing", and pointed out porters to refuse to unload ships of Austrian Llyod company, and the same took place in Trieste as well.²⁰³ In Trablus, in mid-January, watermen stopped and insulted the Honorary Ambassador of Trablus while trying to reach the mainland through a canoe after getting off a Lloyd ferry.²⁰⁴ Even long after signing the protocol on February 26, 1909, dock workers declared they would "certainly keep their hands off of Austrian goods" (Yıldırım, 2013, p. 200). Ottoman porters were determined to maintain it until the parliament ratified the agreement. The workers under pressure of Provisional Law of Strike tried to keep their elbow room.

²⁰⁰ "Boykotaj", *Servet-i Fünun*, 28.02.1909.

²⁰¹ "Devlet-i Osmaniye-Avusturya-Macaristan", *Servet-i Fünun*, 24.01.1909; "Avusturya Sefaretinin Şikayetleri", *Servet-i Fünun*, 26.01.1909; "Boykotaj", *Servet-i Fünun*, 20.02.1909.

²⁰² "Protokol ve Layiha-yı İzahiye", *Servet-i Fünun*, 07.03.1909.

²⁰³ "Boykotaj Elan Devam Ediyor", *Servet-i Fünun*, 09.02.1909

²⁰⁴ "Avusturya Sefaretinin Şikayetleri", *Servet-i Fünun*, 26.01.1909; "Trablus Hadisesi", *Servet-i Fünun*, 16.02.1909.

The boycott created a free space for workers in which they raised their interests. The Interest of workers was not compatible with that of the bourgeoisie anymore.

After the two sides signed the protocol, “there was no need to continue the boycott”²⁰⁵. Yet, it had to be approved in the respective parliaments. In the end, the Ottoman state recognized the annexation, which had already been under *de facto* control of Austria-Hungary for a long time, and the Austrian state consented to submit in early January a 2,5 million *liras* of compensation to Ottoman Empire. While the compensation clause created a climate of victory, the press highlighted that this amount was inadequate to compensate for the loss of Ottoman territory. Throughout negotiations, although the Ottoman demand for increasing customs duty to 15 percent was on the agenda,²⁰⁶ there is no reliable information that Austria-Hungary had accepted the Ottoman request. The Ottoman state ultimately had to make do with Yenipazar, which Austria-Hungary abandoned as compensation.²⁰⁷ The boycott officially ended when the deputies ratified it in the Ottoman Parliament in the first week of April.²⁰⁸

Although the Ottoman Empire took the compensation it demanded and terminated the boycott without engaging in a costly and deadly battle, the question regarding the success of the boycott remained unanswered. Before evaluating the success of the 1908 Boycott, we need to put what the boycott meant. At this point, I quote the aims of the boycott from *Gave*, the official publication of the boycott: “A boycott means a sort of a *milli* war declared by subjects of the state influenced by it, against all the goods and services of a state or an amirate that acts contrary to the international law and agreements or that infringes boundaries of civilization.”²⁰⁹ Apparently, the boycott aimed at damaging the infringer country through an economic “war”. Since the very

²⁰⁵ “Boykotajın Ref’i”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 27.02.1909.

²⁰⁶ “Avusturya’nın Teklifi”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 12.01.1909; “Zübde-i Siyasiye”, *Beyanü’l Hak*, 21.12.1908; “Osmanlı-Avusturya”, *Köylü*, 27.12.1908.

²⁰⁷ “Yenipazar Sancağı”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 01.12.1908; “Ahval-i Siyasiye”, *Ahenk*, 01.12.1908; “Zübde-i Siyasiye”, *Beyanü’l Hak*, 21.12.1908.

²⁰⁸ Ahval-i Siyasiye”, *Ahenk*, 08.04.1909.

²⁰⁹ “Boykotaj”, *Gave*, 17.12.1908.

“subjects” of the other state would carry out the boycott, there was a popular component, too.

It is difficult to measure how much damage the boycott brought about for the economic situation of Austria-Hungary. From the Ottoman side, newspapers emphasized Austria-Hungary’s economic losses from the boycott.²¹⁰ Newspapers considered its acceptance to start negotiations as a manifestation of the hardship Austria-Hungary encountered. *Servet-i Fünun* cited from the newspaper *İstanbul* that the total economic cost and military expenditures of Austria-Hungary reached 337 million, and 1,5 million francs was added each month.²¹¹ In related *Ticaret Layihası*, Ottoman official documents, which includes information parallel to the newspapers, there is an effort to prove that the boycott heavily harmed Austria. Trieste Consulate, an economically significant city of Austria-Hungary then, wrote that, due to the financial crisis in America and the boycott, there was a stagnation in the trade of Trieste with the Ottoman Empire.²¹² Yet, in the chart in which the consulate compared and contrasted the import and export through Trieste with Austria-Hungary in 1908 and 1909, the difference between the two was not substantial. Even so, the comparison of the years 1908 and 1909, which did not overlap with the *Rumi* calendar Ottomans used, could not give a credible result. Moreover, as the consulate revealed, other factors such as a financial crisis in another part of the world influenced the import and export with Austria-Hungary.

Şevket Pamuk’s analysis on the Ottoman import and export relations with European countries also reveals the difficulty of determining the amount of economic damage the boycott caused (as cited in Quataert, 2017a). From 1907 to 1908, the amount of Ottoman imports from Austria-Hungary decreased by %25. However, its imports from

²¹⁰ “Boykotaj Hakkında Müzakere”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 20.12.1908; “Boykotajın Ref’i”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 27.02.1909; “Avusturya”, *Köylü*, 29.11.1908; “Boykotaj”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 03.02.1909; “Memleketimiz Avusturya Emtiasına Karşı Muharebe-yi İktisadiye”, *Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi*, 06.12.1908.

²¹¹ “Boykotaj”, *Servet-i Fünun*, 03.02.1909.

²¹² “Trieste Şehbenderliğinin 1909 Senesine Aid Ticaret Layihasıdır”, *Ticaret Layihası No:4*, 1909 (1327).

Germany diminished by %22 as well, thus recording just a small difference between the fall in imports from Germany and Austria-Hungary. In parallel, as Quataert (2017a) has highlighted, although the total trading of 34 Austrian post offices in the Ottoman territory decreased by %10, that of some other branches, including the İstanbul branch, considerably augmented from November 1907 to November 1908. Overall, the 1908 Boycott was a complex process the success of which can hardly be measured. Moreover, 4-5 months is not long enough to measure economic damage. In such a short period, Ottomans could bring about a certain level of damage to the Austrian economy but could not strike a devastating blow. Similarly, Ottomans could refrain from Austrian goods and services and prefer domestic ones, but they could not build domestic factories or companies in this short time. The boycotters were possibly aware of it. For each group of actors, however, the boycott had different goals beyond economically hurting Austria-Hungary.

Furthermore, it was open to question to what extent the boycott really aimed at destructive results. At first glance, it resulted from mere '*milli* sentiments' that emerged as an outcome of the Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Bulgarian independence; thus, it aimed at harming Austria-Hungary economically. Yet, a deeper look reveals that the boycott represented a search for incorporating Ottoman merchants into a 'competitive' free market in which non-Ottoman merchants were already included. The boycott constituted an Ottoman attempt to be incorporated into the free market through in-free-market ways, but never an opposition to the free market economy. Contrary to the literature that regards the "National "Economy" in opposition to the "liberal" free-market economic model and associates the 1908 Boycott with the former, the boycott already took the free market for granted. Considering all these, damaging Austro-Hungarian economy extensively would mean damaging the capitalist free market system that the Ottomans tried to be a part of. The Ottoman expectation from the boycott, therefore, was not to erase Austria-Hungary from the arena of the free market through destructive out-of-play methods but to penalize it through the rules of the play.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

This thesis has been an attempt to question the dichotomy assumed to exist in the Ottoman economic thought between “liberal” economy / *laissez faire* and “national” economy / protectionism. It has specifically concentrated on the periodization of the 1908-18 era that the existing literature largely divides as “liberal” and “national”. This study has embarked on such inquiry through a study of the 1908 Ottoman Boycott. It claims that the 1908 Boycott presents an appropriate opportunity to re-question a settled dualism between historically opposite strands of Ottoman economic thought. Contrary to scholars who relate the 1908 Boycott exclusively to the National Economy, this thesis has argued that the boycott that promotes protectionist arguments incorporates considerable instances of “liberal” / free trade approach. Thus, it is more appropriate to evaluate the boycott neither through “liberal” economy nor “national” economy but through their overlap.

From the late 19th century onwards, the dualism between *usul-i himaye* and *serbesti-i ticaret* characterized Ottoman economic thought. The existing literature argues that, until the Hamidian rule, the Ottoman economy was dominated by *laissez-faire/serbesti-i ticaret* ideas, yet the Hamidian period was one of protectionism. After a while, *laissez-faire* ideas supposedly became dominant again. In the post-1908 period, the oscillation was between the “liberal” economy and the “national” economy.

This dichotomous structure of Ottoman economic thought leaves a legacy to the post-1908 period. Accordingly, the existing literature divides the 1908-18 period into two sections: the 1908-13/14 “liberal” economy period and the 1913/14-18 “national” economy period. Among this literature, a significant names of the literature from diverse schools including Zafer Toprak, Sina Akşin, Şevket Pamuk, Feroz Ahmad, Murat Koraltürk and partially Tefvik Çavdar and Korkut Boratav. Based on this

division, the literature attributes distinguishing characteristics to two approaches and periods. State intervention is the most prominent dividing line between the “liberal”/ free trade economy and the “national”/ protectionist economy. The National Economy represents active state intervention in economy to protect small producers and *esnaf*s and to create a national bourgeoisie. The “liberal” economy, the historical opposite of the National Economy, suggests at least theoretically a total withdrawal of the state and the domination of free competition. The National Economy undertakes a positive mission in that it prevents the national merchants from being crushed under the pressure of foreign bourgeoisie. The “liberal” / *laissez-faire* economy stands for the imperial ambitions of foreign countries. Until the Unionists “created” a national economy, a national bourgeoisie did not exist. The bourgeoisie was absent, class dynamics were hardly there, and capitalism was yet to appear in full. Throughout the thesis, I have called this line of argumentation that divides the 1908-18 period into periods of “liberal” economy and “national” economy and attributes such distinctive characteristics to this division as the National Economy Thesis (NET). Yet, since the NET does not a consistent set of arguments, this thesis has regarded Zafer Toprak as the ideal type of the NET, who has a wide impact on the literature on the 1908-18 period.

Considering such a periodization that the NET literature pioneered by Toprak employs, the 1908 Boycott against Austrian and also Bulgarian goods and services that the literature largely associates with the National Economy broke out in early October 1908, when the “liberal” economy of the revolutionary regime had recently been established. Then, an apparent contradiction comes to light. Scholars of the boycott literature evaluates it as one of the early embodiments of the “national” economy, but it broke out at the very start of the “liberal” economy period. This thesis has delved into this discrepancy between the leitmotiv attached to the boycott and its timing. It has argued that the dividing line between the “liberal” economy and the National Economy is not as sharp as the NET literature suggests. Moreover, it has claimed that the historically established duality between the two economic strands does not present an appropriate analytical framework to examine the 1908 Boycott and also the economic thinking of the 1908-18 period. The 1908 Boycott has indeed

substantial traces of its historical opposite, i.e., the “liberal” / free market economy. As this study of the boycott has revealed, the National Economy also referred to a liberal perception of economy. Thus, I have suggested to reconsider to replace the dichotomy between the “liberal” economy and the “national” economy with the dualism between protectionism and *laissez-faire*/free trade, and underline that both were liberal perspectives in essence.

Besides the re-evaluation of the existing dichotomies in the history of Ottoman economic thought, this thesis has also suggested reevaluating the 1908 Boycott itself. The boycott literature, which consists of a limited number of studies, discusses the boycott largely with respect to the National Economy. Although there are considerable studies such as the Doğan Çetinkaya’s study the *1908 Ottoman Boycott* which does not disconnect the boycott from liberal-capitalist premises, the evaluation of the boycott through the National Economy without taking its historical anti-thesis into consideration reproduces the “liberal” economy - “national” economy duality and places the boycott against “liberal economy”. Moreover, the literature takes the National Economy for granted and fails to place it in an appropriate historical and conceptual framework. Thus, it disguises other dimensions of the boycott under the veil of the National Economy. Hence, this thesis has also aimed to contribute to the literature on the 1908 Boycott.

Yet, one point should be clarified: This thesis regards the National Economy within a historical process; thus, it focuses on its supposed contrast to “liberal” economy. However, this study is absolutely aware that the concept National Economy also refers to the appropriation of wealth of non-Muslim bourgeoisie in favor of Muslim national bourgeoisie and the accumulation of wealth by dispossessing non-Muslims bourgeoisie especially after Balkan Wars. Yet, this study focuses on the moment of the 1908 Boycott in which such a dispossession did not come to light yet, as apparent as in the period after Balkan Wars. Moreover, such conceptualization of the National Economy as an oppressive and appropriative process itself proves that the National Economy, which evolved from *usul-i himaye* / protectionism of the 19th century considerably holds a liberal content.

Clarifying the relationship between the National Economy and the 1908 Boycott, this thesis has firstly analyzed the binary nature of the Ottoman economic thought in Chapter 2. It has argued that the oscillation between *usul-i himaye* and *serbesti-i ticaret* was neither peculiar to the Ottoman context nor a proof of Ottoman backwardness but resulted from worldwide economic changes like the Long Depression. After freeing the protectionism-free trade debate from Ottoman particularism, I have interrogated the historical roots of each approach. In order to avoid cursory judgements, I have restricted the focus of this thesis to the 1908-18 period, and I have analyzed a broad spectrum of scholars from Kemalism to World System Theory. My analysis on the periodization of the 1908-18 period has proved that there is an entrenched consensus regarding the periodization of the given era as “liberal” and “national”.

In the next section, since the National Economy Thesis (NET) stands for the literature that applies to this duality, I have problematized the presumptions of the NET that urges it to make a duality between the two. It is the value-laden nature of it in favor of liberalism and its several assumptions that lie behind the rivalry between “liberal” and “national” economy. I have discussed the problems of the NET in two interrelated subsections by focusing primarily on Zafer Toprak’s arguments. First, Toprak makes the state so central to his analysis that the state becomes an independent variable and a part of a dialectical duality. The centrality of the state stems from his ontological assumption that separates the world into distinct entities such as economy, politics and society. Such view paves the way for the second problem: Toprak establish dualities between politics and economy, and between politics and society.

After a rather detailed criticism of the existing literature and especially NET, I have delved into dynamics of the 1908 Boycott. My analysis has revealed that the boycott always prioritized the “liberal”/free trade economic policies. While the boycott included early demands for protectionism, it significantly considered free trade. Protectionist demands hardly arrived at the point of demanding the active intervention of the state in economy. Ottoman merchants did not have equal competitive power vis-a-vis foreign merchants, and as soon as the government constituted free competition for all, it would retreat from the economic sphere. The role of government would be

nothing more than a ‘referee’ to competition. In line with this strong pattern of respect for free trade, newspapers included repeated warnings that people were free in their decision-making to participate in the boycott. For the same reasons, Kamil Pasha government refused to end the boycott, claiming it to result from national feelings or “patriotism” of the people. Likewise, governmental officials were strongly discouraged to participate in the boycott since it would mean the participation of the government in an economic boycott.

A common fear that the boycott would overstep its boundaries stemmed from the anxiety that an unlimited mobilization of the masses would distort the free functioning of the economy. Accordingly, insistent calls for “perseverance” [*sebat*], “patience” [*sabır*], “fortitude” [*metanet*], “foresight” [*basiret*], “temperance” [*itidal*] and “calm” [*sükunet/sükun*] towards masses and especially workers prevailed throughout the boycott. Ottomans should participate in the boycott and mobilize through it but to a limited extent. Accordingly, there was a fear that the boycott could undesirably spread over goods other than Austrian or Bulgarian ones, which would end up distorting free trade. The boycott did by no means target the total destruction of free trade; to the contrary, it included a strong desire to protect it.

Nonetheless, economic concerns were not the only factor behind the strict emphasis on such moral concepts. They also constituted an instrument of the conservation of societal ‘equilibrium’. Masses had to avoid “outburst” [*galeyan*] which would cause violent outcomes. The press, the Unionists and the Kamil Pasha government all highlighted that intemperate mobilization was incompatible with Ottomanness. “Genuine boycott” could easily turn into a “wrong boycott” in which the masses overstepped the mark or misunderstood the boycott.

The 1908 Boycott relied on a tacit coalition among the Unionists, Kamil Pasha government, workers, merchants and *esnafs*. Each group had a different goal that they wanted to fulfill through the boycott. Accordingly, each adopted different attitudes towards the boycott. The boycott broke out immediately before the parliamentary elections which would be the first election after the 1908 Revolution. Kamil Pasha’s

government wanted to consolidate its position with an international success. The sphere of influence of the CUP was still limited, and it attempted to establish its hegemony over the society. The boycott literature largely regards the boycott as an outcome of Unionist attempts, which was only partially true. The Unionists organized demonstrations, instrumentalized the press for the purpose of the boycott and even met with Austrian officials. The boycott, however, was a complex and multi-actor process that on which no one totally had a grip.

In this regard, the workers, including porters, lightermen and freight waggoners, were prominent actors who actively participated in the boycott. In other words, contrary to the NET argument that the National Economy was an outcome of Unionist policies, non-Unionist actors like workers considerably participated in, organized and directed the boycott. Yet, their aim was much more than *milli* issues. The year 1908 witnessed both the outburst of several strikes of workers and proscriptive laws like the Provisional Law of Strike. For workers who could not engage in a strike, the boycott must have constituted an appropriate option to raise their class demands. They were the most determined participants of the boycott. They firmly refused to unload Austrian ships and carry its goods. Following their determined collective actions, both the government and the Unionists did not hesitate to curb their undesired mobilization, when necessary.

Merchants and *esnafs* were the least represented group in the scholarship in the 1908 Boycott due to their invisibility or veiled visibility in the primary sources. I have argued that the underrepresentation might stem from practical reasons. The first years of 1908 was “an age of boycotts” in which boycott movements broke out in different regions of the world and the Ottoman bourgeoisie might have learned how to respond to the boycott. In this vein, they might have preferred to be less visible. Yet, as I have shown, this invisibility did not *necessarily* ensure that they economically benefited from the boycott.

Going back to the focus of this thesis, there are at least three points, which I have summarized above, that could prompt us to reevaluate the discrepancy between the

timing of the boycott at the dawn of the “liberal” economy period and the “national” leitmotiv attached to it by the literature. First, the boycott included respect for free trade as a vital component. Second, the boycott involved demands for state intervention; however, such demands, which were not very in number, never envisioned a longstanding existence of the state in the economy. It was an enabler of ‘competition’ which is a frequently repeated term throughout the boycott. Third, the tacit coalition among Kamil Pasha government, the Unionists and the press always attempted to control and discipline lower class. They feared that their spontaneous mobilization would destruct the free market economy. The repeated moral concepts precisely served the alleviation of such a fear.

Obviously, the boycott included a considerable concern for free trade. It occurred at the dawn of the “liberal” economy period as a movement with significant liberal tendencies. Considering this fact that this thesis attempted to reveal, the thesis questions that the literature reads the 1908 Boycott through the eyes of the National Economy but not those of its historical opposite, i.e., the “liberal” economy. As the boycott which the literature regards the seeds of the National Economy demonstrates, the National Economy encompassed free trade. Just as the boycott did never challenge the free trade but contrarily paid regard to it, the National Economy never aimed at the replacement of a “liberal”/free trade economy with itself. Although there were differences between two camps of the historical dichotomy between the “liberal” economy and the “National Economy”, as evident in the case of the 1908 boycott, both were liberal in the last instance. For this reason, I suggest that the historical duality is not between the “liberal” and the “national” economy, but between free market/laissez-faire and protectionism. Moreover, it was not a ‘dichotomy’ in the strict sense of the term but a ‘dualism’ at most.

All in all, this thesis has endeavored to interrogate the separation between “liberal” and “national” economies over the case of the 1908 Boycott. This study has revealed new problems or questions for further research. First of all, because of the limitation of language, this thesis has utilized the primary sources in Ottoman Turkish. The utilization of the Austrian newspapers, for instance, could bring a new dimension to

the boycott. Second, although this thesis has listed the places in which the boycott could have occurred, a broader-scale study could map the distribution and the frequency of the boycott on the Ottoman territory. Third, this thesis has engaged in the general evaluation of the boycott; thus, it has not focused on specific actors. A more concentrated study, for instance, on merchants and *esnafs* can reveal more about the bourgeoisie. Fourth, such a concentrated study can focus on non-actors of the boycott like women. While there was mention of women and the boycott in the newspapers I have consulted, there are no studies on their participation or non-participation in the boycott. Lastly, this thesis has questioned the duality between the “liberal” economy and the National Economy in the 1908-18 period through the case of the 1908 Boycott. One could apply such an approach to other boycotts that took place in the later years, like the boycott in 1913-14 against *Rum* goods and services of.

REFERENCES

- Abrams, P. (1988). Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State (1977). *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 1(1), 58–89. <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1467-6443.1988.TB00004.X>
- Ađır, S. (2021). Peripheralization of the Ottoman Economy 1838–Present. In E. Ozcelik & Y. Ozdemir (Eds.), *Political Economy of Development in Turkey* (1st ed., pp. 47–78). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ađır, S. (2023). Erken Donem Cumhuriyet’in “Giriřimcilik” Mirası: Milli İktisadın Bedeli. *Toplum ve Bilim* 163, 114–131.
- Ahmad, F. (1986). *İttihatçılıktan Kemalizme* (2nd ed.). Kaynak.
- Ahmad, F. (1999). *İttihat ve Terakki 1908-1914* (5th ed.). Kaynak.
- Ahmetođlu, S. (2022). Trabzon’da Boykot. In *Devrim Gunlerinde Trabzon* (1st ed., pp. 165–187). Timař.
- Akkurt, H., & Pamuk, A. (Eds.). (2008). *Yuzuncu Yilında II.Meřrutiyet. Yeni İnsan*.
- Akřın, S. (1980). *100 Soruda Jon Turkler ve İttihat ve Terakki* (1st ed.). Gercek.
- Akřın, S., Unlu, B., & Balcı, S. (Eds.). (2019). *100. Yilında Jon Turk Devrimi*. İř Bankası.
- Akyol, A. E. (2022). *Birinci Dunya Savařı’nda Osmanlı İmparatorluđu’nda İlksel Birikim ve Kapitalist Devlet* [Unpublished Master’s Thesis]. Istanbul University.
- Akyol, E. (2023). Kapitalizmin Tarihyazımında Turkiye’de Milli İktisat. *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklařımlar*, 21(262), 271–294.
- Armaođlu, F. (1997). 19. Yzyıl Siyasi Tarihi (1789-1914). In *Osmanlı İmparatorluđu (1878-1914)* (pp. 592–628). Turk Tarih Kurumu.
- Aytekin, E. A. (2023). Negotiating Religion, Moral Economy and Economic Ideas in the Late Ottoman Empire: Perspectives of Peasants and the Intelligentsia. In T. Skambraks & M. Lutz (Eds.), *Reassessing the Moral Economy: Religion and Economic Ethics from Ancient Greece to the 20th Century* (pp. 195–218). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-29834-9_10
- Berkes, N. (1975). *Turkiye İktisat Tarihi 2* (2nd ed.). Gercek.

- Berkes, N. (2012). Mutlakiyetten Meşrutiyete. In *Türkiye’de Çağdaşlaşma* (18th ed., pp. 169–474). YKY.
- Blackbourn, D., & Eley, G. (1984). *The Peculiarities of German History*. Oxford University. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198730583.001.0001>
- Boratav, K. (2016). *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-2009* (22nd ed.). İmge.
- Boratav, K. (2017a). Kemalist İktisat Politikaları ve Devletçilik . In *Emperyalizm, Sosyalizm ve Türkiye* (5th ed., pp. 353–376). Yordam.
- Boratav, K. (2017b). Türkiye’de Devlet, Sınıflar ve Bürokrasi: Çağlar Keyder’in Kitabının Düşündürdükleri. In *Emperyalizm, Sosyalizm ve Türkiye* (5th ed., pp. 183–197). Yordam.
- Buğra, A. (2013). *Devlet ve İşadamları* (8th ed.). İletişim.
- Çakmak, D. (2011). *Osmanlı İktisat Düşüncesinin Evrimi : Societas ve Universitas Gerilimi* (1st ed.). Libra .
- Çavaş, R., & Demirel, Y. (Eds.). (2018). *II. Meşrutiyet’in İlk Yılı / 23 Temmuz 1908 – 23 Temmuz 1909* (2nd ed.). YKY.
- Çavdar, T. (1992). *Türkiye’de Liberalizm (1860-1990)* (1st ed.). İmge.
- Çavdar, T. (2003). *Türkiye Ekonomisinin Tarihi 1900-1960*. İmge.
- Çelik, F. E. (2022). *Kişisel İktidardan Millet Meclisine: Saltanattan Cumhuriyete* (2nd ed.). İmge.
- Çetinkaya, Y. D. (2004). *1908 Osmanlı Boykotu* (1st ed.). İletişim.
- Çetinkaya, Y. D. (2015). *Osmanlı’yı Müslümanlaştırmak* (1st ed.). İletişim.
- Çetinkaya, Y. D. (2023a). İtibar-ı Milli Bankası ve İş Bankası Birleşmesi (1927): Bir Banka Birleşmesi Üzerinden Müslüman/Türk Burjuvazisi Üzerine Tarihyazımını Düşünmek. *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, 21(262), 153–203.
- Çetinkaya, Y. D. (2023b). Mübadele: Müslüman Milliyetçiliğinin Temsili. *Toplumsal Tarih*, 2–7.
- Çolak, F. (2020). Osmanlı Devleti’nin Dış Ticaretinde Avusturya-Macaristan’ın Yeri ve Önemi (1908-1918). *Akademik Tarih ve Düşünce*, 7(3), 1611–1643.
- Corrigan, P., Ramsay, H., & Sayer, D. (1980). The State as a Relation of Production. In P. Corrigan (Ed.), *Capitalism, State Formation and Marxist Theory* (pp. 1–26). Quartet Books.

- Corrigan, P., & Sayer, D. (1981). How the Law Rules: Variations on Some Themes in Karl Marx. In B. Fryer, A. Hunt, D. McBarnet, & Bert. Moorhouse (Eds.), *Law, State and Society* (1st ed., pp. 21–53). Croom Helm.
- Corrigan, P., & Sayer, D. (1985). *The Great Arch: English State Formation as a Cultural Revolution* (1st ed.). Blackwell.
- Davison, R. H. (1990). The Ottoman Boycott of Austrian Goods in 1908-9 as a Diplomatic Question. In H. W. Lowry & R. S. Hattox (Eds.), *IIIrd Congress on the Social and Economic History of Turkey (24-26 Ağustos 1983)* (pp. 1–28). The Isis.
- Dinler, D. (2011). Türkiye’de Güçlü Devlet Geleneği Tezinin Eleştirisi. *Praksis*, 9(1), 17–54.
- Eldem, E. (2014). (A Quest for) the Bourgeoisie of Istanbul: Identities, Roles and Conflicts. In U. Freitag & N. Lafi (Eds.), *Ulrike Freitag and Nora Lafi, eds., Urban Governance under the Ottomans: Between Cosmopolitanism and Conflict* (pp. 159–186). Routledge.
- Elmacı, M. E. (1997a). 1908 Avusturya Boykotunda Liman İşçileri. *Kebikeç*, 2(5), 155–162.
- Elmacı, M. E. (1997b). Fes-Kalpak Mücadelesi. *Toplumsal Tarih*, 7(42), 28–32.
- Elmacı, M. E. (2005). Osmanlı Devleti’nde Ekonomik Güç Olarak Boykotun Siyasete Yansımaları: 1908 Avusturya Boykotajı Örneği. *Askeri Tarih Araştırmaları*, 3(6), 89–112.
- Emiroğlu, K. (1994). Trabzon’da Avusturya Boykotu 1908. *Toplumsal Tarih*, 8, 17–21.
- Ergut, F. (Ed.). (2010). *II. Meşrutiyeti Yeniden Düşünmek* (1st ed.). Tarih Vakfı Yurt.
- Genç, M. (2014). *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda Devlet ve Ekonomi*. Otuken.
- Göçek, F. M. (1996). *Rise of the Bourgeoisie, Demise of Empire*. Oxford University.
- Gölen, Z. (1998). II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Bosna-Hersek’in İlhakına Tepkiler. *Toplumsal Tarih*, 60, 6–16.
- Gülsoy, Ufuk., & Nazır, Bayram. (2009). *Türkiye’de ticaretin öncü kuruluşu : Dersaadet Ticaret Odası, 1882-1923*. İstanbul Ticaret Odası.
- Heper, M. (1985). *Türkiye’de Devlet Geleneği* (2nd ed.). Doğu Batı.
- Hobsbawm, E. (2021). *İmparatorluk Çağı (1874-1914)* (8th ed.). Dost.

- İnal, V. (2011). *The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Ottoman Attempts to Catch Up with Europe*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2011.590061>
- İnce, O. U. (2015). Friedrich List and the Imperial Origins of the National Economy. *Http://Dx.Doi.Org/10.1080/13563467.2016.1115827*, 21(4), 380–400. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13563467.2016.1115827>
- İzmir Ticaret Borsası*. (n.d.). İzmir Ticaret Borsası'nın Tarihçesi. Retrieved December 26, 2023, from <https://itb.org.tr/Sayfa/15-tarihce>
- II. Meşrutiyet “100. Yıl” Cilt 1 . (2008). *Doğu Batı Düşünce Dergisi*, 1(45).
- Kansu, A. (2016). *İttihadcıların Rejim ve İktidar Mücadelesi 1908-1913* (1st ed.). İletişim.
- Kansu, A. (2017). *1908 Devrimi* (8th ed.). İletişim.
- Karakışla, Y. S. (2015). *Kadınları Çalıştırma Cemiyeti (1916 - 1923)* (1st ed.). İletişim.
- Kasaba, R. (1988). *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy* (1st ed.). State University of New York.
- Kaymak, M. (2008). *1873-1896 Krizi: Kapitalizmin Uluslararasılaşması ve Osmanlı İktisadiyatı*.
- Kaymak, M. (2010). 1873-1896 Krizi: Mit Mi Gerçeklik Mi? *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi*, 65(2), 165–194. https://doi.org/10.1501/SBFDER_0000002163
- Keyder, Ç. (2014). *Türkiye’de Devlet ve Sınıflar* (2014th ed.). İletişim.
- Kişi, Ş. S. (1996). Avusturya ve Bulgaristan’a Karşı İzmir’de 1908 Boykotu. *Tarih ve Toplum*, 26(152), 4–14.
- Kılınçoğlu, D. T. (2015). *Economics and Capitalism in the Ottoman Empire*. Routledge.
- Kıray, E. (1995). *Osmanlı’da Ekonomik Yapı ve Dış Borçlar* (2nd ed.). İletişim.
- Koraltürk, M. (2002). *Türkiye’de Ticaret ve Sanayi Odaları, 1880-1952* (1st ed.). Denizler Kitabevi.
- Koraltürk, M. (2011). *Ekonominin Türkleştirilmesi* (1st ed.). İletişim.
- Mardin, Ş. (1990). Türkiye’de İktisadi Düşüncenin Gelişmesi. In M. Türköne & T. Önder (Eds.), *Siyasal ve Sosyal Bilimler: Makaleler II* (1st ed., pp. 45–100). İletişim.

- Mckee, D. L. (1986). The Chinese Boycott of 1905-1906 Reconsidered: The Role of Chinese Americans. *Pacific Historical Review*, 55(2), 165–191. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3639528>
- Ollman, B. (2003). Putting Dialectics to Work: The Process of Abstraction in Marx’s Method. In *Dance of the Dialectic* (1st ed., pp. 59–114). University of Illinois.
- Özveren, E. (2001). Ottoman Economic Thought and Economic Policy in Transition. In M. E. ; P. M. Mata (Ed.), *Economic Thought and Policy in Less Developed Europe* (1st ed., pp. 129–144). Routledge.
- Pamuk, Ş. (1984). The Ottoman Empire in the “Great Depression” of 1873—1896. *The Journal of Economic History*, 44(1), 107–118. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022050700031399>
- Pamuk, Ş. (2008). Birinci Dünya Savaşında Osmanlı Ekonomisi. In *Osmanlıdan Cumhuriyete Küreselleşme, İktisat Politikaları ve Büyüme* (1st ed., pp. 139–168). İş Bankası.
- Pamuk, Ş. (2018). Introduction. In *Uneven Centuries: Economic Development of Turkey since 1820* (pp. 1–21). Princeton University.
- Pamuk, Ş. (2021). *Osmanlı -Türkiye İktisadi Tarihi (1500-1914)* (13th ed.). İletişim.
- Polanyi, K. (2001). The Great Transformation. In *The great transformation: the political and economic origins of our time*. Beacon.
- Quataert, D. (1994). The Age of Reforms. In D. Quataert & H. İnalcık (Eds.), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire 1300–1914* (pp. 759–945). Cambridge University.
- Quataert, D. (2017a). Avusturya Macaristan’a Karşı Boykot. In *Osmanlı Devleti’nde Avrupa İktisadi Yayılımı ve Direniş* (1st ed., pp. 189–224). İletişim.
- Quataert, D. (2017b). Sonuç. In *Osmanlı Devleti’nde Avrupa İktisadi Yayılımı ve Direniş* (pp. 225–235). İletişim.
- Sayar, A. G. (2021). *Osmanlı İktisat Düşüncesinin Çağdaşlaşması* (6th ed.). Otuken.
- Sayer, D., & Corrigan, P. (1987). Revolution Against The State: The Context and Significance of Marx’s Later Writings. *Anthropology*, 12(1), 65–82.
- Sevinçli, E. (2023). İzmir Basınının Kayıp Gazetelerinin Peşinde: Gave Gazetesi. *Toplumsal Tarih*, 50–57.
- Toprak, Z. (1981). 1909 Tatil-i Eşğâl Kanunu ve Grev Yasağı. *Toplum ve Bilim*, 13, 141–156.

- Toprak, Z. (1985a). 1909 Cemiyetler Kanunu. In *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* (Vol. 1, pp. 205–208). İletişim.
- Toprak, Z. (1985b). II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde İktisadi Düşünce. In *Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete Türkiye Cumhuriyeti* (1st ed., Vol. 3, pp. 635–640). İletişim.
- Toprak, Z. (1994). Fes Boykotu. In *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* (Vol. 3, p. 297).
- Toprak, Z. (1995). *Milli İktisat-Milli Burjuvazi* (1st ed.). Tarih Vakfı Yurt.
- Toprak, Z. (2014). Anayasal Monarşi, Özgürlükler ve İlk Osmanlı Kadın Denekleri. In *Türkiye'de Kadın Özgürlüğü ve Feminizm(1908-1935)* (1st ed., pp. 17–28). Tarih Vakfı Yurt.
- Toprak, Z. (2017). *Türkiye'de Milli İktisat (1908-1918)* (2nd ed.). Dogan.
- Uçar, Ö. (2013). Türkiye'de Tarihyazımı ve Burjuva Devrimleri: Bazı Gereksiz Kıstaslar. *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar*, 16, 145–178.
- Ünal, H. (1992). *Ottoman Foreign Policy During the Bosnian Annexation Crisis, 1908-1909* [Unpublished PhD Thesis]. The University of Manchester.
- Ünal, H. (1998). Ottoman Policy during the Bulgarian Independence Crisis, 1908-9: Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria at the Outset of the Young Turk Revolution. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 34(4), 135–176. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4283973>
- Uslu, A., & Aytekin, A. (2015). Burjuva Devriminin ve Savaşın Belirsiz Sınırlarında. In G. Atılğan, E. A. Aytekin, E. D. Ozan, C. Saraçoğlu, M. Şener, A. Uslu, & M. Yeşilbağ (Eds.), *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Türkiye'de Siyasal Hayat* (4th ed., pp. 95–200). Yordam.
- Varel, A. (2020). Güçlü Devlet Geleneği Tezinin Eleştirisine Katkı: Özne-Merkezcilik Sorunu. *Mülkiye Dergisi*, 44(4), 609–642.
- Watson, M. (2012). Friedrich List's Adam Smith Historiography and the Contested Origins of Development Theory. *Third World Quarterly*, 33(3), 459–474. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41507181>
- Wood, E. M. (1995). *Democracy Against Capitalism: Renewing Historical Materialism* (1st ed.). Cambridge University.
- Yalman, G. (2015). Devlet. In G. Atılğan & E. A. Aytekin (Eds.), *Siyaset Bilimi: Kavramlar, İdeolojiler, Disiplinler Arası İlişkiler* (5th ed., pp. 69–86). Yordam.
- Yavuz, E. (1978). 1908 Boykotu. *ODTÜ Gelişme Dergisi*, 1978 Özel Sayısı, 163–181.

Yıldırım, K. (2012). Balkan Savaşları'nın Osmanlı'da İşçi Hareketleri Üzerindeki Etkileri. *Journal of Turkish World Studies*, 12(2), 213–234.

Yıldırım, K. (2013). *Osmanlı'da İşçiler* (2nd ed.). İletişim.

Zürcher, E. J. (2000). *Modernleşen Türkiye'nin Tarihi* (7th ed.). İletişim.

Primary Sources

Gave

Şura-yı Ümmet

Servet-i Fünun

Ahenk

Köylü

Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye Mecmuası

Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi

Beyanü'l Hak

Karagöz

Ticaret Layihası (Numbered 2,3 and 4)

APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

19. yüzyılın son çeyreğinden itibaren Osmanlı iktisadi düşüncesi, usul-i himaye (himayecilik) ile serbesti-i ticaret (*laissez-faire* /serbest ticaret) arasındaki salınımaya dayanmaktadır. Geç dönem Osmanlı ekonomik düşüncesine dair mevcut literatür, bu salınımı Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun geri kalmışlığının, patrimonyalizmin, Avrupa'nın taklit edilmesinin veya Osmanlıların sosyokültürel eksikliğinin bir göstergesi olarak değerlendirmiştir. Bununla birlikte Osmanlı iktisadi düşüncesi himayecilik ile serbest ticaret arasında salınım yapan tek örnek de değildir. Dünya zaten 1873-96 yıllarında kapitalizmin ilk krizine tanık olmuştu. Smithyen kapitalizmde sıkışıp kalan Avrupa ülkeleri, ekonomilerini sürdürebilmenin yeni yollarını aramak zorundaydı. Sözü edilen bu aşırı üretim krizinin mevcut koşullarında, dikkatlerini ve kaynaklarını uluslararası piyasadan iç piyasalarına yönlendirdiler. Ekonomilerinin karlılığını deflasyon koşulları içinde korumak mecburiyetindeydiler ve bu durum himayeci ekonomi politikalarını izlemeyi gerektiriyordu. Tüm bunlar, iktisadi düşüncede Smithyen serbest ticaret politikalarından Listyen himayeci politikalara doğru bir paradigma değişikliğine işaret ediyordu.

Osmanlı İmparatorluğu da bu değişimden muaf değildi. Kapitalist bölüşüm ilişkilerinin bir parçası olma sürecinde olan Osmanlı ekonomisi de bu paradigma değişikliğiyle ayak uydurmak zorundaydı. Dolayısıyla, Osmanlı iktisadi düşüncesinin usul-i himaye ve serbesti-i ticaret arasında gidip gelmesi, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun geri kalmışlığını ve gelenekçiliğini göstermek bir yana, Avrupa ekonomik ilişkileriyle yakın bağlantısının ve yaşanan değişimin bir işareti olarak görülmelidir. Osmanlı ekonomisi gerçekten de ekonomik sistemin bir parçasıydı ve Osmanlı ekonomik düşüncesinin ikili yapısı bir anomali teşkil etmiyor.

Bu, yaygın paradigma değişimi doğrultusunda, Osmanlı bağlamındaki serbesti-i tica-

tret ve usul-i himaye ikiliği temelde üç ana hatta dayanıyordu: devlet müdahalesinin *derecesi*, dış ticaret ve gümrükler ile uluslararası iş bölümü. Himayeciliğin, usul-i himayenin, savunucuları Osmanlı ekonomisinin güçlü Avrupa ülkelerinin tüccarlarıyla eşit iktisadi rekabet koşullarına sahip olmadığını farkındaydılar. Friedrich List'in himayeci fikirlerinden etkilenen Osmanlı aydınları; devlet yardımını, Avrupa'nın daha büyük ekonomileri altında ezilmemek için bir çözüm olarak görüyordu. Öte yandan, serbest ticaret yaklaşımının destekçileri, dizginsiz bir rekabet ortamını teşvik ediyordu. Ekonomiye herhangi bir devlet müdahalesi, onun işleyişinin bozulması anlamına gelecekti. Serbest ticaret kapitalizminin evrensel yasaları, Avrupa ülkeleri için olduğu kadar Osmanlı İmparatorluğu için de bağlayıcıydı. Bununla birlikte, bu iki iktisadi düşünce yaklaşımı en az iki açıdan örtüşüyordu. İlk olarak, usul-i himaye, himayeciliği savunan Osmanlı aydınlarının etkilendiği Friedrich List'in kendisinin de belirttiği üzere, sürekli bir devlet müdahalesi öngörmüyordu. Osmanlı ekonomisi uluslararası piyasada yeterli rekabet gücüne ulaştığında, devlet ekonomiden elini çekecekti. Dolayısıyla, her iki model de sonuç olarak serbest ticaret sistemine entegrasyonu hedefliyordu. Aralarındaki ayırım bu entegrasyonun zamanlamasına dairdi. İkinci olarak, serbesti-i ticaret, Avrupa ekonomilerine ayak uydurabilmek için ana sektör olarak sanayiden ziyade tarımı öne çıkararak usul-i himayeden farklı görünse de tarımı sadece sanayiye geçiş öncesindeki bir ara safha olarak görüp teşvik ediyordu. Osmanlı politika yapıcıları kaçınılmaz olarak bir tarım politikasını takiben sanayiye teşvik politikalarını benimseyecekti. Her iki görüş de uluslararası iş bölümüne katılmanın, tarım veya sanayiyle, bir yolunu arıyordu.

Osmanlı iktisadi düşüncesindeki bu ikili yapı, 1908 sonrası sürece bir miras olarak kaldı. Bu dönemde, daha önce usul-i himaye ile serbesti-i ticaret olarak adlandırılan ayırım, “milli” iktisat ve “liberal” iktisat arasında bir karşıtlık halini aldı. Ancak bu tür bir adlandırmanın “milli” ve “liberal” olanın karşılıklı olarak birbirini dışladığını varsayması nedeniyle bu çalışma bu terimleri ya tırnak işareti içinde kullanır ya da bunları ‘himayecilik’ ve ‘serbest ticaret / *laissez-faire*’ olarak değiştirir. 1908 sonrası dönemi “liberal” iktisat (1908-13/14) ve Milli İktisat (1913/14-18) olarak ikiye ayıran, I. Dünya Savaşı'nın başlangıcına, Balkan Savaşları'nın son bulmasına veya 1913 Bab-ı Ali Baskınına odaklanan kayda değer bir literatür bulunmaktadır. Osmanlı iktisadi

düşüncesinde uzun süredir var olan bu ikilik, “liberal” iktisat / *laissez-faire* ile “milli” iktisadı / himayeciliği karşı karşıya getirir. Bu dönemselle ve kavramsal ikiliğe Zafer Toprak öncülük etmiş ancak daha sonra muhtelif okulların öne çıkan isimleri tarafından takip edilmiştir. Böylesi bir ayrımının savunucuları, iki farklı perspektife ve iki farklı döneme atıfta bulunur ve her dönemi bir perspektifle eşitlemektedir. Milli İktisat’ı, “liberal” iktisada karşı açıkça bir alternatif olarak tanımlar ve bunu kapitalizmin çıkmazlarına bir yanıt olarak değil, milli duyguların bir sonucu olarak görür. Dolayısıyla, “liberal” ve “milli” arasındaki ikilik üzerine kurulu bu literatür, “milli” olanı, ülkeyi yabancı ekonomilerin emperyalist boyunduruğundan kurtaran olumlu bir misyonla ilişkilendirir. Bu ikili perspektiften bakıldığında, bir milli burjuvazi, İttihatçılar onu ‘yaratana’ dek mevcut değildir. Buna göre, o zamanlar Osmanlı sınıf dinamikleri nispeten zayıftır. Milli İktisat döneminde İttihatçılar, himayeci politikaları tepeden inmece bir şekilde uygulayarak kapitalizme geçişe katkıda bulunmuştur. Milli İktisat, ekonomiye aktif devlet müdahalesini ifade eder; bu nedenle, bu dönemde serbest ticaret için, olsa olsa, dar bir alan var olacaktır.

Bu tezde, 1908-18 dönemini “liberal” ve “milli” olarak ikiye ayıran ve Milli İktisat bahsedilen varsayımları kabullenen düşünce hattına, Milli İktisat Tezi (MİT) ismi verilir. Karışıklığı önlemek adına başlangıçta bir noktayı açıklığa kavuşturulmalıdır: Tez boyunca, ‘Milli İktisat’, bir dizi iktisadi politikaya atıfta bulunurken ‘Milli İktisat Tezi (MİT)’, bu bir dizi iktisadi politikaya dair akademik bir argüman silsilesini ifade eder. Ayrıca MİT’in belli başlı yorumlarına yer vermekle birlikte temel olarak MİT’in öncüsü olarak Zafer Toprak’ın argümanlarına odaklanır. Ancak Toprak’ı MİT’in en önemli ismi ve onun argümanlarını da MİT’in temelleri olarak kabul ederken bu tez, Toprak’ın düşüncelerindeki değişim çizgisini göz ardı etmez. Toprak’ın muhtelif zamanlarda muhtelif yayınevlerinden Milli İktisat üzerine birkaç kitap yayımladığının ve bunlar arasında nüanslar olduğunun farkındadır. Daha erken dönem yazılarından sonrakilere doğru, *laissez-faire* ile himayecilik arasında ya da “liberal” iktisat ile “milli” iktisat arasındaki dönemselle ve kavramsal karşıtlığın derecesi azalır. Daha açıkça ifade etmek gerekirse, Tarih Vakfı Yurt yayınevi tarafından 1995’te ilk baskısı yapılan *Milli İktisat-Milli Burjuvazi* kitabında, iki ekonomik görüş ve dönem arasındaki keskinlik daha belirgindir. Öte yandan, *Türkiye’de Milli İktisat 1908-1918*

kitabında Toprak, iki yaklaşım ve dönem arasındaki dikotominin keskinliğini nispeten azaltır ve bu geç dönem çalışması, daha nüanslı bir formda karşımıza çıkar. İlk kitap keskin bir dönemsal tezada dayanırken sonraki kitap, 1908'den 1918'e kadar Milli İktisat'ın hakimiyetinin yukarı doğru yükselen bir eğrisini çizer. İlk kitapta, serbesti-i ticaret–usul-i himaye tartışmasını neredeyse “özgürlük-despotizm ikilemi” (Toprak, 1995, s. 10) olarak değerlendirir ki bu, keskin bir ikiliğe işaret eder. Sonraki kitapta, *Türkiye’de Milli İktisat 1908-1918*’ de olduğu üzere, Milli İktisat'ın köklerinin 1908 Devrimi'nin çok başında bulunabilmesi, *Milli İktisat-Milli Burjuvazi* kitabında bu pek mümkün olamamaktadır. Dolayısıyla Toprak'ın düşüncesinde bir değişim hattı görürüz. Bu kademeli değişimi göz önünde bulundurarak bu tez; özellikle son kitaba, *Türkiye’de Milli İktisat 1908-1918*'e odaklanır. İlk kitaba nispetle daha az keskin ikili bir resim sunmasına karşın bu kitap da yine dönemsal ve kavramsal bir ikiliğe dayanır.

Milli İktisat Tezi'nin (MİT) öne sürdüğü bu ikiliği benimseyen isimler, 1908 Devrimi'nin hemen başındaki bir boykotu, Milli İktisat'ın ilk tezahürü olarak değerlendirir. 1908 Boykot hareketi üzerine çalışan bu akademisyenler arasında Doğan Çetinkaya, Mehmet Emin Elmacı, Şule Sevinç Kişi ve Selim Ahmetoğlu, boykotu Milli İktisat ile ilişki içerisinde ele alır. Ancak bu isimlerin tarihsel anlatımları arasında önemli nüanslar da bulunmaktadır. Örneğin, boykotun en kapsamlı analizini sunan Çetinkaya ile bu tez, kayda değer örtüşmeler içerir. Adı geçen isimlerin aksine Çetinkaya Milli İktisat'ı liberal-kapitalist ilişkiler içerisinde ele alır. Milli İktisat'ı kavramsal olarak kullanmayan ancak Milli İktisat kavramının içerdiği anlama eşdeğer bir terim kullanan Erdal Yavuz ve Hasan Ünal gibi isimler de boykot literatürü içerisinde yer alır. Bu isimlerin ilk kategorideki akademisyenlerden farkı büyük ölçüde kavramsalıdır. Öte yandan, üçüncü bir kategoriyi teşkil eden Donald Quataert, boykotu ne “liberal” / *laissez-faire* ekonomiyle ne de “milli” / himayeci ekonomiyle eşitlemesi anlamında, sözü edilen isimlerden ayrılır. Bu bakımdan, 1908 Boykotu üzerine literatürde bir istisna teşkil eder. Boykota dair anlatısı, MİT ile en az uyumlu olanken, bu tezin benimsediği yaklaşım ile ise en uyumlu olandır.

1908 Boykotu, Avusturya-Macaristan'ın Bosna-Hersek'i ilhak etmesine ve Bulgaristan'ın bağımsızlığını ilan etmesine karşılık düzenlenmişti. Boykot;

İttihatçıları, işçileri, hükümeti, tüccarları, halkı ve basını içeren çok aktörlü bir süreçti. Tüm aktörler ortak bir amacı paylaşmışlardı: Osmanlıların artık Avusturya ve Bulgaristan emtian ve hizmetlerinden imtina etmeleri ve yeni alternatiflere yönelmeleri gerekiyordu.

Bir kez daha yinelemek gerekir ki 1908 Boykotu'nu Milli İktisat'ın bir tezahürü olarak gören önemli bir literatür bulunmaktadır. Sözü edilen literatür bu şekilde, “liberal” iktisat ve “milli” iktisat arasındaki ikiliği yeniden üretmektedir. İlginçtir ki literatürdeki isimlerin önemli bir kısmının Milli İktisat'ın bir parçası olarak değerlendirdiği 1908 Boykotu, tam da “liberal” iktisat döneminin ilk aylarında gerçekleşmiştir. Öyleyse 1908 Boykotu'nun zamanlaması ile ona atfedilen ekonomik ana motif arasında açıkça bir çelişki ortaya çıkmaktadır. Yukarıda bahsedilen, 1908-18 dönemini “liberal” (1908-1913/14) ve “milli” (1913/14-1918) iktisat dönemleri olarak bıçak gibi ikiye ayıran MİT literatürünü esas alırsak boykot bir yandan “liberal” diğer yandan “milli” iktisadın bir parçası olamazdı. Başka bir deyişle, iktisadi düşüncede böylesi bir ikiliğe dayanan mevcut literatürün bakış açısından, 1908 Boykotu bir yandan iktisadi himayeciliği, diğer yandan *laissez-faire*'i aynı anda temsil edemezdi.

Bu çelişkiden hareketle bu tez, 1908 Boykotu'nun bir incelemesini yapmaya koyulur. Böylece boykotun iktisadi perspektifine dair daha incelikli bir anlayışı ortaya koyabilmeyi amaçlar. Bunu yaparken 1908 Boykotu'nun Milli İktisat'ın bir tezahürü olduğunu varsayan boykot literatürünün altta yatan varsayımlarını yeniden değerlendirir. Bu doğrultuda boykotu ortaya çıkaran motivasyonları, boykotun aktörlerini, hedeflerini ve sosyal ve ekonomik dinamiklerini detaylı bir şekilde inceler. MİT literatürünün tarihsel karşıt olarak sunduğu “liberal” iktisat ile ilişkisi göz önüne alındığında Milli İktisat'ın, 1908 Boykotu'nu çözümlmek için uygun bir iktisadi düşünce çerçevesi sunmadığını savunur. Sonrasında bu literatürün Milli İktisat'ın tarihsel zıttı olarak gördüğü “liberal” iktisadın 1908 Boykotu'nun analizi için uygun olup olmadığını sorgular. Aslında 1908 Boykotu'nun iktisadi çerçevesini tartışırken, aynı zamanda 1908-18 döneminde “liberal” ve “milli” olarak ikiye ayrılan iktisadi görüşlerin ve dönemlerin tartışmaya açılmasını da amaçlar. Nihayetinde bu

sorgulamanın, Osmanlı iktisadi düşünce tarihi çalışmalarının üzerine kurulu olduğu serbesti-i ticaret / *laissez-faire* ve usul-i himaye / himayecilik arasında varsayılan ikiliğe dair bir sorgulama yolunun açılmasını hedefler.

Bu amaçla, konu üzerine sınırlı ikincil literatürü ve birincil kaynakları esas alarak bu çalışma, 1908 Boykotu'nu incelemeye başlar. Sözü edilen ve her biri bir amaç doğrultusunda seçilen şu birincil kaynaklardan yararlanır: *Gave, Servet-i Fünun, Şurayı Ümmet, Ahenk, Köylü, Ulum-u İktisadiye ve İçtimaiye Mecmuası, Osmanlı Ziraat ve Ticaret Gazetesi, Beyanü'l Hak, Karagöz* ve ayrıca 2, 3 ve 4 sayılı Ticaret Layihaları.

Bu tez, giriş bölümünde çalışmanın temel meselesi, bağlamı, kapsamı, kritik kavramsal noktaları ve araştırma sorularını oraya koyar. Milli İktisat ile 1908 Boykotu arasındaki ilişkiyi izah etmeyi amaçlayan bu çalışma, ikinci bölümde Osmanlı iktisadi düşüncesinin ikili doğasını izah eder. Usul-i himaye ile serbesti-i ticaret arasındaki gelgitlerin ne Osmanlı bağlamına münhasır olduğunu ne de Osmanlı geri kalmışlığının bir göstergesi olduğunu, ancak Uzun Buhran (1873-96) gibi dünya çapında iktisadi kırılma hatlarından kaynaklandığını savunur. Himayecilik-serbest ticaret tartışmasını Osmanlı özgüllüğünden kurtardıktan sonra, her iki yaklaşımın da tarihsel köklerini sorgular. Yüzeysel yargılardan ve aşırı genellemelerden kaçınmak adına bu tezin odağı 1908-18 dönemi ile sınırlıdır ve Milli İktisat Tezi (MİT) bağlamında Kemalizm'den Dünya Sistem Teorisi'ne dek geniş bir yelpazede akademisyenlerin yaklaşımını analiz eder. 1908-18 döneminin “milli” iktisat ve “liberal” iktisat bağlamında dönemlere ayrılması üzerine yapılan analiz, bu zaman aralığının “liberal” ve “milli” olarak dönemleştirilmesi konusunda yerleşik bir fikir birliği olduğunu gösterir.

Bu tez, Zafer Toprak'ı 1908-18 devresini “milli” iktisat ve “liberal” iktisat olarak iki kısma ayıran MİT literatürünün öncüsü saymakla ve temelde onun argümanlarını esas kabul etmekle birlikte Toprak, MİT literatüründeki yegâne isim değildir. MİT, muhtelif okullardan geniş bir yelpazedeki isimlere atıfta bulunur. Örneğin, Feroz Ahmad, Sina Akşin, Şevket Pamuk ve Murat Koraltürk gibi akademisyenler de “liberal” iktisat ile “milli” iktisat arasındaki dönemsel ikiliğe değinir. Benzer şekilde

Çağlar Keyder, Ayşe Buğra, Şerif Mardin, Metin Heper, Erik J. Zürcher ve literatürün büyük isimleri MİT'in argümanlarını yineler. Bu literatürün önemli isimleri, iktisadi düşüncede ve politikada olarak ya I. Dünya Savaşı'nın başlangıcını, Balkan Savaşları'nın sona ermesini ya da 1913 Bab-ı Ali Baskını'nı bir dönüm noktası kabul etmiştir. Milli İktisat dönemi (1913/14-1918) itibarıyla İttihatçılar, daha evvel Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda hiç var olmadığını düşündükleri milli burjuvaziyi yaratma "projesini" gündeme getirmiştir. Yukarıda bahsi geçen isimlerin yanı sıra Toprak'ın argümanları, 1908 sonrası dönemin ekonomi politikaları üzerine sonraki çalışmalarında da zuhur etmiştir. Toprak'ın argümanlarının literatürdeki etkisi arttıkça, ondan etkilenen ve ondan hareketle geç dönem Osmanlı-erken dönem cumhuriyet tarihi iktisadını inceleyenler, 1908-1918 dönemini, Toprak'ın bizzat kendi çalışmalarında olduğundan da daha belirgin biçimde, ikili bir şema üzerinden incelediler. Başka bir ifadeyle, Milli İktisat üzerine literatürde Toprak'ın payı arttığı ölçüde, onu takip edenler de "liberal" iktisat ve "milli" ikiliğini, Toprak'ın yaptığından açıkça daha fazla bir biçimde, karikatürize ettiler.

Bu sebeple bu çalışma MİT literatürünün öncü ismi olarak kabul ettiği Toprak'ın varsayımlarını sorgulamak için kayda değer bir yer ayırır. Toprak'ın kabulleri üzerinden bu literatürü derinlemesine inceler zira bu kabuller, akademisyenlerin "liberal" ile "milli" arasında ayrım yapmalarının altında yatan tarihsel ve toplumsal ön varsayımlara işaret eder. Bunu yaparken de dünyayı birbirinden bağımsız varlıklardan müteşekkil olarak kavrama, siyaset-iktisat ayrımı veya siyaset-toplum ayrımı gibi liberal ontolojik varsayımların, onları "liberal" iktisat ile "milli" iktisat arasında bir ikilik kurmaya ve "milli" iktisada özel nitelikler atfetmeye ancak "liberal" iktisada atfetmemeye yönlendirip yönlendirmediğini de sorgular.

Tezin "1908 Osmanlı Boykotu" başlıklı üçüncü bölümü, 1908 Boykotu'nun iktisadi düşünce açısından önemine karşın neden doğrudan bu konu üzerine eğilen az sayıda çalışma olduğunu sorgulayarak başlar. Bunun ardından, 1908 Boykotu üzerine çalışmaları olan akademisyenlerin 1908 Boykotu ile Milli İktisat arasında nasıl bir bağlantı kurduklarını anlamaya çalışır. Boykot literatüründeki akademisyenlerin, "milli" iktisat ve "liberal" iktisat arasında ne türden bir ilişki kurduğuna ve ayrıca bu

akademisyenlerin, boykotun aktörleri ile iktisadi formasyon arasında nasıl bir bağ tasavvur ettiğini inceler. Burada temel gözlem, Donald Quataert hariç literatürdeki isimlerin boykotu münhasıran Milli İktisat ile ya da “ekonomide ulusallık” ve “iktisadi milliyetçilik” gibi Milli İktisat’a muadil kavramlarla izah ettiği yönündedir. Bunu yaparken Milli İktisat’ın tarihsel zıttı olduğu söylenen “liberalizmi”i, önceki adlandırmayla serbesti-i ticareti, dışlamış olur.

1908 Boykotu literatürü üzerine tartışmadan sonra, bu tezin ana hattını oluşturan boykotun anlatısıyla devam eder. Bu bölümde, birincil kaynaklara dayanarak, öncelikle boykotun nasıl ortaya çıktığı, boykot edilen mal ve hizmetlerin içeriği, boykotun kapsam ve sonuçları açıklığa kavuşturulur. Ardından, bu tezin temel sorularına cevap verebilmek için boykotun iktisadi düşünce ve politika açısından daha detaylı bir çözümlemesine girilir. Boykotun Osmanlı iktisadi düşünce tarihine içkin olan himayecilik-serbest ticaret ikiliğinde nasıl konumlandırılacağı sorgulanır.

Bu bağlamda, bu tez boykot kapsamında ortaya çıkan himayeci taleplerin kapsamını, içeriğini ve sınırlarını sorgular. Bu sorgulama, boykotun daima “liberal” / serbest ticaret politikalarına öncelik tanıdığını ortaya koyar. Boykot, himayeci talepleri kayda değer ölçüde içermesine rağmen, ticaret serbestliği daima ön plandadır. Himayeci talepler ise devletin ekonomiye aktif müdahalesini talep etme noktasına hemen hiç varmamıştır. Osmanlı tüccarlarının yabancı tüccarlarla eşit rekabet koşullarına sahip olmadığı biliniyordu. Hükümet yabancı tüccarlar için olduğu kadar Osmanlı tüccarları için de serbest rekabet koşullarını temin ettiğinde ekonomik alandan çekilecekti. Hükümetin rolü ise rekabeti düzenleyen bir ‘hakem’ olmaktan ibaret olacaktı. Serbest ticarete yönelik bu baskın ihtimam doğrultusunda, gazeteler kişilerin boykota katılım konusunda tam bir karar verme hürriyetine sahip olduğunu ısrarla vurguladı. Tam da serbest ticarete dair duyulan bu kaygı sebebiyle, Kâmil Paşa hükümeti Avusturya-Macaristan hükümeti ile çatışmak pahasına boykotu sonlandırmayı reddetti. Ona göre boykot, özgür iradeye sahip Osmanlıların “hamiyet” hissiyatından doğmuştu. Benzer sebeple hükümet memurları boykota katılımdan kati şekilde menedildi zira bu, hükümetin boykota katılımı anlamına gelecekti. Bu da hükümetin açıkça ekonomiye müdahale etmesi demekti.

Yinelemek gerekirse 1908 Boykotu süresince serbest ticaretin sekteye uğramaması temel bir kaygıydı. Boykotta, hükümet olsa olsa küçük çaplı bir müdahalede bulunabilirdi. Az sayıdaki karşıt görüşe rağmen hiç kimse *laissez faire*'i bozacak şekilde davranmamalıydı. 1908 Boykotu, serbest ticarete karşı çıkmak bir yana onu koruma altına alıyordu. Hükümet ve İttihatçılar, boykota hükümet müdahalesinin, ekonominin serbest işleyişini bozabileceğinden ve serbest ticaretin bozulmasının da nihayetinde rekabetin ortadan kalkmasına yol açmasından endişe ettiler. Aslında boykotun kendisinin rekabete hizmet etmesi bekleniyordu. Saf bir serbest piyasa ekonomisinde Osmanlılar, yabancı tüccarlarla rekabet edemezlerdi. Hükümetin rolü rekabeti organize etmek ve düzenlemektir. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Avusturya emtialarına gümrük vergisi koyabilseydi o zaman Avusturya tüccarları ile rekabet mümkün olurdu. Osmanlı tüccarlarının rekabet yönünden yabancılarla aynı seviyeye ulaşmaları maksadıyla yerli şirketler kurmaları üzerine yapılan vurgular da dikkate değerdir. Böylece, Osmanlılar kendi mallarını yabancı tüccarlara başvurmadan üretecekti.

Yine tezin üçüncü bölümünde, boykot süresince tekrar edilen ahlaki kavramlar ve bu kavramların Avusturya-Macaristan ve Bulgaristan emtialarına karşı ekonomik muhalefetteki rolü tartışılır. Bu ahlaki kavramlardan birkaçı “sebat”, “sabır”, “metanet”, “basiret”, “itidal”, “sükûnet / sükûn” ve “hamiyet” tir. Sözü edilen ahlaki kavramların boykotun neredeyse tüm aktörlerince sıklıkla dile getirilmesi, iki temel açıdan önemlidir. Öncelikle bu kavramların kullanımı boykota iktisat dışı bir müdahaleyi temsil eder. Bir diğer deyişle Avusturya-Macaristan tüccarlarını iktisadi zarara uğratmanın iktisat dışı bir yoluydu. “Hamiyet” sahibi Osmanlılar “sabır”, “sebat” ve “metanet” i elden bırakmamalıydı zira Avusturyalılara karşı uzun süreli, “hakiki” bir boykotu ortaya koyabilmenin başat yolu buydu. İkincisi ve bu çalışma açısından daha kritik olanı ise bu kavramları, egemen sınıfların boykotun yarattığı halk hareketliliğinin serbest piyasa düzenine zarar vereceğine ve nihayetinde de kendilerine yöneleceğine dair sınıf korkusunu ifade ediyordu. “Sükûnet” i benimseyen Osmanlılar “ifrat” a kaçmayacak, ölçsüz gösteriler içerisine girmeyecekti. Öyleyse tekrar eden bu ahlaki çağrılar, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda toplumsal ‘dengeyi’ de düzenlemeyi hedefliyordu. Bu toplumsal denge aynı zamanda, boykota iştirak eden toplumsal

aktörlerin serbest piyasaya zarar verecek bir eylemde bulunmamasını içeriyordu. Örneğin boykot adı altında, Avusturyalı bile olsa tüccarlara zarar vermek kınanmıştı. “Boykotun Hikayesi” alt başlığında ayrıca boykotun başat aktörleri birer birer incelenir. 1908 Boykotu, İttihatçılar, Kâmil Paşa hükümeti, işçiler, tüccarlar ve esnaflar arasında üstü örtülü bir koalisyona dayanıyordu. Her grup, boykot aracılığıyla gerçekleştirmeyi umduğu farklı bir hedefe sahipti. Boykot, 1908 Devrimi’nden sonra yapılan ilk parlamento seçimlerinden hemen önce patlak vermişti. Kâmil Paşa hükümeti, uluslararası bir başarı ile pozisyonunu pekiştirmek istiyordu. İttihatçıların etki alanı hala sınırlıydı ve toplum üzerinde hegemonya kurmaya çabalıyordu. Mevcut boykot literatürü, boykotu genellikle İttihatçı girişimlerin bir sonucu olarak görse de bu ancak kısmen doğrudu. İttihatçılar, boykot kapsamında gösteriler düzenlemiş, basın yoluyla halkı harekete geçirmeye çalışmış ve hatta Avusturyalı yetkililerle bizzat görüşmüştü. Ancak bu, onların boykota hakimiyeti anlamına gelmiyordu zira boykot, hiç kimsenin tamamen hâkim olamadığı karmaşık ve çok aktörlü bir süreçti.

Hamallar, mavnacılar ve yük arabacıları gibi işçi grupları da boykota katılan önemli aktörlerdendi. Öyleyse Milli İktisat’ın İttihatçı politikaların bir sonucu olduğuna yönelik argümanın aksine, işçiler gibi İttihat ve Terakki dışı aktörler boykota önemli ölçüde katılmış ve boykota yön vermişti. Ancak, amaçları basitçe bir “milli” meseleden çok daha fazlasıydı. 1908 yılı, işçi grevlerinin patlak verdiği ve Tatil-i Eşgal Muvakkati gibi yasaklayıcı kaidelerin uygulamaya konduğu bir dönemdi. Grev yapamayan işçiler için, boykot, sınıfsal taleplerini dile getirmek için elverişli bir seçenektir. Öyle ki boykotun en dirençli katılımcıları onlardı. Avusturya gemilerini boşaltmayı ve mallarını taşımayı kesinlikle reddetmişlerdi. Birlikte kararlılıkta hareket ettiklerini gören hükümet ve İttihatçılar, gerekli gördüklerinde onların aşırı addedilen hareketliliklerini engellemekte tereddüt etmediler.

Boykotun bir diğer aktör grubu tüccar ve esnaflardı. 1908 Boykotu’nun birincil kaynaklarındaki görünmezlikleri veya sınırlı ve üstü kapalı görünürlükleri, nedeniyle en az temsil edilen gruptu. Eksik temsil edilmelerinin pratik nedenlerden kaynaklanıyordu. 1908’in ilk yılları, dünyanın farklı bölgelerinde boykot hareketlerinin patlak verdiği bir “boykotlar çağı” idi ve Osmanlı burjuvazisi boykota

nasıl karşılık vereceğini boykotu daha evvel deneyimlemiş ülkelerin burjuvazisinden öğrenmişti. Bu bağlamda, daha az görünür olmayı tercih etmiş olabilirlerdi. Ancak gösterdiğim gibi, bu görünmezlik, ekonomik olarak boykottan yarar sağladıkları anlamına gelmiyordu. Bu az görünürlük veya görünmezlik, burjuvazinin kimi gruplarının çıkarınayken kimi gruplar için değildi.

Bu çalışmanın temel odak noktasına geri dönüldüğünde, literatür tarafından boykota atfedilen “liberal” zamanlama ile “milli” iktisat teması arasındaki açığı bir kere daha gözden geçirmenin yolunu açabilecek en az üç nokta vardır. İlk olarak boykot, serbest ticarete saygıyı boykotun kaçınılmaz bir bileşeni olarak içeriyordu. İkinci olarak, boykot, devlet müdahalesine yönelik taleplerini kapsamakla birlikte, sayıca çok olmayan bu talepler, devletin ekonomide uzun süreli varlığını tasavvur etmiyordu. Devlet müdahalesi rekabeti sağlayıcı bir faktördü. Rekabet boykot süresince sıkça yinelenen bir sözcüktü. Üçüncü olarak, Kâmil Paşa hükümeti, İttihatçılar ve basın arasındaki zımnî koalisyon, her zaman alt sınıfı kontrol altında tutup disipline etmeye çalıştı. Onların kendiliğinden hareketliliğinin serbest piyasa ekonomisini yok edeceğinden korktular. Bu açıkça bir sınıf korkusuydu. Tekrarlanan ahlaki kavramlar da bu tür bir korkuyu hafifletmeye hizmet etti.

Bu tezin literatüre katkısı iki yönlüdür. Öncelikle, literatürde 1908 Boykotu’nu analiz eden sınırlı sayıda çalışma bulunur ve bunların birçoğu boykotu yalnızca Milli İktisat ile ilişki içerisinde ele alır. Böylece boykot tek boyutlu bir olaya ve Milli İktisat’a doğru giden doğrusal yolda bir noktaya dönüşür. Bu çalışma, 1908 Boykotu ile Milli İktisat arasındaki ilişkinin yeniden değerlendirilmesini önermektedir. Aynı zamanda, boykotun Milli İktisat’ın tarihi karşısı, yani “liberal” iktisat, ile ilişkilendirilip ilişkilendirilemeyeceğini yeniden gözden geçirir. İkinci olarak, 1908 Boykotu, Milli İktisat ve “liberal” iktisat arasındaki bağlantıyı sorgulayan bu çalışma, oldukça ender bir çaba içerisine girmektedir: Osmanlı iktisadi düşünce tarihinde hep var olduğu kabul edilen, serbest-i ticaret / serbest ticaret / “liberal” iktisat ile usul-i himaye / himayecilik / “milli” iktisat arasındaki ikiliklerin yeniden değerlendirilmesini önermektedir. Bu sebeple çalışma, bu ikiliğin bir prototipi olan 1908-18 dönemine odaklanır. Bu yolla 1908-18 döneminde “milli” iktisat ile “liberal” iktisat arasındaki

bölünmeyi yeniden düşünmeyi ve literatürün “milli” olarak adlandırdığı iktisadi düzenin de zaten liberal olduğunu öne sürmektedir. Bu tez, literatürdeki isimlerin büyük oranda Milli İktisat’ın tezahürü olarak gördüğü 1908 Boykotu’nun aslında en az üç yönden liberal bir hareketi ve iktisadi bir düzeni ifade ettiğini göstermeye çalışmaktadır: İlk olarak, boykotun serbest ticareti muhafaza etmeye yönelik güçlü bir kaygısı vardı. İkinci olarak; boykot her ne kadar ekonomide devlet müdahalesini öne çıkaran Milli İktisat ile ilişkilendirilse de boykot süresinde devletin iktisadi himayesine yönelik talepler pek yaygın değildi ve bu tür talepler hiçbir zaman uzun süreli bir devlet korumasını da hedeflememişti. Boykot daha çok, sadece Osmanlı tüccarları ile yabancı tüccarlar arasındaki rekabet eşitlemeyi içeren talepleri temsil ediyordu. Üçüncü olarak, boykotun amacı kitleleri seferber etmek olsa da serbest piyasayı bertaraf edebilecek durdurulamaz bir hareketlilik halinde duyulan korku nedeniyle alt sınıflara karşı baskıcı ve panik içinde bir tutum vardı. Egemen sınıflar, açıkça bu hareketliliğin liberal serbest piyasa düzenine ve nihayetinde kendilerine yöneleceğine dair bir sınıf korkusu taşıyordu.

Öyleyse 1908 Boykotu’nun gerçekten ne ölçüde yıkıcı sonuçları hedeflediği de sorgulamaya açıktır. İlk bakışta boykot, Avusturya-Macaristan’ın Bosna-Hersek’i ilhakı ve Bulgaristan’ın bağımsızlığını ilan etmesine cevaben ortaya çıkan, saf milli duygulanımlardan kaynaklanıyor; bu yolla Avusturya-Macaristan’ı ekonomik olarak zarara uğratmayı amaçlıyordu. Ancak, aslında boykot temelde, yabancı tüccarların çoktan içinde yer aldığı ‘rekabetçi’ serbest piyasaya Osmanlı tüccarlarını da entegre etme arayışını temsil ediyordu. Boykot, serbest piyasa ekonomisine karşı bir muhalefet değil, serbest piyasa yollarıyla serbest piyasaya dahil olma girişimiydi. “Milli İktisat” 1, “liberal” serbest piyasa iktisadına karşıt olarak gören ve 1908 Boykotu’nu ilkiyle ilişkilendiren literatürün aksine, boykot zaten serbest piyasayı bir ön kabul olarak almıştı. Öyleyse Avusturya-Macaristan ekonomisine geniş çapta zarar vermek, Osmanlıların da bir parçası olmaya çalıştıkları kapitalist serbest piyasa düzenine zarar vermek anlamına gelecekti. Dolayısıyla, Osmanlı’nın boykottan beklentisi, Avusturya-Macaristan’ı oyun dışı yöntemlerle serbest piyasa alanından defetmek değil, onu oyunun kurallarıyla cezalandırmaktı.

B. THESIS PERMISSION FORM / TEZ İZİN FORMU

(Please fill out this form on computer. Double click on the boxes to fill them)

ENSTİTÜ / INSTITUTE

- Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Natural and Applied Sciences**
- Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Social Sciences**
- Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Applied Mathematics**
- Enformatik Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Informatics**
- Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Marine Sciences**

YAZARIN / AUTHOR

Soyadı / Surname : Hazan
Adı / Name : Sertkaya
Bölümü / Department : Siyaset Bilimi ve Kamu Yönetimi / Political Science and Public Administration

TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (İngilizce / English): BEYOND PROTECTIONISM–FREE TRADE DICHOTOMY: THE “NATIONAL” ECONOMY AND THE 1908 BOYCOTT MOVEMENT IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE: **Yüksek Lisans / Master** **Doktora / PhD**

- 1. Tezin tamamı dünya çapında erişime açılacaktır. / Release the entire work immediately for access worldwide.**
- 2. Tez iki yıl süreyle erişime kapalı olacaktır. / Secure the entire work for patent and/or proprietary purposes for a period of two years. ***
- 3. Tez altı ay süreyle erişime kapalı olacaktır. / Secure the entire work for period of six months. ***

** Enstitü Yönetim Kurulu kararının basılı kopyası tezle birlikte kütüphaneye teslim edilecektir. / A copy of the decision of the Institute Administrative Committee will be delivered to the library together with the printed thesis.*

Yazarın imzası / Signature

Tarih / Date

*(Kütüphaneye teslim ettiğiniz tarih. Elle doldurulacaktır.)
(Library submission date. Please fill out by hand.)*

Tezin son sayfasıdır. / This is the last page of the thesis/dissertation.