

TURKEY AND TURKISH/MUSLIM MINORITIES IN GREECE AND  
BULGARIA (1923-1938)

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **TURKEY AND TURKISH/MUSLIM MINORITIES IN GREECE AND BULGARIA (1923-1938)**

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This thesis examined how Turkish perception of insecurity, which was based on its suspicions about Greek and Bulgarian intentions and politics towards its territorial integrity and stability of its regime, shaped its view of Turkish/Muslim minorities living in these two states in the early Republican period. Using a wealth of archival material and newspapers, it questioned to what extent these physical and ideological concerns of the Turkish Republic played a role in its approach to these minorities in the period between 1923 and 1938. Turkey perceived the Greek and Bulgarian maltreatment of these minorities as a part of these states' hostile intentions regarding the new Turkish state. Thus, what this thesis argued is that Turkey responded to pressure on Turkish/Muslim minorities in these two states not only because of humanitarian concerns but according to its security concern, which became an important factor to determine Turkish interventionist approach to the minority issues in Greece and Bulgaria in this period.

Keywords: Turkish/Muslim Minority, Greece, Bulgaria, Early Republican Period.

## ÖZ

### TÜRKİYE VE YUNANİSTAN VE BULGARİSTAN'DAKİ TÜRK/MÜSLÜMAN AZINLIKLARI (1923-1938)

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Bu tez, Türkiye'nin kendi topraksal bütünlüğü ve rejiminin istikrarına yönelik Yunan ve Bulgar emelleri ve politikaları hakkındaki şüphelerine dayanan güvensizlik algısının, erken Cumhuriyet döneminde bu iki devlette yaşayan Türk/Müslüman azınlıklara bakışını nasıl şekillendirdiğini inceledi. Zengin arşiv kaynaklarını ve dönemin gazetelerini kullanarak, 1923 ve 1938 yılları arasındaki süreçte, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin bu fiziksel ve ideolojik kaygılarının, bu azınlıklara karşı tutumunda ne ölçüde rol oynadığını sorguladı. Türkiye, Yunanistan ve Bulgaristan'ın bu azınlıklara karşı kötü muamelesini, bu devletlerin yeni Türk devleti hakkındaki düşmanca emellerinin bir parçası olarak algıladı. Sonuç olarak, bu tezin öne sürdüğü şey şudur ki, Türkiye, bu iki devletteki Türk/Müslüman azınlıklara uygulanan baskıya, yalnızca insani kaygılarla değil, aynı zamanda bu dönemde Yunanistan ve Bulgaristan'da azınlık meselelerine ilişkin Türkiye'nin müdahaleci yaklaşımını belirleyen önemli bir unsur olmuş olan kendi güvenlik kaygısına göre de tepki vermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk/Müslüman Azınlık, Yunanistan, Bulgaristan, Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi.

*To my mother and father*

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The Turkish view of Turkish/Muslim minorities living in Greece and Bulgaria in the early Republican period was based on its current political relations with these two states. Although Turkey and these states seemed to lead peaceful relationships at diplomatic level, actually, the relations among them were strained under mutual mistrust. From Turkish point of view, the source of this mistrust was Greek and Bulgarian threat to the territorial integrity of Turkey and the stability of the Kemalist government.

Turkey saw the Greek and Bulgarian treatment of Turkish/Muslim minorities living in these two states as these states' aspirations on Turkey. The pressure on these minorities, hence, meant more than a problem of minority rights for Turkey, but it was, rather, considered as a part of policies threatening Turkey's security. Therefore, the Turkish view of these minorities could not be read outside the Turkish perception of insecurity, since it was this concern that shaped its approach to Turkish/Muslim minorities in Greece and Bulgaria.

In terms of its physical concern, what made Turkey felt insecure were revisionist policies of Greek and Bulgarian governments on Turkish territories. Indeed, borders of Turkey with Greece and Bulgaria were settled in the course of the establishment of Turkish Republic. For the Turkish view, these borders could not be revised in any condition. However, from time to time, the Turkish side concerned about Greek and Bulgarian intentions to revise the existing borders. This was actually disturbing for Turkey, following *status quo* policies for its own territories. Turkey was, however, well aware of the fact that Turkish/Muslim presence in these two states became the first target of these states' revisionist agenda, which was designed against territorial integrity of Turkey. Thus, Turkey considered this insecure environment of these

populations living in these two states as the extension of revisionist policies of Greek and Bulgarian governments. Hence, for Turkey, attack on Turkish/Muslim minorities in Greece and Bulgaria was not independent from its perception of insecurity, stemming from revisionist challenges from these two states towards its territories.

In terms of its ideological concern, what made Turkey felt insecure were the efforts of Greek and Bulgarian governments in the creation of an anti-Kemalist structure, composed of oppositional Turkish elements and local conservatives,<sup>1</sup> in their territories. Apparently, these anti-Kemalists found a convenient environment in these two states for their anti-Kemalist propaganda. This was a serious threat to the young Turkish Republic's stability. The Turkish government, however, knew that the activities of the anti-Kemalists, having direct or indirect support of Greek and Bulgarian governments, were not restricted to opposition to Ankara. In addition to the anti-Kemalist propaganda, the Kemalist presence in these two states became also a target of these anti-Kemalists, with a state support. Turkey, hence, considered the problems encountered by the Kemalists in Greece and Bulgaria as the extension of anti-Kemalist policies of these two states. Therefore, for Turkey, the suppression of the Kemalists was not independent from its perception of insecurity, stemming from Greek and Bulgarian support to anti-Kemalist forces.

This thesis will examine how Turkish perception of insecurity, which was based on its physical and ideological concerns, shaped its approach to Turkish/Muslim minorities living in Greece and Bulgaria, in the period between 1923 and 1938. In trying to understand this question, both primary and secondary sources were used. For primary sources, mainly the wealth of archival material from the Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivi in Ankara was used. These official Turkish documents are significant to understand the stance of the Turkish authorities on this issue. In addition to this, copies of *Cumhuriyet*, a

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<sup>1</sup> In this thesis, the term 'Kemalists' was used to point the supporters of revolutions and ideology of the newly established Turkish Republic among Turkish/Muslim minorities living in Greece and Bulgaria.

popular newspaper of the period close to the Turkish government, and influential in Turkish Balkan Policy, in the Türk Tarih Kurumu and Microfilm department of the Milli Kütüphane were examined. Finally, the Turkish publications of this period including military books, memoirs, and histories were examined as primary sources to have a view about intellectual stance of the period. And, in addition to these primary sources, variety of academic studies as secondary sources was used for this study.

As a part of this Introduction section, a historical review of treaties which showed the basis of minority regime for Turkish/Muslim minority in Greece and Bulgaria would be made.<sup>2</sup> This would introduce the minority rights of this Turkish/Muslim population in light of the treaties. It is significant to show officially what the living conditions should be for this minority. Their rights and obligation were stated in a detailed way in these treaties. In the reality, on the other hand, the Turkish side complained about violation of these settled rights with Greek and Bulgarian maltreatment of this Turkish/Muslim minority in 1920s and 1930s. Indeed, at that period, it was not only the Turkish side that complained about current conditions of its minorities, similarly, both Greek and Bulgarian sides had complaints about Turkish treatment of their minorities. However, this thesis would focus on Turkish view of Turkish/Muslim minorities living in these two states between 1923 and 1938. And, a beginning with this diplomatic settlement would show what the bases of Turkish complaints were.

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<sup>2</sup> The number of these minorities was one of the mostly debated issues between the parties. Thus, it is difficult to show concrete proportion of these Turkish/Muslim populations both in demographic structure of Greece and Bulgaria. However, by referring to some studies approximate numbers will be given. For instance, Nazif Mandacı and Birsen Erdoğan wrote that by 1920s there were 106.000 Turks in Western Thrace. In the Bulgarian case, Ali Eminov presented the number of Turks in Bulgaria as more than a half million people in 1920s and 1930s. Similarly, a Bulgarian document from 1934 presented the number of Turks as 650.000. See for more details Nazif Mandacı and Birsen Erdoğan, *Balkanlarda Azınlık Sorunu: Yunanistan, Arnavutluk, Makedonya ve Bulgaristan'daki Azınlıklara Bir Bakış* (Ankara: Stratejik Araştırma ve Etüdler Milli Komitesi, 2001), p. 1; Ali Eminov, *Turkish and other Muslim Minorities in Bulgaria* (London: Hurst & Company, 1997), p. 81; *Belgelerle Mustafa Kemal Atatürk ve Türk-Bulgar İlişkileri (1913-1938)* (Ankara: TC Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2002), p. 287.

The Turkish/Muslim presence in Greece and Bulgaria was the legacy of the Ottoman Empire. It was one of the largest states in the world history that ruled huge territories for centuries, and Greece and Bulgaria were also part of these territories. Then, these two states gained their independence. However, despite waves of migration to the Ottoman territories from these lands, there remained a considerable Turkish/Muslim minority there. Thus, the rights of these people were also a matter of discussion in the course of the independence of these two states, and these rights were guaranteed by the treaties.

The Protocol of London, for instance, was one of these treaties. On February 3, 1830 with this Protocol, which announced the independence of the Greek Kingdom, the rights of Muslim minority were settled. In accordance with this treaty, Muslims living in lands left to the Greek rule would continue to enjoy their properties and live in security.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, on June 13, 1878 the Treaty of Berlin, which revised the San Stefano Peace Treaty declaring the Principality of Bulgaria,<sup>4</sup> guaranteed rights of Muslims living in Bulgarian lands. For instance, it was stated that there would be no discrimination against minorities. Therefore, these people would benefit equal rights such as a right to serve in government service. In terms of religious practices, for example, they were also guaranteed to be free. Thus, for Muslims *şeyhülislam* in İstanbul would continue to be a religious leader. Also, the properties of Turkish/Muslim minority were guaranteed. Accordingly, this minority in Bulgaria would hold their properties. However, this was also valid for the ones who had already migrated from Bulgarian lands. So, they would have an opportunity to liquidate their properties.<sup>5</sup>

Then, the rights of Muslims in Greece were enhanced with the International İstanbul Convention on May 24, 1881. This was signed after the

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<sup>3</sup> Gabriel Effendi Noradounghian, "Protocole (No.1) tenu à Londres le Février 1830, relatif à l'indépendance de la Grèce", in *Recueil D'actes Internationaux de L'empire Ottoman*, II (1789-1856) (Paris: Recueillis Et Publiés, 1900), pp. 177-181; Baskın Oran, *Türk-Yunan İlişkilerinde Batı Trakya Sorunu* (Ankara: Mülkiyeliler Birliği Vakfı Yayınları, 1986), pp. 33-34.

<sup>4</sup> Gabriel Effendi Noradounghian, *Recueil D'actes Internationaux de L'empire Ottoman*, III (1856-1878) (Paris: Recueillis Et Publiés, 1902), pp. 509-521.

<sup>5</sup> Nihat Erim, *Devletlerarası Hukuku ve Siyasî Tarih Metinleri. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Andlaşmaları*, I (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1953), pp. 403-424.

annexation of Thessalia by the Greek forces. In accordance with the mediatory role of the Great Powers in this minority issue, which was given in the Treaty of Berlin, with this new territorial gain, the Greek Kingdom was again asked to revise Muslims' rights in its lands. Accordingly, this Convention guaranteed common citizenship with equal rights, freedom in religious practices and safety of property rights.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the rights of Muslims were also enhanced in the Bulgarian case, when Bulgaria declared its independence in 1908. On April 19, 1909 the Ottoman Empire and the Bulgarian Kingdom signed the Protocol of İstanbul. The Convention about rights of Muslims was also annexed to this Protocol, which mainly arranged Muslim's religious community, the *Başmüftülük*, the role of its leader, the *Başmüftü*, and other *müftüs* under its rule. For instance, it was stated that *Başmüftü* must be previously approved by the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, mosques, schools and *vakıfs* of these people were guaranteed to be protected by the Bulgarian authorities.<sup>7</sup>

However, following the Balkan Wars, new treaties were signed between the Ottoman Empire and these two states, which brought changes to the minority rights. On November 14, 1913 the Ottoman Empire and the Greek Kingdom signed the Treaty of Athens. It could be argued that it was the most extensive treaty about rights of Muslims in Greek lands.<sup>8</sup> The Protocol, which was mainly about the governance of Muslims' communities, was annexed to this treaty. These communities were recognized as legal entities. As in the case of Bulgaria, the *Başmüftü* would be the religious leader of Muslims, and he would be appointed with the approval of the Ottoman state. He was granted with equal rights with other civil servants of Greek Kingdom.<sup>9</sup> At the same period, the Treaty of İstanbul signed with the Bulgarian Kingdom, on September 26, 1913.<sup>10</sup> Again a Convention about the governance of the

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<sup>6</sup> Oran, *Türk-Yunan İlişkilerinde Batı Trakya Sorunu*, p. 34.

<sup>7</sup> Bilâl N. Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri* (İstanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1986), pp. 368-370.

<sup>8</sup> "Yunanistanla Atınada Münakid Muahede-i Sulhiye", *Düstur*, İkinci Tertip, Vol: 7 (Dersaadet: Matbaa-i Amire, 1336), pp. 15-45.

<sup>9</sup> *Düstur*, İkinci Tertip, Vol: 7, pp. 58-60; Galip Kemalî Söylemezoğlu, *Hatıraları Atına Sefareti* (1913-1916) (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1946), pp. 56-67.

<sup>10</sup> "Bulgaristanla Dersaadetde Münakid Muahede-i Sulhiye", *Düstur*, İkinci Tertip, Vol: 7 (Dersaadet: Matbaa-i Amire, 1336), pp. 45-61.

*Başmüftülük* was annexed to the treaty. This was the detailed version of preceding Convention annexed to the Protocol of İstanbul in 1909. Additionally in this new Convention, for instance, these two states agreed on the establishment of *Nüvvab* (a religious school) to educate *müftüs*.<sup>11</sup>

However, on January 10, 1920 with the establishment of the League of Nations, in the end of the First World War, the issue of minorities gained new outlook.<sup>12</sup> Thus, these minority rights were revised. In this post-war settlement, the League of Nations was described as a guarantee mechanism for the minorities.<sup>13</sup> However, actually, there was not a standard minority regime applied to all states. The Ottoman Empire, for example, had to implement the minority regime which was imposed to the defeated sides of war. Thus, the Ottoman Empire had to arrange distinct sections in the Treaty of Sévres on August 10, 1920 for minorities in its lands. However, this was not the case for the Greek Kingdom. It apparently applied a kind of different minority regime designed for victorious sides, which enlarged their territories. Hence, there occurred a clear difference between minority rights arranged for Greek population in the Ottoman lands and Muslim population in the Greek lands.<sup>14</sup> For instance, the role of the League of Nations in the protection of minority rights showed a difference. Distinct from the Greek case, with the article 151 of the Treaty of Sévres, the Ottoman Empire had to accept an additional role of the Allied powers to decide about any necessary measures for the application of minority rights settled in the articles 140 to 150.<sup>15</sup> This ambiguous role of the Allies about the protection of minority rights, according to Celil (Bilsel), left the Ottoman Empire prone to future interventions. This article 151, he

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<sup>11</sup> *Düstur*, İkinci Tertip Cilt: 7, pp. 21-28.

<sup>12</sup> Aptülahat Akşin, *Atatürk'ün Dış Politika İlkeleri ve Diplomasisi*, II (İstanbul: İnkılâp ve Aka Kitapevleri, 1969), p. 11.

<sup>13</sup> M. Celil (Bilsel), *Lozan*, II (İstanbul: Ahmet İhsan Matbaası, 1933), p. 266.

<sup>14</sup> Oran, *Türk-Yunan İlişkilerinde Batı Trakya Sorunu*, p. 39.

<sup>15</sup> Erim, *Devletlerarası Hukuku ve Siyasî Tarih Metinleri. Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Andlaşmaları*, I, p. 576: “Başlıca düvel-i müttetika bu kısımda münderiç mevaddın temin-i icra ve tatbiki için ne gibi tedabire tevessül edilmek iktiza ettiğini Cemiyet-i Akvam Meclisile müttetikan tetkik etikten sonra tayin edeceklerdir.”

argued, revealed the intentions of the Allies to interfere to the Ottoman lands under ‘the mask of humanitarian concerns’.<sup>16</sup>

Indeed, this mistrust about different minority regimes also shaped the minds of the Turkish delegation in the Lausanne Conference, between 20 November 1922 and 24 July 1923. İsmet (İnönü), the head of Turkish delegation in Lausanne, said that they learned lessons from the Ottoman experience and therefore they did not want to repeat the same mistakes.<sup>17</sup> Thus, in the Conference, the Turkish delegation acted in accordance with the principle of reciprocity, which had been already described in the article 5 of the *Misak-ı Milli* (National Pact). In this article, it was pointed out that the rights of Muslims living in other states would be granted to the minorities in Turkey.<sup>18</sup>

Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) described the issues discussed in the Lausanne Conference as the matter of centuries that had to be settled.<sup>19</sup> The issue of minorities was actually one of them. Thus, in the conference this issue led to harsh disputes and even stalemate.<sup>20</sup> The Allies, even, threatened the Turkish delegation with the ceasing of negotiations.<sup>21</sup> However, the Turkish delegation was very dedicated to stand against a minority regime, designed only for Turkey, but advocated a regime which would be reciprocally applicable. Thereby, in the conference, İsmet Paşa stated that the Turkish nation would apply a minority regime which had been already accepted in the civilised world system. Thus, he clearly stated that the Turkish delegation

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<sup>16</sup> M. Celil, *Lozan*, II, p. 271.

<sup>17</sup> *Lozan Barış Konferansı: Tutanaklar, Belgeler*, I (Seha L. Meray trans.) (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basım Evi, 1969), pp. 187-200.

<sup>18</sup> *Lozan Barış Konferansı: Tutanaklar, Belgeler*, I, p. 202: “Düvel-i İtilâfiye ile muhasımları ve bazı müşarıkleri arasında takarrür eden esasat-ı ahdiye dairesinde ekalliyetlerin hukuku, memalik-i mütecaviredeki müslüman ahalinin de aynı hukuktan istifadeleri ümniyesiyle tarafımızdan teyd ve temin edilecektir.”

<sup>19</sup> Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, *Nutuk*, II (1920-1927) (İstanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1934), pp. 194-195: “Çünkü, Lozan sulh masasında mevzuubahs edilen mesail, üç, dört senelik yeni bir devreye ait ve munhasır kalmıyordu. Asırlık hesaplar rü’yet olunuyordu. ...Maziye ait müsamahaların, hataların faili biz olmadığımız halde, esasen asırların müterakim hesabı bizden sorulmamak lâzım gelirken bu hususta da, dünya ile karşı karşıya gelmek bize teveccüh etmişti.”

<sup>20</sup> Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türkiye Devletinin Dış Siyaseti* (İstanbul: Millî Mecmua Basımevi, 1938), p. 126.

<sup>21</sup> *Lozan Barış Konferansı: Tutanaklar, Belgeler*, I, p. 215; Bilâl N. Şimşir, *Lozan Telgrafları*, I, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1990), p. 215-217.



would not accept any additional obligations, which would probably restrict Turkey's independence.<sup>22</sup> It was apparent that the Turkish delegation of the Lausanne Conference was different from the Ottoman delegation of the Treaty of Sévres. Although the latter belonged to the minority regime imposed to the defeated ones, the former gained a victory in the National Independence War.<sup>23</sup> Thus, the Turkish delegation was alarmed about any different minority regime. At the end, Turkey attained the reciprocity principle with the article 45 of the Treaty of Lausanne. Thus, rights of the Greek population in Turkey were also guaranteed for Muslims in Greece.<sup>24</sup>

In the Treaty of Lausanne, the articles from 37 to 45 were about the issue of the minorities. In the article 37, Turkey agreed on the priority of this treaty over the other domestic rules. Thus, these articles would be valid in any condition.<sup>25</sup> In article 38, Turkey accepted to provide the right to life and freedom for all the Turkish citizens without considering about their births, nationalities, ethnicities, languages or religions.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, in article 39, the equality before law was guaranteed.<sup>27</sup> In the following two articles, rights to establish organizations, institutions and schools were granted.<sup>28</sup> In fact, in the Conference, an additional control mechanism for the rights about religious customs was proposed by the Allies. However, this proposed control mechanism had not been put in the treaties of Greece, Serbia, Croatia and

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<sup>22</sup>Ali Naci Karacan, *Lozan* (Hulûsi Turgut Ed.) (Ankara: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2009), pp. 153-156; İsmet İnönü, *Hatıralar* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 2009), p. 354.

<sup>23</sup>Afet (İnan), "Türk İstiklali ve Lozan Muahedesi", in *Belleten*, 2/7 (1938), p. 286; B. Macit, *Lozan Kahramanı İsmet Paşa* (İstanbul: Güneş Matbaası, 1934), pp. 23-24; İnönü, *Hatıralar*, p. 314.

<sup>24</sup>*Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5 (İstanbul: Necmi İstikbal Matbaası, 1931), p. 42: "İşbu Fasıla ahkâmı ile Türkiyenin gayri Müslim akalliyetleri hakkında tanınan hukuk, Yunanistan tarafından dahi kendi arazisinde bulunan Müslüman akalliyet hakkında tanınmıştır."

<sup>25</sup>*Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5, p. 36: "Türkiye, 38 den 44 e kadar olan Maddelerde musarrah ahkâmın kavanini asliye şeklinde tanınmasını ve hiçbir kanun, hiçbir nizam ve hiçbir muamelei resmiyenin bu ahkâma münafı veya muarız olmamasını ve hiçbir kanun, hiçbir nizam ve hiçbir muamelei resmiyenin ahkâmı mezkûreye ihrazı tefevvuk etmemesini taahhüt eder."

<sup>26</sup>*Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5, p. 36: "Türkiye Hükümeti, tevellüt, milliyet, lisan, ırk veya din tefrik etmeksizin Türkiye ahâlisinin kâffesine hayat ve hürriyet lerince himayeî tamme ve kâmile bahşetmeği taahhüt eder."

<sup>27</sup>*Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5, p. 37: "Gayri Müslim akalliyetlere mensup Türk tabası, Müslümanların istifade ettikleri aynı hukuku medeniye ve siyasiyeden istifade edeceklerdir. Türkiyenin bütün ahâlisi din tefrik edilmeksizin kanun nazarında müsavi olacaklardır."

<sup>28</sup>*Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5, pp. 38-39.

Slovenia for Muslim populations in their lands. Therefore, the Turkish delegation refused this proposal.<sup>29</sup> But, with article 42,<sup>30</sup> Turkey guaranteed these religious rights and customs similar to other states' treaties.<sup>31</sup> More importantly, a kind of different control mechanism was proposed again but this time for the role of the League of Nations. However, the Turkish delegation again refused these proposals of the Allies for a special delegate of the League of Nations which would be sent to Turkey to examine application of minority rights.<sup>32</sup> And, in the article 44, the Turkish delegation accepted the standard guarantor role of the League of Nations.<sup>33</sup> All kinds of the exceptional control mechanisms, therefore, were refused by the Turkish delegation.<sup>34</sup>

In the Lausanne Conference, on January 30 1923, Greece and Turkey also signed the Convention about the exchange of populations. First of all, in the article 2 of this Convention, they agreed on who would be exempted from the exchange. According to this article, *Rums* in İstanbul and Muslims in Western Thrace would be exempted from this exchange of populations.<sup>35</sup> In the article 8, the property rights of migrants were guaranteed. Thus, they would be able to either carry their movable properties with them or transfer them without any document.<sup>36</sup> Then, in the following article immovable properties were guaranteed.<sup>37</sup> However, with the article 12, the liquidation of these properties left to the surveillance of the Mixed Commission, which was described in the

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<sup>29</sup> M. Celil, *Lozan*, II, p. 286.

<sup>30</sup> Some of these rights such as the ones about civil marriage were arranged later in accordance with the Civil Code of Turkey in 1926.

<sup>31</sup> *Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5, p. 39: "Türkiye Hükûmeti gayri Müslim akalliyetlerin hukuku aile veya ahkâmı şahsiyeleri bahsinde bu mesailin mezkûr akalliyetlerin örf ve âdetlerinde hal ve fasledilmesine müsait her türlü âhkâm vaz'ına muvafakat eder."

<sup>32</sup> *Lozan Barış Konferansı: Tutanaklar, Belgeler*, II, p. 165-166.

<sup>33</sup> *Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5, pp. 41-42: "Türkiye, işbu Fasılın yukarıki maddelerinin Türkiyenin gayri Müslim akalliyetlerine teallük ettiği mertebede mezkûr maddeler ahkâmının beynelmilel menfaati haiz taahhüdât teşkil etmelerini ve Cemiyeti Akvamın kefaleti altında vaz'edilmelerini kabul eyler."

<sup>34</sup> Hikmet Bayur, *Türkiye Devletinin Dış Siyaseti*, p. 127.

<sup>35</sup> "Türk ve Rum Ahalisinin Mübadelesine Dair Mukavelename ve Protokol", *Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5, pp. 205-206: "Madde 2- Birinci Maddede musarrah olan mübadele atideki ahaliye şamil değildir: a) Dersaadet Rum ahalisi; b) Garbî Trakyanın Müslüman ahalisi."

<sup>36</sup> *Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5, p. 208. "Muhacirler her cinsten mallarını beraberlerinde götürmek veya naklettirmek serbest olacaklar ve bu yüzden ne ihraç, ne ithal resmine, ne de başka hiçbir resim vermeğe tabi tutulmayacaklardır."

<sup>37</sup> *Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5, p. 209.

article 11 as composed of four members from each parties and three members from neutral states which did not enter the First World War.<sup>38</sup> According to the relevant articles, this Commission would be responsible to estimate the worth of immovable properties, and it would arrange compensation mechanism if necessary. Additionally, it would examine the cases of refugees left Turkish and Greek lands since October 12, 1912. Therefore, if their properties had been already expropriated, then this Commission would estimate an estate.<sup>39</sup>

These minority rights were also guaranteed between Turkey and Bulgaria in 1925. Simeon Radeff came to Turkey as a Bulgarian chargé d'affaires in İstanbul, just after the establishment of the Turkish Republic on October 29, 1923. From onwards, Turkish-Bulgarian negotiations about minority rights were launched between these two states. And, Tevfik Kamil was the head of the Turkish delegation during these negotiations, which started in November of 1923.<sup>40</sup> As a result, on October 18, 1925 Turkey and Bulgaria signed a Friendship Treaty in Ankara.<sup>41</sup> In this treaty, the parties accepted to recognize the Lausanne and Neuilly Treaties as basis of the minority rights guarantee between them.<sup>42</sup> A Turkish-Bulgarian Residence Agreement was also annexed to this Friendship Treaty. It was stated in the article 2 of this agreement that two states would permit voluntarily immigrations of both Turks in Bulgaria and Bulgarians in Turkey. Moreover, these people should be permitted to take their movable properties with them and also to sell their immovable properties.<sup>43</sup> In fact, this agreement was significant to provide regulations for the immigration issue for the first time. And, it was designed to

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<sup>38</sup> *Düster*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5, pp. 212-213.

<sup>39</sup> *Düster*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5, pp. 210-219.

<sup>40</sup> *Tarihte Türk Bulgar İlişkileri* (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 2004), pp. 107-108.

<sup>41</sup> *Düster*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 7 (devamı) (Ankara: Türk Ocakları Merkez Heyeti Matbaası, 1928), pp. 2482-2498.

<sup>42</sup> *Düster*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 7 (devamı), p. 2484: “Nöyyi ve Lozan muahedelerinden her birine vazı-ü’limza devletlerin ekalliyetlere mütallik olarak haiz oldukları bilcümle hukuku mütakiben Bulgaristan Türkiyeye ve Türkiye de Bulgaristana karşı tanır.”

<sup>43</sup> *Düster*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 7 (devamı), pp. 2491-2492. “Tarafeyn-i akidiyenin Bulgaristan Türklerinin ve Türkiye Bulgarlarının ihtiyari hicretlerine bir gûna mania ika edilmemesi kabul edilir.”

provide an order for the immigration problems.<sup>44</sup> Although in this agreement a definition of ‘Bulgarian Turks’ was used, in this Friendship Treaty this minority defined as ‘Muslims’ in Bulgaria. Thus, religion was again used to identify the Turkish minority as in the case of the Lausanne Conference.<sup>45</sup>

These treaties mentioned above, indeed, established the legal framework for the minority rights of Turkish/Muslim populations in Greece and Bulgaria. In accordance with these treaties, there emerged a minority regime between Turkey and these two states. However, these guaranteed rights were not granted by Greece and Bulgaria in a form as it was written in the articles. And, this made Turkey protested these violations in the inter-war period both at inter-state and international levels. Turkey perceived the violation of minority rights as a sign of ‘unfriendly’ attitude of these two states towards the Turkish Republic. And, for Turkey, it was the extension of these states’ policies of posing physical and ideological threats to the new Turkish state and it responded accordingly.

Within this context, the first chapter will deal with those physical challenges which were perceived by the Turkish Republic as a threat from these two states. In accordance with this perceived threat, the effects of those physical challenges on the Turkish/Muslim minorities from the Turkish point of view will be examined. And, finally, how the Turkish side responded to this situation will be problematized. Then, in the second chapter, the Turkish perception of ideological threat which was based on ideological challenges from these two states will be examined. Similarly, both the way these challenges affected the lives of Turkish/Muslim minorities living in Greece and Bulgaria and the Turkish respond to this impact will be examined.

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<sup>44</sup> Bilâl N. Şimşir, “The Turks of Bulgaria and the Immigration Question”, in *The Turkish Presence in Bulgaria* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1987), p. 46.

<sup>45</sup> Ebru Boyar, *Ottomans, Turks and the Balkans: Empire Lost, Relations Altered* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007), pp. 133-138.

## CHAPTER 2

### **PYHSICAL THREAT TO TURKEY: REVISIONIST CHALLENGES FROM GREECE AND BULGARIA**

In the inter-war period, revisionist versus anti-revisionist states debate was also valid for the Balkan politics. Turkey, which just settled its territories with the Lausanne Treaty in 1923, was obviously one of the anti-revisionist states throughout this period. Following territorial *statu-quo* policies, the Turkish government was suspicious about any sympathy for revisionism in other states. Thus, the positions of Greek and Bulgarian governments on the issue of revisionism were significant for the Turkish side. And, it was apparent for Turkey that in both these two states, there was an inclination towards the revisionist ideals, but in different time periods during the inter-war years. In Turkey, this revisionist outlook in its neighbours was perceived as a physical challenge. It was because Turkey saw that both Greek and Bulgarian revisionism had claims on Turkish territories. Hence, although Turkish diplomatic relations with these two states survived in a peaceful tone, the Turkish side suspected about irredentist intentions of these two states in the inter-war period.

However, the Turkish side knew that revisionist tendency in Greece and Bulgaria also determined their treatment of Turkish/Muslim minorities living in their lands. Parallel to its perceived physical threat stemming from revisionist challenges in these two states, Turkey was well aware of the fact that these Turkish/Muslim populations were also attacked in accordance with the same revisionist agenda of these two states. More important than the violation of their rights, even, these minorities were attacked. Besides humanitarian concerns, hence, these attacks on Turkish/Muslim presence in Greece and Bulgaria meant more than a minority problem for Turkey. The

Turkish side considered the problems encountered by these people as the extension of revisionist tendency in these two states. Thereby, the way Turkey considered the Greek and Bulgarian approach to these minorities acquired a different character. Being designed within the revisionist context for Turkish view, Greek and Bulgarian pressures on these people became inevitably alarming for Turkey. Thus, the Turkish side protested this insecure environment for its minority in accordance with its own physical threat perception.

## **2.1. GREEK CASE**

Greece could be described as one of the anti-revisionist states in the Balkans during the inter-war period,<sup>46</sup> but, in 1920s, the Turkish side was definitely suspicious about potential irredentist policy of Greece towards Turkey. Although the Turkish-Greek relations entered into new phase with the Lausanne Treaty after years of war, mistrust was still at the centre of relations. For Turkey, peace in the Lausanne Conference did not mean the end of Greek revisionism. Particularly, Greek approach to remaining Greeks in İstanbul reminded the Turkish side previous expansionist Greek policies. Indeed, the rule of Pangalos in the mid-1920s was the most evident proof for Turkey about continuing revisionist ideals in Greece. However, Turkey saw that in line with this revisionist agenda, there was also an increasing pressure and persecution towards the Turks in Western Thrace.

### **2.1.1. GREEK REVISIONISM AND TURKEY**

The revisionist claims in Greece always revolved around the *Megali Idea*. This was an irredentist Greek project that based on unification of all Greeks under a single state in which İstanbul would be its capital. This project was first defined by Ioannis Kolettis, an influential Greek politician. In 1844,

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<sup>46</sup> Mustafa Türkes, “The Balkan Pact and its Implications for the Balkan States, 1930-34”, in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 30/1 (1994), pp. 123-124.

he declared this as a plan for ‘the Greek Kingdom’ that covered all Greeks living in any place related with ‘the Greek history and the Greek race’.<sup>47</sup> This was an open-ended definition with an intention of uniting all Greeks in a single state that had neither a geographical limit nor a determined content.<sup>48</sup> However, it was clear that the first settled Greek territory of 1832 was far from meeting this Hellenic project.<sup>49</sup> It was only ‘a first step’ of the *Megali Idea* for many Greeks. Thus, after this period they always searched for the ways of continuing this expansionist policy. Actually, it was the remaining Greek presence in the Ottoman lands that they used as a pretext to continue this irredentist policy.<sup>50</sup> In line with this project, Greeks, under the patronage of external powers, could expand their territories, twice more than the initial one, at the expense of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>51</sup>

The *Megali Idea* was also at the centre of Greek politics both on the eve of the First World War and during the following Peace Conferences. In this period, Eleftherios Venizelos could be defined as the most significant follower of the *Megali Idea* in the Greek politics. During this period, between 1910 and 1920, he ruled Greece at various times as a Prime Minister. However, before this period, he had already started to work for the *Megali Idea*. For instance, he played an influential role in the autonomy of Crete, and, then, in its union with the Greek territories on the eve of the First Balkan War. Similarly, during this war, he was active in the annexation of other Ottoman territories as Western Thrace, Macedonia and Epirus. This expansion at the expense of the Ottoman Empire, indeed, made him popular in Greece,<sup>52</sup> and he continued to follow this policy on the eve of the First World War. However, on the contrary to his aggressive policies to satisfy this Hellenic project, the King Constantine

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<sup>47</sup> Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 46-47.

<sup>48</sup> İlhan Şerif Kaymaz, “Greek or the Western Question”, in *Atatürk Yolu Dergisi* 25/26 (2000), p. 163.

<sup>49</sup> Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*, p. 48.

<sup>50</sup> Ramazan Tosun, *Türk-Yunan İlişkileri ve Nüfus Mübadelesi* (1821-1930) (Ankara: Berikan, 2002), pp. 33-37.

<sup>51</sup> İlhan Şerif Kaymaz, “Greek or the Western Question”, p. 161.

<sup>52</sup> *Yunanistan 1929-1930* (Hizmete Mahsus) (İstanbul: Askeri Matbaa, 1930), pp. 268-270.

was against to the adventurist policies of his Prime Minister.<sup>53</sup> Thus, during the rule of the King Constantine, from 1913 to 1917, there was ‘schism’ between these two Greek rulers. Although Venizelos desired to enter war on the side of the Allies in order to meet this irredentist project, Constantine did not want this.<sup>54</sup> This dedication of Venizelos to meet the *Megali Idea* and to enter war on the side of the Allies was also noticed by the Ottoman authorities. For instance, Galip Kemali Söylemezoğlu, the ambassador of the Ottoman Empire in Athens between 1913 and 1916, sent reports about pro-Allied policies of Venizelos.<sup>55</sup>

In 1917, Greece finally joined the war on side of the Allies. During this period, Venizelos took the support of the Allies to overcome this national schism in Greece. Thanks to the pressure of the Allied forces, the king left power to his pro-Allied son in 1917 and Venizelos returned to Athens from Thessaloniki, where he had organized a coup against the supporters of the King. Thus, Greece was united under the rule of Venizelos and joined the war.<sup>56</sup> After the war, Venizelos asked for the reward of Greek devotion to the Allies as a part of Ottoman lands. In order to justify his territorial claims on the Ottoman lands, in Paris Peace Conference, Venizelos, as the head of the Greek delegation, argued that the *Megali Idea* was compatible with the Wilsonian principles. Therefore, Venizelos told that in accordance with these principles, Thrace, İstanbul, some territories in eastern part of Anatolia and the northern Epirus should be Greek.<sup>57</sup> In the Conference, he claimed these Ottoman provinces in the name of ‘liberating’ the *Rums* living there, particularly in İzmir.<sup>58</sup> However, before the settlement of Peace Conference, the Italian troops landed in the Ottoman territories in Anatolia. This Italian occupation alarmed Venizelos who considered that it was the most suitable time for Greece to

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<sup>53</sup> Richard Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*, p. 87.

<sup>54</sup> Charles and Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States 1804-1920*, VIII (Peter F. Sugar and Donald W. Treadgold Ed.) (Seattle and London: The University of Washington Press, 2000), p. 294.

<sup>55</sup> Söylemezoğlu, *Hatıraları Atina Sefareti*, pp. 215-216.

<sup>56</sup> Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States*, p. 296.

<sup>57</sup> *Yunanistan 1929-1930*, p. 32.

<sup>58</sup> Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*, p. 91.



realise the *Megali Idea* at maximum level. Thus, just after the Italian occupation, he took the approval of the Allies to land the Greek troops in İzmir on May 15, 1919.<sup>59</sup> Four days later, Mustafa Kemal Paşa started the national struggle of Turks for independence in Samsun, which continued until the ceasefire in Mudanya on October 11, 1922.<sup>60</sup>

Between 1919 and 1922, thus, the Turkish and Greek forces fought in Anatolia. However, in addition to these armed campaigns, there were also mind campaigns. For instance, Venizelos launched a propaganda campaign arguing that the *Rums* faced with systematic Turkish atrocities in Anatolia. This atrocity propaganda in fact helped him to gain both support of Greeks in Anatolia and the Allies.<sup>61</sup> In the support of *Rums*, the main actor was the Patriarchate. For the Ottoman view, the Patriarchate was already very powerful, and enjoyed various concessions from the Ottoman empire. For instance, in 1914, Galip Kemalî described the Patriarchate as ‘a state-in-state’ under the Ottoman rule.<sup>62</sup> However, this was more alarming (according to the Ottoman view) during the Greek invasion in Anatolia. In particular, in the propaganda activities of Greece about Western Anatolia, the Patriarchate was so active.<sup>63</sup> In *Yunanistan 1929-1930*, a book published by the Turkish army only for military personnel, it was pointed out that when the Greek commandership, under Leonidas Paraskevopoulos, entered İstanbul with the Allies on November 13, 1918 they initially went to the Patriarchate and Aya Sofya. This was to run up Byzantine flags, in these places, which were removed in 1453.<sup>64</sup> However, officially it was on March of 1919 that Dorotheos, the new Patriarch, and the council of the Patriarchate declared their unity with Greece. Then they changed the Ottoman flag with the Greek one.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Charles and Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States*, p. 313.

<sup>60</sup> Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, *Nutuk*, I (1920-1927) (İstanbul: Devlet Matbaası, 1934), p. 1.

<sup>61</sup> İbrahim Erdal, *Mübadele (Uluslaşma Sürecinde Türkiye ve Yunanistan 1923-1925)* (İstanbul: IQ Yayıncılık, 2006), p. 34.

<sup>62</sup> Söylemezoğlu, *Hatıraları Atina Sefareti*, p. 160.

<sup>63</sup> Erdal, *Mübadele*, p. 35.

<sup>64</sup> *Yunanistan 1929-1930*, p. 32.

<sup>65</sup> Elçin Macar, *Cumhuriyet Döneminde İstanbul Rum Patrikhanesi* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), pp. 65-67.

Indeed, the closeness of Dorotheos to the revisionist policies of Venizelos was so explicit from the very beginning. When he replaced Patriarch Yermenos on November 25, 1918, for instance, he described the role of Patriarchate as the mouthpiece of ‘remaining *Rums*’ in Anatolia.<sup>66</sup> During his term, he did not hesitate to show his favour of Venizelos and his revisionist ideals, and supported him from within. In *Nutuk*, Mustafa Kemal Paşa underlined about these activities of the Patriarchate. For instance, an organization was established in the Patriarchate as *Mavri Mira Heyeti*, which spread propaganda against the Turkish forces, was established in 1919. It was apparent that when it was needed, supports of the *Yunan Kızılhaç Cemiyeti* (Greek Committee of the Red Cross) and the *Resmî Muhacirin Komisyonu* (Formal Commission of Immigrants) were also enjoyed by Greek forces. Moreover, *Mavri Mira*, under the control of the Patriarchate, made propaganda among the Greek youths both in schools and sport organizations.<sup>67</sup>

In addition to the support of Greeks living in Ottoman lands, Venizelos was able to gain the support of the political establishment of Britain because he was considered the man that could satisfy the British interests in Anatolia.<sup>68</sup> Apparently, the Greek defeat by the Turkish army under Mustafa Kemal Paşa split the Allies about their support for Greeks. It was Britain that was the last power among the Allies to withdraw her support.<sup>69</sup> However, in time, not only because of the defeat of Venizelos in the elections of November of 1920, the political establishment in Britain also disturbed from the situation of the Greek troops in Anatolia. Finally, on September 23, 1922, the British cabinet declared the failure of their Turkish policy.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, this announcement was after the collapse of the Greek forces in İzmir by September 9. This was the last stage of the well-organized Turkish campaign of attack which was started on August

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<sup>66</sup> Macar, *Cumhuriyet Döneminde İstanbul Rum Patrikhanesi*, pp. 65-66.

<sup>67</sup> Atatürk, *Nutuk*, I, pp. 1-2.

<sup>68</sup> Ebru Boyar, “Savaş ve Basın: Türk Ulusal Kurtuluş Savaşı ve İngiliz *The Times* Gazetesi (1919-1922)”, *ODTÜ Gelişme Dergisi*, 36:2 (2009), p. 298.

<sup>69</sup> Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States*, p. 314.

<sup>70</sup> Boyar, “Savaş ve Basın”, pp. 299-300.

26, under Mustafa Kemal Paşa, as a commander in chief, in Kocatepe.<sup>71</sup> This ‘catastrophe’ for the Greek troops in Anatolia was a sign of the collapse of the *Megali Idea* identified with Venizelos.<sup>72</sup> However, it would be difficult to denote the Greek catastrophe in Anatolia as the end of this Hellenic project. It is because in the inter-war period until 1930s, the new Turkish state saw remainders of this ideology in Greek politics.

According to Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, peace periods sometimes could be defined as continuity of wars but in other means, and indeed the period after the Lausanne Peace was one of them.<sup>73</sup> Especially in terms of Turkish-Greek relations, this kind of ‘peace’ was observable from signing of the Lausanne Treaty to 1930s. It was apparent that there was a lack of trust between these two states, and especially for Turkey, Greece was the country to watch. For instance, an intelligence report dating 23 March 1925 about Greek attempt to recruit an army from men aged 16 to 30 alarmed the Turkish authorities.<sup>74</sup> Following two months, continuous reports were sent from Turkish officials at the Turkish-Greek frontier to the several state authorities in Ankara. These were about Greek military activities in the eastern part of the Maritsa River.<sup>75</sup>

Despite this agitation, the dictatorship of Theodoros Pangalos, however, could be seen as the period when this Turkish mistrust reached its peak point. Theodoros Pangalos was from military staff but he became a MP for Thessaloniki in 1923. Then, in 1924, he became the Minister of War, with the establishment of the Republic in Greece. He was, however, already a well-known figure among Turks because of his efforts to reunite the Greek forces in Thrace during the Lausanne Conference. In this period, he was the leader of the War Party and he called for a new war with the Turkish forces. Although this

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<sup>71</sup> Atatürk, *Nutuk*, II, pp. 172-179

<sup>72</sup> Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*, p. 98.

<sup>73</sup> Bayur, *Türkiye Devletinin Dış Siyaseti*, p. 147: “Sulhun başka vasıtalarla devam eden bir harp olduğu hakkındaki iddia doğru ise bu tarif Lozan sulhunun akabinde bize karşı takip edilen siyasette oldukça geniş bir tatbikat sahası bulmuştur.”

<sup>74</sup> 23 March 1925: Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivi (hereafter BCA), 030 10 253 708 12.

<sup>75</sup> 23 March 1925: BCA, 030 10 253 708 14; 29 March 1925: BCA, 030 10 253 708 19; 31 March 1925: BCA, 030 10 253 708 21; 04 April 1925: BCA, 030 10 253 708 24; 06 April 1925: BCA, 253 708 27; 07 April 1925: 030 10 708 29; 08 April 1925: BCA, 030 10 253 708 31.

was an unrealistic attempt, what apparent was his dedication for this new conflict with the Turkish national forces. However, with the Treaty of Lausanne, he lost this ground. The stance of Venizelos during the Conference made him anti-Venizelist although he had supported the pro-Allied Venizelist forces in 1916 against the king. On June 25, 1925 in Thessaloniki he launched a coup with a military community there. Then, he compelled the Greek government to resign and he abolished the Greek parliament. Finally, he became a dictator.<sup>76</sup>

Political scene in Greece played an influential role for his dictatorship. It was because that the Greek defeat in Anatolia meant also the loss of national purpose for Greeks, the *Megali Idea*. This disappointment made Venizelos to lose elections to the king Constantine on October 1920. However, instabilities in the Greek politics continued in the following period. Then, Pangalos, in 1925, took the power, with a clear intention of regaining the territorial losses of the Treaty of Lausanne.<sup>77</sup> This revisionist outlook, indeed, made him supported particularly by the Greek refugees of Anatolia, who migrated to Greece after 'the catastrophe' (according to the Greek point of view). Wishing to return Anatolia, they supported his revisionist policies. This backing of the Greek immigrants for Pangalos was apparent. For instance, on December 1925, he came together with these Greeks in Thessaloniki. In this meeting, which clearly turned into a protest against Turkey, he showed how he favoured the *Megali Idea*. During the meeting, he implied that these Greek immigrants would soon return to Anatolia.<sup>78</sup>

In his rule, Pangalos relied on the strained Turkish-British relations to achieve his revisionist claims in Anatolia. One of the main reasons of this tension between Turkey and Britain was the unsettled Mosul issue which resulted in a stalemate between Turkey and Britain until its settlement on June 5, 1926. In fact, this issue turned into a problem between the parties in the

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<sup>76</sup> Harry J. Psomiades, "The Diplomacy of Theodoros Pangalos", *Balkan Studies*, 13/1 (1972), pp. 1-2; *Yunanistan 1929-1930*, pp. 278-280.

<sup>77</sup> Psomiades, "The Diplomacy of Theodoros Pangalos", pp. 1-2.

<sup>78</sup> Psomiades, "The Diplomacy of Theodoros Pangalos", p. 9

Lausanne Conference. Ali Naci Karacan, a Turkish journalist participated this Conference, wrote that Mosul issue was ‘the most exciting match’ of this Conference.<sup>79</sup> Apparently, it resulted with harsh disputes in the Conference. Thus, when the first conference was ceased on February 4, 1923, İsmet Paşa showed this issue as one of the reasons of this cessation.<sup>80</sup> However, this issue could not be also settled during the second session of the Conference and it remained unsettled between 1923 and 1926. But this deadlock over the Mosul issue meant a lot to Pangalos and his arch supporters about the *Megali Idea*. Pangalos had territorial claims on Thrace and İstanbul. According to him, these claims could only be achieved if Turkish-British relations deteriorated because of the Mosul problem, and this would lead Greek-British cooperation against Turkey.

During his term, in addition to the potential British support, Pangalos also planned to take the support of Italy. Mussolini, in fact, had already proposed aid for the revival of the *Megali Idea*.<sup>81</sup> Similar to the case of Pangalos’s rule, Mussolini also considered the worsening Turco-British relations as an opportunity to meet territorial claims of Italy on the Turkish territories.<sup>82</sup> He even offered Britain a support against Turkey on December 1924.<sup>83</sup> Therefore, these two revisionist rulers of Italy and Greece shared the same will: a clash between Turkey and Britain about Mosul, hence, they would invade Anatolia easily. This desire made them come closer. Especially, in 1926 the rumours about the cooperation between these states had reached to unprecedented degrees, and, Britain used this and implied to Turkey if the Mosul issue could not be solved, then the enemies of Turkey would act more freely.<sup>84</sup> Thus, Turkey realised that the issue of Mosul became the problem basis of the revisionist intentions of both Greece and Italy. However, with the

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<sup>79</sup> Ali Naci Karacan, *Lozan* (Hulûsi Turgut Ed.) (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2009), p. 197.

<sup>80</sup> Karacan, *Lozan*, p. 214.

<sup>81</sup> Psomiades, “The Diplomacy of Theodoros Pangalos”, pp. 2-3.

<sup>82</sup> Mim Kemâl Öke, *Musul-Kürdistan Sorunu (1918-1926)* (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 1995), p. 308; Nevin Yazıcı, *Petrol Çerçevesinde Musul Sorunu (1926-1955)* (İstanbul: Ötüken Neşriyat, 2010), p. 35.

<sup>83</sup> Psomiades, “The Diplomacy of Theodoros Pangalos”, pp. 5-6.

<sup>84</sup> Psomiades, “The Diplomacy of Theodoros Pangalos”, p. 11.

demilitarised zones in Thrace and the Straits, any attack coming from Italy and Greece, especially in a case of cooperation among these two states, would pose a big danger to Turkey.<sup>85</sup>

On June 5, 1926, the issue of Mosul was settled with a treaty.<sup>86</sup> There were internal reasons pushing Turkey to sign this agreement as the Şeyh Sait Rebellion,<sup>87</sup> Turkey had also considerable external factors such as eliminating the British support to the revisionist Italy and Greece, as mentioned above. According to Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, the problematic relations between Turkey and Britain unfortunately forced Turkey to remain vigilant against to the other states,<sup>88</sup> and, obviously, Greece was one of these states, especially under the dictatorship of the General Pangalos. However, with the settlement of relations between Turkey and Britain, Pangalos lost the ground for his revisionist policies. Thus, he lost his source of power. In line with this, Psomiades described the overthrow of this dictator as ‘the by-product’ of the Turco-British agreement on the Mosul issue. Pangalos, who lost his credibility, was even attacked by his own Republican Guard. And, on August 22, Admiral Pavlos Koundouriotis again became the President of the Republic.<sup>89</sup> In 1926, with the removal of Pangalos from the rule of Greece, there was relaxation on the revisionist foreign policy of Greece. However, it was not a total abandonment of revisionism. For inter-war period, it could be argued that it was the beginning of the 1930s that the remnants of the *Megali Idea* lost ground in the Greek politics. Thereby, Turkey continued to suspect about revisionist tendency in Greece about Turkish territories until this period. So, the end of Pangalos rule was not the end of insecurity perception in Turkey about Greek revisionism.

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<sup>85</sup> Türkeş, “The Balkan Pact and its Implications for the Balkan States”, pp. 129-130.

<sup>86</sup> Öke, *Musul-Kürdistan Sorunu*, pp. 308-309; Psomiades, “The Diplomacy of Theodoros Pangalos”, pp. 11-12.

<sup>87</sup> Yazıcı, *Petrol Çerçevesinde Musul Sorunu (1926-1955)*, p. 36; Esra Sarıkoyuncu Değerli, “Lozan Barış Konferansında Musul”, in *Balıkesir Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 10/18 (2007), p. 138.

<sup>88</sup> Bayur, *Türkiye'nin Dış Siyaseti*, pp. 167-168.

<sup>89</sup> Psomiades, “The Diplomacy of Theodoros Pangalos”, pp. 12-14.

Indeed, these Turkish continuing suspicions about Greek intentions were based on the unsettled problems between Turkey and Greece about minorities. Turkey and Greece were not able to solve the problems about the exchange of populations after the Lausanne Conference.<sup>90</sup> Although these two states agreed on Convention for the exchange of populations during this Conference,<sup>91</sup> the impasse remained between the parties until the 1930, when it was revised with a new Convention.<sup>92</sup> In this period, what disturbed the Turkish side most was the Greek view of remaining *Rums* in İstanbul. The attempts of the Greek side to achieve maximum number of these *Rums* to remain in İstanbul made Turkey suspected about continuing revisionism in Greece. Hence, Turkey was alarmed about this Greek stance during this period of legal impasse until 1930s.

### 2.1.2. EXCHANGE OF POPULATIONS AND LEGAL IMPASSE

In the history of the Ottoman Empire, exchange of populations was first proposed by Galip Kemali (Söylemezoğlu), with the consent of Sait Halim Paşa, the grand vizier of the period, to Venizelos. It was in 1914, when he was the ambassador of the Ottoman Empire in Athens. He planned this exchange between Muslims in Macedonia and *Rums* in Aydın.<sup>93</sup> The ambassador did this to prevent atrocities against Muslims in Macedonia. Although the Greek side accepted this proposal, it could not be implemented in the atmosphere of the First World War.<sup>94</sup> However, in the Lausanne Conference, this exchange of populations issue was once more brought forward. But this time parties were more dedicated to it.

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<sup>90</sup> *Türkiye Dış Politikasında 50 Yıl Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı ve Balkan Paktı (1923-1934)* (Ankara: T.C. Dışişleri Bakanlığı, 1973), p. 153; Stephen P. Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932), pp. 364, 496.

<sup>91</sup> “Türk ve Rum Ahalinin Mübadelesine Dair Mukavelename ve Protokol”, *Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5 (İstanbul: Necmi İstikbal Matbaası, 1931), pp. 205-219.

<sup>92</sup> “Mübadelei ahaliye mütedair Lozan Muahedenamesile Atina İtilâlafnamesinin tatbikatından mütevellit mesailin sureti katiyede halli hakkında Mukavelename” (Ankara: Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Hariciye Vekâleti, 1930).

<sup>93</sup> Söylemezoğlu, *Hatıraları Atina Sefareti*, p. 102.

<sup>94</sup> Erdal, *Mübadele*, p. 33.

For the newly established Turkish Republic, exchange of populations meant more than just migration of Greeks from its lands. It, however, had a historical meaning. In a Turkish history book for the primary schools, for instance, this exchange was justified with the description of the exchanged Greeks as ‘snakes living with us’.<sup>95</sup> Indeed, the legacy of history was the main factor behind the presentation of the Greeks as ‘traitors’. Mainly, their relation with Greece during the National Independence War was fresh in the minds of Turks. According to Behçet Kami, who wrote a book during the Lausanne Conference called *Tarihimizde Rumlar, Patrikhane ve Yunancılık* (Greeks, the Patriarchate and Pro-Greekness in Our History), this minority always sought the ways of representing Greece in Turkey, even after the Greek defeat in Anatolia, at a degree more than it should be in Athens. Thus, they could only be the enemies of Turkey so that why Turkey would ‘look after these elements of disorder’ as a minority then.<sup>96</sup> According to Kami, hostile Greeks in Turkish lands were not limited with the ones who showed their favour of Greece during the Armistice of Moudros period, between 30 October 1918 and 10 August 1920. He claimed, however, by looking through the following period, the Turkish National Independence War and afterwards, Turkey would see how the efforts of the Turkish authorities to establish a homogenous country without *Rums* both in Anatolia and İstanbul were so vital.<sup>97</sup> Similarly, the book of Turkish army about Greece pointed out the historical factors to justify the exchange of populations. And, it was written that *Rums*, who were exchanged according to the Lausanne Treaty, in no condition should be allowed to return

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<sup>95</sup> Ebru Boyar, *Ottomans, Turks and the Balkans Empire Lost, Relations Altered* (London, New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), p. 134.

<sup>96</sup> Behçet Kami, *Tarihimizde Rumlar, Patrikhane ve Yunancılık* (İstanbul: Orhaniye Matbuası, 1339), p. 12: “Bu kadar vakadan, hele bu Yunan mağlubiyetinden sonra, Yunanlılığı Atina’dan ziyade burada temsile mazhar eden bu unsur Türke dost olmaz. İçimizde neden göz göre göre bu düşmanları saklayıp beslemeliyiz? .. Eğer medeni hükümetler ekaliyetlere aid bi takım haklar kabul ediyorlarsa o hakların arasında memleketin sahibine alenen düşmanlık edebilmek şart olmasa gerekdir.”

<sup>97</sup> Behçet Kami, *Tarihimizde Rumlar, Patrikhane ve Yunancılık*, p. 4: “Biz yalnız mütakereden sonra mavi beyaz renklere bulanana Yanneleri Kostileri hesaba katmışız. Keyfiyet böyle değil. İstanbul’da olsun, Anadolu’da olsun bu beladan kurtulup pak ve saf bir Türk vatani vücuda getirmeğe çalıştığımız şu sırada ne hayırlı bir iş yaptığımızı yakından bilmemiz fa’idelidir.”



to Turkey and this should be accepted as ‘the most significant national duty’ for Turks.<sup>98</sup>

These efforts, indeed, showed the concerns of the Turkish side about the necessity of exchange. However, this exchange of populations did not include all Greeks in Turkey and the ones in İstanbul were excluded from the compulsory exchange. In this context, it can be argued that the presence of Rum population in İstanbul gave at least psychological effect about the continuing claims of Greece within the context of the *Megali Idea*.<sup>99</sup> Therefore, the idea of excluding *Rums* of İstanbul from the exchange of populations was one of the deadlocks during the Lausanne Conference and it remained as a problem afterwards. In the conference, the Turkish delegation described the main concern of Turkey while insisting on the exchange was to eliminate Greek irredentism through this exchange.<sup>100</sup> İsmet Paşa, the head of Turkish delegation, explained the concerns of Turkey: There would always be a potential demand among the minorities to establish an independent government.<sup>101</sup> Also, Behçet Kami shared İsmet Paşa’s views, implying how states in the Lausanne Conference still perceived the minorities as elements of disorder and searched for minority rights, which would, for example, allow *Rums* act freely. However, he underlined that the rights of minorities should not permit them to act in hostility towards their own governments.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> *Yunanistan 1929-1930*, p. 28: “Evliya Çelebi zamanında Moranın âdeti büyük harpten evvelki İzmir havalisini andırdığı, seyahat namesinin tafsilatından istidlâl olunmaktadır. Görülüyor ki, Yunanlıların son harpte İzmir havalisinde muvakkat işgal mahiyetinde göstermek istedikleri istilâ, beş, on sene içinde memleketimizi Mora haline getirmek maksadını gizlemekte idi. Lozan muahedesıyla defedilen Rumların her ne pahasına olursa olsun İzmir ve sevahil mıntikasına kat’iyen sokulmamaları en mühim bir milli vazife olmalıdır.”

<sup>99</sup> Melek Fırat, “Yunanistan’la İlişkiler” in Baskın Oran (ed.) *Türk Dış Politikası Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, I (İstanbul: İletişim, 2001), pp. 330-331.

<sup>100</sup> *Lozan Barış Konferansı: Tutanaklar, Belgeler*, II (Seha L. Meray trans.) (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1970), p. 312; Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, pp. 379-380.

<sup>101</sup> *Lozan Barış Konferansı: Tutanaklar, Belgeler*, I, p. 199: “Ayrı bir Hükümet kurmanın maddi imkansızlığı, karşılıklı mübadele tedbirlerinin dışında kalacak azınlıkları, aklın ve sağlaml bir mantığın kendilerine çizmiş olduğu yoldan ayrılmamaları zorluğuna inandırabilecek midir?”

<sup>102</sup> Behçet Kami, *Tarihimizde Rumlar*, p. 12: “Baş murahhasımız İsmet Paşa hazretleri ekaliyetler meselesinde noktai nazarımızı müdafâ ederken bunların, devletlerin arzularına göre mehterin bir unsur-ı fesad olduklarını sırahat rabitasında bir ima ile söyledi. Hâlâ konferans, ekalliyetlerin bildikleri gibi yaşamaları luzumunda musır görünüyor... Tarih ve henüz tarihe karışmayan vakalar gösteriyor ki Rumlar için bu tarz-ı hareket tabii olmuştu. ...Eğer medeni

Despite Turkish concerns about *Rums* excluded from the exchange, the parties, finally, agreed on the exclusions. These exclusions were both for *Rums* in İstanbul and Muslims in Western Thrace, with the 2<sup>nd</sup> article of the Convention.<sup>103</sup> However, after the Lausanne Treaty there emerged a problem about the definition of *Rums* being excluded from the exchange.<sup>104</sup> This was ‘the *établis* problem’ that resulted from the different interpretation of this term by the Turkish and Greek authorities. Although the former translated this term with the legal conditions of domicile, the latter only referred to any actual establishment in İstanbul.<sup>105</sup> According to the Turkish side, the excluded *Rums* in İstanbul should be asked to prove their residence in İstanbul. But this proof should be made according to the legal codes of Turkey about the domicile. However, the reports of Tevfik Rüştü Aras, the head of the Turkish delegation in the Mixed Exchange Commission<sup>106</sup>, showed that the Greek part was totally against to this definition.<sup>107</sup> It could be argued that this was because the fact that the Greek part was very well aware of the existence of *Rums* who could not meet the legal condition of the Turkish law to prove their domicile in İstanbul before October 30, 1918. So, the number of the excluded *Rums* would decrease in line with the Turkish law. So, Greece did not want this. Thus, it was apparent that while the Turkish delegation was searching ways to limit the number of Greeks who would stay in İstanbul, the Greek one was searching

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hükümetler ekaliyetlere aid bi takım haklar kabul ediyorlarsa o hakların arasında memleketin sahibine alenen düşmanlık edebilmek şart olmasa gerekir.”

<sup>103</sup> “Türk ve Rum Ahalisinin Mübadelesine Dair Mukavelename ve Protokol”, *Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5, pp. 205-206: “Madde 2- Birinci Maddede musarrah olan mübadele atideki ahaliye şamil değildir: a) Dersaadet Rum ahalisi; b) Garbî Trakyanın Müslüman ahalisi.”

<sup>104</sup> *Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı*, p. 181: “Görüldüğü gibi, Anlaşmazlık İstanbulda yerleşmiş bulunan ve değiştirilmeyecek olan Rumların tarifinden çıkmıştı. ‘Mukim, yerleştirilmiş, établi’ deyimlerinden ne anlaşılıyordu? İstanbul Belediyesi sınırları içinde yerleşmiş olan kimselerin bizim kanunlarımıza göre tayini ise tabii idi. Yunanistan ise İstanbul’da mümkün olduğu kadar fazla sayıda Rum ahali bırakmayı çıkarları bakımından zorunlu buluyordu.”

<sup>105</sup> Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, pp. 401-402.

<sup>106</sup> Tevfik Rüştü Aras, *Atatürk’ün Dış Politikası* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2003), p. 138.

<sup>107</sup> *Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı*, pp. 170-172. “Etabli kelimesinin tefsiri etrafında Muhtelit Komisyondaki cereyanları gerek tahriri maruzatlarımla gerek şifahen ve komisyona bu meseleye dair verilen tezkerelerin suretlerini takdim ettik.. Heyeti vekilei celilenin bu bapta tebliğ emir ve talimatları heyetimizi yalnız nüfus kanununun maddei muayenesinin müdafaası ve buna göre netice istihsalile takyit etmiş, halbuki Yunan tezi bu noktai nazarımızla tamamile zıt olduktan ve bu vesile ile de hiçbir müsaadekar temayülata gayri müsait olduktan başka bitarafları noktai nazarı da Yunan noktai nazarından kısmen ayrı olmakla beraber bizimle de müterafik değildir.”

ways to maximise their number. Indeed, this was the core of problem between the parties in the Mixed Exchange Commission.

Besides this dispute in the Commission, Greece wanted to internationalize this problem.<sup>108</sup> And, the issue of *établis* was carried to the Hague.<sup>109</sup> In the discussions, the Greek delegation claimed that Turkey did whatever it could to limit the number of *gayrı-mübadil Rums* (Ottoman/Turkish Greeks who were excluded from the exchange). As a response, Tevfik Rüştü gave a speech in January 16, 1925 in the Court of Justice. In this speech, he clearly underlined that this issue for Turkey was not about the exchange of ‘ten-thousand more or less’ people. However, it was about the security of the country, as this issue posed a threat to the independence and sovereignty of Turkey. Thus, he declared that Turkey would take any necessary steps for this potential threat such as limiting the number of *gayrı-mübadil Rums*.<sup>110</sup> This speech, indeed, shows how the issue of exchange of populations was considered within the context of Turkish security.

This security concern also played a role in the issue of *Rums* without passports; or the issue of ‘the *absent Rums*’. Nearly more than 30.000 *Rums* were without regular passports of the Turkish Republic. These *Rums* had the passports of the Ottoman Empire but did not have the passport of the Republic so that they could not enter İstanbul. As this was part of the domestic law, Turkey did not want to negotiate this issue. After the insistence of the Greek side, the Turkish delegation in the Commission underlined that it would be impossible to recognise passports issued in the Ottoman period.<sup>111</sup> However,

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<sup>108</sup> Özden Zeynep Alantar, “Türk Dış Politikasında Milletler Cemiyeti Dönemi” in Faruk Sönmezoglu (ed.) *Türk Dış Politikası Analizi* (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 2001), p. 73.

<sup>109</sup> *Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı*, p. 177.

<sup>110</sup> *Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı*, p. 189: “Büyük fedakarlıklar pahasına elde ettiği istiklalini, hakimiyetini en ufak bir şekilde dahi olsa haleldar edebilecek olan tedbirler ve hareketler karşısında pek hassas davranmasından tabii ne olabilir? ‘Nihayet sizler, bay Reis, Hakim baylar, hepiniz müstakil ve medeni memleketler fertlerisiniz. Eğer bir gün buna benzer bir mesele, tabii başka şartlar ve başka bahaneler altında sizin memleketinizde de çıksaydı, sizlerde dahi bu milli hakimiyet ve kanunların ekseriyette olduğu gibi akaliyete de müsavi tarzda tatbiki endişe olacaktı; binaenaleyh bu aynı endişeyi duymakta haklı olup olmadığımızı muhakeme edeceksiniz.”

<sup>111</sup> 18 July 1929: BCA, 030 10 254 711 11, p. 3: “M. Papas’ya pasaport işinin ancak dahili kanunlarımız ile halledilmesi lazımgelen bir mes’ele olduğu, kanunlarımıza göre muntazam addedilebilecek pasaportların bu sıfatının tanınacağı böyle olmayanlar hakkında ise bittabi bir

this issue continued to be the source of friction between two parties. In his report to İsmet Paşa, Tevfik Rüştü even forecasted that the accord between the parties, being in a project level, would be demised because of this issue. In this report, he mentioned how the public opinion in Greece desired to make this issue turn into a problem, although there was no point for negotiation in this issue for Turkey.<sup>112</sup> Similarly, the report of Enis Bey (Tulça), the Turkish ambassador in Athens, showed how this issue was prioritised in the Greek press.<sup>113</sup> Evidently, this issue drew the attention of the public opinion in Greece. Among these absent *Rums*, however, there were *Rums* who had worked for the armies of occupying powers and fought against the Turkish national forces. Therefore, these people were ‘traitors’ for Turkish view and this issue was about the security of Turkey. Thereby, the insistence of Greece in this issue was perceived as the extention of bona fide by the Turkish ambassador.<sup>114</sup> Similar to the *établis* issue, Turkey again was concerned about

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şey yapılamayacağı cevabını verdim... Osmanlı İmparatorluğu hükümetinin e’al ve icraatını tekabül etmemenin her hususta esas siyasetimizi teşkil ettiği malumdur. Binaenaleyh Türkiye Cumhuriyeti hükümeti sakıt Osmanlı İmparatorluğu zamanında onun memurları tarafından verilmiş olan pasaportları bittabi muteber addedemez.”; 14 July 1929: BCA, 030 10 254 711 10, pp. 8-9: “Bu akşamki mülâkatta filhakika gerek bu noktalara ve gerek yeni bir teklife temasa maruz kalırsam pasaport hukuku hükûmetlerin mahalli kavanin tayin edeceğini ve diğer noktalarda şimdiki kadar konuşulan mesail haricinde yeni bir şey ilâvesi uzamasile herkesi ümitten düşüren müzakerelerimizin nihayeti gelmez yollara sevkedeceğinden yeni bir şey konuşmakta mazur olduğumu binaenaleyh takarrür ve kabul ettiğimiz esaslar dahilinde işi bitirmek lâzım geldiğini bu esaslar talimatı Devletlerini muvafık olduğundan söyleyeceğim.”

<sup>112</sup> 21 July 1929: BCA, 030 10 254 711 14, pp. 1-2: “Yunanistandaki efkarı umumiye bu işi uzatmakla ve sürüncemede bırakmakla kendilerinin sebebiyet vermiş oldukları ve hulusa bizim için hangi pasaportun muntazam olduğunu münakaşe etmek gibi bir masebak husule getirmekliğimizin imkanı olmadıktan başka emlak itibarile de şümulu gayri malum bir hareket olmak itibarile de gayri kabili kabul bulduğunu izah ettim ve hal şekli mecmasile kabul olunmadığı takdirde hepsi hakkında taahhütten beri kalacağımızı halinde zahiri bir teessürle ayrıldı. Bu vaziyete göre proje halindeki Türk-Yunan İtlafı suya düşmüş ve müzakerede intika husule gelmiş nazarile bakılabilir.”

<sup>113</sup> 21 July 1929: BCA, 030 10 254 711 13, p. 1: “Bu günkü matbuatın bazıları, firari rumların Türkiye tarafından hukuklarının ihlaline, kabotaj haklarının Lausanne Muahedesinin ve Mübadele Mukavelesinin tahtı zımanında olduğundan bahsile Yunanistanca bu bapta vukubulabilecek her hangi ferağate karşı Cemiyeti Akvam Meclisi nezdinde protestoda bulduklarını bildirir.”

<sup>114</sup> 18 July 1929: BCA, 030 10 254 711 11, p. 4: “Türk tabiiyetini haiz iken bir ecnebi ordusunda askerlik etmiş yahut ecnebi hükümeti hizmetinde kullanılmış olan eşhas da tabiiyetimizden iskat edilmişlerdir. Bu kabil insanların avdetini iltizam acip ve hüsnü niyetle kabili telif bulunmayan bir talep olur ki bu şekilde arzu ızhar edecek bir devlete karşı dostane hissiyat besleyemeyeceğimiz pek tabiidir. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ile anlaşmak arzusunu

the Greek effort to increase the number of *Rums* in İstanbul who were mainly defined as ‘traitors’ by the Turkish side. Obviously, the Turkish authorities perceived these Greek efforts, in particular about İstanbul, as the remnants of the *Megali Idea* so they had suspicions about Greek irredentism in the 1920s. In this period, however, these suspicions of Turkey about Greek irredentism also stemmed from the Greek approach to Turks in Western Thrace. It was apparent that there was a policy of coercion towards this minority. The Turkish side, indeed, considered this coercion as the part of Greek irredentism. Thus, throughout the 1920s, this Greek approach towards the Turkish minority was protested by Turkey.

### **2.1.3. VIOLENCE AND PRESSURE: ‘HELLENIZATION’ IN WESTERN THRACE**

In the 1920s, Greek policy of coercion towards Turkish/Muslim minorities resulted in migration of these people to Turkey. Turkey suspected that this migration was the result of the hidden agenda of the Greek revisionists. Apparently, when Turks withdrew from Western Thrace, this region became more Hellenized. Western Thrace, in fact, was strategically an influential region for Turkey. In accordance with the Contract about the Thracian borders, signed during the Lausanne Conference, there was a demilitarized zone in Thrace. This was about thirty kilometres zone through the both sides of the border.<sup>115</sup> Indeed, this was considered as a physical deficit by the Turkish authorities. Even in the Lausanne Conference, İsmet Paşa told that as a result of this demilitarization, Turkey would face with potential defence problems over its territory. For instance, under this condition, Edirne, being always ‘the defence castle’ for the Turks, would lose this qualification. Similarly, Turkey would be devoid of the defence support of the Maritsa.<sup>116</sup> However, despite Turkish concerns, labelling the issue as ‘heavy sacrifice’ for

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göstermekte olan Atina hükümetinin böyle garip bir mutalebede bulunmayacağını ümit etmek istiyorum.”

<sup>115</sup> “Trakya Hududuna Dair Mukavelename”, *Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol: 5, pp. 154-163.

<sup>116</sup> *Lozan Barış Konferansı: Tutanaklar, Belgeler*, I, p. 63.

Turkey,<sup>117</sup> the Contract was signed with the Lausanne Treaty.<sup>118</sup> In accordance with this demilitarization, especially, Western Thrace gained more strategic value for Turkey. After the Treaty of Lausanne, however, Turkey saw that Greece ‘Hellenized’ this region through its policy of settlement and pressure on Turkish minority. And, this made Turkish minority migrated from this insecure environment in Western Thrace to Turkey.

The Turkish side, in fact, suspected about Greek maltreatment of Turks in Western Thrace from the very beginning. Therefore, in the Lausanne Conference, the Turkish delegation had proposed self-determination in this region but it was refused.<sup>119</sup> In this conference, İsmet Paşa stated that if Western Thrace had been left to the Greek administration, Turks in the region would have to leave this region in time under the pressure of increasing number of Greek refugees.<sup>120</sup> Indeed, this forecast was based on the observations of the Turkish delegation during the war. When Greeks left Anatolia and came to Western Thrace, they were all settled in the houses of Turks. In the Conference, Venizelos explained this situation with Turkish hospitality. However, İsmet Paşa claimed that this torment towards the Turks and Muslims, who had to leave their houses, could not be explained as Turkish hospitality.<sup>121</sup> However, it could be argued that the situation was compounded after the Lausanne Treaty.

After ‘peace’ in Lausanne, Greece continued its settlement policy in Western Thrace at unprecedented degree so that the situation gained a form of

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<sup>117</sup> *Lozan Barış Konferansı: Tutanaklar, Belgeler*, I, p. 65.

<sup>118</sup> İsmail Soysal, *Türkiye'nin Siyasal Andlaşmaları*, I (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2000), p. 88.

<sup>119</sup> *Lozan Barış Konferansı: Tutanaklar, Belgeler*, I, p. 46.

<sup>120</sup> *Lozan Barış Konferansı: Tutanaklar, Belgeler*, I, p. 51.

<sup>121</sup> *Lozan Barış Konferansı: Tutanaklar, Belgeler*, I, p. 86: “M. Venizelos, bundan sonra, Türklerin cömertliğinden ve kendi evlerini sığınmaya gelmiş Rum göçmenlerine bırakacak ölçüde gösterdikleri yardım duygularından söz etmişti. İSMET PAŞA, Türklerin özelliklerine ilişkin bu tanıklığın yüksek değerini kabul etmekle birlikte, Yunan yönetimi ya da işgali altında kalmış bölgelerde Türklerin evlerinden atılıp, yerlerine Rumların yerleştirilmiş olduğunu belirtmek zorunda olduğunu ve bu konuda kimsenin kendisini yalanlamayacağını söyledi. Türklere karşı uygulanan bu zor kullanma tedbirlerinin onların kendi istekleriyle yapıldığı yoluna gidilemez.”

‘Hellenization’.<sup>122</sup> For instance, a book of Turkish military about Greece described this situation as ‘a refugee concentration’. In this book, it was pointed out that Greece prioritized Western Thrace rather than other Greek regions. Thus, it was written that the refugee concentration in Western Thrace, probably made through a hidden agenda, was more than just the result of normal settlement procedure as Greeks argued.<sup>123</sup> Even the number of refugees settled to Western Thrace compared with the number of settled ones in other parts, was very high,<sup>124</sup> and this revealed the distinct policy of Greece in this region. And, this distinct policy, actually, had detrimental effects on Turkish/Muslim minority.

Turkey was very aware of how this settlement policy of Greece in Western Thrace worsened the living conditions of Turkish minority.<sup>125</sup> Deterioration in lives of this minority inevitably resulted in migration of them. Thus, this paved the way for more Hellenization in Western Thrace. Stephen P. Ladas pointed out the basis of Turkish complaints about this settlement policy and he wrote that:

“The homes of Moslem population of Western Thrace were, in many cases, seized by the Greek government for the shelter of the refugees. In 1923-24, 8245 rooms in rural houses and 5590 rooms in urban homes were so occupied. In addition, 127 mosques and Moslem schools and 667 Moslem stables and granaries were also used for the shelter of refugees.”<sup>126</sup>

Similarly, the report of the League of Nations from November 29, 1925 showed that these people were not happy with sharing rooms of their houses with these non-Muslims. Ladas argued that forcing these people to cohabitate with new-comer Greeks was ‘certainly the greatest evil’ for them. This was against to their religious and family values. Thus, according to him, this was one of the reasons for the wave of migration of these people to Turkey, with a

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<sup>122</sup> Oran, *Türk-Yunan İlişkilerinde Batı Trakya Sorunu*, p. 49; Alantar, “Türk Dış Politikasında Milletler Cemiyeti Dönemi”, p. 74.

<sup>123</sup> *Yunanistan 1929-1930*, p. 47: “Yunanlılar Garbi Trakyayı diğer Yunan memleketlerinde daha hususi bir düşünce ile idare etmektedirler. ...Garbi Trakya halen altı kazayı muhtevindir. Nüfusu Yunan menabiine göre [102 000 i Türk olmak üzere 312 000] dir.”

<sup>124</sup> *Yunanistan 1929-1930*, p. 48.

<sup>125</sup> Erdal, *Mübadele*, pp. 66-67; Kemal Arı, *Büyük Mübadele: Türkiye'ye Zorunlu Göç (1923-1925)* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2007), pp. 21-22; Ahmet Aydın, *Batı Trakya Faciasının İçyüzü* (İstanbul, Akın Yayınları, 1971), pp. 363-364.

<sup>126</sup> Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, p. 478.

feeling of uncertainty about future.<sup>127</sup> Indeed, there were also dissident Turkish elements among these new-comers. These were described as ‘fugitives’ by the Turkish sources, as they fought against the Turkish national forces during the National Independence War, and left the country. Thus, what most disturbed these people was to share their homes with these fugitives, in particular, the ones escaped from Turkish lands with the Greek forces such as Çerkez Ethem’s forces. However, the Greek authorities took no measure against these fugitives’ torture of Turks in their own houses.<sup>128</sup> This obviously made these people believe that Greek government was behind these dissident elements. Thus, there was no other option left for them besides migrating to Turkey.

In 1923, accordingly, this issue of migration continued to be at the agenda of the Turkish authorities. Immediately after establishing peace with Greece, Turkey faced with the wave of refugees on its borders. For instance, a report from October 1923 was about the Turkish families from İpsala, Dereköy and other villages, who left Greece with their animals and fled to Turkey. In this report, more importantly, it was underlined that this migration was the result of continuing ‘persecution and torment’ to the people of Western Thrace.<sup>129</sup> As a response, the Turkish cabinet decided not accepting refugees to Turkey on 4 November. This was to maintain the Turkish presence in this strategically important region. However, this migration problem could not be solved with this legal sanction as the Greek policies continued.<sup>130</sup> When migration gained impetus in 1924, Hamdi Bey, the Turkish representative in the Mixed Exchange Commission, sent a report to the Prime Ministry in order to show the conditions in Western Thrace. He pointed out how Greece had already settled two-thousand Greek refugees in Komotini (Gümülcine), Xanthi (İskeçe) and Aleksandropolis (Dedeğaç) by 1924. Also, he pointed out

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<sup>127</sup> Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, pp. 483-484.

<sup>128</sup> Cahide Zengin Aghatabay, *Mübadelenin Mazlum Misafirleri: Mübadele ve Kamuoyu* (1923-1930) (İstanbul: Bengi Yayınları, 2007), p. 283.

<sup>129</sup> 16 October 1923: BCA, 030 10 123 874 12, p. 1: “Vakıa olduğu mükerrer müracatlara rağmen Yunanlılar Garbi Trakya ahalisine zulm ve ta’zibât icrasından geri durmamaktadır.”

<sup>130</sup> Hikmet Öksüz, *Batu Trakya Türkleri*, pp. 65-68.



violence and pressure that these people had to face with. In addition to the settlement policy, obviously, this violence and pressure were the problems of these Turks. Thus, these were also alarming for the Turkish authorities. In his report, for example, Hamdi Bey showed how the Greek authorities collaborated with oppositional Turkish elements escaped from Turkey. He reported that these ‘fugitives’ were charged with the duty of disquieting the Turkish/Muslim minority living in Western Thrace.<sup>131</sup> Indeed, this was significant for Turkey as this showed how coercion towards these minorities turned into a state policy. For instance, Turkey knew that Çerkez Ethem was provided with money and position by the Greek authorities. Particularly, in this period, the Greek islands in the Aegean Sea turned into a centre of these armed organizations composed of these figures.<sup>132</sup>

This collaboration between Çerkez Ethem and the Greek authorities, in fact, was not a new thing for the Turkish authorities and elite. For instance, Yunus Nadi in his book *Çerkes Ethem Kuvvetinin İhaneti* (Treason of Çerkez Ethem’s Forces) underlined how these rebellious forces worked for the sake of the Greek targets in Anatolia during the National Independence War. Sharing the will of demolishing Ankara government, these rebellious groups had attacked to the Turkish army. However, when they could not succeed, they had sought the shelter of the Greek authorities in İzmir. Finally, they had to leave Anatolia with Greek forces.<sup>133</sup> The Turkish authorities were aware of the fact that these close relations between them continued afterwards. Thus, attacks of these ‘fugitives’ this time to the Turkish presence in Greece, meant Turkey more than just an attack towards this minority. But, it was read as a sign of existing partnership between the Greek side and opponents of Turkey.

Besides these Turkish elements, Turkey considered the Greek refugees of Anatolia, who were mainly settled in Western Thrace after the Greek defeat in Anatolia, as the other group which was used in this Hellenization project.

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<sup>131</sup> Hikmet Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 67.

<sup>132</sup> Kamil Erdeha, *Yüzellilikler: Yahut Milli Mücadelenin Muhasebesi* (İstanbul: Tekin Yayınevi, 1998), pp. 98-100.

<sup>133</sup> Yunus Nadi, *Çerkes Ethem Kuvvetlerinin İhaneti* (İstanbul: Sel Yayınları, 1955), pp. 123-125.

This was felt most during the rule of Pangalos. It was probably because of the potential support of Britain for these people, who followed Pangalos' policies. For instance, in the first six months of 1926, when Turkish-British relations were very tense, there was news about the British intention of recruiting army from these Greek immigrants to attack Turkey.<sup>134</sup> Interestingly, a Turkish intelligence report of one year earlier showed how this British support for these Greek refugees had already worked against Turks. This document dating 25 February 1925 was sent to the Prime Ministry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the General Staff Headquarters. It was pointed out how British military staff collected volunteers from these Greek refugees to establish gangs to attack the Muslim villages in the coastal areas of Greece.<sup>135</sup> This, in fact, showed how the Turkish presence in Western Thrace was under the attack of the Greek immigrants, with revisionist stance. But, what was disturbed Turkey most was the support they gained not only from the Greek government but also from the British one, in particular until the settlement of Mosul issue.<sup>136</sup>

In the 1920s, these atrocities towards Turks in Western Thrace were angered the Turkish side. Thus, this was continuously protested by Turkey. And, it was the card of reciprocity that the Turkish side put on table as a response to the policy of coercion in Western Thrace, which was considered as the part of Hellenization project. Turkey highlighted this idea of reciprocity, in 1923, when it faced with influx of migration on its borders. For instance, the report of the Turkish Foreign Minister on October 1923 revealed that Tevfik Rüşti (Aras), the head of Turkish delegation in Mixed Exchange Commission, was ordered to warn the Greek authorities to end these 'inhuman treatment' towards the Turks that resulted with the influx of migration. Thus, Turkey put diplomatic pressure on Greece to improve the conditions in Western Thrace.

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<sup>134</sup> Alantar, "Türk Dış Politikasında Milletler Cemiyeti Dönemi", p. 83; Psomiades, "The Diplomacy of Theodoros Pangalos", pp. 9-10.

<sup>135</sup> 25 February 1925: BCA, 030 10 253 707 13.

<sup>136</sup> Indeed, in this period, there was also a British support probably for Çerkez Ethem. For instance, the Turkish intelligence reports showed that during Mosul problem, time-to-time Çerkez Ethem left Greece and went to Mosul to agitate Kurdish tribes for a revolt. Thus, it could be claimed that he acted in accordance with British directives. For more details see Sedat Bingöl, *150'likler Meselesi: Bir İhanetin Anatomisi* (İstanbul: Bengi Yayınları, 2010), pp. 167-171.

But, in the case of continuation of such a treatment of Turks in Greece, Turkey threatened Greece that it would treat *Rums* in İstanbul with the same manner.<sup>137</sup> This warning, in fact, did not work as Greece continued to follow its coercive policy towards these people.

Although Turkey put this card of reciprocity on the table first in 1923, this principle was not implemented immediately. Turkish press always put pressure on the Turkish government for its implementation, but, the Turkish government considered this as a bargaining chip and was circumspect to use this method. Thus, it was on January 19, 1925, two years later, that the Turkish parliament finally codified a law for reciprocity. According to this law, Turkey had a right to seize and distribute properties of Greeks, who left the country, to migrant Turks, who had also abandoned their properties in Greece.<sup>138</sup> Moreover, it was written that if it was necessary, Turkey would also seize and distribute properties of the remaining *Rums* in Turkey.<sup>139</sup> This was, indeed, applied in the following period but in a limited sense. For instance, the Greek Literary Club of İstanbul was dissolved because of its political activities. Added to this, the properties of this association, having members excluded from the exchange, were seized. But, this was not an isolated event and the seizure of properties in İstanbul continued<sup>140</sup> as problems encountered by Turkish minority in Western Thrace did.

There were also other thorny issues such as the Patriarchate problem that even resulted into the intensification of pressure on Turkish minority. This problem was about the exchange of Patriarch IV Araboğlu Konstantin (Karacopulos). He was, in fact, subjected to exchange since he was born in Bursa and settled in İstanbul after 1919.<sup>141</sup> As a result, on January 30, 1925, Konstantin was expelled from Turkey to go to Thessaloniki. In this case, the

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<sup>137</sup> 16 October 1923: BCA, 030 10 123 874 12, p. 1: “Yunan hükümetinin memurları bu gayrı insani hareketlerine devam ettikleri takdirde Türkiyenin de kendi memalığında bulunan Rumlara karşı mukabil başlıkta .... marifetiyel ihtar olmuştur. Keyfiyat mübadele komisyonu reisi Tevfik Rüştü Bey Efendiye dahi işmar ve mumuraleyhe bu babda talimat .... istiyorum.”

<sup>138</sup> Aghatabay, *Mübadelenin Mazlum Misafirleri*, p. 247.

<sup>139</sup> Aghatabay, *Mübadelenin Mazlum Misafirleri*, pp. 288-290.

<sup>140</sup> Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, p. 488.

<sup>141</sup> Macar, *Cumhuriyet Döneminde İstanbul Rum Patrikhanesi*, pp. 128-129; Erdal, *Mübadele*, p. 95.

Turkish side did not want to apply any exception for the case of Konstantin, despite Greek protests. However, five months earlier, an exception was granted in the case of *Papa Eftim*. On August 3, 1924 with Cabinet decision he and his family were allowed to stay in Turkey.<sup>142</sup> In fact, this was to appreciate his efforts during the National Independence War. In 1922, he established the independent Turkish Orthodox Church in Kayseri. And, he fought against the atrocity propaganda of the Patriarchate against the Turkish forces. For instance, during the war, he called the representatives of the foreign press in Ankara and he told them how propaganda of the Patriarchate about violence towards the Christians in Anatolia was delusive.<sup>143</sup> There were also other people, who were exceptionally allowed to stay in Turkey. For instance, Konstantin Partil and Dr. Perikli Efendi, because of their help to Turks during the Greek invasion of Söke, were allowed to stay in 1924.<sup>144</sup> This, in fact, showed the Turkish view of exchange of populations. It was apparent that the Turkish government applied the rules of exchange of populations very strictly since it was considered as a measure against the potential threat of loyalty of this minority to Greece. However, there were also limited numbers of exceptional cases that the Turkish government did not feel this threat so did not apply this rule.

However, the exchange of Konstantin turned into agitation in Greece and this irritated Turkey. For instance, Haydar Rüşdü Bey, the MP for Denizli, proposed a motion for the analysis of this reaction in Greece. He underlined that in the Greek press and assembly, there were hostile reactions against to Turkey and there was even call for war.<sup>145</sup> On February 4, 1925 this Greek reaction was also discussed in the Turkish Grand Assembly in a closed session. In this meeting, Şükrü Kaya Bey claimed that the Greek government protested this exchange of Konstantin since they had a hidden agenda of creating a loyal

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<sup>142</sup> 3 August 1924: BCA, 030 18 1 1 10 37 1.

<sup>143</sup> Erdal, *Mübadele*, p. 86.

<sup>144</sup> 17 December 1924: BCA, 030 18 1 1 12 63 5; 17 December 1924: BCA, 030 18 1 1 12 63 8.

<sup>145</sup> 3 February 1925: BCA, 030 10 7 41 11, p. 2: “Baş Papaz Kostî Bey mübadeleye tabî tutulması üzerine Yunan gazeteleri neşriyatta bulunuyor. Aynı zamanda Yunan meclisinde milletimiz ve hükümetimiz hakkında aleyhdarane bazı beyanatta bulunulduğu gibi bazı Yunan rical-i mesulü tarafından Kıt’a münasebet ‘harb-ü darb’ kelimenin de edildiğini matbuatta görmekteyiz.”

Patriarchate for Greece as in the past.<sup>146</sup> However, three days later, Esad Bey, the MP for Aydın, also pointed out how these atrocities in Western Thrace reached to a peak point, with the exchange of Konstantin. Thus, he asked what would be the situation of these people in Western Thrace. In this context, he wanted that Turkey should respond these atrocities by ‘the defeated’ Greece so ‘our co-religionists in Western Thrace’ should be given the right to life.<sup>147</sup>

This Greek reaction about exchange of Konstantin was also protested in Turkish press. For instance, Yunus Nadi referred to these Greek reactions in his article, “Garbî Trakya Türkleri” (Turks of Western Thrace), in *Cumhuriyet* published on February 23, 1925. According to him, Greek purpose was to cover its coercive policies towards the Turks, who were deprived of all their rights.<sup>148</sup> Similarly, on February 4, 1925, *Akşam* reported how systematized coercion gained impetus in Western Thrace, where these people were started to be beaten in the streets.<sup>149</sup> However, in 1925 Turkey carried on negotiations with Greece in the Commission despite the fact that public opinion pushed for more severe measures. By June 21, the parties agreed on essential points of property rights, with Ankara Accord. However, the dictatorship of Pangalos put back this process and this accord could not be enacted.<sup>150</sup> This, in fact,

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<sup>146</sup> T. B. M. M. *Gizli Celse Zabıtları* (4 Şubat 1341) Devre: II Cilt:4 İçtima Senesi: I, pp. 473-476.

<sup>147</sup> 7 February 1925: BCA, 030 10 7 41 17, p. 2: “Yunanistan tarafından daima imhakar siyaset icra edilen Garbi Trakya’da bu kere Konstantin sevki dolayısıyla mezalim ve ta’zibât derece-i nihayiye varmıştır. Hanelerine mallarına sahip olamayan ve envai mezalim ve minhabi altında inleyen bu halkın halleri ne olacaktır? Mağlup Yunana galip hükümetim haddini bildirmelidir. Garbi Trakya’daki dindaşlara hak-ı hayat verilmelidir.”

<sup>148</sup> Yunus Nadi, “Garbî Trakya Türkleri”, *Cumhuriyet*, 23 February 1925: “Mübadele mukavlenamesinden şikayet edecek bir millet ve hükümet varsa o da Türk milleti ve hükümetidir. ...hiçbir esasa istinad etmediği halde Yunanistan’da bu kadar gürültüye mucip olmuş olan Patrik meselesi mesela şu Garbi Trakya Türklerini tabii tutuldukları nisbetle hatta maraldaki sığır kadar bile ehemmiyete haiz değildir... Yunanistan mübadeleye tabii bir Papazdan tutturarak ortaya bir patrik meselesi çıkarıp dünyayı velleveye vermeye çalışacağına imzasını taşıyan bir mukavele ahkâmını baştan başa ihlal eden hareketlerinin akibetini düşünse daha iyi eder. İşte Yunanistan’ın Garbi Trakya Türklerine karşı ihtiyarında bugüne kadar ısrar ettiği hatt-ı hareket bu cümledendir... Hala bugün bile Yunanistan bir taraftan patrik meselesi diye, établi işi diye Avrupa’da kapı kapı dolaşırken diğer taftan Garbi Trakya’da iğtisab ile oradaki Türkleri soyup soğana çevirmekle o zavallı ırkdaşlarımızı medar-ı maiyetlerinden mahrum etmekle vakit geçiriyor.”

<sup>149</sup> Aghatabay, *Mübadele’nin Mazlum Misafirleri*, p. 242.

<sup>150</sup> Psomiades, “The Diplomacy of Theodoros Pangalos”, pp. 6-7.

justified the calls of some circles in the political establishment and public opinion for reciprocity.

After this abandonment of Ankara Accord because of Pangalos's attitude, two states could only agree on the issue of properties on December 1, 1926 in Athens at *interim*. In this period between these agreements, the idea of reciprocity was again highlighted in the Turkish press. For instance, Yunus Nadi, being the influential advocate of this principle, wrote a series of articles based on the necessity of reciprocity in 1926. In these articles, he mainly underlined the difference between the policies of Turkey and Greece towards minorities in their lands. He told that although Turkish minority was deprived of its rights in Greece, Greek minority in Turkey enjoyed all kinds of rights.<sup>151</sup> This made him again underlined the necessity of reciprocity. Thus, accordingly, the Turkish government should seize the Greek properties.<sup>152</sup> According to him, it was pointless to wait for the Greek recognition of the rights of Turks in Western Thrace. Thus, what was left for Turkey was to pursue same policies.<sup>153</sup> Similar to Yunus Nadi's point of view, an organization of Turks, excluded from exchange, *Türk Gayrimübadiller Cemiyeti*, supported the principle of reciprocity.<sup>154</sup> It was, in fact, the continuity of coercion in Western Thrace that made this issue of reciprocity shown a pressing need.

The role of Turkish press in this process was effective and it was considered by Turkish minority as a place to make their voice heard. For instance, on February 18, 1926, *Cumhuriyet* reported a letter of these people about the living conditions in Western Thrace, with heading of "Garbi

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<sup>151</sup> Yunus Nadi, "Son Merhale", *Cumhuriyet*, 14 February 1926, p. 1: "Yunanistan'daki Türk tebası hukuktan mahrum, Türkiye'deki Yunanlılar haklarına sahip ve mallarından mıntazı."

<sup>152</sup> Yunus Nadi, "Israr Ediyoruz", *Cumhuriyet*, 15 February 1926, p. 1: "Bilmukabele Yunanlıların Türkiye'deki tasarrufları işkal edilmek zaruridir."

<sup>153</sup> Yunus Nadi, "Açık Konuşalım!", *Cumhuriyet*, 16 February 1926, p. 1: "Şimdi artık açık konuşmaktan ve açık yorumlamaktan başka çare yoktur. Yunanistan'ın mitkameti bundadır. Açık konuşmak için biz bugün meselenin en can alacak bir noktasına temas edeceğiz. Yunan Hükümeti Türk vatandaşlarının Yunanistan'daki emval ve emlaka aid hukukunu tanımıyor ve vermiyor. Türk tebasının Yunanistan'daki emval ve emlakını tanımak ve vermek için hummalı bir faaliyet sarf etmeye hacet yoktur. Bunlar tanımır ve verilir o kadar, değil mi? Yunanistan işte bunu yapmıyor. .... Bu vaziyette hükümetin vaziyet ve vazifesini teshil etmek üzere bizim tarafımızdan yapılacak muamele Türkiye'deki Yunan emlakına vaziyet etmekten ibarettir."

<sup>154</sup> Aghatabay, *Mübadelenin Mazlum Misafirleri*, p. 260.

Trakya’da Fecii Bir Vaziyet” (Disastrous Situation in Western Thrace). In this letter, the declaration of Hafız Salih Bey, the head of *Gümülcine Cemiyet-i İslamiye* (Islamic Society of Komotini), about the enforcement of the Greek authorities for migration of Turks was pointed out. Indeed, the Greek government threatened Turks of the region to give up their nationality in order to stay in Greece. According to *Cumhuriyet* this was ‘the evidence of injustice’ which Turks were subjected to in Western Thrace. The newspaper asked this issue to Şükrü Bey (Saraçoğlu), the member of Turkish delegation in the Mixed Exchange Commission. He declared that there was no Act signed between the parties which allowed Greece to enforce Turks to leave the region. He explained that the Turkish delegation referred this issue to Turkish Foreign Ministry.<sup>155</sup> However, these kinds of responses at a ministerial level were inadequate according to some circles in the political establishment. For instance, Esad Bey again criticized the continuity of persecution in Western Thrace that Turkey did not succeed to put an end. He asked the Foreign Ministry about the measures taken for ‘these miserable conditions’ of Turks.<sup>156</sup> Then, he questioned why Turkey could not prevent this kind of enforced migration from Western Thrace because of ‘the extermination policy’ of Greece.<sup>157</sup> Indeed, these voices were all for the application of the reciprocity measures.

Although the parties finally agreed on the Agreement of Properties on December 1, 1926 in Athens, the minority problems remained unsolved.

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<sup>155</sup> “Garbi Trakya’da Fecii Bir Vaziyet”, *Cumhuriyet*, 18 February 1926, p. 3: “Garbi Trakya unsurlu bir Yunanlının emriyle, Gümülcüne Cemaat-i İslamiye reisi Salih Hoca namında bir adamın imzasını taşıyan bir beyanname işar edilmiştir. Bu beyanname Yunanlıların Türklere yaptıkları haksızlıkların şadairi olmak itibarıyla çok şayan-ı dikkattir. 11 numaralı 926 Şubat tarihli olan bu mektub ile Yunanlıların Türk ahaliye reva gördükleri muamelatı alenen ilan etmekte ve Garbi Trakya Müslümanlarını hudud-u harice çıkarmaya karar verdiklerini söylemektedir.”

<sup>156</sup> 2 February 1926: BCA, 030 10 8 45 1, p. 1: “Garbi Trakya’da Türklerin pek feci olan hal-i perişanları hakkında Mentşe mebusu Esad Bey’in Hariciye Vekaleti’ne ...”

<sup>157</sup> 2 February 1926: BCA, 030 10 8 45 1, p. 2: “Galib hükümetin hariciye vekaleti malub Yunan’ın Garbi Trakyadaki imhakar siyasetine ne vakit nihayet vermekle muvaffak olacaktır. Senelerden beri mal ve mülklerine sahip olamayan pek perişan ve merhamete şayan bir halde bulunan kardaşların hal-i perişanları ne vakit salaha girecektir. Mazlum ve masum kardaşlarımızı hicrete mecbur ettiği zalimler ve muhalif-i muahede olanlar hakkında ne gibi tedabir-i müsârat ittihaz olunmuştur.”

According to the article 1 and article 2 of this agreement, the parties reconciled at the compulsory purchase of the properties of the exchanged populations if it was impossible to return.<sup>158</sup> And, in the article 9 the properties of populations excluded from the exchange were agreed to return in one-month period.<sup>159</sup> This agreement was supposed to solve the problem of properties for the minorities; however, problems continued in daily life.<sup>160</sup> Indeed, from the very beginning, there was a disbelief in Turkey about the liquidation of properties in Western Thrace by the Greek authorities. For instance, Yunus Nadi argued that even if Greece had really accepted these conditions, it did not have the capacity to return all the seized properties.<sup>161</sup> This disbelief in Turkish public opinion was justified with the continuing problems in Greece. Thus, Turkey once more put the card of reciprocity on the table in the end of 1927. The Turkish government told that if the property problem in Western Thrace could not be solved, then, Turkey would distribute the Greek properties to these people at amount of their properties in Greece. It was declared that the application of this procedure would start by December 1927. Although this alarmed Greek authorities initially, the problems in Western Thrace continued so the deadlock between the parties.<sup>162</sup> By the year of 1928, the deadlock about the properties continued to remain as one of the top issues between the parties;<sup>163</sup> however, in 1929 the issue became more problematic. Thus, the pressure of the Turkish public opinion for the application of reciprocity intensified.

Meanwhile, there were general elections in Greece and Venizelos became a Prime Minister on August 19, 1928. As soon as he came to power on August 30, he wrote a letter to İsmet Paşa in which he declared that Greece had

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<sup>158</sup> *Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı*, p. 197.

<sup>159</sup> *Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı*, p. 199; Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, pp. 520-523.

<sup>160</sup> *Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı*, p. 195.

<sup>161</sup> Yunus Nadi, "Atina İtilâfnamesi", *Cumhuriyet*, 15 September 1926, p. 1. "Hususile son Atina müzakeratı bizim bu mesele etrafındaki mudayanımızın ne kadar müsebbib olduğunu isbat etmiştir. Filhahika Yunanlılar gayri-mübadil Türklerin emval ve emlaklarını iadeye hazırız dedikçe biz ne diyorduk? Biz diyorduk ki vaziyetin Yunanistan'da malumumuz olan işkeline nazıran Yunanistan istese dahi bu emlakın hepsini inaeen teslimine muktadir değildir."

<sup>162</sup> Aghatabay, *Mübadelenin Mazlum Misafirleri*, pp. 260-261.

<sup>163</sup> Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, p. 540.



no claims on the Turkish territories.<sup>164</sup> However, he had to work a lot to change his image in Turkey as he was still remembered with his revisionist ideals. Clearly, he was one of the most influential figures of Cretan issue, Balkan Wars, and the invasion of Anatolia as he sought the *Megali Idea*.<sup>165</sup> Moreover, although he totally changed his rhetoric, within Greece, he explained this change in the Greek attitude to Turkey as an involuntary one. Thus, his supporters from the Greek immigrants did not consider his new policies alarming.<sup>166</sup> This, however, justified Turkish concern about the continuity of his revisionist tendency. Indeed, besides this revisionist image, mainly the remaining problems between Turkey and Greece resulted in this distrust for his discourse of friendship.<sup>167</sup> For instance, Abidin Daver in his article, “Nasıl İnanabiliriz?” (How can we trust?), wrote that although Venizelos had talked about good relations between Turkey and Greece, when he came to power, the negotiations even reached to the danger of interruption.<sup>168</sup>

In fact, despite the agreement between the parties at the beginning of 1929,<sup>169</sup> the continuing problems about properties in Western Thrace resulted in deterioration in relations. This atmosphere also shaped the public opinion in Turkey which continued to put pressure on the authorities to protest Greek policies harshly. For instance, Yunus Nadi in his article called “Yeter Artık!” (Enough is Enough), wrote that Turkey should give up its conciliatory policy since Greece only sought to protract the negotiations and never applied the articles of the agreements. Thus, according to him, Turkey should seize the

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<sup>164</sup> Damla Demiröz, “Megali İdea’dan Ankara Antlaşmasına (1930) Eleftherios Venizelos”, in *Atatürk Yolu*, 35/, (2005), p. 293.

<sup>165</sup> *Yunanistan 1929-1930*, pp. 268-270.

<sup>166</sup> Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*, pp. 104-105.

<sup>167</sup> Fırat, “Yunanistanla İlişkiler”, pp. 344-345; Enis Tulça, *Atatürk, Venizelos ve Bir Diplomat Enis Bey* (Enis Tulça ed.) (İstanbul: Simurg, 2003), p. 35; *Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı*, p. 211.

<sup>168</sup> Abidin Daver, “Nasıl İnanabiliriz?”, *Cumhuriyet*, 10 February 1929, p. 1: “M. Venizelos, Yunanistanın idaresini der’uhte ettiği zaman, ve ondan sonra müteaddit defalar Türkiye ile iyi geçinmek arzusunda olduğunu söylemiş, hatta Başvekilimiz İsmet Paşa ile görüşüp anlaşmak için bizzat Türkiyeye geleceğini bile vaat etmişti. Yunan Başvekilinin, bu sözünü tutmıyarak Türkiyeye gelmediğinden sarfinazar, Türkiye-Yunan müzakeratı da sarih bir surette sürümcemede burakıldı, sür’atle bitmek şöyle dursun, inkıta tehlikelerine maruz kaldı.”

<sup>169</sup> Stephen P. Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, p. 560.

Greek properties in Turkey rather than seeking ways of agreement.<sup>170</sup> Two weeks later, Yunus Nadi defined the reason of this procrastination policy of Venizelos as the way of gaining time to prepare attack towards Turkey. According to him, Venizelos, ‘the defeated and miserable hero of the adventurist Anatolian invasion’, would organise a war towards Turkey to regain the dignity of his nation.<sup>171</sup>

Evidently, the Turkish side had a physical concern in the initial period of Venizelos’s government despite his discourse of friendship with Turkey. There was a belief in Turkey that revisionist outlook in Greece continued. For instance, Abidin Daver reported about the publications of *Konstatinopolis*, a Greek newspaper. In this newspaper, İstanbul, Thrace and Dardanelles were defined as the inseparable parts of the national Greek state. Thus, according to this newspaper unless İzmir and İstanbul were removed from the governance of

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<sup>170</sup> Yunus Nadi, “Yeter Artık!”, *Cumhuriyet*, 11 February 1929, p. 1: “Ankara müzakereleri Yunanlıların imza ederek asla tatbikine yanaşmadıkları taahhütleri üzerinde cereyan ediyor!.. Daha açıkcasını şudur: Tevfik Rüştü ve Saracoğlu Şükrü Beylerin aktetmiş oldukları anlaşmalar Yunanistan ile aramızda ki muallâk mes’elelerin hemen hemen hepsini, hiç olmazsa çok mühim bir kısmını halletmiştir, ve bunları Yunanlılar da kabul ve imza etmişlerdi. Bunlara nazarın: 1:- Yunanistan’daki, Türk hukukundan şehir ve kasabalar dahilindeki emlâk ve musakkafat bir ay zarfında aynen ve tamamen iade edilmiş olacaktı. 2:- Şehir ve kasabalar haricindeki Türk emvaline gelince bunların mukavele tarihine kadar işgal olunmuş olanları muavazaya dahil olacak, işgal olunmamış olanları ise ya aynen, ya bedelen iade olunacaktı. 3:- Türk emlâk ve arazisinin şimdiye kadar birikmiş icar bedelleri, yani bilumum hasılât ve menafil hesap ve tesviye olunacaktı. 4:- Yunanlıların garbi Trakyada zapt ve gaspetmiş oldukları Türk emlâk ve arazisi aynen ya bedelen, fakat tamamen ve kat’iyen iade ve teslim olunacaktı. İşte Yunanlılar bin bir imzalarını taşıyan ve başlıcaları bunlardan ibaret olan taahhütlerini ifa etmediler. Ankara da icra olunmakta olan müzakerelerin mevzuu da işte belli başlı gene mes’elelerden ibarettir. Ve Yunanlılar talimat üstüne talimat isteyerek işte bu mes’eleleri sürüklendirip duruyorlar. Evvelce müzakere ve imza edilmiş işlerin tekrar müzakeresinde acaba ne hikmet tasavvur olunabilir? Madam ki Yunanlılar evvelki taahhüt ve imzaların icabını icra etmiyorlar, bundan sonrakilerini tatbik ve infaz edeceklerinden nasıl emin olabiliriz? Ve haydi çok büyük bir sulh ve itilâf emelile son defa olarak bir daha konuşmağa muvafakat ettik diyelim, ya bu bitip tükenmez sürünceme ne oluyor? Sulhperverliğin bu derecesi cidden fazla ve muzırdır. Fazla itilâfçılık hiçbir itilâfa varamamak demektir. Onun için bu bahsı artık kısa kesmek lâzımdır, artık yeter olmuştur. Biz Yunanistandaki matlumatomuz ne vakit olsa alırız. Şimdilik Türkiyedeki Yunan emlâkının kâffesine vaz’iyet ederek işimize bakalım, ve bu pek haklı hareketin bütün icabatını tatbik edelim, kafidir. Sonrasına sonra bakarız.”

<sup>171</sup> Yunus Nadi, “Açık Cevap”, *Cumhuriyet*, 16 February 1929, p. 1: “Hem bu harbi isteyen biz değiliz, Yunanistandır ve şimdiki şart için Mösyo Venizelosun bizzat kendisidir. Evet, Mösyo Venizelos el altından harıl harıl harbe hazırlanıyor. Anadolu seferi sergüzeştinin mağlup ve perişan kahramanı kendisine ve milletine iadei itibar ettirmek hulyasındadır. ...Sual: -Hallolunacak mes’eleler meydanda iken Ankara müzakeratı neden böyle ucu bucağı gelmez bir halde uzayıp gidiyor?. Cevap: -Venizelos harp hazırlıklarında zaman kazanmak istiyor da onun için!”

Turkey, national Greek plans could not be satisfied. According to Abidin Daver, this article revealed the continuity of the *Megali Idea* claims and Venizelos was part of this as the Greek press was always inspired by Venizelos. Thus, he implied that it was Venizelos who was responsible from these territorial claims. But, according to him, if these territorial claims on İstanbul and İzmir continued, then, Turkey would respond these revisionist ideals with a war as it was done in Dumlu Pınar on August 30, 1922.<sup>172</sup> This, in fact, showed how the possibility of a new war started to be narrated in the Turkish press as a measure against the revisionist tendency in Greece in 1929.

At this year, the parties were on the verge of a new war.<sup>173</sup> The crises reached to an unprecedented degree that these two states called their ambassadors back in the summer of 1929. According to Enis (Tulça), the Turkish ambassador of the period, this was the result of continuing mistrust between these two states and remaining problems about the properties of minorities.<sup>174</sup> In this context, the Turkish press accused the Greek side for interruption of the negotiations and again called the Turkish government to implement reciprocity principle.<sup>175</sup> For instance, Yunus Nadi wrote that these people fled from Western Thrace to Turkey because of ‘terror policies’ there. Thus, they left their properties in this region. Added to this, he wrote that the recent visit of the Mixed Exchange Commission in Komotini showed the continuity of this coercion towards the Turkish minority, excluded from the exchange. And, he again asked how it would be possible to negotiate with

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<sup>172</sup> Abidin Daver, “Bizim de Gazimiz Var!”, *Cumhuriyet*, 22 March 1929, p. 1: “Atınada çıkan ve ismi Konstantinopolis- yani İstanbul- olan bu gazete, “Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun son enkazı” serlâvhalı makalesinde M. Venizelosun, Yunanistanın ve belki bütün Yunanlıların hâlâ o sönmez “Megalo İdea” hırsı ve hülyası peşinde koştuklarını göstermektedir.. Görüyorsunuz ya Anadolu hezimetine rağmen Yunanlılar hâlâ uslanmamışlar, hatta daha büyük bir ihtirasa kapılarak İzmirden başka İstanbula da göz dikmişlerdir. M. Venizelosun yeni mevkii iktidara geldiği zaman söylediği: “ Türkiye ile Yunanistan arasında esaslı bir anlaşmağa mani olacak hiçbir arazi ihtilâfı kalmamıştır” sözü ile Yunan gazetesinin neşriyatı arasında tezat çok şayan-ı dikkattir. Yunan gazetelerinin M. Venizelostan ilham alarak yazı yazdıkları ise çocukların bile bildikleri bir hakikattir. Yunanlıların İstanbula ve İzmirde dikilmiş olan gözlerini çıkarmak için icap ederse, yeni bir “Dumlu Pınar” daha yaratabiliriz.”

<sup>173</sup> Soysal, *Türkiye'nin Siyasal Andlaşmaları (1920-1945)*, I, p. 399; Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 39.

<sup>174</sup> Tulça, *Atatürk, Venizelos ve Bir Diplomat Enis Bey*, p. 34.

<sup>175</sup> Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, p. 565.

Greece then.<sup>176</sup> According to him, thereby, reciprocity was not only a legitimate right for Turkey but it also turned out to be ‘urgency’, with severe conditions in Western Thrace.<sup>177</sup>

This ‘urgency’ was also felt by the Turkish authorities with the stalemate in the Commission. The report of Tevfik Kamil, the member of the Turkish delegation, from October 1929 showed that Greece ignored the restoration project of the Turks presented in the Commission. It was a project that would solve the property problems in Western Thrace as it arranged the ways of return of properties to their owners. However, Greece was reluctant to provide any kind of guarantee for the properties taken from Turkish minorities in this region. As a response, Tevfik Kamil threatened the Greek party about how this liquidation of properties was ‘the most essential issue’ for Turkey. He even told that if the Greek delegation continued to ignore the proposal of Turkey about properties and put pressure on the head of the Commission to pay attention only to their own projects, the Turkish government would call him back and dissolve the Commission.<sup>178</sup> Despite this warning, the relations

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<sup>176</sup> Yunus Nadi, “Türk-Yunan İhtilâfi”, *Cumhuriyet*, 7 June 1929, p. 1-2: “Yunanistan ile bu mübadele işleri üzerinde hemen hemen beş seneden beri uğraşıyoruz. Bu müddet zarfında bir çok itilâflar yapıldı, fakat bunlardan hemen hiç birisi Yunanistan tarafından tatbik ve icra edilmedi. ...Bizim mübadillerimiz tedbiren ve mallarının kıymeti takdir olunarak naklonulacaklardı. Halbuki bunlara karşı tatbik olunan terör siyaseti önünde malümenal düşüncesini bilâhareye bırakarak kendilerini alelacele memleketimize taşıdık. Sonrada takdiri kıymete hiç imkân bulamadık. ...Trakya Türklerine karşı yapılan mezalimin telâfisi ta Eksindaris itilâfından beri derpiş olunmuştu. Beş altı ay evvel Muhtelit Komisyon Gümölcineye gittiği zaman orada eski hamam eski tas olan vaziyetin fecaati her göze hayret ve nefretle ayan oldu. Bu şerait altında Yunanistanla nasıl anlaşılabilirdi?”

<sup>177</sup> Yunus Nadi, “Müzakeratta Fasıla”, *Cumhuriyet*, 15 July 1929, p. 1: “İşte biz söylüyoruz ki badema Türkiye Yunanistana asla ve kat’a itimat edemez.”

<sup>178</sup> 16 October 1929: BCA, 030 10 254 711 26, p. 1: “Yunanlıların dün akşam zeri iade teklifimiz hakkında itirazlar sert ve ityan ettikleri telefonla arzetmiştim. Teklifini tetkikten sonra bizim talep ettiğimiz garantilerin hiç birinini temin etmek istemediklerini görüldü. Bu sabah Yunan heyeti Murahhası reisine hususî bir mektup göndererek iade mükellifiyetini amelî bir hale koymak için tasavvur ettiğimiz sistem yerine teklif ettiği usulün iadeyi fiilen hükümsüz bırakacağını binaenaleyh en esaslı addettiğim bir meselede uyusmak zemini kalmadığını bildirdim. Celseye girdiğimiz zaman bitaraflar bizim proje üzerinde ehemmiyetli ehemmiyetsiz tadilat teklif ettiler. Fakat etabli üzerinde Lahey Divanı rey ve istişareye müstenit yaptığım teklifi bir tarafa bırakıp kendi tekliflerini ileri sürdüler. İade projesi üzerinde bu ehemmiyetsiz tadilatla itihat yahut ekseriyet hasıl olacaktı. Fakat bilmukabele kendi etabli teklifleri üzerinde ekseriyetle rey verdirmek istiyorlardı... Geldikleri zaman Reisi bir tarafa çekip kendi projelerini ekseriyetle geçirmeğe kalkışacak olursa Hükümetin beni çekeceğini ve komisyonu lağvedeceğini anlattım. Bunu söylememiş olsaydım bile yine esasta bize hak verecekleri görülyordu.”

between the parties continued to get worsen so the parties exchanged notes as a result.<sup>179</sup>

The worsening relations made Venizelos revealed his fear for a potential Turkish attack in Aegean Sea.<sup>180</sup> According to Venizelos, the repair of Yavuz, the Turkish battle-ship, was a sign of Turkish tendency of attack to Greek islands. But, Turkish authorities denied such accusations and they described this as a part of Venizelos's propaganda. And, this idea was justified with his persistent efforts to internationalize this issue of Turkish attack. For instance, he met with the Prime Minister of Britain and the Secretary of the League of Nations in order to get their support in a case of Turkish attack. However, more importantly, the Turkish side thought that the main intention of Venizelos was to diffuse this propaganda, which he made through the Greek press, among *Rums* in Turkey.<sup>181</sup> This alarmed the Turkish authorities who were already suspicious of loyalty of these people to Greek revisionist ideals, in particular the ones of Venizelos as seen in the recent history.

In fact, the Greek side was also aware of this suspicion of Turkey about remaining *Rums* in İstanbul. Thus, in 1929, the Greek authorities were worried about the probability of expulsion of these people from Turkey as a result of very tense relations.<sup>182</sup> This Greek concern was not groundless. On September 16, 1929, there was an item in *Cumhuriyet* that reported the desire of the

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<sup>179</sup> Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, p. 566.

<sup>180</sup> Alantar, "Türk Dış Politikasında Milletler Cemiyeti Dönemi", p. 77.

<sup>181</sup> "Yunan Adalarına Taarruz Edecekmişiz! Venizelos Devletlerden Himaye Talep Ediyor", *Cumhuriyet*, 11 September 1929, p. 3: "Yavuz zırhlısının tamiri üzerine Yunanistan'da yapılan gürültüler ve Yunan adalarının Türkiyenin bir taarruzuna karşı müdafasız kaldıklarına dair Atina matbuatı sütunlarında izhar edilen endişelerden bahsetmiştik. Son gelen Atina gazeteleri M. Venizelosun muhtemel bir Türk taarruzuna karşı Yunanistanın himayesi hakkında bir çok teşebbüsatta bulunduğu dair bir hayli malumat vermektedirler. Bu malumata nazaran M. Venizelos Cenevrede İngiliz başvekili M. Makdonalt, Lori Sesli ve Cemiyeti Akvam katibi Dunumisile vuku bulan müzakerelerinde yalnız Yunanistanın Türkiyeye karşı siyasetinin tasvibini değil, aynı zamanda Türkiye tarafından fili bir tehdide maruz kaldığı takdirde Cemiyeti Akvamın Yunanistanı himaye edeceği hakkında teminat verilmesini talep eylemiştir.... Yunanlıların birkaç günden beri Rumca gazeteler vasıtası ile Yunan adalarına tecavüz edeceğimiz hakkında propaganda mahiyetinde bazı haberler neşretmeleri üzerine keyfiyeti telefonla Ankarada alakadar bir zattan sorduk. Bize şunları söyledi: 'Birkaç günden beri Yunanlılar Rumca gazeteler vasıtasile ve muntazam bir program altında bu kabil haberler işaa etmektedirler ve bilhassa arzuları bu propagandanın Türkiyede yer bulmasıdır. Biz katiyen ehemmiyet vermiyoruz'".

<sup>182</sup> Alantar, "Türk Dış Politikasında Milletler Cemiyeti Dönemi", p. 76.

Turkish delegation to propose an exchange of *Rums* in İstanbul with Turks in Western Thrace, and the Mixed Exchange Commission could accept this proposal because of the continuing Greek pressure in Western Thrace. According to *Cumhuriyet*, this exchange would solve the *établis* problem and put an end to persecutions in Western Thrace.<sup>183</sup> Thus, this new exchange would, in fact, serve the interests of Turkey. As this proposal of new exchange was undesirable for the Greek authorities, they started to pursue a conciliatory policy in the Commission in order to take Turkey apart from this idea of new exchange. As a result, the negotiations restarted before the end of 1929.<sup>184</sup>

In fact, this was the beginning of new phase in the relations of Turkey and Greece, which led to a rapprochement between them in 1930s. Venizelos's approach, definitely, played an influential role in this. He became a Prime Minister in 1928 and stayed in power until 1932. However, initially the Turkish public opinion still had doubts about his continuing revisionist ideals. But, in the following period, he deepened his friendship rhetoric and found ways to show his retreat from the revisionist ideals, so-called the *Megali Idea*. For instance, in the Greek National Assembly on February 10, 1930, he gave a speech underlining that Greece would act in accordance with the treaties in post-war period. According to him, both Greece and Turkey, two 'peace-loving countries', could solve their problems within the peaceful environment.<sup>185</sup> But, the reason of this change in the policies of Venizelos is disputable. According to some Greek newspapers such as *Aneksartitos*, the underlying reason behind this change was to gain international support. It was written that this international support would enable Greece to solve her remaining problems

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<sup>183</sup> "Garbî Trakya ile İstanbul Rumalarının Mübadelesini İsteyeceğiz! 99,000 Rumu Alımız, 102, 000 Türkü Veriniz!", *Cumhuriyet*, 16 September 1929, p. 1: "Aldığımız malûmata nazaran bu içtimada murahhaslarımız İstanbuldaki Yunan emlakına vaz'iyet edilmesini de talep edecekleri gibi etabli mes'elesinin halli için de Grabi Trakya Türklerinin İstanbul Rumları ile mübadelesini isteyeceklerdir... Yunanlılar Garbi Trakyadaki Türklerin kâmilen gayri mübadil olmalarını kabul ettiklerini beyan etmektedirler. Filhakika bu zavallılar Yunan tazyiki altında perişan bir halde kaldıklarından onlar için hiçbir suretle muzır değildir. Halbuki İstanbuldaki Rumların vaziyetleri büsbütün başkadır. Komisyonun bu teklifi kabul etmesi muhtemeldir."

<sup>184</sup> Alantar, "Türk Dış Politikasında Milletler Cemiyeti Dönemi", p. 77; Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, p. 566.

<sup>185</sup> Alantar, "Türk Dış Politikasında Milletler Cemiyeti Dönemi" p. 77.

with the Little Entente States, Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Turkey.<sup>186</sup> In fact, Venizelos's government was in need of these achievements in the foreign policy. This was considered as a compensation for the economic problems, as Greece was also hit by the Great Depression of 1929.<sup>187</sup> Thus, probably Venizelos had pragmatic reasons for his emphasis on peace.

During this rapprochement period, when Venizelos met with the Turkish authorities, he pointed out some of these reasons for the necessity of Turkish-Greek friendship. For instance, on October 1929, he also met with the Turkish envoy of Prague in the course of his visit to this city. The report of this envoy revealed that Venizelos emphasized the necessity of peace between Turkey and Greece in order to achieve 'a significant status in Europe'. In this meeting, he also implied that there would be changes in Greek policy about the properties in Western Thrace. Thus, he told that Greece would rethink the proposals of Turkey about this problem, which he defined as 'only a detail' in Turkish-Greek relations.<sup>188</sup> Similarly, Venizelos met with Enis Bey, Turkish ambassador in Athens. In this meeting, Venizelos told that he would come to Ankara in order to show the end of problems between two countries.<sup>189</sup> However, according to Enis Bey, prior to his visit of Ankara, Venizelos was in need of a diplomatic step from Turkey, as otherwise it would be difficult for Venizelos to explain his visit to Turkey to the oppositional circles in Greece. Therefore, Turkey accepted the invitation of Greece to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of

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<sup>186</sup> 22 January 1930: BCA, 030 10 254 712 6, pp.1-3: "Geçenlerde Atina gazetelerinden tercüme ettiğimiz bir habere göre Yunan Başvekili beynelmilel bir rol oynamak istediği mevzubahs olmuş ve her ne kadar M. Venizelos Yunan muhalif gazetelerinin işbu haberini tekzip etmeye çalışmış ise de La Haye'dan Yunan gazetelerine gelen malûmat Yunan Başvekilinin hakikatta beynelmilel bir tavır takınmaktan yegâne maksadı Yunanistan lehine her devletin hüsnü teveccühünü kazanıp her şeyden evvel Yunan menfini temin edebilmektir. Bu hususta Yunanca 'Aneksartitos' gazetesi 14/1/30 tarihli nüshasında şunları yazıyor: .... M. Venizelos'un La Haye da hazır bulunması ve perde arkasında oynadığı rol, Yunanistan lehine esaslı neticeler verdiği gibi Yunanistanın küçük itilâf devletleri ile Macaristana pek yaklaştırılmasına ve Bulgaristan ile dahi Şark tamiratından gayri bazı muayyen meselelerde anlaşılmasına vesile olmuştur. Diğer tafatan Yunan Başvekilinin Fransız birinci Nazzırı M. Tardieu ve Hariciye Nazırı M. Briand ile olan temasları Cinevrede Milletler Cemiyeti Meclisinin ictimasında arzı mutesavver muayyen Yunan meselelerinin hüsnü intacına da medar olacaktır. İşbu meseleler ise malûm olup bilhassa Türk-Yunan muallak ihtilâfı ile alâkadardır."

<sup>187</sup> Clogg, *A Concise History of Greece*, p. 107.

<sup>188</sup> 19 October 1929: BCA, 030 10 254 711 27, p. 1.

<sup>189</sup> 4 January 1930: BCA, 030 10 254 712 2, p. 1

the National Day of Greece.<sup>190</sup> In these celebrations, Venizelos declared that Greece gave up her five-hundred years old demand from Turks and now chose the way of agreement with Turkey.<sup>191</sup>

This national celebration was about Greek revolt against the Ottoman Empire in 1821, as a result of which Greeks gained their independence with the Protocol of London signed in 1830.<sup>192</sup> Although the issue was also related to Turkish history, Turkey decided to participate in these celebrations but on the condition that Greece would prevent any kind of anti-Turkish demonstration during the ceremony. And, Mihalakopoulos, the Foreign Minister of Greece, guaranteed that such demonstrations would not be allowed. In the report of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, it was pointed out that this celebration for Turkey had significance only as ‘a historical event’, and the Turkish participation was ‘a necessity’ of peace policy of Turkey towards Greece.<sup>193</sup> Shortly after, Venizelos visited Ankara in October 1930.<sup>194</sup> His visit was obviously significant moment for the Turkish press. For instance, according to *Cumhuriyet*, the visit of Venizelos, who was known as ‘the most dedicated enemy of Turks’ in the Balkans, was really an important political event. It was argued that the peace in Turkish-Greek relations, which had been restricted to

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<sup>190</sup> Tulça, *Enis Bey*, p. 35.

<sup>191</sup> “M. Venizelos Diyor ki”, *Cumhuriyet*, 31 March 1930, p. 1: “(Venizelos) Türkiye ile beşyüz seneden beri başlıyan bir davamız vardır. Şimdi ise istinaf ve temyiz hukukumuzdan feragat ederek hasmımızşa müteaküben samimî bir müsaleha yaptık.”

<sup>192</sup> *Yunanistan 1929-1930*, pp. 23-26; Tosun, *Türk-Yunan İlişkileri ve Nüfus Mübadelesi*, pp. 29-33.

<sup>193</sup> 24 April 1930: BCA, 030 10 254 712 11, pp. 1-3: “Kendisile dost geçinmek siyasetini takip etmekte olduğumuz Yunanistan’ın bizce ancak bir vakayı tarihiye kıymetini haiz olan istiklâl bayramına iştirâk etmemek politikamızın bu günkü cereyan ve temayülâtına uygun değildir. Binaenaleyh gerek Elçimiz ile Sefarat erkânının gerek icap ediyorsa Konsoloslarımızın bayrak keşidesinden maada merasimde hazır bulunmaları muvaffaktır. Ancak Türkiyeye karşı mukabeleten dostluk hissiyatı beslemekte olduğu teminatını vermekten hali kalmayan Atina Hükümeti işbu merasim ve tezahurata Türkiye ve Türkler aleyhine matuf herhangi bir nümayiş mahiyeti verilmesine müsaade etmeyeceği kanaatında bulunduğumuzu evvel emirde Yunan Hariciye Nazarına ifade ile iki Devlet münasebatının islah ve tanzimine çalıştığımız şu sırada vukuu takdirinde efkârı umumiymizi bihakkin ve ehemmiyetli bir şekilde rencide edeceğine şüphe olmayan gayri dostane tezahüratların önüne geçilmelidir. Atina Elçimiz Yunan Hariciye Nazarile vaki ilk mülâkatında bu talimat dairesinde idarei kelâm eylemiş ve mösye (Mihalakopoulos) şenlikler esnasında millî izzeti nefsimizi rencide edecek nümayişler olmayacağı hakkında Elçimize teminat verdiği gibi merasime iştirâk niyetimizden pek mütehassis olduğunu ifade ve ihzari şükran eylemiştir.”

<sup>194</sup> İsmet İnönü, *Hatıralar* (3rd ed.) (Ankara: Bilgi Kitabevi, 2009), p. 500.



the official papers in Lausanne, was only now materialized.<sup>195</sup> When he arrived to Ankara, Venizelos continued to give peaceful messages. He told that, with his visit, he wanted to show how Greece definitely considered the Lausanne Treaty as ‘the established status quo’ for Turkish-Greek borders.<sup>196</sup> Thus, he implied Greece would not follow any irredentist policy on the Turkish territories. This speech repeated what he said in the Greek parliament seven months before. In fact, it was this retreat from revisionism that led to rapprochement between Turkey and Greece. And, on October 30, 1930, during his visit, these two states signed the Treaty of Friendship.<sup>197</sup>

#### 2.1.4. CONCLUSION

For Turkey, this rapprochement meant more than the normalization of relations with Greece. It was also significant for Turkish view of Turks in Western Thrace. With the establishment of friendship, Turkey knew that there would be relaxation in Greek maltreatment of Turks. Accordingly, this new atmosphere paved the way for the settlement of remaining minority problems. Thus, thanks to this rapprochement, these two states settled these issues with the Convention of June 10, 1930.<sup>198</sup>

This rapprochement between Turkey and Greece was claimed to become the core of peace in the Balkans. According to Venizelos, for example, Turkey and Greece ‘constituted the essence of the Balkan peace’.<sup>199</sup> In fact, these two states perceived Bulgarian revisionism as a threat to this Balkan

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<sup>195</sup> “Türk-Yunan Husumeti Tarihe Karıştı”, *Cumhuriyet*, 28 October 1930, p. 1: “Yalnız Yunanistan’da değil, bütün Balkanlarda en büyük Türk düşmanı addedilen bir siyaset rücülünün, bir zamanlar harben ve düşman olarak girmek istediği Ankara’ya şimdi sulhen ve dost olarak girmesi, elbette gayet mühim bir siyasi hâdisedir. Bu vak’a Türkiye ile Yunanistan arasında Lozan’da başlayan sulhu müsalemet hayatının artık muahedesinin sahifeleri arasında ve resmî devlet münasebatı şeklinden çıkararak ruhlara nüfuza başladığını gösteriyor.”

<sup>196</sup> “Ankaradaki Tarihi Temasların İlk Günü”, *Cumhuriyet*, 28 October 1930, p. 3: “M. Venizelos’un cevabi nutku: ...Bu hareketle (davetinize icabetle) Yunanistan’ın, Lozan muahedesini arazi istatokosunun iki devlet arasında kat’i tavsiyesi olarak telâkki etmek hususunda azimkâr kararını göstermek istedim.”

<sup>197</sup> *Türkiye Dış Politikasında 50 Yıl Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı ve Balkan Paktı*, p. 230.

<sup>198</sup> *Mübadelei ahaliye mütadair Lozan Muahedenamesile Atina İtilâfnamesininin tatbikatından mütevellit mesailin sureti katiyede halli hakkında Mukavelename* (Ankara?: Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Hariciye Vekâleti, 1930), pp. 1-15.

<sup>199</sup> “Venizelos’un Beyanati: “Türkiye ile Biz Balkan Sulhünün Esasını Teşkil Etmekteyiz”, *Cumhuriyet*, 19 June 1930, p. 3.

peace. Both in Turkish and Greek Thrace, there was threat of Bulgarian irredentist attack. Probably, this common concern was one of the reasons which fostered the rapprochement between these states. And, in the following period, this common concern also made these states came closer with the idea of pacifying Balkans through a treaty.<sup>200</sup> These two states knew that their friendly relations could help to make this Balkan idea accepted in the Balkans. For instance, this was pointed out in the report of the Turkish ambassador in Bucharest, dating April of 1933. According to him, if the Turkish-Greek rapprochement continued to develop and took its final form, as it had been affirmed by the report of the Turkish Foreign Ministry sent to him, then the other Balkan states would be interested more in this idea of a Balkan Pact.<sup>201</sup>

This final form of rapprochement was succeeded during the visit of Tsaldaris, the new Prime Minister of Greece, in Turkey. In fact, from the date he was elected, he was also dedicated to develop relations with Turkey. His favour of friendly relations with Turkey was also pointed out by the Greek authorities. For instance, on November 1932, the Greek ambassador in Turkey guaranteed that there would be no rupture in the peace policy of Greece towards Turkey. He told that it would be wrong to restrict this policy to any political party in Greece. Thus, the change in the government would not mean the change in the friendly relations between these two states.<sup>202</sup> Similarly, the Foreign Minister of Greece met with the Turkish ambassador in Athens and he told that he would be so glad to continue friendly relation with Turkey.<sup>203</sup> And, accordingly, on 14 September 1933, these two states signed Pacte d'Entente Cordiale that mutually guaranteed their Thracian frontier.<sup>204</sup> In fact, Entente Cordiale, with the treaty between Romania and Yugoslavia, constituted the essence of the Treaty of Balkan Pact. Then, on February 9, 1934 these four states concluded the Balkan Pact, which was based on acceptance of the

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<sup>200</sup> *Türkiye Dış Politikasında 50 Yıl Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı ve Balkan Paktı*, p. 316.

<sup>201</sup> 24 April 1933: BCA, 030 10 226 524 3, p. 3.

<sup>202</sup> 13 November 1932: BCA, 030 10 255 715 14, p. 1.

<sup>203</sup> 13 November 1932: BCA, 030 10 255 715 15, p. 1.

<sup>204</sup> "Samimi Anlaşma Misakı (Pact d'Entente Cordiale)", *Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Vol:15 (Ankara: Başvekâlet, 1934), pp. 195-196; *Türkiye Dış Politikasında 50 Yıl Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı ve Balkan Paktı*, pp. 315-316.

established territorial order. Thus, it was, apparently, an anti-revisionist project in nature.<sup>205</sup>

This anti-revisionist nature made Bulgaria, having territorial claims from her neighbours, refused to take part in this Pact. Thus, Bulgarian claims over Thrace continued to trouble Turkey and Greece, and these two states protested this revisionist outlook in Bulgaria. Tsaldaris, for instance, in his speech, as reported in the Turkish press, defined the territorial claims of Bulgaria on both Turkish and Greek Thrace as ‘absurd’. According to him, it was impossible to think about the admissibility of these claims.<sup>206</sup> However, this Bulgarian threat on Thrace continued to intensify. Within the Greek Thrace, for example, this potential threat of Bulgarian attack reached to a point that even disturbed Turks living in Western Thrace. In accordance with the Turkish documents from the end of 1934, it was realised that this Bulgarian threat was one of the reasons of migration of these people to Turkey.<sup>207</sup> Similarly, the threat of potential Bulgarian attack over Eastern Thrace felt in Turkey. Apparently, these perceived physical challenges on Thrace made these two states come closer during 1930s.

## 2.2. BULGARIAN CASE

In the inter-war period, Bulgaria was definitely one of the dissatisfied states<sup>208</sup> and considered revisionist policies as remedy for its unhappiness. In fact, it was clear that after the coup against Aleksendur Stambuliiski in 1923, all the new Bulgarian governments had this revisionist outlook, and the territorial claims on Turkish territories were also part of this revisionist tendency in Bulgaria. Especially, in the late 1920s and 1930s, Turkey concerned more about this physical challenge and doubted more about the

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<sup>205</sup> Türkeş, “The Balkan Pact and its Implications for the Balkan States”, pp. 123, 134-135.

<sup>206</sup> “Bulgarların Arazi Talebi Manasız ve Mantıksızdır”, *Cumhuriyet*, 3 May 1934, p. 1: “M. Çaldaris “Türk olan Trakya ile Yunan Trakyası üzerinden bu iddiaları düşünmek kabil midir” diyor.”

<sup>207</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, pp. 74-77.

<sup>208</sup> Türkeş, “The Balkan Pact and its Implications for the Balkan States”, pp. 123-124.

friendship in Turkish-Bulgarian relations. In 1934, particularly, with the refusal of Bulgaria to enter the anti-revisionist Balkan Pact and the rule of new regime, this Turkish physical concern reached to a peak point. Turkey saw that this revisionist atmosphere with active irredentist committees, which enjoyed Bulgarian backing, resulted in pressure on the Turkish/Muslim minority.

### **2.2.1 FROM FRIENDSHIP TO ENMITY: BULGARIAN REVISIONISM**

Bulgarian revisionism was apparently based on 'Greater Bulgaria' ideal. In the Bulgarian history, definitely, it was the Treaty of San Stefano that satisfied this idea at most. After the Russian victory during the Ottoman-Russian war of 1877-1878, this treaty was signed on March 3, 1878. In accordance with the design of this treaty, the Bulgarian Principality would expand through from the Danube to the Aegean coast and from the Black Sea to the Morava and Vardar valleys. However, this greater Bulgaria, which gained strategic closeness to İstanbul and the Turkish Straits, bothered other Great Powers, in particular, Britain. And, the threat of potential Russian control over this vast Bulgarian Principality made these states to revise this treaty in the Congress of Berlin. Thus, this short-lived treaty was replaced with the Berlin Treaty signed four months later. A little changed about the internal structure of this autonomous Bulgarian principality with this new treaty. But, there was a considerable reduction in the territories designed for a greater Bulgaria. And, some Ottoman territories in Thrace and Macedonia were returned to the Ottoman rule again.<sup>209</sup> The territorial gains of Treaty of San Stefano, however, always remained as an ideal for Bulgarian revisionists.

Similar to the Treaty of San Stefano, the territorial gains of the First Balkan War also remained as an ideal for Bulgarian revisionists. In this war, Bulgarians even reached to outskirts of İstanbul by April 1913. Moreover, they seized the important Ottoman cities in Thrace such as Edirne. However, as the

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<sup>209</sup> R. J. Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria* (2nd ed.) (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 81-84; Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan States*, pp. 208-209.

alliance between the Balkan states was dissolved at the expense of Bulgarians, the Ottoman forces was able retake Eastern Thrace, including Edirne, by the end of the Second Balkan War.<sup>210</sup> Similarly, Bulgarians also lost Southern Dobrudza to Romania and a considerable piece of Macedonia to Serbia and Greece.<sup>211</sup> But, these territorial losses angered Bulgaria seeking Greater Bulgaria ideal.

Apparently, Bulgaria entered the First World War to satisfy its territorial ideal. As the Central Powers seemed to Bulgaria having more chance of success and offered more territories, it favoured the Central Powers. Germany, for example, offered Macedonia and greater parts of Thrace and the control of Aleksandropolis (Dedeağaç) railway line.<sup>212</sup> Thus, on September 6, 1915 Bulgaria signed agreements with Germany and Austria-Hungary and entered war on their side. This meant Bulgaria would be able to satisfy most of 'Bulgaria of San Stefano' ideal.<sup>213</sup> However, this was not the case as the outcome of war was in favour of the Allies. And, on September 29, 1918 Bulgaria signed an armistice after the forces of Allies entered its territories.<sup>214</sup> In the following year, on November 27, 1919 Bulgaria signed a peace treaty with them in Neuilly-sur-Seine. With this treaty, Bulgaria lost strategically influential points such as Struma valley, Tsaribod, Negotin and Vranje to Yugoslavia.<sup>215</sup> In addition to these, in 1920, the Allies left the authority of Western Thrace to Greece.<sup>216</sup> This meant that Bulgaria was deprived of its access to the Aegean Sea. And, it was apparent that these territorial losses made Bulgaria unhappy with new settlement after the First World War. Dissatisfied with this peace settlement, in the inter-war period Bulgaria considered any kind of revisionism as an opportunity.<sup>217</sup> And, this territorial

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<sup>210</sup> Justin McCarthy, *The Ottoman Turks: An Introductory History to 1923* (London: Longman, 1997), pp. 353-354.

<sup>211</sup> Türkeş, "The Balkan Pact and its Implications for the Balkan States", p. 124.

<sup>212</sup> Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, p. 138.

<sup>213</sup> Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasî Tarihi 1914-1980* (Ankara: Türkiye İş Bankası, 1983), pp. 118-119.

<sup>214</sup> Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, p. 139.

<sup>215</sup> Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan States*, p. 304.

<sup>216</sup> *Tarihte Türk Bulgar İlişkileri*, p. 97.

<sup>217</sup> Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan States*, p. 311.

dissatisfaction became the centre of the Bulgarian relations with her neighbours.

Although Turkey was one of the states that Bulgaria had better relations when compared to other Balkan states, this issue still played a central role between these two in the inter-war period. These Bulgarian claims were about Turkish Thrace. For these territorial claims, Bulgarian revisionists mainly referred to the Bulgarian siege of Edirne during the Balkan Wars, on March 26, 1913. It was one of the last and the vital fortress for the Ottoman Empire in Thrace but it was retaken by the Ottoman forces in July.<sup>218</sup> However, this event continued to be celebrated in Bulgaria per annum, as ‘the independence of Edirne’. And, Turkey put strict eye to these celebrations. For the Turkish view, these persistent celebrations justified how the loss of Edirne remained unacceptable for the Bulgarian revisionist. Defining the Ottoman retaking of Edirne as ‘the act of a clown putting high and mighty as if he was a wrestler’<sup>219</sup>, according to these Bulgarian revisionists, this was a temporal situation. However, the meaning of these historical events during the Balkan Wars was different for the Turkish side.

The Balkan Wars resulted in more than the loss of Balkan territories for the Ottomans.<sup>220</sup> It was an emotional item within shared history of Turks and Bulgarians. In the Turkish history, this war was associated with violence encountered by Muslim minority. There is a book published in 1913 by a charity organization about Muslim migrants of the places Ottomans lost in the Balkans called *Rumeli Mezalimi ve Bulgar Vahşetleri* (The Atrocity in Rumelia and the Bulgarian Brutalities). This book, both using the pictures and the texts, explained the torture committed by Bulgarians and their allies. However,

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<sup>218</sup> R. J. Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, p. 133.

<sup>219</sup> 25 March 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 627 2, p. 1: “Bulgar mektep müfettişlerinden coğrafya hocası Naşeff isminde biri tarafından yazılan diğer bir makalede “Bulgarların Halil Yaver Beyin zannettiklerinden fazlasını yani Midye-Enos hattını istemekte olduklarını, Türklerin bulgarlardan korktuklarını adeta itiraf edildiği ve bundan not alındığı, Türklerin Balkanlara gelmelerinden evvel bulgar ırkının Trakya’da muharebeler vermiş olduğu, bulgarların Türk ırkından olmadıkları, vaktile bize uşaklık ettiklerini de saklamadıkları, fakat eski efendilerini nasıl yendikleri malûm olduğu, 1913 de Trakya’nın istirdadı palyaçonun pehlivanlık etmesi kabilinden olduğu ” yazılmıştır.”

<sup>220</sup> Boyar, *Ottomans, Turks and the Balkans*, p. 1.

according to this book, even the allies of Bulgarians, for example Greeks, showed disgust to unbearable atrocities of Bulgarians.<sup>221</sup>

Indeed, this was a book published just after the Balkan Wars; however, the Turkish publications in the 1930s also repeated these atrocities with the same manner. For instance, Mehmet Şeref, the MP of Edirne of that period, did this in his book published 21 years after the Balkan Wars. He narrated stories about Bulgarian tyranny of Turks on the way of the Castle of Edirne, which the writer defined at a degree that would ‘even ashamed the angels of the hell’. According to Mehmet Şeref, members of the Bulgarian committees were quite natural while stabbing babies sucking their mothers, cutting off breasts of women, cutting stomachs of Turks open. As a result while the committees carried ‘fire, torture and death’ to the Turkish villages, the Bulgarian army entered the Castle of Edirne.<sup>222</sup> This, in fact, showed how memories about Bulgarian siege in Edirne were still fresh in Turkey.

In the inter-war period, Turkey saw that Edirne was not only a city that Bulgarian revisionists had territorial claims but it had also central role in their ideals for expansion. For instance, in an article of İv. P. Ormandijeff, an influential member of the *Trakya Cemiyeti*,<sup>223</sup> published in *Zaria*, it was underlined that in order to govern Thrace, Bulgaria was in need of controlling Edirne.<sup>224</sup> Similarly, an article, published in *Thrace* in the same year, Edirne was referred to as ‘the privileged ambition’ of Bulgarians as it was the pivot of

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<sup>221</sup> Rumeli Muhacirin-i İslamiye Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi, *Alam-ı İslam. Rumeli Mezalimi ve Vahşetleri* (İstanbul: Mahmud Bey Matbaası, 1913), p. 19: “Bulgarlar işgal ettikleri kasabalarda o kadar caniyane hareketlerde bulunmuşlar, öyle hareketler irtikab etmişlerdir ki, bu keyfiyat müttetikleri olan Yunanlıların gazeteleri tarafından da tenkid edilmeğe başlanmışdır. Ezcümle Selanikte münteşir Rumca Makedonya gazetesinde ahiren yazdığı bir makalede Bulgar çetelerile asakir-ı muntızamasının if’al-i vahşetkarane ve zalimanelerini bir cinayet-i medeniyye olmak üzere göstermiştir.”

<sup>222</sup> Mehmet Şeref, *Bulgarlar ve Bulgar Devleti* (Ankara: Hakimiyeti Milliye Matbaası, 1934), pp. 47-48.

<sup>223</sup> 1 March 1934: BCA, 030 10 242 632 18, p. 1.

<sup>224</sup> 3 May 1934: BCA, 030 10 242 633 13, p. 3: “Zaria” gazetesinde Trakya Cemiyeti Reisi İv. P. Ormandijeff imzası ile münteşir makalede. Bulgaristan, bulgarların istihlası için silahlı hazırlanmıştı, politika ile değil. Bulgaristana yeni doğuşunu, istiklalini kazandıran aktörlerin ölümlerinden sonra Cavour ve Bismark gibi birer şahsiyet çıkmamıştır... Bulgaristan bu gün her günden ziyade, muahedatın tadili ile kendisini iktisaden kuvvetli bir devlet yapabilecek olan açık bir siyasete muhtaçtır. Bu da ancak Meriç vadisinden Trakyayı kat’ ederek Ege denizine inmesi ile kabildir. Bu sevhilde bulgarların hükümran olabilmeleri de ancak Edirneye malik bulunmalarına bağlıdır...” denilmektedir.”

Thrace.<sup>225</sup> As Edirne had the pivotal role for these Bulgarian revisionists, they intensified their propaganda activities accordingly. Thus, national celebrations about the Bulgarian siege in Edirne were golden opportunities for them. The Turkish authorities knew this and always followed these celebrations closely through the Turkish embassy there. For instance, basing on the observations of embassy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a report to the Prime Ministry in 1929 about the ceremony of that year. In this report, it was underlined that the ceremony was again celebrated in ‘a noisy manner’ as the celebrations in previous years. There was a ceremony in the church called St. Nikolas to which garrison commander, General Lazorof, General İvanof, who was the commander of army which invaded Edirne and numerous other soldiers attended. The same day of this celebration, the soldiers who had participated to the invasion of Edirne also issued a special newspaper called *Edirne*, which was full of articles and the pictures showing the details of the siege.<sup>226</sup> This showed the efforts of the revisionists to make this historical event fresh in the minds of Bulgarians. A similar Turkish report from 1932 reflected the continuing propaganda activities of these revisionists about Edirne. For instance, the Bulgarian clergyman described the siege in Edirne as ‘the most glorious triumph’ in the Balkan Wars that could be the lesson for new generations in Bulgaria. The revisionist ideal of this clergyman was apparent within his description of Edirne as ‘the victim of the injustice of civilised world once again’, which implied revisionism was the sole solution.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> 3 May 1934: BCA, 030 10 242 633 13, p. 4: “22 Mart 1934 tarihli “Trakya” gazetesi bir nüshasında kâmilten Edirne’nin istirdadı bayramı yıl dönümüne hasretmiştir. Muhtelif imzalarla yazılan makalatta bulgar askerlerinin kahramanlığından, Trakyanın can noktası olan Edirne’nin daima bulgar milleti için bir nuhbei amal olarak kalacağından bahs olunmaktadır. Bu meyamda, Allahın yardımı ile bir gün gelir bulgarlar tekrar eski kuvvetlerini elde ederlerse bir daha mechul ve yabancı bir toprak için değil fakat mukaddes bir toprak, kahramanların mezarları, münbit bir erazi ve deniz için harb edeceklerdir, denilmektedir.”

<sup>226</sup> 23 June 1929: BCA, 030 10 239 617 6, p. 1. “Edirnenin işgali yıldönümünün Bulgaristan’da tes’idi: 1913 senesi martının 24 üncü günü Edirne, Bulgarlar tarafından işgal edilmişti. Bulgarlar, her sene olduğu gibi bu sene de işgali yıl dönümünü gürültülü bir şekilde tes’it etmişlerdir.”

<sup>227</sup> 17 October 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 625 4, p. 1: “Rahip makalesini şu suretle bitirmektedir: “Ey Edirne! Bugün tekrar “medenî” adaletsizliğin kurbanısın.”



In the same year Tevfik Kâmil (Koperler), the Turkish ambassador in Sofia, reported a speech of a member of the *Trakya İhtilâl Komitası*, which was also called as *Trakya İhtilâl Teşkilâtı* (the Internal Thracian Revolutionary Organization, ITRO). In his speech, this man told about the necessity for Bulgarians to carry the issue of Thrace to the top agenda of Bulgarian foreign policy.<sup>228</sup> Similarly, another report from the Turkish embassy pointed out the same emphasis observed from revisionist publishing organs such as *Thrace*.<sup>229</sup> Apparently, revisionist committee members described Eastern Thrace more significant than the ‘sunless and stony Macedonia’.<sup>230</sup> Indeed, this attitude of the *Trakya İhtilâl Komitası* presenting the Thracian issue more significant than Macedonian one disturbed the Turkish authorities. They suspected about the role of Yugoslavia to provoke this committee to act like this.<sup>231</sup>

In 1933, the committee members even accepted as ‘a week of propaganda’, between 19 and 26 March, for the celebrations about the Bulgarian siege in Edirne. For this week, these revisionists decided to organize conferences given by figures such as the director of National Museum, D. P.

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<sup>228</sup> 19 October 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 625 8 2, p. 3: “Trakya teşkilâtı mümessili nutkunda her vakitki nakaratlarını tekrar ederek Trakya meselesinin Bulgar siyaseti hariciyesinin en mühim mevzuu olması gerektiğini ileri sürmüştür.”

<sup>229</sup> 25 May 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 622 14, p. 1: “Trakya Cemiyetinin naşiri efkârı (Trakya) gazetesi ile Trakya ihtilâl teşkilatının organı olan “Staj” gazetesinin şayanı kayıt neşriyatının hülaseten Fransızacaya mütercem suretleri Sofya Elçiliğimizden gönderilmiş olmakla aynen ve leffen takdim kılındı, efendim.”; Halil Yaver, *Bugünkü Bulgaristan’da Türk Düşmanlığı* (İstanbul: Tecelli Matbaası, 1932), pp. 32-33: “Bulgaristan’da resmen teşekkül etmiş bir “Trakya cemiyeti var. Bu cemiyetin “Trakya” isminde bir gazetesi de her hafta çıkmaktadır.”

<sup>230</sup> 1 May 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 622 3, p. 1: “Sofya Elçiliğimizden alınan tahriratın metni berveçhizir arz olunur: “Şarkî Trakya ve Midiye-Enos hattının Bulgaristan için taşlık ve güneşsiz Makedonya’dan daha ziyade haizi emniyet olduğu keyfiyeti “Trakya” gazetesinde uzun zamandan beri takip edilen bir tez olduğu malûmu Devletleridir.”

<sup>231</sup> 10 March 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 620 14, p. 1: “Bulgar Başvekili Mösyö Muşanof’un Ankara seyahatının bir hatayı siyasî olduğu ve bu seyyahatın zimandarının Paris seyahati esnasında müşarinileyhe hüsnü muamale etmemiş buldukları hakkındaki bazı Bulgar gazeteleri tarafından neşredilen yazılarla Belgrat matbuatında görülen ve hemen aynı maalde bulunan neşriyatın, bu iki memleketteki Trakya teşkilatı tarafından memleketimiz aleyhinde ibraz edilmekte olan hamsan hissiyatın derecesi müşabehetini göstermesi itibarile şayanı kayıt görüldüğü Sofya Elçiliğimizden alınan bir tahriratta bildirilmekte ve berveçhi maruz mütaleat ilave edilmektedir: “Bilhassa Trakya Teşkilatı ele başları tarafından son zamanlarda (Makedonya mesalesi ve Makedonya teşkilatı tarafından takip olunan siyasetin Bulgaristan için netice itibarile daha müfit olan Trakya meselesinin Bulgar milli siyasetinin mihveriyi yapılması) hakkında ileri sürülen mütaleatın Yugoslavlar tarafından teşvik görmekte olduğunu gösteren birer delildir.”

Nikoloff, İv. P. Ormandjieff and Petkonoff in ‘Alliance Française of Sofia’.<sup>232</sup> Indeed, the Turkish authorities were familiar with these names. For instance, the Turkish consul in Varna sent a report to Ankara one week earlier, about the activities of Petkonoff, the committee member. The consul pointed out that it was highly unusual to face with conferences in Varna on the issue of Thrace at this level of publicly declared and with this kind of grand organization.<sup>233</sup> These grand organizations of revisionists, however, made Turkey suspected about the hidden role of the Bulgarian state behind them. The Turkish publications, for example, the book of Halil Yaver called *Bugünkü Bulgaristan’da Türk Düşmanlığı* (The Enmity towards the Turks in Today’s Bulgaria), which was published in 1932, pointed out how these national celebrations were organized by both the Bulgarian government and the committees.<sup>234</sup>

However, there were also cases that the Bulgarian authorities declared their territorial ideals overtly. For instance, Tevfik Kâmil reported about a speech of an influential clergyman, Stefan, the metropolitan of Sofia. Stefan emphasized the bravery of Bulgarian soldiers during the siege of Edirne, which had been lost because of ‘the loose policies of the Bulgarian politicians’. He told that continuous national celebrations would finally help to make Thrace, ‘the inseparable and unforgettable part of Bulgaria’, again a Bulgarian territory.<sup>235</sup> Indeed, this definition of Stefan about the national celebrations justified the physical concerns of Turkey about the celebrations for Edirne. It

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<sup>232</sup> 25 March 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 626 32, p. 1.

<sup>233</sup> 18 March 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 626 21, p. 1: “Trakya muhacirleri Cemiyetleri, gazetelerle yaptıkları propagandayı birçok şehirlerde verdikleri konferans ve tertip ettikleri toplantılarla da teksif eylemeğe devam etmektedirler. Bu meyanda Cemiyet icra komitesi katibi K. N. Petkonoff Sofyadan Varnaya giderek orada Trakya mefkûresi ve Trakya Cemiyetinin faaliyetleri hakkında konferanslar vermiştir.”

<sup>234</sup> Halil Yaver, *Bugünkü Bulgaristan’da Türk Düşmanlığı*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>235</sup> 19 October 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 625 8, p. 2: “Sofya Metropolidi Stefan bir hitabe irât ederek Edirne harbi devri senevisinin Bulgar kalplerinde hem sevinç hem de keder duyguları doğurduğunu ve Bulgar neferinin kahramanlığı ile kazanılan zaferin bazı politikacıların hafifmeşrepliği neticesi kaybedildiğini, Edirne denilen mücevherin Bulgarlar tarafından zaptedildikten sonra tekrar ellerinden alındığı söylenmiş ve 58 inci alay efradının şecaatının Edirne’nin zaptı hadisesini daima yadettirerek Bulgarlara altın ve feyzdar Trakya’nın, anavatandan ayrılmaz ve unutulmaz Trakya’nın günün birinde ona rucu edeceğine dair iman bahşedeceğini ilâve etmiş ve âtide aynı hatalara düşülmemesini temenni eylemiştir.”

was apparent for Turkey that despite the friendship rhetoric of King Boris and Mouchanoff, there was an official support behind these activities. For instance, the political establishment in Bulgaria such as General Kisof, the Minister of Military Affairs, Malinof, president of the Bulgarian Assembly including the metropolitan Stefan inaugurated a monument symbolising the siege of Edirne. They also did not abstain to define the task of this monument as encouraging Bulgarians to work for ‘future seizure’ of Edirne.<sup>236</sup> But, for the Turkish side, from 1934 onwards, support of the Bulgarian government to these activities became more observable.

In fact, 1934 was also the year of delicate relations between Turkey and Bulgaria because of the Balkan Pact issue. Although Turkey worked hard to include Bulgaria in this Pact, the latter persistently refused to take part in it.<sup>237</sup> However, it was clear that this refusal based on both external and internal pressures for revisionism.<sup>238</sup> These external pressures were about Italy, as a revisionist Great Power. Apparently, Turkey knew that Italy was against this anti-revisionist Pact. For instance, on February 14, 1934 Hüseyin Ragıp (Baydur), the Turkish ambassador in the Soviet Union, sent a report about how Italians even tried to persuade Soviet Union to be against this Pact.<sup>239</sup> However, it was definitely Bulgaria where Italian lobby against this Pact was felt mostly.<sup>240</sup> Apparently, Bulgaria and Italy had close relations in the inter-war period. This was actually alarming for Turkey because it was clear that what made them closer was the same dissatisfaction with the post-war settlement. Thus, Turkey knew that both shared the ideal of revisionism. Hence, this made Turkey felt insecure about any possible allied attack towards Turkish territories.<sup>241</sup> In fact, with the Balkan Pact, Turkey attempted to decrease this risk.<sup>242</sup> However, Bulgaria dedicated to refuse to be part of this

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<sup>236</sup> Halil Yaver, *Bugünkü Bulgaristan'da Türk Düşmanlığı*, pp. 28-30.

<sup>237</sup> 26 February 1934: BCA, 030 10 227 526 9, pp. 24, 33-34.

<sup>238</sup> *Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı ve Balkan Paktı*, p. 318.

<sup>239</sup> 14 February 1934: BCA, 030 10 227 526 5, pp. 1-3.

<sup>240</sup> Türkeş, “The Balkan Pact and its Implications for the Balkan States”, pp. 125-126; *Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı ve Balkan Paktı*, p. 311.

<sup>241</sup> Türkeş, “The Balkan Pact and its Implications for the Balkan States”, p. 135.

<sup>242</sup> *Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı ve Balkan Paktı*, pp. 313, 318.

anti-revisionist structuring in the Balkans. And, finally, this Pact was signed without Bulgaria on February 9, 1934.

Apparently, internal pressures for revisionism were more effective in this Bulgarian refusal. The Bulgarian revisionists, particularly the ones having territorial claims on Thrace, were totally against this Pact, which aimed to keep the existing *status-quo*. They underlined that Bulgaria, being unhappy with territorial settlements, could not be part of this anti-revisionist Pact. According to them, this Pact was definitely ‘unfair’ as it aimed to sustain the settled territories. And, for this ‘unfair’ Pact they mostly accused of Turkey. The Entente Cordiale between Turkey and Greece preceding this Pact was also not ‘a coincidence’ and it was designed to ignore the Bulgarian ‘territorial rights’ in Thrace. Thus, both this Turkish-Greek agreement and the Treaty of Balkan Pact were disturbing for Bulgarian revisionists. But, these did not mean much to them as they considered these written treaties as ‘temporal’. Thus, similar to the Neuilly Treaty, the Treaty of Balkan Pact was a thing that could be revised in their point of view. But, according to them what they needed was to persistently continue their revisionist activities.<sup>243</sup>

Accordingly, Turkey saw how they intensified their revisionist propaganda in the course of Balkan Pact. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 1934, for example, *Cumhuriyet* reported about four planned congresses by *Trakya İhtilâl Komitesi*, the first of which would be held on 14<sup>th</sup> of January in Mustafapaşa

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<sup>243</sup> 1 March 1934: BCA, 030 10 242 632 18, p. 3: “Bu adaletsizliklerin husulunde Türkiyenin pek büyük bir teşriki mesaisi vardır. O ilk defa olarak 1913 senesi zarfında bulgarları hudutları haricine attı, ve ondan sonra aynini Yunanistan da yaptı. Türk-Yunan misakının Balkan misakından evvel oluşu bir tesadüf eseri değildir. Neuilly muahedesinin 48 inci maddesi ahkâmınca erazi vermek suretile Akdeniz’deki mahreç hususunda Trakya teşkilatının propagandasına karşı son zamanlarda mezkûr devletlerin matbuat vasıtasile ve diplomatik yollar ile şiddetli muhalif hareketleri de bir tesadüf eseri değildir. ...Dünya’da “ebedî” diye bir çok muahedeler aktedilmiştir. Fakat bunlar pek büyük adaletsizliklere istinat ettiğinden uzun müddet devam edememiştir. Balkan misakının akibeti de böyle olacaktır; çünkü milletlere vurulan zincirler değil baki olan yalnız adalettir. Biz, Trakyalılar Balkan misakını böyle bir his ve imanla karşılamaktayız. Gürültülü misakın sonunu ve muahedenamelerin tadili cereyanının mufakkeyeti için her zamankinden daha çok şimdi bizim sabır ve metanet ve makulâne hareket etmemiz lâzımdır. O vakıta kadarsa? İş başına? Balkan misakı ile zincir bent edilen adaletin muzafferiyeti için cesurane iş başına.”

(Svilengrad), a town 'just on' the Turkish border.<sup>244</sup> Although after this congress, due to the Turkish government pressure and Turkish press's protests, the Bulgarian government had to announce that the governor of Mustafapaşa, Peyu Triandafilef, who was deemed responsible for the congress, was removed from his post, the Turkish consul in Plovdiv (Filibe) reported that this governor continued to his duty as was proved by his signature on a passport issued in Svilengrad (Mustafapaşa).<sup>245</sup> *Cumhuriyet* made comments on this issue and it was argued that by appointing one of the influential figures of *Trakya İhtilâl Komitası* as the governor of Svilengrad, who continued to stay in his job after congresses, Bulgaria showed how little it cared about the friendship of Turkey.<sup>246</sup>

This kind of relationship between the revisionist committees for Thrace and the Bulgarian government further intensified with the establishment of new regime in Bulgaria. On 19<sup>th</sup> of May 1934, there occurred a military coup in Bulgaria which resulted in dictatorship, and Colonel Kimon Georgiev became the Prime Minister. In all areas of life including press, arts, political parties, trade unions, banks and organizations of youths, there was the strict control of new regime. In name of unity among the society, even the Turkish names of places were changed.<sup>247</sup> But, this new political scene affected the committees as well and they were similarly dissolved. In fact, for Turkey, Bulgaria was a place where the committees always held the power. In particular, after the Neuilly settlement, according to Mehmet Şeref, Bulgaria altogether turned to

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<sup>244</sup> "Trakya Komitası Hududumuz Üstünde Kongre Aktediyor", *Cumhuriyet*, 6 January 1934, p. 5.

<sup>245</sup> 24 March 1934: BCA, 030 10 242 633 3, p. 1: "Filibe Konsolosluğumuzdan alınan bir tahriratta: "Trakyalıların Mustafapaşa'da yaptıkları miting'in mesulu azedildiği bulgar hükûmeti erkânî tarafından matbûata beyan olunan Mustafapaşa kaymakamı Peyü Triandafilef'un işinden ayrılmadığı ve bugün yine vazife başında bulunduğu yapılan tahkikatta anlaşılmış ve Mustafapaşa'da verilmiş bir pasaport üzerindeki imzası da bunu teyit etmiş olduğu" bildirilmektedir."

<sup>246</sup> "Trakya Komitası Hududumuz Üstünde Kongre Aktediyor", *Cumhuriyet*, 6 January 1934, p. 5: Cumhuriyet- Trakya komitasının aktedeceği kongrelerin bilhassa hududumuz üzerinde toplanması ve bu kongrenin toplanacağı Mustafapaşa kazası kaymakamlığına Trakya ihtilâl komitası ikinci reisi Trandanfilofun tayin edilmesi, Bulgaristanın Türk dostluğuna ne kadar ehemmiyet verdiğini göstermektedir."

<sup>247</sup> Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, pp. 158-160.

this state-in-state structure, a heritage of the Bulgarian history.<sup>248</sup> However, with new regime even the *Makedonya İhtilâl Komitası* (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization, IMRO) was dissolved immediately after the coup. This committee had worked for the territorial claims of Bulgarian revisionists from Yugoslavia. It was an influential committee with its own paramilitary forces and it had also close relations with the political establishment.<sup>249</sup> However, as new regime sought more relaxation in relations with Yugoslavia<sup>250</sup> this revisionist committee was closed. But, the same enforcement was not applied against the *Trakya İhtilâl Komitası*.<sup>251</sup> And, this disturbed the Turkish side. According to Yunus Nadi, the previous government under the leadership of Mouchanoff was not also able to keep his promise of closing the *Trakya İhtilâl Komitası*. But, this time there was an authoritarian regime in Bulgaria, with a power to close this revisionist committee. Thus, the continuity of this committee was ‘abnormal’ under the present circumstances.<sup>252</sup>

The relations between new government and this committee, on the contrary, got closer. In line with the documents, Turkey saw how this new Bulgarian regime took more part in these revisionist propaganda activities about Thrace. For instance, Bulgarians organized an official ceremony to inaugurate a monument in name of places taken from Turks during the Balkan Wars. In the ceremony there were numerous Bulgarian authorities and committee members. The War Minister, in his speech, declared that this monument would become ‘an inspiration and encouragement’ for new generations. He also implied that this monument would show the direction of Bulgarian ambitions about its ideal territories that Bulgarian youths would

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<sup>248</sup> Şeref, *Bulgarlar ve Bulgar Devleti*, pp. 53, 57.

<sup>249</sup> Türkeş, “The Balkan Pact and Its Implications for the Balkan States”, pp. 124, 131-132.

<sup>250</sup> Yunus Nadi, “Trakya Adlı Bulgar Komitanın Dağılması”, *Cumhuriyet*, 21 September 1934, p. 1; Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, p. 160.

<sup>251</sup> The report of Turkish consul in Filibe (Plovdiv), dating April of 1934, showed that officially it was declared that this committee was dissolved. However, overtly, it continued its activities as a committee with Bulgarian backing. For more details see 30 April 1934: BCA, 030 10 242 633 10.

<sup>252</sup> Yunus Nadi, “Bulgaristanla Türkiye Arasında Hakikî Vaziyet”, *Cumhuriyet*, 10 September 1934, p. 1.

follow in 21th century. After the minister, the president of *Trakya İhtilâl Komitası* gave a speech in which he similarly underlined that Bulgaria would never give up its ideals over Thrace and the Mediterranean.<sup>253</sup> Memduh Talât, the reporter of *Cumhuriyet* in Sofia, reported another grand festival in Bulgaria in which Bulgarians set up a monument for Shipka (a pass that the Russian forces defeated the Ottoman forces during the Ottoman-Russian war of 1877-1878).<sup>254</sup> From the Turkish perspective the role of new Bulgarian regime in this celebration was significant. In the place of ceremony, there was a canopy called Edirne which was a figure which the committee normally used in its congresses. When this canopy disturbed Turkey, the previous Bulgarian governments used to accuse irredentist committees about this. However, at this time, it was the Bulgarian government itself that built this canopy and whole parliament including the King passed under this canopy during the ceremony. Moreover, they also issued the stamps special for this ceremony.<sup>255</sup> These three day long celebrations were also reported in English newspaper *Daily Mail* which defined this ceremony as ‘unprecedented’.<sup>256</sup> In fact, these all justified the changing nature of the revisionist propaganda activities with explicit support of new government.

Clearly, in this period, the Bulgarian authorities felt free to publish their ideals about Eastern Thrace. For instance, the Bulgarian officer in the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry, Dr. Assen Boijnof, wrote a book called “New Bulgaria and The External World” in which he argued that there should be condominium in Eastern Thrace including both Bulgarian and Turkish parties.

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<sup>253</sup> Memduh Talât, “Bu Hal Ne Zamana Kadar Sürecek?”, *Cumhuriyet*, 17 August 1934, p. 1: “Harbiye nazırı bu münasebetle irat ettiği nutukta bu heykelin gelecek nesil için bir ilham ve kuvvet membası olacağını, ona Bulgarlığın yirminci asırda yürümek istediği yolu göstereceğini söyledi. Harbiye nazırından sonra Trakya komitesi reisi bir nutuk irat ederek Türklük aleyhinde ne kadar kelime varsa hepsini de kullandı ve Bulgarların kat’iyyen Trakya ve Akdenizden vaz geçmiyeceklerini söyledi.”

<sup>254</sup> Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, p. 83.

<sup>255</sup> “Hiçbir Yoldan Edirneye Gidilmez!”, *Cumhuriyet*, 3 September 1934, p. 1: “Şimdiye kadar üzerinde Edirne yazılı olan taklar ancak Trakya komitasının kongrelerinde yapılır ve Bulgar hükûmeti de Bulgaristanda teşekküller hürriyeti var deyip işin içinden çıkardı. Fakat şimdi Şipkada yapılp üzerinde Edirne ibaresi yazılı olan tak resmen hükûmet tarafından inşa edilmiş ve altından kral hazretleri de dahil olduğu bütün Bulgar kabinesi geçmiştir.”

<sup>256</sup> “Hiçbir Yoldan Edirneye Gidilmez!”, *Cumhuriyet*, 3 September 1934, p. 5.

Although there was a strict censorship in Bulgarian publications with new regime, this book could be sold freely in Bulgaria. Similarly, the government gave permission to publication of articles calling Thrace as ‘wailing region under the siege of Turks.’<sup>257</sup>

In the following months, the support of new Bulgarian regime to this committee remained as a problem between these two states, and the Turkish authorities continued to follow this committee’ activities. For instance, on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April in 1934, the Turkish consul in Plovdiv sent a report to Ankara about an intelligence showing the continuity of the activities of this revisionist committee. More importantly, however, the report underlined the employment of the members of the committee as guards, customs officers and watchmen, who were armed and close to the Turkish border.<sup>258</sup> These armed revisionists, who became the employees of Bulgarian state, close to the boundary of Turkey, was highly alarming for the Turkish side since it clearly showed how unofficial revisionist outlook in Bulgaria gradually turned into an official state policy.

This close relation between new Bulgarian regime and this committee was also reflected within the announcement of this committee about its dissolution. In this announcement, the committee told that in order to make new regime in Bulgaria held the authority in all parts of Bulgaria to sustain its ambitions, the committee dissolved itself. Significantly, however, in this announcement, the committee asked for the assistance of ‘the devoted sons of Bulgaria’ for this new regime, which was ‘working to create a greater Bulgaria’.<sup>259</sup> In fact, firstly, according to Yunus Nadi, this announcement

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<sup>257</sup> Memduh Talât, “Dostluk Lâfta Kalırsa Böyle Olur!”, *Cumhuriyet*, 28 July 1934, pp. 1, 3.

<sup>258</sup> 30 April 1934: BCA, 030 10 242 633 10, p. 1.

<sup>259</sup> Memduh Talât, “Trakya Komitası Kendi Kendini Feshetti”, *Cumhuriyet*, 20 September 1934, p. 1: “Trakyayı kurtarma komitası, yani Trakya ihtilâl teşkilâtı, kendi kendini festtiğine dar Bulgar gazetelerine şu tebliği göndermiştir: “Trakyayı kurtarma komitası Bulgaristandaki yeni idarenin dört aylık faaliyetini, devlet otoritesini memleketin her tarafında hâkîm kılabilmesi ve şimdiki hükûmetin, memleketin dahilî ve haricî siyasetini sımsıkı elinde tutup Balkan harbinde müttefiklerin birbirile harbetmesine sebep olan 16 haziran 1913 hâdisessi gibi müessif hâdiselere sebebiyet verip Bulgaristanın kazandığı zaferleri artık yok edemeyeceğini nazarı itibara alarak bugünden itibaren bütün şubelerile birlikte faaliyetine nihayet verdiğini bütün Trakya muhacirlerine ve Bulgar efkârı umumiyesine beyan eder. Trakyanın sadık



showed how this committee, with a clear intention for a greater Bulgaria, was more than a just charity organization as called by the Bulgarian authorities.<sup>260</sup> But, secondly, it showed how this committee trusted in new regime to meet their revisionist ideals. Indeed, this was not the case with the previous governments. For instance, the Turkish report from 1933 showed how these revisionists were critical about the previous governments since they described them as being inactive to meet the revisionist demands of Bulgarians over Eastern Thrace.<sup>261</sup> In particular, they were critical about the friendly attitudes of Mouchanoff to Turkey.<sup>262</sup> But, as they considered this new regime had a potential to meet their territorial claims over Thrace, they saw no need to continue their activities.

However, until this declaration of dissolution, the Turkish government had already taken steps against this irredentist committee, considered as a physical challenge to the Turkish territorial integrity with Bulgarian backing it enjoyed. For instance, the Turkish embassy in Sofia closely watched activities of this committee and sent regular reports about these activities to Ankara.<sup>263</sup> In addition to these, its propaganda organs such as *Trakya*, *Zavet* and *Staj* were also translated and sent to Ankara.<sup>264</sup> As a response to this challenge Turkey mainly used diplomatic pressures. For instance, during the period of Mouchanoff, Turkey conveyed its annoyance about the existence and continuing activities of this committee. As Mouchanoff did not want to harm

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evâtlarına büyük bir Bulgaristan yaratmak için çalışan bugünkü idareye bütün kuvvetleriyle yardım etmelerini tavsiye eder.”

<sup>260</sup> Yunus Nadi, “Trakya Adlı Bulgar Komitasının Dağılması”, *Cumhuriyet*, 21 September 1934, p. 1: “Komita kendi kendine feshini ilân eden beyannamesinde büyük Bulgaristan idealini tahakkuk ettirmediği şimdiki hükûmete tevdi ediyor, ve bu hükûmette o ideali tahakkuk ettirecek bir kabiliyet gördüğünü de kaydederek bunu kendisinin sahneden çekilmesinin eshabı mucizesi gibi gösteriyor.

<sup>261</sup> 18 March 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 626 21, p. 3: “Burada hatip, şimdiye kadar hükûmeti idare edenleri tenkit etti. Bu adamların, milletin arzularını nazarı itibare almayup yalnız başlarına Ankara muahedesi gibi mukaveleler imzaladıklarını ve bulgarları hicrete ve Trakyayı boşaltmasına sebep olduklarını söyledi.”

<sup>262</sup> 14 November 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 631 22, pp. 4-5.

<sup>263</sup> 15 November 1930: BCA, 030 10 240 618 22, p. 1; 14 November 1933: BCA, 030 10 631 22, p. 1.

<sup>264</sup> 26 September 1931: BCA, 030 10 240 619 10; 12 March 1932: BCA, 030 10 620 18; 20 March 1932, BCA, 240 621 7; 31 May 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 622 17; 25 May 1932, BCA, 030 10 622 15; 25 May 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 622 14; 17 April 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 627 13; 14 April 1933: BCA, 03 10 241 630 21; 4 April 1933, BCA, 030 10 241 629 2.

Bulgarian relations with Turkey, he promised to dissolve this committee, in his speech in the Bulgarian Parliament.<sup>265</sup> Despite his promise, Mouchanoff did not close this committee; however, to mitigate the Turkish anger he banned the publication of *Staj*.<sup>266</sup>

This, however, was not sufficient for Turkey and Turkish government intensified its diplomatic pressure about this committee even after the new regime's coming to power. For instance, A. Şevki (Berker), the Turkish ambassador in Sofia who replaced Tevfik Kâmil, met with the Prime Minister of Bulgaria on the 6<sup>th</sup> of August in 1934. During this meeting, the ambassador asked why strict measures carried against the committee of Macedonia was not carried against the committee of Thrace as well. But, new Bulgarian leader described committees about Thrace as charity organizations far away from political activities. Then, the ambassador told that he did not mean the *Trakya Cemiyeti*, which was officially established with the purpose of helping Bulgarians rather he told that he meant the *Trakya İhtilâl Komitası* (the ITRO),<sup>267</sup> which was secretly established with political intentions towards the new Turkish state. But, the Bulgarian leader told that they did not encounter with secret activities of such a committee, which acted similar to the *Makedonya Komitası*.<sup>268</sup>

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<sup>265</sup> Yunus Nadi, "Bulgaristanla Türkiye Arasında Hakikî Vaziyet", *Cumhuriyet*, 10 September 1934, p. 1.

<sup>266</sup> 7 January 1934: 030 10 242 633 1, p. 1: "...bundan evvelki şikâyetler üzerine Mösyö Muşanof tarafından gayrı kanunî teşkilâtın organı olan "Staj" gazetesinin çıkarılmamasının temin edilmiş olduğu..."

<sup>267</sup> The Turkish documents dating from 1930 gave the clues of organic link between the *Trakya Cemiyeti* and the irredentist *Trakya İhtilâl Komitası*.

<sup>268</sup> 27 August 1934: BCA, 030 10 242 635 8, p. 3: "...Bu konuşmadan bilistifade Makedonya Komitasının ilgası hususunda ittihaz edilen kati tedbirlerin cenuptaki türk ekalliyetini bihuzur eden Trakya Cemiyeti hakkında da takip edilip edilmediğini sordum. Müşarünileyh, hükûmetin icraatının siyasi faaliyette bulunan gizli teşekküllere münhasır olup muhacirlere yardım gayesiyle teşekkül etmiş olan ve hayırperver bir müessese halinde bulunan Trakya cemiyeti hakkında aynı tedbirlerin tatbikine mahal görmediklerini söylemesi üzerine cevaben; maksadımın resmen hayırperver bir müessese sıfatıyla faaliyette bulunan Trakya cemiyeti hakkında tedbir alınmasını talep olmadığını ve bu sözlerimle, bu cemiyetin arkasında nizamname ve statülerinde musarrah siyasî gayelerle teşekkül etmiş olan gizli Trakya İhtilâl komitesini kastettiğimi söyledim. Müşarünileyh, bu gaye ile çalışan bir komitanın faaliyetini görmediklerini ve böyle bir faaliyet halinde haklarında aynı suretle muamele yapılacağını söyledi."

The *Makedonya Komitası* was an influential armed committee that did not only have a connection with the political establishment in Bulgaria but also had connections with the external powers such as Italy. In the inter-war period, this committee was a problem for the Balkan states because of its territorial claims. However, this committee did not have any territorial claims on the Turkish territories so that it was not a challenge for Turkey. Thus, Turkey did not abstain to contact with this committee. On March of 1932, for example, Memduh Talât made an interview with its chairman, who told him that new Turkish state was ‘the only friend’ of this committee in the Balkans, as there was no unsettled issue of the committee with Turkey.<sup>269</sup> However, with new political scene in Bulgaria, which brought about the Bulgarian-Yugoslavian rapprochement at the expense of Turkey (when Thrace became the prioritised ambition for Bulgaria as claims over Macedonia lost ground), the Turkish government probably chose the way of establishing closer relations with this Committee. Although there was not a written state policy showing this connection, the existence of such relation was to some extent verified when the chairman of the *Makedonya Komitası*, Mihailov, escaped to Turkey when Bulgarian regime dissolved this committee. Apparently, this committee was ‘a state-in-state’ which had a chairman with an official post before the new regime,<sup>270</sup> but after the coup, the situation changed and its chairman, Mihailov, was enforced to leave Bulgaria in September 1934, and he sought asylum in Kırklareli.<sup>271</sup> Then, he was brought to İstanbul for an interrogation.<sup>272</sup> But, the next day he was released and given right to residence in Turkey.<sup>273</sup> In fact, this friendly attitude of the Turkish authorities to Mihailov could be read as Turkey’s counter-offensive for intensified claims over its territories in Bulgaria as a result of the Bulgarian-Yugoslavian rapprochement.

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<sup>269</sup> Memduh Talât, “Balkanların Büyük Derdi: Makedonya Komitesinin Reisi ile Görüştük!”, *Cumhuriyet*, 26 March 1932, pp. 1-2: “Bugün Balkanlarda bizim yegane dostumuz yeni Türkiye Cumhuriyetidir. Biz Türkiye ile her zaman da dost kalacağız çünkü yalnız onun ile hiçbir alacak vereceğimiz yoktur.”

<sup>270</sup> Halil Yaver, *Bugünkü Bulgaristan’da Türk Düşmanlığı*, p. 32.

<sup>271</sup> “Kırklareline İltica Eden Bulgar...”, *Cumhuriyet*, 15 September 1934, p. 1.

<sup>272</sup> “M. Mihailof İstanbul’da”, *Cumhuriyet*, 16 September 1934, p. 1.

<sup>273</sup> “İvan Mihailof, Dün İkâmetgaha Bağlanarak Serbest Bırakıldı”, *Cumhuriyet*, 17 September 1934, p. 1.

This rapprochement between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia was also observed in the changing tone of Bulgarian press towards Yugoslavia. Even if there were some news against Yugoslavia, Turkey was aware of the fact that these were heavily censored. But, on the other hand, Bulgarian attitude was different for news against Turkey. For instance, on July of 1934, a popular Bulgarian newspaper called *Nova Vreme* published an article describing Eastern Thrace as a Bulgarian region under Turkish rule.<sup>274</sup> There was, however, no Bulgarian reaction against this article as it was in the case of articles written against Yugoslavia recently. Thus, two weeks after the publication of this article, the Turkish ambassador met with the Bulgarian Foreign Minister to convey Turkish disturbance about this double standard.<sup>275</sup> Indeed, it was apparent for Turkey that this was related with new Bulgarian policy. Clearly, new Bulgarian regime was inclined to the unification policy of the Southern Slavs. Thus, territorial claims over Macedonia lost ground in Bulgaria in accordance with closer relations with Yugoslavia. But, the Turkish authorities knew that now claims over Turkish Thrace would be prioritised.<sup>276</sup> Thereby, this new political scene in Bulgaria alarmed the Turkish side. And, in the following period, this was in fact justified with increasing number of publications against Turkey. Thus, the Turkish ambassador in Sofia had to meet with the Bulgarian authorities again two years later, in April of 1936. He told the Bulgarian officer in the Foreign Ministry that although the parliament, political parties all vanished and the press was censored after the coup in Bulgaria, there were increasing numbers of revisionist propaganda against

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<sup>274</sup> “İbretle Okunacak Bir Yazı: Bulgarlar Baklayı Ağızlarından Çıkardılar: Nova Vreme Gazetesi “Trakya Bugün Türklerin Esareti Altında İnleyen Bir Bulgar Eyaletidir” Diyor”, *Cumhuriyet*, 17 July 1934, pp. 1, 6.

<sup>275</sup> 12 August 1934: BCA, 030 10 242 634 20, p. 2: “Sofya Matbuatının Trakya meselesine ait neşriyatı hakkında bugün hariciye nazırı ile görüştüm. ...Hariciye Nazırı bu neşriyatın vuku bulmasından müteessif olduğunu ve bunun önüne geçmek için icap eden tedbirleri ittihazda kusur etmiyeceğini ve bütün hüsnü niyetlerine rağmen bu gibi neşriyatın bazen sansür kontrolundan kaçtığını söylemesi üzerine kendisine cevaben: yeni hükümetin iktidar mevkiine geldiği günden beri Yugoslavya aleyhinde neşriyat vukubulmadığını ve malum Makedonya gazetesinin Yugoslavya aleyhine matuf baş makalelerinin muntazaman tayedilmekte olduğu ve binaenaleyh hükümetin, dostluk münasebatı idame ettiği ve etmesini arzu eylediği devletler aleyhine vukubulacak neşriyatı menetmek mevkiinde olduğunu ifade eyledim.”

<sup>276</sup> Boyar, *Ottomans, Turks and the Balkans*, pp. 107-108.

Turkey in which Bulgarian government must be more or less tolerant at least.<sup>277</sup>

This view of the ambassador indeed showed the increasing Turkish concerns about the revisionist claims over Eastern Thrace after the coup in 1934. This perceived change in the nature of revisionism in Bulgaria was underlined in Turkish press as well. For instance, according to Yunus Nadi, before the coup in 1934, Bulgaria was a place full with powerful irredentist committees, but with the rule of new Bulgarian government under Georgiev, Bulgaria itself turned into another type of committee. He pointed out that although on the one hand Georgiev seemed against to *Trakya İhtilâl Komitası*, on the other hand he pursued a secret policy encouraging Bulgarians to apply coercive methods against Turks in Bulgaria.<sup>278</sup>

According to Turkey, this policy of coercion was the other face of partnership between irredentist Thracian committees and Bulgarian government. The Turkish side saw revisionist propaganda was not the sole job of this committee. However, apparently, attacking Turkish/Muslim presence in Bulgaria was also the part of its agenda. Thus, Turkey considered these attacks in accordance with perceived physical challenge posed by the Bulgarian revisionism. It was clear that the Bulgarian government left this minority in insecure living conditions under attacks of committees, and even backed these attacks either implicitly or explicitly. Thus, the Turkish government put strict eye to this violence and pressure and continuously protested about the maltreatment of Turks and Muslims. Particularly, when encountered with refugee problems in its Thracian frontier, the Turkish government angered more about Bulgarian treatment of its minority.

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<sup>277</sup> 12 May 1936: BCA, 030 10 243 638 15, pp. 3-4.

<sup>278</sup> Yunus Nadi, "Bulgaristanda Hükümet Değişimi", *Cumhuriyet*, 25 December 1935, p. 1.

### 2.2.2. TURKISH/MUSLIM MINORITY AS A TARGET AND THE TURKISH RESPONSE

In 1920s, the Turkish side was occupied with Greek maltreatment of Turkish minority in Western Thrace. However, on the contrary, this was not a problematic issue between Turkey and Bulgaria. For instance, in 1929 Yunus Nadi, who harshly criticized the Greek policies of that period, wrote that it was Bulgaria where Turkish minority had ‘most comfortable life’.<sup>279</sup> Indeed, this could be related to the settlement of minority issue earlier with Bulgaria when compared to Greece. It was on October 18, 1925 that Turkey and Bulgaria agreed on the Covenant of Domicile, annexed to the Friendship Agreement.<sup>280</sup> Although in the following years, two states had dispute about Protocol C of this treaty (about the properties of minorities), in 1931 during Mouchanoff’s visit in Ankara it was announced that this problem could be solved easily.<sup>281</sup> Thus, with this earlier treaty, the situation was different with Bulgaria when compared to the Turkish-Greek relations strained under remaining minority problems in 1920s.

This treaty, however, always remained unacceptable for Bulgarian revisionists, and they always criticized the Bulgarian government which signed this treaty.<sup>282</sup> According to them, with this treaty, the conditions of Bulgarian minority in Turkey worsened. For instance, K. N. Petkonoff, the secretary of the committee, in his article “The Captured Minorities”, wrote that with this ‘baleful and unfortunate’ treaty, the whole Thrace was left to Turks, and

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<sup>279</sup> Yunus Nadi, “Türk-Bulgar Münasebatı”, *Cumhuriyet*, 10 March 1929, p. 1: “...Türkiyenin Balkanlarda Bulgaristanı dostluğuna itimat olunur bir komşusu memleket olarak görmesine hiçbir mani yoktur. ...Bundan başka dil ve dinimiz olan mühim biri Türk akalliyeti en rahat hayatını bu komşu memlekette yaşıyor.”

<sup>280</sup> *Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Cilt: 7 (devamı) (Ankara: Türk Ocakları Merkez Heyeti Matbaası, 1928), pp. 2482-2498.

<sup>281</sup> Ali Süreyya, “Ankara Temasları: Bulgar Başvekili ile Görüşülen Meseleler”, *Cumhuriyet*, 6 December 1931, pp. 1, 6; “Bulgar Başvekili ile Görüşülen Meseleler”, *Cumhuriyet*, 12 December 1931, pp. 1, 4.

<sup>282</sup> 18 March 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 626 21, p. 3: “Burada hatip, şimdiye kadar hükûmeti idare edenleri tenkit etti. Bu adamların, milletin arzularını nazarıtibare almayup yalnız başlarına Ankara muahedesi gibi mukaveleler imzaladıklarını ve bulgarları hicrete ve Trakyayı boşaltmasına sebep olduklarını söyledi.”

Bulgarians who migrated from Turkey could not still enjoy their property rights.<sup>283</sup> Indeed, these critics were not limited to this treaty since they were generally critical of the minority policy of their government. They presented Bulgaria as a place where minorities had great freedom. According to *Rodna Zaštita*, a well-known revisionist committee, for example, Bulgaria turned into ‘a foreign state’ for Bulgarian themselves, so that Turks could benefit from freedom while Bulgarians in Turkey could not. Thereby, Bulgaria should banish Turks from Bulgaria, who occupied large areas in Bulgaria.<sup>284</sup> In the same year in 1930, D. P. Nikoloff, an ex-MP for Thrace and a devoted revisionist with membership to irredentist committees, also underlined the difference between Bulgarians in Turkey and Turks in Bulgaria, and concluded that the former could not enjoy the same rights of the latter. According to him, Bulgarian minority in Turkey lived in conditions harsher than the times of Abdülhamid II.<sup>285</sup>

In the inter-war period, obviously, Turkey was not the sole place having a Bulgarian minority. More than ninety thousand Bulgarians were under foreign rule as a consequence of the Neuilly settlement.<sup>286</sup> However, it was clear that this issue was considered as the part of revisionist propaganda in Bulgaria. In name of saving its minorities, Bulgaria in fact propagated revisionism. However, at the same time, pressures towards minorities in its lands, including Turkish/Muslim minority, continued, thus, both the Turkish authorities and elite protested this. For instance, on April 28, 1933 Yunus Nadi described the minority policy of Bulgaria ‘paradoxical’ as on the one hand,

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<sup>283</sup> 18 March 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 626 21, p. 2.

<sup>284</sup> 16 September 1930: BCA, 030 10 240 618 17, pp. 2-5: “Ecnebilerin kendilerini Bulgaristanda olduğu gibi iyi hissettikleri başka bir memleket var mıdır. ...Türkiyeden bütün Bulgarlar koğuldu. Millet meclisleri, ecnebilerin yapamayacağı, yani hemen bütün mesleklerin, sıralandığı bir kanun çıkardı. Ve ecnebi kadınlarla evlenmiş olan bilumum Türkler devlet hizmetinden çıkarılıyorlar. ...Bulgaristan ise bulgarların kendilerini ecnebi hissedecekleri derecede “hürriyet seven” memleketidir. ...Türkler bizde büyük sahalar işgal ediyorlar. ...Komşularımızın yaptıklarını yapmaktan, onları vatanımızdan koğmaktan başka bir şey kalmıyor.”

<sup>285</sup> 27 July 1930: BCA, 030 10 240 618 13, p. 3. “Krallık dahilindeki türk ekalliyeti, bulgar vatandaşlarının istifade ettikleri bilcümle hukuktan istifade eylediği ve hatta bazı ahvâlde hususî tevecühattan da istifade eylediği hâlde, Türkiye’deki bulgar akalliyetinin vaziyeti nasıldır? ...Bu Bulgar akalliyetlerinin hukuku nerededir?”

<sup>286</sup> Crampton, *A Concise History of Bulgaria*, pp. 144-145.

Bulgaria was searching for wider freedom for Bulgarians outside Bulgaria, but on the other hand, it was pursuing coercive policies towards the minorities within Bulgaria.<sup>287</sup> In particular with late 1920s and 1930s, it was what Turks encountered in this state.

The Turkish documents showed that irredentist committees organized attacks towards Turkish notables of the towns and villages to terrorize Turkish minority and forced them to migrate to Turkey in a panic without their properties. For instance, on February 25, 1930 the Turkish embassy in Sofia pointed out the existence of a secret group<sup>288</sup> in the *Trakya Cemiyeti* formed to act in this way, particularly in Kırcaali, which had a considerable Turkish minority.<sup>289</sup> This policy of the revisionists was clearly observable in the murder of a well-known Bulgarian Turk Hasan Efendi, the governor of sub-district in the region of Cabiroğulları in Kırcaali, in February of 1930. This murder agitated Turkish press in Bulgaria. Mehmet Lütfi Takanoğlu, the owner of *Rodop*, reported this event and he declared that ‘it was their natural right to ask for security in order to survive’.<sup>290</sup> Similarly, the report of Turkish ambassador demonstrated that the murder of Hasan Efendi resulted in ‘a great fear’ among Turks in Kırcaali and in a panic they wanted to migrate to Turkey. It was seen that the culprits were committee members. However, Turks in Bulgaria did not

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<sup>287</sup> Yunus Nadi, “Razgrat Hadisesi ve Bulgaristan”, *Cumhuriyet*, 28 April 1933, p. 1: “Eğer Bulgaristan ekalliyetler davasını yalnız kendi milliyeti için tanıyarak başka ekalliyetlere gelince onları kafaları ezilecek mahluklar saymakta beis görmezse en açık tezatlardan daha vahim bir vaziyet içinde peyan olduğunu isbat etmiş bulunur.”

<sup>288</sup> This secret group was later called as the *Trakya Komitası* in this Turkish document.

<sup>289</sup> 25 February 1930: BCA, 030 10 240 618 4, p. 5: “Verilen malûmattan Trakya Cemiyeti Türklere karşı bu yolda sui kasitleri icra etmek için hafî bir teşkilât meydana getirdiği anlaşılmaktadır. Bununla Kasaba ve Köylerde Türklerin ileri gelenleri telef edilerek halk tethiş suretiyle mal ve mülklerini terk ederek hicret ettirmek ve sonra bunlara bilâ bedel sahip olmak gayesinin takip edildiği şüphesizdir. Şarki Trakyada Bulgarları memleketimde terk eyledikleri emlak ve arazilerinin bedellerinin istihsali zamanda senelerden beri uğraşmakta ve her türlü tedabire baş vurmakta buldukları malûmu Samileri buyrulduğundan buna muvaffak olmayınca Kırcaali ve havalisindeki Türkleri tatil ve tehdit suretile kaçırarak bunların emlak ve arazilerine bilâ bedel sahip olmak gayesini takip salifüzükir tarzda bir hafî teşkilât vücuda getirmiş bulunmaları ihtimali dahilinde olduğu gibi şarki Trakyalılar arasında son zamanda görülmekte olan faaliyetin bu maksada da matuf bulunması imkân dairesindedir.”

<sup>290</sup> Mehmet Lütfi Takanoğlu, “Son Cinayet Dolayısıyla!...”, *Rodop*, 2 February 1930, in BCA 030 10 241 628 17, p. 1: “Kanun-i Saniyenin 25 inci cumartesi günü Kırcaali efakanı acı ve kara bir haber sarsdı: Cabiroğulları kıymeti Hasan Efendi vurulmuş!...” ; Mehmet Lütfi Takanoğlu, “Yaşamak İçin Emniyet İstemek En Büyük Hakkımızdır!...”, *Rodop*, 9 February 1930, in BCA 030 10 241 628 17.



believe that they would be penalized as the *Trakya İhtilâl Komitası* was very powerful in this place, which could cover up the murder.<sup>291</sup> In the same region, three years later violence towards the Turks was surfaced again. This time, Feyzi Efendi, a well-known Turk who was the governor of sub-district in Geran Ada, was killed by three or more Bulgarians, undoubtedly committee members. Moreover, his death body was tied to a mule, so that it was harmed. This also inevitably resulted in a panic among Turks in Bulgaria that started to see the region as unsuitable to live in security. The Turkish consul in Plovdiv learnt about this murder from a letter of Turkish youth living in Kırcaali.<sup>292</sup> Similarly at the same period, Turkish MP in the Bulgarian Parliament, Hüseyin Efendi, was killed. In fact, this was the third murder occurred in the last few months in 1933, since another Turk living in Kırcaali was hanged on 31 March 1933,<sup>293</sup> with a label on his body including first letters of *Trakya İhtilâl Komitası* (K. S. T.).<sup>294</sup> The Turkish ambassador commented on Bulgarian government's reaction and he wrote that although seven committee members were expelled from region in the course Hüseyin Efendi's murder, they were not put into jail. Thus, according to him, the Bulgarian authorities did not show

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<sup>291</sup> 25 February 1930: BCA, 030 10 240 618 4, p. 5: "...katillerin isim ve hüviyetlerinin tespit olunarak tevkıfleri derdest bulunduğu Kırcaali Emniyeti Umumiye Müdürü tarafından da beyan edilmiş olmasına rağmen tedabiri mezkûre halkı tatmin ve teskin etmekten uzak bulunmaktadır. Çün ki Trakya komitesinin nüfus ve tesiri bir takım şahitler tedarikiyle katilleri kurtarılacağı yakinen bilinmektedir. Keyfiyet katlinin Trakya teşkilâtına mensup kesen tarafından icra edildiğine dair kat'i emâret ve kanaat mevcuttur. Mezkûr teşkilâtın tensip ve kararile ara sıra köy ve kasabalarda mevki ve nüfus sahibi Türklere karşı yapıla gelmekte olan sui kasıtlar Türk halkının tethiş ve mütecasirler elde edilemediğinden halkın hükûmete olan itimatlarını kastetmekte ve son çare olmak üzere kendilerini hicrete sevk etmektedir."

<sup>292</sup> 23 May 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 628 17, p. 3: "Kırcaali'li bir Türk genç tarafından Filibe Konsolosluğumuza gönderilen ve Trakyalı Bulgarların Türkler aleyhindeki Faaliyetlerine devam eylemekte olduklarını göstermesi itibarile kayda şayan bir mektubun sureti, aynen aşağıya alınmıştır: "Sancağımızda yeni ve her kesi acılara boğan bir vaka olmuştur. Koşukavak kazasının "Geran Ada" nahiyesi müdürü Hacı Hüseyin oğlu Feyzi efendi köyüne giderken 3-4 bilinmeyen kimse tarafından öldürülmüştür. Ölü, katıra bağlanarak salıverilmiştir. Bu suretle Feyzi efendinin vücudu perişan edilmiştir. Öldürenlerin Trakyalılar olduğuna katiyen şüphe yoktur. Feyzi efendi ise gayet mert tabiatlı ve müdürü bulunduğu nahiye halkınca çok sevilen bir adamdır. Kendisinin öldürülmesiyle bütün sancak halkı pek fazla korkuya düşmüştür. Herkesin konuştuğu artık buralarda yaşıyamıyacağız sözleridir. Kasaba içerisinde de geceleri bazı kimselerin önüne çıkılarak sakallarını çekmişlerdir."

<sup>293</sup> "Ya Buna Ne Diyelim?", *Cumhuriyet*, 20 April 1933, p. 1.

<sup>294</sup> "Kırcaali'de Asılan Türk", *Cumhuriyet*, 25 April 1933, pp. 1, 3.

'good faith' to punish culprits that attacked Turks as usual.<sup>295</sup> Indeed, murder of these Turkish notables by committee members who did not face punishment was a real source of fear among Turkish minority in Bulgaria as it was intended by Bulgarian revisionists. However, in 1930s these revisionists did not only target individuals to terrorize Turks, also organized indiscriminatory rampant attacks such as the cases of Kesarova and Razgrad incidents, which were very traumatic for these Turks living there.

The Kesarova incident was about hereditary violence that Turks in Bulgaria had to encounter in the village of Kesarova in Tırnova, in May 1932. According to the report of Turkish embassy in Sofia, based on the news of Turkish newspaper in Bulgaria, *Karadeniz*, a rural watchman fell on his own knife with which he pointed to a Bulgarian Turk, İbrahim, to threaten him and died. In the following day, hundreds of Bulgarians took İbrahim from his home, tortured him and in the end he was dragged to a wall from his feet and his head was hit on the wall so he was severely injured and died in the hospital. His family was subjected to despicable acts such as his mother and his wife were raped. The other houses in the village were also attacked. The women in the village were raped, the cats were put into their baggy trousers, the sticks were lit up in the ears of the injured ones to understand whether they were still alive or dead and at night both the mosque and the school were set on fire.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>295</sup> 1 August 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 630 25, pp. 1-2: "Bulgarisan'da Türk mebuslarından Hüseyin Efendi'nin katline dair bu kere Sofya Elçiliğimizden alınan tahriratın metni aynen aşağıya alınmıştır: "Sobranya'daki üç Türk mebusundan biri olan Koşukavak mebusu Hacı Galip oğlu Hüseyin Efendi, 21 Temmuz Cuma günü Horozlar köyünden Kırcaali'ye giderken kasabaya bir buçuk saat mesafede Sürmenler istasyonuna yakın bir yerde kurşunla öldürülmüştür. Merhuma bir aydır mebusluktan çekilmezse öldürüleceği bildirilen tehdit mektupları gönderilmekte olduğunu gazeteler yazıyor. ...Bir kaç ay içerisinde o havalide öldürülen Türkler üç kişidir. Fikrimce bu katilleri yaptırmakta olan teşkilatın maksadı intikam hırsını Türk mehali üzerinden tatmin etmekle beraber bunları yıldırarak yerlerinden kaçırtmaktır. Hükümet Trakya Komitacılarından yedi kişiyi o mntukadan uzaklaştırmışsa da katilleri tutmak ve tercim etmek için hüsnü niyet göstermemektedir. Netekim Feyzi Ağa merhumun katili gibi; bu vakada da katiller Türkler arasında aranmak suretiyle gösteriş yapılmaktadır. Bahsettiğim üç vakadan hiç birinin faili elde edilememiştir. Artık mebuslarına hayat hakkını tamin edemeyen hükümet ataleti ve aczi karşısında burdaki ırkdaşların can emniyeti noktasından fazla bir şey yapmak kabil değilse cenubî Bulgaristan Türklerinin hicretlerinin kabul edilmesini ehemmiyetle arzu teklif eylerim Efendim. Yüksek malûmatları için arz olunur Efendim Hazretleri."

<sup>296</sup> 16 August 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 624 5, p. 9: "Maktul kır bekçisi, hatibin oğlu İbrahim tarafından öldürülmeyip onu tehdit maksadıyla çektiği kendi bıçağı üzerine düşmesi neticesi

According to *Cumhuriyet*, nearly forty girls, aged from five to twelve years old, were raped.<sup>297</sup> However, Bulgarian authorities did not do anything. Although this incident demonstrated the extent of persecution which Turks were subjected in Bulgaria, in the very same period, for example, in the Balkan Conferences, Bulgaria continued to present the minority issue only for Bulgarians under the foreign rule. With this pretext of minority issue, Bulgaria, having a delegation mainly composed of members of the *Makedonya Komitası*, even withdrew from one of these Conferences held in Bucharest, in October 1932.<sup>298</sup>

However, apparently, while doing this, Bulgaria ignored the other face of the coin, the problems encountered by minorities in Bulgaria including Turks. To show this paradox, in the course of this Balkan Conference, publisher Mahmut Necmettin Deliorman, a well-known Bulgarian Turk, decided to deal with Kesarova incident in dept. He went to this village as a secret agent to talk

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ölmüştür. İbrahim ev tavanına gizlenmiş orada yakalanarak daireye kırbaç altında götürülmüş, müthiş işkenceye maruz bırakılmış. Bundan sonra dışarı çıkarılarak üzerinde yüzlerce kişi “horo” tepmiş ve neticede bu biçarenin ayaklarından tutularak başı duvar taşlarına çarptırılmış, kafatası yarılmıştır. Bu işkenceden sonra maznun Tırnavı hastanesine sevk olunmuş ve orada henüz yarası bakılmadan ölmüştür. ...Hatibin ve oğlu merhum İbrahimin zevcesi olup bu iki kadının her dayak neticesinde ırzına elleri bağlanmış bir vaziyette geçilmiş ve o biçareler üzerinde bir sürü vahşi hayvanî ihtirasını tatmin etmiş. ...Kendilerine “haç” çıkartmışlar, muvaffak olmadılar bahanesiyle tekrar tekrar dövülmüşlerdi. Köy kadınlarından Hasan ağa zevcesi Mevlüdenin belediye karakolu İliya güpegündüz ırzına geçmek istemişse de kahraman kadın bu canavarın elinden yakayı kurtararak köyden kaçmıştır. ...Kâmil ağa zevcesi Feride /22 yaşında/ hadise gecesi altı aylık çocuğunu ölü bırakarak firar etmişse de farti heyecandan biçare delirmiş, bugün köy dahilinde perişan bir halde gezinmekteymiş. ...Ele geçirilen kadınların hepsinin ırzına geçilmiş, şalvarlarının içine kedi kapanmış, döğülenlerin ölüp ölmediklerini anlamak için kulaklarının içinde kibrit yakılmıştır. ...hatip bugün Elena kazası dahilindeki Stevrek köyünde yaşamaktadır, köyden firareden halkın büyük bir kısmı henüz dönmemiştir. Hergün tehdit altında olduklarından rahat etmeleri ihtimali de yoktur. Cami ve mektep gece saat 11-12 esnasında yakılmış.”

<sup>297</sup> M. V., “Bir Bulgar Köyünde Türk Halka Hücum Edildi! Köy Camii ve Mektep Yıkıldı, Kırk Kız Çocuğu Berbat Edilerek Öldürüldü!”, *Cumhuriyet*, 8 June 1934, p. 1: “Mayıs ayının ilk günlerinde Bulgaristan’ın (Garnaorehovitsa) kazasının (Kesarevo) köyünün Türk halkı aynı köyün Bulgarları tarafından pek fena muamelelere maruz kalmışlardır. Köy camii ile mektep yıkılmış, beş yaşından on iki yaşına kadar kırk kız çocuğu masum iffetlerine tecavüz edilmelerinden ölmüşlerdir. Erkekler döğülmüş, kadınların namuslarına tecavüz edilmiştir.”

<sup>298</sup> 24 April 1933: BCA, 030 10 226 524 3, p. 2: “Bulgarlar bu defa da yalnız ekaliyet mesesesile alâkadar olmuşlar, diğer meselelerin kendileri için bir kıymeti olmadığını göstermişlerdir.”; Türkeş, “The Balkan Pact and its Implications for the Balkan States”, pp. 132-134; *Cumhuriyetin İlk On Yılı ve Balkan Paktı*, p. 309.

the victims.<sup>299</sup> He was aware of the fact that this incident was kept in secret for forty days by Bulgarians. It was firstly made public by his friend, Arif Necib, owner of *Karadeniz*. Immediately after his publications about this incident, however, Arif Necib was arrested. Then, this arrest was publicised in Turkish press. For instance, Yunus Nadi wrote that some Turks in this state even concerned about the life of Arif Necib. He asked Mouchanoff, ‘the friendly government’, to enlighten this ‘unbelievable’ event.<sup>300</sup> One week later, Mouchanoff declared the investigation about the six suspects of this incident.<sup>301</sup> However, this was not sufficient for Turkey and Turkish minority in Bulgaria in order to believe in Bulgarian government’s sincerity. Thus, the Turkish authorities in Bulgaria went to the village for investigation.<sup>302</sup>

What made this incident more noteworthy for Mahmud Necmettin Deliorman was the attitude of the Bulgarian government which tried to conceal this ‘vileness’.<sup>303</sup> As this incident occurred on the eve of the Balkan Conference, it would harm Bulgarian minority policy, presenting Bulgarian

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<sup>299</sup> Necmettin Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı* (İstanbul: Türkiye Ticaret Matbaası, 1955), pp. 26-30.

<sup>300</sup> Yunus Nadi, “Bulgaristan’daki Vak’a”, *Cumhuriyet*, 26 April 1932, p. 1: “Nitekim Razgart’ta çıkan (Karadeniz) Türk gazetesi 3 Haziranda bu meseleyi (Niçin Susuluyor?) serlavhalı gayet makul bir makale ile mevzuu bahsettiğinden dolayı başmuharriri tevkif edilmiş ve Sofya’ya götürülmüştür. Bu muharririn hayat ve mematından şüphe edenler bile var. O kadar mı? O kadarına kadar inanmak akla ziyan bir şeydir. Bütün bu vaziyetler karşısında önümüzdeki karanlıkların tenviri dostumuz Muşanof hükümetinden rica ediyoruz.”

<sup>301</sup> “Muşanof’un Mühim Beyanati”, *Cumhuriyet*, 1 July 1933, p. 1: “Keseravo hadisesi faili olarak 6 kişinin hakkında tahkikata başlanmıştır. Bulgar Başvekili bize teminat veriyor.”

<sup>302</sup> 21 July 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 624 7, p. 3.

<sup>303</sup> Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı*, pp. 19-22: “Keserevo Katliamı: Seksen Hane Türk Nasıl Mahvoldu?: Razgrad mezarlık hâdisesi patlak vermezden birkaç ay evvel Bulgar idaresinde kanlı bir leke olarak yâdedilecek olan çok müthiş bir facia işlendi. 80 hane Türk mahvedildi. O günlerde Türkleri insan yerine koymıyan Bulgarlar, bu şenaatı işledikten sonra, duyulmasından korktular. Hâdiseyi örtbas etmeğe çalıştılar. ...O gece köyün bellibaşlı Türklerini bir binaya topluyorlar. Köyün Bulgarları, muhtarın ve jandarmanın gözü önünde nöbetleşe bu Türkleri sabaha kadar demir tellerle dövüyorlar. 28 Türk canavarların elinde yarı ölü, yarı diri bir halde iken, bunları sabaha karşı köyün dışına sürüklüyorlar. Orada kafalarını eze eze öldürüp bir çukura dolduruyorlar. Köy Bulgarları bütün gece seferber halde, 80 hanede kadın, kız, çocuk, ihtiyar ne kadar Türk varsa hepsini tasviyeye girişiyorlar. Bulgarlardan bir kabile birkaç Türk evi ile birlikte bir çatı altında olan Türklere ait olan cami ile mektebi ateşliyorlar. ...Fakat kaçamıyan Türk ailelerini yakalıyorlar; erkekleri iplerle bağlayıp genç kadın ve kızları seçiyorlar. Hayvanca ihtiraslarını bu zavallıların bu zavallıların namus ve ırzını berbat ederek dindiriyorlar. ...Tam 40 gün bu facia gizli tutuluyor.”

minorities in other countries as the victims of persecution.<sup>304</sup> As Bulgarian press was aware of this danger, they immediately published articles denying Kesarova incident. But, more importantly, in line with Bulgarian minority policy, they accused Turkey's attitudes towards its Bulgarian minority. For instance, Majdaroff, in *Mir*, accused Turkey of expelling and annihilating Bulgarians in Turkish Thrace. He further claimed that Turks in Bulgaria had very little room to complain about the treatment they received.<sup>305</sup> However, Majdaroff's article did not deter this population from complaining to the Turkish authorities. In the letters they sent to the Turkish embassy, these Turks revealed the fear they lived through and they asked for the assistance of Turkey, which they described as the sole relief for them as Bulgarian authorities ignored the coercion they had to face.<sup>306</sup> According to Necmettin Deliorman, the Kesarova incident, which reminded Bulgarian atrocity policies in the Balkan Wars, resulted in a panic among these people. And, he described

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<sup>304</sup> Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı*, pp. 19, 22-23.

<sup>305</sup> 13 August 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 624 4, p. 1: "Bulgaristanın tanınmış Rus taraflarından ihtiyar Majdaroff'un (Mir) gazetesinin 27 temmuz 1932 tarihli nüshasında "Ecnebi memleketlerde Türk ekalliyeti" sernamesi tahtında neşrettiği şayanı dikkat makalenin tercemesi leffen takdim kılınmıştır. Mumaileyh bu makalesinde Türkiyenin akalliyetler muvacehesindeki siyasetinden bahsettikten sonra Kessarevo hadisesine intikal etmekte ve bu hadise etrafında işae edilen haberleri tezkibe ve Bulgar Hükûmetile Bulgar milletini tenzihe uğraşmaktadır. Mösyö Majdaroff makalesinin sonunda şahsiyetinin vekar ve derecesile kabili telif olmayacak bir laubalilikle Türkiyenin Trakyadaki Bulgarları tart ve imha eylediklerini söyleyerek Bulgaristandaki Türklerin şikâyet için pek az haklı olduklarını ve İstanbulda bu vadide çıkarılan görütlülerin iki tarafın da unutmaları lâzım gelen bir siyasete avdet edildiğine bir işaret olduğunu ileri sürmektedir."

<sup>306</sup> 21 July 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 624 7, pp. 3-4: "Efendim siz gelmişsiniz bizi aramağa, biz Keserevoda yoktuk, işittik sizin aradığınızı bizi, biz de geldik evimize amma ikinci günde bizi dövmeğe başladılar ve hem de çok eziyet ediyorlar; bizim bir çaremze bakasınız efendim. Bize bir imdat idesiniz, ana da siz baba da siz, bizim bir çaremize bakasınız rica ederim rica ederiz efendim. ...burada bu işlerden kolayına bakın yahut bize bir yol gösterin, biz de bilelim işimizi bize bir çare var mı yok mu; biz bu yerde rahat duramayoruz, ne insanlara ne de hayvanlara rahat var, bir yere çıkamıyoruz böylece bilesiniz efendim vesselâm. ...şimdi biz de köy muhtarına ağlanıyoruz. Hiçbir faide yok ve de kaymakama ağlanıyoruz. Ondan da fayda göremeyoruz bu bizim işimiz nice olur sizden imdat bekleyoruz. Ya gâne bir çare yoksa daha şimdi gelin siz alın bizim canımızı da biz de kurtulalım bu belâlardan, bir kişi yapıp ta bütün köylünün ne kabahatı vardır, çeksinler ya sizden de hiç çare olamazsa bize tek bir haber biz de arayalım başımıza çare. Aman biz çok zahmetler çekiyoruz bulgarlardan Keserevo da Ravza kasabasında. ...Biz buraya geleli bize çok eziyet ediyorlar daha çok dertlerimiz var amma yazmıyoruz. Niçin dersiniz korkuyoruz bize diyorlar ki Bulgarlar biz islâm karılarında gözümüz kalıyor efendim bizim hatunlarımız suya çıkamıyorlar."

this incident as ‘the most evil massacre’ against Turks in Bulgaria before the Razgrad incident.<sup>307</sup>

One year after the Kesarova incident, a similar scene of violence occurred in Razgrad. This time, the target was not living Turks but the dead ones. According to the report of Turkish consul in Varna, the attack to the graveyard was organized by the members of *Rodna Zaštita*, which was described as ‘a fascist committee’ by the Turkish embassy in Sofia. Initially, this committee imitated an Austrian committee, being xenophobic, but with the success of Hitler’s movement in Germany, it started to follow up the principles of Nazi movement.<sup>308</sup> Thus, it could be clearly argued that this committee had hatred towards minorities including Turks. At Easter, a group broke into a Turkish graveyard in Razgrad and dug up bodies. Obviously, the group had made preparations before, since they were well-equipped with diggings, oaks and axes. The group, consisting of nearly two-hundred Bulgarians, initially set the house of the guard on fire and then they destroyed the whole graveyard.<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>307</sup> Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı*, pp. 27, 31: “...Razgrad mezarlık hâdisesi facialar ve şenatler zincirinin son halkası olmuştur. Fakat ondan evvel Bulgaristanın muhtelif mntıkalarında vukubulan tecavüzler ve işkenceler yanında en şeni olanı Keserevo kâtliamıdır. ...Balkan Harbinde Makedonya ve Trakyada Türklere yapılan mezalimin kanlı bir perdesi de burada oynanmıştır. ...Keserevo hâdisesi bütün Bulgaristan Türklerini korkutup tiksindirip korkutmuştu. Bu korku yüzünden Türklere zulüm edenlerin cezalandırılmalarını Bulgarlardan talep etmek için bir milyon Türkten orta yerde Arif Necip ve emsali gibi beş on gençten başka kimse görünmüyordu. ...Bulgaristanda 80 şubesi ve 7000 âzası olan Turan cemiyetlerine dahil bütün Türk gençleri müthiş surette takibe maruz bırakılmışlardı. Bu yüzden gençlerin birçoğu Türkiyenin yolunu tutmuştu. Keserevo hâdisesinden sonra Bulgaristanda ilk hicret ayaklanması başlamıştı.”

<sup>308</sup> 11 July 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 630 16, pp. 1-2: “Bulgaristan’da millî ve haricî millî mesailde halkı terbiye etmek üzere siyasî fırkalar fevkinde kalmağı istihdaf eden (Rodna Zaštita- Müdafaai Vatan) isminde bir faşist teşekkül mevcuttur. İlk zamanlarda Bulgaristan’da komünizm ve çiftçi cereyanlarına karşı mücadele temek için teşekkül eden bu cemiyet Bulgaristan’daki teşekküller içinde en ziyade ecnebi ve musevî düşmanlığı güdeni olup evvelce Avusturya (Heimwehr) teşkilatı ile tesisi rabıtaya meyyal iken daha sonraları Almanya’da Hitler hareketi başlamasile anın prensiplerinden ilham almağa ve anı taklide çalışmıştır. Bilhassa gençlik arasında mensubini fazla olan bu cemiyet vaktiyle (Zgovor) hükûmeti zamanında bu hükûmetin ihtilâlcî ve komünist addettiği gruplara karşı kullanmak için muavenet ve sahabet görmüş olmak sayesinde mühim bir surette inkişaf bulmuştu. O derece ki cemiyet hükûmetin zabıta teşkilatı arasına ve fabrika ve atelyelere varıncaya kadar ajanlarını dağıtmış ve (Bulgaristan bulgarlarıdır, bulgaristan’da diğer milletlere hakkı hayat yoktur) prensibi üzerinde vatanperverane propagandalar icrasiyle menfî hisler eshabına da tehdidatta buluna gelmiştir.”

<sup>309</sup> 7 May 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 627 26, p. 1: “Razgrat hadisesi hakkında alınan raporlar peyderpey takdim edilmektedir. Bu meyanda Varna Konsolosluğumuzdan alınan bir raporda verilen malûmat ehemmiyeti haiz ve nazarı dikkati calip görülmüş olmakla aşağıya alınmıştır:

This brutal action created enormous fear among Turks in the course of the event. For instance, *Cumhuriyet* reported how these people waited in front of this unrecognizable graveyard whole night and cried for their ancestors, brothers, and sons. It was written that most unfortunately these people witnessed that their relative's bodies, who died recently, were dug up and scattered around.<sup>310</sup> Turks in the city wanted to inform the authorities about the event but they could not access to the governor or governing director as they were on the Easter holiday. But when the Bulgarian authorities were informed, they chose to cover up the event by claiming that the youth aimed to enforce the previous decision of Razgrad municipality about the relocation of the graveyard, which was ignored by Turks.<sup>311</sup> Despite the Bulgarian authorities' dismissal of the incident as if it was an exercise because of a devotion for the materialization of a civic duty on the part of the Bulgarian youth, and denying any official support, Necmettin Deliorman, who was there on that night with Arif Necib, painted a very different picture. He underlined that before the incident Bulgarian soldiers had hidden their machine guns in the graveyard and at that night while Bulgarian youth were destroying the graveyard, with the command of the governor of sub-district, Vazelof, the Bulgarian gendarmerie were standing on the roads to graveyard. Similarly, Hubançef, the clergyman,

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“14-15 Nisan Cuma gecesi, Hazreti İsa'nın öldüğü gece, karanlıkta türk mezarlığına yerli bulgarlar tarafından pek çirkin bir taarruzu yapıldığı haber alındı. Münasip surette yapılan tahkikat neticesinde bu taarruzu yapanların Rodna Zaştita cemiyetine mensup olan müfrit milliyetperverler olduğu anlaşıldı. Akşamdan klüplerinde içtima eden bu müfrit milliyetperverlerin yapacakları işi evvelden tasarladıkları, evlerden kazmalarla, küreklerin toplandığı ve grup halinde mezarlığa gittikleri, evvelâ mezarlığın telörgüsü kesilerek kabristana girildiği ve derakap kabristan bekçisinin evi yakıldığı, ve bu hareketi müteakip bir iki yüz bulgarın mezarlığa dağılarak ellerindeki balta, kazma ve küreklerle mezar taşlarını kırıp geçirdikleri, mezarların tahrip ve telvis edildiği, hatta ölülerden bir kaçının bile mezardan çıkarıldığı ve bu ameliyat sırasında bir de kamyonun çalıştırıldığı öğrenildi.”

<sup>310</sup> “Bulgaristan'da İnanılmıyacak Bir Hadise. Bir Türk Mezarlığı Fecii Bir Şekilde Tahrip Edildi”, *Cumhuriyet*, 18 April 1933, p. 1, 5.

<sup>311</sup> “Sofya Elçimiz Hadise Hakkında Ne Diyor?”, *Cumhuriyet*, 19 April 1933, pp. 1, 5: “Halk, gece yarısı kaymakamı ve ertesi gün müddeiumumiyi arayarak şikayet etmek istemişler de ikisini de galiba yortu münasebetile yerlerinde bulamamışlar. Razgrad Belediye Meclisi evvelce bu Türk mezarlığının belediyeye mal edilmesine ve Türklere başka bir mezarlık yeri gösterilmesine karar vermiş ve bu karar Türklere tarafından güya kabul edilmesine rağmen yine eski mezarlığa gömmeğe devam etmişlerdir. Hadisenin, Belediye'nin kararını emri vaki yapmaktan isteyen ve mezarları sökerek yerine ağaç diken gençler tarafından bu sebepten dolayı ika edilmiş olmasına Bulgarlar tarafından ihtimal verilmektedir. Polisin müdahale ettiği fakat kilise inzibatı ile meşgul olduğu için geç kaldığı söylenmektedir.”

known with his insistence on installing crosses on the Turkish mosques, sent his men to the graveyard.<sup>312</sup>

Sofia was very keen to show this incident as an isolated attack by a group of ‘so-called Bulgarian patriots’. According to Mouchanoff, Turkey had exaggerated the issue.<sup>313</sup> However, the public opinion in Turkey did not believe in the Bulgarian declarations at governmental level accusing only unofficial organizations for maltreatment to Turks.<sup>314</sup> Similarly, Antonoff, the Bulgarian ambassador in Ankara, claimed that it was the independent act of ten or more Bulgarians which could not be related to the overall Bulgarian foreign

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<sup>312</sup> Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı*, pp. 38-39: “14 Nisan 1933 akşamı Razgrat Türkleri sanki bir Sodom Gomor hengâmesi içinde kıvraniyor, genç Bulgar zabitlerinin kumandasına verilen mitralyözlü askerler silâhlarını mezarlığın dört köşesine yerleştirmişler. Türk düşmanı şövenist Bulgar gençleri balyözleri, baltaları ve kürekleri ile mezar kazıcılığına koyulmuşlar... Kaymakam Vazelof’un emriyle Bulgar jandarmaları mezarlığa gidecek yolların geçit yerlerini tutmuşlar. Türk camilerine haç takılmasını öteden beri toplantılarında telkin eden mutaassıp papaz Hubançef adamlarını göndermiş ve hain faaliyetine başlamış. ...Türkleri ağlatmak, ecdatlarının kemiklerini çiğnemek, mezarlarını yıkmak, münevverlerini öldürmek, onların zevklerini okşayan şeylerdi. Ve uzun yıllardan beri yapılan bu türlü şenaatler daima cezasız kalmış ve hattâ resmi Bulgar makamları tarafından güler yüzle karşılanmıştı. Bulgarlar Razgrat hâdisesini de böyle olacak zannettiler... Sökülüp atılan mezarlık tel örgülerinin ötesinde askerler, papazlar, gençler, kartlar ve miktarı belli olmayan sürülerle karartılar gecenin zifirî karanlığında taşları sökülüp sürüsünün balyöz seslerini işitiyoduk. Balyöz darbeleri çarptıkça mezar taşlarından çıkan haşın sesler muhterem ölülerimizin ruhlarından kopan feryatlar gibi canlısaran bir aksi sada ile kalplerimizi delip geçiyor... Kefenlerle birlikte mezarlarından çıkıp ayağa kalkmış dedelerimiz, babalarımız, ninelerimiz, yavrularımızın kollarını bize doğru uzatıp: “İmdat. Bizi kurtaracak yok mu?” diye feryat ettiklerini duyar gibi oluyoruz.”

<sup>313</sup> 27 April 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 630 2, p. 1: “Zgovoristelerden mebus Vasilef’de Türkiye ile olan münasebetin eyi olduğunu söyleyerek Razgrat hadisesinin izam edilmiş olmasından müteesif görünmüştür. Başvekil Mr. Muşanof cevabında, memleketimizden bahsettiği sırada: “Türkiye ile dostluk ve hakem Muahedelerle bağlıyız, münasebetimiz hissiyat ve menafimizin emrettiği veçhile çok samimîdir. Hareketlerinin hesabını vermeyen ve güya Bulgar vatanperveri geçinen bir takım bedbahtların eseri olan ve vukuu istenmeyen Razgrat hadisesi çok istismar edilmiştir. Fakat bütün bunlar dostluğumuza zarar vermemiştir. Biz bu dostluk için mümkün olan her şeyi yaptık ve seleflerimiz tarafından bize bırakılan dostluk vaziyetini muhafaza etmekle kalmayıp onu arttırdık.” demiştir.”; 17 April 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 629 12, pp. 1-2: “Bulgar Sobranyası Hariciye Encümeninde cereyan eden son müzakerat ve Başvekil Mouşanof’un komşu devletlerle ve bu meyanda Türkiye ile olan münasebata dair verdiği izahat hakkında Sofya Elçiliğimizden alına malûmat berveçhizir arz olunur: ...Türkiye ile münasebetleri için samimî tabirini kullanmış, Razgrat hadisesinin iz bırakmamış, emlâk meselesinin halli ilerlemiş olduğunu söylemiş, üçüzlü ittifakın aslı olmadığını ilâve etmiştir.”

<sup>314</sup> Yunus Nadi, “Razgrad Hadisesi ve Bulgaristan”, *Cumhuriyet*, 29 April 1933, p. 1: “Resmi Bulgar mahfilleri şikayet mevzuumuza olan meselelerin gayiresmi teşekküller tarafından ika edildiğini söyler dururlar. Biz buna ilanihaye inanmış görünmeği iki komşu memleket arasında takarrürü her ikisinin menfaatleri icabından olduğu gibi giderek daha adaletli de olacak hakiki bir sulhun şartları cümlesinden olan dostluğa muhalif görürüz. Vaziyeti müsbet veya menfi bir hal suretine bağlamak artık bir zarurettir.”



policy.<sup>315</sup> But, in fact, the Turkish public opinion suspected about the role of the government in this violence. The report of the Turkish ambassador, for example, revealed these suspicions. In this report from 1933, the ambassador defined the living conditions for Turks as insecure. Added to this, he underlined how it had become ‘a custom’ to leave attacks towards the Turks without punishment in Bulgaria.<sup>316</sup> Thus, Turkey knew that the picture was much different than what was drawn by the Bulgarian government.

Particularly, this incident protested among the youth in Turkey. The Turkish national football team, for instance, decided to quit a match with Bulgarian team and it announced that the members could not shake hands of the youths of any state which set Turkish graveyard on fire and tortured corpses.<sup>317</sup> However, it was *Milli Türk Talebe Birliği* (Turkish National Student’s Union, MTTB) that protested this violence at most. This union, under the leadership of Tevfik Celal Bey, came together just after the incident and decided to organize a widespread protest to voice Turkish youth’s anger about this incident.<sup>318</sup> In line with this decision, on 20 April, the members of this union met in front of the Bulgarian consulate in Maçka and Tevfik Celal Bey gave a speech there. Then, other high school students, particularly the ones from Şişli Terakki and Fevziye High Schools, and people on the street joined to this group and the number of demonstrators increased in a short-time span. But, during the protest some people went to the Bulgarian graveyard in Feriköy, and laid flowers in this graveyard. However, this unofficial act angered the Turkish government since the group resisted to the warnings of police, and 80 of them,

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<sup>315</sup> “Bulgar Sefiri İzahat Veriyor. “Razgrad Hadisesi Vahimdir, Fakat Türklere Karşı Bir Hareket Yoktur” Diyor”, *Cumhuriyet*, 20 April 1933, p. 1-2.

<sup>316</sup> 17 April 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 629 15, p. 1: “Bulgaristan Türklerinin vaziyeti, Bulgar Çingenelerinden Türklüğe temessül etmiş olan bir kısmının memleketimize kabulü ve Pomakların muhaceretinin bütün vesaitimizle teşvik ve teshili lüzumundan bâhis olarak Sofya Elçimizden alınan 13/5/933 tarihli tahriratın sureti aşağıya nakledilmiştir: “Siyasî haklar şöyle dursun, müteakip vakaların şهادet ettiği üzere bilhassa yeni arazide sakin türkler için can emniyeti tehlikeye girmiştir. İka edilen suçlardan bir tanesinin faili yakalanmamış ve esasen türkler aleyhinde yapılan cürümlerin cezasız kalması bu memleketin ananesi iktizasından bulunmuştur.”

<sup>317</sup> “Gençlikte Galeyan”, *Cumhuriyet*, 20 April 1933, p. 1

<sup>318</sup> “Talebe Birliğinin Kararı”, *Cumhuriyet*, 20 April 1933, p. 2.

including Tevfik Celal Bey, were taken for interrogation.<sup>319</sup> Indeed, before this unofficial demonstration, this union applied to the provincial authorities in İstanbul to organize a protest meeting on 23 April. But, this was not allowed.<sup>320</sup> However, this group insisted on this demonstration and made it on 20 April. Thus, they were taken by police. But, at night most of them were released.<sup>321</sup> Indeed, although they were punished for their resistance to rules, their sensitiveness about the national issues was appreciated by the public. Abidin Daver, a popular writer in *Cumhuriyet*, was one of those who showed how he was proud of these students. Then, in its congress, MTTB even thanked for the supports of Abidin Daver and Peyami Sefa.<sup>322</sup>

Razgrad incident was traumatic for Turkish public opinion. Thus, it remained at the top of agenda for a long time in Turkish press. The writers clearly showed their anger about this violence. On 22 April, for instance, Abidin Daver wrote an article, “İşte Bulgar dostluğu!” (Here is the Bulgarian friendship!), in which he reported a letter of Petrov, who introduced himself as a member of committee, *Rodna Zaštita*. In this letter, Petrov wrote that how Bulgaria could be a ‘friend’ of Turkey which ruled Bulgaria for five centuries. He underlined that atrocities that their heroes such as Vasil Lewski (who was hanged by the Ottoman authorities in 1873)<sup>323</sup> encountered under this Turkish rule were always fresh in their minds. Thus, they would continue to torment Turks in Bulgaria and expel them from their country. Abidin Daver commented that this man was at least honest in showing his opposition to any friendly relations with Turkey in his letter. According to Abidin Daver, this was what Bulgarian government should also do. He pointed out how Turkey tried to establish friendly relations with Bulgaria, as it was in the case of Greece.

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<sup>319</sup> “Hadise Nasıl Oldu?”, *Cumhuriyet*, 21 April 1933, p. 1.

<sup>320</sup> “Talebe Birliği Neşrettiği Bir Beyanda 20 Nisan Nümayişiyle Alakası Olmadığını İlan Ediyor”, *Cumhuriyet*, 28 April 1933, pp. 1-2.

<sup>321</sup> “İhtilattan Menedilen 80 Talebeden 60’ı Dün Gece Serbest Bırakıldı”, *Cumhuriyet*, 22 April 1933, p. 1.

<sup>322</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 27 April 1933, p. 5.

<sup>323</sup> 4 March 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 626 15, p. 1.

However, if Bulgaria did not want this, then it should be honest to show this so that Turkey would give up its efforts for friendship.<sup>324</sup>

In this period, Yunus Nadi also published articles to protest the Razgrad incident. He wrote that no Bulgarian excuse would be sufficient to denounce this violence.<sup>325</sup> Also, he pointed out in his articles how Bulgarian press did not pay sufficient attention to criticize this incident, although they recently overemphasized the Turkish demonstration in front of the Bulgarian consulate in Edirne.<sup>326</sup> This was a protest organized on March 26, 1933 against annual celebrations in Bulgaria about Bulgarian siege of Edirne during the Balkan Wars. This protest angered the Bulgarian authorities, and Mouchanoff conveyed his disturbance to the Turkish embassy in Sofia immediately.<sup>327</sup> However, the same Bulgaria ignored violence in Razgrad. This made Yunus Nadi to question the sincerity of Bulgaria about friendship. He underlined that Razgrad incident was not an isolated attack, since recently a Turk was killed in Kesarova, then another Turk was hanged, similarly Pomaks were forced to convert Christianity, and finally there occurred this violence in Razgrad. And, he asked how Turkey could believe in friendship of Mouchanoff's government in spite of these attacks.<sup>328</sup>

With new regime in Bulgaria, which came to power on May 19, 1934, there was a change in the nature of these attacks towards the Turks. For instance, according to Turkish ambassador in Sofia, with new Bulgarian regime these attacks gained 'a systematic character'. Hence, Turks in Bulgaria had to

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<sup>324</sup> Abidin Daver, "İşte Bulgar Dostluğu!", *Cumhuriyet*, 22 April 1933, p. 1.

<sup>325</sup> Yunus Nadi, "Razgrat Hadisesi ve Bulgaristan-I", *Cumhuriyet*, 28 April 1933, p. 1.

<sup>326</sup> Yunus Nadi, "Razgrat Hadisesi ve Bulgaristan-II", *Cumhuriyet*, 29 April 1933, p. 1.

<sup>327</sup> 3 May 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 628 29, p. 1.

<sup>328</sup> Yunus Nadi, "Razgrat Hadisesi ve Bulgaristan-II", *Cumhuriyet*, 29 April 1933, p. 1: "...Üç gün evvel Keserova'da kireç kuyusuna atıldıktan sonara dayak altında öldürülen Türk genci, iki gün evvel Pomakların hristiyan olmağa mecbur edilmeleri gayretleri, dün halkın himeetile hatbehat idam edilen Türk, bugün Razgrat hadisesi... Bunlar şöylece kalbur üstüne gelen kişiler. Bütün bunlara rağmen Bulgar dostluğu!"; Yunus Nadi, "Razgrat Hadisesi ve Bulgaristan-III", *Cumhuriyet*, 30 April 1933, p. 1: "Razgrat hadisesi münasebetile bahsi açılmış olduğu için biz nihayet bir kere şunu açık söylemek istedik ki Bulgaristan'da Türk dostluğu denen şeyin daha ziyade manasız bir kelime sayılabileceği öteden beri bizim gözlerimizden kaçmamaktadır. Biz bu dostlukta ne kadar samimi isek, Bulgaristan o kadar gayriresmidir..."

suffer more cruel persecutions.<sup>329</sup> This inevitably resulted in more refugee problems on the Thracian border of Turkey.<sup>330</sup> The Turkish reports revealed that there were even Turks who escaped to the Romanian frontier where they urgently contacted to the Turkish embassy to go to Turkey.<sup>331</sup> Their situation justified the severe conditions in Bulgaria, where they were maltreated. For instance, *Cumhuriyet* reported how these refugees seemed wretched and broke when they entered Kırklareli.<sup>332</sup> These people were mainly settled in Tekirdağ, close to the Bulgarian border. According to interviews held with these refugees published in *Cumhuriyet*, Bulgarians attacked Turks as they perceived Turks deserving beating or living without any money.<sup>333</sup> More importantly, these people narrated that in Bulgaria they were under the pressure of both new

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<sup>329</sup> 13 September 1934: BCA, 030 10 242 635 17, p.1: “Bulgaristan’da Türk ekalliyetine yapılagelmekte olan tazyik ve intisafın 19 mayısta yeni bir hükûmetin iktidar mevkiine gelmesinden sonra şiddet kesbeylediği ve systématique bir mahiyet arzylediği malûmu devletleridir.”

<sup>330</sup> “Bulgaristan Türkleri. Tazyik Neticesi Hicret Devam Ediyor: Bulgarlardan Dostluğa Yakışır Yola Dönmelerini İstiyoruz”, *Cumhuriyet*, 10 August 1934, pp. 1, 6: “...Bulgaristanda kuvvetli bir disiplin tesis eden ve hemen hemen ilk iş olarak Türk dostluğunun Bulgaristan cephesinde ne kadar sevilen istenilen bir kıymet olduğunu ilân eden yeni hükûmetin sözlerine rağmen Türk ekâliyeti sistematik bir tazyik çemberi içerisinde bulunuyor. Hür bir tebaa olmak hakları kendisinden tamamen nezedildikten başka mutlaka Bulgaryadan çıkarılmak ve mutlaka yok edilmek için işkencelere maruz bırakılıyor.”

<sup>331</sup> “Zavallı Bulgaristan Türkleri: İrktaşlarımız Şimdi de Romanyaya Sığıyorlar”, *Cumhuriyet*, 18 August 1934, p. 1; 13 September 1934: BCA, 030 10 242 635 16, p. 1: “Bugün Bükreş Elçimiz Hamdullah Suphi Beyefendiden gelen bir telgrafta (yüz kişi daha iltica etmiştir. Köstencede sevkedilmek üzere elli kişi daha vardır. Tahsisat bitmek üzeredir. Yeni tahsisat istirham olunur.) denilmektedir. Buna nazaran evvelce ırkdeşarımıza yapılan muamelenin tekrar tatbikine başlanması melhuz ve muhtemel olduğundan keyfiyetin acilen tahkik ve işarı Sofya Elçiliğimize yazılmıştır.”

<sup>332</sup> “Bulgarya Türkleri Ana Vatana İltica Ediyorlar: Ekalliyetlerimiz Tazyik Altındadır ve Bu Yüzden Türkler Panik Halinde Türkiye’ye Kaçıyorlar”, *Cumhuriyet*, 1 August 1934, pp. 1, 4: “Bulgaristanda Bulgarların Türkler üzerindeki tazyiki gün geçtikçe şiddetini arttırmaktadır. Bunu Bulgaristandan gelen yolcularla her gün hudutlarımız dahilinde perişan ve on parasız bir vaziyette iltica etmekte olan Türk gençlerinin ifadelerinden anlıyoruz.”

<sup>333</sup> “Bulgaristanda Zulüm Devam Etmektedir: Bulgaristandan Gelen 40 Ailelik Muhacir Kafilesi Orada Türklere Yapılan Fenalıkları Anlatıyorlar”, *Cumhuriyet*, 29 September 1934, pp. 1, 6: “Son günlerde Bulgaristanda zulüm gören ırkdeşarımızın mühim bir kısmı ana vatana hicret etmeğe başlamışlardır. Gün geçmiyor ki İstanbul’a grup grup felâketzede gelmesi. İki gün evvel de (40) aileden mürekkep kalabalık bir muhacir kafilesi şehrimize gelmiş ve iskân edilinceye kadar Tophanedeki medreselere yerleştirilmiştir. Bir iki güne kadar Tekirdağı ve havalisine yerleşecek olan bu Bulgaristanlı ırkdeşarımızla bir muhabir arkadaşımız görüşmüştür. Mazlum vatandaşlarımız, arkadaşarımıza şunları söylemişlerdir: “Biz Razgradın Kemalli kazasile Şumnudan, Prevadiden ve Deliormandan geliyoruz. Hepimiz rençperiz. Bulgaristana zıyanımız değil faydamız dokunduğu halde bize yapmadıklarını bırakmadılar. İsmi Mehmet veya Ahmet mi? Dayağa müstahaksın, parasız gezinmeğe mahkûmsun seni süründürmek sevaptır. ...”

Bulgarian government and revisionist committees such as *Trakya İhtilâl Komitesi*.<sup>334</sup> This in fact verified how Bulgarian government and revisionist groups collaborated on this issue of attacking Turks.

However, it was clear that it was not only Turks that felt insecure to live in Bulgaria, since Pomaks (Bulgarian speaking Muslims) were also a target and felt themselves have to migrate either to Turkey or Greece. Indeed, it was evident that from 1923 onwards Bulgaria took measures about Pomaks to make them distant from Islamic and Turkish culture. For instance, the Bulgarian authorities did not want to permit Pomaks to be educated in Turkish schools and they were forced to worship in Bulgarian. Moreover, Bulgaria closed the schools of Pomaks and banned the Turkish courses, and similarly restricted the religious ones.<sup>335</sup> However, the Turkish authorities in Bulgaria saw that these pressures were intensified with the new regime. For instance, on September 6, 1934 the Turkish consul in Plovdiv pointed out this deterioration in the living conditions of Pomaks in his report to the Turkish embassy in Sofia, which was then sent to the Prime Ministry. He wrote that although previously there was only verbal propaganda, now Pomaks were subjected to physical coercion. For instance, Pomaks were forced to go churches rather than mosques.<sup>336</sup> This pressure on Pomaks was even protested by some Bulgarian authorities. However, when these severe living conditions pushed Pomaks to leave Bulgaria, what the Bulgarian side did was to accuse Bulgarian Kemalists of encouraging these people to migrate.<sup>337</sup>

Actually, the Bulgarian government desired to put an end to this migration of Pomaks. Both Turkey and Greece, however, saw that these Bulgarian efforts to prevent migration even resulted in murder of Pomaks

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<sup>334</sup> “Bulgarya Türkleri Ana Vatana İltica Ediyorlar”, *Cumhuriyet*, 1 August 1934, p. 4: “...Şu apaçık mezalimden ve bu perişan halde topraklarımıza dökülen vatandaşların halinden öyle hükmedilebilir ki adeta Bulgaristan komitacıları, polisleri ve “gayrimes’ul” teşekküllerile Türk ekaliyetini ya imhaya, ya topyekûn kovmağa azmetmiş gibidir. Çünkü panik halinde kucagımıza koşan kardeşlerimiz bütün tekziplerin fevkine çıkan canlı, hazin ve feci bir tekziptir.”

<sup>335</sup> Hüseyin Memişoğlu, *Balkanlarda Pomak Türkleri* (İstanbul: Türk Dünyaları Araştırma Vakfı, 2005), pp. 61-62.

<sup>336</sup> 6 September 1935: BCA, 030 10 242 637 8, pp. 4-6.

<sup>337</sup> *Belgelerle Mustafa Kemal Atatürk ve Türk-Bulgar İlişkileri* (1913-1938) (Ankara: TC Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2002), pp. 357-359.

attempting to migrate from this state. On April 1934, for instance, eleven Pomaks were killed by Bulgarian soldiers on the borders, while they were fleeing from Bulgaria. This drew attention of Turkish press, and *Cumhuriyet* reported this incident with a heading of “Bunu da mı biz yaptık?” (Did we do this also?), which was a response to accusations of Bulgarian press of Kemalists in the migration of Pomaks.<sup>338</sup> Eight months later, on December 4, 1934 *Cumhuriyet* again reported ‘a violent crime’ of Bulgarians within the Greek territories. The issue in this newspaper was about how five Pomaks were killed by Bulgarian soldiers, similarly while they were leaving Bulgaria with their wives, children, and animals. What made this case significant was the fact that Bulgarian soldiers did not hesitate entering into the Greek territories without permission to attack these Pomaks. For this violence, *Cumhuriyet* commented that although Bulgarians reacted ‘frightfully’ to any issue about minority rights of Bulgarians in other states, they forgot to act within humanitarian terms towards the minorities in its lands.<sup>339</sup> According to this newspaper, this incident showed how Bulgarians would do anything; even violating international rules, in order to kill either Turks or Pomaks.<sup>340</sup> Within this insecure environment, refugee issue remained as a serious problem.

The refugee problem made the Turkish authorities to work for a planned migration. In fact, the Turkish embassy in Sofia started to point out the necessity of such a migration plan just after the Kesarova incident. Tevfik Kâmil, the Turkish ambassador in Sofia, asked for the transportation of Turks in Kesarova to Turkey until the next spring. According to him, the diplomatic

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<sup>338</sup> “Bunu da mı Biz Yaptık: İşkence Gördükleri için Bulgaristandan Kaçan 11 Pomak; Hudut Askerleri Tarafından Öldürüldü”, *Cumhuriyet*, 16 April 1934, pp. 1, 6.

<sup>339</sup> “Bulgarlara Cevab!: Bulgarlar Ekalliyetlere Karşı Yaptıkları Cinayetlerin İlanihaye Sorgusuz ve Sonsuz Kalacağını Düşünüyorlarsa Yaman Surette Aldanıyorlar”, *Cumhuriyet*, 21 December 1934, p. 1: “Kendilerine taalluk ettiği zaman ekalliyet hukuku diye kızılca kıyametler koparan Bulgarlar kendi ülkelerindeki ekalliyetlere insan muamelesi yapmak vazifesile mükellef olduklarını çok unutuyorlar.”

<sup>340</sup> “Şiddetten Hoşlanan Bulgarlara Şiddetle Muamele Etmeli!”, *Cumhuriyet*, 4 December 1934, pp. 1, 3: “Bulgarlar, canavarca bir cinayet işlediler. Pomak olsun, Türk olsun beş insanı alçakça bir bahane ile öldürmek için, uluslar arası (beynelmilel) hakları da gayeleri de çiğneyerek Yunan topraklarına girdiler. Bulgarlarda, Türk ve Müslüman kanı dökmek –hoş onlar Hıristiyan ve İslav Sırlara, Ortodoks Yunanlılara da aynı şeyi yaparlar ya- öyle bir ihtiras ve iptila halini almış ki önlerine çıkan hudutları bile dinlemiyorlar.”

pressures on the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry would only result in the continuation of this violence. Thus, he wrote that in addition to the short term financial support, in the long term Turkey should accept these desperate people to the Turkish territories.<sup>341</sup> Similarly the Turkish ambassador repeated the necessity of migration in his report about the Razgrad incident. He wrote that pressure on Turks did not come to an end. Thus, there was no other way for Turkey than receiving these people either to the Turkish Thrace or Anatolia.<sup>342</sup> This call of the Turkish ambassador for the acceptance of the migrants was also done for Pomaks. He pointed out how Pomaks, who fled from Bulgaria because of religious restrictions, complained about Turkish authorities in Edirne that sent them back to Bulgaria.<sup>343</sup> Apparently, this was against what he proposed persistently. Then, in his another report, he insisted that the migration of Pomaks should be prioritised since it would be ‘a national mistake’ if these Pomaks were left to the Bulgarian assimilation. He also proposed Ankara to contact with Bulgarian authorities for properties of Turks living in Bulgaria and provide these people secure conditions of migration with their properties.<sup>344</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> 21 August 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 624 7, pp. 1-2: “Köylülere tazyik devam ettiğinden bahsile Bulgar Hariciyesine tekrar müracaat etmek elyevm nabemevsimdir. Böyle bir teşebbüsün neticesi ancak tazyikatı daha bir müddet devam ettirmekten ibaret kalır. Binaenaleyh hatıra gelen tedbir mağdur mevkiinde ve isimleri bizce belli olanlara parayla biraz yardım etmek ve gelecek bahara Türkiye’ye nakledileceklerini temin ile kendilerini teskin eylemektir. Şimdiki halde başka bir şey kalmadığına ve geçende lutuf buyrulan ve Kessarevo ile Filinede tahkikat ve istihbarat için şimdiye kadar yarısı sarfedilmiş olan beş yüz liradan bir şey ayırmak mümkün olmadığına binaen bu köylülere yine mahallinde gizlice dağıtılmak üzere üç yüz lira gönderilmesinin ve gelecek bahara kadar Türkiye’ye nakillerinin teminini rica ederim.”

<sup>342</sup> 7 May 1933: 030 10 241 627 26, p. 2: “Kışkırtılan genç Bulgarlar mutlak surette kendilerine pek kolaylıkla masum Türk yurtdaşlarımızı ve onların mukaddesatını görmektedir. Bu gibi hakaret ve tecavüzler tevali edeceklerdir. Her ne pahasına olursa olsun bu milyona yakın yurtdaşımızın bir an evvel Bulgaristan’dan Trakya’ya veya Anadolu’ya nakledilmesinin gün geçtikçe bir zaruret halini aldığı mütaleasında bulunduğumu arzuleyim.”

<sup>343</sup> 23 May 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 628 10, p. 1: “Pomakların kısmı azamı dini tazyikattan kurtulabilmek için hicret arzusundadır. Ancak Türkiye’ye ilticaya muvaffak olanlardan bazılarının Edirne Vilayetince Bulgaristan’a geri çevrildikleri hakkında tekrar şikayetler alınmağa başlamıştır.”

<sup>344</sup> 17 June 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 629 15, pp. 1-2: “Siyasî haklar şöyle dursun, müteakip vakaların şahadet ettiği üzere bilhassa yeni arazide sakin Türkler için can ehemmiyeti tehlikeye girmiştir. İka edilen suçlardan bir tanesinin faali yakalanmamış ve esasen Türkler aleyhine yapılan cürümlerin cezasız kalması bu memleketin ananesi iktizasından bulunmuştur. Pomakların bulgar neslinden Müslüman oldukları bahanesile vicdan hürriyetine taarruz

This issue of migration of Turkish/Muslim minority from Bulgaria in secure and settled conditions, with their properties, was significant for Turkey. However, it was obvious that the Bulgarian authorities tried to prevent this legal migration in which this minority would enjoy its property rights. This became more observable in 1934 when Bulgaria worked against Turkish plan of migration for that year. For this migration plan, on October 23, 1934 *Cumhuriyet* reported that ten thousand Turks would migrate to Turkey from the Balkans.<sup>345</sup> Then, one month later, it was reported that this given number would be exceeded. However, it was also pointed out that only limited number of Turks could migrate from Bulgaria as the Bulgarian government did not permit these people to carry their properties with them.<sup>346</sup> Similarly, Bulgaria left these people with passport problems without which they could not leave Bulgaria legally.<sup>347</sup> And, *Cumhuriyet* reported that these kinds of obstacles continued in 1935.<sup>348</sup> Despite these efforts to prevent legal migration, however, the Turkish side saw that persecutions towards the notables of Turkish minority persistently continued. For instance, on January 1935, Memduh Talât reported how the Bulgarian authorities threatened rich Turks in Ruse (Rusçuk) with exile from Bulgaria. This paradoxical Bulgarian approach made him asked

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edilmekte ve Hristiyan yapılmalarına muttariden uğraşılmaktadır. Bu ahval müvacehesinde Çingeneler hariç tutulursa yarım milyondan eksik olmıyan bu kütlenin zaman tahripkâr tesiratına ve emsali sık sık görüldüğü gibi ferden ferden bulgarlığa temessüllerine imkân bırakılması millî bir hata teşkil edeceği mulahasasında bulunduğumdan Pomaklardan başlamak şartle eski ve yeni Bulgaristan Türklerinin memleketimize aldırılmaları zaruret kesbetmiştir telâkkisindeyim ...Şu halde bir taraftan Pomakların iltica yolile hicretlerini bütün vesaitimizle teşvik ve teshil etmekle beraber diğer türklerin ihtiyarî hicretlerine fiilen mümanaat edilmemesi ve muhacirlerin paralarını çıkarabilmelerini temin için oraca temaslarda bulunulmasını çok faideli gördüğümü şahsî müteala olarak arzederim.”

<sup>345</sup> “On Bin Türk Ana Vatan Yolunu ekliyor”, *Cumhuriyet*, 23 October 1934, pp. 1, 5.

<sup>346</sup> “Muhacir İskanı: 1934’te 100 bin Muhacir Geldi 30 bin Daha Gelecek”, *Cumhuriyet*, 11 November 1934, pp. 1, 6: “İki gün evvel Çorluda Trakya Umumi Müfettişi İbrahim Tali Beyin riyasetinde Edirne Valisi Özdemir Salim, Kırklareli Valisi Faik, Tekirdağ Valisi Ali Kemal Beyler bir toplantı yaparak, son zamanlarda Trakya mıntkasına gelen elli bini mütecaviz Türk muhacirin vaziyeti tatbik edilmiş... Bulgaristandan gelen muhacirin adedi azdır. Bütün tazyiklere rağmen bu yurttaşlarımızın ana vatana gelememelerinin sebebi, Bulgar hükümetinin bunların emval ve emlaklarını satmalarına müsaade etmemesi ve beraberlerinde para götürmelerini men etmiş olmalarıdır.”

<sup>347</sup> “Zavallı Soydaşlarımız: Bulgaristan Türkleri Bir Muhacir Pasaportu Almak için Bütün Mal ve Mülklerini Veriyorlar”, *Cumhuriyet*, 25 December 1934, pp. 1, 5.

<sup>348</sup> Kadri Oğuz, “Bulgaristan’daki Türk Azınlığı: Bulgarlar Soydaşlarımızın Göçmesine Mani Oluyorlar”, *Cumhuriyet*, 18 January 1935, pp. 1, 4.



whether the Bulgarian Council of Ministers did this to terrorize these rich people and enjoy the properties they left.<sup>349</sup>

Migration issue was also pointed out in Turkish publications of 1930s. For instance, in 1936, Yaşar Nabi (Nayır), an important writer and publisher of the Republican period, published a book, *Balkanlar ve Türklük* (The Balkans and the Turkishness), which similarly revealed how this minority faced problems in migrating from Bulgaria. One of them was the problem of passport, which turned into ‘a salvation document’ for this minority. According to him, as soon as possible the Turkish government should sign an agreement with Bulgaria, which would organize the migration of these people so that put an end to refugee problem. And, this organized migration, he argued, would reduce Bulgarian maltreatment of this minority.<sup>350</sup> Indeed, it was a book that was bought for the libraries of *Halkevleri* (People’s House).<sup>351</sup> Thus, its arguments must be acceptable to the *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (Republican People’s Party), the ruling and sole party.<sup>352</sup> Accordingly, it is clear that the Turkish efforts were also for an organized migration as a solution to this refugee problem, which would save Turkey from influx of migrants that escaped from violence and pressure in a panic.

Indeed, it could be argued that although the Turkish side disturbed highly from this violence and pressure throughout this period, its protests towards Bulgaria were not in a form of enforcement. It was clear that Turkey even tried to find alternative solutions as the acceptance of these Turkish/Muslim people fled from Bulgarian pressure as mentioned above.

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<sup>349</sup> Memduh Talât, “Bulgarlar Türk Zenginlerini ve Münevverlerini Sürüyor”, *Cumhuriyet*, 2 January 1935, p. 3: “...Bulgaristan Türklerini göçmeğe teşvik eden Türkler ve Bulgarların göstermek istedikleri gibi Türk ajanlar değil, Bulgar zenginlerinin kendileridir. Ve hükümetinin şimdiye kadar hiçbir Türk ajanını cürmu meşhud halinde yakalayıp meydana çıkarmaması da benim fikrimi kâfî derecede ispat ediyor. Hükümet, Rusçuktaki Türk zenginlerle münevverlerini de sözde Bükreş sefirimiz Hamdullah Suphi ile temas ediyorlar diye sürgünle tehdit etmiştir. ...Acaba kabine, Bulgaristan’daki Türk zenginlerle münevverlerini işlerini bozmak ve kendilerini ürkütüp Bulgaristan’dan kaçırtmak ve mallarının üstüne oturmak siyasetimi takip ediyor.”

<sup>350</sup> Yaşar Nabi, *Balkanlar ve Türklük* (Ankara: Ulus Basımevi, 1936), pp. 174-177.

<sup>351</sup> Boyar, *Ottomans, Turks and the Balkans*, p. 26.

<sup>352</sup> Ebru Boyar, “Turkish Bulgarian Relations in the Early Turkish Republic” in Mustafa Türkeş (ed.) *Turkish-Bulgarian Relations: Past and Present* (İstanbul: Tasam Yayınları, 2010), pp. 63-64.

Actually, Turkey knew that if Bulgaria desired to establish friendly relations with Turkey, then it would be dedicated to cease pressure which these people encountered. For instance, on January 24, 1935 in the report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, this was pointed out. In this report, it was claimed that Bulgarian pressure on Pomaks, for instance, could be ceased if Bulgaria felt itself in need of establishing friendly relations with Turkey. Thus, in a case of friendly relations between these two states, then minority rights of Turks would be completely guaranteed.<sup>353</sup> In fact, this was justified on the eve of Second World War. As Bulgaria desired to establish closer relations with Turkey, there occurred a relaxation in its attitudes towards the Turkish/Muslim minority.<sup>354</sup>

### 2.2.3 CONCLUSION

In the first years of 1920s, Turkish-Bulgarian relations were established on the notion of friendship. Besides being allies in the First World War, during the National Independence War, Bulgarian support for Turkish national forces towards Greeks in Eastern Thrace was significant for Turkey. More importantly, Aleksendur Stambuliiski, the Bulgarian Prime Minister, did not mind about pressure of Allies and searched the ways establishing early relations with Ankara government.<sup>355</sup> This friendly atmosphere was also reflected in the well being of Turkish/Muslim minority living in Bulgaria. However, with late 1920s and 1930s perceived threat of Bulgarian revisionism started to shape the Turkish view of Bulgaria. In this period, Bulgarian backing for revisionist territorial claims on Eastern Thrace, particularly about Edirne, was actually disturbing for the Turkish side. Apparently, the Turkish

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<sup>353</sup> 10 January 1935: BCA, 030 10 242 637 8, pp. 2-3: “Ancak bulgarların bunlar üzerindeki her türlü tasallut ve tazyiklerini tamamen bertaraf etmek ya kati bir tehdit ile veyahud bulgaristanın Türkiye ile samimi surette dost olmak ihtiyacında bulunması ile kaimdir. Halihazırda ise birinci şıktan ziyade ikincinin husul bulması hükümetimizin takip etmekte olduğu umumi siyasete daha muvafık olduğundan Bulgaristandaki Türk ekalliyet hukukunun tam olarak tahakkuku, dostluk siyasetinin müsbet ve fiili bir şekilde teessüsü suretile temin edilmek icap eder. Bu yolda sarfi mesai edilmekte olduğu malumu devletleridir.”

<sup>354</sup> Ebru Boyar and Kate Fleet, “A Dangerous Axis: The ‘Bulgarian Müftü’, the Turkish Opposition and the Ankara Government, 1928-1936” in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 44/5 (2008), p. 786.

<sup>355</sup> *Tarihte Türk Bulgar İlişkileri*, pp. 96-106.

government always protested these claims on these territories, which İsmet Paşa, during his visit to Edirne in December of 1934, described as being ‘more historical than even İstanbul and highly worthy’ for Turks.<sup>356</sup> Similarly, Turkish press highlighted these claims and protested them persistently. For instance, Abidin Daver on February 26, 1935 wrote that the only way for Bulgarian government to establish friendly relations with Turkey as in the past was ‘to silence barking of Bulgarians as Thrace is Bulgarian’.<sup>357</sup>

These were actually the protests of the Turkish government and Turkish press about Bulgarian backing to the revisionist claims on Turkish territories. However, in 1935 Bulgaria suspected that Turkey also worked for a new defence system in Thrace. For instance, in January, the Bulgarian government argued that Turkey planned to sign a new treaty with Greece to protect Thracian border, probably against Bulgaria.<sup>358</sup> Then, two months later, this time, the Bulgarian government argued that there was a considerable increase in the Turkish armament on Turkish-Bulgarian border. Then, they carried this issue to the League of Nations and accused Turkey of armament.<sup>359</sup> The Turkish government clearly denied these accusations. In fact, the Turkish side considered this Bulgarian attempt as a policy to cover its own armament.<sup>360</sup>

However, these strained Turkish-Bulgarian relations in the inter-war period came to an end only with the end of 1930s. This also marked the continuity of Bulgarian maltreatment of Turks and Muslims in those years. In line with the changes in political atmosphere just before the Second World War, however, Bulgaria gave up its dedicated refusal to the Balkan Pact idea. And, on 31 July 1938 Bulgaria signed the Treaty of Thessaloniki with other states of the Balkan Pact. With this treaty Turkey and Bulgaria agreed on the lift of restrictions on the military forces in Thrace and mutual non-

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<sup>356</sup> “Başvekil Edirne’de Çok Mühim Bir Nutuk Söyledi”, *Cumhuriyet*, 9 December 1934, p. 1: “Trakya ve Edirne bizim için İstanbul’dan eski ve çok değerli bir Türk varlığıdır.”

<sup>357</sup> Abidin Daver, “Türk-Bulgar Dostluğu için Tek Yol”, *Cumhuriyet*, 26 January 1935, p. 1.

<sup>358</sup> “Trakya’da Sınırı Korumak için Askeri Mukavele Yapıyormuşuz!”, *Cumhuriyet*, 15 January 1935, pp. 1-2.

<sup>359</sup> “Bulgarlar Bizi Uluslar Derneğine Şikayet Etti”, *Cumhuriyet*, 8 March 1935, p. 1.

<sup>360</sup> Abidin Daver, “Özü Sözüne Uymayan Bir Siyasa”, *Cumhuriyet*, 9 March 1935, pp. 1, 4.

aggression.<sup>361</sup> This new atmosphere of trust inevitably shaped the Bulgarian treatment of Turkish/Muslim minority, and it softened its harsh actions towards these people. Thus, the Turkish side suspected less about Bulgarian approach to this minority with more secure Turkish-Bulgarian relations.

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<sup>361</sup> İsmail Soysal, *Türkiye'nin Siyasal Andlaşmaları-I (1920-1945)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2000), pp. 455-461; Boyar, "Turkish Bulgarian Relations in the Early Turkish Republic", p. 59.

## CHAPTER 3

### **IDEOLOGICAL CHALLENGE: GREEK AND BULGARIAN OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE KEMALIST GOVERNMENT**

It was on 29 October 1923 that new Turkish state established its republican regime. There was considerable number of oppositional elements, who were unhappy with the establishment of new Republic, and during the inter-war period both in the 1920s and 1930s Turkey had concerns about the stability of its regime. Well-known oppositional elements, mainly, left Turkish lands and started to live in other states. However, this did not mean the end of their oppositional activities against Ankara. Indeed, these elements became active in Greece and Bulgaria particularly. For instance, they allied with local conservative group among Turkish minorities, and they together formed anti-Kemalist structures. But, what disturbed the Turkish side was Greek and Bulgarian support for these structures. This made Turkey suspected about intentions of these two states of destabilizing its new regime. Thus, it felt an ideological insecurity stemming from persistent support of these two states for anti-Kemalist activities, despite Turkish protests.

Greek and Bulgarian collaboration with these anti-Kemalist structures was not limited to the activities against Turkey but these 'un-holy' alliances were also active against the Kemalist elements within the Turkish minorities as these elements were perceived as the extensions of Kemalist regime in Turkey. The Kemalists elements were the ones who supported and adopted reforms of new Turkish state in these two states. For Turkey, Greek and Bulgarian maltreatment of these people was the part of their policy of supporting opponents of new regime in Turkey. Thus, the suppression of the Kemalists was inevitably alarming for Turkey as it again proved how the anti-Kemalists were favoured by the Greek and Bulgarian governments. However, the Kemalist elements, who could only counter active anti-Kemalist propaganda in

these two states, were significant for the Republic. Thus, attack on these people was protested by the Turkish government in accordance with its own ideological concern.

### **3.1. GREEK CASE**

In the inter-war period, the Turkish-Greek relations could not be settled until the beginning of the 1930s. In this problematic period, the power of the anti-Kemalists in Greece was actually one of the main sources of problems. What made the Greek case different from the Bulgarian one was its earlier alliance with oppositional Turkish elements, which started during the National Independence War. However, after the National Independence War, Greece continued to attract these figures.

#### **3.1.1. GREEK LANDS: A HUB OF ANTI-KEMALIST ACTIVITIES**

In the early Republican period, Greece was not the only state that hosted oppositional Turkish elements. However, what made Greece a hub of anti-Kemalist activities mainly in the 1920s and the first years of 1930s was its support to these oppositional elements. In fact, it was this Greek backing that alarmed Turkey more than their domicile in this state. It was apparent for Turkey that the Greek authorities provided a convenient environment for these elements to continue their activities. Moreover, the Turkish side saw that these elements were mostly settled in places where mainly were populated by Turkish minority. Hence, they could spread their anti-Kemalist ideas among these people easily. However, it was clear that target of their anti-Kemalist propaganda was not restricted to Turks living in Western Thrace in fact they desired to be heard by Turkish citizens.

Until the first years of the 1930s, there was considerable number of oppositional Turkish elements in Greece. For instance, among them there were people from the list of *yüzellilikler*, the 150 people exiled from Turkey because of their harmful activities during the National Independence War. Among these

figures, there was a group of people who allied with the Greek forces even during the National Independence War. And, these people mostly left the Turkish territories with these forces, when Greece was defeated by the Turkish national forces. Thus, they had been already settled in Greece before they were included to the list of *yüzellilikler*. But, there were also other oppositional figures lived in Greece who were not in this list. These were the people described as ‘fugitives’ by the Turkish sources and who fled from the Turkish territories to Greece both during the National Independence War and afterwards.

Mustafa Sabri was one of the *yüzellilikler* who was accepted by Greece. In fact, he was an influential figure of Damat Ferid’s government and became *şeyhülislam* on March 3, 1919. He was a popular figure among the press which opposed the *İttihat ve Terakki Fırkası* (Committee of Union and Progress). And, in the National Independence War, he acted against the Turkish national forces. For instance, he was very close to *İngiliz Muhipleri Derneği*, which was described in *Nutuk* as an organization that worked for the British mandate over the Turkish territories. However, Mustafa Kemal Paşa added that search for the British mandate was its explicit aim but this organization also worked implicitly for the loss of national consciousness to make foreign rule in Turkey acceptable.<sup>362</sup> Thus, when the National Independence War was concluded with the victory of the Turkish forces, Mustafa Sabri fled from Turkey. He appealed for help from the British embassy and the British authorities carried him and his family to Egypt with a ship. However, there he met harsh opposition of the Egyptian revolutionists because of his articles published in Cairo against the new Turkish state. After moving from Cairo to Lebanon then to Romania, he finally reached to Greece where most of dissidents had already settled.<sup>363</sup>

Gümülcineli İsmail Hakkı was another *yüzellilikler* in Greece. Similar to Mustafa Sabri, he was also anti-Unionist. In 1913, he had to escape to

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<sup>362</sup> Atatürk, *Nutuk*, I, p. 5.

<sup>363</sup> Emin Karaca, *150’lilikler* (İstanbul: Kurtuluş Savaşı Kütüphanesi Altın Kitaplar, 2007), p. 67; Erdeha, *Yüzellilikler*, pp. 199-200.

France after the murder of Mustafa Şevket Paşa<sup>364</sup> as he was one of the suspects. For instance, Cemal Paşa accused him of being one of the organizers of this assassination. Also Cemal Paşa claimed that Gümülcineli İsmail Hakkı was a man who betrayed his country, and received money from Greece. Thus, for Celal Paşa İsmail's return to İstanbul in 1919 as the minister of the Internal Affairs in Damat Ferid's government was 'disastrous' for the empire.<sup>365</sup> Nevroplu Celal Bey also mentioned İsmail's return to İstanbul from Western Thrace in his memoirs. In line with his activities in Western Thrace, Nevroplu Celal bey described him as 'black sheep' within Turks and Muslims.<sup>366</sup> And, he pointed out his continuing links with the *İtilâf ve Hürriyet Fırkası*.<sup>367</sup> In İstanbul, he stayed until the end of the National Independence War. During the war, he worked against Turkish national force, and in Bursa he even collected armed organizations against it.<sup>368</sup> However, with the victory of the Turkish forces, he immediately escaped from İstanbul and moved to Romania. But, finally he arrived to Western Thrace.<sup>369</sup>

Çerkez Ethem and his followers were also ones in the *yüzellilikler* list. In *Nutuk*, Mustafa Kemal Paşa wrote that he first suspected from the activities of Çerkez Ethem and his force called *Kuvay-ı Seyyare* because of their disobedient attitudes towards the Turkish forces. However, Mustafa Kemal Paşa added that on January 6, 1921, during the clash between the Turkish and Greek forces in Gediz, Çerkez Ethem's forces alliance with the Greek forces became visible.<sup>370</sup> On the one hand, İsmet Paşa had to follow Çerkez Ethem's forces towards Kütahya to cease their counter activities, which started in November 1920. On the other hand the Greek forces attacked from Eskişehir, the opposite direction. According to Yunus Nadi, this was a sign of allied

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<sup>364</sup> Erdeha, *Yüzellilikler*, pp. 188-190; Retrieved from <http://www.azinlikca.net/Evren-Dede/bat-trakyada-150likler-ii.html> on June 30, 2010.

<sup>365</sup> Cemal Paşa, *Hatıralar İttihat ve Terakki I. Dünya Savaşı Anıları* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2008), pp. 37-39.

<sup>366</sup> Celal Perin, *Nevroplu Celal Bey'in Hatıraları: Batı Trakya'nın Bitmeyen Çilesi* (İstanbul: Arma Yayınları, 2000), p. 143.

<sup>367</sup> Perin, *Nevroplu Celal Bey'in Hatıraları*, pp. 147-148.

<sup>368</sup> Atatürk, *Nutuk*, I, pp. 186-189.

<sup>369</sup> Erdeha, *Yüzellilikler*, p. 189; Retrieved on <http://www.azinlikca.net/Evren-Dede/bat-trakyada-150likler-ii.html> on June, 2010.

<sup>370</sup> Atatürk, *Nutuk*, II, pp. 27-29, 79-85.



attack.<sup>371</sup> Finally, on January 22, 1921 when Çerkez Ethem's forces and they were defeated, they took the shelter of Greeks and went to İzmir.<sup>372</sup> Four months after, as a result, *Ankara İstiklâl Mahkemesi* (Independence Tribunal) sentenced them to death because of their 'flee to enemy's front'.<sup>373</sup> Then, with the Turkish victory in the National Independence War, they left Anatolia with Greek forces and settled in Greece.<sup>374</sup> The new Turkish state considered them as 'traitors' and the leaders were included in the list of *yüzellilikler*. For instance, Çerkez Ethem, his brothers Çerkez Reşit and Çerkez Tevfik, Düzceli Mehmetoğlu Sami, Kuşçubaşı Eşref, and his brother Kuşçubaşı Hacı Sami were all in this list.<sup>375</sup> But, apart from these names, there were others from this group living in Greece.

Mustafa Neyyir (Uskan) was another figure from the *yüzellilikler* list who lived in Greece. He was a staunch supporter of *Hürriyet ve İtilâf Fırkası* (Freedom and Accord Party) and worked for the Greek intentions during the National Independence War. For instance, in Edirne, he published a newspaper, *Temin*, in which he openly supported the Greek invasion and objected the Turkish national forces' actions.<sup>376</sup> Thanks to his publications, after the Greek invasion of Edirne on July 25, 1920, Greece rewarded him with the post of MP of Edirne in the Greek Parliament. Thus, his propaganda in Edirne gained more ground. Between 1920 and 1922, during the Greek invasion of Thrace, he definitely served the Greek interests. Thus, his activities angered the Turkish forces.<sup>377</sup> And, when the Turkish forces retook Edirne, he left the Turkish territories with these Greek forces and he came to Thessaloniki.

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<sup>371</sup> Yunus Nadi, "On Bir Sene Evvel, Sonra, Daha Sonra? Ve Bugün?", *Cumhuriyet*, 28 June 1931, p. 1: "Çerkes Ethem kardeşlerinin kendileriyle iltihakından kuvvetli ümitlere düşen ve belki onların teşviklerine de kapılan Yunanlılar bağleten üzerimize saldırdılar. Hatta hainlerin düşmanlarla daha önceden anlaşmış oldukları adeta şüphesiz gibidir. Çünkü tam İsmet Paşa Çerkes Ethem kardeşleri ve kuvvetlerini Kütahya illerinde takip ederken Yunanlılar Karaköy üzerinden Eskişehir istikametine saldırarak bizi arkadan vurmak istediler."

<sup>372</sup> Karaca, *150'likler*, p. 75.

<sup>373</sup> Sedat Bingöl, *150'likler Meselesi: Bir İhanetin Anatomisi* (İstanbul: Bengi Yayınları, 2010), p. 185; Erdeha, *Yüzellilikler*, p. 34.

<sup>374</sup> Yunus Nadi, *Çerkes Ethem Kuvvetlerinin İhaneti* (İstanbul: Sel Yayınları, 1955), pp. 123-125.

<sup>375</sup> Erdeha, *Yüzellilikler*, pp. 174-214.

<sup>376</sup> Erdeha, *Yüzellilikler*, p. 203.

<sup>377</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, pp. 180-181.

These were active oppositional Turkish elements in Greece. Thanks to Greek backing, in 1920s and the first years of the 1930s these oppositional elements could easily pursue activities against the new Turkish state. Publishing anti-Kemalist newspapers was their main activity. Particularly during the first years of exchange of populations, Greece encouraged them to publish these newspapers in Thessaloniki. It was a city where all Turkish migrants once visited before they move to Anatolia. So, Greece knew that being subjected to anti-Kemalist propaganda before migration would make these immigrants hostile to the new regime. As a result when they migrated to the Turkish territories, they would turn into rebellious elements. Therefore, the Greek authorities dissolved Turkish newspapers such as *Yeniasır*, pro-Kemalist newspaper, and also banned the entry of newspapers coming from İstanbul. But, on the other hand, Greece allowed publishing of anti-Kemalist newspapers such as *Hakikat* and *İmdat* in Thessaloniki.<sup>378</sup>

The owner of *Hakikat* was Mustafa Neyyir. Indeed, content of this newspaper was a sign of how target reader audience of this anti-Kemalist newspaper was not restricted to the Turkish minority in Greece rather it attempted to attract readers from Turkey. Thus, this newspaper dealt mainly with domestic issues of Turkey such as the abrogation of sultanate on November 1, 1922. For instance, on September 11, 1923, the article of Mustafa Hulusi, “Hilâfet ve Saltanat Meselesi Etrafında” (About the Issue of Sultanate and Caliphate), was published in *Hakikat*. *Hakikat* declared that this article publicized as the views of *Müftülük* in Thessaloniki. The article mainly questioned the possibility of any division between the sultanate and the caliphate within Islam, and argued that any separation in this ‘unity’ (*vahdet*) was not acceptable in Islam.<sup>379</sup> In fact, this attitude was a direct attack to Turkish government which abrogated the sultanate. But, besides these attacks about religious matters, this newspaper also commented about the stability of

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<sup>378</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 180; Erdeha, *Yüzellilikler*, p. 104.

<sup>379</sup> Mustafa Hulusi, “Hilâfet ve Saltanat Mes’esi Etrafında”, *Hakikat*, 11 September 1923 in 17 October 1923: BCA, 030 18 1 7 37 14/86 21, p. 1: “Ehli İslam unsura vahdedde iki kimesneye biat edup iman nasib etmek caiz olur mu? ...bu izahatı inkar edecek bunun hilafını iddia edecek bir İslam tasavvur edilemez.”

the new regime in Turkey. It was argued that the Turkish Republic was about to dissolve.<sup>380</sup> This was similarly in another anti-Kemalist newspaper in Thessaloniki, *İmdat*. For instance, on September 24, 1923, this newspaper published an article, “Ankarada Paşa Sultanın Telâşı” (Panic of the Sultan Paşa in Ankara), depicting the tyranny of the new regime in Anatolia. It was claimed that there was an armed conflict in Aydın between reactionaries and civil servants.<sup>381</sup> In fact, the aim of this article was to present the rule of Ankara government in a panic as it was done in *Hakikat* similarly. And, it was clear that this anti-Kemalist propaganda was made to undermine the confidence of both Turkish minority and Turkish citizens to the new regime in Turkey.

Mustafa Sabri also found a great opportunity to make his propaganda against Ankara in Greece. As a *şeyhülislam* of the Ottoman Empire, he was welcomed by conservative circles among Turkish minority. But, the source of his power was the support of Greek government, and Turkey was very well aware of this.<sup>382</sup> On July 22, 1927, he started to publish an anti-Kemalist newspaper *Yarın* (later renamed as *Peyam-i İslam*) which was first published in Komotini but then was moved to Xanthi.<sup>383</sup> Apparently, this newspaper had a big number of Muslim readers including ones in Turkey.<sup>384</sup> Similar to other anti-Kemalist newspapers, in *Yarın* Mustafa Sabri continuously attacked new regime in Turkey and its reforms.<sup>385</sup> For instance, he did not hesitate to show his hatred about Turkish nationalism as he did in his poem, “Türklükten İstifa Ediyorum!” (I Renounce My Turkishness!). In this poem, he wrote that he was

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<sup>380</sup> Erdeha, *Yüzellikler*, p. 104.

<sup>381</sup> *İmdat*, 24 September 1923 in 17 October 1923: BCA, 030 18 1 7 37 14/86 21, p. 1: “Şimdiye kadar Türklerin zemmam idaresini edebi gasba olan mezalim te’diyatından bıkmış usanmış olan aslen neslen Türk halkının yine bu günlerde yer yer serzide-i zuhur olagelen kıyımlar Asya asayişinin ne derecelere kadar temin edilmiş olduğuna delil-i kafidir.... Aydın kıyamını mütakiben Anadolu’nun kıyamı Ankara memurlarının halk tarafından katli vesairesi elbette Ankarayı oldukça düşündürmeğe sevk etmiştir.... [Paşa Sultanın telâşı hududdan efun].... Bu kıyamın teşkili Millet Meclisinde mevzu bahis olurken yendiklerine alenen ve meclis içerisinde [ha’in-i vatan] yaygaralarıyla bağırışıyorlar.”

<sup>382</sup> *Belgelerle Mustafa Kemal Atatürk ve Türk-Bulgar İlişkileri*, pp. 781-782.

<sup>383</sup> 8 October 1930: BCA, 030 18 2 14 63 17, p. 1.

<sup>384</sup> Adil Özgüç, *Batı Trakya Türkleri* (İstanbul: Kutluğ Yayınları, 1974), pp. 121-122.

<sup>385</sup> Özgüç, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, pp. 120-123; Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, pp. 185-186.

ashamed of being a Turk and he defined Turkish nationalism as ‘a disease’, added that he would never desire to be known as a Turk.<sup>386</sup>

His activities actually drew the attention of Turkish authorities in Greece. For instance, his article, “Din ve Millet” (Religion and Nation), published in *Yarın* on July 25, 1930 was sent to Ankara. Mustafa Sabri, in “Din ve Millet” argued that a state with a national mind, which ignored others and limited rights and justice of them, could not prevent the infiltration of communism on its territories. According to him, this was because the loss of moral instrument such as religion, which could fight against the infiltration of communism.<sup>387</sup> In fact, it was clear that with this argument of national mind he meant new Turkish state and apparently threatened Turkish citizens with communism as long as they supported this regime. Added to this, he both blamed Unionist past and Kemalist regime of the time as behaving discriminatory against Muslims of other nations such as Albanians, Kurds, Arabs, Georgians, and Bosnians. He argued that this kind of behaviour was against the legacy of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>388</sup> He described the establishment of new regime in Turkey as ‘an invasion of Ankara by Islam’s enemy’. According to him, Muslims in Turkey were suffering. Thus, he asked why Muslims of other nations did not defend these Muslims in Turkey against so-called ‘Kemalist invasion’.<sup>389</sup> According to him, it was the context of nationalism that

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<sup>386</sup> Karaca, *150’likler*, pp. 222-235.

<sup>387</sup> Mustafa Sabri, “Din ve Millet”, *Yarın*, 25 July 1930, in 030 18 2 14 63 17/86 103, p. 1: “...kendisinden başkasını tanımayan ve başkalarına karşı hak ve adalet ahkâmı ile mukayyed olmayan milli zihniyetlerde komünistlik ve Bolşeviklik yağmacılığına mani olacak bir manevi bir kuvvet yoktur. Binaenaleyh bu tehlikelerin karşısına çıkacak kuvvet... din kuvvetidir.”

<sup>388</sup> Mustafa Sabri, “Din ve Millet”, *Yarın*, 25 July 1930, in 030 18 2 14 63 17/86 103, p. 1: “Müslüman Türklerin hepsinin de benim gibi Arab nısfına tercih ettiğini ve sair unsur-u İslâmı kendilerinden ayrı gayrı ad etmediğini, Osmanlı Sultanlarının Türk kadar ve belki daha ziyade Arnavuttan, Arabdan, Çerkezden, Boşnakdan, Kürden, Gürcüden, vükela ve vuzerası bulunduğu unutup dünkü İttihatçılarla bugünkü Kemalistlerin milli münasebetsizliklerini Türkel mal ederek kendilerinin de umumi bir tarzda mukabil millet davaları takibine koyulduklarını görüyoruz.”

<sup>389</sup> Mustafa Sabri, “Din ve Millet”, *Yarın*, 25 July 1930, in 030 18 2 14 63 17/86 103, pp. 1-2: “Bir de alem yanlış millet davalarından vazgeçmiyor diye bizim de onlara hiddetlenerek muvazi bir yanlış yol takib etmemiz lazım gelmez ya. Türkiyeden ayrılan İslâm milletlerini İttihatçıların ve Kemalistlerin hareketi şaşırttı ise bize de yeniden onların şaşkınlığını tenzih etmek vazifesi tertib etmez. Evet Müslümanlar milletler harb-u umumiden sonra taraf hak kendi memleketlerinin ve milletlerinin derdine düştüler. Fakat alem-i İslâmın başına gelen son felaketler ibtida Türkün başına geldi. Türkiye din düşmanı Ankara hükümetinin istilası üzerine

made the Islamic world ignored sufferings of Turkish Muslims. And, he implied that these Islamic states were also guilty as Ankara government for 'Turks' retreat from Islam'.<sup>390</sup> Clearly, this was a call for the Islamic world to interfere in the new regime of Turkey. However, these Islamic states were mainly under the mandate regime for those years. Thus, it must be a call to the master of these states.

Mustafa Sabri time to time pursued his anti-Kemalist activities together with other oppositional Turkish elements in Greece. For instance, he had a very close relationship with Ali Vasfi, who was appointed as the chairman of *İskeçe Cemaat-i İslamiye* (Islamic Community in Xanthi). Additionally, Ali Vasfi was a school director and president of some pious foundations. Thanks to the Greek support, he could provide Mustafa Sabri with an opportunity to become a civil servant and his son to become a teacher. Moreover, he moved the printing house of *Yarın* to one room of these pious foundations in Xanthi.<sup>391</sup>

Mustafa Sabri also acted together with Gümülcineli İsmail, other active name of *yüzellilikler*. In fact, previously these two were rivals within the cabinet of Damat Ferid. However, with the same aim of propaganda against the Turkish Republic, they became closer and planned to visit the last sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Vahdettin in France. In this visit, they asked for financial support with which they would publish a newspaper called *İntakı Hak*. With this newspaper they wanted to defend the rights of all politicians who either escaped or expelled from Turkey.<sup>392</sup> This idea was welcomed by Vahdettin,

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Ankara tahribine karşı müdafa edemezler miydi? Ankaranın sefirlerini ve şebenderlerini Hicazdan, Mısırdan, Iraktan, Şamdan kovamazlar mıydı? “

<sup>390</sup> Mustafa Sabri, “Din ve Millet”, *Yarın*, 25 July 1930, in 030 18 2 14 63 17/86 103, p. 2: “..Türkiye'nin Müslüman efradı vatansız kalınca onlara karşı hiçbir İslam mahiyeti kapısını ve kollarını açmadı etraftan bulunan İslam Hükümetlerinin, İslam gazetelerinin, İslam ulemasının yeni Türkiye'de dinini ve arzını kaçırmak mecburiyetinde kalan Müslümanlar nereye geçecek diye düşünmek akıllarını bile gelmedi. Bir yere gidemeyip kalanlar şapka giyinmemek için hanelerinde ölünceye kadar habis-i nefis etmeğe karar verenler ne olacak? ... Türk Müslümanları göz göre göre dinlerini .. unutup gidecekler mi? ... Merhum babalarının mahrum çocuklarının vebali yalnız Ankara Hükümetine mi aid olacak? ... Ankara Hükümeti, din-i İslamın üzerinde horra teperken dans ederken mutlaka keyfine bırakmazlardı. Nasıl ki hali hazırda Müslüman Devletlerin de dindaşları yerine milletdaşları Ankara tazyiki altında bulunsaydı her taraftan medahaleler vukuu bulurdu, matbuat yaygaralarının arksı kesilmezdi.”

<sup>391</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, pp. 199.

<sup>392</sup> Karaca, *150'likler*, pp. 204-207.

and he gave 2,000 pounds to them. However, Gümülcineli İsmail spent this money in France, thus, there was no money left to publish the newspaper.<sup>393</sup> Then, in 1927 he contacted with Armenian committee, *Taşnaksagan*, and he took 25,000 francs from this committee for the same idea of publishing an anti-Kemalist newspaper. However, he did not again publish this newspaper.<sup>394</sup> Similarly, he contacted to committees of Greek migrants in Komotini, who came from Anatolia, to ask for financial support to his idea of publishing a newspaper.<sup>395</sup> But, it was the Greek authorities that financially supported him, and they gave him 25,000 drachmas.<sup>396</sup>

Although Gümülcineli İsmail could not publish this newspaper, there was an active anti-Kemalist publishing in Komotini. For instance, there was *Adalet*, published by Aziz Nuri, one of the *yüzellilikler* in Greece.<sup>397</sup> Similarly, there was *Balkan*, which was the mouthpiece of ‘fugitives’ (ones from Çerkez Ethem’s forces) who left the Turkish territories with the Greek forces. The owner of this newspaper was Karaferyeli Hasan Mustafa but it was actually paid by the Greek government. And, it was started to be a just after the Lausanne Conference.<sup>398</sup> In Komotini, he also published a booklet called *Posta*. This was also one of the anti-Kemalist publications in this region. Particularly, during the Şeyh Said rebellion, Karaferyeli Hasan Mustafa published articles in this booklet that persistently showed Turkey in a trouble. Apparently, this was to undermine confidence towards the stability of new regime in Turkey.<sup>399</sup>

The Turkish authorities in Komotini, however, were definitely aware of these oppositional activities. For instance, the Turkish embassy in Athens sent a report to the Foreign Ministry on October 13, 1930, and it was based on the remarks of the Turkish consulate in Komotini. In this report, it was pointed out

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<sup>393</sup> Bingöl, *150’likler Meselesi*, p. 156.

<sup>394</sup> Bingöl, *150’likler Meselesi*, p. 156.

<sup>395</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 199.

<sup>396</sup> Retrieved from [www.azınlıkca.net/Evren-Dede/bat-trakyada-150likler-ii-html](http://www.azınlıkca.net/Evren-Dede/bat-trakyada-150likler-ii-html) on June 30 2010.

<sup>397</sup> Özgüç, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 123.

<sup>398</sup> Özgüç, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 119.

<sup>399</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 182.

that most of the oppositional Turkish elements, both *yüzellilikler* and ‘fugitives’, were settled in Komotini. It was written that inevitably this place turned into a centre of ‘harmful propaganda’ towards the Turkish state.<sup>400</sup> Indeed, as mentioned previously, in the first years of exchange of populations it was Thessaloniki that this anti-Kemalist propaganda was centred. However, after a short amount of time, the centre of anti-Kemalist activities shifted from Thessaloniki to Komotini, which hosted nearly half of the oppositional elements.

In Xanthi, however, there were also activities. For instance, *İmdat*, a popular anti-Kemalist newspaper, was started to be published there, and it was moved from Thessaloniki. *Îtilâ*, another anti-Kemalist newspaper, was also published there. Binbaşı Çopur İsmail Hakkı, one of the *yüzellilikler* in Greece, was the owner of this newspaper.<sup>401</sup> On November 24, 1926 *Cumhuriyet* reported the views of the pro-Kemalist circle in Xanthi about this newspaper as if it was once read then its commitment to Greek interests would be easily understood. According to these Kemalist elements, it was evident that *Îtilâ* was published with the Greek support.<sup>402</sup>

It was, in fact, these kinds of supports to anti-Kemalist propaganda that made Turkey suspect about Greek intentions to destabilize its regime, in a period when the Kemalist government was working to consolidate its power. Thus, an anti-Kemalist structuring particularly in a country such as Greece, neighbour of Turkey, was alarming for Turkey, since oppositional ideas could infiltrate easily. In the same period, there was also the movement of populations on this Turkish-Greek border so that this Turkish concern for infiltration of anti-Kemalist ideas was intensified. It was clear that publishing

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<sup>400</sup> 13 October 1930: BCA, 030 10 107 697 5, p. 1: “Gümölcine Konsolosluğundan Atina Elçiliğine yazılıp oradan da Vekâletimize gönderilen bir tahrirat suretinde yüzelliliklerle firarilerin merkezi fa’aliyeti olan Gümölcine eşhası mezkurenin muzir propagandalarına mani..”

<sup>401</sup> Özgüç, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, pp. 119-120.

<sup>402</sup> “Garbi Trakyada Neler Oluyor?”, *Cumhuriyet*, 24 November 1926, p. 2. “Yunan Hükümeti inayesiyle intizad ettiği şübhemiz olmayan, sahib ve muharrirleri bunlardan ibaret bulunan “Îtilâ” ismindeki bu paçavra bir kere okunacak olursa hükümeti Yunanistanın bu gazeteye ..... anlaşılır. ... şurasını anlamak mecburiyetindeyiz ki Yunan Hükümeti Türkiyeye karşı iyi bir niyet beslemez..... Yunan “Megalo İdea”nın tekrar ihyasına çalışacaktır.”

activities of these oppositional elements aimed to reach to Turkish readers to provoke them towards the new regime. Thus, Turkey was circumspect about their activities and the Greek support for them in the context of its ideological concern.

However, anti-Kemalist publications were not the sole anti-Kemalist activities. Turkey knew that the pro-Kemalist circle in Greece also encountered with problems at the same period. Particularly in 1920s and the first years of 1930s, Turkey saw that the Kemalist presence in Greece was considered as problematic by the Greek side. It was because of their resistance to anti-Kemalist activities for the Turkish point of view. According to Turkey, as a part of Greek intention to destabilize its regime, this Kemalist group faced with pressures in Greece. Thus, this pressure also disturbed Turkey in line with its ideological concerns.

### **3.1.2. RESISTANCE AND VIOLENCE: KEMALIST TURKISH MINORITY IN GREECE**

Arresting Kemalists was the main method of the Greek government in suppressing this Kemalist Turkish minority.<sup>403</sup> In 1924, these arrests reached to a point that even angered the deputies in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. Thus, on February 12, Esad Bey and his friends, wanted the surveillance of the Foreign Ministry about the thirty-six arrests which the Greek authorities accused them of ‘testing the ways of revolution or autonomy’ in Western Thrace. And, the Turkish deputies underlined that these people were charged with the severe punishments such as a death penalty.<sup>404</sup> In the following years, the Greek authorities also used this mechanism towards the publishers of the Kemalist newspapers in Western Thrace. For instance, in 1929 Mehmet Hilmi, the publisher of *Yeni Adım*, was arrested.<sup>405</sup>

What the Greek authorities did against Kemalist Turkish minority, however, was not restricted to these arrests. Turkey knew that Greece also

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<sup>403</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, pp. 67-68.

<sup>404</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 68.

<sup>405</sup> 11 February 1929: BCA, 030 10 254 711 3, p. 3.



collaborated with the anti-Kemalists, and backed their attacks towards the Kemalists. For instance, Firuz Kesim, who was the Turkish consul in Komotini in the period between 1924 and 1927, pointed out the problems encountered by ‘benign’ Turks. He claimed that anti-Kemalists, composed of the *yüzellilikler* and political fugitives, and *Rums*, recently migrated from Anatolia after the Greek defeat, attacked these people. Particularly, some Greek authorities, who could not accept the defeat they witnessed in Anatolia, were dedicated to support their attacks. According to Firuz Kesim, these Turks were attacked mainly because anti-Kemalist forces could only smuggle their ideas easily on Turkish borders with the loss of Turkish presence on the border.<sup>406</sup> Apparently, this showed how the Kemalists were considered as an obstacle for them.

The Kemalist Turkish minority believed that there was a Greek support to the anti-Kemalist structure for attacks they had to face. Particularly in Kemalist newspapers, this Greek favour for these opponents of Turkey at the expense of them was highlighted. Mehmet Hilmi, the publisher of pro-Kemalist *Yeni Adım*, for example, wrote an article, “Türkiya Kaçakları Atina Kapılarında” (The Turkish Fugitives are on the Gate of Athens), on February 15, 1930. In this article, he wrote that there were many states such as Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Egypt, Cyprus, France and Sweden that hosted these Turkish ‘fugitives’ similar to Greece. But, none of these states allowed pressure of these people on Turks as Greece did. In Greece, however, these people were provided with privileges. For instance, the Greek authorities appointed them to

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<sup>406</sup> Firuz Kesim, “Yunanistan’dan Anadolu’ya Geçerek: Atatürk’ü öldürmek İstemişler!..”, *Yakın Tarihimiz Birinci Meşrutiyetten Zamanımıza Kadar*, II (İstanbul: Vatan Gazetecilik ve Matbaacılık, 1962), p. 11: “Bundan tam otuzbeş yıl evvel, Garbî Trakyanın merkezi Gümülcine’de şehbender (Konsolos) bulunduğum sırada, Gümülcine âdetâ bir yüzellilikler yuvası hâlinde idi. Burada yüzelliliklerin yarısı demek olan, yetmişbeşten fazlası bulunduğu gibi, bir sürü de politika firârîsi ve Türkiyeden yeni göçmüş Rumlar vardı. Bunları tâkip etmek, harekât ve sekenatları ile sıkı surette alâkadar olmak, esas vazifelerimin başında geliyordu. Gümülcine’den başka, İskece ve bir kısım da Kavala’da bulunan bu hainler Yunan hükümetinden ve bize muhalif olan yerlilerden yüz bularak, mütemediyen alehimizde tahrikâtтан geri durmuyorlardı...hele Anadoluda uğradıkları mağlûbiyeti bir türlü zamandemeyen, hükümet erkânının ve kumandanlarla yerlilerin mütemedâî teşvikleri ile bize o zamanki Rumlardan fazla düşman kesilen bu vatan hainleri, oradaki, bütün kalpleriyle tertemiz Türkleri de tâciz ederek sokuldukları hudutlarımızda envai türlü tahrikât yapmaktan bir an geri durmuyorlardı. ”

influential positions in the Turkish institutions. Thus, with this official support, they had an opportunity to apply coercive policies to the Kemalists.<sup>407</sup>

Çerkez Ethem's men in Greece, for example, were one of these anti-Kemalists, which was provided with money and degree by the Greek authorities, and they physically attacked these people.<sup>408</sup> However, definitely, the problem Kemalists encountered in Greece was not limited to these physical attacks. There were also pressures towards their life styles. This was felt mainly when they wanted to learn Latin alphabet or wear hat in accordance with Turkish reforms. At this point, it was apparent for Turkey that Greece used the religious legitimacy of some oppositional Turkish elements to fight with these people, supporting the Turkish reforms. At this point, the efforts of Mustafa Sabri were considerable. It was apparent that with his residence in Greece, as the *şeyhülislam* of the Ottoman Empire, there emerged more conservative outlook among Turkish minority. With his son İbrahim Sabri, the other name from the *yüzellilikler* list in Greece, he distributed religious books to Turkish schools.<sup>409</sup> He even designed to establish a chair of caliphate in Western Thrace.<sup>410</sup>

However, this new outlook damaged the unity of Turks in Greece. Mustafa Sabri and his supporters persistently provoked the conservatives against the Kemalists. And, this was highly welcomed by the Greek authorities, which sought the ways of fighting with these Kemalists. In order to obtain the Greek government's support, Mustafa Sabri with Ali Vasfi, and three other names probably from the list of *yüzellilikler*, initially contacted with the Greek authorities and presented themselves as powerful enough to cease 'Turkishness' among the Turkish minority in Greece. They claimed that with the end of this national identity, Greece would be rescued from Kemalist Turks, following the directives of Ankara in Greece.<sup>411</sup>

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<sup>407</sup> Karaca, *150'likler*, pp. 218-219.

<sup>408</sup> Erdeha, *Yüzellilikler*, pp. 98-100.

<sup>409</sup> Bingöl, *150'likler Meselesi*, p. 185.

<sup>410</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, pp. 198.

<sup>411</sup> Karaca, *150'likler*, p. 220.

Accordingly, in their propaganda organs, they always targeted the Kemalists. For instance, Mustafa Sabri and Ali Vasfi, the chairman of *İskeçe Cemaat-i İslamiye*, gave a *fetva* which claimed that the ones dancing and wearing hats, were ‘infidels’.<sup>412</sup> This was clearly a sign of pressure the Kemalists had to face in Greece. In November 1926, these Kemalists even wrote a letter to *Cumhuriyet* to complain about the problems in wearing hats. *Cumhuriyet* reported this letter with the heading of “Garbî Trakyada Neler Oluyor?” (What is happening in Western Thrace?). In this letter, they wrote that the anti-Kemalists accused them with acting ungratefully to Greece when they followed the Turkish reforms.<sup>413</sup> More importantly, they wrote that when they wore hats, the anti-Kemalists presented them as dreaming to become ‘a citizen’ of Turkey;<sup>414</sup> hence ‘the hat’ became the symbol of loyalty to new Turkey.

This implied that the Kemalists aimed the annexation of Western Thrace to Turkey. In fact, this was same with the Greek argument which was used to explain its pressure on the Kemalists. However, for Turkey it meant nothing more than a pretext. Turkey knew that with suppression of the Kemalists, Greece aimed to continue its policy of creating anti-Kemalist forces in its country. Thus, apparently, Greek support for anti-Kemalist propaganda was valid for attacks towards the Kemalist presence.

### 3.1.3. TURKEY’S COUNTER-OFFENSIVE IN GREECE

Sharing the common borders, Turkey knew that it was easy for oppositional Turkish elements, thanks to the Greek support, to diffuse their anti-Kemalist ideas in the Turkish territories. This made the Turkish government initially took necessary steps within its own territories. For instance, on August 26, 1925, although this was not limited to the *yüzellilikler* in Greece, with the cabinet decision, a communication with these people from

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<sup>412</sup> Karaca, *150’likler*, p. 221.

<sup>413</sup> “Garbi Trakyada Neler Oluyor? Softaların Tezvirini, Yunan Hükûmetinin Maksurlarını, Yahudilerin Siyasetini Vuzuhad Gösteren Bir Mektub”, *Cumhuriyet*, 24 November 1926, p. 2.

<sup>414</sup> “Garbi Trakyada Neler Oluyor? Softaların Tezvirini, Yunan Hükûmetinin Maksurlarını, Yahudilerin Siyasetini Vuzuhad Gösteren Bir Mektub”, *Cumhuriyet*, 24 November 1926, p. 2.

the list of the *yüzellilikler* was forbidden in Turkey.<sup>415</sup> This was a measure taken against ongoing oppositional activities against its new regime outside Turkey, as it was particularly seen in the Greek case. However, in this period the Turkish government also took other legal measures against activities of the *yüzellilikler* that Greece hosted. For instance, a censorship was applied to their publishing organs, and entrance of these papers to Turkey was banned. On October 17, 1923, just before the establishment of the Republican regime, for example, the anti-Kemalist newspapers in Thessaloniki, *Hakikat* and *İmdad*, were banned in Turkey.<sup>416</sup> Then, another anti-Kemalist newspaper published in Komotini, *Balkan*, because of its ‘detrimental content’<sup>417</sup> was banned in 1925.<sup>418</sup> This was the newspaper of Hasan Mustafa and his other anti-Kemalist publication again in Komotini, a booklet called *Posta*, was also banned in the same year.<sup>419</sup> One year later, *Adalet*, similarly published in Komotini, was also banned.<sup>420</sup> Finally, on October 8, 1930 the propaganda organ of Mustafa Sabri, *Yarın*, was banned.<sup>421</sup> However, apparently, Turkey knew that these responses were not enough to fight against anti-Kemalist activities that enjoyed a great Greek backing.

The Turkish government, for example, used diplomatic pressures on Greece, and these were mainly for the expulsion of the oppositional Turkish elements from its lands. From the very beginning, indeed, this expulsion issue was highlighted by the Turkish authorities, who observed the power of anti-Kemalist activities in Greece. For instance, according to Hamdi Bey, a member of Turkish delegation in the Mixed Commission, Ankara should first work for the expulsion of Çerkez Ethem and other ‘fugitives’ from Greece.<sup>422</sup> However, it was in 1927 that for the first time the Turkish government asked Greece to

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<sup>415</sup> 26 August 1925: BCA, 030 18 1 15 54 10.

<sup>416</sup> 17 October 1923: BCA, 030 18 1 7 37 14.

<sup>417</sup> Boyar, *Ottomans, Turks and the Balkans*, p. 121.

<sup>418</sup> 23 November 1925: BCA, 030 18 1 16 72 4.

<sup>419</sup> 29 April 1925: BCA, 030 18 1 13 25 17.

<sup>420</sup> 10 May 1926: BCA, 030 18 1 18 17 11.

<sup>421</sup> 8 October 1930: BCA, 030 18 2 14 63 17, p. 1: “Yüzelliliklerden Mustafa Sabri tarafından Gümülcinede çıkarılıp son zamanlarda İskeçede nakl olunmuş olan (Yarın) unvanlı gazetenin aleyhimizde hezeyanımız neşriyatta bulunduğu anlaşıldığından memleketimize sokulmasının men’i...”

<sup>422</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 67.

expel these dissidents at ministerial level. Turkey appointed Cevat Bey (Mehmet Cevat Açıkalın), a staff of Turkish Foreign Ministry, to submit the Turkish note to the Greek authorities, asking for the transfer of oppositional elements first from Western Thrace and then their expulsion from Greece. A list of names that should be expelled to the other places from Greece was also annexed to this diplomatic note. This list included twelve names such as Çopur Hakkı, Süngülü Çerkez Davut, Aziz Nuri, and Mustafa Sabri. Additionally, in this diplomatic note the Turkish side asked Greece not to allow the residence of ones from Çerkez Ethem's force any more in its lands.<sup>423</sup>

In addition to these Turkish calls for the removal of oppositional elements, Turkey also put diplomatic pressure on Greece about anti-Kemalist publications. In the diplomatic note mentioned above, for example, the Turkish side also asked for the publication ban of *î'tilâ*.<sup>424</sup> Moreover, the Turkish government ordered the Turkish embassy in Athens to make an attempt against the publications of this newspaper targeted the Turkish Republic.<sup>425</sup> Similarly, the Turkish ambassador in Athens diplomatically countered the publications of *Balkan*, particularly to one which was written against Gazi Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk). This was published in July of 1928, with 'immoral expressions' about the President of Turkey. Initially, the Turkish ambassador went to the Greek Foreign Ministry to ask for the punishment of the owner of *Balkan*. Then, he also met with Venizelos, who just became the Prime Minister. Venizelos guaranteed the Turkish ambassador that the Greek authorities would deal with the issue. However, during the judicial inquiry, the court in Komotini gave 'an absurd' decision according to Turkish view. Although Hasan Mustafa was found guilty, he was left free and he could publish this article once more in his newspaper.<sup>426</sup> However, with persistent efforts of the Turkish authorities,

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<sup>423</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.azinlikca.net/Evren-Dede/bat-trakyada-150likler-v.html> on June 30, 2010.

<sup>424</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.azinlikca.net/Evren-Dede/bat-trakyada-150likler-v.html> on June 30, 2010.

<sup>425</sup> Bingöl, *150'likler Meselesi*, p. 154.

<sup>426</sup> 20 January 1930: BCA, 030 10 86 567 11, p. 1: "Firarilerden Karaferyeli (Hasan) tarafından Gümülcinede çıkarılmakta olan (Balkan) gazetesinin 1928 senesi temmuzunda Reiscumhur Hazretleri hakkında bidedbane neşriyatta bulunması üzerine Atina Elçiliğimiz Yunan Hariciye

he was finally sentenced to three and half year imprisonment. But, this punishment was even delayed for three years.<sup>427</sup>

Although it was clear that diplomatic pressures on Greece did not show an effect, the Turkish government used this also for the end of suppression on the Kemalists. However, this time diplomatic channels at international scale were used as a way of voicing the problems these people encountered in Greece. The Mixed Exchange Commission, for example, was considered as a significant opportunity to make these problems heard at international level. From the very beginning, the Turkish delegation in this Commission, described the main problem of Turkish minority as the power of oppositional Turkish elements that Greece hosted in Western Thrace.<sup>428</sup> And, they tried to convince the Commission members to make more visits to Western Thrace to observe the problems there. For instance, in May 1925, the Commission accepted to organize a visit to listen the problems of these people.<sup>429</sup> Firuz Kesim, the Turkish consul in Komotini, was also present at this visit of the Commission, and he reported his remarks to Ankara later. In this report, he wrote that the members of Commission came together with the group of Turks which came from Komotini, Aleksandropolis, and Didymoteicho (Dimetoka). The Greek authorities also participated to this meeting. In front of the commission members, these people talked about their problems. It was apparent that the activities of *İskeçe Cemaat-i İslamiye* (Islamic Community of İskeçe) were problematic for these people.<sup>430</sup> With persistent efforts of Turkish delegation,

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nezaretinin ehemmiyetle nazarı dikkatini celbederek (Balkan) gazetesi sahibinin cezalandırılmasını talep etmişti. Elçiliğimizin neşriyat hakkında ayrıca Yunan Başvekili nezdinde yaptığı teşebbüse M. Venizelos tarafından verilen cevapta; mezkur gazete aleyhinde takibata adliye icrası için memurini iadesine talimat verildiği bildirilmiştir. Ancak, bu teşebbüsat üzerine icra kılınan muhakeme neticesinde Gümölcine Yunan mahkemesi gayet garip bir karar vererek (Balkan) gazetesinin mevzubahs neşriyatının bir cürmü kanuni olduğunu kabul etmekle beraber Türk ceza kanununda bu gibi neşriyata mütecasir olanların cezalandırılmalarını amir bir madde mevcut olup olmadığı kendisince meçhul bulunduğu behanesile adli tatbikatı tatil eylemiş ve bu fırsattan istifade eden (Hasan) mahkemenin işbu kararını gazetesinde neşrederek Reiscumhur Hazretleri hakkında küstahane yazıyı tekrar derceylemiş idi.”

<sup>427</sup> 20 January 1930: BCA, 030 10 86 567 11, p. 12.

<sup>428</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 67.

<sup>429</sup> 12 May 1925: BCA, 030 10 253 708 44.

<sup>430</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 68.

the Commission made another visit to this region on November 8, 1928. In this visit, the members of Commission faced with a case of Muslim boy. The mother of this boy complained to them about a Turkish school, which did not accept his son to attend as he wore hat instead of the *fez* (a traditional hat from the period of Ottoman Empire). The Turkish delegation insisted on to carry this problem to the agenda of the Mixed Commission. They claimed that this picture of suppression was the result of Greek support to the anti-Kemalists. However, the Greek delegation did not accept this.<sup>431</sup> Besides daily life problems, arrests of the Kemalists also drew the attention of the Turkish delegation in the Mixed Commission. For instance, on February 6, 1924 Hamdi Bey sent a report with a secret code to the Prime Ministry in which he pointed out how the Turkish government should take necessary steps for the release of those arrested Turks.<sup>432</sup> Unknown whether it was related with this report or not, six days later a group of MPs in the Turkish Parliament also called the Turkish government to do something for these arrests. Then, the Foreign Ministry charged the Turkish chargé d'affaires in Athens and the Turkish consul in Komotini to deal with these arrests and take necessary measure.<sup>433</sup>

However, it was apparent for the Turkish side that these diplomatic protests whether at inter-state or international level did not show a clear effect. Thus, in addition to these diplomatic tools, the Turkish government considered supporting the Kemalists as another way of response. Therefore, the Turkish authorities in Greece established close relations with some active Kemalists in Greece, and supported them whenever it was possible. With these supports to the Kemalists, Turkey enjoyed a chance of successful counter-propaganda against anti-Kemalist forces. One of these active Kemalists was definitely Mehmet Hilmi. Obviously, he was an influential name for the Kemalist publications. On June 10, 1924, for example, he started to publish the first Turkish newspaper in Greece after the Lausanne Treaty, which was called *Yeni*

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<sup>431</sup> Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities*, pp. 493-495.

<sup>432</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 67.

<sup>433</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 68.

*Ziya*.<sup>434</sup> However, the place where he published this newspaper, Thessaloniki, was noteworthy. It was known that this city became the centre of anti-Kemalist publications for one or two years after the Lausanne Treaty. Most probably, he did this to decrease the influence of this anti-Kemalist propaganda there. Then, when Turkish populations were exchanged, the anti-Kemalist publications moved from Thessaloniki to Xanthi and Komotini. Similarly, Mehmet Hilmi moved his newspaper to Xanthi. However, his counter-propaganda disturbed the Greek authorities, and he was exiled to one island in the Aegean Sea. When he returned to Western Thrace, he started to publish *Yeni Yol*, which was also closed by the Greek authorities. Then, he started to publish *Yeni Adım* in 1926. But, in this period, he was exiled two more times.<sup>435</sup>

These attitudes of the Greek authorities showed how he was *persona non grata* for them. However, the picture was directly the contrary for the Turkish side. Obviously, his counter-propaganda activities were welcomed in Turkey. Although there were no documents showing the Turkish support for his activities, it was clear that he had close relations particularly with the Turkish consulate in Komotini. On January 30, 1929, he was interrogated. But, the report of Fuat (Akman), who replaced Firuz Kesim and became the Turkish consul in Komotini in the period between 1927 and 1929, showed how Mehmet Hilmi met with him both before and after his interrogation.<sup>436</sup> Moreover, his interrogation clearly attracted the attention of Turkish Prime Ministry. In the report sent to Prime Ministry from Foreign Ministry it was written that in a case of intensification in this interrogation, then the Turkish embassy in Athens would take the necessary steps in line with the given instructions.<sup>437</sup>

In fact, the case of Mehmet Hilmi revealed the close relation between the Kemalist circle and the Turkish authorities in Western Thrace. Similarly,

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<sup>434</sup> Özgüç, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, pp. 117-120; Karaca, *150'likler*, p. 215.

<sup>435</sup> Özgüç, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, pp. 117-120; Karaca, *150'likler*, p. 215.

<sup>436</sup> 10 February 1929. BCA, 030 10 254 711 3, p. 1: "İstintaktan evvel ve sonra bendenizi gördü. Dokuz şubat sabahı kendisinden mektup aldım. Tevkifine dair rivayet bile olmadığı maruzdur."

<sup>437</sup> 27 February 1929: BCA, 030 10 254 711 3, p. 3.



one year later, the new Turkish consul in Komotini, Ahmet Muhtar (Batur), sent a report to ask for the financial support of Ankara for the Kemalist political club in Komotini. Initially, he wrote that Komotini continued to be the centre of *yüzellilikler* and fugitives, which was first declared by Firuz Kesim (the first Turkish consul in Gümülcine). In this report, he gave information about how Turkish youths in Komotini established a political club in order to counter this anti-Kemalist propaganda or at least to decrease its influence. He wrote that these youths clearly made this to publish and diffuse the principles of Turkish revolution in Komotini. However, this club was under the risk of closure with severe financial problems, and they were in need of 40,000 drachmas. According to him, as a counter-offensive for anti-Kemalist propaganda Turkey could use this club. Thus, financial support to this Kemalist club would be highly beneficial for Turkey.<sup>438</sup>

Indeed, this club was not the first case that the Turkish consul in Komotini introduced the Kemalist activities in Western Thrace to Ankara. For instance, six months before, on April of 1930, he also sent a copy of the first issue of *İnkılâp*, published in Latin alphabet. This was the Kemalist newspaper started to be published on March 21, 1930 in Xanthi by Osman Nuri (a teacher) and Hıfzı Abdurrahman. In its first copy, *İnkılâp* described itself as potentially the most significant advocator of Turkish rights in Western Thrace and asked Turks to read this newspaper.<sup>439</sup> In fact, it was clear that this newspaper was a devoted follower of reforms in Turkey such as the reform in alphabet. For

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<sup>438</sup> 13 October 1930: BCA, 030 10 107 697 5, p. 1: “Gümülcine Konsolosluğundan Atina Elçiliğine yazılıp oradan da Vekaletimize gönderilen bir tahrirat suretinde yüzelliliklerle firarilerin merkezi fa’aliyeti olan Gümülcine eşhası mezkurenin muzir propagandalarına mani olmak ve hiç olmazsa bunların tesiratını tahdit eylemek ve gençlerarasında inkılap prensiplerini neşr ve tamim etmek maksadile mahalli gençleri tarafından siyasi bir kulüp tesis edilmiş ve kulüp bir çok müşkilat içinde idameyi mevcudiyete gayret etmekte bulunmuş ise de hiçbir taraftan maddi muavenete mazhar olamaması dolayısıyla klübün maalesef kapanmak tehlikesine maruz bulunduğu ve buna hükümetimizce yardım edilecek olursa Memleketimiz ve teceddüdün birer müdafii olan bu gençlerin menfi propagandalara karşı hayli faidelerinin dokunacağı beyan kılınmakta ve bu mütaleaya Elçilikçede iştirak edilmektedir. Mevzuibahis klübün vaziyeti iktisadiyesini islahının, kırk bin drahminin tahsis ve itasına mütevakkip bulunduğu maruülarz iş’arattan anlaşılmağla arzı keyfiyet eylerim, Efendim Hazretleri. (Hariciye Vekili’nden Yüksek Baş-Vekalet)”

<sup>439</sup> *İnkılâp*, 21 March 1930 in 21 May 1930: BCA, 030 10 83 548 24, p. 1: “Türkler (İnkılâb) alınız, okuyunuz ve okutunuz. Hakkımızın en kuvvetli müdafii (İnkılâp) olacaktır.”

instance, it was written that learning the new alphabet was ‘the first job’ of all modern Turks.<sup>440</sup> Particularly, in May, this newspaper published articles to encourage teachers to learn this new alphabet during their holiday.<sup>441</sup> But, besides this encouragement for following reforms in Turkey, this newspaper also fought against the anti-Kemalist propaganda in Greece. For instance, they published harsh criticisms about Mustafa Sabri and his propaganda organ, *Yarın*.<sup>442</sup> Most probably, this counter-propaganda was welcomed by the Turkish authorities. However, there was no document showing the direct support of the Turkish government on this Kemalist newspaper, although it was immediately introduced to Ankara. This was apparently a short lived newspaper, which published its last issue on May 7, 1931. This was, according to Hikmet Öksüz, because of problems between the owners of this newspaper.<sup>443</sup> However, probably, the main reason of dissolution was the lack of Turkish support.

Apparently, Turkish-Greek relations entered into a new period in 1930 with treaties, which settled remaining problems between these two states. Within this normalization period, they also once more discussed the issue of oppositional Turkish elements in Greece. It was clear for these two states that in order to establish confidence in their relations; this problem of Greek approach to the oppositional Turkish elements should be solved urgently. For instance, the Turkish side decided to solve this problem fundamentally and searched for the ways of rescuing Greece from this anti-Kemalist propaganda with agreements at governmental level.

Finally, Turkey and Greece agreed on convention called Domicile, Trade and Ship Passage on October 30, 1930. The second article of this convention was related to the issue of oppositional Turkish elements. In this article, it was written that the parties could deport people who were seen harmful from its territories in line with its laws. Then, these deported ones

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<sup>440</sup> *İnkılâp*, 21 March 1930 in 21 May 1930: BCA, 030 10 83 548 24, p. 1: “Yeni harfleri öğrenmek asri Türkün ilk işidir.”

<sup>441</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 196.

<sup>442</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 198.

<sup>443</sup> Öksüz, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, pp. 202-203.

could be hosted in the other state in case of the permission of the former. However, the ones deported with political reasons could not be hosted.<sup>444</sup> Indeed, this was only the one article of Convention, which in fact had wide range of issue areas. For instance, there were significant articles about trade, which were apparently in favour of Greece. As the economy of Turkey mainly based on agriculture in this period, Greece enjoyed more from the articles about trade, arts, shipping business and companies. However, what significant for Turkey was the application of the second article with which it intended to make Western Thrace rescued from its opponents. Thus, according to Adil Özgüç, Turkey did not abstain to give economic concession to Greece with this Convention.<sup>445</sup>

This Convention was signed in the course of Venizelos's visit in Ankara on October of 1930. However, just after the signature of Convention, new bargaining process began between these two states about who should be expelled. For instance, the Turkish side prepared a list of 450 people that should be urgently expelled from Greece. This was totally different from the list of Greeks that was limited to some names in *yüzellilikler*. One month after the visit of Venizelos, this Turkish list was given to Georgios Kakulidis, the Minister of Thracian Affairs, by Ahmet Muhtar. Apparently, this list was not restricted to *yüzellilikler* and there were also names of other political refugees and some local conservatives. Then, Kakulidis reported this meeting to Athens and he claimed that Ahmet Muhtar told *Yeni Adım* would give up its opposition to the Greek government, if these names were sent from Western Thrace.<sup>446</sup>

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<sup>444</sup> “Türkiye ile Yunanistan Arasında İkamet, Ticaret ve Seyrisefain Mukavenamesi”, *Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Cilt: 12, (Ankara: Başvekâlet Müdevvenat Matbaası, 1931), pp. 116-117: “Madde 2: Yüksek Âkid Taraflardan her biri, gerek kanuni bir hüküm neticesinde, gerek ahlâki ve sıhhi zabıta ve dilencilik hakkındaki kanun ve nizamlara tevkifan, gerek Devletin dâhili ve harici emniyetlerine müteallik esbap dolayısıyla diğer tarafın tebaalarına memleketinde yerleşmeği ve oturmağı ferdi tedabir ile menetmek ve bunları yukarda zikredilen sebeplerden dolayı memleketinden ihraç eylemek hakkını muhafaza eder. Diğer taraf, bu suretle ihraç edilmiş olan tebaalarıyla ailelerinin, tâbiyetleri salâhiyettar Konsolos tarafından tasdik edilmiş olduğu takdirde yeniden memleketine kabul etmeği taahhüt eyler. Bu hüküm siyasi esbaptan dolayı istenmeyen şahıslara tatbik edilemez.”

<sup>445</sup> Özgüç, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, pp. 40-44.

<sup>446</sup> Retrieved from <http://www.azinlikca.net/Evren-Dede/bat-trakya-ve-papa-eftim.html> on March 1, 2011.

Probably, Ahmet Muhtar told this when Kakulidis complained about the publications of *Yeni Adım*. It was apparent that what *Yeni Adım* criticized was the power of oppositional Turkish elements in Greece. Thus, as the Turkish consul argued in a case of expulsion of these listed 450 people then there would be no ground for criticism. However, the Greek government did not accept this list and only decided to expel some names from the *yüzellilikler*, who were not Greek citizens. These were Gümölcineli İsmail, Aziz Nuri, Eskişehirli Safer Hoca, Remzi, İdris, Kasım, İbrahim Sabri, and Mustafa Sabri.<sup>447</sup>

However, Greece did not apply this decision immediately after this Convention, and this delay definitely disturbed the Turkish side. For instance, Nadir Nadi, a writer in *Cumhuriyet*, complained about this issue to Venizelos during his Vienna visit in January 1931. In his speech to the journalists from all over the world, Venizelos pointed out the significance of friendship that Turkey and Greece recently achieved. In this speech, he pointed out the role of Greek efforts to deport the *yüzellilikler* from Western Thrace in line with this friendship, and added that Greece could not allow people living in Greece and acting against the Turkish Republic.<sup>448</sup> Despite Venizelos's explanation, however, concerns of Turkey continued as Greece did not expel the people Turkey wanted and even the *yüzellilikler* were not expelled from Greece on time. Nadir Nadi, for example, pointed out this during the personal interview with Venizelos. In this interview, Venizelos defined the incident in Menemen as 'just a reactionary event'. However, Nadir Nadi told that Menemen could not be described as only a conservative event as this incident was also related to the external supporters, who lived abroad with political intentions such as the ones in Greece. Then, Venizelos told him that he did not also want these

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<sup>447</sup> Bingöl, *150'likler Meselesi*, pp. 154-155.

<sup>448</sup> Nadir Nadi, "Yunan Başvekili ve Türkiye", *Cumhuriyet*, 6 January 1931, p. 1: "Yunan Başvekili müteakiben bana hitap ederek beyanatına şöyle devam etti: Bütün dünya matbuatı mümessilleri huzurunda, Türk-Yunan dostluğunun, Avrupa'da sulhün takviyesi itibarile zamanımızın en büyük muvaffakiyetlerinden olduğunu ve bununla iki memleketin iftihar edebileceğini söylemek isterim.... Yunan Başvekili, Yunanistan'daki yüzelliliklerin Garbi Trakya'dan ayrılmaları için Atina hükümetinin ciddi mukarrerat ittihaz ettiğini kaydederek beyanını şu cümlelerle bitirmiştir: Türkiye'nin istemediği adamları biz de istemeyiz. Bunların Yunan topraklarında Türkiye Cumhuriyeti aleyhinde çalışmalarına müsaade etmeyiz."

people in Greece and did whatever he could for their expulsion. Moreover, he mentioned how he had to struggle even with inner oppositions to do this. And, he concluded this interview with a promise that in two months these *yüzellilikler* would be expelled from Greece.<sup>449</sup>

In the following period, in accordance with the Convention of 1930, *yüzellilikler* were enforced to leave Greece one by one. And, they left Greece and settled in other countries. But, Turkish intelligence service continued to follow their activities. For instance, it was seen that Mustafa Sabri and his family went to Egypt<sup>450</sup> where Mustafa Sabri continued his anti-Kemalist propaganda in *Al-Azhar*, a religious school.<sup>451</sup> In Greece, his propaganda organ, *Yarın*, was banned similar to *İt'ila*.<sup>452</sup> Gümülcineli İsmail went to Paris where he established the *Asya-Beynelmilel* (International Asia), in name of saving Turkishness and Islam.<sup>453</sup> In fact, the expulsions of these two devoted opponents of Turkey and other *yüzellilikler* were significant for Turkey as it worked hard to achieve this. Thus, apparently, with their expulsions there occurred a considerable decrease in anti-Kemalist activities in Greece.

### 3.1.4. CONCLUSION

Apparently, in this period of 1920s and the first years of 1930s, the Turkish government actively responded to anti-Kemalist structuring in Greece that also deteriorated the lives of Kemalists among Turkish minority. Finally

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<sup>449</sup> Nadir Nadi, “Venizelos ile nasıl görüştüüm”, *Cumhuriyet*, 10 January 1931, p. 1: “Bunun (Menemen) yalnızca bir irtica vakasından ibaret olmadığını siyasi emellerle dışarıdan da alakadar olanların mevcudiyetini söyleyerek Yunanistan’daki yüzelliliklerin vaziyetini mevzuu bahsettim... Ne demek istediğinizi anlıyorum dedi, bu yüzelliliklerden Trakya’da ancak altı yedi kişi kalmıştır. Bunların o civarda bulunmalarını muvafık görmediğimden bir müddet evvel kendilerine iki ay zarfında orayı terk etmelerini, hatta icap ederse yol paralarını da temin edeceğimi bildirdim. Bu müddetin bitiminde tabii gideceklerdir. Türkiye’nin istemediği adamları biz de istemeyiz. Bunların topraklarımızda Türkiye Cumhuriyeti aleyhine çalışmalarına müsaade edemeyiz. Bu mesele yüzünden muhaliflerimle de çok mücadele etmek zorunda kaldım.”

<sup>450</sup> Özgüç, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 123.

<sup>451</sup> Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı*, p. 85: “150liklerden Şumnulu Maruf avukat Osman Nuri Şumnu’da Bulgarlarla el ele vermiş bir halde (Nüvap) adresinde hocalık ediyor ve Türk gençliğine dış biliyordu. Eski şeyhülislam Mustafa Sabri’nin adamları Müslümanlar arasında tahrikatta bulunuyorlardı.”; Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Ölümler* (Ankara: Hece Yayınları, 2005), p. 75.

<sup>452</sup> Özgüç, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, pp. 120-121.

<sup>453</sup> Bingöl, *150’likler Meselesi*, p. 157.

some of them were deported from Greece in line with the Convention of 1930. However, Turkey knew that there were still many of them, who were allowed to stay in Greece such as Greek citizens among the *yüzellilikler*. Mustafa Neyyir, Çopur İsmail Hakkı, and Çerkez Davut were some active names from these people.<sup>454</sup> Thus, the Turkish side did not totally give up following their activities in Greece. For instance, in June of 1933, the Turkish ambassador in Athens sent a report to the Ministry of Internal Affairs about the acceptance of the Greek Minister of War Affairs the retirement of Çerkez Davut as a soldier. The ambassador also noted that Çerkez Davut would be given 150,000 drachmas, which was the sum of his salaries since 1926 for his devotion to the Greek forces during the National Independence War of Turks.<sup>455</sup>

In addition to these names, Turkish intelligence reported how the Greek government allowed the return of Aziz Nuri, an active name from the *yüzellilikler*. It was known that he first went to Jordan after he was enforced to leave Greece. But, then he moved from Jordan to Egypt where he contacted to the chief of British intelligence service, the Colonel Smith. This man helped him to return Greece, and he was settled in a Greek village near to Athens. But, there he had financial problems, and in 1937 he did not hesitate to write a letter to the king of Greece in which he reminded his previous support to the Greek forces during the Turkish National Independence War of Turks, and asked for financial support.<sup>456</sup> These, in fact, showed how the Convention did not put an end to the residence of oppositional Turkish elements in Greece.

Additionally, this was also the case for anti-Kemalist newspapers. Although most of them were closed, the Turkish authorities knew that *Balkan* continued its activities. For instance, the Turkish Foreign Ministry sent a copy of this newspaper of October 4, 1932. In this copy there was an article “Ankaracılar Okusun” (Let those supporters of Ankara read this) in which they thanked Greece for its support for them. It was written that as guests of Greece, they were happy to live in this ‘honourable state’. And, it was added that they

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<sup>454</sup> Bingöl, *150'likler Meselesi*, p. 155.

<sup>455</sup> 11 July 1933: BCA, 490 01 587 28 2, p. 26.

<sup>456</sup> Bingöl, *150'likler Meselesi*, p. 162.

were only worried about the Turkish nation in Turkey, which had to wait a messiah to rescue them from ‘captivity’ of the new regime.<sup>457</sup> One year later, on May 19, 1933 this time it published an interview with Arif Oruç, an oppositional Turkish figure. This was made to introduce his new party program. In this interview, Ariç Oruç told that he would publish his party program soon so that they should be patient.<sup>458</sup> Apparently, these issues of *Balkan* targeted new regime in Turkey. However, this newspaper continued to be published, although sometimes in version of fasciculate until the invasion of Thrace by the Bulgarian forces in 1941.<sup>459</sup> Apparently, these showed the instance of the Greek side to host anti-Kemalist structuring. However, Turkey saw that there was a clear decline in the anti-Kemalist activities, which also led to the demise of the suppression of the Kemalists. Therefore, the Turkish government felt less insecure about Greek intention to destabilize its regime.

### 3.2. BULGARIAN CASE

In the first years of inter-war period, the Turkish-Bulgarian relations were friendlier when compared to following years. At this time, the Turkish side did not suspect about Bulgarian intentions to destabilize its regime, since Bulgarian support to anti-Kemalist forces in its lands was not evident. However, particularly with late 1920s and 1930s, this issue turned into a problem for the Turkish side. Apparently, Turkey saw how Bulgaria persistently supported the anti-Kemalist activities and the main actors of these activities, local conservatives and oppositional Turkish elements. And, almost until the end of 1930s, the Bulgarian side pursued this policy, thus, Bulgaria remained attractive for opponents of new regime in Turkey.

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<sup>457</sup> 17 October 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 625 5, p. 2: “Misafiri bulunduğumuz Yunan milletinin bu fahr ve sururbine iştirak ettiğimiz kader zevki Türk milletinin nekbet esaretini yad ederek için için ağlarık. Bedbaht millet devr-i meşrutiyetinde mutlakiyeti mumla aratmışdı, şimdi artık beklediği ‘Mehdi’ dir.”

<sup>458</sup> “Türkiyede Kurtuluş Fırkası Programı”, *Balkan*, 19 May 1933, p. 1 in BCA, 490 01 585 20 02: “Fırkanın programını çok yakında risaen neşredeceğim biraz sabrediniz.”

<sup>459</sup> Özgüç, *Batı Trakya Türkleri*, p. 119.

### 3.2.1. AN ALLIANCE OF ANTI-KEMALIST FORCES

The anti-Kemalist forces in Bulgaria composed of different groups of people including the *yüzellilikler*, other oppositional Turkish elements, and local conservatives among Turks. Although they had different backgrounds and ideologies, what made them allied was their common opposition to the new regime in Turkey. Different from the Greek case, in Bulgaria local conservatives were more active. In the Greek case, it was mainly oppositional Turkish elements that intensified division within Turkish minority and made these conservatives have an anti-Kemalist outlook. However, in Bulgaria local conservatives were already hostile to the new regime in Turkey.

A division in this minority, between conservatives and others, indeed, had its roots in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. During Abdülhamid's regime, one segment of the society supported the rule of Abdülhamid II, while the others supported the *İttihat ve Terakki Fırkası* (Committee of Union and Progress). This actually resulted in disunity within this minority, which was welcomed by the Bulgarian authorities as it became easier to control these people. This picture of disunity, however, was true in the Republican period,<sup>460</sup> when the minority was divided as conservatives and Kemalists. Conservatives persistently acted against new regime in Turkey, and in these anti-Kemalist activities *Başmüftülük* was a significant source of power.

*Başmüftülük* was a Muslim institution that had a control over Muslim population in Bulgaria, and *Başmüftü* was the head of it. On 19 April, 1909 when the Ottoman Empire recognized the independence of Bulgaria, these two states also agreed on the roles of *Başmüftü* and *Başmüftülük*. This made *Başmüftü*, in Sofia, had a great say over religious and legal matters of Muslims. *Başmüftü* had also a control over Turkish and Islamic institutions, schools and *vakıfs*. Then, in the course of İstanbul Treaty, signed between the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria after the Balkan Wars on September 29, 1913, the control

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<sup>460</sup> Boyar, "Turkish Bulgarian Relations in the Early Turkish Republic", pp. 63-64.



of *Başmüftülük* over *Müftüler Örgütü* (Müftüs Community) was settled. And, finally, on June 26, 1919 a detailed Bulgarian regulation about *Başmüftülük* was announced.<sup>461</sup> This regulation set up rules for *Başmüftü*'s election. This was based on decision of *müftüs*, who were previously appointed by the Bulgarian authorities. Then, with pre-election method, Bulgarian authorities gave some names to these *müftüs* and these *müftüs* elected one name from this list as *Başmüftü*. However, this was criticized by the Kemalist circle as Turkish/Muslim minority had no say over the election of their own *müftüs*, thus, was unable to decide who would be the *Başmüftü*. Apparently, this election system served the Bulgarian interest that had an opportunity to make most welcomed *Başmüftü* elected for Bulgaria.<sup>462</sup>

In 1928, the election of Hüseyin Hüsnü Molla Ahmet as *Başmüftü* was the first evident example of this Bulgarian policy that considered *Başmüftü* as a tool against Kemalist Bulgarian Turks and new Turkish state. Hüseyin Hüsnü was educated in İstanbul. Indeed, he was the supporter of Damat Ferid's government, and in İstanbul he supported his party. It was evident that he carried his hatred towards the Unionists to Bulgaria when he returned.<sup>463</sup> According to him, the Kemalist ideology of new Turkish state was the continuity of Unionist outlook. Thus, fundamentally, he was against to this new regime and its reforms.<sup>464</sup>

However, the opponents of Turkish Republic in Bulgaria were not restricted to these active local conservatives such as Hüseyin Hüsnü. There was also considerable number of *yüzellilikler*, who were also the part of this anti-Kemalist structure. For instance, Osman Nuri (who was written as Osman Kadri in some Turkish publications) was one of these *yüzellilikler* that Bulgaria hosted. He was the ex-governor of Bolu, where he made propaganda against Turkish national forces during the National Independence War, and he even

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<sup>461</sup> Bilâl N. Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri* (İstanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1986), pp. 66-71.

<sup>462</sup> Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri*, pp. 71-73.

<sup>463</sup> Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri*, pp. 73-74.

<sup>464</sup> Hüseyin Memişoğlu, *Geçmişten Günümüze Bulgaristan'da Türk Eğitim Tarihi* (Ankara: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı Kültür Eserleri, 2002), p. 171.

supported the Greek invasion of Ayvalık.<sup>465</sup> But, Turkey knew that there were ten more active *yüzellilikler* in Bulgaria in addition to Osman Nuri.<sup>466</sup> Besides these *yüzellilikler*, however, there were also other oppositional Turkish elements that escaped from Turkey but were not put in this list of *yüzellilikler*. Çerkez Ali Haydar, for example, was one of these ‘fugitives’, who was the part of Çerkez Ethem’s force and fled from Turkey with them.<sup>467</sup> Similarly, Sağır Mehmet Emin, who was the ex-director of *Meşihat Dairesi* (an institution in the Ottoman Empire which was under *şeyhülislam*), thus, he was close to ex-*şeyhülislam* Mustafa Sabri, was another fugitive that settled in Bulgaria.<sup>468</sup>

These oppositional elements arrived to Bulgaria mainly in the course of the establishment of Turkish Republic. However, the anti-Kemalist structure in Bulgaria continued to attract Turkish opponents in the following period. For instance, Arif Oruç left Turkey and came to Bulgaria in 1933. He was not one of the *yüzellilikler* but he was an important oppositional element. Prior to his arrival in Bulgaria, for example, he had already become a well-known name for the foreign press with his oppositional activities. For instance, he published a newspaper called *Yarın*, which turned into a voice of the *Serbest Cumhuriyet Fırkası* (Free Republican Party) in 1930.<sup>469</sup> Apparently, he did this to support any oppositional voice to İsmet Paşa’s government which he always criticized. And, finally, his dedicated oppositional efforts attracted the attention of foreign press. For instance, *Estia*, a Greek newspaper, described the oppositional stance of *Yarın* as the beginning of new period in Turkish press. It was stated that before *Yarın*, nobody would think about oppositional newspapers in Turkey. According to *Estia*, however, *Yarın* was a proof of the existence of a displeased population about the government and its reforms. But, *Estia* also stated that it was impossible for these opponents to show their opposition towards Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk). Thus, this Greek newspaper implied that the

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<sup>465</sup> Erdeha, *Yüzellilikler*, pp. 204-206.

<sup>466</sup> Boyar and Fleet, “A Dangerous Axis: The ‘Bulgarian Müftü’, the Turkish Opposition and the Ankara Government, 1928-1936”, p. 778.

<sup>467</sup> Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı*, p. 85.

<sup>468</sup> *Belgelerle Mustafa Kemal Atatürk ve Türk-Bulgar İlişkileri* (1913-1938), pp. 262-264; Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı*, p. 85.

<sup>469</sup> Tefik Çavdar, *İz Bırakan Gazeteler ve Gazeteciler* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2007), p. 380.

only thing that these opponents would achieve was the resignation of İsmet Paşa's government.<sup>470</sup> Similarly, the reporter of *The Times* in İstanbul made the same forecast about the resignation of the current government.<sup>471</sup> *Eleftheron Vima*, another Greek newspaper, also made these kinds of forecasts but this time it was additionally argued that Mustafa Kemal himself would force this government for resignation.<sup>472</sup>

Apparently, these comments of foreign newspapers about the future of Turkish government, with the reference of Arif Oruç's *Yarın*, were disturbing for Turkey. Thus, the Turkish authorities put a strict eye on publications of Arif Oruç. His newspaper, *Yarın*, faced with various lawsuits as a result. For instance, his article, "Bizi men edemezsiniz" (You could not ban us), published on April 7, 1930, was considered as an attack on the identity of government. In this article, he accused a group within the political elite of creating poverty and hunger. Added to this, he claimed that this group, ruling through oppression and enforcement, was even happy to see these people under difficulties. Thus, according to him, these politicians, whom these people would never forgive, would be punished sometimes in future.<sup>473</sup> However, when *Serbest Cumhuriyet*

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<sup>470</sup> 21 April 1930: BCA, 030 10 83 548 15, p. 2: "Yarın gazetesi kapatıldıktan sonra diğer bazı gazetelerin de İsmet paşa hükümeti aleyhine muhalif bir tavr takınmağa başladıkları zannolunuyor. İşbu hadise şayan dikkattir. Şimdiye değin muhalif neşriyat Türkiye'de kimsenin aklına getiremeyeceği bi şeydi. "Yarın" gazetesi; kapatılmasına sebep olmuş olan makalelerin neşri ile bütün diğer refiklerinin heyeti mecmuasından daha çok nüsha tab'edip büyük bir inkişar sahası kazanmıştır. Bütün bunlardan çıkan mana şudurki, memleketin idare olduğu tarzda ve bilhassa Mustafa Kemal paşanın halka birden bire ve temelden kabul ettirdiği tebeddülât (yenilikler) den türkiye'de bir çok gayri memnun bulunmaktadır. Tabii hiçbir gazete, Türkiye'de kendi mevcudiyetini medyun olduğu Kemal paşa aleyhinde vevlki şöyle uzaktan bir ima yapmağa cesaret edemeyecektir. Fakat Hükümet adamlarının beceriksizliği ve gafletlerinden dolayı iktisadî muvaffakiyetsizliğin neticesi olan mevcut gücenginliğin tesbitinden sonra İsmet paşa hükümetinin tebdil olunacağı muhtemeldir. Eger bu tahakkuk devam ederse Reisi cumhur, İsmet paşa hükümeti ve halk fırkasından mürekkep "Blok" kütlenin infisaha doğru gittiğine vazih bir başlangıçtır. Eger bilakis, hiçbir tebeddül olmazsa elyevm meydana çıkan muhalefetin mevcut olmaya devam edeceği tabiidir. Hatta hiçbir "Supap" (seddada) açılmasa bile bu hadisenin hükümet Statukosunun lehine olmayacağı açıktır."

<sup>471</sup> 20 April 1930: BCA, 030 10 83 548 14, p. 2.

<sup>472</sup> 20 April 1930: BCA, 030 10 83 548 14, p. 3: "İstanbul'dan gelen haberlere nazaran Türkiye'de bir hükümet tebeddülü muhtemeldir. Orada İsmet paşa hükümetinin yakında istifası şaiyaları deveran ediyor. "Yarın" gazetesinin, bu günki Türkiye hükümeti aleyhinde açmış olduğu mücadelenin ilhamını Ankaradan aldığı zannolunuyor."

<sup>473</sup> 27 March 1930: BCA, 030 10 86 567 14, p. 3.

*Fırkası* was closed on November 17, 1930<sup>474</sup>, he intensified his criticisms. This time, he accused the government of suppressing the oppositional voices with an overemphasis of an ideological threat.<sup>475</sup> However, just after his article accusing the government with overemphasis of the ideological threat, on December 23, 1930 the Turkish Republic faced with a tragic event in Menemen resulted in death of Mustafa Fehmi Kubilay, which was seen as the continuing ideological concerns.<sup>476</sup>

Indeed, this was a traumatic event for new Turkish state, and the role of oppositional press in this event turned into an ideological concern in Turkey. Possibly, in line with this concern, on June 25, 1931 a new Press Law was issued.<sup>477</sup> However, until the issue of this law, there were discussions about freedom of press, and *Yarın* criticized this new law as it would suppress the freedom of press. For *Yarın*, its oppositional publications could only be considered as ‘a struggle for freedom of press’.<sup>478</sup> However, the picture was different for Yunus Nadi. On June 21, 1931 he underlined how opposition was always confused with treason in the Turkish history as in the case of Çerkez Ethem.<sup>479</sup> Thus, according to him, oppositional activities of Arif Oruç, ‘the servant of Çerkez Ethem’, should not be allowed in Turkey, in name of freedom of press.<sup>480</sup>

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<sup>474</sup> İnönü, *Hatıralar*, p. 492.

<sup>475</sup> Çavdar, *İz Bırakan Gazeteler ve Gazeteciler*, pp. 410-416.

<sup>476</sup> Feroz Ahmad, *Modern Türkiye'nin Doğuşu* (Yavuz Alogan trans.) (Ankara: Kaynak Yayınları, 2006), pp. 77-80; İnönü, *Hatıralar*, pp. 489-491.

<sup>477</sup> “Matbuat Kanunu”, *Düstur*, Üçüncü Tertip, Cilt: 12 (Ankara: Başvekâlet Müdevvenat Matbaası, 1931), pp. 1069-1085.

<sup>478</sup> 29 May 1931, *Cumhuriyet*, p. 3: “...hürriyeti matbuat davasıdır.”

<sup>479</sup> Yunus Nadi, “Muhalefet mi?... Hayır: Bulanık Suda Balık Avlıyanlar”, *Cumhuriyet*, 21 June 1931, p. 1: “Hakikati halde gaip bir talih veya talihsizlik olarak bu memlekette muhalefet şimdiye kadar hemen daima vatansızlığa kadar tereddidi eden bir afet olmuştur. 31 Martı ika eden Derviş Vahdeti’lerin perde arkasında kimlere ve hangi kuvvetlere hizmet etmiş olduklarını görmedik mi?... Bize birinci Balkan harbini kaybettiren halaskaran patırtısı vatani hıyanet ve cinayetten başka bir şey miydi?... Çerkes Ethem biraderler muhalefet namına düşman saflarına iltihak etmediler mi?”

<sup>480</sup> Yunus Nadi, “Muhalefet mi?... Hayır: Bulanık Suda Balık Avlıyanlar”, p. 1: “Ve şimdi cüretkar bir muhalefetlikle güya muhalefet yapmağa yeltenenler bu adamların döküntülerinden başka kimseler mi?... Çerkes Ethemin uşağı Arif Oruç bu memlekette muhalefet partisi yapacak ta ve bu ilanihaye tahammül olunur bir marifet mi olacak sanki? Çerkes Ethemle beraber bu memleketin temellerini sarsmağa çalışmış bir serseriye gösterilecek bu tahammül bu milletin haysiyet ve şerefine bir hakaret teşkil etse yeri değil mi?... Matbuat hürriyeti, teşkilatı esasiye hürriyeti, şu ve bu, hepsi iyi ama insanın sabrı tükenince bu hakikatleri

Apparently, what made the activities of Arif Oruç that much disturbing for Turkish view was also related with his previous activities. As Yunus Nadi reminded in his article, during the National Independence War, he acted in accordance with Çerkez Ethem's forces. In Eskişehir, for example, he published a newspaper called *Yeni Dünya*. Thus, he was also charged in the Independence Tribune on May 9, 1921 with Çerkez Ethem and his followers.<sup>481</sup> In the court, Arif Oruç was released; however, his close relations with Çerkez Ethem remained fresh in the minds of Turks, particularly for the ones in Eskişehir, although the years were passed. In 1931, for example, during the clash between Yunus Nadi and Arif Oruç, these people sent letters to *Cumhuriyet* to point out Arif Oruç's previous activities. For instance, one claimed that he even collected money from them with enforcement of Çerkez Ethem's force to publish *Yeni Dünya*, which turned into a propaganda organ against Mustafa Kemal Paşa.<sup>482</sup> However, Arif Oruç did not accept these accusations and he claimed that he supported Çerkez Ethem and his followers before their revolt to Turkish national forces.

Despite his denial, another informant, who *Cumhuriyet* introduced as witness of Arif Oruç's previous activities, pointed out how he stood near to Çerkez Reşit (brother of Çerkez Ethem), when Çerkez Reşit threatened the Turkish Parliament by supporting Venizelos. Thus, according to informant, Arif Oruç had served these people filled with harmful ideas. More importantly, however, this informant claimed that probably Arif Oruç still acted in

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bağırarak ta namus ve haysiyet sahibi her Türkün vazifesidir.”; Yunus Nadi, “Büyük İşler Önünde, Müziç Ayak Bağları!”, *Cumhuriyet*, 22 June 1931, p. 1: “Bu grup milletin samimi ve şamil bir el birliğiyle uğraşarak bertaraf edeceği bir müşkülâtı bilakis istismar ederek güya fikir hürriyeti namına sözümüz yabana muhalefet yapmak perdesi altında efkârı umumiyeyi karıştırmaya ve yanıltmaya çalışıyorlar. Fikir hürriyeti namus ve haysiyet sahibi insanlara temin olunan bir haktır. Bunların nasibi.. kulaklarından tutuldukları gibi doğruca hapishaneye sevk ve tecrit olunmalarından ibarettir... Bu şimdiye kadar bizde olmamış ve olmuyor diye Arif Oruç gibi vatan haini Çerkes Ethem kardeşlerin eli bardaklı yordakçısı bir neydiği belirsizin güya fırka mırka teşkil ediyormuş gibi hareketlerine müsamaha etmek, inkılapçı Türk milletinin sinesinde Kabakçı Mustafa ve Patrona Halil hezeyanlarının tekerrürüne göz yummak demek olur.”

<sup>481</sup> Bingöl, *150'likler Meselesi*, pp. 72-74.

<sup>482</sup> “Eskişehirli Nadi Beyi Fahri Hemşeri Yaptılar”, *Cumhuriyet*, 10 July 1931, p. 1.

accordance with them nowadays.<sup>483</sup> In fact, this concern about his continuing link with these people was in a way justified when Arif Oruç left Turkey. For instance, he immediately contacted to Çerkez Davut, one of the *yüzellilikler*, when he arrived to Greece in 1933. Then, in Bulgaria it was similarly Çerkez Ali Haydar, one of ‘fugitives’ who hosted him.<sup>484</sup> There was also a Turkish intelligence report (unknown when it was sent to Ankara) which revealed how Çerkez Davut promised to help Arif Oruç to smuggle papers he published in Bulgaria into the Turkish territories.<sup>485</sup> Thus, apparently, when he left Turkey he was backed by the ones among Çerkez Ethem group settled outside Turkey, which Turkey knew Arif Oruç had previous links. Arif Oruç, however, was most indebted to *Başmüftülük* that provided him with various channels in Bulgaria to continue his opposition towards the Turkish Republic.

With the election of Hüseyin Hüsni as a *Başmüftü* in 1928 (who stayed in this position until 1936), *Başmüftülük* apparently became the leader of anti-Kemalist forces.<sup>486</sup> Thanks to Bulgarian support, *Başmüftülük* under Hüseyin Hüsni was powerful enough to attract conservative circles and oppositional Turkish elements, and became a centre of anti-Kemalist activities.<sup>487</sup> As he could provide facilities to these opponents to continue their anti-Kemalist activities, he could attract these different kinds of people from different ideologies that were only united with common hostility towards the Kemalist regime in Ankara. Osman Nuri, one of the *yüzellilikler* in Bulgaria, was obviously one of these opponents. He, for example, wrote in one of the influential anti-Kemalist newspapers called *Dostluk*, which Hüseyin Hüsni

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<sup>483</sup> “Çerkes Ethem’le Arif Oruç’un Münasebatı: Müsaccel Vatan Haini ile Onun Efendileri Çerkes Ethem ve Reşitleri”, *Cumhuriyet*, 16 July 1931, p. 1: “Ethem’in kardeşi Reşit mecliste “Sizin yanınızda oturmazsam, Venizelos’un sağ tarafında koltuğum hazır” diye bağırırken Arif Oruç gene onlarla beraberdir. ...Evet herkesin tapındığı zaman Arif Oruç Ç. Ethem’le birlikti; ve yahut o günlerde Arif Oruç t herkesle beraberdi. Fakat herkesin Çerkes Ethem’den ve onun zehirli başı olan Reşit’ten nefret ettiği günlerde de Arif Oruç gene onlarla beraberdi ve onların aleti idi. Ve belki bugün de onlarla beraber ve onların aletidir.”

<sup>484</sup> 11 July 1933: BCA, 490 01 585 20 2, pp. 26, 29; 18 May 1933: BCA, 490 01 585 20 2, p. 34.

<sup>485</sup> BCA, 490 01 585 20 2, p. 29.

<sup>486</sup> Bilâl N. Şimşir, *Türk Yazı Devrimi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2008), p. 305.

<sup>487</sup> Boyar and Fleet, “A Dangerous Axis: The ‘Bulgarian Müftü’, the Turkish Opposition and the Ankara Government, p. 777.

supported.<sup>488</sup> In fact, this newspaper was based on the subsidies of the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry and the Democratic Alliance that allocated 15,000 levas for its publication.<sup>489</sup> Then, his son, Ali Kemal, became the editor of this newspaper.<sup>490</sup> However, apparently, his activities were disturbing for the Turkish side. For instance, in 1930 the Turkish ambassador in Sofia was alarmed when he heard that Osman Nuri became a teacher in *Medrese'tiin-Nüvvab* in Şumen (Şumnu), but later the ambassador found out that he was not a teacher but teaching for 8 hours a week.<sup>491</sup> But, this was still an influential tool in his hands to continue his anti-Kemalist activities in this school together with other opponents of Turkey such as Sağır Mehmet Emin, one of the 'fugitives' in Bulgaria, who worked under Mustafa Sabri during his term as *şeyhülislam* and Mustafa Nurettin, who was one of the local conservatives educated in *Al-Azhar* in Cairo.<sup>492</sup>

In Şumen, it was *Nüvvab* that anti-Kemalist elements came together. There was also an important anti-Kemalist publishing activity in this area such as *İntibah*,<sup>493</sup> which was published with the support of *Başmüftülük*. This newspaper, full of hatred towards the Turkishness and reforms in Turkey, was distributed to Turks in Bulgaria with free of charge. This newspaper was alarming for Turkey, and its entry to Turkey was banned. With diplomatic pressure on the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry, in 1931, the Turkish side also succeeded to make this anti-Kemalist newspaper closed.<sup>494</sup> Two years after the closure of this newspaper, however, a new newspaper called *Medeniyet* started to be published, however, in Plovdiv. The editor of *İntibah*, Hafız Yusuf

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<sup>488</sup> Boyar and Fleet, "A Dangerous Axis: The 'Bulgarian Müftü', the Turkish Opposition and the Ankara Government, 1928-1936", pp. 777-778.

<sup>489</sup> 16 July 1933: BCA, 490 01 585 20 2, pp. 13-14.

<sup>490</sup> Âdem Ruhi Karagöz, *Bulgaristan Türk Basını* (1879-1945) (İstanbul: Üniversite Matbaası, 1945), p. 43.

<sup>491</sup> 16 March 1930: BCA, 030 10 240 618 7, in *Belgelerle Mustafa Kemal Atatürk ve Türk-Bulgar İlişkileri*, pp. 781-782, pp. 1-2. "Sofya muavin Konsolosluğu'ndan verilen bir malumatta firari ve yüzelliklerden avukat Osman Nuri'nin Şumnu'daki mektebi Nüvaba muallim kaydolunduğu anlaşıldığından keyfiyetin tahkiki Varna Konsolosluğumuza emrolmuştur. Alınan cevapta merhumun muallim değil, haftada sekiz saat ders vermek üzere mukarrir tayin olunduğu bildirilmiş..."

<sup>492</sup> Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı*, p. 85.

<sup>493</sup> Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı*, p. 85.

<sup>494</sup> Karagöz, *Bulgaristan Türk Basını* (1879-1945), p. 45.

Şinasi, became also a writer in this newspaper. And, according to Âdem Ruhi Karagöz, this was ‘the other version of *İntibah* and *Açıksöz*’ (which was also an anti-Kemalist newspaper).<sup>495</sup> *Medeniyet* similarly was published by an active figure of anti-Kemalist force, İpsalalı Ahmet Hikmet, who was one of the *yüzellilikler*. Turkey was aware of his activities and Bulgarian support behind him. For instance, Memduh Talât, the reporter of *Cumhuriyet* in Sofia, pointed out how he was also appointed as a chief of the *Filibe Vakıflar Müdürlüğü* (Plovdiv Headquarter of the Pious Foundations), which was the richest Turkish foundation in Bulgaria.<sup>496</sup> As he continued to attack Turkish government in *Medeniyet*, on September 14, 1933, in its second month of publishing, this newspaper’s entry to Turkey was banned too.<sup>497</sup> However, *Medeniyet* (later published in Sofia as an organ of *Dini İslam Müdafileri*) continued to be published in Bulgaria as the other anti-Kemalist newspaper *Dostluk*.<sup>498</sup>

This powerful anti-Kemalist publishing activities in Bulgaria attracted also Arif Oruç, who aimed to publish his anti-Kemalist papers outside Turkey. These were his newspaper, *Yarın*, and programme of his party, *Kurtuluş Fırkası* (The Salvation Party). Indeed, initially, he went to Syria but there he could not publish these papers. Then, he went to Greece; however, in this state he could not also find a suitable atmosphere for his anti-Kemalist activities, since it was the period that Greece started to exile some oppositional Turkish elements from its lands. Finally, when he was also expelled from Greece, Arif

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<sup>495</sup> Karagöz, *Bulgaristan Türk Basını* (1879-1945), pp. 59-60. “Bundan önceki sahifelerde kapatıldıklarını yazdığımız (*İntibah*) ve (*Açıksöz*) adlı gazetelerin ad değiştirmiş bir örneği olan bu gerici fikirler gazetesi 19 ağustos 1933 tarihinde H. Yusuf Yalubof 1931 yılında kapatılan (*İntibah*) gazetesi başmuharriri Hafız Yusuf Şinasi adlı bir şeyhin muharrirliği altında Sofya’da çıkarılmaya başlandı. Sofya’da (Nüvap) matbaasında basılan ve irtica fikirleri yaymak isteyen (Dini İslam Müdafileri Cemiyeti) nin organı olan bu gazete, yenilik taraftarı diğer bütün gazeteler kapatılmışken yakın yıllara kadar yayım hayatına devam etti. Bulgaristan’da biricik Türk gazetesi sayıldı.”

<sup>496</sup> Memduh Talât, “Dostluk Lâfta Kahrısa Böyle Olur!”, *Cumhuriyet*, 28 July 1934, pp. 1, 3: “Bulgaristan Türkleri bir cehennem hayatı yaşıyorlar. ...Bunca Bulgar vatandaşı Türk dururken Bulgaristanın en zengin vakfı olan Filibe Vakıflar müdüriyetine Bulgar hükümeti Türkiye kaçağı İpsalalı Ahmet Hikmeti tayin etmiştir. Diğer Türkiye kaçakları da Bulgar hükümetinden büyük yardım görmektedir.”

<sup>497</sup> 14 September 1933: BCA, 030 10 02 39 65 5, p. 1. “İpsalalı Ahmet Hikmetin Filibede arap harflerile çıkardığı Türkçe “Medeniyet” gazetesinin, hükümetimiz aleyhinde zararlı yazılar yazdığı görüldüğünden Türkiye’ye sokulmasının yasak edilmesi...”

<sup>498</sup> Boyar and Fleet, “A Dangerous Axis: The ‘Bulgarian Müftü’, the Turkish Opposition and the Ankara Government, 1928-1936”, p. 781.



Oruç came to Bulgaria on May 7, 1933. According to the Turkish Ministry of Internal Affairs, he would again attempt to publish these papers in Bulgaria and distribute them on Thracian frontier of Turkey.<sup>499</sup> Concerning about his activities, the bureau of *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* in Edirne, just on this frontier closely followed his contacts in Bulgaria and sent reports to Ankara. Apparently, as soon as he arrived at Sofia, he contacted with enemies of new Turkish state. However, the report showed that it was Hüseyin Hüsni that first supported his anti-Kemalist activities. Initially, he provided Arif Oruç with an opportunity to publish his articles in *Dostluk*. He even planned to buy this anti-Kemalist newspaper and made it publishing organ of Arif Oruç, but the owner of this newspaper did not accept this offer. Then, thanks to his close relations with the Bulgarian authorities, Hüseyin Hüsni introduced Arif Oruç to the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry. He was immediately settled in the house of Çerkez Ali Haydar (called as Batumlu Ali Haydar as well),<sup>500</sup> one of ‘the fugitives’ in Bulgaria, who was known as an official agent of Bulgarian police.<sup>501</sup> More importantly, he was financially supported by the *Başmüftülük* and Bulgarian Foreign Ministry, from which he respectively took 6,000 and 20,000 levas. Thus, with these supports he could publish his anti-Kemalist papers in Bulgaria.<sup>502</sup> Then, Hüseyin Hüsni established a printing house together with Arif Oruç, İpsalalı Ahmet Hikmet, and other oppositional Turkish elements in

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<sup>499</sup> 16 May 1933: BCA, 490 01 585 20 2, p. 36: “(Yarın) gazetesinin sahibi ve başmuharriri Arif Oruç; Suriye’de gazete çıkarmağa teşebbüs etmiş ve muvaffak olamadığından Yunanistana gitmişti. Yunanistanda da çalışamayacağını anlıyan merhum ahiren Sofyaya hareket etmiştir... A) Bütün maksadı memleketimiz haricinde muhalif gazetelerle birleşmek veyahut Yarın gazetesini tekrar neşrederek memlekete gizli olarak ithal etmek; B) Bulgaristandaki muhalif gazetelerle çalışmak imkanı bulamazsa oradan Romanyaya geçmek; ...E) Yarın gazetesine ve diğer neşriyatı Trakya hududu boyundaki askerlerimiz, çavuşlarımız ve zabitlerimiz vasıtasıyla ordumuzun içine dağıtmak; F) Bulgaristan Trakyası hududundan bunları keza askerlerimizin arasına dağıtmak.”

<sup>500</sup> 16 July 1933: BCA, 490 01 585 20 2, pp. 13-15.

<sup>501</sup> Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı*, p. 85.

<sup>502</sup> 16 July 1933: BCA, 490 01 585 20 2, pp. 13-15: “Yunanlılar tarafından hudut harici edilen ve Sofyaya iltica eylemiş olan Arif Oruç ilk muavenet ve muzhereti Sofyanın yobaz ruhlu, mürteci Baş müftüsünden görmüş ve onun delaletile Bulgar hariciyesine takdim edilmiş, o günlerde Sofyada ikamet etmekte olan Batumlu Ali Haydarın Evine yerleştirilmiştir. Bulgar hariciyesinin ve demokratlarının mahiye 15,000 Leva yardımile çıkan mahut Dostluk gazetesinde Razgrad mezarlıkları hadisesinde Arif Orucun aleyhimize bir makalesi intişaretti ve faaliyete başladı... Baş Müftülüğün verdiği 6,000 ve Bulgar hariciyesinden temin edilen 20,000 Levalık bir tahsisat ile (Kurtuluş Fırkası) programını izaheden broşürlerin ve bilahara Yarın gazetesinin neşbasılıp dağıtılmasına başlandı.”

Sofia, which fostered these anti-Kemalist publications.<sup>503</sup> Thus, it was apparent that Arif Oruç enjoyed great opportunities in Bulgaria for his opposition to Ankara, mainly with the help of Hüseyin Hüsnü. This showed how his anti-Kemalist activities became more threatening for Turkey, when he reached to Bulgaria.<sup>504</sup>

From the very beginning, what Arif Oruç wanted was to smuggle his anti-Kemalist papers into Turkish territories. He even contacted to the *Trakya Cemiyeti* and the Armenians probably on this issue, when he first arrived to Bulgaria.<sup>505</sup> Finally, he achieved this and one of the copies of these leaflets about the programme of his party and *Yarın* reached to Keşan, a town in Edirne. It entered the Turkish territories inside a Bulgarian newspaper, *Zora*. Although both the Turkish authorities and the party members suspected about its publishing in Şumen, they could not find the exact address it was sent from. Then, to have a clear idea one party member, Kara Bekir Bey, who was in Sofia in the same period, was appointed to learn about his activities.<sup>506</sup>

As these papers also reached to Samsun, the chief of *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* in this city, who was also the MP of Antalya, similarly dealt with this issue. In fact, it was not the first time that Arif Oruç sent these papers to this city. For instance, when he was in Greece, he also smuggled his propaganda pamphlets, which were in a handwritten format. However, according to the chief of party in Samsun, there were considerable changes between the papers Arif Oruç smuggled into Turkey when he was in Greece and in Bulgaria. For instance, ones sent from Bulgaria were in a printed version, which were

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<sup>503</sup> 6 November 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 631 30, p. 8.

<sup>504</sup> Boyar and Fleet, "A Dangerous Axis: The 'Bulgarian Müftü', the Turkish Opposition and the Ankara Government, 1928-1936", p. 779.

<sup>505</sup> Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı*, p. 85.

<sup>506</sup> 16 July 1933: BCA, 490 01 585 20 2, p. 14: "Gerek broşürlerin ve gerekse Yarın gazetesinin Şumnu da gizli olarak basıldığı ve hariçte basılıp geliyormuş gibi işin maske edildiği bizce tamamilen tehakkuk etmiştir. Bu broşürlerden bir adedi Bulgarca Zora gazetesi içinde Keşana gelmiş ve ora posta müdürü tarafından görülerek Kaymakamlık vastasile Vilayete gönderilmiş isede, gerek resmi cephenin gerek bizim yapmış olduğumuz tahkikatta bu broşürün hangi adrese geldiği maalesef tespit edilememiştir. Bulgaristandan yeni aldığımız bazı tertibat ile gerek broşürlerin gerekse Yarın gazetesinin memleketimize hangi adreslerle gönderildiğini ve Arif Orucun kimlerle muhabere etmekte olduğunu öğrenebileceğimizi kuvvetle ümit etmekteyiz. Arkadaşımız Kara Bekir bey işleri için Sofyadadır. Bize yeni ve faydalı haberler getireceği şüphesizdir."

different from handwritten texts sent from Greece. This was clearly a sign of opportunities Arif Oruç had in Bulgaria, and the party administrator in Samsun commented that it was these opportunities that made Arif Oruç more courageous to act against Turkish government.<sup>507</sup>

The case of Arif Oruç, in fact, was the most evident example which showed the nature of anti-Kemalist activities in Bulgaria. It was clear that Hüseyin Hüsnü acted as a bridge between the Bulgarian authorities and the opponents of the Turkish Republic in this state. Thus, by only supporting Hüseyin Hüsnü, the Bulgarian government achieved to back all other anti-Kemalist activities.<sup>508</sup> The Bulgarian documents also revealed this fact of his central role in these activities. For instance, according to the Bulgarian Commission, charged by Mouchanoff in 1934 to discuss ways of anti-Kemalist propaganda, Hüseyin Hüsnü's role as a *Başmüftü* should be empowered. Moreover, the members of this Commission thought that *Medrese'tün-Nüvvab* should also be empowered.<sup>509</sup> *Nüvvab* was a potential *Al-Azhar* of the Balkans for Bulgarian authorities.<sup>510</sup> Thus, together with *Başmüftülük*, they provided scholarships to some students of *Nüvvab* to be educated in *Al-Azhar*.<sup>511</sup> Apparently, this was to increase conservative outlook among Turkish minority.

However, Bulgarian support for Hüseyin Hüsnü was intensified with the change of regime in Bulgaria, after the coup on May 19, 1934. This new regime enacted legislations by decrees in various issue areas that enabled Hüseyin Hüsnü to intensify his anti-Kemalist propaganda. One of them was about the rule of the Turkish schools and other institutions, which was left *Başmüftülük*. After the enactment of this legislation, within two months between October and November, Hüseyin Hüsnü changed the members of councils, who were elected, in the Turkish schools and appointed new members to these councils. Indeed, the letter of the Bulgarian Ministry of

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<sup>507</sup> 13 July 1933: BCA, 490 01 585 20 2, pp. 23-24.

<sup>508</sup> Boyar and Fleet, "A Dangerous Axis: The 'Bulgarian Müftü', the Turkish Opposition and the Ankara Government, 1928-1936", pp. 787-786.

<sup>509</sup> *Belgelerle Mustafa Kemal Atatürk ve Türk-Bulgar İlişkileri*, pp. 320, 335.

<sup>510</sup> Boyar and Fleet, "A Dangerous Axis: The 'Bulgarian Müftü', the Turkish Opposition and the Ankara Government, 1928-1936", p. 778.

<sup>511</sup> Davutoğlu, *Ölüm Daha Güzeldi*, p. 67.

Education showed how they designed this legislation to see ‘good’ Bulgarians educated with the religious principles in the Turkish institutions.<sup>512</sup> Obviously, this definition was for Hüseyin Hüsnü and his followers.

With the rule of this new regime in Bulgaria, in 1934 Hüseyin Hüsnü established a popular society, called *Dini İslam Müdafileri Cemiyeti* (The Society for the Defenders of the Religion of Islam), with a head office in the *Başmüftülük* and had other branches. *Medeniyet*, a popular anti-Kemalist newspaper which was first published on August 19, 1933, became a publishing organ of this Islamic society on September 1, 1934.<sup>513</sup> The intention of Bulgarian government in supporting these two propaganda organs was revealed with the report of the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry to the Ministry of Internal Affairs on November 1934. It was stated that with subsidies of the Foreign Ministry, *Başmüftülük* could publish *Medeniyet* and organize branches of this Islamic society in order to struggle more efficiently against the Kemalists.<sup>514</sup> This showed how anti-Kemalist activities were not restricted to anti-Kemalist propaganda, but suppressing the Kemalist presence in Bulgaria was also the part of this activity. Thus, the Turkish side in line with its ideological concerns followed closely the attacks towards the Kemalists in late 1920s and 1930s. In this period, either with diplomatic pressures or with direct support to these people, the Turkish government attempted to decrease pressure on them.

### **3.2.2. PRESSURE ON THE KEMALISTS IN BULGARIA AND THE TURKISH REACTION**

The Kemalists in Bulgaria were considered as a common enemy by the Bulgarian authorities and anti-Kemalist circle. Obviously, the presence of this Kemalist circle among Turks was the first obstacle for these anti-Kemalist activities. Thus, they together fought against these people and their activities. Turkey saw that anti-Kemalists became an informant of the Bulgarian authorities for the pro-Kemalists’ activities, and in return they were provided

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<sup>512</sup> Memişoğlu, *Geçmişten Günümüze Bulgaristan’da Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, pp. 204-205.

<sup>513</sup> Memişoğlu, *Geçmişten Günümüze Bulgaristan’da Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, p. 205.

<sup>514</sup> *Belgelerle Mustafa Kemal Atatürk ve Türk-Bulgar İlişkileri*, pp. 361-362.

with influential positions in the Turkish institutions and other places. This relationship, however, worked against the Kemalists, who encountered with pressures as a result. Actually, all these intensified the suspicions of Turkish Republic about Bulgarian intentions to destabilize its new regime. Thus, as a counter-offensive, the Turkish side worked also to make these people rescued from pressures through diplomatic ways or other methods.

In this period, the Turkish embassies and consulates in Bulgaria turned into areas to which these Kemalists complained about their problems. These complaints were mainly about spying of anti-Kemalist forces about them. For instance, in 1933 Ahmet Rafet Bey, ‘a Turkish nationalist’, sent a letter to the Turkish embassy in Sofia. In this letter, he wrote that he was a teacher in Eğridere; however, the Bulgarian authorities removed him from this job with the spying of the dissident Turkish elements living there for his nationalist outlook.<sup>515</sup> Indeed, three years before this letter, *Deliorman*, pro-Kemalist newspaper, had already pointed out pressures on Turkish schools in Eğridere.<sup>516</sup> But, Ahmet Rafet Bey’s case verified the existence of pressure more clearly. In 1934, the report of the Turkish consul in Plovdiv similarly pointed out the density of pressures. According to this report, Bulgarians started to control Turkish schools but they did this with uninformed tours of inspection. But, it was clear that these inspections based on the previous reports of the anti-Kemalist circles about any ‘awakening Turkishness’ in these schools. For instance, the Bulgarian authorities such as the inspectorate of schools, chief of police, and civil municipal police in Plovdiv organized a sudden inspection in *rüşdiye* of this area. They made this inspection specifically during the course of geography, and asked teacher Halit Efendi about geography book he used in this course. And, because of a sentence in this

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<sup>515</sup> 21 August 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 630 28, pp. 4-5: “Bulgaristanda yaşayan hainler, hükümetimize başka fena şekilde tefsir ederek verdikleri beyan ve jurnallarla hükümetimizin bizim hakkımızda fena yanlış iyane beslemesine sebep olmuşlardır (Ahmet Rafet) ... Eğridere türk mektebi muallimi Ahmet Rafet Beyin bir istidasını raptten takdim ediyorum. Mumaileyh millici bir genç olduğu için muhitindeki firarilerin Bulgarlara ihbaratı üzerine mektep muallimliğinden çıkarılmıştır..(Sofya Elçiliğinden Başvekalet Müsteşarı Kemal Beyefendiye).”  
<sup>516</sup> “Eğridere Mektebinde Grev”, *Deliorman*, 7 January 1930, p. 1, in 2 February 1930: BCA, 030 10 240 618 2.

book (*Milli Coğrafya* which was published in Turkey by Abdülkadir Sadi Bey in 1926)<sup>517</sup> which was considered against Bulgaria, they drew up a report about this Turkish teacher. However, it was known that a day before these same Bulgarian authorities visited Ahmet Hikmet Emin Hoca, probably a name from conservative circle who had a son educated in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in this school. Thus, an inspection particularly for 3<sup>rd</sup> grades during the geography class made the Turkish consul to suspect about this man's previous spying. According to him, the Bulgarian authorities would inevitably use this event as a pretext to support anti-Kemalist forces more, the *Başmüftü* and other oppositional Turkish elements such as İpsalalı Ahmet Hikmet. It was apparent for him that these opponents of Turkish Republic acted in accordance with the directives of Bulgaria which they gained support, and dedicated to fight against awakening of Turkishness. And, *Turan Cemiyeti*, *Bulgaristan Muallimler Birliği* (The Bulgarian Turkish Teacher's Union), and the Turkish schools were the ones that this anti-Kemalist force attacked most.<sup>518</sup>

*Turan* was a Turkish organization which was established for the encouragement of sportive activities among the people aged from 15 to 45. However, it had also a political outlook.<sup>519</sup> This pro-Kemalist stance of this organization was actually alarming for the Bulgarian authorities. According to them, this organization was governed by the Kemalists so that it would be potentially used by Turkey in line with the Turkish interests.<sup>520</sup> Disturbance of Bulgarians about *Turan* was also pointed out in the Turkish documents. For instance, on June 29, 1933 the Turkish ambassador in Sofia sent an interesting report to Ankara which was then sent to the Prime Ministry. This report based on the views of Boris Pavloff, the General Secretary of Bulgarian Democratic Party, who talked to Ömer Kâşif, a Bulgarian Turk but whom Pavloff thought

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<sup>517</sup> Retrieved from [http://www.geography.humanity.ankara.edu.tr/ders\\_notu/COG205\\_ek.pdf](http://www.geography.humanity.ankara.edu.tr/ders_notu/COG205_ek.pdf) on May 9, 2011.

<sup>518</sup> 24 April 1934: BCA, 030 10 242 633 7, pp. 4-6.

<sup>519</sup> Tunalı Ali Hüsnü, *Bulgaristan'da Türk Spor Birliği Nasıl Doğdu ve Nasıl Turan Oldu?* (Tunalı: Vakıt Matbaası, 1933), pp. 5-6: "...bugün Bulgaristan Türk gençliğinin yenilik hareketlerinde Turan Cemiyetlerinin oynamakta bulunduğu ve oynayacağı roller pek büyüktür."

<sup>520</sup> *Belgelerle Mustafa Kemal Atatürk ve Türk-Bulgar İlişkileri*, pp. 300-301.

he was a Bulgarian.<sup>521</sup> Indeed, Ömer Kâşif was the member of this political party, but he was also the chief of *Turan*.<sup>522</sup> This Bulgarian politician told that these Kemalist youths in *Turan*, ‘under the mask of the sportive activities’, worked for interests of Turkey. But, he told that they would fight against these activities and rescue Bulgaria from these Kemalists.<sup>523</sup> To do this, the Bulgarian authorities as usual used anti-Kemalist forces. For instance, Osman Nuri, one of the *yüzellilikler*, worked as an informant for them and reported activities of this organization. One of these reports even passed into the hands of *Rodop*, pro-Kemalist newspaper in Bulgaria, and it was published.<sup>524</sup> Thus, in its 8<sup>th</sup> congress, *Turan* decided to be vigilant against this spying.<sup>525</sup>

*Bulgaristan Türk Muallimleri Birliği* was another pro-Kemalist Turkish organization which was similarly encountered with pressures in Bulgaria. It was established in 1906 with the attempts of the Young Turks aimed to cease divisions within the education system of Turks in Bulgaria.<sup>526</sup> Actually, this organization followed reforms of new Turkish state closely and always searched for the ways of applying these within the minority. Particularly, this was the case in the adoption of Latin alphabet in the Bulgarian Turkish schools.

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<sup>521</sup> 29 June 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 630 6, p. 1: “Bulgar Demokrat partisi umumî kâtibi Boris Pavlof’un mezkur parti mensuplarından Varna’lı Ömer kâşif Efendi’ye kendisini yanlışlıkla bulgar farzederek, Türklük hakkında vaki bazı ifadatına müteallik olarak Sofya Elçiliğimizden alınan tahrikatın bir sureti melfufen arz ve takdim kılındı Efendim Hazretleri.”

<sup>522</sup> Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı*, p. 82.

<sup>523</sup> 29 April 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 630 6, p. 2. “...spor maskası altında meydana getirilen “Turan” teşkilâtının...”

<sup>524</sup> Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri*, pp. 104-105: “Türkiye’den sınır dışı edildikten sonra Bulgaristan’a yerleşmiş bulunan “150’lik” Osman Nuri, Bulgar makamlarına “Turan” derneklerini jurnal ediyordu. Bu jurnallerden biri ele geçirilmiş ve “Rodop” gazetesinde yayımlanmıştı. “150’liklerden” Osman Nuri, Bulgaristan Türk gençliğini Bulgar makamlarına şöyle jurnal ediyordu: “Onlar, Türkiye’de din ve saltanat aleyhinde yapılmakta olan inkılapların müdahinleridir... Bu cereyanı tutanlarsa, hükümetçe de malum olan, Türk konsolosları, muallimler, yarım tahsilli ve birkaç yüksek tahsilli Türk gençleridir. ...Sarf edilen bütün mesai, Bulgaristan’da milli bir Türk teşkilatı yapmak ve Kemalizm ceryanı olan solcu koministleri yaşatmaktır.”

<sup>525</sup> *Özdilek*, 22 September 1933, in 23 October 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 631 12, p. 3: “9- Verilen jurnaller yapılan türlü şikâyetler neticesinde hakkımızda beslenmekte olan fikirlerin cerhi için maksat ve gayemizi ve bu gibi iftiralardan beri olduğumuzu izah eder şekilde mufassal bir beyanname hazırlanması ve bunun erkânı devlete ve icap eden diğer yerlere gönderilmesi... 12- “Turan” teşkilâtının maksatı, bulunduğu vatana hayırlı çalışan ve şuurlu insanlar yetiştirmek olduğundan şübeler bütün işlerinde bu vatanın evlâtları olduğunu onutması ve gösterişe kapılmayıp faaliyet programını ona göre tespit etmesi.”

<sup>526</sup> Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri*, pp. 95-98.

In July of 1928, they organized a congress in Lom. It was the period which was four months before the alphabet revolution in Turkey. In this Congress, they decided to revert to the Latin alphabet in Turkish schools just after it was done in Turkey.<sup>527</sup> In the preparation process, the members of the organization decided to organize courses to teach the new alphabet to teachers.<sup>528</sup> In this process, Ahmet Şükrü (Erbek), a teacher from Plovdiv, wrote a book called *Türk Alfabesi* (The Turkish Alphabet).<sup>529</sup> In fact, there were some missing letters in this book since it was published by only the personal efforts.<sup>530</sup> But, after he wrote a letter to İsmet Paşa, a financial aid was provided towards his expenses.<sup>531</sup>

However, anti-Kemalist circle did not wait without doing anything, and they put pressure on N. Naydenov, the Bulgarian Minister of Education for prohibition of the usage of these new books in Latin letters. This Bulgarian minister, who had already close relations with these anti-Kemalists, declared legislation for the usage of the previous books for four years. In fact, this was the first victory of the anti-Kemalists in Latin versus Arabic alphabet conflict, thanks to the Bulgarian authorities.<sup>532</sup> Disturbed from this legislation, *Bulgaristan Türk Muallimleri Birliği* sent a committee to Sofia, under the leadership of Necip Arif Efendi, the president of this commission. They met with the Bulgarian Prime Minister and showed their disturbance.<sup>533</sup> Apparently, between 1928 and 1930, this organization worked for the ban of the Arabic alphabet in the Turkish schools. For instance, on August 3, 1929, in

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<sup>527</sup> Şimşir, *Türk Yazı Devrimi*, pp. 303.

<sup>528</sup> Hüseyin Memişoğlu, *Geçmişten Günümüze Bulgaristan'da Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, pp. 172-173; Şimşir, *Türk Yazı Devrimi*, pp. 302-303.

<sup>529</sup> Ahmet Şükrü Erbek, *Türk Alfabesi* (Xasköy: Çikago Matbaası, 1928), p. 2: “Muhterem meşlekdaşlar, Bulgaristan türk maillimler Birliği yeni yazının mekteplerinize kabüle karar verdiği zaman bittabi benim gibi meslekdaşlar da memnun olmuşlardır. Bu ülvi teşebbüsün Bulgaristan mektepleri için pek faydalı olacağını düşünerek söz söylemeyi za’it addederim. İşte sırf bu maksetledir ki “Türk alfabetesini” tertip ettim. ...Elde kâfi derecede levazımın bulunmayışı ve vaktin â’demi misai’desine binaen kitapta görülecek hatalardan dolayı ma’zur görülmemi reca ve bununle Bulgaristan mu’ârifine yardım ettiğimi ... edersen benim için ne mutlu.”

<sup>530</sup> Şimşir, *Türk Yazı Devrimi*, p. 304.

<sup>531</sup> Şimşir, *Türk Yazı Devrimi*, p. 309.

<sup>532</sup> Bilâl N. Şimşir, *Bizim Diplomatlar* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1996), pp. 337-338.

<sup>533</sup> Memişoğlu, *Geçmişten Günümüze Bulgaristan'da Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, pp. 176-177.



its 20<sup>th</sup> congress, this organization decided to check all newly published school books.<sup>534</sup> Finally, in 1930 the Bulgarian authorities officially banned the Arabic alphabet.<sup>535</sup> However, it was clear that in practice they were not dedicated to apply this ban.<sup>536</sup> For instance, *İntibah*, an anti-Kemalist newspaper, continued to be published in Arabic letters.<sup>537</sup> This newspaper claimed that the Turkish Republic designed this reform to ‘abolish Islam’. And, *İntibah* accused the members of *Bulgaristan Muallimler Birliđi* of working to abolish Islam.<sup>538</sup>

However, it was Hüseyin Hüsni that worked against this organization most. For instance, in November 1933, he prepared a report for the Bulgarian Foreign and Minorities Ministry, about so-called ‘dangerous pro-Kemalist circle’. In this report, he mainly pointed out the activities of these teachers and Turkish schools. He listed their names in this report and asked the Bulgarian authorities to deport these from their offices.<sup>539</sup> This made the Bulgarian Foreign and Minorities Ministry appoint a special commission to examine influence of Turkish reforms over Turks in Bulgaria. In line with the report of this commission, Mouchanoff dissolved this organization.<sup>540</sup>

However, attacks of Hüseyin Hüsni towards these teachers and Turkish schools continued also after the dissolution of this organization. This pressure was felt much when the new regime in Bulgaria left Turkish schools under the control of the *Başmüftülük*. In addition to this, the new regime closed down most of the Turkish schools used Latin alphabet.<sup>541</sup> Thus, these helped Hüseyin Hüsni in his campaign of Arabic alphabet, and schools were immediately reverted to this alphabet in 1934.<sup>542</sup> This was immediately protested in Turkish

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<sup>534</sup> Memişođlu, *Geçmişten Günümüze Bulgaristan’da Türk Eđitim Tarihi*, p. 183.

<sup>535</sup> Şimşir, *Türk Yazı Devrimi*, p. 314.

<sup>536</sup> Boyar and Fleet, “A Dangerous Axis: The ‘Bulgarian Müftü’, the Turkish Opposition and the Ankara Government, 1928-1936”, p. 777.

<sup>537</sup> Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri*, p. 139.

<sup>538</sup> Şimşir, *Bizim Diplomatlar*, p. 338.

<sup>539</sup> Memişođlu, *Geçmişten Günümüze Bulgaristan’da Türk Eđitim Tarihi*, p. 201.

<sup>540</sup> Memişođlu, *Geçmişten Günümüze Bulgaristan’da Türk Eđitim Tarihi*, pp. 201-202.

<sup>541</sup> Şimşir, *Türk Yazı Devrimi*, p. 317.

<sup>542</sup> Nayır, *Balkanlar ve Türklük*, p. 167: “Türklüğün ve inkılabımızın sicili düşmanı olan ve Bulgar hükümetinin sırf bütün Bulgar emir ve menfaatlerine uşak sadıklığıyla hizmet ettiđi için mevkiiinde tuttuđu baş müftü, bu mekanizma sayesinde bütün Türk mektepleri üzerinde hâkimiyet ve nufuzunu tesise çalıştı (Askeri İdare). ...Baş müftünün gizli emirleri geređince encümenler birkaç müeteci softayı etrafında toplayarak sözde bütün mntıka namına eski

press. For instance, *Cumhuriyet* described this as ban on Latin alphabet in Turkish schools as ‘new front for the suppression of Turks’.<sup>543</sup> This ban inevitably had impacts on the Kemalist teachers. For instance, in Şumen when the usage of the Latin alphabet was banned by the *Şumnu Maarif Müfettişliği* (Educational Inspectorate), teachers were all sacked and replaced with the ones educated in religious schools.<sup>544</sup> This pressure over teachers was also pointed out in the Turkish publications. For instance, Yaşar Nabi wrote about the teachers sacked from their jobs, with pretext of being the members of the *Turan*.<sup>545</sup> However, the Bulgarian government continued to empower the *Başmüftülük* at the expense of Kemalist teachers. In 1935, for example, it was

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harflerin okutulması lehinde karar alıyor ve mazbatalar tanzim ediyorlardı. Bu karar müfettişlikçe alelacele tasdik edilince, bu toplantıdan haberdar bile edilmemiş olan gençlerin ve münevverlerin artık itiraza hakkı kalmıyordu.”

<sup>543</sup> Memduh Talât, “Tazyik Cephe Değiştiriyor: Bulgaristan’daki Türkler, Mekteplerinde Yeni Türk Harflerini Kullanmaktan Menediliyor”, *Cumhuriyet*, 9 October 1934, pp. 1, 6: “Türkiyede yeni harfler kabul edildikten sonra pek tabii olarak Bulgaristan Türkleri de Türk camiasının bir parçası olması sıfatıyla bu büyük inkılâba yabancı kalamazdılar. Bulgaristanda da yeni harflerin halk ve mektepliler arasında tamim edilmesi için büyük bir gayretle çalışılmağa başlandı. Halk için muhtelif kurslar açıldı. Gazetelerin bir kısmı büsbütün yeni harflerle bir kısmı da yarı yeni yarı arap harflerle çıkmağa başladılar. Bu suretle halk da yavaş yavaş yeni harflere alıştı. Mekteplerde tedrisat din derslerinden maada tamamile yeni harflerle yapılıyordu. Geçen Bulgar hükümetlerinin bunda Bulgaristan Türklerine büyük yardımları dokundu. Hatta Bulgar Maarif Nezareti vilâyetlerdeki maarif müfettişlerine gönderdiği muhtelif tamimlerle yeni harflerin Türk mektepleri ve Türk halkı tarafından kabul edilmesini teşvik etmelerini bildiriyorlardı. ...Fakat 19 mayıs taklîbi hükümetinden sonra Bulgaristanda vaziyet tamamile aksi bir şekil aldı. Yeni kabine Bulgaristanda fırkaların yardımile intihap edilen bütün müesseseleri feshettiği için bu meyanda intihaplı olan Türklerin vakıf komisyonları ve marif encümenleri de feshedildi ve bunların idaresi tamamile müftülüklerin ellerine bırakıldı. Şimdi teessürle haberalıyoruz ki müftülükler mektep idaresine gönderdikleri müteaddit tamimlerle mekteplerden yeni Türk harflerinin kaldırılıp tedrisatın gene eskisi Arap harflerle yapılmasını emretmişlerdir. Yeni kabinenin bütün müzahertini haiz olan müftülüklerin Bulgaristandaki uyanık Türk halkını böyle umumî Türk camiasından ayırıp onu bambaşka bir yola sevk etmek istemeleri arasında çok derin bir teessür husule getirmiştir. .... Her zaman Türk dostluğundan hararetle bahseden Kimon Georgiyef kabinesinden biz Bulgaristan Türkünü yükseltmeğe azmettiği kendi içtimaî ve kültür hayatında serbest bırakması, memleketin kanunlarıyla kendisine verilen cemaat intihapları hakkının ipka edilmesini ve müftülüklerin yalnız kendi dini ilerine bakıp onları Bulgaristan Türkünün üzerine musallat etmemesini istiyor ve bekliyoruz. Bu zaten Bulgaristan Türklerine Nöyi muahedesile verilen bir haktır.”

<sup>544</sup> Boyar and Fleet, “A Dangerous Axis: The ‘Bulgarian Müftü’, the Turkish Opposition and the Ankara Government, 1928-1936”, p. 777.

<sup>545</sup> Nayır, *Balkanlar ve Türklük*, pp. 167-168: “Türk mekteplerinde muallimlik eden hakikaten iktidar sahibi münevver gençlerden bir çoğu, “ahkâmı celilei diniyeye muhalif ve münafı olan dinsiz Turan cemiyetine mensup buldukları” hakkında baş müftülüğün jurnalcılığı yüzünden işlerinden çıkarılmışlar ve yerlerine doğru dürüst bir imlâya bile sahip olmayan ve bütün muhareterleri, vaktiyle ezberlemiş oldukları birkaç Kuran suresini tekrarlamaktan ibaret kalan yobazlar tayin edilmiştir.”

authorized for the control and approval of all Turkish school text books.<sup>546</sup> Apparently, all these new Bulgarian legislations intensified pressure over the Kemalists.

In line with the claims of pro-Kemalist Turks in Bulgaria, it was seen that physical attacks were also used as a tool of suppressing these Kemalist people in this period. For instance, Mahmut Necmeddin Deliorman pointed out how Çerkez Ali Haydar, dissident Turkish element in Bulgaria, was armed by Bulgarian police to attack them. He claimed that he knew Çerkez Ali Haydar and his friends even came to Razgrad to attack him. But, as he was not there, these armed ‘fugitives’ could not succeed and turned back to Sofia.<sup>547</sup> However, he was attacked in the following period, which was protested in *Rodop* on May 19, 1933. *Rodop* similarly stated that Çerkez Haydar and H. Mustafa Nuri, who acted in accordance with *Başmüftü* and anti-Kemalist newspaper *Dostluk*, planned to suppress Kemalists’ voices through physical force with fists, sticks, and guns, since they could not do this with their anti-Kemalist newspapers. *Rodop* stated that attack towards Mahmut Deliorman, the owner of pro-Kemalist newspaper *Deliorman*, was the first case and these attacks would continue towards other pro-Kemalist newspapers.<sup>548</sup> Indeed, this was a sign of insecure environment for the Kemalists.

Turkey knew how the Kemalists faced with suppression in Bulgaria. It was evident for all sides that these people acted as an obstacle for anti-

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<sup>546</sup> Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri*, pp. 154-155: “‘Türk düşmanı’ olarak bilinen Gruyef, Ağustos 1935’te Başmüftülük Hukuk Danışmanlığı görevine atıldı. Hemen arkasından yeni bir Bulgar yönetmeliği yayımladı. 5 Eylül 1935 tarihli ve 199 sayılı Bulgar resmi gazetesinde bu yönetmeliğe, Bulgaristan Türk okullarında okutulacak bütün ders kitapları Başmüftülüğün kontrolünden onayından geçecekti. Yalnız din kitapları değil, bütün kitaplar söz konusuydu. Bu kitaplar, daha önce Başmüftülüğün kontrolünden geçmiyordu. Şimdi Başmüftülüğü işe karıştırmak, Türkçe ders kitapları içinde Türk düşmanı Gruyef ile Hüseyin Hüsnü Efendiye tam yetki vermek anlamına geliyordu.”

<sup>547</sup> Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı*, p. 85.

<sup>548</sup> “Firariler Kuduruyor!”, *Rodop*, 19 May 1933, p. 1, in BCA, 490 01 585 20 2: “Dostluk gazetesi ve başmüftü etrafında toplanmış olan kaçak ve koğulmuş vatansızlardan çerkes Haydar ve H. Mustafa Nuri Sofyadaki türk gazetecilerile münevverlerine sokaklarda ve kahvelerde taaruz için bir pılan hazırlamışlar, pis kalemlerile susturamadıkları hak ve hakikat erbabını sopa ve yumrukla ve belkide silâhle mağlup etmeyi kararlaştırmışlardır. Bu suretle geçenlerde “Deliorman” sahibinden başlayan tearruz sırasile Yumukofu ve “Halk Sesi” sahibini bulacağı şayiaları deveren etmektedir. Yalnız yedi kıral ile barışık olan “Rehber” sahibinin listeden hariç bırakıldığı anlaşılmaktadır.”

Kemalist propaganda in Bulgaria. Thus, for Bulgarian view they must be silenced. However, the picture was different for Turkish view. To fight against anti-Kemalist propaganda of opponents of newly established Turkish Republic and its reforms, which enjoyed Bulgarian support, these Kemalists were important for the Turkish side. Thus, particularly in late 1920s and 1930s the Turkish side searched the ways of decreasing pressure on these people, which would in return make its regime more secure towards the suspected Bulgarian intentions of destabilization.

It was clear that rescuing Bulgaria from these opponents of Turkey was the most influential counter-offensive of Turkey. One of them, Çerkez Ali Haydar, who did not even hesitate to enter into Turkish territories, was arrested by Turkish police on Thracian border.<sup>549</sup> He was found in Keşan and taken to Edirne by police for interrogation. However, according to the chief of *Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* in Edirne he would probably deny his contacts in Sofia.<sup>550</sup> In this case, the Turkish authorities could arrest this oppositional figure as he came to Turkey. However, this was an isolated event and in other cases, the Turkish side had to put diplomatic pressure on Bulgaria to expel these anti-Kemalists from its lands. In the case of Arif Oruç, for example, the Turkish government conveyed its concern directly to Mouchanoff. The Turkish authorities saw that particularly in its seventh issue, *Yarın* became more detrimental. Thus, continuous efforts of Arif Oruç to infiltrate these detrimental papers into Turkey remained as a problem for Turkey, and Mouchanoff's government was once more warned. Then, Mouchanoff promised to expel him.<sup>551</sup> However, it took one year for Bulgaria to take this decision, and in July of 1934 Arif Oruç was removed.<sup>552</sup>

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<sup>549</sup> 15 August 1933: BCA, 490 01 585 20 2, p. 10.

<sup>550</sup> 16 July 1933: BCA, 490 01 585 20 2, p. 15.

<sup>551</sup> 4 September 1933: BCA, 490 01 585 20 2, p. 8: "Bulgaristan'da bulunan muhaliflerden Arif Oruç tarafından çıkarılmakta olan Yarın başlıklı broşürün daha muzur yazıları ihtiva eden yedinci numarası da basılarak memleketimize sokulmak istendiği elde edilen nüshasından anlaşılmiş ve tekrar Bulgar hükümeti nezdinde teşebbüsatta bulunularak Mösyö Muşanof'un vadi veçhile Arif Oruç'un oradan hudut harici edilmesinin temini Hariciye vekâleti celilesine yazılmıştır."

<sup>552</sup> 12 July 1934: BCA, 490 01 585 20 2, p. 7.

In this period, however, the Turkish government did not only work for the expulsion of these oppositional figures from Bulgaria. Turkey knew that to pacify this anti-Kemalist forces these should be removed from their offices. Particularly, this was most desired for the case of Hüseyin Hüsnü, the *Başmüftü*, who finally left office in 1936. It was apparent that he was considered as an attractive partner by the Bulgarian authorities.<sup>553</sup> His loyalty to the Bulgarian interests, especially, was always welcomed in this state.<sup>554</sup> However, he was actually a dangerous figure for the Turkish side. His praised loyalty in Bulgaria was on the contrary a matter of suspicion in Turkey. Yaşar Nabi (Nayır), for instance, wrote in his book, *Balkanlar ve Türklük* (The Balkans and The Turkishness), that as Hüseyin Hüsnü served with loyalty to the Bulgarian directives and interests, the Bulgarian government was dedicated to keep him in office<sup>555</sup> despite Turkish protests. For instance, in 1935, Şevki Berker, the Turkish ambassador in Sofia, protested Bulgarian insistence on Hüseyin Hüsnü. At ministerial level, he pointed out how Turkey desired to see modernized people particularly in *Başmüftülük*.<sup>556</sup> Then, on May of 1936 he was replaced with another *Başmüftü*. This was clearly welcomed in Turkish press. *Cumhuriyet*, for example, issued this with a comment that his removal from office made Turks finally felt relieved.<sup>557</sup>

Besides these diplomatic protests to Bulgaria that backed anti-Kemalists, Turkey also protested Bulgarian approach to Latin alphabet in late 1920s and 1930s through diplomatic channels. The introduction of Latin script in Turkey was actually one of the important reforms. Gazi Mustafa Kemal resembled this reform to a moment in the National Independence War, which was on August 26, 1922 (*Büyük Taarruz*). It was the date of Turkish grand

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<sup>553</sup> Boyar and Fleet, "A Dangerous Axis: The 'Bulgarian Müftü', the Turkish Opposition and the Ankara Government, 1928-1936", p. 775.

<sup>554</sup> *Belgelerle Mustafa Kemal Atatürk ve Türk-Bulgar İlişkileri*, p. 469.

<sup>555</sup> Nayır, *Balkanlar ve Türklük*, p. 167: "Türklüğün ve inkilabımızın sicili düşmanı olan ve Bulgar hükümetinin sırf bütün Bulgar emir ve menfaatlerine uşak sadıqlığıyla hizmet ettiği için mevkiinde tuttuğu baş müftü, bu mekanizma sayesinde bütün Türk mektepleri üzerinde hâkimiyet ve nufuzunu tesise çalıştı."

<sup>556</sup> Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri*, pp. 153-154.

<sup>557</sup> "Bulgaristan Başmüftiyi Azletti: Ahmedofun Azli Bulgaristan Türklerine Geniş Bir Nefes Aldırdı", *Cumhuriyet*, 29 May 1936, pp. 1, 8.

offence towards the foreign enemies, and it was clearly the turning point in Turkish victory. At the same date, six years later, Gazi Mustafa Kemal announced that alphabet revolution would similarly turn into a grand offensive this time towards the darkness, another enemy.<sup>558</sup> This was clearly a sign of continuing fight of still insecure regime with internal opposition of religious elements. However, this fight was also valid for oppositional activities in Bulgaria. Similarly, the insistence of anti-Kemalist forces for Arabic alphabet and Bulgarian support for their campaigns worried Turkey ideologically. As a part of its ideological concern, the Turkish government diplomatically protested Bulgarian side.

This made the efforts of the Kemalists for Latin alphabet more significant for Turkey. It was clear that from 1928, the Kemalists fought against anti-Kemalists's campaign for Arabic alphabet as much as possible. However, Turkey saw that the success against this campaign was limited as Bulgaria backed the other front. Thus, to enable these Bulgarian Kemalists to fight against anti-Kemalists' pressure for Arabic script, the Turkish authorities persistently warned the Bulgarian authorities through diplomatic channels. Rıdvanbeyoğlu Hüsrev (Gerede), the Turkish ambassador in Sofia, who Gazi Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) described as 'my first friend of the revolution and the difficulties',<sup>559</sup> before the end of 1928, was ordered by the Turkish Foreign Ministry to convey anger of Turkey about the Bulgarian delay for the introduction of Latin alphabet in Turkish schools in Bulgaria.<sup>560</sup> First, he talked to Leapcheff, the Bulgarian Prime Minister, to protest this delay. In this meeting, Hüsrev Bey pointed out how the Bulgarian delay for the Latin alphabet would lead to coercion on Turks in Bulgaria for the usage of the Arab alphabet. Also, he voiced Turkish disturbance about Bulgarian backing of the anti-Kemalist forces. Then, Hüsrev Bey met with Bouroff, the Bulgarian Foreign Minister. Similarly, he complained about this Bulgarian delay.<sup>561</sup>

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<sup>558</sup> Şimşir, *Türk Yazı Devrimi*, pp. 159-160.

<sup>559</sup> Şimşir, *Bizim Diplomatlar*, p. 329: "(Mustafa Kemal Atatürk): "Benim ilk inkılap ve müşkülât arkadaşım."

<sup>560</sup> Memişoğlu, *Geçmişten Günümüze Bulgaristan'da Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, pp. 176.

<sup>561</sup> Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri*, pp. 135-136.

At the beginning of 1929, all the efforts of Hüsrev Bey, in addition to the Kemalist's efforts, for the Latin alphabet were satisfied, when Bulgaria declared a circular that paved the way for its usage.<sup>562</sup> But, this picture was totally changed with the decision of the new regime that came to power after the coup in 1934. Thus, the Turkish authorities again put diplomatic pressure on Bulgaria. For instance, on May 10, 1935, Şevki Berker, the Turkish ambassador in Sofia, met with the Bulgarian authorities in the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry. He told that Bulgarian government should repeal the orders of the *Başmüftülük* about return to the Arab alphabet in the Turkish schools. Although Hüseyin Hüsnü was not any more *Başmüftü*, his decisions from 1934 continued to affect Turkish minority in Bulgaria. Similarly, three months later, the Turkish ambassador repeated this warning but there was no change.<sup>563</sup> Particularly, when Hüseyin Hüsnü was appointed as the school inspector for the religious education, after he was removed from the post of *Başmüftülük* in 1936, he made many Turkish schools with the Latin alphabet closed down. These activities of Hüseyin Hüsnü were praised in *Medeniyet*, which claimed that Turks in Bulgaria 'rescued' from hostility towards the religion, thanks to the new Bulgarian regime. It was argued that only religious education could make Bulgarian Turkish youth beneficial for Bulgaria.<sup>564</sup> Probably, the Bulgarian government was in line with this thought, and it took two more years to make Latin alphabet compulsory. Thus, it was in 1938 that Turkish schools reverted to Latin script.<sup>565</sup>

Turkish diplomatic pressure took years to get a result. In this problematic period stemming from Turkish suspicions about Bulgarian intentions, Turkey did not restrict its counter-offensive to these diplomatic measures. In addition to these, the Turkish government pursued the policy of supporting the Kemalist circle. This support was to empower Bulgarian Turkish Kemalists against anti-Kemalist forces, since in return they would help

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<sup>562</sup> Memişoğlu, *Geçmişten Günümüze Bulgaristan'da Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, p. 180.

<sup>563</sup> Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri*, pp. 153-155.

<sup>564</sup> Memişoğlu, *Geçmişten Günümüze Bulgaristan'da Türk Eğitim Tarihi*, pp. 209-210.

<sup>565</sup> *Belgelerle Mustafa Kemal Atatürk ve Türk-Bulgar İlişkileri*, p. 501.

Turkey to counter anti-Kemalist propaganda within Bulgaria. The Turkish authorities in this state played a key role for Turkey's decision in supporting some activities. For instance, the Turkish schools and Kemalist teachers were significant for Turkish embassy in Sofia.<sup>566</sup> Hüsrev Bey, the Turkish ambassador in Sofia described Turkish teachers as the forerunners of the maturation of the Turkishness in Bulgaria. Added to this, he told that these teachers could work for increasing the number of 'the enlightened Turks' there.<sup>567</sup> Accordingly, the Turkish government tried to solve problems encountered by Turkish schools. In 1933 one of the Turkish schools, *Suhindol Türk Mektebi*'s board (Suhindol Turkish School), sent a letter to the Turkish embassy to ask for financial support. In this letter, first of all school committee members pointed out their activities against the Arab alphabet in their region. And, they reported that no Turkish school teaching in Arabic alphabet left in their place. The committee concluded this letter by mentioning how they were in need of financial support. Thus, they asked for the same financial subsidy which the Turkish government allocated to them in the previous year.<sup>568</sup> Ankara accepted this demand and 300 liras were sent to the Turkish embassy to be given to this school.<sup>569</sup> In the same year, İsmet Paşa also sent money to another Turkish school, which was in Plevne (Pleven). The amount of this subsidy was 6,500 levas.<sup>570</sup> In fact, Turkey felt itself enforced to provide these

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<sup>566</sup> Bilâl N. Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri*, p. 129.

<sup>567</sup> 27 July 1930: BCA, 030 10 240 618 13, p. 4: "...Hüsrev Bey beyanatında itiraf ettiği veçhile "Türk tekâmülünün pişdarları olan türk muallimleri, bu memleketteki münevverlerin adedini çoğaltmak için bulgaristanın her tarafında açık yollara maliklerdir. Mukaddes tahsil ateşile mühlhem genç adamlar kendi ihtiyar amcaları türk köylülerine konferanslar veriyor. Türk gazeteleri Türkçe lisanı üzerine ve yeni türk harflerile inkişar ediyorlar. Bulgaristandaki dindaşlarımıza, teceddüt için mukaddes tekâmül fikirlerini dağıtıyorlar. Ve 300,000 kişilik büyük ekaliyetin ırkı menfaatlerini himaye ediyorlar."

<sup>568</sup> 2 December 1933: BCA, 030 10 24 631 29, p. 2-3: "Encümenimiz büyük türk inkılâbından harf inkılâbını derhal kabul ve tedrisata o surette başlamış ve bu inkılâbı bütün sancak dahilinde neşritâmime muvaffak olmuştur. Binaen aleyh bugün sancağımız dahilinde arap harflerile tedrisatta bulunan bir mektep yoktur. ...marifimiz pek muhtaç ve müşkül vaziyette bulunmakta olduğundan bize, geçen sene olduğu gibi münasip miktar yardımın itilasını ...temenni eyleriz."

<sup>569</sup> 2 December 1933: BCA, 030 10 24 631 29, p. 1: "Suhindol Türk mektebi Encümenine yardım verilmek üzere (300) üç yüz lira İş Bankası vasıtasile Elçilik memuruna gönderilmiştir."

<sup>570</sup> 2 October 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 631 8, p. 1: "Sofyada Hasan Rıfat Beyefendiye, Muhteşem Beyefendi, Türkiye başvekili İsmet Paşa hazretleri tarafından mektebimize bir



subsidies since otherwise these schools were all to be closed by Bulgarian authorities, with the pretext of financial problems. Although the Turkish authorities protested the Bulgarian closing the Turkish schools, there was no change.<sup>571</sup> Thus, there was no way left to Turkey besides supporting these schools financially.

Although these cases were about financial supports to the Turkish schools, actually, the Turkish government allocated most of its subsidies to the Kemalist publications. In fact, this media strategy was shaped by Hüsrev Bey. Firstly, he sent two copies of *Deliorman*, pro-Kemalist newspaper, to Ankara and asked for financial support for this newspaper.<sup>572</sup> Then, he proposed Ankara to support *Halk Sesi*, which he described as loyal to the directives of Turkish embassy. He sent one copy of this newspaper and he wrote that in addition to *Deliorman*, supporting this pro-Kemalist newspaper as well would be beneficial for Turkey.<sup>573</sup> This was accepted and the Turkish government sent 1,200 liras to the embassy to be given to these two newspapers and *Rodop* (another pro-Kemalist newspaper).<sup>574</sup>

Subsidies for these pro-Kemalist newspapers continued to be given to the Turkish embassy in Sofia during the term of Tefvîk Kâmil, who succeeded Hüsrev Bey. A document from 1932 showed that in addition to *Deliorman*, *Halk Sesi* and *Rodop*, *Rehber* which was described as working to defend rights of Turks in this state, was also supported.<sup>575</sup> These payments were repeated in

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yardımı olmak üzere gönderilen (6500) altı bin beş yüz levayı aldık. Paşa hazretlerine minnet ve hürmetlerimizi bildirmeniz lütfunu rica ederiz efendim. Plevne Türk mektep encümeni.”

<sup>571</sup> Şimşir, *Bulgaristan Türkleri*, pp. 148-149.

<sup>572</sup> 2 February 1930: BCA, 030 10 240 618 2, p. 1: “Bulgaristan Türkleri arasında inkılâb neşri tamimi için (Deliorman) gazetesine nakti yardımda bulunulmasının temenni ricalesile Sofya Elçiliğimizden gönderilmiş olan tahriratın suretini...”

<sup>573</sup> 5 March 1930: BCA, 030 10 240 618 9, p. 4: “Sofya’da yeni harflerle çıkan “Halk sesi” gazetesi büyük inkılabımızın aciz bir hadimidir. Elçiliğin direktifleri altında, masada doğru yürümektedir.”

<sup>574</sup> 10 June 1930: BCA, 030 10 240 618 10, p. 1: “Rodop, Halk Sesi, Deli Orman gazetelerine üç aylık yardım tahsilatı olarak merbut cetvel micibince tevdi buyrulmak üzere 1200 lira mukabili yetmiş altı bin iki yüz lira İş Bankası vasıtasile gönderilmiş olup...”

<sup>575</sup> 23 August 1932: BCA, 030 10 240 624 8, pp. 1-2: “...Bulgaristan Türklerinin hukukunu müdafaya çalışan (Rehber) gazetesine yardım edildiği beyan buyrulmaktadır.”

August 1933, when Ankara sent 1,800 liras to be allocated.<sup>576</sup> Even when one of these newspapers directly contacted to Ankara, it was still embassy in Sofia that Ankara asked for information to check the case. For instance, when *Özdilek* wrote a letter to İsmet Paşa for financial support, this was asked to Tevfik Kâmil.<sup>577</sup> And, he told that *Özdilek*, which already receiving 3,000 levas per month from the embassy, was published by ‘decent’ and ‘idealist’ Turks and it would be beneficial if they published more.<sup>578</sup> However, in the end of 1933, Tevfik Kâmil was informed that hence after, Hakkı Tarık, the MP of Giresun, would deal with these subsidies to *Deliorman*, *Halk Sesi*, *Rodop*, *Rehber*, *İstikbal*, *Karadeniz*, *Turan* and *Özdilek*. This was decided after the visit of the representatives of *Deliorman*, *Rodop* and *Halk Sesi* to Ankara.<sup>579</sup> This would be probably designed as a precaution against intensified Bulgarian inspections about funding of these Kemalist newspapers.<sup>580</sup>

In fact, besides financial support, pro-Kemalist newspapers were also in need of new fronts for publishing in Latin alphabet. Accordingly, in order to support Kemalist activities, the Turkish government sent these to Bulgaria. Just after alphabet revolution, for instance, these were sent for *Rehber*, on the order of İsmet Paşa.<sup>581</sup> It was clear that buying or hiring these letters were highly

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<sup>576</sup> 21 August 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 630 29, p. 1: “Sofya Elçiliğine, Bulgaristanda çıkan Türkçe gazetelerin Eylül, teş. ev., teş. san. 933 üç aylık tahsiratları olan 1800 liranın bu gün İş Bankasile gönderildiğini arz, hürmetlerini teyit eylerim. Başvekil Müsteşarı.”

<sup>577</sup> 23 October 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 631 12, p. 1: “Sofya Sefiri Tevfik Kâmil Beyefendiye, “Özdilek” gazetesinin müdürü Mehmet ali ve başyazarı gültekin imzası ile, gazetelerinin neşriyatını anlatmak için yardım dileğine dair Başvekil Paşa Hz. ne gönderilmiş mektubun sureti leffen takdim kılınmıştır. Bu dilek hakkındaki mütealalarınızın iş’ar buyrulmasını rica ederim. Başvekil Müsteşarı.”

<sup>578</sup> 7 November 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 631 30, p. 5. “23 Birinci Teşrin 1933 tarihli ve 2880 numrolu tahriratı devletlerine melfuf mektubu okudum. “Özdilek” gazetesine elyevm ayda maktuan (3.000) leva vermektayiz. Bu gazeteyi çıkaran gençler bura Türkleri içinde şahsen çok temiz ve maddi menfaatleri istihkâr eden idéaliste kimselerdir. Gazete münderecat itibarla da ayda iki nüsha yerine dört veya beş nüsha çıkartılması faideli olur.”

<sup>579</sup> 4 December 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 631 30, p. 1: “Giresun Mebusu Hakkı Tarık Beyefendiye, Bulgaristanda intişar eden Deliorman, Halk Sesi ve Rodop gazetelerinin Ankaraya gelen mümessillerile yapılan temas neticesinde Başvekâletçe kendilerine Sofya Elçiliği vasitasile yapılmakta olan yardımın bundan sonra verasat-ı Aliyeleri ile yapılması kararlaştırılmış ve keyfiyet Sofya Elçiliğine de yazılmıştır.”

<sup>580</sup> Boyar and Fleet, “A Dangerous Axis: The ‘Bulgarian Müftü’, the Turkish Opposition and the Ankara Government, 1928-1936”, p. 782.

<sup>581</sup> 5 December 1928: BCA, 030 10 83 547 17, p. 1: “Kiliste “Kilis” ve Bulgaristanda “Rehber” gazetelerine, Başvekil hazretlerinin telekki olunan emir mucibince, lâzım gelen miktarda yeni harflerin tedarik ve sevk olunduğunu hürmetlerimle arz ederim efendim.”

expensive for these Kemalist newspapers with limited budgets. In 1930, for example, Hüsrev Bey reported these problems of *Deliorman* and *Rodop* and their demand of letters from Ankara. However, for financial reasons, the Turkish government could satisfy these demands in a limited sense.<sup>582</sup> Similarly, in 1933 new fronts were also sent to *Rodop* and *Turan*.<sup>583</sup>

### 3.2.3. CONCLUSION

Ankara was alarmed from power of anti-Kemalist forces in Bulgaria, particularly in late 1920s and 1930s. What Turkey saw was persistent Bulgarian support for the anti-Kemalists at the expense of the Kemalist Turks in Bulgaria. This Bulgarian support was mainly for Hüseyin Hüsni, who led considerable anti-Kemalist activities. At the same time, he served to Bulgarian interests, and he did not hesitate to show his gratitude to Bulgarian government in any condition. According to him, besides Bulgaria there was no other country in the Balkans having Shari'a courts which were so perfectly in tune with Shari'a. Thus, according to him, Muslims in Bulgaria were 'very happy' in Bulgaria, particularly when compared to the conditions of Muslims in Turkey and the other Balkan countries.<sup>584</sup> However, although he favoured Bulgarian rule on Muslims, he ignored the conditions of Pomaks, a Bulgarian-speaking Muslims living in Bulgaria, as these people encountered with Christianization policies in this state.<sup>585</sup> For instance, in May of 1933, the Turkish ambassador in Sofia reported how Bulgarian school inspector banned reading Koran and religious courses in a Turkish school in Arda, where Pomaks attended. To stop Muslim religious education, the Bulgarian soldiers even prohibited Hoca Salih Efendi to enter this school hence after. Moreover,

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<sup>582</sup> 31 March 1930: BCA, 030 10 83 548 9, pp. 1-4.

<sup>583</sup> Boyar, *Ottomans, Turks and the Balkans*, p. 121.

<sup>584</sup> 24 April 1934: BCA, 030 10 242 633 8, p. 4: "Umumiyetle Bulgaristan Müslümanları mesutturlar. Ve balkan devletlerinde yaşayan Müslümanlar arasında şeraite uygun en mükemmel şeriye mahkemelerine ve Avrupa'da yegâne yüksek dini mektebe malik olmakla iftihar edebilirler. ...Balkan devletlerinde ve Türkiye'de yaşayan Müslümanlar haiz oldukları haklardan istifade teseler çok memnun olurlardı."

<sup>585</sup> Boyar and Fleet, "A Dangerous Axis: The 'Bulgarian Müftü', the Turkish Opposition and the Ankara Government, 1928-1936", p. 776.

Pomaks who protested this decision were attacked by these soldiers.<sup>586</sup> However, this pressure on Pomaks did not draw the attention of Hüseyin Hüsni, who was the *Başmüftü*. This showed how Hüseyin Hüsni did not mind problems of Turkish/Muslim minority in general, but was only satisfied with Bulgarian support behind anti-Kemalists.

For this period, Turkey was aware of intensive conservative outlook in Bulgaria as a clear consequence of partnership between anti-Kemalist forces and Bulgarian authorities. It was actually an opposition to new Turkish state that this conservatism fed on. Turkey saw that their activities were mainly about new regime in Turkey and its reforms, and any internal opposition towards this new regime in Turkey was yearned by these oppositional elements in Bulgaria. For instance, Menemen incident drew their attention. In Varna, Mahmut Deliorman saw a coffee house named as Menemen, ‘for blessing the reactionaries’, in which local conservatives such as Hâfiz Eşref and his supporters came together.<sup>587</sup> This was a sign of deep hostility towards the Kemalist government in Turkey. And, Turkey knew that this hostility had Bulgarian support. However, in the end of 1930s, political scene in international arena made Bulgaria desired closer relations with Turkey.<sup>588</sup> This actually resulted in a change within the Bulgarian attitudes towards anti-Kemalist activities, and Bulgaria started to act in accordance with the protests of Turkish side, which would inevitably diminish pressure on the Kemalists.

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<sup>586</sup> 20 May 1933: BCA, 030 10 241 628 10, p. 1: “Paşmaklı’nın Pomak yokarı Arda köyünde Bulgar mektep müfettişinin nisanın üçüncü günü Türk mektebine giderek artık kur’an ve müslümanca din dersi okutturmamak mennu olduğunu ihtar hoca Salih efendiyi mektebe gelmekten men eylediği, şikayete giden on altı köylüye askeri kumandan tarafından dayak atıldığı, mekteplerdeki kur’an cüzlerinin aynı müfettiş tarafından parçalanarak hakaretle yere atıldığı ehalinin şikayetlerinden anlaşılmıştır. Pomakları cebren hristiyanlaştırma politikasının Bulgar memurlarınca bersabık tatbik edilmekte bulunduğu bu vaka ile de teyyüt edilmiştir.”

<sup>587</sup> Deliorman, *Razgrad Mezarlık Hadisesinde Çanlar Benim İçin Çalındı*, p. 83.

<sup>588</sup> Boyar and Fleet, “A Dangerous Axis: The ‘Bulgarian Müftü’, the Turkish Opposition and the Ankara Government, 1928-1936”, p. 786.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **CONCLUSION**

In the period between 1923 and 1938, the Turkish state was responsive towards the Greek and Bulgarian maltreatment of Turkish/Muslim minority living in their lands. Both at inter-state and international level, the Turkish government voiced and protested this suppression applied on these people. Additionally, through Turkish authorities in these two states, contacted with these people and granted a support to them. But, the reason of this active Turkish response could not be restricted only to humanitarian concerns of the government about these oppressed people as well as it could not be considered as a reflection of expansionist policy of Turkey towards the Balkans as presented by Greeks and Bulgarians. In fact, this concern was an extension of Turkish quest for security which became a motive for its attention to these minorities. Apparently, the Turkish government considered maltreatment of these minorities as the part of Greek and Bulgarian policies, which posed threats to Turkish territorial integrity and stability. Thus, protesting and searching ways to cease this pressure were also a part of counter-offensive of the Turkish side to remove its feeling of insecurity.

Turkey was well aware of the fact that Greek and Bulgarian pressure was particularly on the ones among Turkish/Muslim minority who were the proponents of new Turkish state and its regime, while the opponents of Ankara were directly or indirectly supported by both Greece and Bulgaria, and they were granted with influential positions in the institutions of minorities, thus, had a great say over the Turkish/Muslim Communities. This situation, actually, drew the attention of Turkish side. For Turkey, this was done by these two states for the intensification of distinction among Turkish/Muslim minorities. However, these two governments did not only support local conservatives.

More importantly, they created a friendly environment for oppositional Turkish elements, who were either fled or expelled from Turkey in the course of the establishment of Turkish Republic. Thanks to supports of these governments, local conservatives and oppositional elements composed an anti-Kemalist structure, threatening Turkey. As diplomatic measures could not solve this problem, the Turkish government supported the Kemalist circle in these countries in accordance with its security concerns.

Indeed, according to the Turkish side, these two states would not approach to Turkish/Muslim minority violently if they cared about friendship with Turkey. Thus, insistence of these two states to apply coercive methods on these people made Turkey suspected about intentions of Greek and Bulgarian governments to have territorial claims on Turkish lands and to destabilize its new regime. These unfriendly actions shaped the Turkish view of these two states. In fact, this Turkish perspective was justified both in these two cases. Initially, with the beginning of 1930s, as Greek government prioritized friendship with Turkey, its pressure on Turks diminished. On the contrary, it was the period when Bulgarian side intensified its pressure on Turks and Pomaks. However, with changes in the political scene with the end of 1930s, Bulgaria also softened its harsh actions towards Turks and Muslims in Bulgaria. This shows how Greek and Bulgarian treatment of Turkish/Muslim minorities was shaped in accordance with their aspirations on Turkey.

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