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# TOWARDS THE REVOLUTION OF 1908: THE ASSASSINATION OF ŞEMŞİ PAŞA

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by

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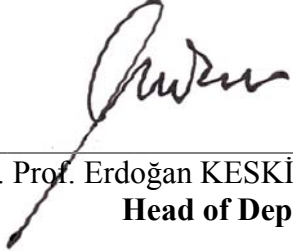
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To my father

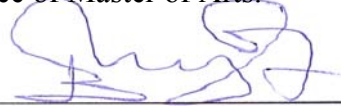
## APPROVAL PAGE

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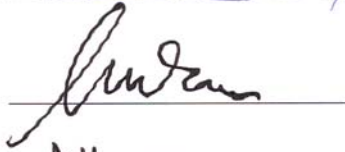
  
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## ABSTRACT

**Hakan ÖZDEMİR**

**January 2013**

### **Towards the Revolution of 1908: The Assassination of Şemsi Paşa**

The transformation of the Ottoman Empire from absolute monarchy to the constitutional monarchy was actualized after the Revolution of 1908. The Ottoman Freedom Society (*Osmanlı Hürriyet Cemiyeti*) was founded in 1906 by young officers of the Third Army to conduct an effective revolutionary organization in Macedonia. After Resneli Niyazi Bey revolted against the Hamidian regime, Abdülhamid II decided completely abolish the Unionist structure in Rumelia. The plan was to use Albanian warriors, whose loyalty to the palace was well-known, under the command of Şemsi Paşa. However, Şemsi Paşa was assassinated outside the Telegraph Office by a Unionist partisan, Atıf Bey, shortly after he arrived in Manastır. This not only caused the disappearance of the threat against the existence of the Committee of Union and Progress, but also left thirty thousand armed Albanians gathered in Firzovik aimless. The dissident agents who infiltrated into this group managed to convince them to do the exact opposite of what Şemsi Paşa planned. They threatened Abdülhamid II in their successive telegrams to “either declare the Constitution immediately, or they would march on to İstanbul”. The Sultan was forced to re-institute the Constitution on the night of July 23, 1908, with the death of one of his famous generals and the loss of Albanian support. This work aims to highlight the great importance of the assassination of Şemsi Paşa during the process that led to the Second Constitutional Period.

**Key Words:** Şemsi Paşa, Abdulhamid II, Constitutional system, 1908 Revolution, Macedonia, Manastır, Resneli Niyazi Bey, Firzovik

## KISA ÖZET

Hakan ÖZDEMİR

Ocak 2013

### 1908 İhtilaline Doğru: Şemsi Paşa Suikasti

Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun mutlak monarşiden anayasal meşrutiyete geçişi Temmuz 1908 İhtilali ile mümkün olmuştur. Makedonya'daki III. Ordu içerisinde görevli genç subayların 1906'da oluşturduğu Osmanlı Hürriyet Cemiyeti etkin bir ihtilalci yapı kurmuştu. Resneli Niyazi Bey'in Abdülhamid rejimine karşı isyan ederek dağa çıkması üzerine, II. Abdülhamid, Rumeli'de örgütlenen İttihadçı yapılanmayı tamamen ortadan kaldırmaya karar verdi. Bunun için de, Şemsi Paşa'nın liderliğinde, Saray'a sadakatleriyle bilinen Arnavut silahşörleri kullanmayı planladı. Ancak Şemsi Paşa Manastır'a geldikten kısa bir süre sonra Telgrafhane çıkışında, bir İttihadçı fedai olan mülazım Atıf Bey tarafından suikastle öldürüldü. Bu olay İttihad ve Terakki'nin varlığına yönelik tehdidi ortadan kaldırdığı gibi, Firzovik'te toplanan otuz bin silahlı Arnavut'un ortada kalmasına neden oldu. Bu topluluğun arasına sızan muhalif ajanlar, Onları, Şemsi Paşa'nın amacının tam tersini yapmaya ikna ettiler. II. Abdülhamid'e arka arkaya yazdıkları telgraflarla, "Kânûn-ı Esâsî'yi hemen ilan etmesi; aksi halde İstanbul'a yürüyecekleri" yönünde tehdit ettiler. Şemsi Paşa gibi önemli bir komutanının ölümü ve sadık Arnavutların desteğini kaybetmesi üzerine Sultan, 23 Temmuz 1908 gecesini Kânûn-ı Esâsî'nin yeniden yürürlüğe konulmasını kabul etmek zorunda kaldı. Bu çalışma Şemsi Paşa suikastinin II. Meşrutiyet sürecindeki bu büyük önemini belgelerle vurgulama amacındadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Şemsi Paşa, II. Abdülhamid, Meşrutiyet, Kânûn-ı Esâsî, Makedonya, Manastır, Resneli Niyazi, Firzovik.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BEO	Bâb-ı Âlî Evrak Odası
BOA	Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi
CPU	Ottoman Committee of Progress and Union
CUP	Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress
DH.MKT	Dahiliye Nezareti Mektubi Kalemi
DİA	Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi
EI	Encyclopedia of Islam
FO	Foreign Office
HHP	Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa Evrakı
İ.HUS	İrade Hususi
İ.MLU	İrade Meclis-i Umumi
İ.TAL	İrade Taltifat
İSAM	İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi
MV	Meclis-i Vükela Mazbataları
OFS	Ottoman Freedom Society ( <i>Osmanlı Hürriyet Cemiyeti</i> )
TFR.IA	Rumeli Müfettişliği Sadaret Evrakı
TFR.IAS	Rumeli Müfettişliği Jandarma Müşiriyet Ve Kumandanlık Evrakı
TFR.IKV	Rumeli Müfettişliği Kosova Evrakı
Y.A.HUS	Yıldız Sadaret Hususi Maruzat Evrakı
Y.EE	Yıldız Esas Evrakı
Y.MTV	Yıldız Mütenevvi Maruzat Evrakı
Y.PRK.ASK	Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Askeri Maruzat
Y.PRK.MK	Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Müfettişlikler ve Komiserlikler Tahrirati

## TRANSLITERATION OF NAMES AND DATES

The following methods have been used for personal and place names in the transliteration of archival documents used in this thesis: The names of the places were used as they appeared in the documents. The modern names of places are given additionally in parentheses at first usage in the text. The current names of cities and villages are quite different from the names used in the Ottoman era. For example, in the Ottoman period, “Manastır” was the official name of the province; later on, it was renamed to “Bitola”, its Serbian name. However, “Monastir” has become a popular name in historical literature in English; the original version, “Manastır”, is preferred here. The same situation applies to “Firzovik”; we will use neither the Serbian “Uroševac” nor the Albanian version “Ferizaj”. Names of Ottoman-Turkish statesmen are spelled with the resources available in the modern Turkish alphabet. For instance, “Şemsi Paşa” is preferred instead of “Shemsi Pasha”. The titles, especially military ranks, will be used in English equivalent; thus, using “Lieutenant Atıf” instead of “*Mülâzım* Atıf” is preferred.

In this period, both lunar (*Hijri*) and Julian (*Rûmî*) calendar were used. It is possible to see both versions of the dates in archival documents, as well as in the newspapers. There is a 13-days difference between Rumi and Gregorian calendars. In this study, I preferred to convert both *Hijri* and *Rûmî* calendars into Gregorian versions to avoid confusion. However, for a few cases, such as the theinstance of the *Rûmî* date of the Revolution of July 10 (1324) – which corresponds to July 23, 1908 in the Gregorian calendar – the original date was used as a title or concept rather than mentioning it as a calendar date.

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## INTRODUCTION

“*Şemsi Paşa vuruldu, yeni dünya kuruldu!*”<sup>1</sup>

The Revolution of July 23, 1908 is one of the turning points of Ottoman political history. It was a relatively late consequence of the impact of the French Revolution. The events that made this revolution possible were the assassinations of the officials of the Hamidian regime in Selanik and Manastır. The most effective among these was the assassination of General (*Birinci Ferik*) Şemsi Paşa, thanks to his mission to the office he represented, and to the authority he showed loyalty to.

There was an important network of resistance against the long rule of Abdülhamid II, whose reign coincided with a particularly difficult era. This antagonism turned from an intellectual framework with political and social connotations into a “reactionary” movement using military methods in 1906-1908. Arguably the most effective endeavors, and the first serious attempt at rebellion against the Hamidian regime, was the rebellion of Resneli Niyazi Bey, together with his soldiers and some civilians in Resne. Şemsi Paşa, who earned the trust of the Sultan thanks to his success in suppressing revolts in the Rumelia region, was assigned to destroy Niyazi Bey’s band and eradicate the secret committee that was starting to draw attention with its activities. No one ever thought that he would fail in this mission, thanks to his success in previous missions.

Şemsi Paşa arrived in Manastır with his loyal guards and battalions to the heart of the Unionist organization, Selanik. After the meetings and communications he conducted here; he was killed by Lieutenant (*Mülâzım*) Atıf Bey, a partisan of the Committee of Union and Progress (*İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti*) at the doors of the

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<sup>1</sup> “Şemsi Paşa was murdered / the new world was established!”, a popular catchphrase of 1908 Revolution.

telegraph office while he was preparing to march on Resne. The assassination of a general, who was one of the most trusted men of Abdülhamid II, in Manastır, which housed the biggest military power of the Ottomans in Rumelia, forced the Sultan to change his policies significantly. In fact, thanks to this change, the end of absolute monarchy and the re-institution of the constitutional regime and parliamentary system became possible.

All of the studies on the process leading to the Second Constitutional Period stress that the assassination of Şemsi Paşa was the most important event of this timeframe. However, it is hard to say that this event was paid due attention in the academic works. This work aims to examine the events before, during and after the assassination in depth. In doing so, it will be possible to interpret this period better, by making clear the context, the inter-relations, and their impact on the decision-making mechanisms.

Şemsi Paşa's assassination was not an event that remained on July 7, 1908, but with its connection to the Firzovik events, had a strong influence on the outcome on July 23, 1908. If Şemsi Paşa succeeded in his mission, how would the course of history change? Would the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) be heard of by later generations? How would the fate of the Ottomans in Rumelia change? Would there still be Balkan Wars? Would the Ottomans enter the First World War? Would the battles in Çanakkale and Sarıkamış happen? Would there still be a Turkish Republic? These questions can be multiplied, but they will remain unanswered except by speculation. However, the in-depth inspection of these events will help future historians and social scientists gain a better understanding.

It is also necessary to see how French Revolution concepts like “liberty, equality, fraternity, justice and fatherland” affected the academic world of the Young Turks and their activities. It is also necessary to compare the New Ottomans (*Yeni Osmanlılar*), who were of relatively elite backgrounds, and the Young Turks, who were of modest backgrounds and rose through new military and civilian cadres, and wanted to have a say in the state structure.



The policies of the European great powers on the Ottoman Empire very much affected the ideas and the reactions of both the Sultan and the dissidents. Worries about the “division of the country” and “foreign intervention” were sensitive not only for both of the parties, but also for the common people. The Eastern Question and Macedonian Question should be taken into account for a better understanding. The complex nature of Macedonia, with a dense mixture of the Empire’s ethnic and religious groups, and how this affected the process will also be taken into account. The Albanians, thanks to the events and persons that constitute the subject of this dissertation, will be one of the focuses of this study.

The three words<sup>2</sup> uttered by Şemsi Paşa while he was dying seem to summarize the process of the empire’s disintegration, and the problems experienced by the modern Turkish Republic. In this context, the relations between military and politics, and the political groups within the military, will also be touched upon.

The organization of the modernist dissidents named as “Young Turks” will be examined through the CUP. The foundation of the Ottoman Freedom Society (OFS) and its operations around Selanik-Manastır will be especially examined. Another focus will be some of the documents that relate the thoughts and worries of Abdülhamid II in the process of the opening of the parliament and the re-institution of the constitution. It is a fact that the young officers who played a role in the 1908 Revolution had pivotal roles in the following fifty years.

This study aims to shed light on some events on the eve of the July 23, 1908 Revolution, and to show how the socio-psychological fragility of the Albanians affected the Empire and the region. The effectiveness of the armed forces compared to dissident intellectual activity in the Revolution will be stressed. The periods of preparation and action of a military coup will be scrutinized by considering some of

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<sup>2</sup> “The officers devoured me!” (*Beni zabitler bitirdi*), İSAM, HHP, 8/419-2, 7.7.1908.

the events that led to the dissolution of the Empire. It is hoped that this will form a basis for further research.

Primary archival materials will be used in examining the event before and after Şemsi Paşa's assassination: official correspondence between Manastır, Selanik and İstanbul, and the reports of the commission which investigated the assassination. Some field research in Macedonia was also conducted, as it is essential to have an understanding of the time, place and social aspects of the event. The information gathered in a visit to Selanik (Salonica/Salonika/Thessaloniki), Manastır (Bitola/Monastir), Üsküb (Skopje), Ohri (Ohrid), Resne (Resen), Kosova (Kosovo), Prizren, Firzovik (Ferizaj/Uroševac), Mitroviça (Mitroviça), Köprülü (Veles), Gevgili (Gevgelija), Siroz (Serres), Drama, Elbasan, Draç (Durrës) and İşkodra (Scutari/Shkodër) was incorporated in this work.

The work that dwells the most on the assassination of Şemsi Paşa is Mustafa Ragıb (Esatlı)'s "Manastır'da Patlayan Tabanca" (The Gun that Blazed in Manastır). Mustafa Ragıb, who escaped to Rusçuk and joined the group of İbrahim Temo, one of the founders of the CUP, was a member of the Committee too.<sup>3</sup> He used the information he gathered from his close contacts rather than his own observations, and created a highly detailed work. However, as the book was written in fictional form, it is necessary to cross-check the information provided. This book was also used as a guide in the field research conducted in Manastır, as it includes a plan of the region where the assassination was carried out.

Thanks to some family members of Şemsi Paşa who are still living in Turkey, it was possible to gather information on his family and the environment he was born into and raised in. However, the only book written about Şemsi Paşa, by his Bosnian compatriots, has a photo of Mahmut Şevket Paşa on the cover by a great mistake.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *The Young Turks in Opposition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 90.

<sup>4</sup> Zaim Azemović, *Şemsi Paşanın Balkan Kaderi*, trans. Saffet Atalay (Rozaje: Udruženje Naučnika i Umjetnika, 2005), p. 140.

Memoir-writing became almost a regular practice after the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some of the more or less important memoirs of the people in a different position may have been lost, but a significant part survived. Especially after the Revolution of 1908, there is almost an explosion in the number of memoirs. The main reason behind this storm was “creating a former era (*devr-i sâbık*)”. The important men of the former regime were anxious to clear their names, while the founders of the new one were excited to ensure that their success was “not to be forgotten” or to “write down their names in history in golden letters”. Of course, the records of the witnesses who were there have been extremely valuable, but we should be equally careful. The use of memoirs to the neglect of others will cause significant distortions; they can provide a clear sense only when they are read comparatively. The existence of fake memoirs, like the “*Abdülhamid’in Hatıra Defteri*”<sup>5</sup> (Memoirs of Abdülhamid) creates a risky situation for academics.

The most valuable sources to be used for this era are the accounts of the actors themselves, similar to Tunaya’s claim: “Very few eras, in our history have been evaluated by their own writers, as was the case with the Second Constitutional Period”.<sup>6</sup> Thanks to this abundance of memoirs, we have many sources relating the development of the CUP, the events before the Second Constitutional Period, and the events after the Revolution of 1908. The memoirs of government officials, like the Head Secretary of the Palace, Tahsin Paşa, Minister of War Rıza Paşa, Grand Vizier Said Paşa, Grand Vizier Kamil Paşa and Şeyhulislam Cemaleddin Efendi, give us a glance into the point of view of the regime before the Revolution.

The second set of memoirs belongs to the members and founders of the CUP. The names include Ahmet Rıza Bey, İbrahim Temo, Bahattin Şakir, Mizancı Murad Bey, Talat Paşa, Enver Paşa, Resneli Ahmet Niyazi, Mithat Şükrü Bleda, Kazım Karabekir, Fethi Okyar, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, İsmet İnönü, Celal Bayar, Ahmet

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<sup>5</sup> Ali Birinci, “Sultan Abdülhamid’in Hâtıra Defteri Meselesi”, *Divan İlmî Araştırmalar Dergisi*, No. 19 (2005/2), pp. 177-194.

<sup>6</sup> Tarkan Zafer Tunaya, *Hürriyet’in İlanı- İkinci Meşrutiyetin Siyasi Hayatına Bakışlar* (İstanbul: Arba Yayınları, 1996), p. 2.

Bedevî Kuran, Muhittin Birgen, Cemal Paşa, Hüsamettin Ertürk, Süleyman Kâni İrtem, Süleyman Külçe, Hüseyin Kâzım Kadri, Hasan Amca, İsmail Kemâl Bey, Leskovikli Mehmed Rauf, Halil Mentеше, Ali Haydar Midhat, Mustafa Ragıb, Rıza Nur, Mustafa Özden, Galip Vardar, Galip Pasinler, Prens Sabahaddin, Said Halim Paşa and Selim Sırrı Tarcan. Most of them played a role in the actual events. In particular, “*İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti (1896-1909)*” (The Committee of Union and Progress) by Kazım Karabekir gives detailed information on the foundation of the secret committee, its Masonic organization, and the foundation of its Manastır branch with Enver Bey.

A third group is the memoirs of bureaucrats of the new regime: Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi, Ali Cevat, Atıf Hüseyin, Mahmut Muhtar, Lütü Simavi, Ali Fuat Türkgeldi, Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil, Tahsin Uzer and Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın. The process after the Revolution can be followed from their accounts.

A fourth set of sources consists of the memoirs of Ahmed Saib, Ahmed Ziya, Ahmed Refik, Ahmed Selahaddin, Haşım Bey, Mehmed Selahaddin, Osman Nuri, Selanikli Şemseddin, Yunus Nadi and Ziya Şakir. Their accounts provide valuable information and documents concerning the 1908 events.

The books of Ahmet Bedevi Kuran, who is known as “the historian of the Young Turks”, are exceptionally valuable, in respect of the documentary information they contain. Kuran relates the formation of a Unionist officers’ mind, starting from the Military School, through his own experience. He was able to give an impartial view from outside the CUP thanks to his break-up with the organization. The only thing uniting the Islamists, Westernists, Positivists, Turkists, and Albanian nationalists was the “resistance against the Hamidian regime” and the desire for “liberty”.

Tahsin Paşa, who was one of the closest people to Sultan Abdülhamid, and had access to his correspondence, explained the purpose of his memories in striking words. The Head Secretary of the Sultan started by saying, “there is no perfect

history of the short but engrossing period that ended with the re-institution of the Constitution on 10<sup>th</sup> of July (23.7.1908)”, and added:

“..It is true that the kidnapping of Tatar Osman Paşa, the murder of Şemsi Paşa and the claim of the General Inspector Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa “there is no one left who did not join Union and Progress except me”, the news that the police and the gendarmerie joined the Committee after the military, forced Sultan Hamid to make concessions to Union and Progress.”<sup>7</sup>

These remarks recap the events that affected Abdülhamid’s decision after the discussions held on the night of July 23, 1908.

It is known that Şemsi Paşa who “had the favour and trust of the Sultan because he carried out his orders with speed and ardour”, was sent to Manastır with an order dated July 5, 1908 after Resneli Niyazi rebelled; finally, Şemsi Paşa was killed on July 7, 1908. Tahsin Paşa narrates: “Abdülhamid thought of sending Şemsi Paşa with the Albanians under his command, and gave him a secret order, after a committee of officers kidnapped Müşir Osman Paşa from his command post”. However, Müşir Osman Paşa was appointed to Şemsi Paşa’s post because of his murder, and was taken from his home in Manastır on the night of 21 July. This example, by itself, points to the necessity of “correctly” setting the date of the most important event that triggered the July 1908 Revolution.

It seems that some authors’ eyewitness accounts for some events use exactly the same words and repeat the same mistakes. The memoirs of Galip Vardar, Hüsametdin Ertürk and Mustafa Özden are good examples of this. All of them place the death of Şemsi Paşa on 8 July (7.7.1908 in fact) and tell that Atıf escaped to Selanik after the assassination, although he stayed in Manastır, Resne and Ohri. As there is no tradition of referencing in the works of the time, it is not possible to determine whether this information depends on their own testimony or was quoted from other works. It is necessary to make a separate study on this issue, to prevent misunderstandings.

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<sup>7</sup> Tahsin Paşa, *Abdülhamit-Yıldız Hatıraları*, compiled by Kudret Emiroğlu (İstanbul: İmge Kitabevi, 2008), pp. 164-165.

Süleyman Külçe's works entitled "*Firzovik Toplantısı ve Meşrutiyet*" (Firzovik Meeting and the Constitutional Period) and "*Osmanlı Tarihinde Arnavutluk*" (Albania in the Ottoman History) are important for taking the Albanian factor into consideration in explaining the second constitutional period and Firzovik. Külçe was the adjutant of Şemsi Paşa<sup>8</sup> and blamed him a lot after the Revolution as he was a member of the Committee, but he still accompanied Şemsi Paşa during most of the events. However, he was not able to join Şemsi Paşa's journey to Manastır; therefore, he is not an eyewitness of the assassination, its aftermath or the events in Firzovik. However, this situation does not diminish the value of the book, as it is the only book with the "Firzovik" name. He manages to provide a basis for details reached through archival materials. Interestingly, some works on the 1908 Revolution, the constitutional period, or the CUP, never reveal Firzovik, while some others contain significant chronological and factual mistakes.<sup>9</sup> It is strange that the memoirs of Mithat Şükrü Bleda, one of the most prestigious Unionists, entitled "*İmparatorluğun Çöküşü*" (Collapse of the Empire), details the events in Manastır, Selanik, Tikveş and Siroz, but does not mention Firzovik even once.

The most comprehensive works on the CUP are works by M. Şükrü Hanioglu, namely "*The Young Turks in Opposition*" and "*Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks 1902-1908*". These works, which are complementary to each other, deal with all of the dissident groups after 1889 that may be considered as Young Turks. Şerif Mardin's "*The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*", Sina Akşin's "*Jön Türkler ve İttihat ve Terakki*" (Young Turks and CUP), Tark Zafer Tunaya's "*Hürriyetin İlanı - İkinci Meşrutiyetin Siyasi Hayatına Bakışlar*" (Proclaiming the Liberty and

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<sup>8</sup> Süleyman Külçe, who was a member of the Mitroviça branch of the Union and Progress while he was the aide of Şemsi Paşa, wrote a theatrical play called "Şemsi Paşa ve 24 Haziran" in 1911, with the nickname "Süleyman Sırrı". Süleyman Külçe, *Osmanlı Tarihinde Arnavutluk* (İzmir: Yeniasır Matbaası, 1944), p. 343; Abdullah Şengül, "Türk Tiyatrosunda Tarih", *Turkish Studies*, Vol. 4 /1-II (Winter, 2009), p. 1950.

<sup>9</sup> An example would be this information on "the Committee's first armed attack carried out on Nazım Bey just after Şemsi Paşa was killed on the streets of Manastır". See Ahmet Eyicil, "Osmanlı İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti", *Türkler*, Vol. 13 (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002), p. 420.

Approaching the Comments on the Second Constitutional Period) make significant contributions to our understanding of the political atmosphere.

Feroz Ahmad's "The Young Turks: The Committee of Union and Progress in Turkish Politics: 1908-1914" is another important source for the period. His use of British Foreign Office materials is its greatest contribution, while the complete lack of Ottoman Archival materials is its greatest caveat. Among Western works, Ramsaur's "*The Young Turks: Prelude to the Revolution of 1908*" is a valuable work, as it was based on interviews with eyewitnesses and participants, though it was written long after the Constitutional Period. Buxton's "*Turkey in Revolution*" is a work relating the European view on the events, written right after the Revolution in 1909. Knight's "*The Awakening of Turkey: The Turkish Revolution of 1908*" is the first work on this issue which is still relevant for researchers. Aykut Kansu's "*1908 Devrimi*", tries to prove that the Young Turk Revolution was a people's movement that developed in time, though it is hard to judge that the work was successful.

Fikret Adanır, Gül Tokay and Mehmet Hacısalihoglu's works on the Macedonian Question provide a valuable contribution allowing the reader to understand the dynamics and problems of the region better. The "official memoir" published in the name of Resneli Niyazi Bey and approved by the CUP, "*Hatırat-ı Niyazi*" (Memoirs of Niyazi)<sup>10</sup>, is the one that is mostly dealt with in this work. Niyazi Bey starts by saying "he felt himself forced to write his memoir to tell that his character and his services were not worth the praise". In the introduction, the Ottoman period from its foundation to the years of expansion and the conquest of Constantinople, and Young Ottomans such as Mithat Paşa, Ziya Paşa, Şinasi and Namık Kemal, are glorified, while the Hamidian period is mentioned as the "dark

<sup>10</sup> This memoir, which was "congratulated and approved for its accuracy in the chronology of events" by the Manastır branch of the Committee of Union and Progress on 21.09.1908, was both a record of the revolution and propaganda material. There is a French expression on the book "*Ahmed Niazi De Resne, 23 Juillet 1908*" and a stamp inside it: "*Resneli Ahmed Niyazi 20 Haziran / 10 Temmuz 1324*". Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi Yahud Tarihçe-i İnkılâb-ı Kebîr-i Osmânîden Bir Sahîfe* (İstanbul: Sabah Matbaası, 1326); it is reported that the memoirs were written by a group of people (Hasib Bey according to Kuran). Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa, Arnavudluk ve İttihad-Terakki- El-Hakku ya'lû ve lâ yu'lâ aleyh* (İstanbul: Nehir Yayınları, 1995), p. 150; Cemil Koçak, *Geçmiş Ayrıntıda Saklıdır* (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2012), p. 41.

days” that lasted 32 years. It is mentioned that the “the Ottoman nation who stood out with its superior traits that came from nature, because of its excessive greed went over its natural borders though it was still young, faced stagnation and decline”.<sup>11</sup> The memoir narrates the story of the Revolution after the breezy days of June and July 1908, but aims at envisioning a future for the state and nation. It is written with a Unionist view and a propagandist approach. With cross reading and comparisons with archival materials, it provides valuable information on the 1908 Revolution.

The work by Şemsi Paşa’s son, Müfid Bey, “*Şemsi Paşa, Arnavudluk ve İttihad-Terakki / El-Hakku ya’lû ve lâ yu’lâ aleyh*” (Şemsi Paşa, Albania and the CUP), which was written as a response to “*Hatırat-ı Niyazi*”, is a valuable source for the personality and the personal life of Şemsi Paşa. The book is written in a defensive tone against the attacks of Niyazi on his father; it occasionally contains counter-attacks. The book could only be published after the fall of the CUP.

Ahmet Turan Alkan gives hints on the development of the military coup in his work, which examines the military-political nexus and the problems created by the involvement of the military in politics. In his works, Necmettin Alkan draws on German and Austrian sources that were not included in Turkish books on the issue in his works “*II. Abdülhamid ve Jön Türkler*” (Abdülhamid II and the Young Turks), “*Selanik İstanbul'a Karşı*” (Selanik vs. İstanbul) and “*Selanik'in Yükselişi: Jön Türkler Abdülhamid'e Karşı / 1908 İhtilali*” (Raising Selanik: Young Turks in opposition against Abdülhamid / Revolution of 1908). There is still no work that makes use of Turkish, English, German and Balkan literature together with archival materials. All of the books mentioned above can be considered lacking in this respect.

A set of documents from the Başbakanlık Ottoman Archives considering the Constitutional Regime, the assassination of Şemsi Paşa, and Firzovik were used for this study. Also, in İSAM Library, the documents of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, who served

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<sup>11</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 7.



as the Inspector-General of Rumelia for years and was the highest authority in Macedonia during the 1908 Revolution, were used for the first time in this work. Of course, some of these documents were available to researchers in the archives of their receivers, but some of the documents that will be used for the first time will allow us to approach the issues of the assassination and the Firzovik meeting under a new light. The armed Albanians who gathered in Firzovik on Şemsi Paşa's request to support the Hamidian regime and fight against the Unionists and their complete return to the Unionist side, thanks to the propaganda after Şemsi Paşa's death, will be examined carefully. This way, the importance of Şemsi Paşa's assassination on the Revolution will be better appreciated.

This study is divided into three chapters. The emergence of dissident movements in the Ottoman Empire, the foundation and the spread of CUP will be examined in the first chapter. The Macedonian Question will be briefly touched upon, and the general situation the region was in before the assassination will be described. The general position of the Albanians and their contribution to the revolution through their reactions to regional developments will be seen. The foundation of the OFS, the identities of its founders, its organization, and the activities of its Manastır branch will be in this chapter. Also, the political structures in the army and their contribution to the revolutionary process will be scrutinized.

The second chapter deals with the stages of the revolutionary process that started on June 11, 1908. First, the effects of the Reval Meeting that caused anxiety among the Young Turks and the Albanians for fear of "foreign intervention" will be examined. Then, the unsuccessful assassination of Nazım Bey in Selanik, the first assassination attempt of the CPU, will be reviewed. The next topic will be the rebellion of Resneli Niyazi Bey together with his two hundred men, and the appointment of Şemsi Paşa to suppress the revolt and to destroy the Young Turk movement. The assassination, carried out by a Unionist partisan, Atif Bey, during the preparation stage of Şemsi Paşa's mission, will be detailed. The evaluation of the evidence and information by Ottoman authorities on the assassination will come after that. The relationship between the 23-day rebellion of Resneli Niyazi with the

assassination and the methods he followed in those days will be touched upon. It will be seen that the Albanians gathering in Firzovik to fight against the CPU at the request of Şemsi Paşa were successfully manipulated by Unionist officers and provoked to act against the Hamidian regime.

The third chapter will deal with Abdülhamid's desperation and forced acceptance of the demands as a result of the assassination of Şemsi Paşa, the rebellion of Resneli Niyazi, and the meeting in Firzovik. The roles of the movements in Manastır and Firzovik in the revolution will be compared, and the effects of the "liberty" on İstanbul will be examined.

## CHAPTER 1

### EMERGING REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS

#### 1.1 Ottoman Modernization and the Effects of the French Revolution

Can we identify the events during June-July 1908 as a “revolution”,<sup>12</sup> or was it a popular revolt, or may be a military coup? This is a topic that is still discussed by historians and social scientists. Most European historians think of the events as a military coup for they had the effect of making the reform programs in Macedonia pointless.<sup>13</sup> Those examining the issue with its content of the “desire of radical change”, its diplomatic, social and ideological aspects come to the conclusion that this was a successful military coup. It is thought to be the latest transformation of the Eastern Question.<sup>14</sup> The entrance of the word “*ihtilal*” (revolution), which can be defined as the destruction of an authority in power with the use of force by people

<sup>12</sup> “The 10<sup>th</sup> of July Revolution is not a political, intellectual, social and scientific event. We can’t consider it to be a reformation and evolution like the ‘Tanzimat-ı hayriye’ and cannot think of it as a transformation”. See, Hüseyin Kazım Kadri, *Meşrutiyetten Cumhuriyete Hatıralarım* (İstanbul: Dergah Yayınları, 2000), p. 71; According to Aykut Kansu 1908 Revolution was not a top-down reform movement like in 1876, but “literally” a revolution that was achieved by the masses of people. (p. 155) Kansu argues that the naming “II. Meşrutiyet (Second Constitutional Period)” was the result of later ideological historiography which aimed at minimizing and degrading the 1908 revolution. Aykut Kansu, *1908 Devrimi*, trans. A. Erbal (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2009), pp. 3-6; A Bulgarian historian from Manastır, named M. N. Rizoff, thinks that he would be right in calling the events of 11-24 July a ‘military coup’ (*Pronunciamento*) rather than a ‘*Revolution*’ as the reports called it. Demetrios Georgiades, *Is The Regeneration of Turkey Possible* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1909), p. 119.

<sup>13</sup> Mehmet Hacısalıhoğlu, *Jön Türkler ve Makedonya sorunu (1890-1918)*, trans. İ. Catay (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2008), p. 204; “It was a *coup d’état* carried through by a small group of men of remarkable energy and lack of scruple” Robert William Seton-Watson, *The Rise of Nationality in the Balkans* (London: Constable&Co.Ltd, 1917), p. 184.

<sup>14</sup> Taner Timur, ‘Uluslaşma Süreci, İttihatçılık ve Devrim’, in: S. Akşin, S. Balcı and B. Ünlü (eds.), *100. Yılında Jön Türk Devrimi* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2010), pp. 51-56.

organized around political ideologies, to Ottoman usage happened after the French Revolution, but it became a reality only after 1907.<sup>15</sup>

These events that were possible mostly through the activities of military circles in Macedonia and had a little popular support can not be defined with the words “*ihtilal*”<sup>16</sup> or “*devrim*”. Alkan defines the events as “a military revolt”, which did not have a social background and wide public support, and was carried out “for and in the name of the people.”<sup>17</sup> Feroz Ahmad, too, defines the process as a military coup: “The importance of the 1908 *coup d'état* is not that it was revolutionary in profession; it was not”.<sup>18</sup> When we focus on the topic of this thesis, the events before and after the assassination of Şemsi Paşa, we can talk about an environment of terror<sup>19</sup> and chaos that was created with a military revolt.

According to Akşin, the French term ‘*Jeunes Turcs*’ (Young Turks) were used for those aiming to improve the “sick man” that was the Ottoman Empire, through liberal methods. The term “Young” (*Jeune*) was perceived as almost a “popular

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<sup>15</sup> Necmettin Alkan, *Selanik'in Yükselişi: Jön Türkler Abdülhamid'e Karşı 1908 İhtilali* (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2012), pp. 104-106; “The ideal France found expression in three major themes in, the Ottoman press, the conquest of tyranny, the liberation of culture, and the granting, with constitutionalism, of a voice to the previously voiceless “people.” Before a society could be liberated, its tyrants had to be neutralized. This capturing of sovereign power was suggested in cartoons showing Abdülhamid caged and juxtaposed to symbols of the French Revolution”. See, Palmira Brummett, *Image and Imperialism in the Ottoman Revolutionary Press, 1908–1911* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), p. 83.

<sup>16</sup> “*İhtilal*” has the meaning of revolt and revolution. Both words were used by different historians. Odile Moreau, *Reformlar Çağında Osmanlı İmparatorluğu* (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010), p. 176.

<sup>17</sup> Necmettin Alkan, *Mutlakiyetten Meşrutiyete II. Abdülhamid ve Jön Türkler* (İstanbul: Selis Kitapları, 2009), pp. 35-36.

<sup>18</sup> It is mentioned that the Unionists have a conservative discipline in their social backgrounds, and their general character was the desire to protect the status quo rather than altering it. Feroz Ahmad, *The Young Turks: The Committee of Union and Progress in Turkish Politics: 1908-1914* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 15.

<sup>19</sup> An important figure among the Unionists, Kazım Karabekir defines the environment of fear that was created with secret operations, as “terror”. Kâzım Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti (1896-1909)*, compiled by Faruk Özerengin, (İstanbul: Emre Yayınları, 2000), p. 360.

messiah” at the time.<sup>20</sup> The widely used terms are “Young Ottomans” (*Yeni Osmanlılar*) for the Pan-Ottomanist constitutionalists of 1865-1889, and Young Turks (*Jön Türkler*) for those after 1889.<sup>21</sup>

It is also clear that the Ottoman regime of the time, shared a lot in common with the Young Turks in terms of Westernization and modernization, although the Young Turks showed radical opposition to the “current order”.<sup>22</sup> The target of the Young Turks’ harshest criticisms, Sultan Abdülhamid II, is defined as “the most modernist Ottoman Sultan” by some historians.

Like the “bourgeois class” after the French Revolution,<sup>23</sup> “Ottoman middle classes” wanted to have a say in the government.<sup>24</sup> Napoleon’s military coup, through which he gained control of the country,<sup>25</sup> was the example before the Young Turks. Kazım Karabekir (1882-1948) relates that they wanted to take over the government “by marching on İstanbul with an army like Alemdar’s”<sup>26</sup> (*Alemdar*

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<sup>20</sup> Eric J. Hobsbawm, *The Age Of Revolution 1789 -1848* (New York: Vintage Books, 1996), p. 132; Alkan, *Mutlakiyetten Meşrutiyete*, p. 70; “Yaşasın Kânûn-ı Esâsî!, Hürriyet, Müsâvat, Uhuvvet, Adâlet”, *Servet-i Fünûn Gazetesi*, 5.11.1908.

<sup>21</sup> Some researchers like Tunaya, defined the movement after 1889 as the “Second Young Turk Movement”. See, Sina Akşin, *Jön Türkler ve İttihat ve Terakki* (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 1987), p. 19; Alkan, *Mutlakiyetten Meşrutiyete*, pp. 101-110; Yuriy Aşatoviç Petrosyan, *Sovyet Gözüyle Jöntürkler*, Trans. M. Beyhan and A. Hacıhasanoğlu (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1974), p. 282.

<sup>22</sup> Nader Sahrabi, “*Constitutionalism, Revolution and State: The Young Turk Revolution of 1908*” Ph.D Thesis (The University of Chicago, 1996), p. 372.

<sup>23</sup> Hobsbawm, *Fransız Devrimi*, pp. 33-46; Aykut Kansu defines the 1908 Revolution, as a “late bourgeois revolution”. Kansu, *1908 Devrimi*, p. xvii .

<sup>24</sup> This “Muslim middle class” that became powerful under Abdulhamid’s government were consisting of well-educated people who had an influence over the press and undertook a brave political stance when necessary. Carter Vaughn Findley, *Turkey, Islam, Nationalism and Modernity* (London: Yale University Press, 2010), p. 179; Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, p. 18.

<sup>25</sup> Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Fransız Devrimi'ne Bakış* (İstanbul: Agora Kitaplığı, 2009), p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, pp. 199-200; the event referred to is the marching of the *ayan* of Ruscuk Alemdar Mustafa Paşa with local soldiers from Rumelia, and the dethronement of Sultan Mustafa IV. A similar formation marched on İstanbul with the name of “Action Army” after the famous “31 Mart” incidents (13.04.1909) and dethroned Abdülhamid II. Hanioglu mentions that the Unionist leaders believed that they could march the second and the third armies on İstanbul, like the ayans did one hundred years ago. M. Şükrü Hanioglu, “The Second Constitutional Period, 1908–1918” in: *The Cambridge History of Turkey - Turkey in the Modern World*, Reşat Kasaba (ed.), Vol. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 65.

ordusu gibi bir ordu ile İstanbul'a yürüyerek)<sup>27</sup> and become a Napoleon.<sup>28</sup> The slogans of the Union and Progress were copied from the French Revolution: "Hürriyet" (*Liberté*), "Müsâvat" (*Égalité*), and "Uhuvvet" (*Fraternité*).<sup>29</sup> The additions "adalet" (justice) and "vatan" (fatherland)<sup>30</sup> were widely used.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup> There were threats of "marching on the capital", but there is no plan that is discovered yet. Instead, mass demonstrations and telegraph office occupations were common. M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks 1902-1908* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 261-262.

<sup>28</sup> Karabekir says that such comparisons were widespread in the School for General Staff (Erkân-ı Harbiye Mektebi). See, Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, pp. 126-127; Cemal Bey told Enver Bey, who was welcomed with a pompous ceremony in Selanik after the 1908, "Your are now like Napoleon!" (*Sen şimdi Napolyon gibi oldun!*). See, Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa'nın Anıları*, compiled by Halil Erdoğan Cengiz (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2010), p. x; "He was ambitious about earning military fame. He wanted to be as famous as Napoleon. (*Askerî şöhret kazanmaya arzuluydu. Napoleon gibi şöhretli olmak isterdi*)" see, Ahmed Rıza, 'Hatıralar', in: *Biz İttihatçılar*, compiled by Ö. Andaç Uğurlu, (İstanbul: Örgün Yayınevi, 2009), p. 378; Those unable to attend the Academy for General Staff voiced their discontent for those getting the rank of "Captain" (yüzbaşı) while they were still "lieutenants" (mülâzım), blaming them to mistake themselves with Napoleon. Ahmet Turan Alkan, *Ordu ve Siyaset* (İstanbul: Ufuk Kitapları, 2001), p. 63.

<sup>29</sup> It can be argued that the ideals of Union and Progress were copied from the French Revolution while their practices were copied from the Macedonian bands. They thought that once "liberty" was achieved, and the constitution was in place, even through anarchist and violent methods. Everything would be resolved. See, Muhittin Birgen, *İttihat ve Terakki'de On Sene: İttihat ve Terakki Neydi?*, compiled by Zeki Arıkan, Vol. 1 (İstanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2006), p. 79.

<sup>30</sup> "The Young Ottomans, notably Namık Kemal, developed the concepts of fatherland (*vatan*), political identity, and loyalty to the state within the framework of the Ottoman-Muslim culture. These formed the psychological foundations of the nascent Turkish nationalism, and the political culture of the new generation of intellectuals" Kemal H. Karpat, 'The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 3, (July, 1972), p. 279; Namık Kemal'in 'Hürriyet', 'Vatan', 'Millet', 'Ümmet' gibi kavramlar hakkındaki değerlendirmeleri için see, Şerif Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000), pp. 326-332.

<sup>31</sup> Hobsbawm, *The Age Of Revolution*, p. 55; "Namık Kemal's poem *Hürriyet* (Freedom) and the play *Vatan* (fatherland), provided some of the basic material for the new political culture. The poem stressed the permanency of the *millet*-nation (originally it meant Muslim community) and demanded sacrifice of individual goals for the sake of the greater community - the fatherland". Karpat, *The Transformation of the Ottoman*, p. 265; Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 195; M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, *Bir siyasi örgüt olarak 'Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti' ve Jön Türklük : (1889-1902)* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1985), p. 627; It is reported "Vatan yahud Silistre" by Namık Kemal created a huge excitement and furor in the people of İstanbul. See, Ebuzziya Tevfik, *Yeni Osmanlılar*, compiled by Ş. Kutlu (İstanbul: Pegasus Yayınları, 2006), p. 437; Bernard Lewis, "The Impact of the French Revolution on Turkey" *Journal of World History*, No. 1 (January, 1953) p. 107.

It is no wonder that the nationalist movements in the Balkans were effected by Europe.<sup>32</sup> The following article of the 1795 French Declaration of Rights no doubt, had an influence: “Each people is independent and sovereign, whatever the number of individuals who compose it and the extent of the territory it occupies. This sovereignty is inalienable”.<sup>33</sup> Still, among Muslim intellectuals, the strong trend was “Ottomanism” based on citizenship, though Turkish nationalism became a strong second with 1905.<sup>34</sup>

*Kânûn-ı Esâsî* was prepared with the principles of Nizâm (*Ordre*), Adâlet (*Justice*), and Usûl (*Discipline*) became effective on December 23, 1876 was the first Ottoman constitution that was prepared, taking European examples as models.<sup>35</sup> The constitution, prepared by a commission under the leadership of Midhat Paşa, was hurried to prevent the intervention of foreign powers and their representatives into Ottoman internal affairs through a conference in İstanbul.<sup>36</sup> Still, it was received with contempt by the Europeans and did not result in a moderation, in their reform

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<sup>32</sup> Sina Akşin, ‘Fransız İhtilali’nin II. Meşrutiyet Öncesi Osmanlı Devleti Üzerindeki Etkileri Üzerine Bazı Görüşler’, *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi*, Vol. 49, No. 3-4 (Ankara, 1995), p. 25.

<sup>33</sup> *French Declaration of Rights*, Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 19.

<sup>34</sup> The Turkish element was stressed as the “main element” for the first time in this period, and the pre-dominance of one nation over others in a multi-ethnic environment was considered to be normal. Hanioglu, *Bir siyasal örgüt*, p. 630; Birgen, *İttihat ve Terakki*, p. 163; Yusuf Akçura, *Üç Tarz-ı Siyâset* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1976), p. 21; Ziya Gökalp summarizes these discussions in the following words: “Tıbbiye’de teşekkül eden gizli bir inkılâp cemiyetinde Pan-Türkizm, Pan-Ottomanizm, Pan-İslâmizm mefkûrelerinden hangisi daha ziyâde gerçeğe uygun olduğu münakaşa ediliyordu” diye ifade edecektir. Ziya Gökalp, *Türkçülüğün Esasları*, compiled by Mehmet Kaplan, (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1970), pp. 11-12; Şerif Mardin, *Jön Türklerin Siyasi Fikirleri 1895-1908* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2008), p. 275.

<sup>35</sup> Copy of the 1876 Constitution: BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/4, 28.3.1909; BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/21, 28.3.1909; BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/28, 28.3.1909; For the full text, *Salname-i Devleti-i Aliyye-i Osmaniyye* (Dersaadet: Mahmut Bey Matbaası, 1305/1888), pp. 99-119; Suna Kili and A. Şeref Gözübüyük, *Türk Anayasa Metinleri* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2000), pp. 36-51.

<sup>36</sup> Ernest E. Ramsaur, *Jöntürkler – 1908 İhtilalinin Doğuşu*, trans. M. Ö. Mengüşoğlu, (İstanbul: Pınar Yayınları, 2011) p. 24; This conference in which the representatives of foreign powers discussed Turkish reforms without the presence of even one Turkish delegate is reported to have a continuing effect on Abdulhamid. Roderic Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 383; Selim Deringil, *İktidarın Sembolleri ve İdeoloji – II. Abdülhamid Dönemi 1876-1909*, trans. Ç. Güven, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2007), p. 218.

plans for the Ottoman Empire.<sup>37</sup> The Ottoman bureaucratic elite thought that they could protect the multi-religious and multi-national Empire with the reform program. In the end of the century, the development of nationalist separatism in the Balkans, the economic problems faced by the government and other internal troubles, ended in the intervention of European powers in Ottoman internal affairs.<sup>38</sup>

The first years of the Hamidian period can be considered as the most troubled period of the Ottoman state, due to internal and external developments. A bankrupt treasury, capitulations,<sup>39</sup> Public Debt Administration (*Düyûn-ı Umûmiye İdaresi*)<sup>40</sup> which controlled eighty percent of the Ottoman income in return of foreign debt, and European Great Powers that were fixated on expansion. Tahsin Paşa relates the “policy of balance” followed by Abdülhamid in this environment:<sup>41</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Florian Riedler, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Muhalefet ve Meşruiyet*, trans. Azize F. Çakır (İstanbul: Picus Yayıncılık, 2012), p. 100.

<sup>38</sup> Renée Worringer, “‘Sick Man of Europe’ or ‘Japan of the near East’?: Constructing Ottoman Modernity in the Hamidian and Young Turk Eras”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (May, 2004), p. 209.

<sup>39</sup> It is thought that the capitulations and the Public Debt Administration were the favourite topics of the “revolutionary” Law School students, and a reactionary nationalism emerged in the shape of anti-Imperialism. These topics were attractive to military school students and young officers who were brought up with “a nationalism lacking intellectual base”, see, Hanioglu, *Bir siyasi örgüt*, pp. 634-635.

<sup>40</sup> The Administration founded on 20.12.1881’ with the “Muharrem Kararnamesi” allowed the credibility of the Empire to rise. See, Erdoğan Keskinç, “Düyûn-u Umumiye İdaresi”, içinde: *Devr-i Hamid / Sultan II. Abdülhamid*, Metin Hülagu, Şakir Batmaz and Gülbadi Alan (eds.), Vol. 1 (Kayseri: Erciyes Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2011), p. 487; Findley, names this administration as “semi-colonial”. Findley, *Turkey, Islam*, p. 135.

<sup>41</sup> “Sultan Hamit’in siyaset-i hariciyede mesleki şu idi: Rusya’yı idare etmek, İngiltere ile asla mesele çıkarmamak, Almanya’ya istinat etmek, Avusturya’nın gözüniin Makedonya’da olduğunu unutmamak, diğer devletlerle mümkün merteye hoş geçinmek, Balkanlar’ı birbirine karıştırıp Bulgarlar ve Sırlar ve Yunanlılar arasında nifak ve ihtilaf yaratmak. (Rusya’nın) en yakınımızda gayet büyük ve korkunç bir düşman olduğunu sık sık söylerdi. Rusya’ya karşı İngiltere’den muavenet beklenemeyeceği hakkındaki kanaati sarsılmaz bir halde idi. Sultan Hamit’in en çok çekindiği devlet İngiltere idi”. Tahsin Paşa, *Yıldız Hatıraları*, pp. 135-136; Fikret Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu : Oluşumu ve 1908’e Kadar Gelişimi*, trans. İ. Catay, (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2001) p. 107; Kuran, *İttihat ve Terakki*, p. 87; the British Ambassador argues that the revolution allowed the British-Ottoman friendship to re-surface and that Abdulhamid was anti-British during the entire period he reigned. See, Sir Gerard Lowther, *Türkiye 1908: İngiliz Büyükelçisi Sir Gerard Lowther’in 1908 Yılı Türkiye Raporu*, Trans Halil Ersin Avcı, (Çanakkale: Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesi Ofset Tesisleri, 2003), p. 18; After the Revolution of 1908, Gerard Lowther’s “carriage was freed of its horses and carried to the Embassy by the people” during a demonstration against Germany. (*arabasının atları sökülüp, araba tâ Sefarethaneye kadar (halk tarafından) bizzat çekilerek götürülecektir*) Ali Haydar Mithat, *Hatıralarım : 1872-1946*, (İstanbul: Mithat Akçit Yayınları, 1946), p. 192; Abdülhamid, tried hard to restore his



“What Sultan Hamid did in the foreign relations was this: to manage the Russians somehow, never to create an issue with the British, to rely upon Germany, never to forget that Austria had its eyes on Macedonia, to get along as good as possible with other countries, turmoil in the Balkans and dispute among Bulgarians, Serbs and Greeks. He constantly told that [Russia] was a powerful and fearful enemy that was too close. He was convinced that he could not wait for British assistance against Russia. He feared the British most”.

Ottomans were heavily defeated in the war against Russia in 1877-78. Little after the signature of the ceasefire the parliament was dissolved, and the Constitution was suspended.<sup>42</sup> The constitution and the system of constitutional monarchy were lacking the political support it needed. Abdülhamid, started to rule the country through a strong mechanism he built in Yıldız, moving away from the Tanzimat tradition which required a strong Sublime Porte. He was utterly in power now. According to Tahsin Paşa:<sup>43</sup>

“Sultan Hamid followed a policy of concentrating every state endeavor in the palace, from his crowning to the end. Thanks to this, he had the chance to deal with every governmental, economic, civil, military, financial, scientific and religious issue and managed to widen his experience”.

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relation with Britain in this period. He wanted to appoint Midhat Paşa’s son, Ali Haydar Bey as ambassador to London as he had good relations with them. This request was rejected by Ali Haydar Midhat because the Sultan had bad relations with the Unionists. Ali Haydar Mithat, *Hatıralarım*, p. 214; Abdülhamid is reported to have said “I fear the British above all other states. I do not fear the Russians that much” (*Ben her devletten ziyade İngilizlerden korkarım. Ruslardan o kadar korkmam*). M. Metin Hülagü, *Sultan II. Abdülhamid’in Sürgün Günleri – Hususi Doktoru Atıf Hüseyin Bey’in Hatıratı*, (İstanbul: Pan Yayınları, 2007), p. 195; “It was the British, who supported the annexation of Eastern Rumelia to Bulgaria. The Russians were not even aware”. (*Hatta Rumeli-i Şarkî’nin Bulgaristan’a ilhakına da İngilizler ön ayak olmuşlar da Rusya’nın haberi bile olmamış*), Hülagü, *Sultan II. Abdülhamid*, p. 228.

<sup>42</sup> According to Said Halim Paşa, the reason behind the short life-cycle of the 1876 Constitution which was prepared by reformist high bureaucrats who thought themselves to be “the protectors of the law and the nation”, was the unwillingness of the ruler and the people to play the role given to them. See, Said Halim Paşa, *Meşrutiyet*, in: *Buhranlarımız ve Son Eserleri*, compiled by M. Ertuğrul Düzdağ, (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 2006), p. 52.

<sup>43</sup> “Sultan Hamid bidayet-i cülûsundan başlayarak devletin bütün umurunu saraya toplamak siyasetini takip etmiştir. Bunun içindir ki idarî, iktisadî, mülkî, askerî, malî, ilmî ve dinî bütün mesail ile temas etmek imkanını bulmuş ve bu sayede tecrübesini pek çok genişletmeğe muvaffak olmuştur” Tahsin Paşa, *Yıldız Hatıraları*, p. 66.

The “despotic period”<sup>44</sup> that was harshly criticized by Westerners and dissidents alike started and lasted for thirty years.<sup>45</sup> The coup against his uncle Sultan Abdülaziz and his murder, Murat V, loss of mental capacity and closure in Çırağan Palace after his three months on throne cause Abdülhamid to have a very suspicious and fearing nature. He created a spy network in every city of the Empire, to be able to follow every little detail from his palace. The Hamidian regime is criticized for promoting soldiers closer to the palace quicker, and for using spies, not for their talents but their loyalty.<sup>46</sup>

Though it is hard to argue that Abdülhamid was an opponent of reforms, it is clear that he prevented liberal and constitutionalist ideas. West continued to be model under his rule, and the Ottoman Empire was integrated more and more to the world economic and political system.<sup>47</sup>

He focused on occupational and technical education, opening 18 new high schools. He founded schools in the other cities as well, not just in İstanbul. This way local middle classes could make their children receive higher education and let them hold higher posts in the government. This privilege was constrained only to the members of the “*askeri*” class beforehand, who were descendants of powerful governors, and rich people from the cities. From the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, children from the periphery who received Western education and graduated from military academies had the most advanced and modern upbringing in their era and

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<sup>44</sup> “one of the most demoralising and destructive tyrannies that the world has known” “he sincerely believed that a cruel despotism was the best rule for Turkey” Edward Frederick Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey: The Turkish Revolution of 1908* (Boston: Boston J.B. Millet, 1910), pp. 34-35, 65; The opponents of Abdülhamid use very interesting description in their books: “Abdulhamid’s mother died of a heart disease in 1849, at the age of twenty six. His father Sultan Abdulmecit died of tuberculosis at the age of forty. Sultan Abdulhamid is the product of these two ill bodies”. See, Ahmet Bedevi Kuran, *İnkılap tarihimiz ve İttihad ve Terakki* (İstanbul: Tan Matbaası, 1948), p. 48; Alkan, *Mutlakiyetten Meşrutiyete*, p. 63; Dr. Reşad Bey claims that Abdülhamid had a problem in his spinal cord in a letter dated 8.7.1905. Ahmet Bedevi Kuran, *İnkılap Tarihimiz ve Jön Türkler* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2000), pp. 255-256.

<sup>45</sup> Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 95.

<sup>46</sup> Hanioglu, *Bir siyasal örgüt*, p. 57; Ramsaur, *Jöntürkler – 1908*, p. 30.

<sup>47</sup> Hasan Kayalı, *Arabs and Young Turks : Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire (1908-1918)* (Los Angeles: University Of California Press, 1997), p. 36.

had the chance to hold influential posts at their twenties, something that would be unimaginable for their elders.<sup>48</sup> Ahmad mentions that a new social class emerged that, was in opposition to the current regime as the result of Hamidian reforms. They had social and economic requests beside their political expectations.<sup>49</sup>

The term progress (*terakki*) which emerged in the age of Enlightenment and aimed at changing the world can be seen as one of the reflections of the Western thought on the Ottomans. This was a desire of those bothered with the conditions of their age, not to bring back the successes and beauties of the past, but to build a better and sustainable future. Progressivism, which takes as its basis a constant change and believes in the supremacy of the West, can be accepted as the foundation of modernism.<sup>50</sup> Learning (*ulûm*), sciences (*fünûn*) and progress (*terakki*) were pronounced everywhere to prove the supremacy of Europe. The innovations were welcomed as “new progress” (*terakkiyât-ı cedîde*).<sup>51</sup> Elizabeth Özdalga narrates Ottoman modernism and its practical consequences as follows:

“Modernization not only brought market principles to the economy, and more complex administrative controls as part of state power, but also new educational institutions as well as new ideologies. A professional middle class grew up that paved the way for the development of modern intellectuals, independent of state, tribal relationships, and institutionalized religion. Many intellectuals became the bearers of nationalist ideologies, thereby constituting a threat to the unity of the empire. However, nationalism also had its opponents and a large range of different ideologies, including Islamism and Ottomanism, found fierce champions during the last century of the empire’s life”<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 103; Adanır mentions that 82% of the young officers who joined the army in 1885 as “Kurmay Yüzbaşı” (staff captain) were from the peripheries, and that all the founders of the Ottoman Union movement that was the basis of the Committee of Union and Progress, were from the periphery. See, Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 259.

<sup>49</sup> Feroz Ahmad, 'The Young Turk Revolution', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 3, No. 3, The Middle East (July, 1968), p. 20.

<sup>50</sup> John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History* (London: Longman, 2002), p. 19.

<sup>51</sup> Somewhat radically, Biologic Materialism and Darwin’s Evolutionary Theory was debated by Ottoman intellectuals in the newspapers and magazines of the time. See, Hanioglu, *Bir siyasi örgüt*, p. 21; Sacit Kutlu, *Balkanlar ve Osmanlı Devleti* (İstanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2007), p. 184.

<sup>52</sup> Elizabeth Özdalga, *Late Ottoman Society: The Intellectual Legacy* (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2005), p. 1.

## 1.2 The Macedonian Question

The Macedonian Question can be considered the 20<sup>th</sup> century version of the Eastern Question which concerned the disintegration of the weakened Ottoman Empire and the re-structuring of the local relationships. The 1908 Revolution is a turning point in this issue.<sup>53</sup> The people behind the revolution of July 1908 believed that the different ethnical and religious groups would unite under the Ottoman supra-identity thanks to the constitutional system and liberty. According to Scelle, the independence of Bulgaria, the Cretan Question, the annexation of Bosnia and Hercegovina, the upheavals in Serbia, the emergence of the Kingdom of Montenegro; all of which happened in the last months of 1908 were pointing to the final solution of the Eastern Question, rather than being the results of Young Turk Revolution.<sup>54</sup> According to Ahmed Selahaddin, “Serbs, Bulgarians, Montenegrins and the Greeks made the region (Macedonia) subject to struggles. This vast place is so mixed in a strange way that it is impossible to give it to anyone, without being exposed to the requests and claims of the other three”.<sup>55</sup>

The integrity of the Ottoman Empire was being seen as a vital balancing element by the European Great Powers, especially Britain and Russia. The key question was: “if the Turks were driven out of Europe the question would still be, who shall command the Danube? Above all, who shall hold Constantinople?”<sup>56</sup> Lyde explains this situation this way: “even the Turks were to leave Europe altogether, tranquility would not be assured for the Balkan Peninsula; on the contrary, in all

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<sup>53</sup> “The Eastern Question suddenly entered on a new and acute phase in the summer of 1908” William Miller, *The Ottoman Empire, 1801-1913* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1913), p. 474.

<sup>54</sup> Georges Scelle, “Studies on the Eastern Question”, *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Jan, 1911), p. 145; Azmi Özcan, 'Sultan II. Abdülhamid', *Türkler*, Vol. 12 (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002), p. 1574.

<sup>55</sup> “*Sırplar, Bulgarlar, Karadağlılar ve Yunanlılar bir araziye (Makedonya) sebab-i sahâ-yı cidâl edecekdiler. Bu vâsi' arazinin ahâlisi o kadar garip sûrette birbirine karışmış, mahlût olmuştur ki, diğer üçünün metâlibât ve müddeiyyâtına muâriz olmaksızın bu arâziyi bunlardan birine vermek kabil olunamaz*”. Ahmed Selahaddin, *Berlin Kongresi : Diplomasi Tarihine Bir Nazar* (İstanbul: 1327/1911), p. 137.

<sup>56</sup> John Mill, *The Ottomans in Europe* (London: Weldon, 1876), p. 245.

probability the state of unrest would increase”.<sup>57</sup> For the equilibrium in the competition among the Great Powers, the unity of the Sick Man of Europe had to be protected.<sup>58</sup>

Macedonia is the region, west of Rodop Mountains of Rodop and Karasu (Néstos) River, south of Kosova and Mountains of Şar (Shara), east of Lake Ohri and north of Selanik and Mount Olympus. The “Three Provinces” (*Vilâyât-ı Selâse*) of the Ottoman system; Selanik, Manastır and Kosova were in this region. Deringil claims that the 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe was consisting of the rulers and the ruled, and the only Muslim ruler that ruled over millions of Christians was the Sublime Porte; a situation that was found increasingly disturbing.<sup>59</sup> The existence of the Ottoman Empire in Europe was unwanted by the European Great Powers, and an obstacle to the union of Balkan Christians.<sup>60</sup>

The population records of the ethnically and religiously mixed Macedonia show substantial differences. With the foundation of the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1870, the effectiveness of the Greek Orthodox Church diminished, and both of the communities tried to gain control by showing their own group more populous.<sup>61</sup> At this period, ethnic identity became a condition to be determined by the clergy and the elite regardless of the language and common history of the group. The following

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<sup>57</sup> Lionel William Lyde, *A Military Geography of the Balkan Peninsula* (London: A. and C. Black, 1905), p. 173.

<sup>58</sup> Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 36; The last chronicler Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi, says that the three consecutive Russian attacks, the Greek Uprising and the Egyptian Question made the material weakness of the Ottoman state apparent and caused the emergence of the term “sick man”. See, Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi, *Tarih Musahabeleri* (İstanbul: Kapı Yayınları, 2012), p. 48.

<sup>59</sup> According to Deringil “The Ottomans saw themselves as an equal participant of the world politics and requested to be treated so. Europe saw them as an anomaly, a lord that should have been a servant, a ruler that should have been ruled”. Deringil, *İktidarın Sembolleri*, pp. 14, 217.

<sup>60</sup> “The Ottoman was an alien presence in Europe. ‘The Turk came into Europe as a stranger and an oppressor, and after five hundred years he is a stranger and oppressor still’ Ebru Boyar, *Ottomans, Turks and the Balkans: Empire Lost, Relations Altered* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), p. 93.

<sup>61</sup> Stefanos Yerasimos, *Az gelişmişlik Sürecinde Türkiye* (İstanbul: Gözlem Yayınları, 1975), p. 1033; For a summary of the 12<sup>th</sup> article that regulated the foundation and the purpose of the Bulgarian Exarchate see. Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 76-77.

table was prepared by using different sources to give a sense of Macedonia's population and ethnic structure:<sup>62</sup>

<b>Macedonia's Population and Ethnic Structure according to Ottoman, German, Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek Sources</b>							
	Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa 1904	Ottoman Census 1905-1906	Encyclopædia Britannica 1911	German Sources	Bulgarian Sources	Greek Sources (excepting Kosova)	Serbian Sources
Turkish	1.508.507	1.145.849	504.000	250.000	489.664	576.600	231.400
Albanian			120.000	300.000	124.211	0	165.620
Bulgarian	896.497	626.715	1.150.000	2.000.000	1.184.036	454.700	57.600
Serbian	100.717	623.197			700		2.048.320
Greek	307.000		250.000	200.000	222.152	656.300	201.140
Vlach	99.000	26.042		100.000	77.267	41.200	74.465
Other		33.522	176.000		147.244	91.700	101.875
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.911.721</b>	<b>2.455.325</b>	<b>2.200.000</b>	<b>2.850.000</b>	<b>2.245.274</b>	<b>1.820.500</b>	<b>2.880.420</b>
Sources:	Bayur, <i>Türk İnkılâbı</i> , p. 152.	Jelavich, <i>History of the Balkans</i> , p. 91; Shaw, <i>History of the Ottoman</i> , p. 208.		Yerasimos, <i>Az gelişmişlik Sürecinde</i> , p. 1032.	Yerasimos, <i>Az gelişmişlik Sürecinde</i> , p. 1032; Andonyan, <i>Balkan Savaşı</i> , p. 84		

Table 1.1 Macedonia's Population under Ottoman Rule

The change in territory policies may have affected the background of the Macedonian Question, but the division among the Orthodox populations had the most significant effect.<sup>63</sup> The Bulgarian, Greek and Serbian elements in Macedonia made every effort to prove that they were in the majority in terms of population, and this way hoped to annex the territories to their own neighboring state. They formed armed bandit groups to help in this struggle.<sup>64</sup> This created chaos in the region and

<sup>62</sup> The Muslim Albanians and Bosnians from the North West part of Macedonia were included into the statistic of Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha in 1904. Thus, this census represents more Muslims in the region. See, Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 11; Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı Tarihi*, Vol. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1940), p. 152; Barbara Jelavich, *History of the Balkans*, Vol. 2 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 91; George Castellan, *Balkanların Tarihi: 14.-20. Yüzyıl* (1995) in: Meltem Begüm Saatçı, *1890-1903 Arası Makedonya Sorunu*, Unpublished M.A. Thesis (Ankara Üniversitesi, 1997), p. 14; Additional information about the Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek statistics see, Centre Europeen de la Doration Carneige, Edition Georges Cres et Cie, 1914, pp. 9-10 in: Kemal Karpat, *Osmanlı Nüfusu: 1830-1914* (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2010), p. 135; Yerasimos, *Az gelişmişlik Sürecinde*, p. 1032.

<sup>63</sup> Stephen P.H. Duggan, *The Eastern Question- A Study in Diplomacy*, (New York: The Columbia University Press, 1902), p. 5.

<sup>64</sup> Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı*, Vol. 1, p. 154; It was usual to receive news about a person killed everyday by bandits in Manastr. Sir John Foster Fraser, *Pictures from the Balkans* (London: Cassell, 1906), pp. 206-207.

harmed the state authority.<sup>65</sup> For the Bulgarians who desired to create a “Greater Bulgaria with the annexation of the entire region, the ultimate aim was the capturing of Macedonia and “saving their kin”.<sup>66</sup>

IMRO (The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization) was founded in 1893 “to gather Macedonia and Thrace under a greater Bulgaria”.<sup>67</sup> They widened their aim as the “autonomy of a Balkan Federation that would be founded with a popular revolt”.<sup>68</sup> Three groups emerged within IMRO, the most significant being the Serres Group under the leadership of Jane Sandanski, with whom the Young Turks tried to cooperate. This group founded in 1904 defended the necessity of an independence war by the entire population of Macedonia without religious or ethnic distinctions.<sup>69</sup> In contrast, the Young Turks –at least until the revolution- followed an “Ottomanist” policy that prioritized the integrity of the country.<sup>70</sup> For the Slavs in Macedonia, the shaking the protective hand of the Young Turks with joy and gratitude was preferable to unsuccessful European reforms and the egoism of Bulgaria.<sup>71</sup>

The claims of Serbia in Northwestern Macedonia to allow them an outlet on the Aegean, the Romanian claims concerning the Vlachs, the autonomy expectations of Albanians that would cover a large region including Manastır and Selanik... All

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<sup>65</sup> Jelavich, *History of the Balkans*, p. 92; Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, pp. 18, 23.

<sup>66</sup> Gül Tokay, *Makedonya sorunu: Jön Türk İhtilalinin Kökenleri: 1903-1908*, (İstanbul: Afa Yayınları, 1996), p. 13; “The start of the organization in Macedonia was the annexation of Eastern Rumelia with Bulgaria in 1885. Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *Makedonya’dan Orta Asya’ya Enver Paşa*, Vol. 1 (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 1972), p. 416.

<sup>67</sup> Andrew Rossos, *Macedonia and the Macedonians-A History* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2008), pp. 99-105; Kutlu, *Balkanlar ve Osmanlı*, p. 165.

<sup>68</sup> Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 37.

<sup>69</sup> Serres (*Siroz*) was the center of a *sancak* connected to the Selanik *Vilayeti*. The population was consisting of 40% Muslims, 36% Exarchists, 22% Patriarchists Bulgarians. Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>70</sup> Knight probably meant “Ottomanist” when he said: “The Young Turk movement is therefore Nationalist and not Pan-Islamic”. He also said “the policy of these reformers is opportunist”. Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, pp. 60-61.

<sup>71</sup> *Austrian Consulate’s Report*, 1.8.1908, No. 51, HhstA, PA XXXVIII/395, quot.in: Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 267.

these claims caused the tension in the region to rise, and created enormous turmoil and clashes in the region.<sup>72</sup>

There was an intense pressure from European states to put in force a reform program in Macedonia. The perception at the end of 1902 was that they would interfere if the Ottomans did not start applying reforms themselves.<sup>73</sup> The foundation of a mechanism of an “international judicial inspection” was suggested to control the state measures against the bands in Macedonia, at around the same time. The Palace was under constant pressure through the European Embassies of the Ottoman Empire, and it was informed that the European states would be forced to interfere otherwise.<sup>74</sup> The Inspector-General of Rumeli (*Rumeli Müfettiş-i Umûmîsi*), which was responsible for the three vilayets of Selanik, Manastır and Kosova, were founded as a result. Sultan Abdülhamid II assigned Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa (1855-1922) on December 1, 1902, to revive the economic life in the region, to reform the systems of security and justice, and the educational system. His appointment was received positively by European states, and he is considered to have been successful in the six years he served in office. He manages to earn the trust of both the Palace and the Sublime Porte.<sup>75</sup>

For the Young Turks, the appointment of a “General Governor” to Macedonia under the pressure of European states and the inability to do anything without the latter’s consent was disappointing. They took this as the separation of Macedonia from the “inseparable” fatherland and the separation of the Ottoman Empire from Europe.<sup>76</sup> Resneli Niyazi Bey mentions this in his memoirs:

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<sup>72</sup> Maria Nystazopoulou Pelekidou, *The Macedonian Question*, trans. I. Kyzirakos (Corfu: Ionian University, 1992), p. 8.

<sup>73</sup> The Grand Vizier of the time Said Paşa relates that Abdülhamid resisted the implementation of these reforms although he was in favor of them. See, Said Paşa, ‘Hatırat’, in: *İkinci Meşrutiyetin İlanı*, compiled by Ö. Andaç Uğurlu (İstanbul: Örgün Yayınevi, 2008), p. 260.

<sup>74</sup> For the correspondences with the embassies in Vienne and Berlin See, Kuran, *Jön Türkler*, pp. 298-306.

<sup>75</sup> Süleyman Kâni İrtem, *Osmanlı Devleti’nin Makedonya Meselesi*, compiled by O. S. Kocahanoğlu (İstanbul: Temel Yayınları, 1999), p. 266.

<sup>76</sup> John Macdonald, *Turkey and the Eastern Question* (New York: Dodge Publishing Co., 1912), p. 51.



“Macedonia is one of the elements of the Ottoman Empire today, and cannot be separated. Its life is tied to the life of that Empire. And its death will be tied to it if the latter takes its last breath”.<sup>77</sup>

The foundation of courts and Gendarmerie in which Muslims and Christians,<sup>78</sup> and the foundation of Foreigner Offices under the name “*Umûr-ı Ecnebiyye*” are among the most significant reforms.<sup>79</sup> The two neighboring states with a border to Macedonia, Austria and Russia, gave a reform program to the Sublime Porte on 22.2.1903, named “Vienne Reforms Program”.<sup>80</sup> Russia warned the Balkan countries to be “well-behaved”, thinking that this reform program accepted by the Ottoman government would bring peace and welfare to the region. However, the program was found lacking by Bulgaria, which ended in the Illinden Uprising<sup>81</sup> on August 2, 1903 which was the start of a great hatred between Bulgarians and Turks. Britain and Italy who desired the appointment of a Christian governor to the region interfered in the problem. As a result, the Austrian Emperor and the Russian Tsar met in Mürzsteg on October 2, and prepared a new reform program taking other Great Powers’ concerns into consideration and handed it to the Sublime Porte.<sup>82</sup> Abdülhamid II, accepted this program “in principle” on November 25, 1903, after some pressure and the advice of Germany, the program had extremely harsh terms for the Ottomans. Although the

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<sup>77</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 53.

<sup>78</sup> The first gendarmerie organization was called *Jandarma Daire-i Merkeziyesi* connected to the Ministry of War. (Example: Manastır Vilayeti Jandarma Komutanı Mehmed Paşa'ya nişan verilmesi" DARM, Berât, no: 83, 2.1.1892) For the organization of the Gendarmerie Regulations Supreme Command See, Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 117-130.

<sup>79</sup> The directive on Rumelian vilayets dated 12.12.1902 has details the authority and responsibilities of the General Inspector. See, Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı*, Vol. 1, pp. 154-156.

<sup>80</sup> For its details see, Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 44-46.

<sup>81</sup>“St.Elias’s Day” Rossos, *Macedonia*, pp. 106-113; Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 192-213; According to Bulgarian reports 6437 Christians, 5328 Turkish soldiers died during the uprising. See, İrtem, *Osmanlı Devleti'nin*, p. 227; 350.000 Ottoman soldiers were mobilized to suppress 26.000 revolutionists; there were a total of 239 clashes. 30.000 Bulgarians and 3087 Turks (soldiers and civilians) died. Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, pp. 238-240.

<sup>82</sup> Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı*, Vol. 1, pp. 160-162; Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 46-48; Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 71; Selanikli Şemseddin, *Makedonya: Tarihçe-i Devr-i İnkılâb* (İstanbul: Artin Asaduryan Matbaası, 1908), p. 115; İrtem, *Osmanlı Devleti'nin*, pp. 239-240; François Georjeon, *Sultan Abdülhamid*, Trans. Ali Berktaş (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012), p.509.

region was referred to as “*Vilâyât-ı Selâse*” officially, the term Macedonia entered Ottoman consciousness after this reform program that started in 1903.<sup>83</sup>

The defeat Russia faced against Japan in 1905 resulted in a change of the status quo in Macedonia in Austria’s favor. This new situation created a constant fear for the people of the region and the Ottoman government that Austria-Hungary could attempt an invasion all the way through Selanik.<sup>84</sup> The fact that the Firzovik meeting started as a result of this fear would be taken into consideration.

Austria-Hungary tried to increase its influence over Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thanks to the railways reaching Selanik, over Macedonia. Russia abandoned its policy of supporting the foundation of the small nation states in the Balkans. This reached the conclusion that the disappearance of Ottoman state authority in the region was not to its benefit after all. The Eastern Question, which was considered to be political, turned to be approached with Imperialism and commercial competition.<sup>85</sup>

### 1.3 Establishment of the Committee of Union and Progress

The first nucleus of the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress was constituted in 1889 İstanbul by young generations who grew up with “homeland and liberty” ideology.<sup>86</sup> The organization, which was founded in the Royal Medical Academy (*Mekteb-i Tıbbiye-i Şâhâne*) and then entitled as *The Ottoman Committee*

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<sup>83</sup> Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 3, 216-217.

<sup>84</sup> Ahmed Selahaddin refers to this as: “(Russia) started to be suspicious of Austrian government’s political ambitions as they could not agree on the Danube and it did not want to See, a widening of Austria’s sphere of influence to Selanik”. (*Rusya’nın, Avusturya-Macaristan Hükümeti’nin ne Tuna üzerinde tefvik etmesi ve ne de Selânîk’e kadar nüfûzunu tevsi’ eylemesini görmek istemediğinden Hükümet-i mezkûrenin hırs-ı siyâsiyesinden süphelenmeye kuşkulandırmaya başlamış idi*) diye ifade eder. See, Ahmed Selahaddin, *Berlin Kongresi*, p. 138; Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 225.

<sup>85</sup> Duggan, *The Eastern Question*, p. 152.

<sup>86</sup> Akşin, ‘II.Meşrutiyet’in Tarihimizdeki’, p. 15; Deringil, *İktidarın Sembolleri*, p. 199.

of Union (*İttihad-ı Osmânî Cemiyeti*),<sup>87</sup> had its presence like a legend for a long time.<sup>87</sup> Its first founders and members are İbrahim Temo,<sup>88</sup> Abdullah Cevdet,<sup>89</sup> Mehmed Reşid, Hüseyinzâde Ali, İshak Sukûtî, Şerafeddin Mağmumi, Şefik of Girit, Sabri of Mekke and Nâzım of Selanik.<sup>90</sup> Hanioglu, in the first volume (1889-1902) of his study, comprehensively examines the Ottoman CUP and the Ottoman modernization as well as the mental codes giving rise to the Young Turks activity. Not only the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress, but also the main forces underneath the opposition are stated extensively as the conflict between autocracy and constitutional monarchy encountered in the painful process of modernization described above.<sup>91</sup>

The committee whose presence as well began to be felt in a short duration, in other schools aimed to stand against Abdülhamid II's despotism and also to put the constitution back into operation.<sup>92</sup> People who participated in the activity defined themselves with "the regime they opposed to" and described with a mysterious "Young Turkishness" (*Jön Türklük*) whose political opinions were unclear. The management would call them "agents of corruption" (*erbab-ı fesad*) or "organization of corruption" (*Cemiyet-i fesâdiye*). Main desire of them was to put the constitution which they called "*Midhat Paşa Kânûn-ı Esâsîsi*" back into operation.

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<sup>87</sup> Hanioglu, *Bir siyasal örgüt*, p. 174; Süleyman Kâni İrtem, *Yıldız ve Jön Türkler, compiled by O. S. Kocahanoğlu* (İstanbul: Temel Yayınları, 1999), p. 21.

<sup>88</sup> Similarly, the secret organization of Carbonari of Italy, a unique number was given to each new member (e.g. 1/1 for İbrahim Temo means he was the first member of the first cell). Exactly the same system will be applied for OFS which when its established in 1906. Hanioglu, *Bir siyasal örgüt*, p. 175; Ramsaur, *Jöntürkler – 1908*, pp. 34-35.

<sup>89</sup> Abdullah Cevdet express "There is only one civilization, that of the European civilization. There is no other way of taking the rose with thorn" (*bir tek medeniyet vardır, o da Avrupa medeniyetidir. Güllü dikenini ile almaktan başka çare bulunmamaktadır*) Hanioglu, *Bir siyasal örgüt*, p. 41.

<sup>90</sup> Kuran confirms that there was a regulation of this newly established organization, and he owns one copy of it. Kuran, *Jön Türkler*, p. 45.

<sup>91</sup> Hanioglu, *Bir siyasal örgüt*, pp. 37, 75.

<sup>92</sup> Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 30.

Another reason why “constitution” (*Kânûn-ı Esâsî*)<sup>93</sup> term occupied so many places on the agenda was the fact that an emperorship with many ethnic and religious components had the objective of constructing a common law basis. Unless a new jurisprudence had implemented in place of the classic “nation system” (*millet sistemi*) which disappeared under the scope of the reform process in 19<sup>th</sup> century, upcoming turmoil would take the empire to a chaos and division. To prevent this, it seemed to be essential to construct an upper identity of “Ottoman citizenship” whose rights were guaranteed via *Kânûn-ı Esâsî*.<sup>94</sup>

Talât Paşa, in his memoirs, says that the Young Turk activity was put out in order to “bring equality, freedom and justice to the country”. While achieving these high ideals, it was hoped to unite the Arabs, and also Greeks, Albanians and Turks into a single existence under the components of Empire. Therefore, the Ottoman conscious would establish while the independence and integrity of the country would be protected and developed.<sup>95</sup> With the proposal of Ahmed Rıza Bey who joined the Committee in 1894, secret formation began to be mentioned with the name of “Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress” (*Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti*). The objective of the Committee was stated in its regulation as follow:<sup>96</sup>

<sup>93</sup> According to Ramsaur, “Many popular ideas and concepts (Constitution, Fatherland, Parliament, etc.) at that time began to be expressed in Turkish literature yet not fully absorbed. Even some words in use were not understanding by the people. Ramsaur, *Jöntürkler – 1908*, p. 18.

<sup>94</sup> Dr. Nazım Bey, one of the most influential member of the Society emphasizes “to be honest, I have not seen the Constitution (*Kânûn-ı Esâsî*), and also, not know what is written in it. But, in our youth, when we are in Paris, we believe that Ahmed Rıza Bey saw and read it.”; Even some applications were suspended; state yearbooks (*salname*) contained the constitution in the introduction pages for about thirty years. Very strange that, almost the only motto is “constitution” matter, but whether they are unaware of it. Hanioglu, *Bir siyasal örgüt*, pp. 37-41, 70-72.

<sup>95</sup> Talât Paşa, *Talât Paşa'nın Anıları*, compiled by Alpay Kabacalı (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2011), p. 17.

<sup>96</sup> “*Hükümet-i hazıranın adalet, müsavat, hürriyet gibi hukuk-u beşeriyeyi ihlal eden ve bütün Osmanlıları terakkiden men ile vatanı ecnebi yedd-i tasallut ve itizabına düşüren usul-ü idaresini islam ve huristiyen vatandaşlarımızı ikaz maksadiyle kadın ve erkek bilcümle Osmanlılardan mürekkep, Osmanlı İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti teşekkül etmiştir*” Hanioglu, *Bir siyasal örgüt*, pp. 178, 180; Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 23; A document titled as “the first Declaration of the Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress” was found among Ahmed Celaleddin Paşa’s documents. There are 39 articles in this regulation. Section titles of the regulation are: The purpose of the Society, how it was established, management style, structure and duties of the Board of Directors, membership system. Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye’de Siyasal Partiler - İkinci Meşrutiyet Dönemi 1908-1918*, Vol. 1 (İstanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları, 1988), pp. 39-44.

“Article 1 — The Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress is established against the totalitarian management of the current regime; which is not only violates justice, equality, liberty and public law; but also put blockage on the progressing and advancement. This poor administration will cause to the Ottoman country to be occupied by the foreign powers. The aim of the Committee is to create awareness among the people, regardless to be Muslims or Christians, men and women...”

A Young Turks congress was held against Abdülhamid regime between February 4 and 9, 1902 in Paris. Among the attendees, there were representatives of various nations with Ottoman mosaic.<sup>97</sup> In the discussions that took place two subjects affected the agenda:<sup>98</sup>

- 1-The propaganda only through the press and publication would not be adequate for revolution; military forces were also needed to be included in the work,
- 2-Requesting intervention of foreign forces to ensure making reforms in the country.

In this congress, most remarkable debate was about the subject of “the need for participation of Super Powers with ‘good intentions’ for reforms to be made in Turkey”. To prepare a revolution in the region, it was tried to create a cooperative environment with Greeks, Bulgars and Vlaches, besides the Armenian Daschnakzoutioun Organization.

The intellectual bourgeoisie class with modern education in 19<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman Empire consisted mostly of non-Muslim citizens working for their own national goals. In accord with the Panislamist<sup>99</sup> policy of Abdülhamid, especially the non-Turk Muslims who were neglected during the political reforms made in the

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<sup>97</sup> This meeting is also known as “Congress of Ottoman Liberals”. Turks, Arabs, Greek, Kurdish, Circassian, Armenian, Jewish and Albanian representatives participated with 47 deputies. In fact, the congress has failed and could not achieve to ensure idea of “gathering the Ottoman citizens under a single roof”; through the subsequent three years in the form of a retreat. For the final decisions of the Congress see, Ramsaur, *Jöntürkler – 1908*, pp. 96-106; Kuran refers to 60-70 delegates attended. Kuran, *İttihat ve Terakki*, pp. 181-184; Akşin claims there should be maximum of 40 people because of a photograph consist 35 delegates. Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 43; Aydemir, *Makedonya’dan Orta Asya’ya*, pp. 256-258.

<sup>98</sup> Kuran, *Jön Türkler*, pp. 191-193.

<sup>99</sup> Mardin, *Jön Türklerin*, p. 75.

*Tanzimat* era; they would be remembered again. The positions close to the Sultan in the palace were realized to be usually occupied by Albanians.<sup>100</sup>

An Albanian origin state man, Mehmed Ferid Paşa (1851-1914)<sup>101</sup> being appointed to the position of grand viziership for 5 years duration by Abdülhamid are said to be with the aim of preventing the conservative Albanian nation's reaction to the reform program which was started to be carried out in Macedonia in 1903. Ferid Paşa was in good relationships with both German and English Ambassadors.<sup>102</sup>

Albanians were conditioned to the idea that recent reform initiatives were to the benefit of Christian nations in Rumeli and against the Muslims. This extremely conservative nation even took women's registration for census as an attack for their honour and used it as a reason for rebellion.<sup>103</sup> Furthermore, they murdered Russian Consul<sup>104</sup> and non-Moslem officials who were assigned in the context of a reform program in İşkodra and Prizren; conservative Albanians in regions such as Kosova strongly reacted against European officers charged on reform process especially for Austrian ones.<sup>105</sup> They organized armed protests for deporting Serbians who were

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<sup>100</sup> Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 106; İsmail Müştak Bey, who had the opportunity to monitor the sultan as a clerk of Yıldız Palace, emphasized "even it was a truth that Abdülhamid was deeply believed to Islam, his religious posture was politic. He wears *hilafet* dress as much as he needs". See, İsmail Müştak Mayakon, *Yıldız'da Neler Gördüm?* (İstanbul: Dün Bugün Yarın Yayınları, 2010), p. 90.

<sup>101</sup> Mehmed Ferid Paşa was born in Yanya (Janina) in 1851 to an Albanian family. He studied in Greek High School and learned Arabic, Greek, French and Italian. He served as a member of the Council of State and the governor of Konya province. The period of 1903-1908 he served as Grand Vizier for 5 years. He died in 1914 in San Remo, Italy. His funeral was buried in Vlore, Albania. Mahmud Kemal İnal, *Osmanlı Devrinde Son Sadriazamlar* (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 1965), pp. 1587-1653.

<sup>102</sup> Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 96; Kutlu, *Balkanlar ve Osmanlı*, p. 203; It is claimed that Ferid Paşa of Vlore carried on the leadership of the Albanian National Assembly in this period. See, Constantin A. Chekrezi, *Albania Past and Present* (New York, The Macmillan Co., 1919), p. 64.

<sup>103</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan Tabanca*, compiled by Rahşan Aktaş (İstanbul: Bengi Yayınları, 2007), p. 10.

<sup>104</sup> Russia's request to open a consulate in the town of Mitroviça, in 1902, moreover, organizing an unusual and glitzy ceremony on the opening party, impacted to the conservative Albanians. Said Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 196; Russia's Consul in Mitroviça was killed on March 31, 1903. Kutlu, *Balkanlar ve Osmanlı*, p. 207; The Russian consul, Rostkovski was killed in Manastır by an Ottoman Gendarme. Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa'nın*, p. 19.

<sup>105</sup> BOA, TFR.IKV, 3429, 30.5.1322 in: Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 133.

taken to gendarmerie. In order to suppress this Albanian terror activities around Mitroviça and İpek, Yakova, Şemsi Paşa got commissioned. Despite Abdülhamid's sensitivity about avoiding harshness against Albanians as much as possible, it became inevitable to use violence. Additionally, these violent measures were to be applied by Ferid Paşa of Avlonya and Şemsi Paşa both Albanians.<sup>106</sup>

It can be evaluated as a conflict that Abdülhamid sees the Albanians as his "most trustworthy supporters" but at the same time he never hesitates to respond in the harshest way.<sup>107</sup> However, this was crucial to protect the security and public peace, for comfort of Rumeli and also prevent probable plans of European forces about the region. These incidents can be said to affect the devotion of Albanians to Abdülhamid. Moreover, feudal rulers such as Bayram Sur and İsa Bolatin had still interest based relationships with government.<sup>108</sup> It is claimed that Italy and Austria had the objective of creating an independent Albanian state by forming "Albanian nation conscious" in the region. There are certain documents in Ottoman archives showing that some Austrians had financed some notables to get Albanians provoked against reforms.<sup>109</sup>

#### 1.4 The Ottoman Freedom Society

It would not be an exaggeration to say that, the Revolution of 1908 was carried out by the Ottoman Freedom Society, rather than the CUP. The CUP is an organization, consisted of individuals who were involved in intellectual campaigning via newspapers, and magazines. The majority of the leading group was living in European cities like Paris and Geneva. They had not been involved in any activity

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<sup>106</sup> Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 180-181; Bilgin Çelik, *İttihatçılar ve Arnavutlar - II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Arnavut Ulusçuluğu ve Arnavutluk Sorunu* (İstanbul: Büke Kitapları, 2004), p. 77; Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, pp. 49-52.

<sup>107</sup> Chekrezi, *Albania: Past*, p. 64.

<sup>108</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 27; İsa Bolatin was the only Albanian leader who continue to support the Sultan. Aram Andonyan, *Balkan Savaşı*, trans. Zaven Biberyan (İstanbul: Aras Yayıncılık, 2002), p. 158.

<sup>109</sup> BOA, *TFR.IKV*, 825, 20.2.1904 in: Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 9, 69, 70.

other than political opposition for some decades. The organization was quite different from others in two aspects: Members profiles, and proposed methods. As Adanır expresses, OFS's thoughts and beliefs were driven by conditions in Macedonia (regarding Macedonia's disintegration from the Empire) rather than mere theoretical ideologies and beliefs.<sup>110</sup> Despite of the assumptions regarding to CUP's establishment in 1889, Celal Bayar argues "the CUP was founded in 1906 (the year that OFS was emerged), by the followers of the Young Ottomans in the light of Namik Kemal literature".<sup>111</sup>

A revolutionary organization was founded among the 5<sup>th</sup> Army officers in Damascus, followed by Jafa and Jerusalem branches; but it could not have sufficient authority in the Arab dominant region. Mustafa Kemal (1881-1938) also joins to this secret committee, which would have been renamed as "the Fatherland and Freedom Society" (*Vatan ve Hürriyet Cemiyeti*), in 1905 when he was appointed to 5<sup>th</sup> Army order. He came to and stayed in Selanik in February 1906 for about four months, due to his long lasting illness where he had an opportunity to initiate the organization. Thanks to this off time, the opponents found the opportunity to discuss the future of the country and think about the alternatives. Mustafa Kemal held various meetings with Tahir, Ömer Naci, Hüsrev Sami and Hakkı Baha Bey. However, there is no evidence indicating that a structural community was established based on these discussions. A few months later upon Mustafa Kemal's returning to Syria, some of those will have joined to the new establishment as the founding members of the Ottoman Freedom Society.<sup>112</sup> Even though it is suggested in some sources<sup>113</sup> that the

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<sup>110</sup> Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 259; "The secret organization that led the army to launch 1908 Revolution is completely different from the Young Turks in exile in Europe. On the other hand, no direct heir to the Young Turk movement in the Empire". Ramsaur, *Jöntürkler – 1908*, pp. 19, 135; Tekeli and İlkin, *İttihat ve Terakki'nin*, p. 352; "This movement, was not accomplished under the influence of the Young Turks, unlike claimed in European newspapers; But, the main success is achieved in the mountains of Resne, Manastır and Selanik". Ali Haydar Mithat, *Hatıralarım*, p. 189.

<sup>111</sup> Celal Bayar, *Ben De Yazdım* (İstanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1965), p. 126.

<sup>112</sup> Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Unionist Factor: The Rôle of the Committee of Union and Progress in the Turkish National Movement, 1905-1926* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), p. 34; Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 59.

<sup>113</sup> Petrosyan, *Sovyet Gözüyle*, p. 254.



Fatherland and Freedom Society merged with CUP prior to the revolution of 1908, no hard evidence exists that support the claim.<sup>114</sup>

A rumor was spread for a while, claiming that Abdülhamid was terminally ill. It is a fact that the authoritarian management system of the Empire was highly dependent on Abdülhamid; chaos would be inevitable in case of his death. Thus, it was believed “European Super Powers would interfere in Macedonia’s internal affairs and disintegrate the homeland” unless the CUP declared independence and issued a constitution. They also believed that they needed to establish communities in major cities across the country and be prepared just in case. Meanwhile, the CUP was using newspapers and magazines, like *Şura-yı Ümmet*<sup>115</sup> to create a public opinion and raise public awareness against Macedonia’s disintegration from the Empire<sup>116</sup>

Selanik was a cosmopolitan city that hosted people of many ethnic backgrounds. The majority consisted of Jews; therefore, it is called as “the second Jerusalem” by some historians.<sup>117</sup> The Masonic Lodges of the city were mainly composed by Jews and the Crypto-Jews (*Dönme*) but received interest from people of other ethnic backgrounds, as well. According to Seton-Watson, “The real brains of the movement were Jewish or Judaeo-Moslem. Their financial aid came from the wealthy Dunmehs and Jews of Salonica, and from the capitalists —international or semi-international— of Vienna, Budapest, Berlin and perhaps also of Paris and

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<sup>114</sup> M. Şükrü Hanioglu, 'Yakın Tarihimizde Perspektif ve Ölçü Meselesi ve İdeolojik Tarih Yazımı', in: *Kanun-i Esasi'den Askerî Müdahaleye II. Meşrutiyet*, Yusuf Çağlar (ed.) (İstanbul: Zaman Kitap, 2008), pp. 56-59.

<sup>115</sup> Mardin, *Jön Türklerin*, pp. 255-256.

<sup>116</sup> Mardin, *Jön Türklerin*, p. 270.

<sup>117</sup> At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the city's population has doubled to 120,000. The ethnic distribution of the population was 27% Muslim, 40% Jewish, 13% Greek, 3% of Bulgarian and 17% others. A large amount of refugees has been exposed to Selanik after 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War. It caused to damage existing harmony and raising on national frictions. It is indicated that this social transformation also impacted to the political movements in the last period of 1908. See, İlhan Tekeli and Selim İlkin, “İttihat ve Terakki'nin oluşumunda Selanik'in toplumsal yapısının belirleyiciliği”, in: *Türkiye'nin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Tarihi (1071-1920)*, Osman Okyar and Halil İnalçık (eds.) (Ankara: Meteksan Ltd., 1980), p. 365.

London”.<sup>118</sup> Thus, Masonic lodges were generous contributors of the Ottoman Freedom Society.

Talat Bey (1874-1921), was employed as a postman (*seyyar posta memuru*) in the Selanik Post Office, who circulated revolutionary publications from Paris in order to have revolutionary ideas spread. He entered the Masonic Lodge, after his failed attempt to open a branch of Paris CUP group in Selanik.<sup>119</sup> Emanuel Karasu helped Abdülhamid opponents like Talat Bey and Manyasizâde Refik Bey to lobby against him, by ensuring that they could meet in confidence, in their masonic lodges, and hide confidential documents. The number of Turks who are members of Masonic lodge at that time was around seventy.<sup>120</sup> A meeting was held in the Masonic Lodge of Selanik on August 29, 1906 where long term plans were discussed. Talat Bey, the leader of the group believed in the necessity of establishing a committee to fight against the regime. This dominant group was entitled High Council (*Heyet-i Âlî*) and consisted of ten people. First members are listed in age ranking as follows:<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Robert William Seton-Watson, *The Rise of Nationality in the Balkans* (London: Constable&Co.Ltd, 1917), p. 184

<sup>119</sup> Talat, Rahmi, Mithat Şükrü and Kazım Nami Beys were adhered to freemason Lodge of Risorta where leading by Emanuel Karasu. In addition, Talat Bey Naki and Kazım Nami Bey were members of Veritas Lodge, which was established, in 1904. Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 146; Hanioglu, *Bir siyasal örgüt*, p. 90; Ziya Şakir, *Yakın Tarihin Üç Büyük Adamı: Talat-Enver-Cemal Paşalar* (İstanbul: Akıl Fikir Yayınları, 2011), p. 28.

<sup>120</sup> Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 99; Hanioglu argues that, most of the political actions attributed to the Young Turkishness, in fact, carried out by Freemasons. Hanioglu, *Bir siyasal örgüt*, pp. 76-92; Unionists' entering to the Masonic lodges provides security for their political actions; in addition, ensures for Jews in terms of the result of the quest for balance against Slavs and Greeks. It shall be expressed that Abdülhamid has shown a tolerance to meet for Masons' engage in charity work and social activities. Orhan Koloğlu, *İttihadçılar ve Masonlar* (İstanbul: Pozitif Yayınları, 2012), pp. 58-59.

<sup>121</sup> Tunaya express “all members of this small group also member of a cult (*tarikât*) and also Mason with the one-two exception. Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal*, pp. 21-22; Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, pp. 174-180; Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 258-271; Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 145-154; Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 10; Bleda, *İmparatorluğun Çöküşü*, pp. 21-22; Halil Menteşe, *Osmanlı Mebusan Meclisi Reisi Halil Menteşe'nin Anıları*, compiled by Orhan Birgit, et. al. (İstanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı, 1986), p. 121; It is argued that Talat Bey worked as a Turkish instructor in Alliance Israelite Universelle school for a while, then, started to consist of the Society. Mustafa Özden, *II. Meşrutiyetin İlanı: Öncesi ve Sonrası* (İstanbul: Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Vakfı, 2000), p. 50; Külçe, *Osmanlı Tarihinde*, p. 341; All except Mehmed Tahir Bey are freemason. Within a short time, 42 more officers attend to the Society in Selanik. Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 212.

1. Tahir Bey	Major	Head of Military School
2. Naki Bey (Yücekök)	Major	French Instructor - Military School
3. Talat Bey	Civilian	Postman
4. Mithat Şükrü (Bleda)	Civilian	Clerk at Department of Education
5. Mustafa Rahmi Bey	Civilian	Lawyer
6. Kâzım Nami (Duru)	Captain	Aide of the Marshal of Third Army
7. Ömer Naci Bey	First Lieutenant	
8. Hakkı Baha (Pars)	First Lieutenant	
9. İsmail Canbolat Bey	First Lieutenant	in charge for Central Command
10. Edip Servet (Tör)	Captain	Assistant for General de Giorgios

Even though, several names were suggested, they agreed on “The Ottoman Freedom Society” (*Osmanlı Hürriyet Cemiyeti*), for the title of the organization in September 18, 1906 meeting.<sup>122</sup> Another suggestion “Crescent” remained as a symbol of the organization. The Society wanted to keep secret for a long time so that they could present “to be much more populous, wide spread and powerful than they were”. To accomplish this goal, the ten founding member decided that each new coming member to be numbered starting with 111 instead of 11 so that the new members of this secret organization would assume that hundreds of people had joined before them.<sup>123</sup> Thanks to the organizational structure, only a small group of members had to interact with other members, and therefore, members did not find out about the actual number of members as the only thing that gave them an idea about the size of the Society was the assigned membership numbers. Because of the misleading number assignment, the exact size of the Society is debatable. It is, however, estimated that a total of 505 members joined since the establishment of the association till the proclamation of the Constitution in July 1908, including 319 officers (*zâbit*).<sup>124</sup> Contradictorily, Aydemir expresses referring to Enver Paşa that

<sup>122</sup> Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 212; This meeting was held at Ömer Naci’s house where opposite Alatini Mansion (Abdülhamid spent his exile time between 1909-1912 after dethroned).

<sup>123</sup> Süleyman Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı ve Meşrutiyet* (İzmir: Yeniasır Matbaası, 1944), p. 7.

<sup>124</sup> Enver Paşa highlighted that there was no decision for a general uprising since lack of organization across the country. Total size of the Committee was almost two thousand in Rumeli, including

there were two thousand officers tied to the Society as of 1908.<sup>125</sup> A İstanbul branch was not opened because it was feared that Abdülhamid's spy network could reveal the organizations. Even when the constitution was declared in July 1908, there were only a few members in İstanbul.<sup>126</sup> Selim Sırrı (Tarcan) claims "on July 23, 1908, when the constitution was declared in Rumeli, we were just thirty people in İstanbul".<sup>127</sup> Although, there may be separate small groups, the number is still very low.

A prospective candidate had to pledge placing his hand on a pistol, dagger, and a Qur'an, sworn in (*tahlif*)<sup>128</sup> in a mystical atmosphere. They were using "crescent" (*hilal*) as a symbol and "MUİN"<sup>129</sup> as a password. The candidate would be brought to a convenient place blindfolded.<sup>130</sup> Niyazi Bey's house was also used for the pledge

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four hundred of Selanik, in his memoirs. Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa'nın*, p. 67; Although it sounds very close to the reality of these figures given by Karabekir, Knight argues "just before the proclamation of the Constitution, the initiates of the Committee of Union and Progress, in Macedonia alone, numbered fifteen thousand" as highly exaggerated. Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 109; Buxton increases the number as "It is estimated that there were in the European provinces, during the final stage of the revolutionary work, some twenty thousand initiated members. In Asia, there was probably a somewhat smaller number", see, Charles Roden Buxton, *Turkey in Revolution* (London: T. F. Unwin, 1909), p. 46; Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 228.

<sup>125</sup> Aydemir, *Makedonya'dan Orta Asya'ya*, p. 493.

<sup>126</sup> Ramsaur, *Jöntürkler – 1908*, p. 136; Kadri claims that there were only 11 members before the Revolution in İstanbul. Kadri, *Meşrutiyetten Cumhuriyete*, p. 70.

<sup>127</sup> Selim Sırrı Tarcan, *Hatıralar - Canlı Tarihler*, No. 16 (İstanbul: Türkiye Yayınevi, 1946), p. 29.

<sup>128</sup> Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 218.

<sup>129</sup> "Muin" (مُعِين) means "helper"; "That helps, assist, especially, God, as helper to all" Sir James W. Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon* (Constantinople: A.H.Boyajian, 1890), p. 1917; Karabekir explains how MUİN password used when two people met, first one say a word start with M, the initial letter of the replied word must be U, then a word with İ, and concludes with N, respectively. Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, p. 136.

<sup>130</sup> Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, pp. 177-181; Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, pp. 105-108; Details about the ceremony see, Buxton, *Turkey in Revolution*, p. 45; Şemseddin, *Makedonya: Tarihçe*, p. 127; Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa'nın*, p. 33; Tahlif ceremony creates a deep impression on the candidate; thus, they remember till the end of their life. Yalçın expresses "the CUP became a mystic, combined with a mystic charm and did them brothers" Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, *Talat Paşa* (İstanbul: Yedigün Neşriyat, 1943), p. 12; Menteşe, *Osmanlı Mebusan*, p. 122.

ceremonies in Manastır.<sup>131</sup> Taking Italian Carbonaria organization as a model, they used a cell based structure, composed of 4-5 members only.<sup>132</sup>

The pledge text consisted of striking statements like: to commit the rights of imperial royalty and usual system of getting throne will be secured and respected. (*Devlet-i Osmaniye'nin 'Kânûn-ı Esâsî' ahkâmı dairesinde hakkı hakimiyeti ekber evlâda intikal etmek üzere Âl-i Osman uhdesinde kalması*). Even though, the Committee's main goal was to overthrow despotic Abdülhamid regime, they still respected and wished the continuity of dynastic order.<sup>133</sup>

Ertürk summarizes the foundation objectives of the Society as “to destroy Abdülhamid's totalitarian regime; to bring the spirit of the Constitution of 1876; to bring liberty, justice, equality, and fraternity to the homeland; and to celebrate the integrity of the Empire by respecting all Ottoman citizens regardless of religion, language, race and class. In addition to these main objectives, some interesting objectives consisted of being loyal to the Ottoman dynasty, reinforcing the caliphate institution, and making the army the guard of the reforms.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, p. 193.

<sup>132</sup> The Committee of Military Revolutionary (*Askeri İhtilal Cemiyeti*) founded in 1903 by Ahmed Bedevi Kuran and his friends. Carbonaria was accepted as a model of the organization. However, no one expected to happen anytime soon longed constitution, Ahmet Bedevi Kuran, *Harbiye Mektebi'nde Hürriyet Mücadelesi* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2009), p. 29; Yerasimos, *Az gelişmişlik Sürecinde*, p. 1053.

<sup>133</sup> The oath text can be seen on 27<sup>th</sup> article of “Internal Regulation” (*Dahiliye Nizamnamesi*) of the CUP, dated 1908, as follows: “*Cemiyetin esrarını ve mensubininden bittesadüf öğrendiklerinden hiç birinin ismini en şedit işkencelere duçar olsa da faş etmeyeceğine ve Devlet-i Osmaniye'nin (Kânûn-ı Esâsî) ahkâmı dairesinde hakk-ı hakimiyeti ekber evlâda intikal etmek üzere Âl-i Osman uhdesinde kalması ve umum efrad-ı Osmâniye'nin bilâ tefriki cins ve mezhep naili saadet ve hürriyet olması için ilâ nihayetülömr çalışacağına ve duçarı felaket olan efradı Cemiyete ve ailelerine muavenet eyleyeceğine ve Cemiyetin mukarreratını tamamiyle ifa edeceğine ve şayet ihaneti tebeyyün ederse ceza-yı idama razı olduğuna dair, din, vicdan ve namusuna ve Cenab-ı Hakk'ın ism-i azâmetine*” Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal*, pp. 50-58; Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, pp. 61-62; Full text see, Bayar, *Ben De Yazdım*, p. 239-251; Concerns regarding to reigning method of inheritance was also an item of the second Congress of the Young Turks in 29.12.1907. Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 66; Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa'nın*, p. 38; Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, pp. 134-135.

<sup>134</sup> Hüsamettin Ertürk, *İki Devrin Perde Arkası*, compiled by Samih Nafiz Tansu (İstanbul: İlgi Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2011), p. 34.

After joining the secret committee on November 18, 1906 in Selanik, Enver Bey tries to convince his close friend Kazım (Karabekir) Bey to join as well.<sup>135</sup> When Kazım Bey wants to know about Society's organizational structure, and its regulation (*Cemiyet Nizamnamesi*), Enver replies: "I never cherry-picked like you did; I do not have the regulation that you are looking for; you will get whatever you want from the central committee in Selanik."<sup>136</sup> Kazım Bey highlights their main goals as "proclamation of liberty and the constitution"<sup>137</sup> He joins to the society as a suicide volunteer (*fedai*) member on November 30, 1906. The volunteers were employed for special tasks as defined in the 48<sup>th</sup> article, such as carrying out assassinations for revolution.<sup>138</sup>

Main criticism against the current regime focuses on the following issues: "the mismanagement of the country, the ruling class' ignorance about its upcoming collapse, the harm foreign officers of Macedonia brought to sovereignty, the level of economic distress, and the defenseless Muslims massacred by Christian gangs". Strong opposition was voiced in the press against the Hamidian regime on that matter. It can be said that *Neyyir-i Hakikat* newspaper had remarkable influence on the members of the Society in Manastır and the neighborhood.<sup>139</sup> Although the Society was first founded in Selanik, the majority of the active members consisted

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<sup>135</sup> Enver Bey has joined to the Ottoman Freedom Society as 52<sup>nd</sup> member. His number was 152 (10 +42 = 52) while Cemal Paşa No: 150, A decrease in participation during this period has been quite a significant pause and formed. Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) has joined as mentored by Fethi (Okyar) Bey (1880-1943) with number 322 in February 1907. Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, pp. 177-179; Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 147; Enver Paşa, tells in his memoirs that, his number was 12 and Talat Bey was the mentor for his entering. Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa'nın*, pp. 31-34.

<sup>136</sup> A similar situation applies to Dr. Nazım Bey; In 1906, he said "although, I'm here for almost ten years, this is the first time I read the Constitution text (*Kânûn-ı Esâsî*)". "Action" was more important rather than the concepts in this period. Kuran, *Jön Türkler*, p. 214;

<sup>137</sup> Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, pp. 134-135; "Most of these officers who aimed to make political revolution in the country, to sacrifice their lives for freedom and sworn to destroy tyrannic administration, at the junior ranks such as lieutenant and captain. Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, pp. 19, 126; It is written in the secret correspondence of the Society was "the need for money and sacrifice" "the selection of the members' titles, rather it should be based on the mood, need to be taken young, single, and poor people. Çiçek, *Dr. Bahattin Şakir*, p. 61.

<sup>138</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 38; Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 218.

<sup>139</sup> Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 149-151; Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa'nın*, p. 50; Interior Minister Memduh Paşa referred to *Neyyir-i Hakikat* as "deliriums gathered in Manastır" (*Manastır'da elde edilen hezeyânnâmeler*). BOA, Y.EE, 71/48, 12.7.1908.

mainly of young officers and gorillas were from Manastır. Selanik was the intellectual center of the Society while Manastır was the city of actions.<sup>140</sup> At that time, the Society had almost no organization in Üsküb, Edirne and even in İstanbul.<sup>141</sup>

Dr. Bahattin Şakir and Dr. Nazım Bey, who had played a key role in the formation of first intellectual Young Turk movement which dates back to 1889, grasped the significance of the new movement of Selanik right away.<sup>142</sup> They've also attended to secret meetings held in İstanbul and Selanik in autumn of 1907 to determine the conditions of cooperation and action plans.<sup>143</sup> Finally, the Ottoman Freedom Society merged with the Paris group named "The Ottoman Committee of Progress and Union (*Osmanlı Terakki ve İttihad Cemiyeti*) led by Ahmed Rıza Bey

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<sup>140</sup> Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi, *Tarih Musahabeleri*, p. 309; Kazım Bey emphasize that Manastır would take over the central committee role if Selanik keeps the things very slow than expectation. Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, p. 207; The "revolution" concept was not an approach of CUP till 1906. Hanioglu, *Bir siyasal örgüt*, p. 52; Enver Paşa says, "I was the only person who knows the center of the committee is Selanik; other friends were supposed to be in İstanbul". Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa'nın*, p. 38; Manastır Branch had advanced Selanik, both in terms of quality and quantity, through the efforts of Enver Bey and Kazım Bey. Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 229.

<sup>141</sup> "As same as the tax revolts that occurred in some provinces, we have almost no information about İstanbul to the pre-revolutionary years. Kansu, *1908 Devrimi*, p. 97.

<sup>142</sup> Bahattin Şakir strives hard to organize a committee within the country. He prepares a ten-point Branch Regulations. Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, pp. 4, 145; Mardin, *Jön Türklerin*, p. 224; The most influential men of the Society, Dr. Bahattin Şakir entered into the Society in 1905, directing by Dr. Nazım Bey. Hikmet Çiçek, *Dr. Bahattin Şakir-İttihat ve Terakki'den Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa'ya Bir Türk Jakobeni* (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2007), p. 35; Dr. Bahattin Şakir "to drive a bit stagnant environment" and has spent intense efforts to promote cooperation between groups. Kuran, *Jön Türkler*, p. 212; Georgeon, *Sultan Abdülhamid*, p.541.

<sup>143</sup> Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 203; Dr. Nazım Bey involved to the movements at every stages. He spent his time, as well as activities on behalf of the Society, to mobilize the Anatolian cities, especially İzmir, Sir Edwin Pears, *Life of Abdul Hamid* (London, Constable and Company Ltd., 1917), p. 285 (Nazım Bey's activities in this resource accidentally expressed in the name of "Niazi"); Dr. Nazım Bey at the beginning of 1907, met with Halil Menteşe in İzmir, and said "We have decided to revolution. Sultan Hamid will put the army Corps of İzmir first. He will say "the Society made me in charge to get the young officers and İzmir's intellectual fraternity to make them adhered to the Society. Eventually, his effort gives fruit, when İzmir Redif corps were sent to Selanik. Menteşe, *Osmanlı Mebusan*, pp. 119-120; Ramsaur argues that, Paris group, noticed the OFS group in Selanik by chance. Ramsaur, *Jöntürkler – 1908*, p. 162; Dr. Nazım Bey's Selanik trip, see, Ahmet Bedevi Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda İnkılap Hareketleri ve Millî Mücadele* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2012), p. 462; Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa'nın*, p. 40.

on September 27, 1907.<sup>144</sup> The merging protocol consisted of the following articles:<sup>145</sup>

- 1- There will be two headquarters of the Society: Selanik the “internal center”, and Paris the “external center”.<sup>146</sup>
- 2- The Society aims to re-introduce Midhat Paşa’s constitution which was originally adopted in 1876.
- 3- Even though they work independently, the central committees shall assist each other in case of need.
- 4- The members, who felt in trouble, in their positions within the Empire, will be directed to the Paris office.
- 5- External headquarter of the Society will manage the CPU’s external branches and its foreign affairs with other countries. All kinds of initiatives and activities in the Empire will be managed by the internal headquarter of Selanik.
- 6- Centers, however, can only interfere in each other in case of danger.
- 7- “*Şura-yı Ümmet*” in Turkish, and “*Mechveret*” in French, shall be official publications of the Society.

As can be seen from the above articles of the protocol, rather than an organization fully integrated, an independent double-centric structure was

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<sup>144</sup> Bayur argues that, this merger realized thanks to CUP Paris groups’ offering to OFS in Selanik. They convinced by using CUP’s well-known advantage. There are benefits on integration for both parties. Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı*, Vol. 1, p. 190; Ahmed Rıza Bey, formerly opposed to violence and armed actions; but he convinced upon merger actions with the OFS. Kutlu, *Balkanlar ve Osmanlı*, p. 219; It is argued that Dr. Nazım could not embrace the name of the OFS, thus, a survey was conducted among members of the CPU and finally agreed on this name: “Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti” (CUP) Özden, *II. Meşrutiyetin İlanı*, p. 51; Uzunçarşılı emphasizes that the OFS was founded in 1905 by Talat Bey. He gives merger process was completed on April 21, 1906. See, İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, “1908 Yılında İkinci Meşrutiyetin Ne Suretle İlân Edildiğine Dair Vesikalar”, *Belleten*, No. 77 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1956), pp. 105-106; Sacit Kutlu, *Didâr-ı Hürriyet*, (İstanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2008), p. 107.

<sup>145</sup> Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, pp. 215-216; Tunaya, *Türkiye’de Siyasal*, pp. 49-50; Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 154; Mardin, *Jön Türklerin*, p. 219; Kuran, *İttihat ve Terakki*, pp. 238-239; Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda*, p. 456 ; Petrosyan, *Sovyet Gözüyle*, p. 255; Tachat R. Ravindranathan, *The Young Turk Revolution - July 1908 to April 1909: Its Immediate Effects*, Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Simon Fraser University (1970), pp. 47-48.

<sup>146</sup> Knight called Selanik as headquarter while Paris as branch. Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 102; Internal Headquarter: “*Terakki ve İttihad Cemiyeti Dahilî Merkez-i Umûmîsi*”.



adopted.<sup>147</sup> Akşin, argues that, in the period of 1902-1906, Ahmet Rıza's group has not been using "Union and Progress" as the name of their society. Therefore, it could be claimed that a nostalgic name of the opponents was given to the Ottoman Freedom Society, which is very effective, and promising interpretation as also expressed by Midhat Şükrü Bleda (1874-1956).<sup>148</sup> After the proclamation of the Constitution in July 1908, "Union and Progress" -formerly based for secret organizations- (*vaktiyle gizli teşekküllere menşe olan İttihad ve Terakki ismi*), will be used again instead of "Progress and Union".<sup>149</sup>

There was no single leader for the Ottoman Freedom Society, as well as the CPU; instead a collective leadership, called "Central Council" (*Heyet-i Merkeziye*) was in place.<sup>150</sup> Society's structure and conduct guidelines were defined under the Regulations (*Nizamnâme*) which consist of 67 articles. It is claimed that, those articles originated from IMRO's and Daschnakzoutioun's regulations.<sup>151</sup>

By 1907, a period of economic hardship was affecting the whole world. Price increase in many products of basic needs had caused a significant discomfort for people.<sup>152</sup> Given these circumstances, the Young Turks seeks to establish an

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<sup>147</sup> Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 216.

<sup>148</sup> Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 55; "Meşrutiyetin ilanı sırasında "Terakki ve İttihad" yerine "vaktiyle gizli teşekküllere menşe olan 'İttihad ve Terakki' ismi yeniden canlanmıştır". Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda*, p. 496; Midhat Şükrü Bleda who is one of the founders of OFS argues that is no "merger", but just a renaming as recommended by Dr. Nazım Bey. Bleda, *İmparatorluğun Çöküşü*, pp. 30-31; Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 63.

<sup>149</sup> Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda*, p. 496.

<sup>150</sup> Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 109.

<sup>151</sup> The sections of the Regulations, dated as 18.9.1908: Purpose, General Center, Centers, Board of Directors, Sword Board, Division Committees, Self-sacrifice, Branches, Members of the general tasks. In addition, 10-item "part of the trial methods and fining" are added, see, Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal*, pp. 50-58; Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, pp. 63-64; *Osmanlı İttihad Terakki Cemiyeti'nin Nizamnamesi -1325* (Selanik: Hakkak Ömer Kani ve Mahdumu Matbaası, 1909); The reasons of CUP's not having regulations before are lack of knowledge and experience of members able to find such a political system, Their only purpose was "to save the homeland", Yalçın, *Talat Paşa*, p. 14; Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 217.

<sup>152</sup> Carter Vaughn Findley, 'Economic Bases of Revolution and Repression in the Late Ottoman Empire', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Jan. 1986), p. 102; Donald Quataert, "The Economic Climate of the 'Young Turk Revolution' in 1908", *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (Sep. 1979), p. D1149.

influence, not only over officers and soldiers but also on workers and clerks. Some historians like Hacısalihođlu, Kansu and Kars claim that, the CPU, in particular, took part in the riots against the government's tax applications in 1906 and 1907 in cities like Erzurum, Trabzon, Kastamonu and Diyarbakır.<sup>153</sup> These were the deeds of the “emerging the conservative Ottoman middle class”<sup>154</sup> according to Findley, and Society’s involvement in these riots are questionable, with the exception of the intellectual impact of opponent publications of the Young Turks abroad.<sup>155</sup> Mehmed Selahaddin expresses “when the members of the Society travelled to some Anatolian provinces; they noticed that those ‘noble and naive’ (*necîb ve saf*) people of Anatolia were not inclined for such initiatives; therefore, the Unionists turned to Rumeli people for support.<sup>156</sup> The Committee has focused their activity in Macedonia; especially after merging with the Ottoman Freedom Society in 1907.<sup>157</sup> It was considered that the Great States had a hidden agenda behind the Mürzsteg Protocol, as well as on the negotiations held in Reval which was to throw Ottomans out of Rumeli. Europe’s approach to the Macedonian affairs was criticized by the Young Turks as follows: “It is not fair to request privileges only for Christians while Muslims are also the victim of the despotic regime as much as the Christian subjects. If they really want to force a reform program, it should be for all people, regardless of their ethnic or religious affiliation”. The Turkish bourgeoisie’s main demand until

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<sup>153</sup> Kansu claims that there is a direct connection between the Revolution of 1908 and tax uprisings of 1906-1907. However, he could not provide concrete data to prove the relationship between events is enforced via these uprisings. Contrary, most of those cities have celebrated Revolution for about 2 weeks later than Macedonian cities. This situation also shows the weakness of connection between them. Kansu, *1908 Devrimi*, pp. 35-95; H. Zafer Kars, *1908 Devrimi'nin Halk Dinamiđi*, (İstanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 1997), p. 43.

<sup>154</sup> Findley, *Turkey, Islam*, p. 164; Privileges are transferred from father to son. That leads to the assumption that people neglect this form of expression has been a significant part of the society. Alkan, *Ordu ve Siyaset*, p. 34.

<sup>155</sup> Quataert expresses the relationship between tax revolts and the revolution of July as follow: “The economic setbacks in 1907-1908 cannot be viewed as the sole motive force of the revolution. What seems new in July 1908 is that an economic crisis unfolded in the presence of an organized, widespread revolutionary cadre. For the first time in decades, there was a favorable juncture of economic and political conditions”. Quataert, *The Economic Climate*, p.D1161.

<sup>156</sup> Mehmed Selahaddin, *Bildiklerim*, p. 8; Dr. Nazım Bey emphasizes that, even though the proclamation of constitution, most of the inhabitants of Anatolia after the Revolution could not understand about the aim of proclamation and so on. He says, freedom and ignorance cannot live together. Tunaya, *Hürriyet'in İlanı*, p. 62.

<sup>157</sup> Hacısalihođlu, *Jön Türkler*, pp. 166-170; Alkan, *Mutlakiyetten Meşrutiyete*, pp. 162-169.

the Revolution of July 1908 was a general reform deriving from the establishment of a constitutional system and the proclamation of freedom.<sup>158</sup>

The second Young Turk Congress was held in Paris between 27 and 29 December 1907 with wider participation compared to the first one.<sup>159</sup> The participants agreed on maintaining the integrity of the present Ottoman Empire, overthrowing of the Hamidian regime, and establishing a peaceful and constitutional parliamentary system instead.<sup>160</sup> The final declaration of the Congress highlights the common commitments as “We will not give up in the face of events; and not leave weapons unless we ensure the emergence of a new era in Turkey”.<sup>161</sup> They express signs of revolutionary uprising against the regime of Abdülhamid.

It was believed that once “freedom” is declared, folks once an enemy would reconcile; all kinds of unfair and unlawful practices would disappear, and the totalitarian government would be removed. It is a known fact that, for the Unionists, the messages consisting of “unity, integrity and citizenship” were indeed emphasizing “Ottomanism”. Because, according to them, the constitution was a written form of “liberty”.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 84; Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 88; The Revolution of 1908 was a process that opening up Empire into capitalism, just after the bourgeoisie’s overthrow the despotic management. See, Tekeli and İlkin, “İttihat ve Terakki’nin”, p. 352.

<sup>159</sup> The organizations that attended to the Congress were: CPU, *Teşebbüs-ü Şahsi ve Ademi Merkeziyet-i Meşrutiyet Cemiyeti*, the Armenian Dashnaktsutyun Organization, Egypt League of Ahd-i Osmani İsrailiye Society, London, representatives participate in the Journal of the Caliphate. However, Bulgarians (except IMRO), Greek and Albanian representatives does not take part, even they were invited. Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, pp. 66-68; The idea on gathering all oppositionist parties to take actions against the authoritarian regime, in fact, proposed by Armenian Daschnakzoutioun. Petrosyan, *Sovyet Gözüyle*, p. 259.

<sup>160</sup> Ramsaur, *Jöntürkler – 1908*, p. 19; Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, pp. 85, 103; Petrosyan, *Sovyet Gözüyle*, p. 261; Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 257-259; Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 66; Hanioğlu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 203.

<sup>161</sup> “*hâdisat karşısında fütûr getirmeyeceğimizi birbirimize vâdediyoruz. Türkiye’de yeni bir devrin zuhuruna muvaffak olmadan terki silah etmeyeceğimizi hünkâra ilân ederiz*”, full text of the declaration see, Kuran, *Jön Türkler*, pp. 290-296.

<sup>162</sup> Hacısalihoğlu, *Jön Türkler*, pp. 218-219; Tunaya, *Hürriyet’in İlanı*, p. 54; Resneli Niyazi Bey, argues “If the foreigners end their influence on Macedonia, they fight against the administration of tyranny and regardless to be Muslim or Christian, they will live in brotherhood on the ‘Ottomanism’ basis”. Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyazi*, p. 60.

## 1.5 Politics and the Ottoman Army

New military schools were established as part of the modernization process during Abdülhamid II period, and significant changes in the existing curriculum were put into action. The high performer talents who graduate from the Military school had an opportunity to attend to the Staff College (*Erkân-ı Harb Mektebi*), and were subject to a high level of military education. They could easily reach the rank of “senior captain” (*kolağası*) just after graduating from this school by having “staff officer” (*kurmay*) title.<sup>163</sup> On the other hand, Officers formerly raised from the ranks (*alaylı zabıtlar*) came to the fore with their skills and capabilities demonstrated military practices; they were older and had limited education compared to the new generation. This *alaylı* group had established domination over the soldiers in the army, based on their long-standing experiences; therefore, they were not satisfied with the young and arrogant “schooled” (*mektepli*) officers at all. These, well-educated, liberal minded, high self-esteemed officers’ worldview was influenced mainly by the Western ideas, and they were involved with the opponent circles. This emerging conflict and competition between “*alaylı*” and “*mektepli*” officers will have led to the Hamidian regime’s most troubled period.<sup>164</sup> The “schooled” young officers will have been responsible for staging the military coup of July 1908.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>163</sup> In 1884, the number of “schooled” officers were around 1.000 (10% of the total); in 1899, 4.500 (25%) increased. Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 20; Moreau emphasizes that schooled officers were needed to have to struggle to impose themselves. Moreau, *Reformlar Çağında*, p. 145; more than 3,000 schooled officers in 3<sup>rd</sup> Army and more than 2000 in 2<sup>nd</sup> Army. Rıza Paşa expresses “a criticism has been happened to him because of concentrating most of the new officer in Macedonia. Rıza Paşa, *Abdülhamid’in Seraskeri Rıza Paşa’nın Anıları*, compiled by Mahir Aydın (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2012), p. 63.

<sup>164</sup> Moreau, *Reformlar Çağında*, pp. 154-156.

<sup>165</sup> “Yirmibeş yaşında mirlivaların ve feriklerin ordu kadrolarını doldurmalarına karşı aksakallı yüzbaşuların, velev bir derece olsun, terfi-i rütbe etmeleri kabil olamıyordu. İttihad ve Terakki bu halden istifade ederek Rumeli’ndeki zabıtları kazanmıştı. Zaten, yanlış ve fena da olsa, memlekette herhangi bir inkılabın istinat edebileceği yegâne kuvvet ordu idi”. See, Kadri, *Meşrutiyetten Cumhuriyete*, p. 71; After the revolution, the members of the Central Committee visit Hüseyin Hilmi Pasha in Selanik. He congratulates the Unionist and states “the ones who make up this work (coup) were who trained in the Schools that Abdülhamid is opened!”. See, İrtem, *Yıldız ve Jön Türkler*, p. 366; 300 officers from the Staff College between 1900 and 1910, and 680 from the Military Academy in 1905 were graduated and most of these served in the Third Army of Macedonia. Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 110; Moreau, *Reformlar Çağında*, p. 51.

Without knowing whether it would cost to his power in the future, Abdülhamid sent intelligent, talented and well-trained young officers to Macedonia. He had believed that, these modern minded young Turkish officers would easily fill the positions that were currently occupied by the European counterparts'. Thus, he also wanted to show how Ottoman officers will change the European Powers' perception regarding the Ottoman Macedonia.<sup>166</sup> The ongoing efforts of modernization and westernization throughout 19<sup>th</sup> century created a new generation of liberal-minded young officers who committed themselves changing the existing political order. The most important factor leading to the revolution in July 1908 is considered to be the public-army cooperation for the purpose of preventing "further division of the Empire". Even though, public involvement was at a questionable level, the public was aroused against the absolute regime of Abdulhamid II.<sup>167</sup>

Ahmed Rıza Bey, one of the leaders of the CPU states "the army's role has changed since the development era of the empire and has become to prevent the disintegration of the empire which was once to pursue conquest".<sup>168</sup> This citation summarizes how the army transformed from an "attack" oriented, progressive military mission into a "defensive" state against "insider threats". According to them, the Western powers were interested in conquering the valuable lands of Rumeli, and dismiss the Ottomans. The people in the region were provoked against the authority of the state; their loyalty and trust to the state was damaged. The armed bands have created terror in the region and were threatening the peace. Neither the ruling cadre nor the interest-seeking, incompetent supporters of the palace could stop the threats. As this was not enough, they aggravated the state of affairs. These armed bands needed to be eliminated; in order to ensure the liberation of the country, and bring peace to the nation. The agenda of the majority of students and graduates of the military school was filled almost exclusively with these thoughts and ideals. Their

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<sup>166</sup> Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 184; It was efforts to create an image of "we exactly like you" to resist against increasingly loneliness of the Ottomans, as only Muslim Empire. Deringil, *İktidarın Sembolleri*, p. 30.

<sup>167</sup> Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 11.

<sup>168</sup> Mardin, *Jön Türklerin*, p. 219.

big and only task was “to save the homeland”. The Unionists express “need to do a radical reformation against the current administration to solve the problems created by the state authorities were rooted in their heads in early school years”.<sup>169</sup>

In his memoirs, Niyazi Bey emphasizes “no other option would have been useful in the re-enforcement of the constitution (*Kânûn-ı Esâsî*) other than utilization of the army influence”. Furthermore, he proposes to shape the public opinion through newspapers in preparation for the revolution.<sup>170</sup> The main stream of classic Union and Progress believed that the salvation of nation laid in a coup initiated by the cadre of Palace elite upon Abdülhamid’s death due to illness, supported by lifting up the education level and creating awareness among the nations. Thirty years had passed, but none of that happened. Moreover, the events in Macedonia were showing that, the Empire was facing disintegration and collapse. They had no option to prevent this forthcoming end, other than a military coup carried out by the “schooled” officers.<sup>171</sup> Uzer also confirms that by emphasizing “the Society only relied on the army”.<sup>172</sup>

According to Karpat, Revolution of 1908 was not carried out by the Young Ottoman intellectuals in European circles but actualized by deeds of core staff of the army in Selanik and Manastır.<sup>173</sup> Tunaya also states “the secret revolutionary power of the Ottoman Freedom Society came from the initiative of the Ottoman army directly, ensured the revolution.<sup>174</sup> Even though they have come from the middle and lower classes of society these young people were different from the others in their “superior abilities” and “sublime qualities” they acquired in modern military high schools. The reason of the country's bad state was that, these highly educated, forward-thinking people were not in the management. The cruel and short-sighted

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<sup>169</sup> Halil (Kut) Paşa, Enver Paşa’s uncle. Alkan, *Ordu ve Siyaset*, p. 35.

<sup>170</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 32.

<sup>171</sup> Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 68.

<sup>172</sup> Tahsin Uzer, *Makedonya Eşkiyalık Tarihi ve Son Osmanlı Yönetimi* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1999), p. 89.

<sup>173</sup> Karpat, ‘*The Transformation of the Ottoman*’, pp. 280-281.

<sup>174</sup> Tunaya, *Türkiye’de Siyasal*, p. 22.

administrators at Palace were deceiving “uneducated public” who are unaware of what was happening. According to them, these uneducated people were unaware of what was going on because of their inability to differentiate between right and wrong, and good and evil. While the young officers were regarded as “the only power for a sustainable revolution”, they thought that public awareness and indoctrination towards revolutionary goals were mandatory.

The young officers who adopted the Young Turks movement in Macedonia would try to take part in the Third Army. Therefore, compared to other armies, the majority of the officers in Macedonia, were graduated from the Royal War Academy (*Mekteb-i Harbiye*) and Staff College (*Erkân-ı Harbiye Mektebi*), while some of them received training in Germany.<sup>175</sup> The “schooled” young officers were the most important organized power of the CUP, and were always ready to carry out the proposed actions given them. On the other hand, it is a known fact that, these well-educated but un-experienced brave officers have failed in the ongoing guerrilla war against the bands in the mountains of Macedonia. However, after a while, they gained experience in the field, and gained the confidence of the Muslim villagers by keeping close contact with them.<sup>176</sup> More importantly, during these struggles, these junior officers would have experienced *komitacılık* as a competency in the region; and adopted it into their practice in the army against the government.<sup>177</sup> Failure, however, was excused and explained to be caused by lack of modern weapons and equipment, and the existence of powerful networking of gangs which received huge support and protection from the locals, as well as central government's inability and unpaid soldiers.

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<sup>175</sup> Enver Bey is assigned as Staff Captain to the Third Army's order in 1902. When he comes to Manastır, he criticize an officer by saying “without performing his duty, it will not acceptable to criticize *Serasker*” he will say. Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa'nın*, p. 18; The Third Army, its Cavalry, Artillery and Infantry classes, had a total of 74.000 soldiers as of 1905. Reserve forces (*Redif*) from Anatolia and others in the region, this number reach 194.000, the maximum. As many as 20,000 of these belongs to Şemsi Paşa's 18<sup>th</sup> Regular Corps of Mitroviça district.

<sup>176</sup> Knight emphasizes that, not only Muslims, for many years (because of the gangs) Christian villagers are exposed to the woes got tired; will in anticipation of a new order and safety. Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 90; Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 106, 109.

<sup>177</sup> Alkan, *Ordu ve Siyaset*, p. 41; Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 17.

Britain had given a note to the Sublime Porte in March 1908, to demand “the reduction of Turkish troops in Macedonia” which evoked significant concern over the Unionist.<sup>178</sup> If a progress on those demands happened before declaring “independence”; then the officers would have lost their strong positions in the region. According to the British consul in Selanik, Sir Robert Graves, the Unionist leaders had contacted him and asked for UK’s position on supporting “the Young Turks’ attempt to start a revolt against Abdülhamid”. But he responded saying “forget the idea unless you have the military support”.<sup>179</sup> The letters were sent by CPU to all embassies in Macedonia about overthrowing of the despotic regime and setting up of the constitutional system for the sake of people in the region. The public support for the European states will be highlighted as expected.<sup>180</sup> As expressed in Karabekir's words, “fighting against the Abdülhamid regime would be welcomed by Europeans, since they all supported national freedom movement” with no doubt.<sup>181</sup> In fact, “despite the prevalent perception, the most profound longing of the Young Turks was not freedom; it was to stop the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire” as Mardin said.<sup>182</sup>

Muhittin Birgen, also a Unionist, emphasizes that the men of sword (*erbâb-ı seyf*/military) and the men of bureaucracy (*kalem*) were at the forefront of management coups with an interest seeking attitude since the former periods of the Ottomans. In addition to the military’s evident involvement in the revolution, what marks the revolution of 1908 different than previous coups is the emphasis placed on the ideals of “homeland, freedom, and constitutional regime” (*vatan, hürriyet, meşrutiyet*) rather than self-interests.<sup>183</sup> Count Metternich argues “the revolution was

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<sup>178</sup> This case is determined on the letter of Paris branch of the CUP which was sent to Selanik in March 16, 1908: “acceptance and implementation of these four substances requires to loss of Rumeli from the Ottomans rule”. See, Hacısalihoglu, *Jön Türkler*, p. 167.

<sup>179</sup> Sir Robert Graves, *Storm Center of the Near East: Personal Memories 1879-1929* (New York: AMS Press, 1975), p. 200; Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 144-145; A Similar negotiation was made with Heathcote, the British Consul in Manastır. Yerasimos, *Az gelişmişlik Sürecinde*, p. 1057.

<sup>180</sup> Lowther, *Türkiye 1908*, pp. 8-9. Tekeli and İlkin, *İttihat ve Terakki'nin*, p. 376.

<sup>181</sup> Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, p. 205.

<sup>182</sup> Mardin, *Jön Türklerin*, p. 305.

<sup>183</sup> Birgen, *İttihat ve Terakki*, pp. 69-70.



carried out by the officers who trained in Germany rather than the Young Turks in Paris and London; and that it was just a military revolution, made by the army”.<sup>184</sup> On the other hand, Ortaylı claims that the officers who trained in the German army, and later took on leading roles in the Ottoman army, were, in fact, “good officers, but bad politicians”.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> For the report, prepared by Paul Graf Wolff Metternich, German Ambassador to London dated 14.08.1908, See, Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı*, Vol. 1, p. 235.

<sup>185</sup> İlber Ortaylı, *İkinci Abdülhamit Döneminde Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda Alman Nüfuzu* (Ankara: A.Ü. SBF Yayınları, 1981), p. 68.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE REVOLT AND THE ASSASSINATION OF ŞEMŞİ PAŞA

The problematic structure that was founded in the region of Macedonia as a result of Russo-Ottoman War and the Treaty of Berlin was possibly going through its most eventful days. This time, the rebellions and guerilla activities that were concerning the structure were not those of Albanian, Greek, Serb or Vlach bands; but those of Ottoman officers who were responsible for the security of the region.

Although the biggest Ottoman military base in Rumeli was in Manastır, it was not possible to use any of the troops stationed here in the events. Almost all of the minor officers were members of the CPU. This was known by both the officials in the capital and the local governors, but an effective solution could not be found.

General Şemsi Paşa, was stating that the officers of the 18<sup>th</sup> *Nizamiye* Division were loyal to the Sultan with their lives, but there were some “disloyal and ungrateful officers” (*hain ve nankör zabitan*) in the region, and was asking for the promotion of Major Rıf’at Bey to the headquarters of the division to “keep the officers and Imperial subjects under inspection”.<sup>186</sup> However, quite frankly, Rıf’at Bey the new son-in-law of Şemsi Paşa was a Unionist himself.

#### 2.1 The Reval Meeting and its Effect on Macedonia

The Young Turks were convinced that the British Government, which according to them was thinking that the Ottomans were harming the Concert of

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<sup>186</sup> For the telegram he wrote to the Imperial Secretary, See, Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 21.

Europe, was decided to kick the latter out of Macedonia, and was trying to organize Russia and other Great Powers to this effect.<sup>187</sup> The cooperation between Russia and Britain and the rumors that the two powers came to an understanding regarding the break-up of the Empire created great dissatisfaction for the Young Turks. A memorandum was given to the European consulates of Selanik in May 1908. The text prepared by the secret organization address the followings:<sup>188</sup>

“We, the children of the fatherland called Turkey, of which Macedonia is a part –actuated by the love which we bear to the land of our birth, our desire to work in harmony to bring about its tranquility and welfare, and our wish to disabuse your minds of the false impression which we know you entertain to the effect that we are few in number and mischievous in our aims- now write to you the following to explain to you from what evils Macedonia is really suffering, to show you what is the true remedy and the right path, and to save Europe from a number of vain efforts and avoidable difficulties”

This memorandum claims “the programs enforced under the name of reform by Europe which is unaware of the problems in Macedonia, do not bring peace and welfare to the region, but in contrast makes everything worse in comparison to the previous situation”. It also declares that these decisions and activities are not going to be accepted by the “nation”.<sup>189</sup> It would not be plausible to argue that Western powers who did not have a clear idea on the power and effectiveness of the Committee took this memorandum seriously. In fact, just a few weeks later, on June 9, 1908, the Reval meetings between the British King Edward VII and the Russian

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<sup>187</sup> Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 118; “*The meeting of King Edward with the Tsar at Reval was interpreted, no doubt rightly, as portending an Anglo-Russian agreement on the Macedonian question, and, no doubt wrongly, as assuring British support for Russian designs there*” George Young, *Nationalism and War in the Near East* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1915), p. 114.

<sup>188</sup> Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 120; this memorandum given to the consuls in the Three Vilayets (*Vilâyât- Selase: Manastır, Kosova and Selanik*) by three Unionists was the first actual undertaking of the Committee. Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa'nın*, p. 49; Resneli Niyazi Bey in his memoirs mentions that this memorandum was given to “eliminate the threat that would certainly result from the Reval Meeting, and to show the presence and the goodwill (of the Committee) to the Europeans”. Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 51. However, it is clear from the text that pre-Reval British policies like the appointment of a Christian governor are also criticized. Therefore, it is clear that the memorandum was prepared before the Reval Meeting. In fact, the last sentence of this memorandum signed by “The Manastır Center of the Committee of Union and Progress” reads: “Given to the consuls in Manastır, in May 324 (1908)”. Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 61; Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 144.

<sup>189</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 53.

Tsar Nikolai II started.<sup>190</sup> The concern and the anger of the Young Turks reached a climax just before this meeting.<sup>191</sup> Britain was disturbed by the increasing economical and military endeavors of Germany in the Ottoman domains. Macedonian Question was part of the agenda, together with a desire to develop a common strategy against the increasing activity of Germany in the world. “A compromise among the Great Powers and the continuance of discussions concerning the reform in Macedonia” was aimed at.<sup>192</sup> Britain, who defended the autonomy of Macedonia from 1906 on, wanted to act together with the greatest actor in this region, Russia.

When Britain realized that it could not gain oil privileges, and when it failed in its efforts to control the ports in İstanbul, it took on a more radical and more active role in the Macedonian Question. Grey, British Foreign Minister, claims that the Ottomans acted “indifferent, even negative in every case” concerning Britain.<sup>193</sup> As Joseph Heller mentions in his book, “British policy towards the Ottoman Empire”; Britain was desiring the appointment of a Muslim or Christian Inspector-General with greater power, appointed with the approval of Great Powers; who would be responsible for the appointment and removal of other governors, and lesser officials. Also, it was willing an increase in the number of the gendarmerie, and a decrease in the number of military personnel. As far as the British foreign officials were concerned, a settlement with Russia, would assure the concerted activity of Great Powers and the re-organization of the balance of power in the region according to this. Russia succeeded in getting Britain drop its demand of a Christian governor, and

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<sup>190</sup> Reval (Tallinn, modern capital of Estonia) Meetings are emphasized as the “event that triggered the bomb”. See, Tunaya, *Türkiye’de Siyasal*, p. 23; Sina Akşin describes the meetings as the “meeting of the traditional ally and the traditional enemy of the Ottoman Empire”. See, Alkan, *Mutlakiyetten Meşrutiyete*, p. 147. However, it cannot be argued that relations with Britain were so good in the Hamidian era; Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 262.

<sup>191</sup> Joseph Heller, *British Policy Towards the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1914* (London: Frank Cass, 1983), p. 1; Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 63.

<sup>192</sup> “The King and the Tsar. Significance of the meeting: a Macedonian understanding”, *The Times*, 11 June 1908, p. 5 and “The King and the Tsar. Russian ministers on visit”, *The Times*, 12 June 1908, p. 9, quot.in Hacısalihoglu, *Jön Türkler*, p. 173; Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 92; Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı*, Vol. 1, p. 217.

<sup>193</sup> F.O. 800/79, O’Conor to Grey, İstanbul, 17.12.1907, quot.in: Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 88.

proposed an increase in power for the Inspector-General, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa. Britain experienced a softening of the policy it followed in the later years after it was convinced that the complete disappearance of the Sultan's rule and Ottoman government in the region would be too risky. However, this change in policy was too late to prevent the events that ended in the Young Turk Revolution.<sup>194</sup>

Koloğlu emphasizes, in his analysis of the minutes of the Reval meeting that although the problems in Macedonia were among the items on the agenda, an understanding was not reached. Despite this, the German Consulate in Selanik did not hesitate to misinform the Unionists “the British King and the Russian Tsar who were meeting in the yacht of the Russian Tsar in the port of Reval had come to an agreement on the partition of our state”.<sup>195</sup> The Ottoman government, too, interpreted the Reval meeting, as the desire of Britain to have control on Ottoman lands.<sup>196</sup> The Unionists, on the other hand, were receiving information like “the partition of Turkey was decided in Reval”.<sup>197</sup> They were convinced that unless immediate measures, meaning the declaration of freedom and the reinstating of the constitution were taken, Macedonia would be lost. On the other hand, the leaders and the members of the Committee were in a confused situation as they did not yet complete the necessary organization in most places, in the country.

It is clear that the rumors that spread during and after the Reval Meeting were used by the CUP as propaganda material. Though it is debatable whether the contents and the decisions of this meeting were distorted “on purpose”, it is clear that this event played the role of the catalyzer for the revolution. Mustafa Ragıb informs that although they did not have clear information on the agenda and minutes of the Meeting, they decided to propagate the “*disastrous results that this Meeting would*

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<sup>194</sup> Heller, *British Policy*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>195</sup> The analysis of minutes in the file numbered FO/371-517 in the Public Record Office, in London. See, Orhan Koloğlu, “Reval’de Osmanlı Devleti Gerçekten Paylaşıldı mı?” *Tarih ve Toplum*, Vol. 24 (December 1985), pp. 368-371.

<sup>196</sup> Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 92.

<sup>197</sup> Aydemir, *Makedonya’dan Orta Asya’ya*, p. 508; Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 237.

create”.<sup>198</sup> Tahsin Uzer, who was a Unionist himself, lists five points under so-called “Reval Decisions” among which there is “*the complete control over finances by Great Powers*”. He also mentions that the Sublime Porte was given a note to implement these decisions within six months.<sup>199</sup>

Andonyan argues that the revolutionist propaganda carried out by the Ottoman officers in Macedonia was based on the argument “the Sultan sold the country”. To support this argument, the existence of Europeans in state institutions in the region, as a result of the reform program was proof enough.<sup>200</sup> According to British sources “Turks were aware that the situation was desperate and that it could only be avoided by resorting to force”. The revolt had to start before Britain contacted the Sublime Porte to force its demands according to the agreement it made with Russia. The same sources argue, “the *coup d'état* was planned for September 1, the date the Sultan was crowned, but Niyazi and Enver Beys were forced to act openly as a result of the government’s effort to crush this movement, and it resulted in what happened”.<sup>201</sup> There are three weeks time difference between the Reval Meeting and the first influential reaction to it, the revolt of Resneli Niyazi Bey. This time in between, when the Unionists read and were influenced by the critics of German and Austrian newspapers.<sup>202</sup> Unionist sources inform that the Selanik centre of the CPU “found it

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<sup>198</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, p. 124; Alkan, *Mutlakiyetten Meşrutiyete*, pp. 146-155.

<sup>199</sup> 1. The appointment of a European Governor General for 5 years, 2. A special status for Macedonia, 3. Control of the Gendarmerie by Russian, French, Italian, British and Austrian officers, 4. The complete control of Great Powers over Ottoman finances, 5. An extra budget for Macedonia without military expenses. Uzer, *Makedonya Eşkiyalık*, pp. 86-87.

<sup>200</sup> Andonyan, *Balkan Savaşı*, p. 157.

<sup>201</sup> The letter sent by the Head Translator of the British Consulate G. H. Fitz to Tyrell, a politician known for being responsible for directing British foreign policy. See, Celâl Bayar, *Ben De Yazdım – Milli Mücadeleye Giriş*, Vol. 3 (İstanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1965), p. 907; The crowning date of Abdülhamid II is recorded either as August 31, or September 1. “He was crowned on Thursday, August 31, 1876” “Abdülhamid II”, *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 1 (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1989), p. 217, “On September 1, 1876 he succeeded his brother Murad V” “Abd el-Hamid II”, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, Vol. I (Leiden: Brill, 1986), p. 63.

<sup>202</sup> Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı Tarihi*, Vol. 2 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1940), p. 172.

appropriate to start the revolt that was going to re-instate the constitution in August 1908”.<sup>203</sup>

According to Yerasimos, the Committee reached a critical point by making itself known through assassinations. It was either going to be entirely uncovered through the investigations of the Hamidian government which increased in scope, or it was going to act aggressively and prevent being uncovered whatever the cost may be.<sup>204</sup> Feroz Ahmad mentions that the revolts and assassination made in June and July were aimed first and foremost at the protecting of the presence of the Committee.<sup>205</sup> It is clear that these actions were unplanned and were done by the decision of the person who committed them, or at the best through consulting a few people.

The Centre in Selanik, attempted to secure weapons to be used in possible actions, after the constitution of secret cells. To this end, they asked for bombs and Parabellums from Paris, but when their delivery was delayed, they decided to use the accessible Webley-Scott revolvers.<sup>206</sup>

Central Commander of Selanik, Nazım Bey, was a successful official. He managed to catch a few hints in his investigations of the secret committee and reported them to İstanbul. This correspondence between the Palace and the Central Command was uncovered by members of the secret committee. They were either in the telegraph office or one of the official institutions related to the communication and were reported to the Headquarters immediately. Nazım Bey has called to İstanbul to share information and the documents he found on the “plotting group” (*cemiyet-i fesadiye*). This top secret information reached the Unionists. The Committee was certain that some of its members were going to be reported to Yıldız,

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<sup>203</sup> “The public revolt that was to be started in August was to be carried out with a clear program taking everything in to consideration”. Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, pp. 121-122.

<sup>204</sup> Yerasimos, *Az gelişmişlik Sürecinde*, p. 1056.

<sup>205</sup> Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, p. 2.

<sup>206</sup> Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 228.

and its organization was going to be harmed. The only way to prevent this was to stop Nazım Bey whatever the cost may be.<sup>207</sup> Therefore, the central committee decided his “execution” immediately. Enver Bey acted together with İsmail Canbolat Bey and Mustafa Necib in the assassination of Nazım Bey, who was his brother-in-law. The assassination attempt on June 11, 1908<sup>208</sup> ended in failure; Nazım Bey continued his journey to İstanbul wounded, and the Unionists were under serious stress. When Nazım Bey reached İstanbul, he asked for his wife to be brought to İstanbul with Enver Bey, his brother-in-law. Enver Bey thought he was uncovered and left Selanik for Tikveş, on Thursday night of June 25, 1908.<sup>209</sup>

İsmail Mahir Paşa, was charged to investigate the situation after the assassination attempt on Nazım Bey, he gave Abdülhamid a very striking report.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> Buxton, *Turkey in Revolution*, p. 54; Lowther, *Annual Report*, p. 35; Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 74; Alkan, *Mutlakiyetten Meşrutiyete*, p. 174; Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, pp. 39-76; According to the British Foreign Office some lower ranking officers were arrested by Nazım Bey for being members of the Committee. This is considered to be the reason of assassination. Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, p. 1; İrtem, *Yıldız ve Jön Türkler*, pp. 305-319; Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa’nın*, pp. 51-56; Mustafa Kemal observes Nazım Bey’s departure from Selanik differently. See, Atatürk, *Nutuk*, p. 445; Ziya Şakir, *Yakın Tarihin*, pp. 108-111; “Nazım would be destroyed. One of the relatives (Enver) of Nazım had the signature the execution decision”. Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 38; Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 266; Kuran, *Jön Türkler*, p. 308.

<sup>208</sup> Miller describes this assassination attempt he considers to have happened on June 12, in these words: “The day after the ending of festivities in Reval an attempt was made on the life of Nazım Bey, the Commandant de Place (head of the military police) of Salonica. Nazım was about to return to Constantinople, presumably to report on the state of affairs in the region”, Geoffrey Miller, *Straits: British Policy Towards The Ottoman Empire and the Origins of the Dardanelles Campaign* (Hull, University of Hull Press, 1997), p. 27.

<sup>209</sup> According to the British Consulate reports, Enver had been invited to Istanbul with promises of promotion just after İsmail Mahir Paşa’s investigations, *F.O. 371/544*, Lamb to Barclay, Salonica, July 26, 1908, quot.in: Ravindranathan, *The Young Turk*, p. 67; Halil Menteşe mentions that Enver Paşa left Selanik because, it was understood that he had a hand in the assassination attempt. See, Menteşe, *Osmanlı Mebusan*, p. 123; Enver Bey’s action was to protect himself, rather than being a planned undertaking by the Committee. He mentions that he told that he would be back for the Congress on June 23, 1908, but claims “with the grace of God, the decided date for the congress became the happy day of our freedom”. Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa’nın*, pp. 67, 90; According to Hasan Amca “Enver, is not the creator of an event that could be termed positive. He hid in a village in Tikveş to protect himself from the surveillance of Sultan Hamid, and re-appeared only when everything was settled. He is just one of the hundreds of officers that were members of the CUP”. Hasan Amca, *Doğmayan Hürriyet*, p. 98; Kuran, *Harbiye Mektebi’nde*, p. 95; Kolağası Mecdettin Efendi who wrote a letter to congratulate Resneli Niyazi Bey on rising in revolt informs him “it was officially informed that Enver Bey disappeared after he was called to İstanbul because he was suspected to be involved in the Nazım Bey affair”, Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 10.

<sup>210</sup> İsmail Mahir Paşa was sent to Selanik on June 20, 1908. In this report, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa and Ali Paşa, son-in-law of Grand Vizier Avlonyalı Ferid Paşa are accused of disloyalty. Ravindranathan,



This investigation was not carried out only in Selanik; other inspectors were assigned to investigate the other cities in the Three *Vilayets*. İbrahim Bey would inform Şemsi Paşa who was in Mitroviça “the officers in the south (Selanik and Manastır) founded a committee to kill our Sultan” he said.<sup>211</sup> Presumably, this was not only input concerning to the revolutionists’ activities in Macedonia but could be treated as a validation of his judgement regarding to the “schooled officers” mainly.

Knight claims that the Young Turks desired to start the coup in the fall of 1909.<sup>212</sup> However, the failed assassination of Nazım Bey and rumors about the Reval meeting, both in June changed their original plan. Though Nazım Bey managed to get away wounded, next targets were not so lucky. Sami Bey, the Head of Police in Manastır, who was collecting information on Unionists in the city. He was sent to Kruşevo (Kruševo) on a special mission given to him by Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa. Sami Bey was killed in the assassination by a Unionist named İbrahim Bey on June 21, 1908.<sup>213</sup> This was the first mortal action on the way of revolution.

Abdülhamid, who had a large network of spies directly connected to the Yıldız Palace, was aware of most of the movements in Macedonia but followed a careful strategy to uncover the leaders and resolve the problem completely. He did not want to carry out his action before he was sure of everything.<sup>214</sup> Failing to do this, he feared that the events would become unmanageable, and it would result in a foreign intervention, something everyone feared.

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*The Young Turk*, pp. 61-62; İsmail Mahir Paşa was killed in a Unionist assassination on 3.12.1908. Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, pp. 74-75; The assassination of İsmail Mahir Paşa, who was a relative of Şemsi Paşa created discontent among Unionists and caused Hasan Amca’s moving from the CUP to the Liberal Party (Ahrar Fırkası). Müfit Ekdal, *Eski Bir İhtilalciden Dinlediklerim* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2003), pp. 15-17; Yalçın, *Siyasal Anılar*, p. 53; Ali Cevat, *İkinci Meşrutiyetin*, p. 21.

<sup>211</sup> Külçe, *Osmanlı Tarihinde*, p. 344.

<sup>212</sup> Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 118.

<sup>213</sup> Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, p. 91; Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 130; Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 266.

<sup>214</sup> Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, p. 21.

Albanians, the biggest ethnic group in the region of Üsküb and Kosova are known as a conservative and nationalist. In the later years, there were some events that were provoking this group. Casinos and singing cafes (*café chantant*) in Üsküb, which were reported to be corrupting the morals of Albanian youngsters, were under the protection of the Austro-Hungarian consul. The Albanian elite were extremely bothered with this, and they harbored hatred for “foreigners” exemplified by the Austrians. The tension between Albanians and Serbs in Prizren rose significantly after the rumors that a pig head was left in Sinan Paşa Mosque in the city. However, the perpetrators of this provocative act were never found. The Christian of the population of the city was in fear of retaliation from Albanians as a result of the offences to holy religious sanctuaries. Any activity that would target the Christians could have resulted in the intervention of the Austro-Hungarian Empire which was hoping to dominate the region. For this, it was utmost importance to resolve the situation with care.

A meeting was planned by the leading religious and secular figures of Prizren to calm the situation between the Muslims and Catholics, for July 5, Sunday. Şemsi Paşa asked for permission to join this meeting.<sup>215</sup> He was given permission and ordered to calm the city by attending this meeting.

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<sup>215</sup> The reply was given to him on July 2, 1908; communicated both the permission for the meeting, and the promotion of Rıf'at Bey to Colonel. Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 24.

## 2.2 Outbreak of the Revolt of Resneli Niyazi

### Resneli Ahmed Niyazi Bey

Niyazi Bey was born in Resne in 1873, as the second child of an Albanian family. He chose to be a military man like his brothers Murteza and Osman Fehmi Bey. He studied in Manastır Military *Rüşdiye* and *İdadi*.<sup>216</sup> He met with the ideas of Namık Kemal and concepts like “fatherland” and “freedom” with the help of dissident teachers like Bursalı Tahir Efendi. He started Pangaltı Military Academy in 1894 and moved closer to dissident movements with the influences of professors like Adjutant-Major Recep, Major Ahmet and Lieutenant Colonel Esat Bey.

He was appointed to the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the 21<sup>st</sup> Regiment as Lieutenant (*Mülâzım-ı Sani*) in 1896. He was promoted eight months later thanks to his success in the Greek-Ottoman War. He became a storage clerk in the Reserve Regiment of Ohri in 1899.<sup>217</sup> He served in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Light Infantry Battalion in Resne against paramilitary groups, especially against Bulgarian bands.<sup>218</sup> He tried to win over the local population during his service by propagating the aims of CUP. He was in close relations with the command of the Reserve Regiment of Ohri, Eyub Sabri Bey.

He is rumored to be fluent in Turkish, Albanian, Greek, and Bulgarian. He would confess that he “could not serve progress as needed because he was in despair in a time when virtue, capacity, wisdom, comprehension and talent were not respected enough”.<sup>219</sup> He thinks that his lack of intellectual capacity is the result of the conditions he had to live in. He complains that the army was managed poorly in the hands of uneducated men; and that the ideas of revolution being spread by enlightened men were suppressed.

He decided to rise against the government after the meeting he had with his friends on June 28, 1908. He took to the hills with a group of two hundred of men on July 3, 1908. Thanks to this action that lasted 23 days, he is accepted to be one of the leading men who made the Second Constitutional Era possible. He gained fame as a “Hero of Freedom” (*kahraman-ı hürriyet*) after the Revolution; his name was given to a war ship and to a street in Manastır. He came to İstanbul with the “Army of Action” (*Hareket Ordusu*) in April 1909. He served in the War against

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<sup>216</sup> “Niyazi Bey, Ahmed”, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, Vol. VIII (Leiden: Brill, 1995), p. 66.

<sup>217</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, pp. 12-25.

<sup>218</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 34.

<sup>219</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 42.

Italy in Trablus. He asked for retirement in February 1911 due to his health conditions. He was retired with a salary of 4.000 *kuruş* (~2.000 Frank) and moved to Resne.<sup>220</sup> He had two sons named Ahmet Mithat (1907) and Saim (1913-1975) from his marriage to the daughter of a family from İstanbul, Feride Hanım (1880-1966).<sup>221</sup>

He experienced the defeat against the Serbians in the Balkan Wars under the command of Cavit Paşa. He was among the sick soldiers in Fier, and a special permission was taken for him to get him back to İstanbul for treatment. He was killed in an assassination, in the port of Avlonya, for unknown reason (29.4.1913) and was buried there. It is argued that the assassin was either an Albanian nationalist, or his personal guard given to him by the CUP.<sup>222</sup>

Niyazi Bey was thinking that his country was going from bad to worse in the latest years. He was totally convinced, like his friends that something had to be done in order to “save the fatherland”. He claims that he acted without the instilling or influence of anybody when he made the decision to take to the mountains. According

<sup>220</sup> For his retirement due to health conditions see, BOA, *MV*, 148/4, 3.1.1911; “*Ahvâl-i sıhhyesinin gösterdiği lüzûma mebni tekâüdünü istid'â ile Kolağası Niyazi Bey'e hidemât-ı vataniye tertibinden kayd-ı hayât suretiyle döst bin kuruş tahsîsi hakkında hükümetçe tanzim ve Meclîs-i Mebûsân'ca kabul olunan kanun*” This was also accepted by the Senate: BOA, *İ.MLU*, 4/1329/S-05-3, 11.2.1911; the decision was sent to the Sultan with a communication numbered 4324, and became effectual on 13.2.1911. BOA, *İ.MLU*, 4/1329/S-05-1, 12.2.1911; his retirement process was started by the Office of Imperial Debts. BOA, *İ.MLU*, 4/1329/S-05-2, 23.2.1911; Also see, BOA, *İ.MLU*, 9/1333S-2,3,4, 11.2.1911; For the salary given to his wife, his sister and his two sons after his murder see, BOA, *BEO*, 4201/315034, 31.7.1913; For the investigation carried out for a new salary with the application of his family see, BOA, *MV*, 221/132, 5.5.1921 ve BOA, *MV*, 222/48, 12.9.1921.

<sup>221</sup> Interview with Niyazi Resnelioğlu (1945-10.3.2010), grandson of Resneli Niyazi Bey, see, *Hürriyet*, 27.7.2008, <http://arama.hurriyet.com.tr/arsivnews.aspx?id=9524718>; Saraçoğlu, *Unutulan Meşhurlarımızdan*, p. 176.

<sup>222</sup> Andonyan, *Balkan Savaşı*, p. 356; Kuran, *Jön Türkler*, p. 309; He was waiting for a ferry to İstanbul and had typhoid fever. Reported from Grebeneli Binbaşı Bekir Bey: Saraçoğlu, *Unutulan Meşhurlarımızdan*, p. 191; General Kazım Orbay, who was with Niyazi Bey during the event reports that Niyazi Bey “who was shot 4-5 times among a group of four” gave his last breath saying: “Why?” (*Niçin be?*). He was buried within a mosque in Avlonya. Saraçoğlu, *Unutulan Meşhurlarımızdan*, p. 203; Resneli Niyazi Bey's grandson Ahmet Resnelioğlu suspects Enver Paşa for giving the order to kill his grandfather. See, *Hürriyet Gazetesi*, 03.06.2001, <http://webarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/2001/06/03/302717.asp>; The will he wrote just before his death and protected by his wife was published in 22.05.1913 in *Tanin*. . Saraçoğlu, *Unutulan Meşhurlarımızdan*, pp. 176-177; Kuran claims that he was killed by İsa Bolatin. Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda*, p. 470; Çakmak, mentions that he was killed in Avlonya on April 30, 1913, by two Albanians and the assassins were founded to be relatives of İsa Bolatin and Şaban Batak. Fevzi Çakmak, *Batı Rumeli'yi Nasıl Kaybettik?* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2012), p. 635; Zürcher gives the date of assassination as 13.04.1913. “Niyazi Bey, Ahmed”, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p. 66.

to Niyazi, he acted “only with his own decision and the anxiety he felt for the future of the country”<sup>223</sup> As he explained in the following words:<sup>224</sup>

“The Reval Meeting happened at a time I was feeling depressed with sorrow. I trembled in fear and anxiety for three days and three nights thinking about the decisions of this meeting. The least hesitation and delay could have resulted in bloody disasters. I was not expecting much of a help from the Committee. Because I knew that the committee put more effort to its Anatolian organization at the time; therefore, I could not wait any longer”.

The same source, in contradiction to the above, mentions that the operation undertaken by Niyazi Bey was within the knowledge and control of the CPU, and argues that he was “carrying out an order he took from the CPU”.<sup>225</sup> In another part of his memoirs, he relates that the branch CPU in Manastır was informed and that he received a response telling “all arrangements are approved”.<sup>226</sup> Bayur explains the situation by saying “he took to the mountains by himself, and this action was approved and supported by the Manastır Branch of the Committee after it took place”. Niyazi Bey signed his communications as “Senior Captain Niyazi, in the name of two hundred patriots” (*İki yüz vatan fedaisi adına Kolağası Niyazi*) and did not use the Committee’s name. This can be used to support the idea that this action was a private one. No doubt, the intelligence gathered on them was effectual in Niyazi Bey’s hurried move to the hills without taking the approval of the CPU’s Headquarters.<sup>227</sup> The Manastır branch was effectual in the aftermath of this revolt

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<sup>223</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, p. 154.

<sup>224</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 64.

<sup>225</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 11, 172; Ahmad writes that Cemal Bey went to the centre of the Committee in Manastır to get approval and came back with it in two days. However, in a later statement he claims that the fact that Niyazi talks about himself as the head of his 200 men, rather than a representative of the CPU, is a proof that he took this action independently. Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>226</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 75.

<sup>227</sup> F.O. 294/47, Heathcote to Barclays, Monastır, July 13, 1908, quot.in: Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 170; It was also a factor to be determined Niyazi’s anti-regime activities by the regimental chaplain (*Alay Müftüsü*) Mustafa Şevket Bey. F.O. 371/544, Lamb to Barclay, Salonica, July 10, 1908, quot.in: Ravindranathan, *The Young Turk*, p. 63; “In spite of the general sympathy for Niyazi’s cause among the officers, many complained that the insurrection was ill-prepared and premature. Who felt their lives were being threatened by the revelations of the *Mufti* of Manastır, without any direct orders from the higher echelons of the Committee”, see, F.O. 371/544-100, Heathcote to Barclay, undated, quot. in: Ravindranathan, *The Young Turk*, p. 72; Mete Tunçay et.

that started without proper planning; it managed to prepare military and civil institutions for Revolution thanks to the members it had close relations with.<sup>228</sup>

Although it was known that Niyazi Bey took to the hills without the knowledge of even the Headquarters in Selanik, many tried to have a claim on the action after its success. According to Ahmed Rıza Bey, who was the head of the “external headquarter”, when the Committee “he founded” had enough supporters in Rumeli it was found appropriate to “declare freedom” through the activities of Enver and Niyazi, and the decision for their actions were sent from Paris.<sup>229</sup> This information can not be confirmed by other sources.

Niyazi’s memoirs provide information on the preparations of this revolt that was aimed to “bring freedom” and “prevent the disintegration of the fatherland”. From his memoirs, the feelings of the participants and efforts to avoid the spy network of the Palace and build a safe communication mechanism can be glanced.<sup>230</sup> According to Niyazi Bey, the oppressive policies of the current government were the reason behind the evils in the country. He believed that Europe’s reform efforts in Macedonia did not bear fruit, and changed nothing. The greatest share in Macedonia’s current situation was the wrong policies of the “government that remained silent against bloody upheavals, and consented to the injury and misery of the army”. These were the basis of his desire for revolution.<sup>231</sup>

Niyazi Bey told his friends that taking to the mountains in Resne would be “a nice signal for a massive revolt”. He also believed “Pirlepe, Ohri and Debre would join without hesitation”. He argued that the geography and the local population

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al., *II. Meşrutiyetin İlk Yılı: 23 Temmuz 1908 – 23 Temmuz 1909*, (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2008), p. 32.

<sup>228</sup> Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı*, Vol. 2, pp. 170-171.

<sup>229</sup> Ahmed Rıza, *Hatıralar*, p. 316.

<sup>230</sup> Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 185.

<sup>231</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 32.

would be on their side by saying “in this forest and hill region surrounded by Muslim population we can prepossess the government for months, even years”.<sup>232</sup>

The preparations were completed in a few days, and as agreed, the movement started on July 3, 1908, at a time when the people of the city were in the mosque for the Friday prayer. As Niyazi Bey was the commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of the 88<sup>th</sup> Regiment, he made it easy to take the weapons and armory in the depot. This way, the equipment of the band was ready.<sup>233</sup> In his words, he took up to the hills “with the intention of dying for the country together with the two hundred patriots – for now – armed with Mauser rifles”.<sup>234</sup> With the formation of this band which included a few soldiers and some civilians including the mayor of Resne, Cemal Bey and the Police Chief, Tahir Bey, the revolt against the Hamidian regime started.<sup>235</sup>

<sup>232</sup> These ideas were mentioned in 28.6.1908, in a meeting with Mayor Cemal Bey and the Chief of Police Tahir Bey. Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, pp. 64-65.

<sup>233</sup> He informs that he left a message regarding to “borrowed money”, 55.000 *kuruş* (~20.000 Frank) that was taken from the coffers of the battalion. Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 77.

<sup>234</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 73; Uzunçarşılı mentions that his departure was reported to İstanbul on July 5, with two days delay. Uzunçarşılı, ‘1908 Yılında’, p. 168; In fact, on the same day, the Third Army Headquarter wrote a telegram to the Ministry of War informing “Niyazi Efendi stole some arms and ammunition together with some people, and soldiers were dispatched to catch them”. BOA, Y. MTV, 312/45-2, 3.7.1908; Minister of War Rıza Paşa duly informed Yıldız. BOA, Y. MTV, 312/45-1, 5.7.1908.

<sup>235</sup> Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 75; Buxton describes Niyazi Bey’s departure from Resne which he claims to have happened on July 4, 1908 with these words: “a brevet-major, Niazî Bey by name, first raised the banner of revolt. He spread the report that a rebel band was in the neighbourhood, and thus sent off the greater part of the local garrison on a wild goose chase. No sooner were their backs turned than he collected 18 soldiers, a few civil officials, and about 150 of the Moslem population; secured 75 rifles, 15 boxes of ammunition, and, what was more important, £600 in cash from the battalion fund; and set off into the hills” Buxton, *Turkey in Revolution*, p. 57; Aykut Kansu gives the highest estimate for the members of the band: 100 soldiers, a group of local officials, and 800 civilians. Kansu, *1908 Devrimi*, p. 123; “The revolt of Niyazi Bey together with the 160 soldiers under his command”. Özden, *II. Meşrutiyetin İlanı*, p. 55; It is claimed that the revolting band reached 500 in two weeks and, 3000 last week basing the claim on A. F. Miller. See, Petrosyan, *Sovyet Gözüyle*, p. 309; Niyazi Bey in his memoirs mentions “there were 9 soldiers, 4 of them were returned on the next day, among the patriots who accepted my command”. Later, Osman Bey and Mulazım Sadık Bey from Pirlepe together with 4 soldiers and 30 civilians; and Mulazım Şevki Bey on July 7 in an area between Ohri and Debre joined the band. The number of the band members reached 200. Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 79; “Those taking to the hills were 200 soldiers and an equal number of irregulars and civilians. Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, p. 5; The Bulgarian representative in İstanbul mentions in a report to the Sultan. According to this report, Niyazi Bey “usurped money, weapons and ammunition from the local treasury with the twelve soldiers and two hundred civilians he had with him”. Also, the report informs “two officers named Sadi and Osman Efendi moved from Prespe together with 120 men to join the aforementioned Niyazi Efendi”. BOA, Y.PRK.MK, 22/111, 8.7.1908.

Niyazi Bey sent letters and telegrams to different officials to declare the intentions and aims of his movement. Declarations were prepared to be sent to the Head Secretariat of the Yıldız Palace, to the General Inspectorate of Rumeli, to the Governor of Manastır, to the Command of the Gendarmerie in Manastır, to the Command of the Battalion in Resne, to the local governor in Resne and to the Bulgarian community.<sup>236</sup> In these declarations, the demands of the revolt were listed as the re-introduction of the constitution, the reopening of the parliament, the end of spying activities, and the declaration of liberty.<sup>237</sup>

The letters sent to the commanders of Manastır and Resne Gendarmerie Divisions which could have taken military action against the band, were more threatening in tone. Buxton, who is known for his studies concerning the Balkan Christians living under Ottoman rule, claims that Christians were in fear of Niyazi Bey who was known as a harsh and physically strong soldier. When the revolt was heard, the Christians of the villages in the band's route were worried. However, the speech given by Niyazi that Buxton narrates helped to decrease the tension:<sup>238</sup>

“We have come out to fight against the despotism, if necessary. But our objects are pacific and liberal. We call upon all Ottoman subjects to inaugurate a new era of equality. To you Christians; we say the great Powers and the Balkan States have done nothing for you. They have only sowed discord between you while playing for their own hand. Our government is also to blame. Let us work together for our country. I promise freedom to every race and creed, on condition that they renounce all ideas of annexation to other countries. So long as a Turk remains alive, this country will belong to the Ottomans. I appeal to all the bands to report themselves to me and arrange a common programme.”

<sup>236</sup> For communication between the Governor of Manastır, Hıfzı Paşa, the Inspector-General Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa and the Grand Vizier Ferid Paşa concerning the open letters of Niyazi see, BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/38, 6.7.1908; For the transliterated and simplified version of the telegrams see, Özden, *II. Meşrutiyetin İlanı*, p. 57; For the entire communication see, Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyazi*, pp. 83-152.

<sup>237</sup> “*Hedef-i maksat, bundan sonra medeni devletlere benzeyecek bir suret-i idare tesis etmektir. [...] Biz Kanun-ı Esasi'nin hemen bugün tatbikini isteriz. Bu hükümet vermez ise, millet cebren almaktadır. [...] Meclis-i Mebusan'ın derhal küşadını talep ederiz. Olmadığı halde vebal, ulülemre aittir*” Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, pp. 181-182.

<sup>238</sup> Buxton, *Turkey in Revolution*, p. 58.



In a declaration aimed at Bulgarians, they were called to unity in these words: “We do not have differences. We are all Ottomans. Religion is another issue; it has nothing to do with the fatherland”.<sup>239</sup> Both the rebels and the Young Turks were enemies of the current government. He asked from the Bulgarians “to act together with them in their struggle to change the current government and open the parliament”. In this atmosphere, we see a report by the governor of Ohri sent to the concerned authorities attaching the complaint of the Bulgarian Metropolitan who claimed to be under pressure.<sup>240</sup>

The communication between the Commander of the Third Army, İbrahim Paşa and the local commander of the region of Manastır, Osman Hidayet Paşa, gives detailed information on the investigations concerning the revolt and the possible measures to be taken. Niyazi Bey’s house and his office in the battalion were investigated. Information was gathered on his preparations before the revolt and the observations of the people around him were noted. Detailed identification of the soldiers that went with him was carried out, and their connection to the secret committee was scrutinized.

Resneli Niyazi engaged in “noble” activities like “conciliating people”, “ending feuds” in every village and town he passed through. He gathered villagers to village centers and told them about the conditions the country was in, and asked them to help the “patriots” for the cause of liberty to succeed. Patriotic people were urged to join the Committee, but the numbers of the band did not change significantly in the following days.<sup>241</sup> This shows that the villagers were supporting them in appearance out of fear, but did not take action. We should also consider that Niyazi

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<sup>239</sup> “Bizim ayırımız gayrımız yoktur. Hepimiz Osmanlıyız. Din meselesi başkadır, vatanla alakası yoktur”. Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 107.

<sup>240</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 25/1686-6, 7.7.1908, Şemsi Paşa was informed about this telegram during his meetings in Selanik on July 6. There is a note concerning him on the document. “Devletlü Şemsi Paşa Hazretleri'ne irâdeten ve müzâkere olundu. Ta'rif vechile cevâb. 24 Haziran 324”.

<sup>241</sup> Ahmed Refik, *İnkılâb-ı Azîm*, p. 38; For the telegrams sent to the Commander of the Third Army, İbrahim Paşa concerning the communication between Niyazi and Osman Cevdet, and some soldiers that defected to his side. See, BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/97, 5.7.1908.

Bey would not want his band to grow out of proportion for this would cause problems in supply and the ease of movement.

Niyazi Bey, desired to meet famous Albanian Tosk bandits Çerçis (Topulli) and Mihal Grameno, once he took to the hills. It is rumored that their contact was provided by a Bektashi leader.<sup>242</sup> He believed that these bands against whom he fought when he was a commander of the light infantry troops; would support him in the name of revolution. He was planning to go to İstarova (Pogradec) south of Lake Ohri, in order to meet with Çerçis. However, they feared that two soldiers, who left the band a few days ago, would betray the route to the authorities. As a result, he postponed the meeting and decided to make do with a letter: “I am reaching my hand to you to save the country from disaster; the time for union has come. Let’s meet on your terms and act together”.<sup>243</sup> It is argued that Niyazi Bey promised autonomy to gain the support of Albanian bands. Bartl would describe this situation in these terms: “*Niyazi Bey trusted first to the army, and then to the Albanians*”.<sup>244</sup>

Niyazi Bey’s revolt, which started on July 3, 1908, lasted for 23 days and 22 nights. In his memoirs, he details these days by mentioning the villages they went and the things they witnessed. They travelled for 16 km on average, with the record being 40 km a day, and 375 km in total. The table below lists his route.<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> Çelik, *İttihatçılar ve Arnavutlar*, p. 63; Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 257.

<sup>243</sup> “*Vatani felaketten kurtarmak için sana elimi uzatıyorum, artık birleşecek zaman geldi. İstedğin şartlarda görüşelim, el-ele verelim*”. Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatrât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 93; Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, p. 614.

<sup>244</sup> Peter Bartl, *Die Albanische Muslime zur Zeit der Nationalen Unabhängigkeitsbewegung: 1878-1912* (Wiesbaden, 1968), p. 155, quot.in: Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, pp. 150, 165.

<sup>245</sup> Niyazi Bey gives a detailed description of his route. However, there are wrong information on both in his memoirs (Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatrât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 169) and some secondary sources too. According to them, he went to the Albanian border to fight against officers who loyal to the Sultan. The information stating his visit to Debre, Elbesan and Görice, were also incorrect. See, Kansu, *1908 Devrimi*, p. 124.

Day	Date	Distance (km)	Towns stayed in (Modern names)
1	03.07.1908	20	Resne (Resen), Lahça (Lavci), İzavor
2	04.07.1908	35	Ohri (Ohrid)
3	05.07.1908	55	Kroşişte (Koroşišta)
4	06.07.1908	60	Delafojde (Delogozhdi)
5	07.07.1908	70	Veleşte (Velešta)
6	08.07.1908	76	Labonişte (Labunishta)
7	09.07.1908	85	Potgoriçe (Podgorci), Oktis (Oktisi), Vechan (Vevçani)
8	10.07.1908	92	Zağraçan (Zagraçani)
9	11.07.1908	106	Radovişte (Radolishta), İstroga (Struga)
10	12.07.1908	117	Gorunca (Gorenci)
11	13.07.1908	129	Ohri (Ohrid)
12	14.07.1908	158	Sarı Saltuk (Sveti Naum)
13	15.07.1908	169	Çernova (Çërravë), Leşniçe (Leshnicë)
14	16.07.1908	179	İstarova (Pogradec)
15	17.07.1908	184	Zirvaska (Zervaskë)
16	18.07.1908	224	Leskofçe (Leskoec), Ateşova (Oteshevo), Lahça
17	19.07.1908	241	Ohri (Ohrid)
18	20.07.1908	242	Ohri (Ohrid)
19	21.07.1908	272	Lahça (Lavci), Dirmeni (Drmeni), Grençar (Grnchari)
20	22.07.1908	302	Katrani (Kazani, Kijani), Dölecik (Dovledjik)
21	23.07.1908	307	Manastır (Bitola)
22	24.07.1908	341	Resne (Resen)
23	25.07.1908	375	Manastır (Bitola)

Table 2.1 Towns, Resneli Niyazi Bey visited during his revolt

## 2.3 The Great Task Given to Şemsi Paşa by Sultan Abdülhamid

### Şemsi Paşa

He was born in the village of Biševo (Biševo) in Tırgovište within İpek (Peć) *Sancak* in 1846. He was a member of the Kuc tribe and the Feyzagic family. His father was a Bosnian from Taşlıca (Pljevlja) named Destan (Desto) Colovic; his mother was an Albanian<sup>246</sup> from Peć from a family, named Hot, Şehriye Hanım.<sup>247</sup> He is told to be an active child. When he was 16, he joined a division of voluntaries that passed through his village and fought in the borders of Montenegro. He joined the Ottoman army as sergeant in Bosnia in 1866 and was promoted to lieutenant in three months. He became first lieutenant in 1867 and captain, in 1870. He became the Senior Captain in the Bosnian 3<sup>rd</sup> regiment of the Army of Bosnia thanks to his service during the revolt in Hersek. He was wounded in Şıpkı during the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78. He became the commander of the second battalion of the Nizamiye Regiment of the Third Army after the War.

He became a major on August 24, 1884. He received an Osmani medal of the third degree on September 16, 1889. He was given the duty to suppress a Bedouin revolt in Hejaz, in 1891. He became a lieutenant commander on January 18, 1892 and received a Mecidi medal of second degree in March 1894 due to his service in the border with Montenegro and Kosova. He was the commander of the Reserve Regiments of Priştina during Greek-Ottoman War. He was honored with the medal of Teselya (Thesally) and promoted to colonel after the war. He was promoted again in 1889 to brigadier general while he was serving as the commander of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment.<sup>248</sup>

He was assigned to the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade of Strumica of the 9<sup>th</sup> Division as commander on 14.2.1900.<sup>249</sup> He was given the Danilo medal by the Montenegrin government thanks to his efforts to protect foreigners in the region.<sup>250</sup> He was honored with another Mecidiye medal of second degree on 8.11.1900.<sup>251</sup> He earned the trust of Abdülhamid thanks to his success

<sup>246</sup> It is told that his mother was “Bosnianized”. His maternal uncle, Necib Beg Hamkuşiç is still famous in İpek (Peć).

<sup>247</sup> One ancestor of the family was known as “one-armed (çolak)”; thus he is known as “Şemsi Paşa Çoloviç”. The tombs of his parents are still in Biševo. Although Azemovic mentions his mothers name as Vasfiye, the living members of the family (Hakkı Erik / Çoloviç) mention it as Şehriye. Azemoviç, *Şemsi Paşanın*, pp. 21, 195; Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 211.

<sup>248</sup> BOA, *Y.EE*, 149/10, 22.10.1889.

<sup>249</sup> BOA, *Y.PRK.ASK*, 158/52, 14.2.1900.

<sup>250</sup> BOA, *İ.TAL*, 211/1318/M-109, 26.5.1900.

<sup>251</sup> BOA, *İ.TAL*, 230/1318/B-040, 8.11.1900; BOA, *BEO*, 1718/128842, 12.10.1901.

in securing Pristina's safety and was promoted to be lieutenant general on February 4, 1901.<sup>252</sup> He became the commander of the 18<sup>th</sup> *Nizamiye* Division of Mitroviça in September 1901. He was given another badge on May 20, 1906<sup>253</sup> and a badge of honor (*nişan-ı zîşan*) on June 5, 1906<sup>254</sup> and a *murassa Osmani*<sup>255</sup> badge on July 19, 1906, thanks to his efforts in dealing with the problems in Ottoman-Montenegrin border. Şemsi Paşa was a very loved and respected figure in his hometown Biševo. He was called “Şemo” or “Şemso” by the locals.

He was promoted again on 31.5.1908 to general<sup>256</sup> rank as a result of his efforts to calm the tension between Christians and Muslims in Prizren.<sup>257</sup> He was killed by a Unionist agent named Mülazım Atıf Bey in Resne on July 7, 1908 when he came to suppress the military revolt of Niyazi Bey. He is buried in Manastır.<sup>258</sup>

Şemsi Paşa had a real influence over the populace of the region thanks to his familiarity with the ways and customs of this geography. He is known for suppressing the revolt in Northern Albania by force, he was known for his harsh methods and his success.<sup>259</sup> Şemsi Paşa was a commander feared by bandits thanks to his brilliance, his success in dealing with banditry and his methods that brought him results. He was one of the figures that made the continuance of state authority possible. He gained Abdülhamid's trust by not failing in any of the tasks he was given and by his unquestioning loyalty.<sup>260</sup>

He was remarkably loyal to the Sultan; he thought that the criticism against the Sultan was unnecessary, and the Sultan had to rule as a single man because those around him were incompetent. He believed that the Constitution and the Parliament were tried before, and they brought nothing but harm to the country and served only those who were the

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<sup>252</sup> BOA, *İ.TAL*, 240/1318/L-019, 4.2.1901.

<sup>253</sup> BOA, *Y.PRK.ASK*, 240/8, 20.5.1906.

<sup>254</sup> BOA, *BEO*, 2823/211670, 5.6.1906.

<sup>255</sup> BOA, *BEO*, 2880/215955, 28.6.1906.

<sup>256</sup> BOA, *İ.TAL*, 447/1326/RA-062, 31.5.1908, The Head Secretariat of the Yıldız Palace informs him: “*irâde-i seniyye ile, sâdikâne hizmetlerinden dolayı Birinci Feriklik rütbesi tevcih buyurulduğu*”.

<sup>257</sup> BOA, *İ.HUS*, 165/1326/Ra-48, 28.5.1908, It is known that the Governor of Kosovo at the time, Mahmut Şevket Paşa had disagreements with Şemsi Paşa on some issues. It seems that there was a disagreement also on the method to be employed in dealing with the events in Prizren, but this was resolved; BOA, *TFR.I.A*, 37/3692-4-5, 25.5.1908, This rumor reached the Palace, and both Mahmut Şevket and Şemsi Paşa had to report back denying the rumors.

<sup>258</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, pp. 119-148.

<sup>259</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 29.

<sup>260</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, pp. 12-13.

enemies of the Sultan.<sup>261</sup> Şemsi Paşa was given the task to restore order in Kosova, especially in Priştina and Seniče (Sjenica) due to the increasing cases of murder and thievery. He cooperated with the local elite and took the situation under control by taking necessary steps, and preventing the use of arms even at weddings and celebrations.<sup>262</sup> Although he was a high ranking officer, he did not hesitate personally deal with the least events that would only require the involvement of a few gendarmeries.<sup>263</sup>

His influence on Albanian society is demonstrated by the gathering of a mass of people in Firzovik with his invitation.<sup>264</sup> He was criticized, together with those similar to him, for not having an education in a military school. He is defined by some as “Ignorant, blindly loyal to the Sultan” and blamed for “having the honors and the rank he had for his loyalty rather than his success”. However uneducated, his success in the missions he undertook was respected both by common people and military officers.

He was familiar enough with technical and bureaucratic terms to allow him to do his official and private communication by himself. He joined most of the mission given to him personally and interfered in every detail. He knew Rumelian geography very well. He was interested in local and foreign literature and had knowledge on European social life. He followed Turkish newspapers together with some translated Austrian ones. Although he was not a military school graduate, he helped the graduates in their undertakings.<sup>265</sup> When he was sent to suppress the revolt in Elbasan, in 1907, he saw his mission to the end although he suffered apoplexy on the way.<sup>266</sup>

Şemsi Paşa is known to be pious and doing his daily prayers, to be brave and stayed away from alcohol. He also showed interest in poetry. He married to a Bosnian woman from Mostar named Elif Hanım, but she died while with him in his mission, in Syria. He has three sons and two daughters from Zübeyde Hanım who died in 1906.<sup>267</sup> His sons were

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<sup>261</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 59.

<sup>262</sup> The carrying of arms in cities and towns were banned, and the weapons that were confiscated were not to be given back. BOA, *TFR.I.AS*, 32/3114, 24.2.1906; Şemsi Paşa, took the word of headmen, *ulama* and elites that they would not question the orders of the government and would help it in catching criminals. BOA, *TFR.I.KV*, 161/16061, 19.4.1907.

<sup>263</sup> Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 17.

<sup>264</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 74.

<sup>265</sup> There are those who have the opposite opinion: “Şemsi Paşa was known to be the enemy of the graduate officers and supporters of constitutionalism”. Moreau, *Reformlar Çağında*, p. 172.

<sup>266</sup> BOA, *İ.HUS*, 154/1325/R-027, 23.4.1907.

<sup>267</sup> His wife’s name is recorded as Zilkade by Azemoviç (Azemoviç, *Şemsi Paşanın*, p. 45), but it is Zübeyde on Turkish population records.

named Ali Galib Bey,<sup>268</sup> Müfid Bey, and Muammed Bey. His sons-in law are Süreyya Bey and Rıf'at Bey.<sup>269</sup> Şemsi Paşa knew Turkish, Bosnian, Albanian, Arabic and Greek.<sup>270</sup> Right after his death, Abdülhamid ordered the erection of the mausoleum for him, but this was not carried out.<sup>271</sup> He is buried in Manastır, İshak Çelebi Mosque in the garden of the Rifai lodge.<sup>272</sup>

The events that unfolded in the vicinity of Selanik and Manastır turned into a revolt against the state when Niyazi Bey formed a band and took to the mountains. As the region was in quite turmoil, Abdülhamid wanted to suppress this movement against his rule as soon as possible. The band had to be followed in an effective way and destroyed in to provide an example for others. The only person that would be capable of undertaking this task was Şemsi Paşa, who was already experienced thanks to the suppression of revolts in Northern Albania.<sup>273</sup>

The appointment made by Sultan Abdülhamid was sent to Şemsi Paşa with the signature of Tahsin Paşa, the Head Secretary of the Yıldız Palace.<sup>274</sup> The telegram does not just include the order, but also information on the preparations Niyazi made

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<sup>268</sup> *Şemsipaşazade* Ali Galip Bey: (TR ID Number: 66625080766) He was born on 1.7.1873 in Kosovo and died on 13.9.1921 in İstanbul. According to the records at the institution of Civil Registration and Nationality department, Ali Galib Bey was moved from Mitroviça's quarter called "Saray" in 1911(1329) and re-registered with the registration number of 1/417 into official documents. Ali Galib Bey's daughter, Enise was born in 1.7.1905, his son Şemsetdin Tanyel (16.9.1919-20.3.1984 TR ID Number: 66622080820) is known to be the last member of the family. Some documents falsely mention "Mehmed Ali Bey" as his son, who was actually one of his relatives.

<sup>269</sup> Both of his sons-in-law were among the Unionists. Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 38; Şemsi Paşa's daughters' names are unknown.

<sup>270</sup> Azemoviç, *Şemsi Paşanın*, p. 187.

<sup>271</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 56; Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 59.

<sup>272</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 84; Külçe, *Osmanlı Tarihinde*, p. 347; I have not come across information on the Rifai lodge in the research I have done in Manastır in 2012. According to the Mufti of Manastır Plumi Velju, Şemsi Paşa's tomb was next to İshak Çelebi Mosque but was destroyed by Yugoslavian government in 1972.

<sup>273</sup> Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, p. 8; İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 20; Hüsamettin Ertürk, who was the head of the "Special Organization" (*Teşkilât-ı Mahsûsa*) says that Abdülhamid assigned İbrahim Paşa to replace Hayri Paşa in Selanik who refused the order given to Şemsi Paşa. However, İbrahim Paşa came to Selanik from Siroz on June 26, 1908, ten days before Şemsi Paşa, which shows that these two events are not related. See, Ertürk, *İki Devrin*, p. 35.

<sup>274</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 131; Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, pp. 26-27; Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı*, Vol. 2, p. 180; Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, pp. 187-188.

the people with him, and his direction. Şemsi Paşa was informed to move to Manastır together with the reserves (*redif*) from Anatolia. Şemsi Paşa was in Prizren dealing with the problems among Muslims and Catholics when he received the telegram.<sup>275</sup>

Another telegram was sent to him the same day, ordering him not to wait for the troops from Anatolia, and to take the needed troops from the 18<sup>th</sup> Regular (*Nizamiye*) Division and immediately move to Manastır with a reserved train. If the troops at hand were not enough, voluntaries were to be added to the battalion, by giving them military clothing. It was stressed that a violent response against the “mischievous people” was expected of him.<sup>276</sup> Both of the telegrams reached Şemsi Paşa with a delay because he was not in Mitroviça. These orders from İstanbul could be brought to Şemsi Paşa who was in Prizren in a faster manner. However, the fact that this did not happen can be taken as a planned action of the Unionist officers.

Şemsi Paşa sent a response to the Yıldız Palace on July 4, 1908 after reading carefully the telegram he received. He repeats his loyalty to the Sultan and relates how grateful he was to receive this mission.<sup>277</sup> The report given to the British

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<sup>275</sup> Pig heads were left first in December 1907, then in March and May 1907, in some mosques, in Yakova. Albanians claimed that the Catholics were behind these and started an embargo on them which raised the tension. Grand Vizier Ferid Paşa and Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa advised the use of force to solve this problem while Abdülhamid assigned Şemsi Paşa to solve it “without making Muslims sad and harming the life and property of the Christians”. BOA, *Y.MTV*, 308/67, 14.5.1908; After a preliminary agreement in May, Şemsi Paşa returned to Mitroviça but returned to Prizren for the final solution on 03.7.1908. He learned the rebellion of Resneli Niyazi Bey and his new mission in Prizren. Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, pp. 55, 153-155; On his movement to Yakova and Prizren with six battalions, see, BOA, *BEO*, 3270/245185, 13.3.1908; For the order concerning the widening of measures to be taken by Şemsi Paşa: BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 519/53, 20.3.1908; For the bringing of two battalions from Kosovo and Mitroviça with the request of Şemsi Paşa, see, BOA, *BEO*, 3299/247390, 26.5.1908; For his departure for Prizren to resolve the problem among Muslims and Catholics, see, BOA, *BEO*, 3330/249723, 19.6.1908; According to Külçe “Şemsi Paşa, went first to Firzovik, then to Prizren on 2.7.1908 to join an Albanian congress”. Külçe, *Osmanlı Tarihinde*, p. 346.

<sup>276</sup> Bleda relates “Şemsi Paşa claimed that he would suppress the revolt within a few days with his soldiers; therefore, he asked for the issuance of an order to this effect. He was so confident that Abdülhamid and everyone around him believed the general and issued the necessary order”. Bleda, *İmparatorluğun Çöküşü*, pp. 42-43; Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 132; Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı*, Vol. 2, p. 180; Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 190.

<sup>277</sup> “*Mabeyn-i Hümayûna, Nailiyetle bekâm buyurulduğum enâm ve ihsân-ı lâtuhsâ-yı hazret-i hilâfetpenâhiye bir zamime-i âlülâl olmak üzere bu kerre selâm-ı saadet-i ittisâm-ı hazret-i şehriyâr-ı âzamî ile taltif buyurulmaktığımdan dolayı eşkrîz-i meserret ve mahmidet olduğum halde arz-ı şükrâna mücâseret*



Foreign Ministry mentions that Şemsi Paşa went to Manastır with two Albanian battalions; with the pretext of suppressing the revolt of Bulgarians and Serbs while the real reason was to suppress the revolt of Enver Bey in Tikveş. It is also told that he was killed by an officer as soon as he arrived, though this information can not be verified.<sup>278</sup>

Mehmed Selahaddin says that he gave Şemsi Paşa the order to close on Niyazi Bey with his battalions, and to disperse the group. For this, he was allowed to order his officers in any way he saw fit, and he was excused for any cruel action, he was going to undertake.<sup>279</sup>

Fethi Okyar mentions that the administrators of the Committee met in secret in Selanik during the anxiety created by the Reval meetings. In this meeting, Manyasîzâde Refik Bey shared with his friends that Abdülhamid “had appointed Şemsi Paşa completely destroy the Committee of Union and Progress and to clear the army from the Unionist officers”.<sup>280</sup> It seems that the mission undertaken by

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*eder ve bu vesîle ile de vird-i zebân-ı sadâkat nişânım olan duayı temâdien umûr u âfiyet ve teâlî-yi şân ve şevket hazret-i hilâfetpenâh âzamînin tekrârıyla tezyîn-i lisân-ı memlûkiyyet kılındığının arzına ictisâr eylerim, fermân. Fî 21 Hazîrân sene 324* Birinci  
*Ferik Şemsi*”

Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatîrât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 132; although Şemsi Paşa was sent to Prizren on July 2, Mustafa Ragıb mentions that these communications were made in Mitroviça. In fact, it is written that Fevzi (Çakmak) Bey bravely warned him in these words: “Whether you go there or not, there will be a revolution and the government will be overthrown one day. However, this move can cost you your life. Please be careful”, see, Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, pp. 192-198.

<sup>278</sup> “Enver Bey, who had mysteriously disappeared from Selanik a few days previously, and was popularly supposed to have escaped by sea to Greece, was at the head of a body of deserters from the garrison of Tikvesh. On the receipt of this news at Constantinople telegraphic instructions were dispatched to Şemsi Paşa, who was then in command of the troops at Uskub, to proceed to Manastır and take immediate measures for the suppression of this revolt. Şemsi Paşa passed through Selanik by special train on July 6, taking with him two Albanian battalions, which had been persuaded to entrain by stories of a Bulgarian or Serbian insurrection at Manastır, which they were required to suppress. Almost immediately after his arrival in Manastır, however, he was shot down by an officer, in the presence of a considerable number of troops, which made no attempt to hinder or avenge the deed”. Lowther, *Annual Report*, p. 36.

<sup>279</sup> Şemseddin, *Makedonya: Tarihçe*, p. 129.

<sup>280</sup> Although this meeting is supposed to have happened on 25.6.1908, this is impossible. This piece of information should be taken with caution as Fethi Okyar’s memoirs prepared by Cemal Kutay, have similar technical mistakes. There are other incorrect things, like the claim that Niyazi Bey prepared his revolt in June in Selanik, or that Atif Bey was also assigned for the assassination in Selanik. Also, claims regarding Şemsi Paşa’s movement with some of his troops on Eyüb Sabri

Şemsi Paşa was not just to disperse Resneli Niyazi Bey's band, but completely destroy the CPU.

One of the Unionist writers of the time Ahmed Ziya, argues that Abdülhamid sent Şemsi Paşa "with four battalions to Manastır to destroy Niyazi Bey and his companions in Resne" because he wanted to "suppress the cries of truth wherever they appear".<sup>281</sup> Ahmet Bedevi Kuran is making an important observation that is contrary to the widely accepted idea. According to him, the gathering in Firzovik was to protest the Austrian foreigners, by relating "15-20 thousand people were gathered and armed around Firzovik, to help the government, thanks to the ignorant propaganda of Şemsi Paşa".<sup>282</sup>

Şemsi Paşa, contacted the Albanian leaders on his way from Prizren to Firzovik, and tried to create an armed militia.<sup>283</sup> To hide the real reason behind the gathering, the appearance was made so that this would be seen as a gathering against Bulgarian and Serbian bands, "while the officers from military schools – Young Turks were going to be moved and destroyed".<sup>284</sup>

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Bey, or that Enver Bey was revolting with a bigger group than both Niyazi and Eyüb Sabri, or that Şemsi Paşa came to Selanik using the sea route, and that he moved first to Firzovik rather than Selanik to disperse 30.000 men gathered there. There are also mistakes in date conversion from Rumi calendar. Fethi Okyar, *Üç Devirde Bir Adam*, compiled by Cemal Kutay (İstanbul: Tercüman Yayınları, 1980), pp. 10-11; Uzer also relates "Abdülhamid trusted Şemsi Paşa too much, and sent this ignorant Bosnian to suppress the patriots in Manastır". Uzer, *Makedonya Eşkiyalık*, p. 91.

<sup>281</sup> Ahmed Ziya, *Meşrutiyet Uğrunda*, p. 11.

<sup>282</sup> Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda*, p. 472.

<sup>283</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 19/1288, 18.7.1908, "[...]Şemsi Paşa merhum Prizren'den Manastır'a hareket ederken kendisince muayyen olan eşhâsa ve Firzovik'e kadar yolun tarafeynindeki kur'â ve bir taraftan Yakova ve Mitroviça'ya serîan haberler göndererek "dinini, devletini, vatanını seven arkandan gelsin, Firzovik'te ictimâ' etsin, vatan elden gidiyor, Manastır ve sâir kasabât ve kurâ-yı İslâmiyyeyi basmış katliâm ediyorlar. Firzovik'e mikdâr-ı kâfi mavzer eslihâ ve cephânesi derdest-i celb ve iddihardır. Orada techiz olunacaksınız. Sûret-i hareketinizi telgrafla bildiririm. İmdâd-ı İslâm için yetişiniz, emirlerime intizar ediniz. İrâde-i seniyye-i hazret-i padişâhî bu merkezdedir" tarzında heyecan-âميز sözlerle ictimâ'a sebebiyet verilmiş [...]. The report of Galib Bey, based on the information given to him by Albanian leaders gathered for the Firzovik meeting; BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/130, 18.7.1908, a copy the same telegram sent by Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa to the Porte.

<sup>284</sup> According to Galib Bey, the Albanian leaders, he met in Üsküb, a few months later (7.11.1908) expressed "they have joined the meeting in Firzovik by force, and this was desired by higher

Andonyan claims that Abdülhamid became desperate and wanted to suppress the revolt using Albanians. He argues this by saying “to this end, Şemsi Paşa collected a huge Albanian group in Ferizovic” [Firzovik].<sup>285</sup> While Şemsi was leaving, he informed the people he trusted “bandits and some mischievous people were revolting against Sultan Abdülhamid, the father of the Albanians” and tried to organize the Albanian that were gathering in Firzovik.<sup>286</sup>

In *Hatırat-ı Niyazi*, Şemsi Paşa is blamed for igniting Albanians telling them “the Christians of Manastır were preparing to murder the Muslims”. Also, Şemsi Paşa is told to have “ascertained that they were ready for his orders when he needed”.<sup>287</sup> From the mentioned documents and other quoted statements, it is clear that the Albanians gathered in Firzovik were organized to destroy the CPU.

Ahmed Refik, mentions that the aim of Şemsi Paşa in the Firzovik meeting was to remove the committee members, by saying “Şemsi Paşa tried to incite some irregulars against these (Niyazi and Enver) through some of his false rumors on the scene, before leaving Prizren”<sup>288</sup>

Galib Bey who was the head of the Unionist propaganda in Firzovik says that after getting his order from the Palace, Şemsi Paşa “invited the Albanian leaders to gather in two places: Prizren and Firzovik”. These gatherings were aimed at using this brave and warlike people who were loyal to the Sultan against the rebels in

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authorities”. He also claimed “it is obvious that Şemsi Paşa was behind it”. Galip Paşa (Pasinler), “Galip Paşa’nın Hâtıraları”, *Hayat Tarih Mecmuası*, No. 6 (July 1966), pp. 8-9.

<sup>285</sup> Andonyan, *Balkan Savaşı*, p. 158.

<sup>286</sup> İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 31.

<sup>287</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 133; Şemsi Paşa was in Prizren, to calm the situation among the Muslims and Christians so as not to cause for the intervention of foreign power. It seems unlikely that he would ignite this tense situation more. See, Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 62.

<sup>288</sup> “Şemsi Paşa Prizren’den çıkarken zâbitândan ‘hurûc-u ales-sultân’ (başıbozuk) bazı eşkiya türediği zemininde bir takım erâcif-i eşâa’sıyla o havali ahâlisini bunlar (Niyazi ve Enver) aleyhine ayaklandırmak teşebbüsünde bulunmuş idi” Ahmed Refik, *İnkılâb-ı Azîm*, p. 40.

Rumeli. Şemsi Paşa “informed that he was assigned by the Sultan to suppress the Young Turk rebels who united with the Bulgarians”.<sup>289</sup>

It is argued that the order from Yıldız was “to move the army against the emerging threat, and the activities of the Committee in Üsküb, Manastır and Selanik” by gathering Albanian troops. After Şemsi Paşa moved to Manastır, it is claimed that, there were more armed people than the already gathered fifteen thousand ready to join the fight.<sup>290</sup> According to Süleyman Külçe, Galib Bey was wrong in saying “the Albanians started preparations from July 4, 1908”, the Firzovik gathering started 20 days before the action of Resneli Niyazi and outside the knowledge of Şemsi Paşa.<sup>291</sup> The quoted information and documents provide us enough information to question Külçe’s argument.

Müfid Şemsi emphasizes that his father ordered the Albanian leaders “to settle the Christian-Muslim tension in Prizren and not to cause any more troubles for the state” before he came back.<sup>292</sup> He writes that Şemsi Paşa called for the abandonment of the boycott against the Christians and for the establishment of peace among subjects. It does not seem plausible that bringing in new troops could settle the problems in Prizren; to the contrary such an act would increase the tension. In fact, the Albanian leaders who were claiming that their intention was not to establish peace, but to “battle”. For example, Selim Bey from Yakova responded to this call by saying “they have gathered in thousands to make promises they made concerning battles a reality”.<sup>293</sup> Parallel to this, according to Atıf Bey “Şemsi Paşa, arranged a lot of meetings in *Gegalık* (North Albania), and took *besa* (word of honor) from a lot

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<sup>289</sup> “Bulgarlarla birleşmiş olan Jön Türk hâinlerini tedibe padişah tarafından memur edildiğini, [...]göndereceği talimata göre hareket eylemelerini tebliğ eylemişti” Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 77.

<sup>290</sup> Galip Paşa, *Galip Paşa'nın Hâtıraları*, p. 8.

<sup>291</sup> Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 77.

<sup>292</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 64; Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 32.

<sup>293</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, pp. 135-136.

of Albanian tribes to support him”.<sup>294</sup> When Şemsi Paşa moved from Prizren to Firzovik, to take the train, he met with some of the people who have gathered there and “created an atmosphere with horrible thoughts and nightmares”.<sup>295</sup>

Şemsi Paşa had health problems due to the apoplexy he experienced, and seemed troubled to those around him. He is reported to have told Colonel Emin Bey: “I am going to a quest that will make me infamous” (*öyle bir işe gidiyorum ki, rezil olacağım*).<sup>296</sup>

He moved to Selanik on Sunday, July 5, together with the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 69<sup>th</sup> regiment in Mitroviça and the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion of the 72<sup>nd</sup> regiment in İpek in a special train.<sup>297</sup> The 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the 69<sup>th</sup> Regiment in Yakova was also given the order to mobilize, but it was delayed by a day due to the distance with the railway.<sup>298</sup>

The military power in the region of Resne and Ohri was limited in number and capacity. In fact, the governor of Ohri would write to Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, requesting reinforcements: “The hearsay is that Niyazi and his companions are about two hundred; we only have forty men to fight with them if they come this way [...] we request the strengthening of our numbers”.<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>294</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 420; “*Gegalık*” is the name of Northern Albania with a dense Muslim population.

<sup>295</sup> Receb Cûdî Bey’s memoirs in *Beyanü'l-Hak Mecmuası* (No. 24-28), quot.in: Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 163.

<sup>296</sup> Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı*, Vol. 2, p. 181; It is reported that he said “God knows, but I will not succeed in this mission” during his train trip from Selanik to Manastır. Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 340.

<sup>297</sup> Külçe, *Osmanlı Tarihinde*, p. 346; He had around 650 soldiers under his command however, his telegram to Yıldız mentions it to be 500, see, Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, pp. 33, 41.

<sup>298</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 52.

<sup>299</sup> “*Niyazi avenesinin iki yüz kişiye mütecâviz oldukları tevâtüiren işidilmekte olup bunlar bu tarafa tecâvüze başladıkları halde bunların bu kalabalığına karşı buradan kâbil-i ifrâz-ı kuvvetin mikdârı ancak kırk neferden ibâret olup; [...] mevcûdunun takviyesi esbâbının istikmâli hâssaten ve kemâl-i ehemmiyetle*” İSAM, HHP, 25/1686-2, 6.7.1908.

The first body of troops sent against Niyazi Bey went from Selanik to Manastır by train. They were asked to show every effort in their field investigations to catch the rebels before Brigadier General (*Mirliva*) Hacı Nazım Paşa arrived. When Nazım Paşa arrived at Manastır with two battalions, Governor Hıfzı Paşa would find the numbers lacking. The issue was very serious, and he felt that it needed a big enough force to be dispatched to the region.<sup>300</sup>

It was feared that the revolt in Resne and Prespe would be heard in Ohri and create a negative mood among the population. Members of the secret committee threatened those who could inform them, with death. In the meanwhile, Hacı Nazım Paşa reached Resne to carry out necessary military activities against Niyazi's band. At the same time, the band was already moving towards the north of Ohri. The Paşa was asked to go to Ohri, or send a trusted commander with enough men.<sup>301</sup>

The leading men of Ohri were invited to the Town Hall, and were warned against listening to those who were touring the neighboring villages and inciting people for revolt against the state.<sup>302</sup> The Governor of Ohri, constantly sent telegrams to the General Inspectorate in Selanik and the Headquarters of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army, to warn them about the gravity of the situation and ask for the taking of necessary steps. The governor was informed that Şemsi Paşa reached the region together with his troops with the intention of ending the chaos.<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>300</sup> İSAM, HHP, 25/1647-2, 6.7.1908; Kuran, writes "Nazmi Paşa" instead of "Nazım Paşa". Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda*, pp. 465-470.

<sup>301</sup> İSAM, HHP, 25/1686-4, 6.7.1908.

<sup>302</sup> İSAM, HHP, 25/1686-5, 6.7.1908.

<sup>303</sup> *Ohri Kaymakamlığına,* 24 Haziran 324  
23 Haziran 324 târihli beş kıt'a telgrafınıza cevâbdır. Sâye-i kudret-vâye-i cenâb-ı şehriyârîde eşirrânın teskini için Birinci Ferik Şemsi Paşa Hazretleri kuvâ-yı kâfiye ile dün Manastır'a azîmet ettiğinden, kemâl-i metânetle hareket ve esdîka-yı ahâlinin iğfâl edilmemesine pek ziyâde dikkat ve gayret olunması tavsiye olunur. (Müfettiş-i Umûmî, Hüseyin Hilmi)  
İSAM, HHP, 25/1686-1, 7.7.1908

Pamphlets were hung on the streets on July 6, 1908, by the “Ottoman Committee of Progress and Union”.<sup>304</sup> This paper entitled “Memorandum to the Governor of Manastır of the current illegitimate government” was probably prepared before Resneli Niyazi Bey took to the hills. Its content reflects the discomfort felt with the arrival of an inspection committee, to investigate the assassination of Nazım Bey. The memorandum stresses the annoyance felt by the totalitarianism that reigned for thirty years disregarding the state system that was built on laws. It mentions that, there were no personal aims and desires other than the re-institution of the Constitution. The steps taken by the state and its supporters against the CPU had to be stopped. The overall tone of the document is threatening.<sup>305</sup> It demands the judgment of uncovered members of the Committee to be held locally, rather than taking these people to İstanbul.<sup>306</sup> The memorandum says that there is no place for the “ignorant and vile persons that are between the Ottoman nation and its symbol, the Sultan”<sup>307</sup> and adds: “The people and the Sultan will see and love each other and throw themselves to the respectful and caring embraces of each other”.<sup>308</sup> The Sultan was not just spared criticism, but also depicted as a haven that would be welcomed with open arms. “The despotism that has been going on for thirty years” was not Sultan’s doing but emerged from the people around him. If this circle of mischief

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<sup>304</sup> An investigation was carried out concerning these pamphlets in Manastır to no end. BOA, *Y.PRK.ASK*, 258/79, 7.7.1908; “23 Haziran Muhtırası” *Neyyir-i Hakikat Gazetesi*, 27.7.1908, see, Appendix.

<sup>305</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 137.

<sup>306</sup> Ahmed Refik, *İnkılâb-ı Azîm*, p. 50.

<sup>307</sup> Until Abdülhamid was overthrown, the respect for the Sultan was stressed and it was argued that the despotism emerged from the people in between. (*Padişâh ile millet arasına girmiş hûne-i zâlimeyi aradan kaldırmak pâdişah ile milleti anlaştırmak ve işte bu günkü muhabbet ve emniyet-i mütekâbileyi meydâna çıkarmak için bundan oniki-onüç sene evvel biraz nâ-be-mevsim isti'câl gösterildi. Derhal kırmızı fesli canavarlar bir ip ucu yakaladılar*) Ahmed Refik, *İnkılâb-ı Azîm*, p. 10; The same writer, only a few months later, would say: “*Abdülhamid, milleti bâr-ı istibdâd altında ezmiş, milletin şu'le-yi eskârını söndürmek için her türlü mezâlîmi icrâdan geri durmamıştı*”. See, Ahmed Refik, *11 Nisan İnkılâbı* (Dersaadet: Kitabhane-i İslam ve Askerî, 1909), p. 10; Tunaya argues that the Unionists avoided blaming the Sultan and showed an insecure timidity like the French Revolutionaries against Louis XVI, and that this opportunism quickly changed. See. Tunaya, *Hürriyet'in İlanı*, p. 7; Petrosyan, *Sovyet Gözüyle*, pp. 304-307.

<sup>308</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 124; Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı*, Vol. 2, pp. 177-178.

was destroyed, the Sultan and people would finally embrace each other.<sup>309</sup> An order from İstanbul dated July 5, 1908 asked for the commander of the pursuer regiment (*takip alayı*) of Manastır, Lieutenant Colonel Selahaddin Bey, and Major of the General Staff, Hasan Tosun Bey.<sup>310</sup> Both of them escaped and joined Niyazi Bey's band. The memorandum did not direct Şemsi Paşa directly, probably because it was prepared earlier. However, the fact that it was hung one day before the arrival of him shows the power the Unionists had in Manastır. When he arrived in the city, Şemsi Paşa sent a message to the Imperial Palace: "I am informed by a spy that the declaration of the committee was hung (in the city) on July 6, 1908, and a big gathering of the Unionists was prepared, and some key names are supposedly joining the committee".<sup>311</sup> For him, this memorandum was a declaration of existence and power of the committee.

Nazif Paşa, the commander of the forces in Manastır was so desperate that he told Governor Hıfzı Paşa that he had "no belief in any of the military officers except the top-ranking ones". The governor informed the General Inspectorate the same night and requested the assignment of trained troops with adequate equipment, complaining about the weakness of the two battalions that arrived with Hacı Nazım Paşa".<sup>312</sup>

The Commander of the Third Army İbrahim Paşa informed the Manastır Command with a telegram after Şemsi Paşa had moved from Selanik to Manastır

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<sup>309</sup> Ahmed Refik, *İnkılâb-ı Azîm*, pp. 45-51; Tarık Zafer Tunaya, *Türkiye'de Siyasal Partiler - İkinci Meşrutiyet Dönemi 1908-1918*, Vol.1 (İstanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları, 1988), pp. 59-61; Tunaya, *Hürriyet'in İlanı*, p. 6. On the contrary, there are those who believe that the greatest error of the Unionists was, not hanging Sultan Hamid. See, Özden, *II. Meşrutiyetin İlanı*, p. 13; The commander of the Action Army that marched to İstanbul, Mahmud Şevket Paşa, used these words when he learnt about the parliamentary debates on dethroning Abdülhamid: "I brought my men here saying that the "life of the Sultan and the nation are in danger". We would be screwed if my men heard that we were the ones dethroning the Sultan". See, Ahmed Rıza, *Hatıralar*, p. 337.

<sup>310</sup> Ahmed Refik, *İnkılâb-ı Azîm*, pp. 38-41.

<sup>311</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 137; Bedii N. Şehsuvaroğlu, "İkinci Meşrutiyet ve Atif Bey", *Belleten*, No. 90 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1959), p. 316.

<sup>312</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 25/1647-2, 6.7.1908.



with the battalions under his command.<sup>313</sup> Meanwhile, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa informed the Governor of Manastır about the movement of Şemsi Paşa.<sup>314</sup> Şemsi Paşa left Fevzi Bey (Çakmak) in his place as commander of the 18<sup>th</sup> *Nizamiye* Division in Mitroviça. But he did not inform the latter about the mission he received as Fevzi Bey was suspected to have relation to the Unionists.<sup>315</sup>

False information was spread on purpose, about the route of the band to misdirect the military troops. For instance, according to the memoirs of Niyazi Bey, his entire band was in Delafojde on July 6, 1908 while the governor of Ohri informed Selanik about the intelligence he received, telling that the band was split in three, one group went to İstarova (Pogdarec) while the other two were on the way to Çermenika.<sup>316</sup> We should consider that this misinformation may have come out of the governor Süleyman Kani (İrtem) Bey, the governor (*kaymakam*) of Ohri, who was a secret Unionist himself.

The train carrying Şemsi Paşa and the three battalions with him from Selanik arrived to the Manastır station on July 7, early in the morning (~04:16). Şemsi Paşa went directly to the telegraph office where is located south of Drahor river and opposite the government hall. Bayar relates Şemsi Paşa went to the telegraph office to inform Yıldız that he “arrived at Manastır, to attack the warriors of liberty, and was ready to suppress the rebels with violence with the Imperial grace”.<sup>317</sup>

He tried to get information on the Albanian militia he gathered in Firzovik, and hoped that the other Albanian leaders would reach him as soon as possible to join the militia force he tried to build. As a result, the first thing he has done was not to

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<sup>313</sup> For the text of the telegram dated 6.7.1908, see, Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 205.

<sup>314</sup> *Manastır Vilâyet-i Âliyesine, Mahremâne 23 Haziran 324 Pazartesi Gecesi C. 23 Haziran 324. tebliğ buyrulan iki taburdan başka, birinci ferik Şemsi Paşa hazretleriyle üç tabur daha Kosova vilâyetine hareket etmiştir. Devletçe mes'elenin ehemmiyeti ile mütenâsib tedârik-i askeriye itihâz olunmaktadır efendim. (Müfettiş-i Umûmî, Hüseyin Hilmi) İSAM, HHP, 25/1647-1, 6.7.1908.*

<sup>315</sup> Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 73.

<sup>316</sup> İSAM, HHP, 25/1686-3, 6.7.1908.

<sup>317</sup> Bayar, *Ben De Yazdım*, p. 132.

communicate with Yıldız Palace, but to make communications concerning his preparations.

A telegram was sent to Albanian leaders through the local government in Elbasan. He celebrated them for power and influence they held in the region, and stressed their loyalty to the state before telling that he was certain of their support against these “betrayers” and asked for their help by saying “I am under the pressure of a huge problem, and am waiting for your support”. He was not aware that these correspondences were followed and sent to the Committee by the Unionists clerks in the Telegraph Office.<sup>318</sup>

Fahri Bey, who was with Şemsi Paşa, the day he was killed, informs that a lot of telegrams were written to places including the Imperial Palace and that Şemsi Paşa decided to move to Resne, though he was planning to go to Ohri.<sup>319</sup> After Şemsi Paşa arrived in Manastır, one of the people who welcomed him, Osman Hidayet Paşa, sent a telegram to the Resne Command. He informed that Şemsi Paşa arrived in Manastır with three battalions, and decided to move on to Resne “to annihilate the existence of the renegade Niyazi and his companions together with those on the same way”. The preparations were to be made, and all his orders were to be carried out to the letter when he arrived at the town.<sup>320</sup>

He had taken twenty five Albanian voluntaries from the men of Mayor Rıf’at Bey before he left Prizren.<sup>321</sup> It is rumored that Unionists infiltrated among them and tried to affect them. The claim is that their thoughts were affected by claiming “there

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<sup>318</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 135; Only the clerks with the ciphers should have been able to decipher the messages. İrtem, *Yıldız ve Jön Türkler*, p. 414; Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, pp. 42-43; Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, pp. 375-376; Ali Hamdi writes “Şemsi Paşa settled in a hotel in Manastır and managed to get a Unionist to his side through promises”. However, this information is false. The most valuable information on this source is a photo of Atif Bey while he was being moved from the Eğrikaş Camii Street to Cinka Street. Ali Hamdi, “Fedai Atif Bey ve Şemsi Paşa’nın katli”, *Resimli Tarih Mecmuası*, No. 65 (May 1955), p. 3830.

<sup>319</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, pp. 83-85.

<sup>320</sup> Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda*, p. 469

<sup>321</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 19/1288, 18.7.1908, this number changes between 20 and 30 in the sources. Mahmut Şevket Paşa gives it as 25.

is no danger here, similar to what you are saying. Şemsi Paşa deceived you to divide Muslims”.<sup>322</sup> However, it is more plausible that the Albanians believed the commander of the man whom they called “father”. It is not logical to argue that they believed young officers instead of believing Şemso who was loved and respected in the region.

After communicating with the Albanian leaders, Şemsi Paşa contacted the Commander of Ohri, Hamid Hamdi Bey and asked for the current condition and whereabouts of Niyazi Bey’s band. He received information that the band was divided into three in the directions of the villages of İstarova, Çermenika and Delafojde.<sup>323</sup> At the same time, the Committee was working to make new members among the officers. A Senior Captain (*Nizamiye Kolağası*) was invited by an officer, to join the Committee. He was threatened with death within 24 hours after he refused. Mehmed Ağa, fearing to reveal the name of the officer that invited him, went to the local governor. He told the governor Süleyman Kani Bey that the lives of those against the secret committee were in danger, and therefore, he feared for the life of Şemsi Paşa.<sup>324</sup>

The organization of the Committee in Manastır was so strong that, even the closest people to the local commander or Şemsi Paşa, who were given the mission to pursue and catch Unionists, were Unionists themselves.<sup>325</sup> The Gendarmerie

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<sup>322</sup> Niyazi Bey’ thinks that these Albanians were gathered from Prizren, Pristine and Firzovik; and let Atıf run away after the assassination by creating a diversion with shooting in the air. See, Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, pp. 133, 135, 141; Müfid Şemsi thinks all of these men were loyal to the Mayor of Prizren, Rif’at. There is no changing side involved. Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, pp. 61, 67.

<sup>323</sup> Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, pp. 393-394; Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 139; Gümüşsoy, *II. Meşrutiyeti Hazırlayan*, p. 62; Çermenika (Cermenika, Librazhd, Elbasan, Albania) is 80 km west of Ohri while Delafojde (Delogozhdi, Macedonia) is 21 km north, Starova (Pogradec, Albani) is 37km south. These three towns are in completely unrelated points. Şemsi Paşa’s telegram to the Palace confuses the place names: “*Niyazi ile avenesinin üç kola taksim olunarak biri İstarva ve diğeri İlbasan sancağı dahilinde Şermenika cihetlerine ve yetmiş kişiden ibaret üçüncü kolu dahi Debre’nin Kocacık nahiyesi istikametinden Ohri kazası dahilinde Velfošte karyesine giderek dün geceyi orada geçirdikleri...*” See, Şehsuvaroğlu, ‘İkinci Meşrutiyet’, p. 317.

<sup>324</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 8/444, 7.7.1908; Süleyman Kâni Bey is thought to be a secret Unionist. İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. xii.

<sup>325</sup> Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 75.

Commander of Manastır, Rıf'at Bey,<sup>326</sup> was the new son-in-law of Şemsi Paşa. He made every effort to discourage his father-in-law from the mission he was given. He tried to convince Şemsi Paşa in an indirect way that the Unionists were so powerful and in very close relations with the people in Manastır, Ohri and Resne that any mission against them would end in failure. Şemsi Paşa did not listen to the suggestions that told him not to leave Manastır, but did not refuse their value all together. "Let's go to Resne for now, and decide what to do once there" was his answer to these advises, suggesting that he was affected by them. But, there was no returning back for him.<sup>327</sup>

Şemsi Paşa contacted İstanbul to share the information he received and his opinions on the situation. He gave information on the city and its military condition in the first telegram he sent to the Inspector-General of Rumeli, to the Ministry of War and to Yıldız Palace.<sup>328</sup>

The wrong information about Enver Bey in his telegram is interesting. Enver Bey escaped to Tikveş, after the failed assassination attempt on Nazım Bey, on June 25, 1908. It is interesting that this information was given to Şemsi Paşa as new, after 12 days and that he communicated it to İstanbul. This may be considered as a tactic of the Unionists to distract Şemsi Paşa, who probably did not know Enver Bey, and was unaware of the investigation concerning him. In fact, the Minister of War Rıza

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<sup>326</sup> The fact that Rıf'at Bey had his signature in the telegrams sent after the assassination, to İbrahim Paşa, the commander of the Third Army in Selanik, by Osman Hidayet Paşa, the commander of the Manastır region, made the former uncomfortable. Rıf'at Bey was assigned to Resne on 8.7.1908. Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 209; Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 538.

<sup>327</sup> It is told that Rıf'at Bey was unaware of Atıf's plans. Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 70.

<sup>328</sup> "Mabeyne, Seraskere, Müşiriyete,

*Bu sabah refâkat-ı âcizide iki tabur bulunduğu halde Manastır'a muvâsalat edilmiş ve Altmışdokuzuncu Alayın Yakova'dan hareket ettirilen Dördüncü Taburunun dahî ma'iyet-i çâkeride bulunan kuvvete iltihâk etmek üzere şimendüfere irkâb edilmiş olduğu ve Cemiyet'in nerede bulunduğuna dâir hiç kimsenin ma'lûmâtı olmayıp yalnız icra edilen tahkikât-ı hafiyeden Erkân-ı Harbiye Binbaşlılarından Enver Bey'in tebdil-i kıyâfet ederek Cemiyet-i fesâdiyeye iltihâk etmek üzere hareket etmiş bulunduğu berâ-yı ma'lûmât arz olunur. Fi 24 Hazirân sene 324 Birinci Ferik Şemsi"*

Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 136; Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 39; Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 383.

Paşa made this point clear in his note.<sup>329</sup> There were other tactics to separate the forces to be sent on Resneli Niyazi Bey as mentioned in the memoirs of Niyazi Bey.<sup>330</sup>

Moreover, Mustafa Ragıb writes that it would have been disastrous if all of Şemsi Paşa's wrath and destruction was directed on Niyazi Bey, so this tactic was employed to distract these troops and make them separate and go different directions. The information on the split of the current band, and also on the gathering of new bands should be considered in this light.<sup>331</sup> Şemsi Paşa was confused by these contradictory pieces of information so decided that it would be best to move to Resne.<sup>332</sup>

In the words of Ahmed Rıza, "These communications and the despotic activities were considered and a bloody result was decided and designed, so he left the telegraph office saying: "I am going; I will cut them all down and spill their red blood".<sup>333</sup> However, this comment may be partial; the telegrams Şemsi Paşa sent were going to be his last messages.<sup>334</sup>

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<sup>329</sup> "[.] Müşarünileyh Şemsi Paşa kullarının telgrafnâmesinde 'erbâb-ı fesâda iltihak etmek üzere hareket ettiği' beyan olunan erkân-ı harp binbaşısı Enver bey, Selânik Merkez Kumandanı-ı sabıki Nazım Bey'in (zevci olan) hemşiresini getirmek üzere Dersaadet'e azimeti evvel ve ahir şerefsudur buyurulan [.] Enver Bey olup mumaileyhin ortadan gaybubet eylediği Üçüncü Ordu-yu hümâyunları müşiri paşa kullarından mukaddema iş'ar olunması üzerine mumaileyhin sebab-i gaybubeti nedir? Bu babta tahkikat icra edilmekte olduğu". Uzunçarşılı, '1908 Yılında', p. 157.

<sup>330</sup> "24-25 Haziran (7-8.7.1908) gecesi Manastır'dan bir çete çıkarılarak Görüce, Ohri, Resne ve Kesriye taraflarından ve Manastır cihetlerinden Resne çetesinin ta'kibi için Resne taraflarında ictima' ettirilmekte olan kuvvetin tefrikine himmet edildiği gibi aynı surette Florinadan Yüzbaşı Resneli Osmân Efendi, Serfice cihetlerinden jandarma binbaşısı Nâşid Bey ve Ohri'den Eyüb Efendi çeteye çıkmak üzere ahvâlin kesb edeceği şekle nazaran ilk verilecek emirde harekete mahya bulunmaları Cemiyetce takarrür etmişti" Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 140.

<sup>331</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 206.

<sup>332</sup> "Zât-ı şâhânelerine arz edeyim ki isyan halinde bulunan zâbitleri ya hayyen veya meyyiten istisal ederek bu gâileyi ortadan kaldıracığım. Allah'ın izni ve zât-ı şâhânenin emir ve müsaadesiyle buna muvaffak olacağıma emin bulunuyorum. Bu maksadla şimdi Manastır'dan hareket ediyorum. Olbâbda emr-ü ferman hazret-i men leh'ül-emrindir". Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda*, p. 469; Özden, *II. Meşrutiyetin İlanı*, p. 54; Ertürk, *İki Devrin*, p. 36.

<sup>333</sup> Ahmed Ziya, *Meşrutiyet Uğrunda*, p. 12; Galip Vardar mentions that Şemsi Paşa started his mission by promising that he would hand Niyazi and Enver Beys dead or alive. However, his account has serious errors like giving the date of the assassination as July 8, 1908, or mentioning that Atıf ran away to Selanik after the assassination, or that liberty was declared on July 21, 1908.

Tahsin Paşa, narrates the same event in different words: “Şemsi Paşa left the telegraph office after receiving a great deal of imperial favor after informing that he was about to start the mission given to him by the Sultan order”.<sup>335</sup>

Eyüb Sabri Bey (1876-1950), one of the close friends of Niyazi, the Commander of the Reserve troops in Ohri sent a letter informing him that Şemsi Paşa arrived in Manastır with three battalions and was ready to move on the band. This news created concern among the band of Niyazi Bey. They were right to be anxious; thanks to the success Şemsi Paşa had in the Balkans. They turned towards Debre, to protect themselves against this danger. Debre was far away from Manastır and was one of the places with the strongest support to the Unionists. Niyazi Bey thought it advisable to go to Selim Dema’s side,<sup>336</sup> which had four thousand men with him, and the support of whom Niyazi was sure of.

### **Atıf Bey (Kamçıl)**

He was born in İstanbul in 1880 to Fatma Hanım and İsmail Bey from Biga/Çanakkale.<sup>337</sup> He was influenced by the Unionists in the Military School and his brother-in-law İsmail Hakkı Bey. He followed the publication of the dissidents and helped their distribution. He was influenced by the mottoes of the revolutionaries like “*vatan*” (fatherland) and “*hürriyet*” (liberty) and was not content with the Hamidian government. He joined the army as a lieutenant in 1904 after his graduation.<sup>338</sup> The problems in Macedonia and the Bulgarian revolts necessitated the strengthening the armed forces. As a result, Atıf, like many other young officers, were appointed to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army in Rumeli. He began his service in the 4<sup>th</sup> battalion of the 21<sup>st</sup> regiment in Manastır. He

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see. Galip Vardar, *İttihad ve Terakki İçinde Dönerler*, compiled by Samih Nafiz Tansu (İstanbul: Yeni Zamanlar Yayınları, 2003), pp. 61-62; The same claims are repeated by Hüsamettin Ertürk. See, Ertürk, *İki Devrin*, pp. 35-38.

<sup>334</sup> Miller, *Straits: British*, p. 27.

<sup>335</sup> Tahsin Paşa, *Yıldız Hatıraları*, p. 486.

<sup>336</sup> Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, pp. 618-621; Emine Gümüşsoy, "II.Meşrutiyeti Hazırlayan Bir Merkez: Ohri", *SDÜ Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* No. 18, (2008), p. 63; Albanian Committee in Debre is known to be a supporter of the Unionists. The local governor was killed in Debre after the revolution. See, Süleyman Kâni İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken – 1908 Jön-Türk İhtilâli*, compiled by O. S. Kocahanoğlu (İstanbul: Temel Yayınları, 1999), p. 81.

<sup>337</sup> Another rumour is that he was born in 1884. Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 157.

<sup>338</sup> Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 293.

was in close relations with some of the officers there, and they continued to gather in secret to discuss the situation of the country. He was among the first to join the Manastır branch of the CPU which opened in 1907. He became a voluntary in the partisan squad of the Committee that was founded to remove those who were seen as threats to the Committee's goals. He was ready to sacrifice his life for his cause when he volunteered for this mission.

He started an important process by killing Şemsi Paşa on July 7, 1908. He was given a badge by Sultan Mehmet Reşad in 1910. He retired with a pension for his "services for the country" later.<sup>339</sup> He served as an MP from Kala-i Sultaniye (Çanakkale) in the first two terms and as the MP of Ankara in the third. Atıf Bey was exiled to Malta after the First World War. He worked as a clerk and managed in the Turkish State Monopoly (Tekel) during the Republican period and served as the MP of Çanakkale in the sixth (1939) and seventh (1943) terms. He has two sons and three daughters from his wife Atıf Hanım.<sup>340</sup> He died on 21.1.1947 and is buried in the *Abide-i Hürriyet* graveyard which includes the bodies of the founders of the Committee.<sup>341</sup>

According to his Unionist friends, Atıf Bey was "a young officer that could not even say boos to a goose".<sup>342</sup> He joined the Manastır branch of the Committee as a voluntary, a little time before the assassination. He was no doubt discontented by the Nazım Bey affair in Selanik and the follow up investigations. It is reported that he said "without a doubt, Abdülhamid will assign Şemo to suppress this movement. If I am right and if I get the chance; I will shoot Şemsi Paşa without hesitation" after he heard about Niyazi Bey's action.<sup>343</sup> In truth, he was unaware that Şemsi Paşa was sent to Manastır after Niyazi Bey took to the hills.<sup>344</sup>

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<sup>339</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 96; Two days after the assassination Sadık Bey, the head of the Manastır branch of the Committee of Progress and Union told Atıf: "You accomplished your mission. After this, the ummah will not ask for services from you. It will only take pleasure in the things you will do to rest your delicate body". Şehsuvaroğlu, 'İkinci Meşrutiyet', p. 320.

<sup>340</sup> Şehsuvaroğlu, 'İkinci Meşrutiyet', p. 324.

<sup>341</sup> Sema Yıldırım, Behçet Kemal Zeynel (eds.), *TBMM Albümü 1920-1950*, Vol. 1 (Ankara: TBMM Basın ve Halkla İlişkiler Müdürlüğü Yayınları, 2010), pp. 316, 385; Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, pp. 95, 157-158.

<sup>342</sup> Ali Hamdi, 'Fedai Âtuf', p. 3828.

<sup>343</sup> Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, pp. 350, 434.

<sup>344</sup> He gives an account of his thoughts and emotions in a letter to his friend Kenan Bey one and a half months after the event. Şehsuvaroğlu, 'İkinci Meşrutiyet', p. 320.

Niyazi Bey writes in his memoirs that the death verdict was in for Şemsi Paşa to protect the order of society, the happiness of the nation and the welfare of the fatherland, and the mission was taken up by the Manastır Branch.<sup>345</sup> Akşin argues that this action was undertaken by the initiative of Atıf Bey, and he only asked for the consent of the Manastır Branch.<sup>346</sup>

Atıf Bey learned the movement of Şemsi Paşa on the night of July 6, the same day Şemsi Paşa moved from Manastır to Selanik. The next morning Şemsi Paşa was in town. One of his Unionist friends, Mehmed Ali Bey, informed him of Şemsi Paşa's arrival. He is reported to have been upset by the failure of the partisans in Selanik to stop him there. This meant that the Committee could not find anyone that would be willing to take the risk, and the volunteering (*fedai*) system was not working. However, it took great courage to attack Şemsi Paşa while he was among three battalions of soldiers and his personal Albanian guard. Death was nearly certain for the one who was brave enough.

If Şemsi Paşa managed to leave Manastır and move on to Resne and Ohri, “a lot of blood would be spilled; the Committee will be in a dire situation close to death. This huge and beautiful fatherland will be split by foreign invasion, and our noble nation will be insulted greatly”. He decided that he was ready to sacrifice himself “to the cause of fatherland and nation”. He was ready to give his life, in the attempt to kill Şemsi. He shared his decision with his friend Mehmed Ali Bey, and asked for a gun, to be used in the assassination.<sup>347</sup>

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<sup>345</sup> It is reported that the decision was taken by the members of the Manastır branch of the Committee, Lieutenant Colonel (Yarbay) Sadık Bey, Artillery Captain (Topçu Yüzbaşı) Habib Bey, and Artillery Lieutenant (Topçu Mülazım) Ziya Bey. See, Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 237.

<sup>346</sup> Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 75.

<sup>347</sup> Şehsuvaroğlu mentions that he did not talk with anyone after his decision. Mustafa Ragıp disagrees and writes that he talked with Mehmed Ali Bey, Baki Bey, Mehmed Ragıp, Talat Bey, Süleyman Askeri Bey and Ziya Bey. See, Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, pp. 424, 432, 441, 449.



He learnt that Şemsi Paşa was in the telegraph office on a street adjacent to the river Drahor.<sup>348</sup> Atıf Bey went to a restaurant close to the Telegraph Office and ordered a meal which he considered being his last. He saw Talat Bey there, and asked for his help in getting two guns. They met again on the other side of Drahor in the garden of the İshakiye Mosque, and Atıf got a Nagant pistol from Talat Bey.<sup>349</sup> He went to a coffee shop close to the telegraph office and started waiting. While waiting, he met Süleyman Askeri Bey, one of the leading members of the Committee, and asked from him, to take care of his family where he to die in his attempt.<sup>350</sup>

It seems highly unlikely that he would survive the attempt on assassination and actually; he was ready for the consequences. According to the Unionists Atıf Bey, he was there “to carry out the honored, noble and highly esteemed mission to help grow the influence of the Committee”.<sup>351</sup> If he managed to get away after the assault, the best place he could hide was the house of Mahmut Bey, in the neighboring district.<sup>352</sup> He asked Mahmut Bey to be ready and reached the final moments of the waiting that lasted for 4 hours. Two carriages came near the Telegraph office, and Atıf Bey was reminding himself that this was important for the nation and the fatherland.<sup>353</sup>

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<sup>348</sup> This street is named the “Boulevard of May 1” (*Булевар 1-ви Май*) now, though the building did not survive.

<sup>349</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 437.

<sup>350</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, pp. 441-444.

<sup>351</sup> Ahmed Ziya, *Meşrutiyet Uğrunda*, p. 13.

<sup>352</sup> Mahmut Soydan, (1883-1936), the chief editor of Neyyir-i Hakikat newspaper in Manastır. M.P. of Sivas in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> terms. The founder and chief editor of Milliyet.

<sup>353</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 155; Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 268.

## 2.4 The Death of Şemsi Paşa

After a long marathon of communications through telegraph lines, Şemsi Paşa ate from the food brought to him and prayed the noon prayer. He gave a clerk to communicate to Yıldız that he was leaving the building. The telegraph office was in the second floor of the building. When Şemsi Paşa was about to leave, he remembered that he forgot his gloves upstairs. His servant and assistant Hüseyin Ağa went back immediately to take his gloves.<sup>354</sup>

Outside the building, soldiers, gendarmerie, Albanian guards and the people of Manastır who wanted to see the Paşa have gathered. Atıf waited at a point as close to the door as he could get. He was worried whether he could recognize Şemsi Paşa as he did not ever see him before. Time was 14:45.<sup>355</sup>

“While Şemsi Paşa took a step outside the building, Atıf Bey [...] took out his weapon and pointed it to the former, without the people around noticing it. With a sudden move, he pushed the trigger, and the deep silence was broken with a bitter sound”.<sup>356</sup>

The first bullet missed Şemsi Paşa and hit a stone block. The place was in turmoil in seconds, and nobody really understood what was going on. Şemsi Paşa turned his face to the sound after hearing the gunfire and the close sound of the missing bullet.

“Atıf Bey re-aimed his weapon with great concentration and pushed the trigger again. A horrible sound changed the scene into complete chaos. Atıf Bey aimed for Şemsi Paşa’s chest this time. The bullet travelled fast.

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<sup>354</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 461.

<sup>355</sup> According to the reports of the Austro-Hungarian embassy Şemsi Paşa was killed at 14:30. See, Bohumil Para to Count Alois Lexa von Aehrenthal, quot.in: Azemoviç, *Şemsi Paşa'nın*, p. 200. The Turkish clock consists of two equal 12-hour parts and shows 00:00 at dusk. Manastır (Bitola) is on 41° 02' North, 21° 20' East. The dusk is at 19:16 for 7 July according to the modern watch. (There was no summer time in the Ottoman Empire until 1919) Ahmet Ziya gives the assassination time 7.40 (14:56). Some sources give it as 8.00 (15:16), 7.30 (14:46), 7.00 (14:16) and one as 6.30 (~13:46). The official report which gives the hour as 7.30 (14:45) is taken to be true. There can be an error of 30 minutes.

<sup>356</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, pp. 466-467.

Şemsi Paşa, who could not understand the assault a second ago, put his hands up and leaned forward and said “Ouch!” in a bitter voice”.<sup>357</sup>

The legendary man, who did not lose any of the battles he had in Albanian mountains, was shot. The second bullet shot from the Nagant of Atıf pierced through his right arm and lungs and was stuck somewhere close to his heart. A third shot was heard immediately, but there was actually no need for that.

Şemsi Paşa’s son Müfid Şemsi claims that Atıf feared the physical grandeur of Şemsi Paşa and missed the last bullet: “the first one of the bullets hit and when my father turned to the sound, although he became a clear target the bullets missed”.<sup>358</sup> He also claims that his father did not fall to the ground “in red blood” but died of internal bleeding repeating the *kelime-i şehadet*.<sup>359</sup>

Heavily wounded Şemsi Paşa was taken back to the telegraph office with the help of the people around him. He was carried back to the building probably because they feared the gunfire would continue. At this moment, the Albanian guards and the soldiers in the scene were firing to the air.

Hüseyin Ağa heard the gunfire when he was coming back with the gloves and ran directly to Şemsi Paşa. It is told that the Paşa told him “An officer shot me, do not fear, do not leave me alone!” Everyone came back when the gunshots ceased. He died probably within ten minutes repeating the *kelime-i şehadet*.<sup>360</sup> According to the

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<sup>357</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, p. 468; In the memoirs of Mustafa Özden, Hüsamettin Ertürk and Galip Vardar the same scene is described in these terms: “Şemsi Paşa, took five bullets to his chest while he was about to get on his carriage outside the post office, fired from the gun of a young officer in civil clothing, Atıf Bey”. As they use nearly the same sentences to describe the event, it is highly possible that one of them was used by others as the source. See, Özden, *II. Meşrutiyetin İlanı*, p. 54; Vardar, *İttihad ve Terakki*, p. 64; Ertürk, *İki Devrin*, p. 36.

<sup>358</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, pp. 81-82.

<sup>359</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 86.

<sup>360</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 85; Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 45; Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, p. 468; Bayar, *Ben De Yazdım*, p. 132; “he collapsed to the ground with grief and destruction and could only say “an officer shot me” (*beni bir zabıt vurdu!*). Ahmed Ziya, *Meşrutiyet Uğrunda*, p. 13; Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, pp. 83-85. The time of his death is probably 15:00.

official documents that reached us, Şemsi Paşa died within fifteen minutes after he was shot. Again the official documents, relate that he gave his last breath in the arms of Hüseyin Ağa, another *alaylı* officer, and his last words were “the officers devoured me!”<sup>361</sup>.

*Müfettiş Paşa Hazretlerine,  
Şimdi ifâdesi alınan merhûmun yetişdirmelerinden Mülâzım Hüseyin  
Ağa, cerihadâr olmasını müteakib Telgrafhâne kapısı arkasında yerde  
oturan merhûm “Beni zâbitler bitirdi” diye terk-i hayât ettiğini ihbâr  
etmekte olduğu arz olunur, fermân. Fî 24 Haziran sene 324  
İstinâf Müdde-î Umûmîsi Mazhar*

Nearly every one of the works written on the history of Union and Progress and the 1908 Revolution argue that the assassination of Şemsi Paşa was the most important development in the process that ended in the Second Constitutional Period. Paşa’s last three words can be seen as the brief summary of the conflicts in this period.<sup>362</sup> The officers not only ended Şemsi Paşa's life; but also ended six centuries long rule of monarchy, and thinking a little to the future, the Ottoman Empire.

Atıf Bey achieved his great aim, and believed that he ended not only the despotic regime that lasted for thirty two years with his bullets. This situation completely crippled the current government’s authority.<sup>363</sup> The sounds of firing guns reminded him that death was very close to him as well, and he ran east as fast as he can. The bullets from the Mausers of the Albanians were buzzing around him. It was quite like a battlefield. The mayor of Prizren, Rıf’at Paşa aimed carefully and fired at Atıf. Atıf relates these moments in his own words:

<sup>361</sup> It could be expressed as “I'm exhausted because of the officers”, see, İSAM, *HHP*, 8/419-2, 7.7.1908, the transcription of this document can be seen in Appendix; Report telling that the telegram received from the Manastır Appeal Prosecutor was forwarded to the Grand Vizierate, see, İSAM, *HHP*, 8/435, 7.7.1908; For the telegram, the inspector sent to the Sublime Porte, see, Çamlıca Basın Yayın Araştırma Kütüphanesi Vesika Arşivi, No. 337, quot. in: *Yedi Kıta Dergisi*, No. 49 (September 2012), p. 27.

<sup>362</sup> Şemsi Paşa’s concerns and discomfort about the schooled officers are known. Menteşe, *Osmanlı Mebusan*, p. 123; His son relates that Şemsi Paşa believed young officers to be “rascals” and “people only thinking about themselves”. Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, pp. 58, 86; Külçe, *Osmanlı Tarihinde*, p. 347.

<sup>363</sup> Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda*, p. 470.

“I only took ten steps when one of the bullets from a Mauser pierced through my right leg. It was like hot water. I realized it immediately and started falter. However, as it was not really affecting my movement, I started running again. I passed the coffee shops and turned right and entered a shoemaker’s shop. After my pursuers passed through I came out of the shop and started walking normally (I was losing my stamina) towards the house I designed beforehand (the house of Mahmud Bey)”<sup>364</sup>

Atif dropped his weapon on the bridge while he was running to the East of the Telegraph Office. He recognized a cross street (*Фустану Сокак / Fistani Sokak*) and entered it before the Albanian guards pursuing him could reach. Because he was seriously wounded, he was slowing down. When he entered the street, he took another left and entered a shop that was not closed yet. This shop belonged to the shoemaker Georgios. The footsteps of his followers were closing on him. He threatened the apprentices inside and made them close the shutters and started waiting in stress.<sup>365</sup>

The guards following him did not see the left he too. Moreover, Atif’s friend from the Committee Military Police Officer İşkret Mehmet Bey guided the guards to a wrong direction to the Hamidiye Street (*Широк Сокак / Şirok Sokak*). By taking the guardians all the way to the Manastır Military School and the train station, Mehmet Bey saved his friend from a lot of trouble.

He made the apprentices open the shutters again and went outside carefully. He moved to the corner and when he was certain that the danger has passed, he moved as quickly as he can to the part of the city where Mahmud Bey’s house was located. He turned right from the street (*Цар Самуил Сокак / Çar Samuil Sokak*) on the other direction of the Town Hall and reached his destination on the Eğrikaş Mosque Street (*болка левата Сокак*). Mahmud Bey brought a Unionist doctor to his house for the

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<sup>364</sup> Şehsuvaroğlu, ‘İkinci Meşrutiyet’, pp. 322-323; “We were informed today that an officer wounded from his arm went into a shoemaker’s store”. BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/55-8,

<sup>365</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, p. 479; The name of the shoemaker is recorded as “Anastas” (İSAM, *HHP*, 19/1267), or as “Dâniş” (İSAM, *HHP*, 25/1656).

treatment of Atif's wound. The house was located in 300 metres distance from the Telegraph Office.<sup>366</sup>

The next day Atif was moved to the house of Mehmed Ragıb Bey in Cinka Street (*Српско Пинџур/ Strašo Pindžur Сокак*) next to Koca Kadı Mosque, near the Hamamönü Square. He had to wear woman clothing (*çarşaf*) in order not to be recognized.<sup>367</sup> They decided to take him outside Manastır on July 9, 1908 after one day as they learnt that the government knew about the hiding place. He was taken to Resne with a carriage in woman clothing again.

The city folk closed their shops in panic after the gun firing, and they closed themselves in their houses. The Albanian irregulars were questioning everyone they suspected. It was obvious that if this continued, more serious events would result. Governor Hıfzı Paşa was worried that the already troubled city would fall into chaos if this situation continued.<sup>368</sup> As a result, he arranged for their return to their homes through Gostivar, accompanied by some cavalrymen under the command of Rıf'at Ağa, the Mayor of Prizren.<sup>369</sup>

Müfid Bey, Şemsi Paşa's son claims that some innocents in the crowd died under the fire of Albanian voluntaries.<sup>370</sup> These rumors were spread after the event

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<sup>366</sup> For a plan of the route see, Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 485; modern version of the map and the assassination plan can be seen in Appendix.

<sup>367</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, pp. 558-565.

<sup>368</sup> It is argued that Hıfzı Paşa the governor of Manastır was making the Unionists seem stronger on purpose which made Yıldız worried. Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda*, p. 470; Bleda argues that he convinced Hıfzı Paşa, who was his brother in-law and that his attitude completely changed and started reporting to the palace taking the events lightly. See, Bleda, *İmparatorluğun Çöküşü*, p. 34; Mehmed Tevfik, *Manastır Vilayetinin Tarihçesi* (Manastır: Beynelmîlel Ticaret Matbaası, 1327), p. 82; Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 509.

<sup>369</sup> Hıfzı Paşa's message to Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa and the Grand Vizier corrects the information provided by both Ahmed Niyazi Bey and Müfid Şemsi. See, İSAM, *HHP*, 9/543-1, 9.7.1908; Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 71.

<sup>370</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, pp. 67, 82; "*Vak'â esnâsından hâsıl olan kargaşalıkta dâire-yi askerîyye yoklamacılarından Muhyiddin Bey yere düşerek başından yaralanmış ve bunlardan başka bir sakatlık vukûa gelmemiştir. Mahall-i vak'âda asker ve ahâleden bir cemm-i gâfir mevcûd olduğu halde atılan silahlardan bervech yalnız bir kişinin hafifçe cerihâdâr olmasından başka bir kaza*

on purpose. Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa says “the commanders in Manastır informed in their telegrams that many people died or were wounded during the attack on the late Şemsi Paşa”<sup>371</sup> and that the same information was “forwarded to the embassies by the consulates”.<sup>372</sup> Through the embassies, these rumors were passed on to the European states and newspapers. He asked to clarify the identities of the people who died or who were wounded if this information was correct.<sup>373</sup> In the investigations carried out a few days later, it was reported that nobody got killed, but there were some wounded among those that jumped into the river Drahor in panic.<sup>374</sup>

The local government’s building in Manastır was on the northern side of Drahor and the opposite side of the Telegraph Office. The sounds of weaponry and the ensuing panic, caused Governor Hıfzı Paşa to panic as well, and he immediately sent some of his men to the scene to investigate. The regional commander of Manastır Osman Hidayet Paşa, who greeted Şemsi Paşa in the same morning and took him to the Telegraph Office, was also in the governor’s building at the time. He, too, immediately went to the Telegraph Office only to see Şemsi Paşa dead. He was most saddened by the fact that the assassin was an officer.<sup>375</sup> The British consulate’s report informs that the assassination was carried out by three officers.<sup>376</sup>

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*vukû’ bulmamış olması, askerlerin silahlarını bilâ intizâm havaya endaht eyledikleri yolunda deverân eden şâyiâyı teyîd etmektedir”.*

<sup>371</sup> İSAM, HHP, 8/432, 9.7.1908.

<sup>372</sup> İSAM, HHP, 9/543-2, 9.7.1908.

<sup>373</sup> İSAM, HHP, 25/1646, 8.7.1908.

<sup>374</sup> “*Vak’â esnâsından hâsıl olan kargaşalıkta dâire-yi askeriyye yoklamacılarından Muhyiddîn Bey yere düşerek başından yaralanmış ve bunlardan başka bir sakatlık vukûa gelmemiştir. Mahall-i vak’âda asker ve ahâliden bir cemm-i gâfir mevcûd olduğu halde atılan silahlardan bervech yalnız bir kişinin hafifçe cerihâdâr olmasından başka bir kaza vukû’ bulmamış olması, askerlerin silahlarını bilâ intizâm havaya endaht eyledikleri yolunda deverân eden şâyiâyı teyîd etmektedir”.*

The report sent to the General Inspectorate and the Grand Vizierate by the Governor of Manastır Hıfzı Paşa. İSAM, HHP, 9/543, 9.7.1908.

<sup>375</sup> Mustafaâ Ragıb, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, p. 513.

<sup>376</sup> “On the 5<sup>th</sup> July Shemsi Pasha with two battalions and some Albanian Ciefs left Uskub for Manastır to crush the movement, but on the 7<sup>th</sup> July he was assassinated in Manastır by three officers”. Lowther, *Annual Report*, p. 26.

The first death report was given by Rıf'at Bey, the Paşa's son-in law.<sup>377</sup> It was immediately directed to Yıldız Palace and the Sublime Porte.<sup>378</sup> Right after this telegram, the governor Hıfzı Paşa sent a telegram to the General Inspectorate.<sup>379</sup>

The message of the Third Army Commander İbrahim Paşa to the General Inspectorate after the first information he received started with a prayer: "May Allah prolong the life and might of his highness". The message informed basing it on the telegram of the Manastır Command: "he died around 7 (~14:15) from wounds inflicted by the bullet of a revolver fired by an un-identified person".<sup>380</sup> The following lines reported "it was awful that Şemsi Paşa was targeted in such an assault, but it is worse that the culprit could not be caught". The order was to take all precautions to "protect the honor of soldiers".<sup>381</sup>

<sup>377</sup> "Selanik'de huzur-u celil-i Müfettiş-i efhâmîye, Manastır'dan, No: 1911/2, Saat:8 (~15:16) Me'muriyet-i mahsusa ile Manastır'a gelmiş Birinci Ferik Şemsi Paşa bugün saat yedide Resne'ye geçmek üzere telgrafhaneden çıkıp arabaya bineceği sırada eşhası meçhule tarafından endaht olunan rovelver kurşunlarıyla katil ve itlâf edildiği kemâl-i teessüfle arz olunur ferman. Fî 24 Haziran sene 324 Merkez Jandarma Taburu Kumandanı Rıf'at (Zeylen Başkitâbet-i celîle ve Sadâret-i Uzmâ'ya telgraf fi 24)"

İSAM, HHP, 19/1277-1, 7.7.1908; BOA, BEO, 3352/251386, 7.7.1908.

<sup>378</sup> Başkitâbet-i celileye, Sadâret-i Uzmâya Gayet müsta'cel 24 Haziran sene 324 Salı günü Manastır Merkez Jandarma Kumandanı Rıfat Bey'den şimdi alınan telgrafın sûreti aynen ve zeylen arz-ı takdim olunur. Vilâyetten henüz bir iş'âr vuku' bulmadığından işbu hadise-i müessife üzerine ittihâz olunan tedârik ve fücârların zâhire ihrâc olunmadıklarının Vilâyete isti'lâm olunduğu maruzdur, fermân. (Rumeli Müfettiş-i Umûmisi Hüseyin Hilmi)

İSAM, HHP, 19/1277-2, 7.7.1908.

<sup>379</sup> Şifre, No: 19189, 8 Rûz (~15:16) Bugün buraya gelmiş olan Şemsi Paşa Resne'ye gitmek için hâzırlanarak arabaya râkib olmak üzere telgrafhânedan çıktığı sırada endaht olunan bir silahtan mecrûh olarak bir çeyrek zarfında müteessiren vefât eylediği ve güzergâhında maiyeti askerleri ve sâir zâbitân bulunduğu halde mütecâsir teşhis ve derdest olunamadığı ma'rûzdur ferman. Fî 24 Haziran sene 324 Manastır Valisi Hıfzı.

İSAM, HHP, 25/1654, 7.7.1908;

The same message was sent from Selanik to the Sublime Porte in a telegram numberes 1189, asking for the appointment of a strong commander to Manastır: "Ferik Şemsi Paşa'nın sûret-i katline dâir tafsilatı hâvî Manastır Vilâyetinden şimdi alınan telgrafnâme leffen arz ve takdim kılınmış ve Manastır'da nezd-i âlîde tensib buyurulacak muktadir bir kumandânın vücûdu i'câb-ı hal". BOA, Y.A.HUS, 523/41, 7.7.1908; For the copy in the Ministry of the Interior: BOA, Y.MTV, 312/63, 8.7.1908; Şehsuvaroğlu, 'İkinci Meşrutiyet', p. 319; Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 513.

<sup>380</sup> "sâat yedi (~14:15) sıralarında, bir şahs-ı meçhûl tarafından birdenbire atılan birkaç el rovelver kurşunlarıyla cerh olunarak on dakika zarfında müteessiren vefât ettiği" İSAM, HHP, 19/1272, 7.7.1908.

<sup>381</sup> The response of İbrahim Paşa to the telegram communicating Şemsi Paşa's death, dated 7.7.1908. Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 207; Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 514.



Another telegram that arrived at 19:15 informed “Şemsi Paşa was assassinated while he was leaving the Telegraph Office, though there were a lot of people seeing him off, and also the guards from Prizren”. Although the identity of the culprit was not clear, a short officer was seen escaping from the crime scene.<sup>382</sup>

Rıf'at Bey describes the time-frame between Şemsi Paşa's arrival in Manastır, to the moment he died:<sup>383</sup>

To the General-Inspectorate, July 7, 1908  
The telegrams received from the deceased Şemsi Paşa's son-in-law Rıf'at Bey, the commander of the Manastır Gendarmerie concerning the assassination is attached:

Şemsi Paşa arrived in Manastır at nine in this morning with a special train. A gendarmerie private informed me that he went directly to the telegraph office.

I went to his high presence directly. He told about his special mission and told that he would take your humble servant to pursue the wrong-doers immediately. At that moment, the Regional Commander, the Commander of the Gendarmerie Division and the Central Commander had come to visit him. We went to the little room and communicated the information we could collect on the wrong-doers to the Imperial Palace, to the Commandership and to the Ministry of War.

In the midafternoon, he ate from the food that was brought, and informed that he would leave with a carriage, and the rented carriage came in front of the Telegraph Office. At seven and a half,<sup>384</sup> while the Central Commander Hamdi Bey, your humble servant, and other retinue officers were accompanying him outside to the carriage; at the moment he was getting into the carriage; a revolver was shot from the right hand side. Everyone tried to protect their lives in confusion while the deceased received bullets that entered his body from his right shoulder and pierced through his left. He was cared to the room upstairs and achieved the high honor of martyrdom.

His body was kept in the Telegraph Office for examination by the legal officers and was moved to the morgue after that. If there is no contradictory order the body will be buried tomorrow, I am waiting for the quick order of your highness in this context. July 7, 1908

Lieutenant Colonel Rıf'at

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<sup>382</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 25/1666, 7.7.1908.

<sup>383</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 20/1319, 7.7.1908.

<sup>384</sup> Old Turkish hour . The hour as reckoned from sunset.

None of the assaulter was identified yet. The investigation is continuing. These are probably officers. That is all.

According to Tahsin Paşa, the Head Secretary of the Palace:<sup>385</sup>

“Şemsi Paşa was a strong hope. The fact that he was murdered among a force of hundreds of Albanians and the fact that the bullet came out of an officer, shows the admission and resolution of the army and also that all the secret communication was followed by the Union and Progress”.

Abdülhamid was seriously affected by the fact that one of his most trusted commanders was murdered among a battalion of soldiers and personal guards, and the assassin could not be found.<sup>386</sup>

There is a lot of mistaken information about the assassination. For example, a thesis informs that Şemsi Paşa was assassinated in Selanik Train Station although the included citations like Akşin, Ahmad and Kuran point the place as Manastır.<sup>387</sup>

The “hidden Unionist” governor of Ohri, Süleyman Kani Bey (İrtem), claims that Şemsi Paşa would have been assassinated in Ohri if he arrived, but this plan became unnecessary with his death in Manastır and add: “The thing that saved the Committee from annihilation was the destruction of Şemsi Paşa”.<sup>388</sup> Şemsi Paşa taught the Unionists to be “an enemy to be approached carefully”. If he was not assassinated the odds are he would succeed in his mission, to destroy the Committee.<sup>389</sup> Müfid Şemsi relates that Zeynullah Bey and Cemal Ağa when talking to him later said “if he told us about Manastır, we would not leave him alone and spend time on Firzovik”.<sup>390</sup>

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<sup>385</sup> Tahsin Paşa, *Yıldız Hatıraları*, p. 487.

<sup>386</sup> Ertürk, *İki Devrin*, p. 38. This memoir confuses the 13 day difference between *Rumi* and Gregorian calendars. It places the declaration of Constitution 2 days after the assassination, which was, in fact 16 days later.

<sup>387</sup> İslamoğlu, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde*, pp. 61-62.

<sup>388</sup> İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 20.

<sup>389</sup> Saraçoğlu, *Unutulan Meşhurlarımızdan*, pp. 94, 99.

<sup>390</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 64.

Ahmed Refik mentions that Şemsi Paşa informed Yıldız about two officers that escaped, Selahaddin and Hasan Tosun just before the assassination. It is interesting that there is no detail concerning the assassination in his account.<sup>391</sup>

The assassination of Abdülhamid's most trusted and Rumeli's most powerful general, shocked everyone. More strikingly, the assassin who killed the general among hundreds of soldiers could not be caught; it is almost as if he was allowed to escape. It seems that Mazhar Bey, the Prosecutor of the Court of Appeals of Manastır, who is not mentioned in Mustafa Ragıb's book on this issue but can be seen in archival documents played an important role in the investigation. He shared his findings constantly with the Command of the Third Army and the General Inspectorate of Rumeli.

According to the information he provided short after the event: "no hint could be founded on whether the culprit was a civilian or an officer, even from those who were near the deceased". It is also informed "one of the voluntary soldiers that was brought with him, mentioned that he saw a short officer escape, but would not be able to identify him as he saw him from behind".<sup>392</sup> Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa ordered Mazhar Bey in his response to the telegrams sent by the latter: "to continue the investigation day and night and with great gravity and care, and inform him on the evidence and findings".<sup>393</sup>

Soon enough, limited information came out of witnesses. According to this information, some hints were gathered on the appearance of the officer, though his identity could not be discovered. The information was shared with security forces so that the culprit could not escape. It was also sent to the Manastır Governor, 3<sup>rd</sup> Army Command and the Inspector-General.<sup>394</sup>

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<sup>391</sup> Ahmed Refik, *İnkılâb-ı Azîm*, p. 41.

<sup>392</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 8/419-1, 7.7.1908.

<sup>393</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 8/419-3, 7.7.1908.

<sup>394</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 8/439, 7.7.1908.

The findings of the investigation were gathered and assessed in the local government building. Around 21:30, Hıfzı Paşa sent another detailed report to Selanik. According to the information gathered, the culprit was: “of middle height, chunky, dark-skinned, with a black moustache, wearing navy blue clothing, carrying a lieutenant symbol and approximately twenty six years old. He took shelter in shoemaker Daniş’s shop while his wounded leg was dripping blood. The information gathered from the foremen, Mişe and Papu, was certified by the neighboring shoemaker’s apprentice, İbrahim b. Yakub”.<sup>395</sup>

The evening of the day the assassination occurred the information gathered were forwarded to the Grand Vizierate,<sup>396</sup> a more detailed report prepared by Mazhar Bey was also sent to the Inspector-General. Right after the event, the blood marks on the ground, approximately 112 meters from the Post Office were followed to the shop of shoemaker Anastas and more blood were found in the building. The statements of the foreman and some other people were recorded. According to the statements, a young officer around the age of twenty five, of middle height, chunky, dark-skinned, with a black moustache, wearing navy blue clothing and a fez, carrying a star in his shoulder strap entered the building while gun shootings were going on. He told the people inside that he was shot on duty, and tried to stop his bleeding. He hid for a short while, and left the shop after the gun firing ceased. The local government was informed so that the military divisions could carry out an investigation of this bleeding officer.<sup>397</sup> The same report was sent to the Yıldız Palace with a note from Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, informing that new evidence was found.<sup>398</sup>

The information provided by Mazhar Bey, the prosecutor, was carefully considered both in Selanik and İstanbul. It was decided to found an Investigation

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<sup>395</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 25/1656, 7.7.1908, Hıfzı Paşa to Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa; The information matches with Atıf Bey. He was 28 at the time.

<sup>396</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 9/536, 7.7.1908.

<sup>397</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 19/1267-2, 7.7.1908, Mazhar Bey to the General Inspectorate at 21:00.

<sup>398</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 19/1267-1, 8.7.1908, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa to the Grand Vizierate at 12:15.

Committee because the culprit was not caught, and there was the possibility that other factors were included in his escape. This decision was forwarded to the General Inspectorate by the Grand Vizier. Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa informed the governor of Manastır to carry the order to the letter.<sup>399</sup> The committee was founded on July 8, 1908 under the leadership of Brigadier General (*Mirliva*) Şükrü Paşa.<sup>400</sup> The committee consisted of the Central Lower Court Prosecutor, Prosecutor of the Court of Appeals Mazhar Bey, member of the Court of Appeals Abdullah Efendi, Chief of Police, Gendarmerie Battalion Commander, member of the local government council Kenan Bey and Central Commander.<sup>401</sup> The investigation committee had only one aim: to investigate the assassination and determine the culprits and bring them to justice.

## 2.5 Firzovik in the Absence of Şemsi Paşa

The Albanians who were asked to gather in Firzovik and “act according to the orders of Şemsi Paşa” who was assigned by the Sultan, to “punish Young Turk traitors”<sup>402</sup> kept their promises and waited for Şemsi Paşa’s directions. However, the operation planned by Şemsi Paşa, had to be cancelled due to an unexpected bullet. The number of people gathering in Firzovik increased rapidly, but they did not know what to do as they were not given enough information and were not aware of the reason for their summoning. They also were not informed about the General’s death.

In those days, there was an announcement about the erection of a stage and an entertainment venue on a picnic ground in a place called Sarayışte close to

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<sup>399</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 9/516, 7.7.1908. This order was already sent from the Grand Vizierate both to the Inspectorate and to the governor of Manastır.

<sup>400</sup> BOA, *BEO*, 3352/251384, 7.7.1908; “it is asked to immediately inform about the investigation that is being carried out and whether the culprits are caught yet and what is being done”. İSAM, *HHP*, 19/1259, 7.7.1908.

<sup>401</sup> For the entire correspondence see, İSAM, *HHP*, 8/477-1,2,3, 8.7.1908; İSAM, *HHP*, 9/511, 8.7.1908.

<sup>402</sup> Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 77.

Firzovik.<sup>403</sup> It is mentioned that this picnic was organized for the students of a foreign school in Üsküb.<sup>404</sup> A rumor that the program was organized “to cover up the invasion prepared by the Austrian army” spread quickly.<sup>405</sup> The armed groups gathering in Firzovik burned down every wooden building in the entertainment venue and attacked the Austrian Consulate.<sup>406</sup>

The reported numbers of people gathered in the Firzovik meeting vary. The least of the estimates is 6.000, the most 40.000<sup>407</sup> while the most common is 30.000 armed men. Everyone was soon aware that the gathering in Firzovik turned into a bomb that was ready to explode. The members of Progress and Union were worried a lot with the news. They thought that the events in Prizren and Firzovik were provoked on purpose by Austria who was planning to invade Kosova on this pretext.<sup>408</sup> Sir Edwin Pears mentions it in these words: “The CPU saw that any attempt on the part of the Albanians against the Austrian Consul would bring in the Austrian Army and certainly postpone if not defeat their plans”.<sup>409</sup>

According to the memoirs of the Mufti of Manastır, Receb Cûdî Bey, he received some news from Firzovik in the morning of the day Şemsi Paşa was

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<sup>403</sup> The Albanians tore down the stage after they heard that dancers were going to perform, and threatened to burn down everything if the tourist train passed Kačanik. Union and Progress was forced to act immediately, fearing that an Austrian invasion would result from this reaction to Austrians. See, Miller, *The Ottoman Empire*, p. 475.

<sup>404</sup> Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 11; It seems that the organization was made by Ottoman citizens and not foreigners. “The management of the Üsküb Serbian Girls’ School sent some people to a small forest to organize an entertainment program for its students for the Spring”. İrtem, *Yıldız ve Jön Türkler*, p. 343.

<sup>405</sup> Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı*, Vol. 2, p. 179; Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 76.

<sup>406</sup> Pears, *Life of Abdul Hamid*, p. 287.

<sup>407</sup> The estimate by Ahmet Bey, the Mayor of Firzovik based on the number of bread that was distributed every day. Receb Cûdî Bey, ‘Kosova’da Vâki Firûz Bey Cem’iyeti Yahûd Ahâli-i Umûmiyyenin Hissiyât-ı Şeri’atperverânesi’, *Beyânül-Hakk Mecmuası*, No. 26 (29.3.1909), pp. 609-610.

<sup>408</sup> “...a fresh collision between the Albanians and the Austrians in Old Serbia was, no doubt erroneously, exaggerated into the excuse that Austria was supposed to be looking for in order to regularize its military and administrative hold on Old Serbia” Young, *Nationalism and War*, p. 114.

<sup>409</sup> Pears, *Life of Abdul Hamid*, p. 288.

assassinated. Albanians were gathered “against an entertainment trip organized by foreigners”. He was also invited. When they arrived in Üsküb following the invitation, he mentions that some people asked them in a nervous tone “to work for the success of the country and the nation disregarding the dangers”. According to him the desire of people gathering in Firzovik “was the success of the country, the happiness of the nation, the return of its strength and supremacy, and the elevation of religion and the state”. The means to achieve these ends were in conflict.<sup>410</sup>

Şemsi Paşa’s body was moved to the house of his son-in-law, Rıf’at Bey a while after his death, through Eğrikaş Mosque Street (now: *болка левата Сокак*) on the backside of the Telegraph Office.<sup>411</sup> The house Atıf was in hiding, was also on the same street, so he watched it as the body was moved. The body was buried in the garden of the Rıfai convent, the next day.<sup>412</sup>

The day after the assassination, Tahsin Paşa sent an order from Yıldız regarding to the sons of Şemsi Paşa in Mitroviça. Captain (*Yüzbaşı*) Müfid and Muammer were sent to İstanbul together with their brother-in-law Süreyya Bey, the chief of military dispatching in Selanik. The costs were paid by the state for this journey.<sup>413</sup> They were to be given every easement to live in İstanbul, with the order of the Sultan.

While leaving Selanik, they thanked for the payment of expenses and voiced some of their requests. For instance, Muammer Bey asked to become an aide of the Sultan and be taken to the service in the palace. Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa assured them

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<sup>410</sup> Receb Cûdî Bey’s memoir in *Beyanü’l-Hak* (Vols. 24-28), quot.in: Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, pp. 161, 174.

<sup>411</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, p. 487.

<sup>412</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 84; Külçe, *Osmanlı Tarihinde*, p. 347.

<sup>413</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 20/1297, 9.7.1908, the correspondences among Yıldız, Selanik and Mitroviça; İSAM *HHP*, 8/433, 10.7.1908, the order sent from Yıldız to the Third Army Command and the General Inspectorate of Rumeli; BOA, *TFR.I.KV*, 205/20424-3, 11.7.1908, the *Vilayet* of Kosovo was given permission to spend 3464 *kuruş* for the journey; BOA, *TFR.I.KV*, 205/20424-5, 9.7.1908, The report of Fevzi (Çakmak) Bey, the Deputy Commander of Mitroviça.

“they would be honored beyond their hopes as the Sultan knew their father’s loyalty and service”.<sup>414</sup>

One of the relatives of Şemsi Paşa named Adjutant Major Mehmed Ali Bey<sup>415</sup> was suspected for wounding Major General (*Ferik*) Sadık Paşa. The local government of Mitroviça gave a positive testament for him. The police reports were asked from Selanik as to his acquaintances. In the end, he was set free, due to the positive reports.<sup>416</sup> He arrived at Mitroviça on July 17, and reached Selanik to go to İstanbul, and the easement shown to the other members of the family were shown to him as well, and he was sent to İstanbul.<sup>417</sup>

The command of the troops that marched on Resne was given to his Unionist son-in-law, Rıf’at Paşa after his death.<sup>418</sup> Şemsi Paşa put a lot of effort in Rıf’at Bey’s promotion to Colonel (*Miralay*), even petitioning the Sultan. He was promoted the day that Şemsi Paşa died and given the command of Mitroviça as his successor. He started his new duty after receiving an official order allowing him to use Şemsi Paşa’s passwords.<sup>419</sup>

İbrahim Temo, although he strongly criticizes the members of the movement in Selanik and Manastır, respects Atif Bey, “the hero of liberty”, even defining him as the “unselfish Turk whose statue should be erected near Drahor”. He even prepared

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<sup>414</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 19/1290, 11.7.1908, the Rumeli Inspectorate to the Grand Vizierate.

<sup>415</sup> According to Külçe he was a propagandist of the Committee of Union and Progress in Mitroviça, İpek, Plava and Gusinya. Külçe, *Osmanlı Tarihinde*, p. 359.

<sup>416</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 20/1301, 16.7.1908.

<sup>417</sup> He is referred to as the elder son of Şemsi Paşa in this document. İSAM, *HHP*, 20/1307, 20.7.1908; however there is no mention of a son named “Mehmet Ali” in population registers.

<sup>418</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, pp. 219-220; It is reported that he could not take command because the soldiers did not obey his orders, although he was promoted. Daily Telegraph, Vienna, 16.7.1908, quot.in: BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/45-4, 28.3.1909.

<sup>419</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 25/1667, 8.7.1908.



ten thousand postcards for him in Vienne, giving some out and donating the rest to the “National Charity Association for the Ottoman Navy”.<sup>420</sup>

A “top secret” telegram was sent to Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, by Mazhar Bey. It was ascertained that the person shot by the guardians was an officer. Moreover, the number of the officers in the battalions and the identities of the two missing officers were also known. This way, the identity of the officer whose age and appearance was known could easily be deducted. The issue would be resolved with a tiny investigation done by the military officials.<sup>421</sup>

The Magistrate of the Vilayet of Manastır Kemal Bey was a member of the secret committee and was aware of the attempt Atıf Bey planned. He went directly to the crime scene after hearing that Şemsi Paşa was killed, together with the deputy prosecutor Asım Bey. They aimed at making the situation more complex, rather than collecting information from the people they questioned. This was made easier as the blood stains were cleared by rain. The only information they gathered and ascertained was that the young man who ran away after the assassination had a military uniform. The report they prepared mentioned that the assassination was carried out by an unknown person in military suit who ran away to an undetermined side and there were no positive findings. It seems that Kemal Bey tried to close the case with this report.<sup>422</sup>

Rumeli Inspectorate was informed that a commission under the leadership of Brigadier General (*Mirliva*) Şükrü Paşa with eight members was founded to investigate the murder of Şemsi Paşa.<sup>423</sup> The Ministry of War was informed in another telegram that the assassin was still not identified.<sup>424</sup> İstanbul reminded the

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<sup>420</sup> The postcard has these lines on it: *Manastır'da vurup bir dev-i ekber / Eden temin-i hak bu kahramandır / Şeyâtin korkar elbet savletinden / Bilirler berk-i hâtif bâmandandır.* For the appreciation letter of the association see, Temo, *İttihad ve Terakki*, pp. 241-243.

<sup>421</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 19/1278, 8.7.1908, Mazhar Bey to the General Inspectorate.

<sup>422</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 519.

<sup>423</sup> BOA, *BEO*, 3352/251388, 8.7.1908.

<sup>424</sup> BOA, *BEO*, 3352/251385, 8.7.1908; BOA, *BEO*, 3353/251422, 9.7.1908.

importance of this issue again and again. The General Inspectorate was asked to deepen the investigation and take every necessary step not to allow the murderer to get away.<sup>425</sup>

The shoemaker's shop, in which Atif Bey hid, was discovered soon enough. The place he hid after that was still not known. However, it was learned that a few other officers escaped, and it was possible that one of these was the assassin. According to the report dated July 8, 1908, "a quick explanation" was requested as "some officers ran away today other than Selahaddin and Hasan Beys who ran away beforehand".<sup>426</sup> At the same time, Field Marshal (*Müşir*) Osman Fevzi Paşa was informed that he would move to Manastır with the title "Extraordinary Commander". He was to be helped, so as not to suffer the same fate as Şemsi Paşa.

The commission found some people who witnessed Şemsi Paşa's death and the events after it. Generally, they could not provide any useful information when they were questioned. It seems nobody understood what was going on. In fact, they were trying to cover the situation on purpose.

The bullet that killed Şemsi Paşa was removed by doctors. It was sent to the Artillery Command for ballistics report.<sup>427</sup> However, this examination yielded no results as well.

A rumor started circulating that the assassin was from the battalion of Major Ali Barut Bey. In fact, two officers from this battalion were missing: Mehmed Ali and Atif.<sup>428</sup> The information was there too quickly reach a conclusion with a careful

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<sup>425</sup> BOA, *BEO*, 3352/251391, 8.7.1908.

<sup>426</sup> BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/55-8, 8.7.1908; BOA, *BEO*, 3352/251387, 8.7.1908; "The escape of some military personnel within the Manastır region together with two officers and its relation to the murder of Şemsi Paşa" BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/55-11, 9.7.1908, the Grand Vizier Ferid Paşa to Yıldız; İSAM, *HHP*, 9/523, 8.7.1908.

<sup>427</sup> BOA, *BEO*, 3355/251584, 12.7.1908; İSAM, *HHP*, 26/1693, 11.7.1908.

<sup>428</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 549.

investigation. However, the fact that the clerks working in judiciary institution were overwhelmingly Unionists made this impossible.

The names of the people on the crime scene during the assassination were determined, and the commission was informed. The commission was asked to investigate the reasons why these people were there at that moment: Manastır Reserve Sergeant Major Debreli Tosun Bey, Reserve Cavalry Deputy Captain Zünnun Efendi, Faik the owner of the coffee shop near Telegraph Office, Şaban from the Officers coffee shop and *Şimendüfer* Abdullah from another coffee shop.<sup>429</sup> They also decided to listen to those near the General in the telegraph office. Central Commander Colonel Hamdi Bey was the highest ranking among them. Since he was in Selanik nowadays; he was asked to give a written statement.<sup>430</sup>

According to the updated report given to the Grand Vizier on July 9, 1908: “It is revealed that the assassin is a military officer, the clarification of his identity are bound to the effort the military will put in it, so the commandership should be informed and the civilian side should continue with its investigations”.<sup>431</sup> The identity of the assassin was about to be revealed, but to catch him; the military command had to show every effort. However, it seems that the local forces had no desire, or effort to spend to this end.

It seems that the soldiers helped in the chaos by firing in the air as mentioned in the report prepared the day after the assassination: “Both the Albanian voluntaries that came with Şemsi Paşa, and about fifty imperial soldiers that were on the scene, fired their guns when Şemsi Paşa was assassinated, but the bullets did not hit anybody, except a barber”.<sup>432</sup> It is thought that this was done on purpose either to frighten the people around, or to let the culprits escape. Rumelian Inspectorate

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<sup>429</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 8/430, 9.7.1908, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa to the governor of Manastır and the Third Army Command.

<sup>430</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 9/551, 9.7.1908, Hıfzı Paşa to the General Inspectorate and to the Grand Vizierate.

<sup>431</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 9/543-2, 9.7.1908, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa to Grand Vizier Said Paşa.

<sup>432</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 9/543, 9.7.1908.

ordered the investigation of this issue. It is mentioned that there were no other military troops around the Telegraph Office other than the two battalions and the Albanian guard Şemsi Paşa brought with him. Because these guards were clothed in military style, their actions were mistaken for those of the soldiers. This issue was deeply investigated by the commission anyway. Hüseyin Paşa was informed by the Manastır Region Command and the Commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army İbrahim Paşa.<sup>433</sup>

The Head Secretary of the Palace Tahsin Paşa, in a message starting with the statement “a seditious person could spoil the entire army” informed the order to take every necessary caution “to carry out reprisal on the assassin who dared to kill an experienced, moral and loyal person like Şemsi Paşa, to provide an example and to protect *şeriat* and law”.<sup>434</sup>

Abdülhamid’s policy was forcefully suppressing the events changed unexpectedly with the murder of Şemsi Paşa. The “extraordinary General” Osman Fevzi Paşa was sent to Selanik with the mission to compromise to solve the problems rather than using forceful methods.<sup>435</sup> He was given long instruction by the Head Secretary of Abdülhamid, Tahsin Paşa before he left İstanbul. He was asked to counsel the Inspector-General and the Commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army and decide on the course, to take once in Selanik. The consultations would be with Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa on civil issues and İbrahim Paşa on military ones. He was also asked to inform Yıldız Palace constantly. The harm the loss of discipline in the army could cause to the country was stressed in this text.<sup>436</sup>

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<sup>433</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 4/223, 12.7.1908.

<sup>434</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 211; For the entire document given to Osman Paşa who was assigned after Şemsi Paşa to the same position. See, BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/55-9, 8.7.1908.

<sup>435</sup> Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, p. 13.

<sup>436</sup> “Rumeli’de hakimiyet-i devlet-i aliyenin bekası için askerinin intizam ve itaat tahtında bulunması lüzumu derkâr ve esasen ahali içinde vuku bulacak bir uygunsuzluğun önünü almak ancak kuvve-i askeriye ile mümkün olacağından, her şeyden evvel askerinin içinde muhal-i kânun ve sadakat ve itaat bir hal var ise onun ıslahına müsâraat edilmek hükmünde idüğü aşikârdır” BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/55-9, 8.7.1908.

Hıfzı Paşa, governor of Manastır, later informed the Grand Vizierate that the commission ended his work and all the paperwork was sent to the General Inspectorate in Selanik. Despite the depth of the work, the assassin could not be found. This information was forwarded to Abdülhamid by the Grand Vizier Ferid Paşa.<sup>437</sup>

As rumors that Şemsi Paşa “was martyred by the people of Manastır” were spreading throughout Rumeli. Civil and military authorities were ordered to take necessary precautions so as not to allow any harmful activity by the Muslims and Christians of the region.<sup>438</sup>

When Şemsi Paşa died in the assassination, his preparations to destroy, the committee came to naught. No one could dare to struggle a committee that was able to effectively remove a strong general like him. Niyazi Bey stresses this in his memoirs:

“In my opinion, the action against Şemsi Paşa who started his activities with great speed and power, gained the utmost satisfaction of both the Committee and the entire nation. This action which prevented the realization of a certain mischief had the properties of an exemplary warning. As a result, after this action that inspired undescrivable joy the line of movement changed naturally”.<sup>439</sup>

The plans made in the Palace came to naught with Şemsi Paşa’s assassination. Tahsin Paşa describes the situation by pointing out “*Albanians, who constituted the only supporting power of Sultan Hamid in Rumeli were shaking. Unpleasant news was arriving from them as well. Especially the meeting in Firzovik constituted an open threat*”.<sup>440</sup> One of the most important changes after the assassination was about the employment of Albanians. The ten thousand of armed people that gathered in

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<sup>437</sup> BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/113, 17.7.1908; İSAM, *HHP*, 9/534, 18.7.1908, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa to the Grand Vizierate.

<sup>438</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 25/1661, 9.7.1908, the Commander of the Greek border Edhem to Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa.

<sup>439</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 140.

<sup>440</sup> Tahsin Paşa, *Yıldız Hatıraları*, p. 487.

Firzovik, to respond Şemsi Paşa's summons became an armed group without any aim, waiting for someone to convince and use them.<sup>441</sup>

Galib Bey of Kalkandelen, a graduate of Military Academy (*Erkan-ı Harbiye Mektebi*) founded the Kosova Vilayet organization of the Ottoman Freedom Society (*Osmanlı Hürriyet Cemiyeti*) whose center was in Üsküb. He was a close friend of Enver Bey, and a gendarmerie officer trusted by Austrian military officers. In 1907, near two thirds of the officers in Kosova were members of the Committee and they gained the trust of civilians and some local leading men.<sup>442</sup>

Mahmut Şevket Paşa, the governor of Kosova assigned Galib Bey as the leader of the committee on July 7, 1908, to disperse the meeting in Firzovik with the consent of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army Command and the General Inspectorate.<sup>443</sup> Their mission was to advise the gathering people and not to allow any rowdiness. The committee consisted of twenty people who were members of the Üsküb branch of the CPU. Although their aim at the foundation is open to discussion, they started Unionist propaganda among the gathered people in the end.<sup>444</sup> The committee which was consisting entirely of Unionists including Mehmet Arslan Efendi, the mufti of Üsküb, Necip Draga (1867-1921)<sup>445</sup> and Emin Bey of Kalkandelen, went to Firzovik

<sup>441</sup> “Abdülhamit’in Arnavutlara oldukça itimadı ve bunların şecaat ve sadakatleri hakkında kuvvetli bir kanaati vardı. Sultan Hamit’in Arnavutlara karşı bu itimadı onun için bir siyasetin temelini teşkil ediyordu. Rumeli’de Arnavutlar Abdülhamit siyasetinin bir istihkâmı gibi telakki oluyordu. O derece ki İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti Rumeli’den Yıldız Sarayı’ni tazyik ettiği zaman Sultan Hamit ‘her ne olsa Arnavutların kendine sadık kalacaklarından ve lede’l-hace kendi tarafına iltihak ile Cemiyet’e karşı hattâ silahla mukabele edeceklerinden şüphe etmemekte idi. [...] Bilâhare vukuat bu zehabın ne kadar yanlış olduğunu göstermiştir”, Tahsin Paşa, *Yıldız Hatıraları*, pp. 65-66.

<sup>442</sup> Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 152.

<sup>443</sup> Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 52; İSAM, *HHP*, 20/1295, 18.7.1908; General Galip Pasinler (1866-1939). Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, pp. 184-185; Şemsi Paşa was suspicious of Galib Bey's relations with locals during his mission in Kumanova and asked for his assignment to a proper place. BOA, *TFR.I.AS*, 59/5833, 20.5.1908; Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, p. 270.

<sup>444</sup> Unionists used for their propaganda a rumor “Şemsi Paşa gave Austrians reason for invasion by taking his battalions in Kosovo to Manastır”. Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı*, Vol. 2, p. 187.

<sup>445</sup> When Şemsi Paşa heard that Necip Bey’ was among the Constitutionalists he is reported to have said: “Those wanting it are rascals; they do not want a parliament they just want enmity against the Sultan”. Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 60.

and “within twelve days turned this armed group ready to serve the Committee”.<sup>446</sup> While the aim at the beginning was to disperse the Albanians and prevent them from attacking Austrians to prevent foreign intervention, with the successful work of Galib Bey, the situation turned to the favor of Unionists.

According to Pears, the news received from Paris gave him the chance to have information on what was going on with the Firzovik meeting and the Progress and Union.<sup>447</sup> Buxton stresses that the Unionists carried out a very clever propaganda activity in Firzovik. According to him, the Albanians were told that the government was carrying out murders against them; it was blocking their right to receive an education according to their own culture; it was not showing any effort for their economic well-being, and it was turning a blind eye on the activities of the Austrians on Albanian soils.<sup>448</sup> Andonyan says that the Albanians which were gathered by Şemsi Paşa, to fight against Unionists were used by the latter. They convinced them that their movement was aimed at “protecting the country from foreign intervention”, and this way “they united with the Albanians who were supposed to march against rebels, and asked for constitution”.<sup>449</sup>

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<sup>446</sup>This committee included influential figures like Emin Bey of Kalkandelen, Receb Efendi of Presova, Hacı Veysel Efendi of Petrovica, Ferhad Bey, Şerif and Yahya Efendis from Prizren, Hoca Şâban Efendi of Üsküb, and Hafız Receb Efendi. Galip Paşa, *Galip Paşa'nın Hâtıraları*, p. 10; Uzunçarşılı, '1908 Yılında', p. 125.

<sup>447</sup> Pears, confuses the dates of Abdülhamid's actions after this point: “On July 19, 800 soldiers arrived at Manastir. Shemshi Pasha left Uskub with two battalions. Niazi and Enver were to be attacked, but the troops refused to fire on their comrades, and Shemshi himself was shot as he was about to lead them to the Resna Hills” Pears, *Life of Abdul Hamid*, p. 288; he mentions that the news of Şemsi Paşa arrived on July 23, 1908 at the time of the last cabinet meeting in which Constitutionalism was debated. This is one of the important mistakes of the author: “It was during the sitting of this memorable Council that news arrived that General Shemshi [Şemsi] had been openly shot in the streets of Manastir. Other telegrams announced that all the troops in Macedonia were in favour of the telegraphic demands for the re-establishment of the Constitution”. Pears, *Life of Abdul Hamid*, p. 291; In the compilation called “La révolte turque” it is mentioned that the assassination of Şemsi Paşa did not have a lasting effect on the Albanians, in Pristina they were attacking government officials, and in Siroz soldiers are protesting, while something similar to Resne happened in Nevrekop. BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/45-3, 28.3.1909.

The effect on the Albanians of the assassination of the general Chemsî pasha was not long to appear indicator that their frightening adversary had disappeared, with Greenhouses they have expels the Turkish authorities of this district. II. in at of the same summer has Prichtina (Reuter)

<sup>448</sup> Buxton, *Turkey in Revolution*, p. 60.

<sup>449</sup> Andonyan, *Balkan Savaşı*, p. 158.

Sadık Bey, the chief of the Manastır branch of the CPU wrote a congratulation letter to Atif Bey on July 9, 1908, which was given to him in Ohri.<sup>450</sup>

Field Marshal Osman Paşa, a member of the High Military Inspection Committee who took over the mission Şemsi Paşa could not complete, arrived in Selanik on the night of July 9, 1908.<sup>451</sup> Precautions were taken not to allow similar situations after the attacks that cost the lives of the Mufti of the Division Mustafa Efendi and Şemsi Paşa. Selanik Gendarmerie Division Command and Police Office took security measures on the roads Osman Paşa was going to pass through; inside, and outside of the hotel he was going to stay in. These security measures started in İstanbul and continued in Selanik until he reached Manastır.<sup>452</sup>

Osman Paşa wanted to come up with a plan on his course of action after he talked with İbrahim Paşa, the commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army; as Abdülhamid asked him to do so. The plans against Niyazi Bey and his band were reviewed. It was found out that some officers like Hasan Tosun Bey and Selahattin Bey who escaped from their posts in Manastır and Selanik, were not yet able to join the band. Abdülhamid had to give up on struggling through harsh military methods, after his most trusted commander with a strong influence in the region was killed by an officer. The policy Field Marshal Osman Paşa was about to follow, and the attempts of Major General Şükrü Paşa in the last days were on the same line: To convince with counsel.<sup>453</sup>

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<sup>450</sup> Şehsuvaroğlu, 'İkinci Meşrutiyet', p. 320; for a photocopy of the original letter see, p. 331; Mustafa Rağıp, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, pp. 590-593; the transcription of this document can be seen in Appendix.

<sup>451</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 19/1253, 9.7.1908.

<sup>452</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 26/1708, 10.7.1908, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa to gendarmerie and police forces and the Yıldız Palace.

<sup>453</sup> "Osman Paşa should inform them to haste back to their previous noble military duties without fear and Ferik Şükrü Paşa's counsel and advices should be renewed for those who are in need of them". (*bilâ-havf ve ihtirâz-ı avdet ve vezâif-i mukaddese-i askeriyelerini kemâ kâne ifâya müsâraâtle ibrâz-ı sadâkât eylemeleri hususlarının Müşîr-i müşârun ileyh (Osman Paşa) hazretleri cânibinden kendilerine tebliğ ve te'kid ve Birinci Ferik Şükrü Paşa Hazretleri marifetiyle ifâ kılınmakda olan nasâyih ve tefhîmâtın dahî iktizâ edenlere tecdîd ve te'kid olunması[...]*), İSAM, *HHP*, 19/1251, 9.7.1908, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa'dan Yıldız Sarayı Başkitâbeti'ne.



The decisions taken in the strategy meeting in Selanik on the evening of July 9, 1908 were as follows:<sup>454</sup>

1. The return of the deserters without fear of punishment, and the continuance of their noble military duties in obedience and loyalty should be achieved. This was also a message for secret Unionist officers who did not yet join the rebellion openly.
2. Pursuing against Niyazi and his men will continue as before.
3. “The arrival of Anatolian reserve troops in the fastest way possible” was seen to be essential. Because the soldiers in Rumelia were not trusted, the military action was to be carried out by troops from Anatolia.
4. “The members and supporters of the plotting committee among the officers” and the troops they were commanding, were going to be moved from their current positions, to a “safer” place.
5. Because undertaking this shift in the places of duty directly would cause more harm, the troops which “were members or supporters of the plotting committee” were to be transferred to other regions “from their current positions with the pretext of pursuing bandits”. This way, these “nests of mischief” would not be able to contact each other; and troops from Anatolia who was not yet “spoiled” would take their positions.
6. The problem of delayed promotions and payments should be resolved as soon as possible, so as not to cause more discontent.
7. “The malicious people (who wanted to harm the country and the Sultan) were to be completely rooted out, and the army was to be cleaned of those in the way of error and mischief as the high necessity of the Imperial order of his majesty the Caliph”.

Osman Paşa was to “move to Manastır on Sunday (12.7.1908) with the grace of God to act according to the related points ”.<sup>455</sup>

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<sup>454</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 19/1251, 9.7.1908.

<sup>455</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 19/1253, 9.7.1908.

The consuls of the Great Powers in Manastır and Selanik informed their countries about the assassination and the following situation, right after the event.<sup>456</sup> Next day, the assassination was in the news, in European newspapers, together with negative comments claiming that the Ottoman Empire was not able to keep order in Macedonia. The ambassadors in İstanbul contacted the Foreign Ministry and the Grand Vizierate to share their knowledge, and to communicate their worries. The Head Translator of the Austrian Embassy in İstanbul visited the Foreign Minister at the same time. He warned him that if European press got a hold of the fact that Şemsi Paşa was murdered by some rebels, this would turn into negative propaganda against the Ottoman state. He suggested ways to take effective precautions. The Minister related the issue directly to the Grand Vizier.<sup>457</sup> Ferid Paşa, on the other hand, claimed that the Austrian Embassy was exaggerating and “the issue was not as important as it is thought, and the necessary actions were taken by the state according to the necessities of the situation with the possible speed”. The reply mentioned that law and order was restored in the city. However, as the issue was important and urgent, it was still left to the information and approval of the Sultan.<sup>458</sup> That the wounded assassin could not be found, and more officers escaped, left the Grand Vizier Ferid Paşa helpless. The fact that a very prestigious general was killed and that the government could not find a solution, made it necessary for Yıldız to take action. The information received from the Austrian Embassy, and the Foreign Ministry was passed onto the Sultan. “It was natural that the situation would result in a terrifically bad effect on Europe, and to calm the thoughts and reveal the truth, the adequacy and the safety of the measures taken in Manastır (seems) in need of revision”. Everyone was waiting to see Abdülhamid’s reaction.<sup>459</sup>

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<sup>456</sup> Grand Vizier Ferid Paşa informed Yıldız after he received information from the Austrian Embassy that the General Inspector was ordered “not to allow any action contrary to the consent of the Sultan and continue with the investigation and catch the culprits with great care”. The issue of the escapee officers was not yet verified. BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/55-6, 8.7.1908.

<sup>457</sup> BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/55-7, 8.7.1908.

<sup>458</sup> BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/55-4, 9.7.1908.

<sup>459</sup> BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/55-5, 9.7.1908, the Grand Vizier to the Head Secretary.

French newspaper, *Matin* wrote, “The revolutionist Young Turk Movement was spread to the entire Macedonia” in the news given with the “Turkish Rebellion” headline, mentioning that it was not known if the movement had a leader. It also writes that nearly all of the Young Turks “did not want to attack foreigners”, and that they gave their word “they would not engage in any new activity that could cause foreign intervention”.<sup>460</sup> For Young Turks, although Europe was a model ideologically, it was a political threat. For this reason, the revolution of July 1908 was seen as the success of “anti-European Muslims”.<sup>461</sup>

For a long time, European states led by Britain wanted the lowering of the number of Ottoman soldiers in Macedonia and the spreading of Gendarmerie, in which European officers also served. The fact that, some officers and soldiers whose duty was to police the region formed bands and took to the hills, created a great discomfort. The order sent from Yıldız with the signature of Tahsin Paşa was as follows:<sup>462</sup>

“For a long time foreigners have been claiming that the soldiers were not useful in the pursue missions, and they were complaining that order and security in that region was lost. Now this event will strengthen the false claims of foreigners and open the door for new complaints and statements; it is heard that the other states will ask for the replacement of soldiers in Rumeli with gendarmerie. How this situation will put the state in a difficult position at a time when the avoiding and resolving this problem is thought of, does not need explanation. The foreigners, who are already partitioning the Muslims throughout the world, are attempting to create disunion in this region to –God forbid- achieve their aim of

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<sup>460</sup> *Matin*, 16.7.1908. BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/45-2, 28.3.1909.

<sup>461</sup> Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 184.

<sup>462</sup> “*Ecânib cânibinden öteden beri askerinin takibatda yararlık göstermediği ve o havâlide emniyet ve asayişin mefkûd bir halde bulunduğu makâm-ı şikâyette serd ve beyân edilmekte iken şimdi bu gibi ahvâlin vuku’u müddeiyât-ı kâzibe-i hariciyeye takviye ile yeniden bir takım şikâyât ve beyânâta kapı açacağından başka devletlerin Rumeli’de asker yerine jandarma konulması yolunda bir teklif dermeyânını tasavvur ettikleri işitilmekte ve def’ ve reddi çaresi düşünülmekte bulunduğu şu sıra devleti nasıl bir mevkî-i müşkile ilkâ edeceği muhtâc-ı beyân değildir. Zaten ecanib bütün dünyada İslam arasına tefrika düşürmekte oldukları gibi oralarda da bu suretle ikâ-i tefrikaya kalkışmış olup bununla maazallah Teala oralarca maksâd-ı işgâlin te’mini cihetine gidecekleri ve Bulgarların da Edirne’ye ve daha ileriye doğru hareket için bundan istifadeye şitâbân olacakları derkârdır”*

BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/55-9, 8.7.1908

invading there, and it seems that the Bulgarians will take advantage of it by marching on to Edirne and beyond”.

The sensitivity of the Young Turks about foreign intervention was the most stressed propaganda material during the Reval meeting. It seems that this sensitivity was shared by the Hamidian government as well. The envisioned march of the Bulgarians on Edirne became a reality a few years later during the Balkan Wars.

## 2.6 “We will march on İstanbul if liberty is not proclaimed!”

Tokay emphasizes that the rebellion spread quickly after Şemsi Paşa’s assassination, and Niyazi Bey found a headquarters for the rebellion in Ohri with the help of Selahaddin and Hasan Tosun Beys. Niyazi Bey did not only get the support of the Muslims of Ohri, but also that of the leaders of the Albanian movement (Çercis and Adem Bey).<sup>463</sup>

Şemsi Paşa’s assassination made it clear again, how effective and widespread was the Young Turk movement in Manastır. Of course, there were spies inside, who managed to put their fingers on these dissident groups and report them to the Palace. Mustafa Şevket Bey, the regimental chaplain (*Alay Müftüsü*) of Manastır is an example; he was going to İstanbul, possibly to share his knowledge right after the assassination. The telegraphs were not so safe at this region with high Unionist support for transmitting sensitive information. He arrived in Selanik on July 9, and settled in the Colombo Hotel. He was planning to take the train to İstanbul, the next day. It is not known whether he met another official, or with İsmail Mahir Paşa who was assigned to investigate the secret committee. He was assassinated in the next morning by Abdülkadir Efendi, one of the partisans of the Committee.<sup>464</sup> The news was received with joy by the members of the Union.

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<sup>463</sup> F.O. 881/9458, there are several technical mistakes in this short paragraph, though it refers to Ramsaur and Ahmad. Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 171.

<sup>464</sup> There is conflicting information about the date of the assassination. The date on the letter is written as “24 Haziran 1324 Cuma” (7.7.1908 Friday). See, Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p 127; However, 24 Haziran is not a Friday; the closest Friday is 27 Haziran 1324 (10.7.1908). In fact,

A letter signed by “Ottoman Committee of Progress and Union Manastır Branch” was sent to Niyazi Bey: He was informed “it was officially ascertained that the regimental chaplain was killed in Selanik, this morning” (*Selânik'te bu sabah alay müftüsünün öldürüldüğü sûret-i kat'iyeye ve resmîyede tahakkuk etmiştir*). The same letter informed also “here, Şemsi Paşa was executed openly, and the culprit was protected” (*burada Şemsi Paşa alenen i'dâm edilmiş; fedâkâr himâye edilmiştir*). The reason this assassination was informed three days later is open to discussion. Both of the assassinations were received with joy by Niyazi Bey and his friends. He mentions his relief in these words: “There was no need to take asylum in Debre and malisya, and to be cautious of the vicious forces”.<sup>465</sup>

Niyazi Bey related his gratefulness to Atıf Bey by saying that he “would eternally bless this hand (he) would love to kiss which prevented him from having to fight against Şemsi Paşa”. Additionally, he was informed that Selahaddin and Hasan Tosun Bey took to the hills from Manastır to join the band.<sup>466</sup>

It was decided to take the investigation committee under İsmail Mahir Paşa in Selanik. Because, the expected benefit in prevention from this commission did not materialize, and the partisans who feared being under surveillance increased their attacks. Sadık Paşa from the Commission, for example, was killed on a ship returning to İstanbul by a Unionist partisan who was a law student.<sup>467</sup> Moreover,

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The Manchester Guardian writes in 17.7.1908 in a piece with the headline “An Assassination against a Spy” that the assassination was carried out on the morning of July 10. See, Aykut Kansu, “Devrimci Süreç: Selanik'te Manastır Alay Müftüsüne Düzenlenen Suikast”, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/>, 16.7.2008 (2.12.2012); The assassination date was given as July 10, 1908, see, *F.O.* 371/544-388, Barclay to Grey, Salonica, July 13, 1908, quot.in: Ravindranathan, *The Young Turk*, p. 70; However, in the same dissertation, two *mufti* was assassinated. Mustafa Şevket Bey was shot dead on July 12 at the train station, see, *F.O.* 371/544, Lamb to Barclay, Salonica, July 10, 1908, quot.in: Ravindranathan, *The Young Turk*, p. 63; The palace thought that Talat Bey was involved in the murder, and ordered his exile to Anatolia. However, Talat Bey refused and resisted the decision and never left Selanik according to Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa. Bleda, *İmparatorluğun Çöküşü*, pp. 38-41.

<sup>465</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 128.

<sup>466</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 129.

<sup>467</sup> Alkan relates that Hakkı Bey from the commission was killed on July 6. Alkan, *Mutlakiyetten Meşrutiyete*, p. 177; Akşin claims that the commission was attacked by a law student while returning from Selanik on a ship together with the mufti of Manastır Division, and two were killed,

another member Hakkı Bey and his assistant were attacked near the White Tower in Selanik, and Şuayp Bey was killed here.

The report given to the Grand Vizierate on July 10, 1908, mentioned that the failure at identifying the murderer of Şemsi Paşa was because of the complexity of the assassination, rather than the slowness of the investigation. Third Army Commander İbrahim Paşa and Müşir Osman Paşa gathered and discussed the situation repeatedly during the day. Osman Paşa was to give utmost importance to this issue once he arrived in Manastır.<sup>468</sup>

Although four days have passed after the event, the special commission could not move forward from the information it gathered on the first day. Most interviewed people claimed that they had no knowledge while some claimed to see a wounded officer enter the shoemaker's shop. Despite this, the statements about the appearance of the culprit were contradictory, and this was probably because the Progress and Union tried to protect Atif Bey by leading the commission to a dead end. Still, Manastır Regional Command was to be asked whether there was a wounded officer or not.<sup>469</sup>

Osman Paşa, who decided to end the events through counsel and "soft" methods, managed to pass an amnesty for committee members including those that escaped and took to the hills.<sup>470</sup> In a report to the Yıldız Palace dated July 10, with the joint signatures of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, İbrahim Paşa and Osman Paşa, the palace was informed that the investigations to find the murderer was continuing. The loyalty of the army was stressed. It was mentioned that the communication lines between the Committee members and Niyazi Bey's band should be cut in order to prevent the latter's activities. They also expressed their opinions to change the posts

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while two were wounded. Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 76; It seems that the person who killed on the ship was Sadık Paşa while the mufti was killed in Selanik on 10.7.1908.

<sup>468</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 9/537, 10.7.1908.

<sup>469</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 26/1692, 11.7.1908.

<sup>470</sup> Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 62.

of Unionist officers carefully, not to delay promotions and payments, and to place Anatolian troops primarily to Manastır and the region around it.<sup>471</sup>

For Niyazi Bey, there was no reason to fear now that Şemsi Paşa was killed, and the army was under the control of Unionist officers. It was not the time to escape, but the time to attack, “the problems that prevented union with Çercis were resolved quickly”.<sup>472</sup> The following days were spent in the villages north of Ohri, informing the villagers about the intentions of the Committee. The only problem experienced were the refusal of the people of Radovişte to allow the band in.

In the meanwhile, the movement in Firzovik continued. Kosova gendarmerie commander Colonel Galib Bey, reported to Selanik that part of the Albanians who gathered there for an undetermined cause were dispersed, and nearly one thousand remained on July 10, 1908.<sup>473</sup> If the group was really disperse, it should be the one attacking around in protest of the picnic in Sarayışte. It is possible that these were not among the Albanians that gathered in Firzovik after Şemsi Paşa’s call. It is not plausible that Galib Bey would disperse this group rather than try to use them for the Committee’s aims. If there was an attempt to disperse the gathered Albanians, this should have been done in fear of Austrian intervention. In fact, in the letter sent to the Grand Vizierate by the Inspector-General, the measures taken to ensure order were listed, and it was mentioned that the Firzovik meeting did not have any relations with these events because the officers sent there dispersed most of the people.<sup>474</sup> On the other hand, the participation of the group increased. Albanian leaders from Priştina invited those from Prizren and İpek to renew their “besa”s.<sup>475</sup>

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<sup>471</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, pp. 212-213.

<sup>472</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 140; Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, p. 621.

<sup>473</sup> To the contrary, Galib Bey did everything in his power to increase the number of the gathered Albanians. Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı*, Vol. 2, p. 187.

<sup>474</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 9/540-2, 11.7.1908.

<sup>475</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 9/540-1, 10.7.1908; Document informing that the Grand Vizierate was informed about the reasons of Firzovik meeting. İSAM, *HHP*, 9/538, 10.7.1908.

The letter sent to the Manastır branch by Resneli Niyazi Bey on Saturday, July 11, started with the sentence “I was informed that Ferik Şemsi Paşa who was assigned to pursue us was killed by \_\_\_\_ Efendi” summarized the activities they have undertaken and asked to be informed about the influence of their activities.<sup>476</sup> Especially, the responses of the Macedonian non-Muslims and European states were wondered. The response reached him two days later when he was in Ohri. Niyazi Bey and Atıf Bey who was brought there met for the first time in here. They flattered and congratulated each other on the struggle they put up for the fatherland and liberty.<sup>477</sup>

The band, under the leadership of Çerçis, was an Albanian nationalist separatist group before the foundation of Progress and Union. These southern Albanians from the Tosk group claimed that they were forced “to act alone for their miserable fatherland as the Turks were negligent and indifferent in working in the name of Ottomanism”.<sup>478</sup> Things have changed now, for a constitutional state that provides equality based on citizenship for every group, both sides needed this alliance.

Union with Çerçis was crucial for the band to be powerful and efficient. As a result, the band wandered around Starova, a city with a dense Albanian population south of Lake Ohri between 14 and 18 of July. However, Çerçis and his band did not show up. The Committee asked the band to move to Manastır region for the final assault on the city.<sup>479</sup>

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<sup>476</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 145-146; The name mentioned here, was someone other than Atıf Bey. The response received by Niyazi Bey states “our volunteer friend is not the one you mentioned his name. However, we would love it if you did not write his name down”. (*fedai arkadaşımız sizin ismini yazdığınız zat değildir. Buna rağmen ismini de kat’iyyen kağıda geçirmemenizi cân-ı gönülden rica ederiz*) (p. 149) The fact that, this place was intentionally left blank in the original memoirs in 1908 might result from a desire not to cause speculations. Although, the name is written as Atıf (Kamçıl) in the transliterated version, see, Ahmed Niyazi, *Hürriyet Kahramanı Resneli Niyazi Hatıratı*, transliterated and simplified by Ö. Andaç Uğurlu (İstanbul: Örgün Yayınları, 2003), p. 284.

<sup>477</sup> Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır’da Patlayan*, pp. 632-637.

<sup>478</sup> Çerçis was to be waited in İstarova (Pogradec) for a few days. Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, pp. 163-164.

<sup>479</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 174.



The telegram prepared by Albanian leaders after the “*besa*”,<sup>480</sup> began by stressing loyalty, respect and love for the Sultan. Following this, the telegram mentioned that the purpose of the people of Kosova that gathered in Firzovik, was to “*eliminate the causes of disaster and catastrophe they deemed to be very close*”. Although this was not the actual reason behind the gathering, they requested the reopening of the parliament and a return to the way of “consultation” (*meşveret*) which was instituted by permission of the Sultan (*müsaade-i seniyye*).<sup>481</sup> This way, foreigners were going to be forced out of Rumeli.<sup>482</sup>

İsmail Kemal Bey mentions in his memoirs that the Albanians were forced to act with the Young Turks to protect the integrity of the country. Because, they feared the Great Powers’ plans about Macedonia would harm the integrity they envisioned. This way, they hoped, all ethnic groups would gather under the “flag of justice and equality” preventing foreign intervention.<sup>483</sup>

It is known that Abdülhamid followed every action of the Albanians closely, and then, he was very sensitive on their requests and reactions. İsmail Kemal Bey relates Firzovik’s effect on Abdülhamid in these words: “Ten thousand armed Albanians met at Ferizovic [Firzovik] on July 15, 1908, and sent to the Sultan a famous telegram, which produced a greater impression upon him than the remonstrances of all the Turks or all the diplomatic representations of Europe”.

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<sup>480</sup> A very strong traditional oath of the Albanians, see, Şemseddin Sâmî, *Kâmûs-ı Türki* (Dersaadet: İkdâm Matbaası, 1901), p. 292.

<sup>481</sup> There were a total of 180 signatures in this text which was sent in 20.7.1908, including 14 teachers lead by Hacı Şaban Efendi, and the names of other leaders. Ahmed Refik, *İnkılâb-ı Azîm*, pp. 88-89; Tunaya, *Türkiye’de Siyasal*, p. 61; Tunaya, *Hürriyet’in İlanı*, p. 7; “10-15 thousand Albanians gathered in the beginning of July and sent a telegram to the Sultan request in the Constitution with the directions of the Unionists”. Lowther, *Türkiye 1908*, p. 66.

<sup>482</sup> Müfid Şemsi claims that the Albanians in Firzovik were not given any comments on the death of Şemsi Paşa, but were provoked against the Palace by convincing them to agree “to re-institution of the Constitution to prevent foreign intervention”. Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 87.

<sup>483</sup> Ahmed Refik, *İnkılâb-ı Azîm*, p. 90; It was claimed that 100-250 thousand armed Albanians could act if needed. The weapons that were plundered by Bulgarians during Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78 were sold to the Albanians. Receb Cûdî Bey, ‘Kosova’da Vâki Firûz Bey Cem’iyeti Yahûd Ahâli-i Umûmiyyenin Hissiyât-ı Şeri’atperverânesi’, *Beyânü’l-Hakk Mecmuası*, No. 26 (March 1909), pp. 609-610; Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 168.

When the Palace, asked about his opinions on the requests of the Albanians, he responded: “His Majesty, without a moment's delay to promulgate the Constitution, which was the only efficacious remedy and the only sure way of grouping round his throne all the peoples of the Empire”.<sup>484</sup>

27 battalions of soldiers (18.000 units) were sent from İzmir to Manastır through Selanik on July 16, 1908. However, thanks to active propagandists like Dr. Nazım Bey, these soldiers did not carry out the orders they were given and added to the despair of İstanbul.<sup>485</sup> The battalions that arrived to Manastır from the Reserve Divisions of İzmir and Tire helped the rebels indirectly by saying that they did not want to go to Ohri.<sup>486</sup>

Hıfzı Paşa, the governor of Manastır described the strong and effective power of Unionists in the city, in a letter to the Grand Vizierate, dated 18 July. After the assassination attempt on Osman Hidayet Paşa, he described the despair of the state mechanism by saying: “No one has the courage to promise an investigation, let alone carrying out an execution”. Hıfzı Paşa recommended the carrying out of Unionists demands in an indirect way by talking about the “necessity of taking quick measures that would be effective at this time, rather than using outdated methods of counsel, force and violence”.<sup>487</sup>

The Unionists in Firzovik continued with their propaganda efforts without dismissing the sensitivities of the Albanians. They especially avoided tackling with

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<sup>484</sup> İsmail Kemâl Bey, *The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey*, Trans. S. Story (London: Constable and Company Ltd., 1920), p. 365.

<sup>485</sup> Petrosyan, *Sovyet Gözüyle*, p. 315; İsmet İnönü met Dr. Nazım Bey, who was using the nickname “Yakup Ağa” when he went on a mission to Izmir. He defines him as “a great propogandist”. İnönü, *Hatıralar*, p. 44.

<sup>486</sup> BOA, Y.EE, 71/80, 21.7.1908.

<sup>487</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, pp. 182-184; It is told that the process that ended in the resignation of the Grand Vizier Ferid Paşa started with this telegram. Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 644; Mülazım Dadaş Salim, who shot and wounded Osman Hidayet Paşa, mistaking him with General Tatar Osman Fevzi Paşa was not caught either. İSAM, *HHP*, 8/450, 17.7.1908; Assassination attempt on Osman Hidayet Paşa is dated as July 17, 1908. See, Georgeon, *Sultan Abdülhamid*, p.549.

their loyalty to the Sultan. They emphasized the relation between Constitutionalism and the Islamic council (*şura*) principle, and preached that this was the best way for social order. They showed great care not to let people misunderstand and over-react. The speech by Hacı Şaban of Kaçanik, who was won to the Committee by Galib Bey, in the mosque created a significant effect on his listeners. He gave a clear message to the religious Albanians by saying “to ask for Constitutionalism (*meşrutiyet*) is to ask for deliberation (*meşveret*), to ask for the Allah’s book, Qur’an” The request of Constitutionalism and the Constitution became the “only purpose” for this group who moved away from its original aim.<sup>488</sup> The end of the purposeless wait that lasted for three weeks relieved both the participants and their hosts in Firzovik. Of course, this achievement, made the Unionists most happy.<sup>489</sup>

The propaganda campaign carried out by Galib Bey was learned by Yıldız in the end, and he was ordered to be removed from Firzovik:<sup>490</sup>

“It is understood from the report of a military leader that Galib Bey who was sent to prevent and negotiate with the Muslim group gathered in Firzovik, has dubious thoughts and the way he conducts the negotiations are harmful to each party. The inferences and feelings in this context should be shared. Galib Bey whose efforts did not create any useful results should be called back to be replaced by some other suitable person. 19.7.1908”

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<sup>488</sup> Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 59; Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, p. 11.

<sup>489</sup> “Galib Bey, who was given the order to interfere in the situation, gave courage to the gathered people with the order of the Central Committee. Hacı Şaban Efendi convinced the Albanians in a meeting in a mosque “the best way to stop the pain was to ask for a constitution”. See, Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 172.

<sup>490</sup> Galip Paşa does not mention in his memoirs that he was removed from his post because he was deciphered. “I returned to Üsküb, by completing this complex and important mission”. (*İşte şu vazife-i müşküle ve mühimmeyi bu veçhile hüsnü ikmal ve itmam eyleyerek Üsküb'e avdet eyledim*) Galip Paşa, *Galip Paşa'nın Hâtıraları*, p. 11; There is no mention of his dismissal in other sources as well. Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 57; Another order was sent to M. Şevket Paşa, the governor of Kosovo from the Grand Vizierate: “The information given to Galib Bey was presented to the Grand Vizierate. The replying telegram is attached; it requests the immediate return of Galib Bey to the Vilayet centre with the Sultanic order, and the appointment of another person respectable by the gathered”. (*Galib Bey tarafına şifre telgrafla verilen ma'lûmât Sadâret-i Uzmâya arz ve iş'âr kılınmış idi. Cevâben şeref-sâdır olan telgraflâme-i sâmi bâlâyâ nakl olunmağla Galib Bey'in ber müceb-i emr-i sâmi hemen merkez-i vilayete celbi ve müctemi'in nezdinde diğer münâsib birinin tavassutıyla maksada vusûl esbâbının istikmâli mütemennâdır efendim*), İSAM, HHP, 25/1626, 19.7.1908.

There was no turning back now. The decisions taken were written down, and the Albanian oaths, *besas* were taken.<sup>491</sup> In this telegram that was prepared by Galip Bey and signed by the leaders, the re-institution of the Constitution and the opening of the Parliament were requested.<sup>492</sup>

Yıldız did not give a response to the telegram. Sudi Bey, the mayor of Priştina sent another telegram ending in the sentence: “If there is no positive answer, and it is absolutely refused, disaster is certain”.<sup>493</sup>

The Albanians in Firzovik provoked each other in very different issues with different rumors and created constant uproar. With a significant armed force, they

<sup>491</sup> For the decisions and oaths of Albanian leaders and ulama see, BOA, *TFR.I.KV*, 206/20501, 23.7.1908.

<sup>492</sup> *Atebe-i Felek-Mertebe-i Cenâb-ı Şehriyâr-ı A'zamîye, Atebe-i Felek-mertebe-i Cenâb-ı Şehriyâr-ı A'zamîye takdim kılınmak üzere makâm-ı Sadâret-i Uzmâ'ya,*

*Atebe-i Felek-mertebe-i Cenâb-ı Şehriyâr-ı A'zamîye arz ve takdim kılınmak üzere makâm-ı muallâyı meşihatpenâhîye,*

*Cenâb-ı Rabbü'l Âlemîn tebârek ve tekaddes hazretleri zînet-ârâyı mansab-ı celil-i emânet-i kübrâ, şevket-efzâyı hilâfet-i uzmâ, Hâlîfe-i rûyi zemîn, ni'met-i bî-minnet efendimiz hazretlerini hemîşe-i zaman kemâl-i şeref u Şân ve adl u ihsân ile sâye-sâz-ı İslâmîyân ve Osmâniyân buyursun ve mevki ve makâm-ı satvet-i ittisâm-ı tâcdâr-ı a'zîmlerini yar u ağyara karşı aliyyu'l a'lâ ve livâyı şevket ihtivâyı cihândârîlerini bâlâ buyursun âmin.*

*Pek yakîn görmekte olduğumuz felâket ve mahviyetin esbâb-ı men' ve izâlesi düşünölmek üzere Kosova Vilâyeti ahâlisi kulları nâmına olarak burada vuku bulan ictimâmımız neticesinde devletimizin muhâfaza-i şevket u mikneti ve i'lâyı şân ve ibkâyı nâmını ve ahâli kullarının refâh ve saâdetini te'min için sünnet-i Nebeviyyeden bulunan ve*

*7 Zilhicce 1293 târihli fermân-ı hümayûn mes'adet makrûn-ı Cenâb-ı Pâdişâh-ı a'zamîleriyle tasdik ve i'lân buyurulmuş olan Kânûn-ı Esâsî ahkâmı vechiyle meşveret-i usûl-i meşrûtiyyesinin yeniden iâde ve ikâmesinden başka çare olmadığını teyakkun ederek Dersaadet'te bir Millet Meclisi'nin celb ve cem'ine müsâade-i seniyye-i cenâb-ı Şehinşâhîlerini istirhâm ve istid'âya müttehiden ve müttefikan karar verdik.*

*Binâenaleyh taleb ve istid'â-yı meşruamız kabul ve is'âf buyurulacağından ümidvâr olmakla beraber kemâl-i hâlisiyyetle vuku bulan ve sadâkat ve emniyet hüsn-ü niyyetimizi te'yîd ve takviye edecek olan işbu istirhâmâtımızın cevâb-ı kabûl ve is'âfına dâir irâde-i seniyye-i cenâb-ı şehriyâr-ı a'zamîlerini kemâl-i süzişle arzu ve intizâr eyleriz. Ol bâbda ve kâtibe-i ahvâlde emr u fermân Hazret-i Veliyyu'l-emrindir. 7 Temmuz 324 Sekizyüzü mütecâviz imzâ vardır.*

İSAM, *HHP*, 9/491, 20.7.1908; In the original it is written to have near eight hundred signatures, however Galip Paşa and Süleyman Külçe relates this as 180. Galip Paşa, *Galip Paşa'nın Hâtıraları*, pp. 10-11; Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, pp. 60-61; Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı*, Vol. 2, p. 199.

<sup>493</sup> “Muvafık cevap gelmezse, mutlak reddolunursa vehâmet muhakkaktır”, Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 65.

started requesting the freedom of convicted relatives.<sup>494</sup> Security forces used different methods to control this gathering that could easily go out of line. The elite and *ulema* that were respected by the group were asked to counsel them, and military precautions were taken to be used if necessary.<sup>495</sup> İstanbul was worried about the movement of Northern Albanian Gëgs, who were mostly known to be conservatives.<sup>496</sup>

The situation in Manastır was in the Committee's favor. The atmosphere was going towards a revolution. The managers of the Committee's branch informed Eyüb Sabri Bey who was in Ohri that necessary conditions were read, and they should come to Manastır after uniting with Niyazi Bey. After this, Niyazi Bey was asked immediately to go to Ohri, though he just arrived at Lahça. The city was ready for an intervention. In fact, Niyazi Bey received an order in this respect:

“They showed me the order to march on Manastır by the Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> of July morning. We sat down. In this order, the mobilization of two thousand Committee members around Ohri and Resne, and the formation of two national battalions, and the immediate march on Manastır together with Eyüb Efendi was written. We discussed and decided on the carrying out of order”.<sup>497</sup>

Committee members joined Eyüb Bey's Ohri Reserve Battalion around Ohri, and a big unit was formed within possibilities.<sup>498</sup> Niyazi Bey, waited for the soldiers to join them around Resne, and started collecting supplies that would be needed for both units. The two groups met at Dirmeni near Lahça. Eyüb Sabri Bey had 1.200 men under his command as Ohri National Division, and Niyazi Bey had 600 Resne National Battalions, who marched to make the big move. Although it is known that

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<sup>494</sup> “To the General Inspectorate of Rumeli, the rotting in prison of a son who is a loyal servant of the state and the religion will be unbearable for the entire Albania, therefore I request his release again and it is informed that every sacrifice will be made whose responsibility will fall on the shoulders of the instigators”, İSAM, *HHP*, 20/1305, 20.7.1908; same topic see, İSAM, *HHP*, 20/1327-2, 24.7.1908.

<sup>495</sup> BOA, *Y.PRK.ASK*, 258/82, 10.7.1908.

<sup>496</sup> Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 258.

<sup>497</sup> Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, pp. 189-191.

<sup>498</sup> Uzunçarşılı writes that Eyüb Sabri Bey took to the hills in 20.7.1908 with his reserve unit, and threatened Ohri's governor Süleyman Kani and its commander Hamid Hamdi Bey. He also attaches the texts of the telegrams. Uzunçarşılı, '1908 Yılında', pp. 114, 161-164.

Ohri National Division was consisted of reserve troops who did not know of their real aim, the identities and the leaders of the 400 hundred who joined Niyazi Bey is not known.<sup>499</sup>

Eyüb Sabri Bey, sent the declarations he prepared and signed as “Ohri National Regiment First Battalion commander and former vice commander of the Reserve Troops” to Süleyman Kani Bey, the governor of Ohri and to the commander of Ohri, Miralay Hamid Hamdi Bey.<sup>500</sup> They, in turn, reported the situation in Ohri to Selanik and İstanbul saying “This night, as reported earlier, a very grave incident was happened here. Senior Captain Eyüb Sabri Efendi escaped with a few officers and a lot of people whose number is yet to be determined”.<sup>501</sup> The current situation of the bands was described and it was claimed that the government forces in Ohri could not act: “The forces we have are not even enough to defend against these two bands, let alone pursue and disperse them and as a result, they can do anything they want in this region”.<sup>502</sup> The Minister of War Mehmed Rıza Paşa forwarded this information he received to the palace.<sup>503</sup>

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<sup>499</sup> Eyüb Sabri Bey used the title “Commander of the First Battalion of the Ohri National Regiment” (*Ohri Milli Alayı'nın Birinci Taburu Kumandanı*) to give the impression that he commanded a large force. Gümüşsoy, *II.Meşrutiyeti Hazırlayan*, p. 65; The “secret leader” of the Ohri branch of the CPU before Eyüb Sabri Bey, governor Süleyman Kani Bey tells that he reported the direction of the “National Regiment” as South Albania, not to let the government understand. İrtəm, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 33; Uzunçarşılı, ‘1908 Yılında’, pp. 161-164; Resneli Niyazi terms them as “National Battalions of Ohri and Resne - Ohri ve Resne Milli Taburları” and writes that Resne Battalion had 1000 soldiers. Among the list of the names he provides there is “Albanian Çerçis Bey”; though the same source claims that he joined the Unionists in 24.7.1908 in Resne (p. 231) Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, pp. 191-197, 231; Ahmed Ziya, *Meşrutiyet Uğrunda*, p. 27; Ahmet Cemaleddin Saraçoğlu, *Unutulan Meşhurlarımızdan Resneli Niyazi Bey*, compiled by İsmail Dervişoğlu (İstanbul: Şema Yayınları, 2006), p. 124; Hıfzı Paşa to the Grand Vizierate on those joining the rebels. BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/63, 21.7.1908.

<sup>500</sup> In these messages dated 8 Temmuz 1324 (21.7.1908), the group claimed to move to Southern Albania to misdirect the government. Moreover, when they heard that the battalions from Mitroviça, would mobilise to supposedly hunt bandits, Eyüb Sabri Bey said: “our soldier co-religionists will not shoot at us”. BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/61-2, 21.7.1908.

<sup>501</sup> “*Bu gece makâmât-ı âidesine arz olunmuş bulunduğu üzere burada gâyet elim bir hâdisе zuhûr etmiştir. Kolağası Eyüb Sabri Efendi bir kaç zâbit ve miktâr-ı hakikîsi daha malûm olmayan ahâliden pek çok insan ile firâr eylemiştir*”. BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/61-3, 21.7.1908.

<sup>502</sup> “*Elimizde kuvvetin iki çetenin takib ve tenkiline değil, bunlara karşı müdâfâada bulunulmaya bile kâfi olmadığı ve bunun neticesi olarak bu çeteler bu tarafda her istediklerini yapabilecekleri*”, BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/61-1, 22.7.1908.

<sup>503</sup> BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/61-5, 22.7.1908.

The “National Battalions of Ohri and Resne” marched on to Manastır with great joy and excitement. Some irregulars who were assigned to deliver a message from the Manastır branch of the Committee to Niyazi and Eyüb Beys. They encountered a fawn on their road and took it with them to present it to Niyazi Bey when they met him. Niyazi Bey made the animal their mascot, and believed that this animal was sent to them by Allah to guide them, and he shared his opinion with the rest of his men.<sup>504</sup>

The local people helped these bands, and because most of the security forces in the region were consisted of the secret committee members, they did not face difficulties, and reached Manastır in a short time. They were feeling that the ultimate aim is very close. Most of the important posts in Manastır were held by the Committee members. The two-thousand men force that entered city blockaded the houses of civilian and military authorities. They had to pacify Extraordinary Commander Osman Paşa, who was widely trusted by local forces, thanks to his calmer and more forgiving nature compared to Şemsi Paşa. They believed that if they could kidnap Osman Paşa, the center would be in total desperation.<sup>505</sup> The aim was to corner Abdülhamid by pacifying both of the commanders he sent for this mission.

On July 22, the telegraph lines entering Manastır were cut down, Osman Paşa’s house was blockaded, and he was given a letter of guaranty by the Committee asking him to leave Manastır to go to a safer place with them. He was taken by the Committee to Resne and was put under surveillance in a secret house.<sup>506</sup>

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<sup>504</sup> It turned in to a myth in time, and Niyazi Bey became famous as “Geyikli Niyazi” (Niyazi with a deer). He is reported to have told his volunteers: “*thanked God who had sent us this beautiful animal, which fascinated all with its charming ways. We regarded its presence as a propitious sign, a divine message of approval of our enterprise*” Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, pp. 191-192, Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 196; Mete Tunçay et.al., *II. Meşrutîyetin*, p. 150.

<sup>505</sup> Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, pp. 187-190; BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/62, 22.7.1908, the telegrams concerning Field Marshal Osman Fevzi Paşa’s kidnapping.

<sup>506</sup> Lowther, *Annual Report*, p. 37; Uzunçarşılı, ‘1908 Yılında’, p. 117; İrtem, *Yıldız ve Jön Türkler*, p. 397; Hıfzı Paşa, governor of Manastır informed Yıldız Palace on 23.7.1908 that Osman Paşa was kidnapped; his house was surrounded, and all the soldiers of Manastır together with 3.500 from the population joined the rebellion. Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, pp. 197, 221; BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/53, 23.7.1908, the ultimatum given by the CPU after Osman Fevzi Paşa was kidnapped.

In the meantime, an important change occurred for the government in İstanbul. Ferid Paşa of Avlonya (Vlore), who was the Grand Vizier since January 15, 1903, was dismissed by the Sultan on July 22, 1908. His attitude towards the Firzovik meeting was an important factor as he was an Albanian himself. He recommended a cautious and tolerant reaction at the start of the revolt, and did not attend to the summons of Yıldız when the events reached a climax.<sup>507</sup> It is told that he advised Abdülhamid to take the requests concerning the Constitution and the Parliament seriously in his last day in office, but his advises went unheeded.<sup>508</sup> Austrian sources in İstanbul claim that Ferid Paşa was favoring the Albanian movement in Macedonia.<sup>509</sup>

Grand Vizier Ferid Paşa was asked by the group in Firzovik to present the situation to the Sultan as they were waiting for days and did not yet receive an answer, asking also about his opinion. Ferid Paşa gave an answer in Albanian in return: *Fort mirë peto pota!* (Very good! Bravo!)<sup>510</sup> These words and some of his actions are interpreted as his support to the Albanians in Firzovik. In fact, when he met Galib Bey later he told him “You must have understood that I was on your side” verifying this interpretation.<sup>511</sup>

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<sup>507</sup> It seems that this summon was not just to exchange information, but also included an order: “Everywhere in Macedonia, the army showed themselves favourable to the Revolutionary party. The Sultan called upon Ferid Pasha, the Grand Vizier, to act as Seraskier or War Minister in order to punish the discontented. But Ferid, a cautious and able man refused to interfere with the task of his colleague” Pears, *Life of Abdul Hamid*, p. 288.

<sup>508</sup> Ahmed Refik, *İnkılâb-ı Azîm*, p. 74.

<sup>509</sup> BOA, *Y.EE*, 74/5.

<sup>510</sup> “*fort mir peto pota*” (*This is good, God Help you!*) was used during the Constitutional period by the Üsküb parliamentarian Hoca Said Efendi who was an Albanian. İnal, explains it as “it is good, continue with the request. (*hayırlıdır, talebde sebat ediniz*)” İnal, *Son Sadriazamlar*, pp. 1617-1618; *fort mirë* (*very well*) is Albanian but “*peto pota*”. When considering that Ferid Paşa knew Italian, it could be re-assembling of Italian phrase “*ben fatto*” (*well done*); Külçe translates it to Turkish as “*Oh oh! Bu tedbir şum emir (çok iyi)*” Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 66; “You are doing good” (*İyi yapıyorsunuz*) İrtem, *Yıldız ve Jön Türkler*, p. 336.

<sup>511</sup> Enver Bey: “When the Committee was spreading throughout Rumeli as cells, the members except the governing body thought that high ranking officers, even the Grand Vizier Ferid Paşa himself were involved in it”, see, Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa'nın*, p. 38.



Mehmed Selahaddin claims that Abdülhamid II was suspicious of Grand Vizier Ferid Paşa and the Minister of War Rıza Paşa; therefore he removed them from office repeatedly to appoint Said Paşa.<sup>512</sup> Said Paşa relates that 11-12 days before his removal; Abdülhamid had called him to the palace with Kamil Paşa to examine some telegrams from Rumeli. They prepared some reports to the Sultan including their thoughts on the issue. These comments can be seen as a sign of Abdülhamid's mistrust against Ferid Paşa.<sup>513</sup>

It is known that the governing power passed from the Sublime Porte to the Yıldız Palace during the ruling period of Sultan Abdülhamid II. It may be considered normal that the investigation concerning the CPU was carried out by Yıldız. However, the following telegram of Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa can also be considered as mistrust against the Sublime Porte; rather than disregarding it as a governing power:<sup>514</sup>

<sup>512</sup> Mehmed Selahaddin, *Bildiklerim*, p. 10; It is thought that Serasker (Minister of War) Rıza Paşa was removed because of his failure to manage the officers of the Third Army. Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi, *Tarih Musahabeleri*, p. 310; Rıza Paşa, mentions in the introduction to his memoirs that he “was removed before our last great revolution, for wanting the implementation of that noble law” (*son mutlu inkulâbımızın ilanından önce, o yüce kanunun uygulanmasını istediğim için, 21 Temmuz 1908 tarihinde azl edilmişim*) he said. Additionally his expression after the revolution: “How can a man pass a life when he sees that the army, the nation, the country was walking, was rolling towards its collapse? How can this man be fooled by slavery, and not thirst for liberty!” (*Bir adam, ordunun, milletin, vatanın çöküşe yürüdüğünü, yuvarlandığını gördüğü halde, nasıl bir hayat geçirir. Bu adam, nasıl olur da, esarete kanmış olur; hürriyet ateşine susamış olmaz!*) Rıza Paşa, *Abdülhamid'in Seraskeri*, p. 61.

<sup>513</sup> Said Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 309; Ayşe Sultan in her memoirs, mentions that the people of the palace were happy that Ferid Paşa of Avlonya was dismissed from his post that he was not loyal, that he had in his mind the Principality of Albania, that he caused the rebellions, that he worked for his own betterment and that Abdülhamid was fooled by him. See, Ayşe Osmanoğlu, *Babam Sultan Abdülhamid* (İstanbul: Selis Kitaplar, 2007), p. 132; Ferid Paşa's son-in-law Fahrüddin Bey emphasized “he was secretly helping the foundation of constitutionalism. Because the Yıldız government was winding up. He recommended the declaration of Constitution, but the Sultan was furious and dismissed him. (*el altından meşrutiyeti idarenin teessüsüne yardım ediyor idi. Çünkü Yıldız idaresi infisah etmiş idi. Meşrutiyeti idarenin kabulünü tavsiye etdi. Padişah kızub azl etdi*) İnal, *Son Sadriazamlar*, p. 1617.

<sup>514</sup> 26 Haziran 324 *Şifre, Mahremâne*  
*Birinci Kâtib Es'ad Bey Efendi Hazretlerine,*  
*Cem'iyet-i fesâdiye hakkındaki muhâberât ve muâmelâtdan dolayı şimdiki kadar Bâb-ı Âliye bir güne ma'lûmât i'tâ edilmemiş idi. Şemsi Paşa merhûmun vefâtı üzerine tahkikât ve ta'kibâtdan ve firâr eden zabitlerle teferruât-ı mes'eleden Bâb-ı Âli'ye ma'lûmât i'tâsı Sadâret-i Uzmâdan iş'âr kılınmakta olduğu ma'rûzdur fermân.*  
İSAM, HHP, 5/256, 9.7.1908.

“To the First Secretary Es’ad Beyefendi, 9.7.1908 Coded, Secret  
No information was given to the Sublime Porte, concerning the intelligence and activities on the plotting committee. The Grand Vizierate asks for information concerning the investigations on the death of the deceased Şemsi Paşa and the details of the situation concerning the escaped officers to the Sublime Porte.”

Another thing the Unionists succeeded at was to make demands from the government in the name of everybody in the city. Governors, the General Inspectorate, Yıldız Palace, the Grand Vizierate, Office of Şeyhülislam, the Ministry of War, were receiving similar telegrams from different towns and cities.<sup>515</sup> Telegrams were almost raining from Macedonia to İstanbul, on 21-22 July. The Sultan was receiving bold messages either to declare the Constitution, or to resign. They also threatened to move on to İstanbul, if their requests were not carried out. Every soldier that was sent to put down the events was pacified in a short time by the young and dissident officers.<sup>516</sup>

The anger and the impatience of the people increased as they received no answer from Yıldız. They started to make preparation to actualize the threat “at least thirty thousand armed Albanians would march on İstanbul” if their conditions were not met. The first city that was on the road from Firzovik to İstanbul was Üsküb, the vilayet center of Kosova.<sup>517</sup> When the rumor, those one thousand men would march on Üsküb as an advance party, the precautions were discussed among the Third Army, the governor of Kosova, and the Inspector-General.<sup>518</sup> The best transportation method for the concerned transfer was of course the train. The “people” asked from the Railway Administration to assign a special train and take them out to Üsküb. The director, being in a difficult position, visited the governor to discuss the situation. He

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<sup>515</sup> Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 239.

<sup>516</sup> Pears, *Life of Abdul Hamid*, p. 289; Findley, *Turkey, Islam*, p. 164; They were telling that their aim was not to revolt against the state but to protect its interests. BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/142, 21.7.1908.

<sup>517</sup> Mahmut Şevket Paşa mentions that the Albanians in Firzovik “would join with another fifty thousand Albanians to march on İstanbul if their desires were not answered”. (*arzularına cevap verilmediği takdirde, kendilerine iltihak edecek elli bin Arnavud’la beraber İstanbul’a gideceklerini*) Uzunçarşılı, ‘1908 Yılında’, p. 127; Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, p. 11.

<sup>518</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 9/499, 21.7.1908.

feared that this group would destroy railways and trains if their desire was not granted. Moreover, this groups could easily capture a train and use it to transport themselves to Üsküb if they so desired.<sup>519</sup>

According to the information received from Cemal Bey on Tuesday, July 21, the Albanians agreed to postpone their march on Üsküb for now, but they were not going to leave until they received a response from İstanbul “and would be forced to march on Üsküb and beyond if they did not get a satisfactory answer”. The arrival of 300 men from Preşova was also reported.<sup>520</sup> The return of leaders from Prizren and Yakova to Firzovik was received with joy. However, when some groups started to march on Üsküb, both the military and civil officials, and the Unionists were worried.<sup>521</sup>

The train company responsible for the trail between Mitroviça-Selanik was ordered not to carry the armed men in Firzovik as their intentions were feared.<sup>522</sup> However, it was obvious that the train company could not carry out this mission, something which even the state could not do. In fact, they declared that they would not be able to stop them.<sup>523</sup>

When the order of the Sultan was received that the groups “should not be allowed to move on Üsküb, or further”. “From the replying telegram, they seem to have decided to stay in Firzovik for now, and even sent news to Albanians who moved on to Üsküb from different places to delay their march”.<sup>524</sup> It was also informed that any military measure would not work on the group if they decided to

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<sup>519</sup> İSAM, HHP, 9/488-1,3, 21.7.1908.

<sup>520</sup> İSAM, HHP, 9/508, 22.7.1908; See, Appendix.

<sup>521</sup> İSAM, HHP, 9/515, 22.7.1908.

<sup>522</sup> İSAM, HHP, 18/1178-5, 21.7.1908.

<sup>523</sup> İSAM, HHP, 18/1178-4, 21.7.1908.

<sup>524</sup>“Ne Üsküb’e ve ne de ileriye azimelerine zinhâr izin verilmemesi [...] Telgrafnâme cevâbına intizaran şimdilik Firzovik’de kalmağa karar vermiş ve hatta Üsküb’e müteveccihen mahâl-i muhtelifeden hareket etdikleri anlaşılan Arnavudlara te’hîr-i azîmetleri için haber göndermişlerdir”, İSAM, HHP, 18/1178-1, 22.7.1908.

march on Üsküb as a secret investigation showed that the soldiers were in cooperation with them.<sup>525</sup>

“No other solution and precaution can be thought by your humble servant other than working to guide them in a nice way and inform them that their march on to Üsküb and beyond is totally against the consent of his highness the Caliph, our benefactor, our Sultan and that this thoughtless act would cause significant harm to the state and the country and would only serve the enemies of religion and the state”.

According to the information given to the Governorship of Kosova by Marshal Şükrü Paşa, the situation was critical although the group “confirmed they would not act contrary to the consent of the Sultan”. It was impossible for the soldiers to resist an armed group of ten thousand even if they carried out their orders.<sup>526</sup>

Governor of Priştina Cemal Bey, who was in Firzovik at the time, reported that he talked with the leaders of the group, and they aimed at nothing other than the carrying out of their demands, and they worked to stop those marching on Üsküb, and he was on the telegraph constantly to help them.<sup>527</sup>

Third Army Commander Müşir İbrahim Paşa asked the governor of Kosova to take precautions against those trying to march on Üsküb. However, Mahmut Şevket Paşa, who was known to be close to the Unionists, did not take this seriously. The issue was forwarded to Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa: “Although the governor was informed to take precautions against those trying to march on Üsküb, the communication was not established with him and discussion were not carried out”.<sup>528</sup>

Cemal Bey informed the General Inspectorate of the Rumelian Vilayets on Wednesday, July 22, 1908 at 16:30 as follows: “the committee, sent especially to

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<sup>525</sup> İSAM, HHP, 18/1178-2, 22.7.1908; the military system was paralyzed (*mefluç*) as Unionists officers were nearly everywhere. Akşin, *Jön Türkler*, p. 76.

<sup>526</sup> İSAM, HHP, 18/1178-3, 22.7.1908.

<sup>527</sup> İSAM, HHP, 20/1350, 22.7.1908.

<sup>528</sup> İSAM, HHP, 9/517, 22.7.1908.

return the group going to Üsküb, informed in their telegram to the leaders here, that the leaders were going to stop at the point the mentioned group was located and were not going to continue on to Üsküb, but they were not going to return either". It was mentioned that if this armed Albanian group of 8-10 thousand whose number was increasing, entered Üsküb; the result would be disastrous. The government was asked to take this into consideration and send the expected response.<sup>529</sup> Another telegram by Cemal Bey, informed that although these people were under the control of their leaders till now, the new participants from the neighbouring villages were acting independently and joined to the group on the way to Üsküb, rather than joining with their leaders.<sup>530</sup>

The government was aware that the arrival of the group in Üsküb would be highly dangerous for the city's safety; but, there was nothing they could do. Before noon, it was informed "a few leaders from every region went with train to stop those moving forward, no matter what";<sup>531</sup> while in the afternoon (19:00) Necib and Kemal Bey's arrived in Firzovik to "take a decision to bring back those going further" together with Albanian leaders and religious men.<sup>532</sup>

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<sup>529</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 9/561-1, 22.7.1908.

<sup>530</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 9/561-2, 22.7.1908; İSAM, *HHP*, 9/488-2, 21.7.1908.

<sup>531</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 9/496-1, 22.7.1908.

<sup>532</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 9/496-2, 22.7.1908.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE PROCLAMATION OF THE CONSTITUTION

The proclamation of the constitutional system, or “liberty” in Macedonia, was “virtually” realized on Thursday, July 23, 1908. Special ceremonies were arranged in Manastır. However, the organizers of this announcement and the celebration knew very well that the constitutional model would not take place unless the two following conditions were met: acceptance and re-proclamation of the constitution (*Kânûn-ı Esâsî*) and opening of the parliament (*Meclis-i Mebûsân*).

The telegram storm from the three major centers had a significant impact on getting approval on both requests. These centers were: Manastır, Siroz and Firzovik. The assassination of Şemsi Paşa had ensured the passage of the control of CPU to the Manastır Branch. The proposed clean-up operation of the revolutionaries under the leadership of Şemsi Paşa was abandoned, and Abdülhamid II’s most trusted entourage, the Albanians had turned to completely opposite direction, against İstanbul. They were thirty thousand armed musketeers in Firzovik. Having lost his most trusted pillars, the support of the Albanians’ the sultan could not further hold his ground. At midnight he decided to accept what was pushed forth and this decision was to be published as an ordinary announcement in the newspapers on Friday morning, July 24.

#### **3.1 July 23, 1908: The great day**

The excited and impatient crowd of Firzovik had approached its limits, but bargains were still not finished. The threats for moving to Üsküb were ongoing for a

few days, but the direction later changed to İstanbul. It was reported on Thursday, July 23 at 10 O'clock in the morning, “a couple of people were sent to persuade the people of Prizren and Luma, who were insistent to go to Üsküb, and also that additional two or three thousand armed people were coming from Prizren”.<sup>533</sup> Albanian notables notified the government around 12 O'clock, by stating “two or three notables from every town should go to Üsküb and prevent people from entering the city and keep them in Tetovo, Gilan, Orhaniye and Preşova districts”.<sup>534</sup>

In the meantime, according to the report of Taki and Cemal Paşa, Ohri and Resne National battalions under the control of Kolağası Eyüb and Niyazi entered to Manastır, captured Osman Paşa in the mountains, Ministry of War was notified of this development in the early morning. A group of two thousand armed soldiers had arrived at Manastır. After surrounding the houses of senior administrators and generals, around 800 people surrounded the residence of Marshal Osman Paşa and captured him and took him to Resne. All of the military forces and about 3.500 people of Manastır were involved in the siege.<sup>535</sup>

Niyazi Bey and his band remained in Resne after kidnapping Osman Paşa, Ohri National Regiment under the command of Eyüb Sabri Bey decided to enter Manastır with a ceremony. The Sublime Porte evaluated this information, and sent an instruction to the Inspectorate of Rumeli and to the Third Army “not to attend officially to the greetings of the First Battalion of Ohri National Regiment in Manastır and perform salute shots for the declaration of freedom”.<sup>536</sup>

In a telegram sent to İstanbul around 12 O'clock on July 23, 1908 by Taki Paşa, Brigadier General, deputy commander of Manastır region, a memorandum was

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<sup>533</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 20/1327-1, 23.7.1908.

<sup>534</sup> İSAM, *HHP*, 18/1190, 23.7.1908, Cemal Bey, the deputy governor of Pristina, to the Inspector General Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa and to the Porte.

<sup>535</sup> BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/55, 23.7.1908; A copy of the same telegram, sent by İbrahim Paşa, the commander of III. Army to the Ministry of War, see, BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/59, 23.7.1908.

<sup>536</sup> BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/96, 23.7.1908.

issued by the CPU ordering all the soldiers and officers to gather in *Kışla-yı Hümayûn* Square. Here, it was asked that all officers with people under their command to gather in the square for a “special ceremony to pray for the state and the nation's glory and grandeur” (*merâsim-i mahsûsa ile devlet ve milletın teâli-yi şân u şevketi için dua edileceğinden*).<sup>537</sup> It was informed “the constitutional regime would be declared by spreading glad news, special ceremonies and salute shots”. Upon this announcement, “the Muslims, Greek, Bulgarian, Vlach, Jewish and every member of the nation” (*İslâm, Rum, Bulgar, Ulah, Musevî, bilcümle efrâd-ı millet*) came to the city.<sup>538</sup> Niyazi Bey narrates this ceremony for the proclamation of the constitution with the participation of the army and the civil public.<sup>539</sup>

Gathered at this ceremony, all civil servants, military officers, soldiers, members of the learning class, sheikhs and representatives of different religions in Manastır take an oath for freedom as a single body, and then proclaim independence with salute shots. Vehip Bey makes a fierce speech saying, “Constitutional Regime or death! Justice, Equality, Liberty and Fraternity”, (*Ya Kânûn-ı Esâsî, ya ölüm! Adalet, Eşitlik, Hürriyet ve Kardeşlik*) and proclaims the victory of the revolution.<sup>540</sup> To make this victory meaningful, an official declaration of the Constitutional Regime and the call for the opening of the parliament was crucial. Sultan Abdülhamid was the only person who could do this, because, the Committee addressed to him directly with a telegram for the acceptance of requests with a deadline of Sunday, July 26, 1908.<sup>541</sup> A copy of this telegram, that was sent to the Sultan with the signature of

<sup>537</sup> BOA, Y.EE, 71/56, 23.7.1908; BOA, Y.EE, 71/66, 23.7.1908; BOA, Y.EE, 71/52, 23.7.1908, “*İcrâ-yı Merâsim-i Mahsûsa, 1326 sene-i hicriyesinin 25. ve 1324 sene-i maliyesinin 10. (dünkü Perşembe günü) bilâ tefrik-i cins ü mezheb bilumûm Osmanlılar nezdinde en muhterem bir gündür*” Neyyir-i Hakikat Gazetesi, 24.7.1908.

<sup>538</sup> Neyyir-i Hakikat Gazetesi, No. 10, 24.7.1908; BOA, Y.EE, 71/65, 23.7.1908.

<sup>539</sup> “*10 Temmuz (23.7.1908) Perşembe saat üç (~10:16) raddelerinde biz Kışrani'ye girerken, Manastır'da top endahı merâsim-i fevkalâde icrâsıyla i'lân-ı hürriyet etmiş olmasından bütün anâsır-ı Müslime ve Gayrimüslime istihlâl-i hukûk ile uhuvvet ve müsâvâtı şanlı bir surette kabûl eylemişti*” Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, pp. 229-230.

<sup>540</sup> Petrosyan, *Sovyet Gözüyle*, p. 317.

<sup>541</sup> BOA, Y.EE, 71/69-6, 23.7.1908; Yıldırım H. Ağanoglu et.al., *Osmanlı Yönetiminde Makedonya* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü, 2005), pp. 40-43; Uzunçarşılı, ‘1908 Yılında’, p. 121; Mustafa Ragıb, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, p. 647; The name of the Society was



“the Ottoman Committee of Progress and Union Manastır Center”, was also sent to governmental units such as Regional Commandership of Manastır,<sup>542</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Army. An interesting sentence had been added when it was sent to İbrahim Paşa: “it is requested to perform the duty of commandership in the endeavor and patriotist manner” (*Hassa-i kumandânilerine isâbet eden vazîfe-i hamiyyet ve vatanperverînin îfâsı müsterhimdir*).<sup>543</sup>

The memorandum given to the Central Commander of Manastır, on behalf of the Ottoman Committee of Progress and Union, was requesting all the civil servants in the city, to continue with the same job and responsibilities as before. Officials were alerted by the authorities, to fulfill their responsibilities in an orderly manner.<sup>544</sup>

The collapse of Abdülhamid’s regime in the region was now inevitable after he received telegrams from Albanians just after the meeting of Firzovik that were threatening the government.<sup>545</sup> Though it seemed like “he would have continued resistance if he had not heard of liberty news echoing in Istanbul skies of ten thousand people gathering in Firzovik threatening his regime.”<sup>546</sup> In this process, the Three Provinces (*Vilâyât-ı Selâse*) Selanik, Manastır and Kosova, such as boiling, while almost no action had been discovered at the neighbor provinces, Edirne, Yanya (Janina) and İşkodra (Scutari).<sup>547</sup>

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started to be called as “The Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress” (*Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti*)

<sup>542</sup> The same telegram was sent to the Ministry of War by General Taki Paşa. See, BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/51, 22.7.1908.

<sup>543</sup> Marshal İbrahim Paşa sends this telegram to the Ministry of War (*Harbiye Nezâreti*) “*Manastır'dan şimdi vürûd telgrafname sûreti ber-vech-i zîr arz ve tezyîl-i hâzûr kılındı*”. See, BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/57, 23.7.1908.

<sup>544</sup> BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/58, 23.7.1908.

<sup>545</sup> İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 49.

<sup>546</sup> İsmail Müştak Bey claims that Abdülhamid had sent a committee to Firzovik to manage the Albanians, but there are no more sources to confirm this argument. See, Mayakon, *Yıldız'da Neler*, p. 194.

<sup>547</sup> Uzunçarşılı, ‘1908 Yılında’, p. 143.

Siroz (Serres), located 80 km Northeast of Selanik, was one of the places that pressured İstanbul prior to the declaration of Constitutional Regime. One of the contributing factors of this pressure was the involvement of Reşid Bey, governor of Siroz, who was an active member of the CPU. A group led by Midhat Şükrü (Bleda) on July 23, 1908 goes to Siroz “to declare the constitution”. In coordination with the local notables and military officers, they send telegrams to the Palace and pressure Sultan by stating that they will pledge allegiance to the crown prince Mehmet Reşad Efendi if the constitution is not declared.<sup>548</sup> Furthermore, a group of the members of Progress and Union and officers from Siroz go to Drama, to pass similar requests to Yıldız Palace “proclaiming constitution within two days”.<sup>549</sup> Enver Bey, who was in Tikveş those days, was also asked to take action in sending telegrams to the palace, in accordance with the instruction from the central organization of Selanik. Hundreds of telegrams were sent to İstanbul from Rumeli towns; mainly from Siroz, Preşova, Nevrekop, Drama, Köprülü, Tikves, İştib, and Koçana.<sup>550</sup> As this was an activity planned and implemented by the CPU, the content of each message was almost the same with one another. There were many supporters of Progress and Union in these places that were under the strong influence of Selanik. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that these activities of July Revolution, which consisted of dispatching messages to convincing Abdülhamid “a public revolt had taken place”, were, in fact, executed by a noteworthy military group of Selanik.<sup>551</sup>

<sup>548</sup> BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/50, 23.7.1908; Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı*, C. 1, pp. 220-221; Kamil Paşa, *Kamil Paşa'nın Anıları*, compiled by Gül Çağalı Güven (İstanbul: Arba Araştırma Basım Yayın, 1991), p. 325.

<sup>549</sup> The telegram sent under the name of “the people, governor and officers of Drama” and saying that thousands of the people declares the freedom: “*Drama Hükümet Konağı önünde bulunan Müslüman ve Gayrimüslim onbinlerce halkın ilân-ı hürriyet ettiği*” .“*Hürriyet, müsâvat, adalet, velhasıl Kânûn-ı Esâsî'yi ilelebed nâfiz kılmak için tekmil kuvvetimizle çarpışmağa hazırız, maksadımızı istihsâl edinceye kadar bütün kanımızı dökmeyi şeref biliriz. Yaşasın millet, yaşasın vatan, yaşasın hürriyet!*” BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/70, 23.7.1908; Ruşen Bey who came to Drama gives a speech regarding to patrie, liberty, equality and friendship, and finally, gives a very tough order to his soldier as: “*You're now going into the town to proclaim a constitutional government; anyone who resists, no matter what his rank and position, is to be shot dead*”, Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, p. 12.

<sup>550</sup> Uzunçarşılı, ‘1908 Yılında’, p. 130; Ahmed Refik, *İnkılâb-ı Azîm*, pp. 88-108; Ziya Şakir, *Mahmut Şevket*, pp. 38-41.

<sup>551</sup> Kansu, *1908 Devrimi*, p. 133.

Telegrams were requesting to the promulgation of the constitution (*Kânûn-ı Esâsî*) that is dated as 1876. These demands were emphasized in Selanik, Manastır and other places like Firzovik. It was one of the heavy and penetrative telegrams from Siroz to stress Abdülhamid: “otherwise, marching on İstanbul to actualize the holy aims...”<sup>552</sup>

Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, who was accused of being Abdülhamid’s finest servant and Muslim community’s biggest enemy by *Şura-yı Ümmet* newspaper, states “there is nobody left from the Unionists here, but me”. This illustrates the level of influence and activism that the Union and Progress party has in the region.<sup>553</sup>

### 3.2 The Promulgation of the Constitution

The Council of Ministers has negotiated and discussed the telegrams gathered from various Rumeli towns to İstanbul on July 23, 1908. The telegrams were requesting immediately to put the constitution into action. Neither the Grand Vizier, nor other ministers, clearly did not have the courage to say what needs to be done. Debates extended. Finally, Sultan Abdülhamid came to a point of no return at the end, called Grand Vizier Said Paşa who was appointed the day before, and said “I was the person who put the constitution in place. I was asked to shut down the Chamber of Deputies during the second period of muster. It was done. Years have passed, but, it was not possible to elect the members and meet. Since, my people request it again, then even I’ll let them!”. By this message, he then lets the opening of the Parliament.<sup>554</sup>

<sup>552</sup> “7 Zilhicce 1293 târihli fermân-ı hümayûn ile tasdik buyurulan Kânûn-ı Esâsî ahkâm-ı celîlesi vechiyle meşveret-i usûl-i meşrûasının yeniden tebşîr ve ilânıyla darülhilâfet-i seniyelerinde Millet Meclisin celb ve cem’i; aksi halde şimdi Üçüncü Ordu-yu Hümayun’un, istihsâl-i maksad-ı mukaddes zımnında Der-i Âliyye’ye doğru harekete müheyya bulunduğunun arz ve ilanına cüret kılındığı”, Uzunçarşılı, ‘1908 Yılında’, p. 133.

<sup>553</sup> İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 48; Tahsin Paşa, *Yıldız Hatıraları*, pp. 164-165.

<sup>554</sup> “Kânûn-ı Esâsî’yi ben tesis etmişim. Meclis-i Mebusan’ın ikinci ictimâ devresinde tatili lüzumu bana ihtar kılınmıştı. Öyle yapıldı. Seneler geçti. Âzası intihap ve cemolunamadı. Madem ki milletim şimdi gene mer’iyetini istiyor, ben dahi verdim!”, Said Paşa, *Hatırat*, pp. 313-319; The Şeyhülislam expresses that the judgement regarding to “the nation is not yet capable of managing constitutional system” is the idea of Said Paşa. Cemâleddîn Efendi, *Hâtîrât-ı Siyâsiyye* (Dersaadet:

According to another narrative, Abdülhamid states that the reasons on closing the Parliament do not exist anymore; thus, it is time to re-open the National Assembly as it has already been discussed by the Council of Ministers. The decision was taken to issue and sent to the next day's newspapers to declare to the people.<sup>555</sup>

The report of the Council of Ministers begins with a description of the movements that caused chaos and rebellions in Macedonia, and argues that, the constitution (*Kânûn-ı Esâsî*) is already in force. It also emphasizes that The National Assembly was temporarily closed for a while,<sup>556</sup> and it's crucial to open it again to avoid "bloodshed between peoples and also prevention of foreign interventions."<sup>557</sup>

It is reminded on the decision of Council of Ministers that the constitution (*Kânûn-ı Esâsî*) was put into effect by Sultan Abdülhamid in 1876 for the first time. As specified in the constitution, the relevant authorities are asked to ensure that elections are held as soon as possible. This decision was formally announced through the newspapers in İstanbul.<sup>558</sup>

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Havagimiyân Matbaası, 1336/1920 ), p. 8; Mayakon, *Yıldız'da Neler*, p. 73; Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 275; Uzunçarşılı, '1908 Yılında', p. 140; It is written in the British Embassy's report that, the Sultan had adopted to promulgate the constitution owing to Said Paşa (who known to be close to the English). See, Lowther, *Türkiye 1908*, p. 9; İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, pp. 48-54; Georgeon, *Sultan Abdülhamid*, p.552.

<sup>555</sup> "Meclis-i Mebusan'ın tekrar küşâd edilmesi taleb edilmekte bulunmuş, ve zaten bunu ben te'sis idüb, ahiren bazı esbâba mebnî küşâdı te'hîr edilmiş ise de, şimdi bunun açılmasını muvâfik görmekte olduğumdan ona icrâ-yı müzâkere ile taht-ı karâra alınarak hemen mazbatasının tanzîm ve i'tâ ve yarınki gazetelerle teşri ve i'lân edilmesini", Haşim, *Tezkîr-i İnkılâb* (İstanbul: Tanin Matbaası, 1911), p. 11; "Tebliğât-ı Resmîyye", *İkdam Gazetesi*, No. 5087, 24.7.1908.

<sup>556</sup> "gerçi kanun-ı mezkûr mer'i olup Meclis-i mezkûrun bir müddet-i muvakkate için tatili ilcaat-u haliye ve mukteziyatı-u memleketten olmasıyla" Kili ve Gözübüyük, *Türk Anayasa*, p. 78; Bayar, *Ben De Yazdım*, p. 136; Özden, *II. Meşrutiyetin İlanı*, p. 61; Kamil Paşa, *Kamil Paşa'nın*, p. 328.

<sup>557</sup> "Menafi-i memleket kuvve-i kanununiyenin bir kuvve-i muntazama ve meşrua halini iktisap etmesi ile hasıl olacağından bunu ve menafi-i hakikiye-i saltanatın menafi-i umumîye-i memleketle mütenasiben terakkisini takdir etmeliğimiz emri tabii olmasıyla Kânûn-ı Esâsinin meriyeti ve mebusanın her sene icimaa daveti hususlarında sadır olan irademizin kat'iyetini imzaladığımız işbu hattımızla ilan ederim" Kili ve Gözübüyük, *Türk Anayasa*, p. 80.

<sup>558</sup> Tahsin Paşa, *Yıldız Hatıraları*, pp. 489-491; İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 58; Ali Cevat, *İkinci Meşrutiyetin*, pp. 108-112; Külçe, *Firzovik Toplantısı*, p. 67; Georgeon, *Sultan Abdülhamid*, p.555.

The Constitution was approved by the Sultan, “immediately to be declared and heralded to every one” (*vakit geçirmeden cümleye ilân ve tebşir*). As the people were impatiently waiting for this news in Selanik, the Inspector-General of Rumeli was notified at midnight accordingly. Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, immediately sent a telegram to inform in accordance with the message received from the Porte that night, around 00:15. He expressed the decision to open the Chamber of Deputies. He wished that the people prayed to the Caliph thanks to this great grace of him. He requested the notification of the provinces and the districts of Macedonia accordingly.<sup>559</sup>

The proclamation text was published on the columns of ordinary pages (*Tebliğât-ı Resmîyye*) of the newspapers on the morning of July 24, 1908. This was a small and very simple text was the start the Second Constitutional period of the Ottoman history.<sup>560</sup> Almost nobody could understand, including men of letters, due to the ordinariness of the official announcement.<sup>561</sup>

Mainly in İstanbul and across the country, there were many people who did not know the meaning of the word “liberty”. Those who did found the printing suspicious decided that the declaration was a scam.<sup>562</sup> However, the “proclamation of freedom” in Macedonia had created a huge joy among all subjects. Especially over the Albanians who have the greatest impact on Abdülhamid's decision, were very satisfied about the constitution and to the reopening of the Chamber of Deputies. The Albanians who had a large impact on Abdülhamid's decision expressed their gratitude and prayers to the Sultan for honoring their expectations.<sup>563</sup>

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<sup>559</sup> This telegram was sent to Firzovik by Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa around 01:00 at the night of 23-24 July 1908. Galip Paşa, *Galip Paşa'nın Hâtıraları*, p. 11.

<sup>560</sup> “Tebliğât-ı Resmîyye”, *İkdam Gazetesi*, No. 5087, 24.7.1908.

<sup>561</sup> İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 62; Mehmed Selahaddin, *Bildiklerim*, p. 11; Hasan Amca, *Doğmayan Hürriyet*, p. 73; Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi, *Tarih Musahabeleri*, p. 310; Kadri, *10 Temmuz İnkılâbı*, pp. 11-12; Yalçın, *Siyasal Anılar*, p. 3; Apak, *Yetmişlik Bir*, p. 30; Burhan Felek, *Yaşadığımız Günler* (İstanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1974), p. 25.

<sup>562</sup> Alkan, *Ordu ve Siyaset*, p. 93; Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, p. 14.

<sup>563</sup> BOA, *Y.A.HUS*, 523/159, 25.7.1908.

Particularly in the next few days of July 24, mainly in Manastır and Selanik, “hundreds of thousands” of citizens including Bulgars, Greeks, Vlachs, Serbs, Jews, Albanians, Turks; Muslim and non-Muslim all the people, as a single body and a single language. They walked with liberty banners, celebrated their freedom by making 21 salute shots, the festivities lasted for days.<sup>564</sup>

Çerçis Topulli, the head of the band in the area of Toska and also Adem Bey of Erseke, with their men, came to Resne, on the evening of July 24 (around 20:00). They found a great interest while moving toward Niyazi Bey, with an attitude of “dignity and poise” (*vakâr ve temkîn içinde*) to come together. Niyazi Bey, Çerçis, Adam, Apostol, and other *komitadçis* heads, “with the creation of a sense of joy of freedom” march on Manastır on July 25, 1908. They were welcomed in Manastır with slogans, “Long live the army officers, thumbs up!” and the festivities continued for several days.<sup>565</sup>

Even though, Karabekir had played an active role in organizing the Committee’s establishment in Manastır, he was in İstanbul during the proclamation of the Constitution. According to his report, there were a total of 127 people in three separate groups in İstanbul.<sup>566</sup> As small groups were forming the underground structure of the organization, the information provided was probably inaccurate about their existence in the capital. In fact, Selim Sırrı Bey will say “only 30 of us were in İstanbul when Constitution was proclaimed in Rumeli”. After the announcement in

<sup>564</sup> Bayur, *Türk İnkılâbı*, Vol. 1, p. 241; When the government let the prisoners out, it comes to criticism by stating “they are released intentionally to harm the Constitution”; therefore, it is decided to recapture for some of them. Ali Fuat Türkgeldi, *Görüp İşittiklerim* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 1951), p. 3.

<sup>565</sup> “*Huzur-u samî-i Sadâretpenâhiye, Resne'ye gelip dehâlet etmiş olan Çerçis ile 27 nefer hempasının dünkü gün Kolağası Niyazi Efendi ile beraber buraya geldikleri, hepsi dahî kamilen geleceklerini ihbâr eyledikleri maruzdur fermân. 13 Temmuz 324, Manastır Valisi Hıfzı*” BOA, BEO, 3363/252159, 26.7.1908; Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, pp. 230-231; the Ottoman Committee of Progress and Union Manastır Center gives a memorandum (23.7.1908 10:16) to inform “Ohri National Regiment First Battalion is going to come to Manastır. BOA, Y.EE, 71/54, 23.7.1908, General Cemal to İbrahim Paşa, Commander of Third Army and the Ministry of War.

<sup>566</sup> Upon hearing of the revolution İstanbul, An Action plan was prepared by having 8 items including getting the oath of the Army and the Navy, ensure to loyalty among the various authorities, “to send telegrams of greeting”, “to manage new membership for the Committee” and “organizing the meetings”, Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, pp. 330-331.

the newspapers, he decides to give a speech to the public explaining “the nature of the constitution and freedom”. The slogans of the French Revolution and the Committee, freedom, equality, justice and fraternity were the subject of his fiery speeches, to a curious and increasing audience. The crowds begin to proliferate, and go to *Sadaret*, Ministry of Education, Justice, and War and also to the Chief Religious Official (*Şeyhülislâm*), to acquire an oath from all of the high rank officials. They were asked to repeat “to work for the happiness and welfare of the nation, keep loyalty to the Constitution and its mandatory” (*Milletin saadet ve selâmetini temine hâdim, Kânûn-ı Esâsî ahkâmına sadık kalacaklarına*) as an oath message. Calming down the demands to “go to Yıldız, to the Palace!” was not easy.

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Fifty-Sixty thousand people marched on Sunday, July 26, 1908 to Yıldız Palace, demanding “to see their sultan, who was blocked by traitors for thirty-three years”. Abdülhamid, albeit a little uneasy, addressed the crowd from the Palace’s window: “I’ve spent all my effort since ascending to the throne, for happiness and welfare of my country and my people. Today, my great desire is, the happiness and salvation of my subjects who are not different from my own family”.<sup>568</sup> People were hollering “Long live the Sultan!” (*Padişahım çok yaşa!*) to show their commitment, but Unionists will end the meeting without further ado because it could encourage

<sup>567</sup> Tarcan, *Hatıralar*, pp. 29-35; İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 77; Sheikh ul-Islam Cemaleddin Efendi, express that: “*bu kitle-i nâsın nâsyelerinde a'lâim-i sürûrdan ziyâde meşrutiyetin yine devâm ve istikrâr edemiyeceği endişesinden mütevellid bir asabiyet ve heyecân âsârı nümâyân olmakta idi*” Cemâleddîn Efendi, *Hâtırât-ı Siyâsiyye*, pp. 3-4; Uzunçarşılı, ‘1908 Yılında’, p. 134; It was known in the Palace that the meetings were organized by Selim Sırrı and Rıza. Osmanoğlu, *Babam Sultan*, p. 135; They were a couple of people to the steps of the New Mosque (*Yeni Cami*) in İstanbul on July 24 “Long Live the Sultan!” chants and banners hung in the shop except for a couple of street action that the Sublime Porte was observed. Yalçın, *Siyasal Anılar*, pp. 10-12; Haşim Bey states that he was working at the Ministry of Education, when the crowd came to the Sublime Porte “to swear to remain faithful to the Constitution”. Haşim, *Tezkîr-i İnkılâb*, p. 12.

<sup>568</sup> “*Cülûsumdan beri memleketimin saadet ve selâmetine bütün gayretimi sarfettim. Şimdi en büyük arzum evlâdımdan farklı tutmadığım tebaamın saadet ve selâmetidir*”, İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 80; “pros and cons voices rise. Tahsin, İzzet, Tatar Şakir Paşa, Ebülhüda and Kabasakal those who swept around the Sultan, should immediately be dismissed and deported” Said Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 320 ; Yücel Aktar, *İkinci Meşrutiyet Dönemi Öğrenci Olayları [1908-1918]*, (Ankara: Gündoğan, 1999), p. 113.

Sultan Abdülhamid.<sup>569</sup> The Society issued a statement in the city with concerns of misbehavior “Now everybody gets busy with their works. Ottomanism is practiced through glory, honor and never departing from patriotism. This is what the homeland requests”.<sup>570</sup> By doing this, the members, as well as people who appeared to be out of the line were warned.

How “liberty” found corresponds to the practical perception can be expressed in the following examples, immediately after the “Revolution of Liberty, 1908”: “Freedom” meant, everything is free, avoid paying taxes, no penalty for theft and the banishing of the death penalty. They gave their lives for the sake of the people their lives work of “liberty” had been achieved, but there had to be something more.<sup>571</sup> There were two views regarding Hürriyet. One saw “freedom is coming from Selanik, from Kaaba of freedom” (*Kâbe-i hürriyet’ten hürriyet gelecekmiş*)<sup>572</sup> while the later saw “Freedom was a priestess coming from Western countries”.<sup>573</sup> Liberty was interpreted as extreme freedom in the country, the increase in wages of workers in the requests, and then leads them to go on strike in various cities and major lines of business with potential consequences that convey a negative affect on the economic life.<sup>574</sup>

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<sup>569</sup> Hasan Amca, *Doğmayan Hürriyet*, p. 77; In the early days, there was complete chaos at ministries and other state institutions. Many official positions were unoccupied due to resignations and dismissals. Also, many acts were unlawful and inconsistent due to the pressure of the press and the CUP. Türkgeldi, *Görüp İsttiklerim*, p. 1.

<sup>570</sup> “Artık herkes iş ve gücü ile meşgul olsun. Osmanlılık şânını muhafaza etmek, namus ve hamiyetten ayrılmamakla olur. Vatan bizden bunu istiyor”, Hasan Amca, *Doğmayan Hürriyet*, pp. 81-82; failure to adequately effect of this memorandum dated 7.8.1908, another one will be issued on 27.8.1908 to give notice “immediately end to all demonstrations”.

<sup>571</sup> Buxton, *Turkey in Revolution*, pp. 101, 107; Alkan, *Ordu ve Siyaset*, pp. 93-95; Taner Aslan, “Meşrutiyet Aleyhtarlığına Dair Bazı Düşünceler”, *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (December, 2009), p. 6.

<sup>572</sup> Hasan Amca, *Doğmayan Hürriyet ve Yarıda Kalan İhtilâl*, compiled by Alpay Kabacalı (İstanbul: Engin Yayıncılık, 1995), p. 10.

<sup>573</sup> Yalçın, *Talat Paşa*, p. 12.

<sup>574</sup> The strikes that started on August 23, 1908, take about two months, resulting in around 20-30% wage increase. Lowther, *Türkiye 1908*, pp. 14, 64.



Tunaya emphasizes “these days begins with which is the expression of a sudden need for welfare with great hope, but an intoxication that swept public order and security on all manner”.<sup>575</sup> Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi, the last official chronicler says “People of the provinces questioned why they were asked to pay taxes in the constitutional period which resulted in the suspension of tax payments. This resulted in even the richest city of Izmir needing to have cash supplied from İstanbul”.<sup>576</sup> On the early days of the Revolution of 1908, Turkish peasants "wrong interpretation of the meaning of freedom" created problems due to suffering from a variety of payments, Sir Adam Block, the Chairman of The Ottoman Public Debt Administration (*Düyûn-ı Umûmiye İdaresi*) emphasized that the organization was able to survive after “realizing that the new regime is not a revolution”.<sup>577</sup>

The Albanians who were known for their loyalty to Abdülhamid, believed in the convincing activities of Firzovik: “Our Lord is going to open a window of virtue, and whenever freedom is proclaimed, the villains who have surrounded him, will be moved away from the Sultan and the enemies will no longer look at our country”. In short, everything was between the two lips of the Sultan. “Everybody in Firzovik mosque seemed fascinated that the day once freedom was proclaimed, will be the day of heaven” (*hürriyet verildiği gün her taraf cennet olacak*).<sup>578</sup>

Ziya Şakir clearly highlights the competition between the Committee’s branches of Selanik and Manastır. Resneli Niyazi Bey secluded himself to the

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<sup>575</sup> Tunaya, *Hürriyet’in İlanı*, p. 53.

<sup>576</sup> “*Devr-i dilârâ-yı meşrutiyette vergi verilir mi efsanesi vilâyât ahalisinin işine gelerek tahsilât durdu. En vâridatlı olan İzmir vilâyetine bile İstanbul’dan para göndermek lazım geldi*”, Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi, *Tarih Musahabeleri*, p. 314; The police was taken aside and avoid being labeled as “instruments of despotism”, as a result, lack of security was a huge issue in İstanbul, even robbery happens in broad daylight and weapons are sold in public.

<sup>577</sup> Niyazi Berkes criticize not only the perception of “liberty” but also other related modern concepts: such as ‘constitution’ and ‘parliament’ passed through them in mere talk. They had no times for plan, program, what requests, as we have seen, nor had the competence and knowledge. The people turned back to the revolution as we experienced many times in the past. Niyazi Berkes, *200 Yıldır Neden Bocalıyoruz?* (İstanbul: Cumhuriyet Gazetesi Kitapları, 1997), pp. 75,78; Quataert, ‘*The Economic Climate*’, p. D1148.

<sup>578</sup> Külçe, *Osmanlı Tarihinde*, p. 352; Ironically most of the former officer risen from the ranks neither read nor write. Mayakon, *Yıldız’da Neler*, p. 91.

mountains without the consent and concurrence of Selanik. The assassination of Şemsi Paşa by Lieutenant Atıf Bey; and also Eyüb Sabri Bey's achievements in Ohri made men of Manastır as national heroes. All these actions had made them a "hero of liberty" and placed their visages in the fore. Moreover, on July 23, when the great and pompous celebrations for constitution were done in Manastır, nothing happened in Selanik. "Members of Central Committee (*Merkez-i Umûmi*) could not tolerate it. The tenderness of the situation prevented anyone from revealing that there was a divide in the ranks of those supporting liberty and the constitutionalists. They also proclaimed the constitutional regime in the immediate vicinity of Selanik. They intended to place Enver Bey as an idol and hero of freedom in a superior position".<sup>579</sup>

İbrahim Temo, an important name in the Young Turks, came to "the source of interest, called the *Kaaba-i Hürriyet* Selanik" after the declaration of constitution. The so called "Freedom Riders" scolded him with "Doctor, this is not the committee that you have established; this success is ours, not yours".<sup>580</sup> After the Revolution, İbrahim Paşa, the commander of the Third Army asked the revolutionary officers whether "he'll remain in office securely"; Mustafa Kemal gives a commitment to him by guaranteeing his role. However, after a certain period, he leaves because of individual interventions against him.<sup>581</sup>

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<sup>579</sup> "Umumi Merkez azaları, buna tahammül edemediler. Fakat vaziyet o kadar nazikti ki, Hürriyet ve meşrutiyetperver kitesinin ikiye ayrıldığını kimseye bildirmek istemediler. Derhal Selânik ve havalisinde de meşrutiyeti ilan ettiler. Ve Niyazi Bey'e daha faik bir Hürriyet kahramanı olmak üzere Enver Bey'i meydana çıkarmaya karar verdiler", Ziya Şakir, *Yakın Tarih*, pp. 111-115; This meeting took place on Sunday 26.7.1908, is enormously exaggerated, but who does even minor criticism against "imitators of the French Revolution" might subject to a bullet. Enver Bey is extremely confused. He could just say "Dear citizens!" while people were expecting a heroic speech.

<sup>580</sup> In addition, Cemal (Paşa) Bey says "this is our committee, not one you worked for. This committee is the outcome of the efforts of Selanik and Manastır". Temo, *İttihad ve Terakki*, pp. 205,214.

<sup>581</sup> Atatürk, *Nutuk*, p. 447; Fethi Bey and Mustafa Kemal was carrying out the Committee's relations with Selanik, since August 1907. The Society was reached about 100 members in Üsküb. Galip Paşa, "Galip Paşa'nın Hâtraları", p. 5; The report intended to the elimination of the measures among the officers who has "conspiracy of ideas", BOA, *Y.EE*, 15/58, 29.6.1908, Marshal İbrahim Paşa, commander of Third Army in Selanik, to Yıldız Palace.

There was quite silent and secure environment in Selanik at the beginning. The Police was functioning, papers, attached to the streets by the revolutionary officers were collected by the police,<sup>582</sup> but afterwards statements such as “the police who dared to claw the declarations will be subject to be killed by revolver bullet, as a sign of our loyalty to Şemsi Paşa”.<sup>583</sup> As can be seen from these statements, although they had carried out 4-5 assassinations in the process of leading to the revolution, assassination of Şemsi Paşa was the case that was in everyone’s mind. The celebrations in Selanik were a little bit late. Enver Bey had returned by train to Selanik on July 26, after making sure of the consistency of the Constitution. He was surprised when he saw the prepared welcoming ceremony which was much greater than expected. Ahmed Refik emphasizes the atmosphere as “there was no such a passion in the world”.<sup>584</sup> This ceremony, which was organized by Talat Bey, was a “heroic creation” project.<sup>585</sup> Exuberant celebrations and festivals were in place in Selanik delegations were coming from surrounding villages, as well as participation of the Greeks and Bulgarians. Criticisms to the former regime and blessings to the constitution were the main subject of the long speeches.<sup>586</sup> All of the ethnic origins including Bulgarians, Greeks, Serbians and Vlachs were active participants in of the celebrations in Manastır. Yane Sandansky, the famous Bulgarian chieftain was

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<sup>582</sup> BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/74, 23.7.1908.

<sup>583</sup> “*Bu yaftaları yırtmağa cesâret eden polislere bir rovölver kurşunundan mütehasıl nişâne-i sadâkat! ihdâ edilib ‘Şemsi Paşa fırkası’na(!) i’zâm olunuyordu*”, Ahmed Refik, *İnkılâb-ı Azîm*, p. 74.

<sup>584</sup> One of the major square of Selanik is called as “Enver Bey Square” after the welcoming ceremony. Niyazi Bey in the same work can be seen in the Manastır. Ahmed Refik, *İnkılâb-ı Azîm*, p. 114; Enver Bey goes to Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa after his compulsion to “Long live the nation! Long live the motherland!” Enver Paşa, *Enver Paşa’nın*, pp. 94-95; Jean-Paul Garnier, claims that Enver Bey gives a fiery speech based on the messages of “brotherhood” at Olympia Place in Selanik on July 19, 1908. However, he was not in Selanik but Tikveş and Köprülü for a period of about a month. Whether the claim regarding to his speech is not correct. Jean-Paul Garnier, *La Fin de l’Empire Ottoman*, Paris, 1973, pp. 97-98, in: Bayram Kodaman, ‘II. Meşrutiyet Dönemi (1908-1914)’, *Türkler*, Vol. 13 (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye Yayınları, 2002), p. 296.

<sup>585</sup> “Enver’s actual role in the insurrection was insignificant, in spite of the popular acclaim given him after the successful conclusion of the revolt”, *F.O.* 371/545, Lamb to Barclay, Salonica, July 26, 1908, quot.in: Ravindranathan, *The Young Turk*, p. 68.

<sup>586</sup> Uzer, *Makedonya Eşkiyalık*, p. 226.

hosted in Selanik for this purpose together with Enver Bey. He told the people “Now, it is time to end of hostilities and work together to protect the freedom”.<sup>587</sup>

In the cities outside of Macedonia, the proclamation of the Constitution would be few days later on. They start to celebrate despite hesitancies. For example, the people in Edirne, one of the most important centers of Rumeli and headquarter of the Second Army learned “freedom came” from the Unionist officers who came to the city on 28 of July. Also in Erzurum, the place of riots regarding tax, festivities came quite late, on August 6.<sup>588</sup>

Ahmad argues that the New Ottomans or the men of Tanzimat era were the high ranking officials of the Empire’s ruling class; on the contrary “the Young Turks, a generation later, did not see in themselves the capacity to rule. Therefore, they never considered taking up high governmental posts”.<sup>589</sup> However, the strong argument of the Young Turks against the government was, “giving the management to the ignorant and incompetent people”.

The Unionists, were faced unprepared for the declaration of the constitution, they neither had a plan for the management of the country nor competencies to be able to do that. There was almost no organization in the capital, İstanbul.<sup>590</sup> Ahmed Rıza Bey as well confesses “there were a few people dignified, experienced, and

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<sup>587</sup> İrtem, *Yıldız ve Jön Türkler*, p. 369; Kadri, *10 Temmuz İnkılabı*, p. 23; “Down the Sultan! Long live freedom!” (*Kahrolsun Sultan! Yasasın Özgürlük*) Petrosyan, *Sovyet Gözüyle*, p. 323.

<sup>588</sup> Kansu, although stated to insensitivity of the cities other than Macedonia, he also emphasize “the people fully aware of the situation and realized what revolution is and the things it contains”. Kansu, *1908 Devrimi*, pp. 136-153.

<sup>589</sup> Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, p. 17.

<sup>590</sup> For the period of 1908-1913, the gradual strengthening of the Committee of Union and Progress, on foreign office, military and some other ministries. They were like a “trainee” on such institutions to monitor and control in case of need. Ahmet Mehmetefendioğlu, “İttihat ve Terakki Kongreleri (1908-1918)” in: *Yüzüncü Yılında II. Meşrutiyet*, H. Akkurt and A. Pamuk (eds.) (İstanbul: Yeni İnsan Yayınevi, 2008), pp. 105-106; Kutlu, *Balkanlar ve Osmanlı*, p. 231; According to V. İ. Lenin: “The Young Turks are shy and the revolution of 1908 is undersized, it was not creating a sense of full independency. This was a bourgeois revolution but did not have people in” Petrosyan, *Sovyet Gözüyle*, pp. 327,335; Ahmad, *The Young Turks*, p. 14.

knowledgeable among the members of the society”.<sup>591</sup> As the proclamation of the Constitutional Regime occurred earlier than planned and expected, they needed to accept that to continue Sultan Abdülhamid would continue to be on the throne, as long as he adhered to the constitution.<sup>592</sup>

“Despotism was overturned. The people who were used to the generosity of the state, nation and homeland were looking forward to another miracle. The revolutionaries were suddenly faced with entirely malfunctioning state machinery. They did not know how it worked, they were not accustomed to those deeds, and good faith did not seem to be enough”<sup>593</sup>

During the next few weeks, many movements including strikes in İstanbul, led by a team consisting of only a few people, and then from Selanik, Talat, Enver, Cemal, Rahmi, Necip Draga and Cavit Bey came to the capital on behalf of the Committee to take over the control of the city.<sup>594</sup>

After the revolution, a lot of people were going to Selanik to provide their “adherence to the constitution” as an oath, and join to the CUP. For this purpose, İsmail Müştak Bey, clerk of court, kindly requested Abdülhamid’s approval to go to Selanik. The Sultan allows him with the following condition:

“You should go to headquarter of the Committee of Union and Progress in Selanik and salute them on my behalf. Confirm that, their majesty is the first and the greatest member of it and ask them to keep their

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<sup>591</sup> Ahmed Rıza, *Hatıralar*, p. 319.

<sup>592</sup> İrttem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 115.

<sup>593</sup> İrttem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 207.

<sup>594</sup> Uzunçarşılı highlights that, the leaders of CUP, like Talat, Cavid and Rahmi Bey, came to İstanbul with the permission of the Sultan and Council of Ministry dated July 29, 1908. Uzunçarşılı, ‘1908 Yılında’, p. 148; The members of the CUP coming from Rumeli meet with the Grand Vizier at Sublime Porte on August 4, 1908. Said Paşa, *Hatırat*, p. 325; According to Ziya Şakir, Talat Bey came to İstanbul just four days after the revolution. See, Ziya Şakir, *Yakın Tarihin*, p. 35; Talat Bey and Cavid Bey wanted to appointment of persons of their own choice, requested from Said Paşa, the Grand Vizier. Cemâleddin Efendi, *Hâtırat-ı Siyâsiyye*, p. 11; Talât Paşa, *Talât Paşa’nın*, p. 40; “Some of the civil and military power of young people represents an attitude of police in İstanbul. The revolution had achieved a leading authority” See, Yalçın, *Talat Paşa*, p. 17; “There was no government, no organization, no authority in place; A calm and bloodless anarchy was prevailed in İstanbul” Yalçın, *Siyasal Anılar*, pp. 15, 20; According to Karabekir, Cemal, Rahmi, Cavit, Necip and Hüseyin Beys had come on August 1, 1908. Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, p. 359.

continuous dedication on the constitution. They have to work hardly in a collaborative model on this way”.<sup>595</sup>

Even after the declaration of the constitutional regime, the Committee was still a “secret society”. Nevertheless, it is a noteworthy expression that he declared himself as “the first and greatest member of it”. Indeed, the Society shall notify the same flair and commitment to the Sultan. Thus, in order to satisfy the constitution,<sup>596</sup> the security of the Sultan was a holy duty to all his subjects and nations. Therefore, it will be highlighted that there is no longer any need to maintain Arabs, Albanians and Circassians as a private security team. This message was given to the palace in a threatening manner.<sup>597</sup>

In England, the Young Turk revolution was met with joy and hope for the restoration of relations with Turkey, the government was immediately congratulated. Foreign Minister Grey expressed his congratulations as: “We intend to do all we can to be on the best of terms with a strong and regenerate Turkey”.<sup>598</sup> The Young Turk revolt, which started pre-maturely, was “unexpected” not just for the Unionists, but also for the Great Powers. No attention was paid to the Young Turks until July 1908. The time between the death of the British Consul in İstanbul, O’Connor in 19<sup>th</sup> March, and the appointment of Lowther in July 30, was passed in silence. The fear and distrust continued after the revolution, but with figures trusted by Britain, grand viziers like Said Paşa and Kamil Paşa, relations were improved. When Lowther met

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<sup>595</sup> Mayakon, *Yıldız’da Neler*, p. 78; After the Revolution, the “Jacobin clubs” as same as on the French Revolution, had established branches all over the country, and the CUP’s influence spread rapidly all over the country. Mahmut Muhtar, *Maziye Bir Nazar*, compiled by E. Kılınç (İstanbul: Ötüken Neşriyat, 1999), pp. 110-113; Students and officer teachers in the School of War shall be compulsory oath of allegiance to the Committee of Union and Progress. Those who oppose the excesses of the Society shall be punished. This shall be interpreted as “despotism of Constitutionalism instead of absolutism” Kuran, *Harbiye Mektebi’nde*, p. 132.

<sup>596</sup> “Kânûn-ı Esâsî Madde 5- *Zat-ı haziret-i padişahinin nefis-i Hümâyunu mukaddes ve gayri mesuldür*” Kili ve Gözübüyük, *Türk Anayasa*, pp. 36-51; This commitment to the Sultan is said to be a commitment to the Ottoman dynasty rather than the Sultan’s personality. Riedler, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu’nda*, p. 145.

<sup>597</sup> Mayakon, *Yıldız’da Neler*, p. 79.

<sup>598</sup> This joy will not last very long. Union and Progress Party took an authoritarian management as same as before, also they turn toward Germany; therefore, Britain was irritated. See, Francis Harry Hinsley, *British Foreign Policy Under Sir Edward Grey* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 30, 149.

Talat Bey and Dr. Bahattin Şakir Bey on September 2, he found them moderate and realistic, and defined that as “a collection of good intentioned children”.<sup>599</sup>

Through July and August, Macedonia was a stage of events for festivals, shows, and blessings to the gangs who came back from the mountain.<sup>600</sup> A special declaration was published on the newspaper of the CUP, adorned with slogans like liberty, equality, fraternity, justice. This was *Neyyir-i Hakikat*, that the voice of the oppositional movement in Manastır. It was freely and evenly distributed to other parts of the Empire, thanks to the revolution.<sup>601</sup>

A total of 20 people were killed during the revolution in Macedonia, in August and September. After a decline in political killings, October marked a new start to this trend.<sup>602</sup> After the Revolution, the confusion caused by the inexperience of the CUP cadre was expressed by Ziya Şakir as follows: “The Revolution has not shown any prosperity; anarchy in the provinces was expanding day by day. Each party was shaken by revolts and coups. The struggles of nations were walking towards the dangers threatening the state's future.”<sup>603</sup>

### 3.3 Reopening of the Chamber of Deputies

The members of the parliament were determined after the election, and it was opened with a great ceremony on December 17, 1908. Ali Cevat Bey, head clerk read a speech of Abdülhamid to the deputies and to the senators.<sup>604</sup> The speech text

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<sup>599</sup> Heller, *British Policy*, pp. 11-13.

<sup>600</sup> The festival held by the majority of Manastır's people continued about a week. The bands were requested to come to the city in a combined form. BOA, *DH.MKT*, 1273/77, 1.8.1908.

<sup>601</sup> BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/64, 22.7.1908; BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/90, 22.7.1908; BOA, *DH.MKT*, 1272/46, 26.7.1908.

<sup>602</sup> Lowther, *Türkiye 1908*, pp. 62-63; Bleda, *İmparatorluğun Çöküşü*, p. 41.

<sup>603</sup> Ziya Şakir, *Yakın Tarihin*, p. 38; It was expected the “unity of nations”, after the Constitutional monarchy and arrival of the freedom, rather than “the struggle of nations”. The aim of Sultan Mehmed, Reşad's Rumeli trip, was also the same purpose: “unity of nations”. Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil, *Saray ve ötesi : Son Hatıralar*, Vol. 2 (İstanbul: Hilmi Kitabevi, 1941), pp. 196-197.

<sup>604</sup> BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/85, 17.12.1908; Speech written by the First Secretary Ali Cevat Bey, during a meal by itself is read by himself too. Ali Cevat, *İkinci Meşrutiyetin*, pp. 25-27; Georjeon, *Sultan Abdülhamid*, p.571.

starts with the justification of “temporarily shuts down” of the first parliament and he begins by explaining the rationale for the suspension of the constitution in 1878. He highlighted his satisfaction and deep trust on the state’s current and future happiness, those who speculate it on the contrary, and how in spite of the oppositions, the constitution was promulgated. He discussed how the election process was initiated to define deputies as soon as possible, and finally, ensured compliance with the constitution by the Chamber of Deputies meeting.<sup>605</sup> He expressed how the conditions necessary to open the Assembly again matured. Abdülhamid stated that, during his reign, he placed the importance of education in his agenda and as a result, the level of capabilities of the people increased. This ensured the proclamation of the Constitution for happiness future and peace of the people.

After the reading of the speech,<sup>606</sup> Abdülhamid himself added the following sentences in his own handwriting:

“Today, I am fortunate to see the deputies of my nations here. My willingness to conduct the country basis of the constitution is definite and irreversible. I hope the Parliament does good services for our country and the people, as a subject to all kinds of honor and happiness”.<sup>607</sup>

<sup>605</sup> “*Ricâl-i devlet tarafından gösterilen lüzum üzerine Meclis-i Mebûsân muvakkaten ta'til olunmuş iken, memâlik-i şâhânemde maârifin terakkîsiyle terbiye-i ahâli derece-i matlûbeye î'sâl olununcaya kadar kânûn-ı mezkûrun te'hîr-i icrâsı tavsiye ve arz olunmuş*”

“*Devlet ve memleketimizin hâlen ve istikbâlen saadetini mûcip olacağına mutmain olduğumdan, buna muhâlîf re'y ve mütâlaada bulunanlara rağmen, bilâ-tereddüt Kânûn-ı Esâsi'yi ez ser-i nev ilân eyledim. Ve mûcibince yeniden intihâbât icrâsiyle Meclis-i Mebûsân'ın ictimaa' davetini irade ettim*”, İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 352; Abdülhamid take extraordinary care in the preparation of this text is shown. His manuscript in his own handwriting on the text corrections and additions are available on the draft versions. Abdülhamid, explains the reasons why the constitution was abolished in 1878 as can be seen very detailed, see, Cemâleddîn Efendi, *Hâtrât-ı Siyâsiyye*, p. 7; Abdülhamid says to his daughter Ayşe Sultan, “people today are not as ignorant as they used to be. Schools opened, officers were trained to perceive constitution possible” Osmanoğlu, *Babam Sultan*, pp. 137-140; Yalçın, *Siyasal Anılar*, p. 57.

<sup>606</sup> İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 354.

<sup>607</sup> “*Bugün milletimin meb'ûslarını huzûrumda görmek ile bahtiyârum. Memleketimizin Kânûn-u Esâsi ile idâresi hakkındaki azmim kat'i ve lâyetegayyerdîr. İnşallah Meclis-i Meb'ûsânımız devletimize ve milletimize hayırlı işler görür de, vatanımız her türlü saâdete mazhâr olur*”. BOA, *Y.EE*, 71/83; There are two different copies of this document are available in the same text file. For the other documents published by Uzunçarşılı see, Uzunçarşılı, '1908 Yılında', Figure 8; The preparation process of this text is expressed by the First Secretary Ali Cevat in great detail. Ali Cevat, *İkinci Meşrutiyetin*, pp. 28-30; Georgeon, *Sultan Abdülhamid*, p.572.



The members of Senate and Chamber of Deputies swore to remain loyal and tied to the fatherland when they were getting started; they also commit their loyalty to the Sultan “on condition that he adheres to the constitution”.<sup>608</sup>

A dinner was given to the deputies at ceremonial hall of Yıldız Palace on December 31, 1908. All deputies (including Unionists like Ahmed Rıza Bey, Talat Bey and Manyasizade Rahmi Bey), with a few exceptions, participated. Abdülhamid here again delivered a speech emphasizing its commitment to the constitution.<sup>609</sup> The Sultan expressed satisfaction to his family, after the program by saying that: “I ate with deputies of my nation; they were truly sincere to me. I am very thankful to have seen this, and succeeded in this manner”.<sup>610</sup>

Şeyhülislam Cemaleddin Efendi sends a telegram to the Council of Ministers based on the impact of proclamation of the constitution and amnesty on public. He also emphasizes the good intentions and aims of CUP in Rumeli. (*Kânûn-ı Esâsî ve afv-ı umûmînin hâsıl ettiği hüsn-ü te'sîrâta ve Rumeli'deki İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti'nin niyât ve makâsıd-ı hâlisânesine dair*).<sup>611</sup> Soon the Grand Vizier Said Paşa, as well as Sultan Abdülhamid would be very pleased too.

### 3.4 Comments on the Revolution

Some historians and social scientists claim that the Revolution of 1908 is a “Turkish 1789” and also a *bourgeois* revolution. On the other hand, Hanioglu and some other historians argue that, there is no indication of a “public element” even in

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<sup>608</sup> “Zât-ı Hazret-i Padişâhiye, -Kânûn-ı Esâsî'ye riayet buyurdıkları cihetle- sadakatten ayrılmayacağıma ve Kânûn-ı Esâsî ahkâmına ve vatanıma ve uhdeme tevdi' olunan vazifeye sadâkat ve riayetle, hilâfından mücânebe edeceğime Vallahi, Billahi!”, BOA, Y.EE, 71/98, 28.3.1909.

<sup>609</sup> İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 361; Ali Cevat, *İkinci Meşrutiyetin*, pp. 28-30.

<sup>610</sup> “Milletimin vekilleriyle yemek yedim. Bana karşı pek samimî idiler. Bunu gördüğüme ve muvaffak olduğuma çok şükrediyorum”, Osmanoglu, *Babam Sultan*, pp. 37-38; It was stated that Abdülhamid won the “hearts of all the deputies” after the banquet, see, Yalçın, *Siyasal Anılar*, p. 61.

<sup>611</sup> BOA, Y.EE, 71/93-3, 29.7.1908; A copy of this memorandum also sent from Grand Vizier to the Palace BOA, Y.EE, 71/94, 29.7.1908.

the Firzovik meeting on the Revolution of 1908. Indeed, a limited-level public interest was due to a sensitive reaction rather than “alien intervention / invasion” by European powers.<sup>612</sup>

Knight states that the Young Turks against the wishes of desire and greed around showed what it can do for the freedom of a nation in a supremely civilized manner. “This revolution is not came from below, from debased city mobs or ignorant peasantry, but from above, from all that is best in Turkey”,<sup>613</sup> saying the revolution is a work of brave, patriotic affinity that was ready to sacrifice their lives for freedom. They were also the new educated people.<sup>614</sup> Georgiades, whom himself is a Greek origin Anatolian native, expressed that the new regime will be formed by the revolution of 1908, -not as in the past with the rule of Islam-; rather consisting of elements with mutual co-operation of Muslims and Christians in the empire. If the new system had been established on the structure of nationalist or pan-Islamic bases, instead of equality and justice, this would have bought back the old troubles and turmoil.<sup>615</sup>

The Young Turks thought that they guaranteed the existence of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans, by ensuring the success of their main objective of “freedom”. In this way, both local elements in the region, as well as the aggressive ambitions of the great powers had been wasted. After a long time, the feared danger of “foreign intervention” entirely disappeared.<sup>616</sup>

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<sup>612</sup> According to Hanioglu, 1908 Revolution was a conservative activism program to protect the ‘status quo’ and to prevent foreign-oriented reform programs’ M. Şükrü Hanioglu, ‘Bir Asır Sonra İnkılâb-ı Azîm’, in: *Kanun-i Esasi’den Askerî Müdahaleye II. Meşrutiyet*, Yusuf Çağlar (ed.) (İstanbul: Zaman Kitap, 2008), p. 40.

<sup>613</sup> Also, “The ‘Young Turks’ threw off the despotism that had all but destroyed their country and seized the reins of government, displaying a firmness, justice, wisdom, and moderation in their almost bloodless revolution that have won for them the admiration of all honest men throughout the civilized world” Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>614</sup> Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, p. 104.

<sup>615</sup> Georgiades, *Is The Regeneration*, p. 16.

<sup>616</sup> Mehmet Hacısalihoğlu, ‘Jön Türklerin Balkan Politikası (1908-1913)’, *Divan Disiplinlerarası Çalışmalar Dergisi*, Vol. 13, No. 24 (İstanbul, 2008), p. 101

A large number of newspapers and magazines published in the pre-constitutional era have been the foundation of both, political and intellectual development that prepares the revolution.<sup>617</sup> Kuran highlights that the Constitutional Revolution as a combination of Niyazi Bey's heroism, self-sacrifice of Atıf Bey and the courage of CUP's Manastır Branch. Subsequently, Selanik Centre and the Young Turks in Europe suppress this success and moved to the forefront of public affairs.<sup>618</sup>

Even after the July 1908 Revolution was successful, Karabekir argued to keep the Committee's hidden status like a mystery; Abdülhamid and his cadre were forced to accept the "declaration of freedom" by so called terror.<sup>619</sup>

Hüseyin Kazım Kadri had taken an active role in the establishment the İstanbul Branch of the CUP; similarly he acted as the founder of the newspaper Tanin, the journal of the CUP. The following passage contains Kadri's comments about the revolution:<sup>620</sup>

"This organization had nothing to do with by social and intellectual revolution; it was a '*komitacı*' spirit prevailed 'secret community' arising from political struggles; which emerged though the return of constitutional monarchy of 1876 in Macedonia. It could have achieved its targets more easily at the circumstances of extraordinary events occurred in the country. When a logical point-based approach taken into account, the Committee should be abolished upon actualizing its purpose; but the passions engendered by the revolution, their personal interests of new

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<sup>617</sup> Halil İnalcık, 'II. Meşrutiyet: Anayasa Rejimi Geliyor, Cumhuriyet Yolu Açılıyor', in: *100. Yılında Jön Türk Devrimi*, Sina Akşin, Sarp Balcı and Barış Ünlü (eds.) (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Yayınları, 2010), p. 5; Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır'da*, pp. 18, 31; After the revolution, nearly a thousand newspaper and magazine had the privilege of publishing by the administration of the Press agency. Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi, *Tarih Musahabeleri*, p. 312; The editor of Tanin, that launched on August 1, 1908, states "At that time, to establish and publish a newspaper began to emerge in everyone's mind" Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, *Siyasal Anılar*, (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 1976), p. 18; More than 200 newspaper and the magazine was launched within the following six years after the Constitutional period. Alkan, *Ordu ve Siyaset*, p. 97.

<sup>618</sup> "Meşrutiyet İnkılâbı'nın, Niyazi Bey'in kahramanlığı, Atıf Bey'in fedakarlığı ve 'İttihat ve Terakki' Cemiyeti'nin Manastır Merkezi'nin cüret ve cesareti ile başarıldığı...", Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda*, p. 470.

<sup>619</sup> "Terörle hürriyetin ilanını kabul eden Sultan Hamid ve saray erkânının üzerine, gizli kaldığımız derecede tesirli olmaz" Karabekir, *İttihat ve Terakki*, p. 360.

<sup>620</sup> Kadri, *Meşrutiyetten Cumhuriyete*, p. 70; Kuran, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda*, p. 495.

members' intervention happened. Therefore, the spirit of revolution went into oblivion”

Prince Sabahaddin Bey, the leader of one of the two main oppositionist movements that fought against the administration of Abdülhamid, harshly criticizes the period which began after the Revolution. He refers to the CUP as responsible for the creation of a state of chaos: “upon closing of applause period, then a new period known for its anxieties, sorrows, riots, disasters and od of uncertainty began”.<sup>621</sup> The problems experienced by the “bourgeoisie class” who came to power after the French Revolution was faced by the Unionists as well.<sup>622</sup>

Criticism about CUP administration can be made much more comfortable and without any fear by 1918, since the period of Union and Progress was in the previous decade. It can be seen that the form of expressions is quite heavy.<sup>623</sup>

On the cover of a newspaper published three months after the revolution, gun in one hand, a horn on the other; an Ottoman soldier proclaims freedom. This painting, with the subtitle of ‘freedom is announced by the soldiers’ can be interpreted as the young officers who were still in their twenties are the ‘heroes of liberty’.<sup>624</sup>

According to Nicolae Constantin Batzaria who is a member of the central board of the Committee in Selanik:<sup>625</sup>

<sup>621</sup> Prens Sabahaddin, *İttihâd ve Terakki'ye Açık Mektuplar* (İstanbul: Mahmud Bey Matbaası, 1911), p. 22; Ahmed Rıza Bey's comment on the “new era” is a positive approach. He highlights Abdülhamid's great contribution on it. Tunaya, *Hürriyet'in İlanı*, p. 56; The government has become totally dysfunctional in Salonica, people were applying to the CUP even for issues such like a marriage and alimony. Uzer, *Makedonya Eşkiyalık*, p. 226.

<sup>622</sup> Hobsbawm, *Fransız Devrimi*, p. 54.

<sup>623</sup> “Ezhâr-ı âsâr-ı şâdimânıyla kahraman-ı hürriyet ve bâni-i meşrûtiyet addeyledikleri İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti'nin o hâin ve kâtil müessis ve azâlarını, â'zam-ı milletin ve evlâd-ı vatanın kanlarını sokak ortalarında heder için hazırladıkları fedâi-yi cânîlerini bile tahsîn ve takdîre müctemân şîtab ettikleri gibi bu Cemiyet'e kayıt ve dehâleti âdeta ferâizden 'ad ile milyonlarca halk dâhil-i cemiyet oldular”, Mehmed Selahaddin, *Bildiklerim*, p. 12.

<sup>624</sup> *Servet-i Fünûn Gazetesi*, 26.10.1908.

<sup>625</sup> Karpat, *The Memoirs of N. Batzaria*, p. 292.

“If Abdülhamid had not lost his head so soon and had not panicked and exaggerated to fantastic proportion the real size of the Young Turk forces, the revolt would have been nipped in the bud, and the absolutist regime might have lasted many more years. The revolt succeeded, however, and 'the population wanted a hero, the hero of the revolution and freedom, and an idol to worship'. Enver became that hero and idol. Niyazi also achieved fame but soon faded into the background”

According to Lütfi Simavi, the constitutional process was started after Abdülhamid gave into the bluffing of the Unionists. Those who sent telegrams to the palace by requesting “the constitutional system that they do not know even the first letter of it”, “a few young and ambitious officer’s riot” and “the telegrams sent to İstanbul from society who did not know the first letter of the constitution”.<sup>626</sup> Galib Bey had managed to convince the Albanians at Firzovik, after his extraordinary efforts and dedication with extraordinary patience, ensured to speed up Abdülhamid’s decision; as well as the significant impact of the assassination of Şemsi Paşa was interpreted by him as “we owe the Constitutional Revolution to Atıf’s finger”.<sup>627</sup>

The politicization was an extreme issue among people of the Empire, mainly in the cities of Macedonia. “Quest for freedom” and concerns about the integrity of the state were subjects of the debates of everybody, including ordinary people, middle and upper-class intellectuals as well. Tunaya states that this “was the unique era that individuals have found a connection between their own courses and ruling power; they counted thinking about the issues, criticisms and suggestions as a “function” for themselves.<sup>628</sup>

The Europeans will be amazed upon the Ottoman Christians’ expressions of great joy in Macedonia. Everybody including soldiers and rival bands from the mountain came down to the square of Manastır to celebrate the freedom with

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<sup>626</sup> Lütfi Simavi, *Sultan Mehmed Reşad Han’ın ve Halefinin Sarayında Gördüklerim*, İstanbul, 1340/1924, p. 140, in: Alkan, *Ordu ve Siyaset*, p. 88.

<sup>627</sup> İrtem, *Yıldız ve Jön Türkler*, pp. 333-337.

<sup>628</sup> Tunaya, *Hürriyet’in İlanı*, p. 28.

festivities accompanied by an oath of allegiance to the constitution of the revolution.<sup>629</sup> European observers state that such massive changes and transformation in recent weeks were not seen anywhere else in the region.<sup>630</sup> European observers reported how religious fanaticism entirely disappeared among Muslim Turks -even could be seen on the Young Turks-, the founders of the new system were totally free from such engagements.<sup>631</sup> George Young, the author of “Nationalism and War in the Near East”, evaluates the revolution in terms of European policy, as follows:

“The swift success of the revolution ended immediately all chance of a peaceful settlement of the Macedonian question by provincial autonomy under European guarantee. In trying to make the Empire reform Macedonia, Europe had succeeded in making Macedonia reform the Empire. The whole internal and external situation was transformed at one stroke. The Concert, whose conservatism fortunately never carries it to the point of opposing a democratic national movement, once that movement has declared itself, at once conformed to the change of circumstance. The whole structure of European intervention, foreign officers, fiscal advisers, &c., had the ground cut from under it, and disappeared without leaving a trace”<sup>632</sup>

Ahmed Rıza Bey, the leader of the CUP in Paris, writes a letter to express his congratulations and thanks to the Sultan Abdülhamid upon his acceptance of the Constitution. In this letter, the role of the army is as expressed that which constitutes “the spirit of Committee”. Abdülhamid describes Ahmed Rıza Bey as “moderate and simple-minded person”, therefore, “he did not influence the process of revolution, where as the army and the Committee did”.<sup>633</sup> This, unlike the classical rhetoric of

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<sup>629</sup> “Constitutional movement had erupted the Europeans’ plan” Tunaya, *Hürriyet’in İlanı*, p. 16.

<sup>630</sup> Freiherr Marschall von Bieberstein, From Maternich to Bülow *GP*, Vol. 25, No. 8906 in: Adanır, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 267.

<sup>631</sup> Knight does an analysis of “Turk” and how it transformed based on his observations when spent his time in Turkey. Then the process of revolution, developments and major transformation in the society reflects amazement. See, Knight, *The Awakening of Turkey*, pp. 11, 111.

<sup>632</sup> Young, *Nationalism and War*, p. 114.

<sup>633</sup> “..ahiren Rumeli’de artan asayiş-şikenane ahval ve düvel-i muazzamanın fırsattan istifade için beyinlerinde müdavele-i efkâr ile Reval’de verdikleri son karar meselenin süratle hallini istilzam ettiğinden ve cemiyetimizin ruhunu teşkil eden ordumuza mensup münevveran taraflarından hâk-i pay-i şehriyelerine amal-i milliyenin herhalde is’al ve incazı arz olunmakla 10 Temmuz 1324 tarihli irade-i seniyyelerile Meşrutiyet’in tecdiden ilanına müsaade buyurulduğunu istipşar eylediğimden muvaffakiyet-i mes’udeden dolayı duyduğum en hâr hiss-i sürur ve mefhareti arz ve

the CUP, highlights the impact of the young officers in the army, as well as the Ottoman Freedom Society which had established the active core of the revolutioners.<sup>634</sup> A few days later, during the Friday ceremony in İstanbul, the military school's (*Harbiye*) students' protesting the Sultan made him profoundly sad. He says "I did nothing that could cause them to hate the palace. They speculate rather than read, engaged in politics and broke their morals themselves. Damn those who caused this. How can I eliminate their grudges? No good can be achieved by force".<sup>635</sup> He will express his dissatisfaction with the army's involvement into politics as contamination. İsmet İnönü, the founder of Edirne branch of the secret society, complains on some uprisings in İstanbul after the proclamation of the Constitution: "the disposition of the army had become a source of complaint during the revolutionary days. There remain incomplete tasks in the barracks while everyone is talking about the state everywhere".<sup>636</sup>

"How the Ottomans responded with the Great Revolution to the European governments created to divide the Ottoman Empire"; a cover painting of a contemporary magazine called *Servet-i Fünûn* pictured an Ottoman soldier with sword and flag was defending the country against the enemies.<sup>637</sup>

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*izhar ile beraber tebrikât ve şükranımı izhar ve takdime müsaraat eylerim. Ferman*", Tahsin Paşa, *Yıldız Hatıraları*, pp. 528-530.

<sup>634</sup> "The revolt of 1908 solely as the work of the Salonica and Monastir organizations and consider the Young Turks associations abroad only superficially related to it" Kemal H. Karpat, "The Memoirs of N. Batzaria: The Young Turks and Nationalism", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (July 1975), p. 291.

<sup>635</sup> Ali Cevat, *İkinci Meşrutiyetin İlanı ve Otuzbir Mart Hâdisesi*, compiled by Faik Reşit Unat (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1991), pp. 23-24.

<sup>636</sup> "Ordunun vaziyeti bu inkılap günlerinde çok şikayet olunacak hale gelmişti. Kışlarda vazifeler eksik kalıyor, herkes her yerde devletin bütün işleri için nutuklar söylüyordu", İsmet İnönü, *Hatıralar*, compiled by Sabahattin Selek (İstanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 2009), pp. 48, 58; İnönü criticize practices and acts especially assassination of journalist by 'komitadji's and the CUP's protection to murderers. Because this violence engendered suspicion and doubt on the CUP and "poisoned political life".

<sup>637</sup> "Osmanlılığı mükâseme etmek üzere hazırlanmış olan Avrupa hükûmât-ı kebîre ve sağıresine inkılâb-ı kebîrle bütün Osmanlılar nasıl cevap verdiler", *Servet-i Fünûn Gazetesi*, 1.11.1908 (see, Appendix); Upon removal of censorship on newspapers, their influence were gradually increasing in İstanbul. *Servet-i Fünun* was playing a key role among them. İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 75; The printing office of Academy of War was printing *Şura-yı Ümmet* (newspaper of the CUP) instead of publishing textbook. They thought "once the constitutional system come in, then it will

A campaign was launched to buy two cruisers in order to appreciate the names Enver and Niyazi, based on their “patriotic services” for the country. A donation was requested for this purpose also from Abdülhamid; as reported by the First Secretary Ali Cevat Bey.<sup>638</sup> Various celebrations were held every day since the declaration of the Constitutional Period; theater plays with themes of “liberty” and “homeland” was very popular. Abdülhamid criticizes both these games, as well as the danger of incitement of ethnic clubs as follows:

“I like the theater too. However, the play called ‘Homeland’ (*Vatan*) seems to invite people to organize a revolt. Officers, soldiers, all became actors; this is especially impermissible. Additionally, what are those so called ‘clubs’? Albanian Club, Greek Club... in short, every nation made their clubs. These are terrible things. This state consists of many different peoples. We should work to combine them all. Tell the Grand Vizier, not to let the officers and soldiers perform in theaters and also ban the clubs”<sup>639</sup>

Special songs were composed for the “heroes of freedom” Enver Bey and Niyazi Bey, which were circulating in the public. Sultan Reşad visited Manastır in his well-known Rumeli trip. Eyüb Sabri and Niyazi demonstrated to the sultan how they entered Manastır during the July 1908 events. Niyazi’s so called “heroic” posture in the saddle and twisting his mustache by taking a walk over the street in the center caused smiles in the audiences.<sup>640</sup>

Enver Bey, who is the most prominent name of the military wing of the CUP, was appointed as military attache to Berlin, Fethi Bey to Paris and Hafız Hakkı Bey to Vienna; to do so, they are removed from the military-political field, even for a limited period.<sup>641</sup>

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open an unlimited field of science; therefore no need the books of despotic period”. Kuran, *Harbiye Mektebi’nde*, p. 124.

<sup>638</sup> Ali Cevat, *İkinci Meşrutiyetin*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>639</sup> This speech was made on September 11, 1908. Ali Cevat, *İkinci Meşrutiyetin*, p. 14.

<sup>640</sup> Uşaklıgil, *Saray ve ötesi*, p. 202; Niyazi Bey participated in this demonstration while living a modest life, rather than go into politics after retiring from the army. Saraçoğlu, *Unutulan Meşhurlarımızdan*, p. 167; Mehmed Tevfik, *Manastır Vilayetinin*, p. 86.

<sup>641</sup> Kutlu, *Balkanlar ve Osmanlı*, p. 240.



Rahmi Bey, the members of the Central Committee, had made a statement to the *Le Temps* newspaper, on behalf of the Society. This statement provides valuable information about the perspective of Union and Progress after the revolution:

“You’re asking our political program. There is no such a program. Until now we've been trying to break down the system. Now we're dealing in protecting the constitution (*Kânûn-ı Esâsî*). In the future, we'll work for the future and progress of the country; the Society will not be invisible. The society will continue to work together with the government to work together and point them to the accurate direction if the government does not see the right job”.<sup>642</sup>

After the removal of several high-ranking officers from the army in July 1908, significant events such as the removal of rank column created anxiety and restlessness. A dazzling success of the officers who lead the Young Turk movement helped the army’s passing into the hands of politicized young and inexperienced officers.

Two most important events in the process of revolution uprising in July 1908, Firzovik meeting and Resne uprising were carried out mainly by Albanians. When considered semi-Albanian Şemsi Paşa, most trusted commander of Abdülhamid’s impact on both cases, it could not be wrong to claim that the success of the Revolution was mainly gained by the Albanians. However, in the following days, at the mouth of the people, as well as on the newspapers, there was a common slogan “Long live Enver, thumbs up Niyazi!”, which created a disappointment among the Albanians. Necip Draga, the founder of CUP’s Üsküb branch, who put significant impact on the manipulation of Firzovik meeting, expressed this disappointment as “won’t say long live the Albanian brothers even one time?”<sup>643</sup> It can be assessed as reasonable to put some expectations by Albanians from the new regime. However, there is no clear evidence regarding to the CUP’s promise for them of a life that is

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<sup>642</sup> For more information regarding to this speech dated on 8.8.1909 see, Hasan Amca, *Doğmayan Hürriyet*, p. 100; For other resources related to this topic see, Fatma Müge Göçek, 'What is the Meaning of the 1908 Young Turk Revolution', *İ.Ü. Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi*, No. 38, pp. 179-214 (March 2008), p. 190.

<sup>643</sup> İrtem, *Meşrutiyet Doğarken*, p. 163.

not available in another. In fact, the following days, the Albanians voiced from time to time, even expressions like “the development of national cultures” would be interpreted as “separatism” and criticized by the Union and Progress. The idea of simple cultural rights will be reflected as a disappointment, opposition against the Union and Progress. This situation will cause Albanian masses and thinkers to move into opposition.<sup>644</sup> Knight called the region of Rumeli where Albanian populations dominated as “a state of positive anarchy”

Mahmut Şevket Paşa announces the following declaration, to be able to control instigation of young officers after he was assigned as the commander of the Third Army: “My army hereafter will be busy to increase the glory of winning an unprecedented duty. It is essential for us to remove our preoccupation with politics and work for progress on its main occupation of military service and increase its glory, value and dignity”.<sup>645</sup> However, is not just the younger officers who deal with this statement, Mahmut Şevket Paşa, himself, as “Inspector-General of Rumeli, Commander of the Third Army and the commander of the Army Movement”, later on will elevate his status in politics. According to Hüseyin Kazım Kadri, “main responsibility on the decreasing divide between military and politics belongs to Mahmut Şevket Paşa”.<sup>646</sup> He came into this important position after the Revolution, thanks to his cooperation with the Unionist officers during his practices as Governor of Kosova. He had tolerated the secret society to be organized in the region. Upon the assassination of Şemsi Paşa, he hired the officers to instruct the Albanians satisfying with the aim of Union and Progress.<sup>647</sup>

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<sup>644</sup> Hanioglu, *Preparation for a Revolution*, p. 258; No evidence is exist to confirm the claims regarding to CUP’s promise to the Albanians on their help to overturn the Government for the provision of “independent Albania”.

<sup>645</sup> “*Ordum, kazandığı emsalsiz şerefi artırmak için bundan sonra da vazifesile meşgul olacak; siyasetle alâkasını keserek badema aslî vazifesile meşgul bulunacak ve ancak askerlikte göstereceği terakki ve kudretle kıymet ve şerefini artıracaktır*”, Ziya Şakir, *Mahmut Şevket Paşa* (İstanbul: Muallim Fuat Gücüyener Anadolu Türk Kitap Deposu, 1959), pp. 43-44.

<sup>646</sup> “*vazifesi münhasıran harbe hazırlanmaktan ibaret olan ordunun siyâsiyyâtdan ayrılmasına sebebiyet veren kişi Mahmut Şevket Paşa’dır*”, Hüseyin Kâzım Kadri, *İmparatorluğun Tasfiyesi / 10 Temmuz İnkılâbı ve Netâyici* (İstanbul: Pınar Yayınları, 2011), p. 40.

<sup>647</sup> Zekeriya Türkmen, *Osmanlı Meşrutiyetinde Ordu-Siyaset Çatışması* (İstanbul: İrfan Yayınevi, 1999), p. 140.

Regarding the responsibility of the Revolution of July 1908 as stated by a former officer: “This revolution is the work of the army. More precisely, it is the work of the officers trained at the academy in Pangaltı in the fifteen years before the revolution. Also, it is the work of the Young Ottomans who gave this feeling by feeding them. The Revolution is Ali Süavi's work, Namık Kemal's work, Midhat Paşa's work...”<sup>648</sup>

During a time when the roles of the external center in Paris, the exiled Young Turks abroad and the Central Committee of Selanik did not transcend motivational support, the organization in Manastır with its persons who risked their lives for liberty (*fedai*) put an enormous effort towards success.<sup>649</sup> After the proclamation of the Constitutional Regime, “The Young Turks coming from abroad and from Selanik took control (in İstanbul) and as a result, the real heroes remained in the background”<sup>650</sup>.

At the first anniversary of the assassination of Şemsi Paşa who was killed the day of June 24 (Gregorian July 7), the people gathered in front of the Telegram House of Manastır. Ceremonies and festivities took place. The main street of Manastır is given the name “Atıf Bey Street”. A special thanks message was sent to Atıf bey to express the gratitude of Manastır from Muslim and Christian citizens.<sup>651</sup> July 10 (Gregorian July 23) was officially celebrated every year by the Turkish Republic in an enthusiastic manner as “Ottoman National Freedom Day” (*İd-i Milli-i Osmânî*)<sup>652</sup> until 1935.

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<sup>648</sup> Rahmi Apak, *Yetmişlik Bir Subayın Hatıraları* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1988), p. 27.

<sup>649</sup> Tokay, *Makedonya Sorunu*, p. 155.

<sup>650</sup> Kuran, *Jön Türkler*, p. 309.

<sup>651</sup> Müfid Şemsi, *Şemsi Paşa*, p. 92; Mustafa Ragıp, *Manastır'da Patlayan*, pp. 652-653; Şehsuvaroğlu, ‘İkinci Meşrutiyet’, pp. 324-332.

<sup>652</sup> Ahmed Refik, *İnkılâb-ı Azîm*, pp. 112-113; The law regarding to the official holiday on the date of celebration is 10<sup>th</sup> of July relating to the law, accepted in the Ottoman Parliament on 6.7.1909. It was published in *Takvim-i Vakayi* and entered into force on July 23, 1909. The first celebration of the Revolution was very flashy passes. Sanem Yamak, ‘Meşrutiyetin Bayramı: 10 Temmuz İd-i Millisi’, *İ.Ü. Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi*, No. 37 (March, 2008), p. 327; *Salname-i Devleti-i Aliyye-i Osmaniyye* (Dersaadet: Selânik Matbaası, 1329/1911), p. 13.

## CONCLUSION

The 1908 Revolution which added the terms ‘fatherland’ and ‘justice’ to the French Revolutionary slogans of ‘liberty, equality and fraternity’, is undoubtedly a major milestone in the Ottoman history. The reform movement carried out by Sultans Selim III, Mahmut II, Abdülmecid and state officials, such as Mustafa Reşit and Âli ve Fuâd Paşas initially met with Young Ottoman opposition. This group made the first Ottoman Constitution of 1876 possible. Abdülhamid II surpassed his radical and reformist predecessors in terms of modernization and supported his endeavours through educational and governmental institutions. Dissident movements that developed in medical and military schools had to move out to cities such as Paris, Genoa and Cairo at the end of the nineteenth century in order to continue their activities through publications, although they did not achieve a great deal thanks to the spy network founded by Abdülhamid.

The Ottoman Freedom Society, founded on a Masonic model in 1906 by young officers, mostly lieutenants, stationed in Selanik, gave new breath to the dissident movement. It took the name “The Ottoman Committee of Progress and Union” a year later, and achieved an active role in the city of Manastır and succeeded in founding a widespread organization within the Third Army.

There was a chaotic environment in Macedonia, due not only to confessional rivalry among Bulgarians, Greeks and Serbians but also to other socio-economic troubles. As the Ottoman government was unable to resolve or control these problems, the Great Powers took the chance to interfere, as each of them had different interests tied to local groups. As a result, they started taking an active role in the implementation of the reforms and in the General Inspectorate and the gendarmerie. The interest of the Great European Powers in Macedonia created fear among Young Ottoman officers that the “Hamidian regime was shortsighted” and

“the country was going to be invaded” as a result. This fear was also felt by conservative Albanians living in the border regions. After receiving news that Britain and Russia were holding talks in Reval with the intention of dividing the Ottoman Empire, Resneli Niyazi Bey revolted against the state, saying, “We are losing the country, none of us will be left!” (*Vatan elden gidiyor, sonra hiçbirimiz kalmayacağız!*).<sup>653</sup> The country could be saved with the declaration of liberty, the re-institution of the constitution, and the opening of the Parliament. If these were achieved, Muslims and Christians within the Empire could live in unity on the basis of “Ottomanism”.

Abdülhamid followed a careful policy of balance. The revolt of officers who were supposed to keep order in Macedonia ended the internal peace, threatened his carefully constructed government of control that lasted 32 years, and caused “foreign intervention”. He had to take immediate measures and destroy the “plotting group” in Rumelia permanently. The only man that could achieve this was Şemsi Paşa. This General, who was without a military academy background, and had Bosnian and Albanian origins, completed every mission he undertook successfully and earned Abdülhamid’s trust. The Imperial soldiers (*Asâkir-i Şâhâne*) could not be trusted as they were deceived by officers from the academy. Şemsi Paşa was given the order to build a paramilitary Albanian army as a result. The first step of Şemsi Paşa’s operation was to destroy Resneli Niyazi Bey’s band. He was assassinated on July 7, 1908 by a Unionist partisan named Atif Bey, outside the telegraph office in Manastır, a city to which he traveled to complete his mission. Moreover, the investigation carried out to find the culprit did not bear fruit, and the assassin who killed the General in front of hundreds of people could not be caught. Süleyman Kani Bey summarizes the situation in these words: “if he stayed alive, it was possible that Şemsi Paşa would destroy the Committee” (*hayatta kalmış olsaydı Şemsi Paşa’nın cemiyeti dağıtması muhtemeldi*).<sup>654</sup>

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<sup>653</sup> From the letter he wrote to his wife on 3.7.1908. Saraçoğlu, *Unutulan Meşhurlarımızdan*, p. 172.

<sup>654</sup> İrtem, *Yıldız ve Jön Türkler*, p. 323.

Şemsi Paşa's assassination did not only cause the end of the big operation against Unionists; but also resulted in the Albanian armed groups in Firzovik changing sides through the active propaganda of the Unionists. In their telegrams to the palace, this group of 30-40 thousand threatened to march on the capital if the constitution was not re-instituted and the parliament was not opened. This behavior of Abdülhamid's most trusted Albanians disappointed him seriously.

Telegrams were raining in from the towns around Selanik, between July 22 and 23, 1908, similar to what was happening in Firzovik. There was no one left to trust for Abdülhamid now. He had to accept the conduct of elections for the parliament as mentioned in the constitution. The little official announcement on July 24, 1908 in *İkdam* and *Sabah* newspapers started the transformation of the Ottoman Empire from absolute monarchy to a constitutional system; in fact to the "age of liberty".

Şemsi Paşa's dying words, "the officers devoured me!" (*beni zabitler bitirdi*), were valid for Abdülhamid too, since the same shot devoured and ruined his long-lasting autocratic regime.

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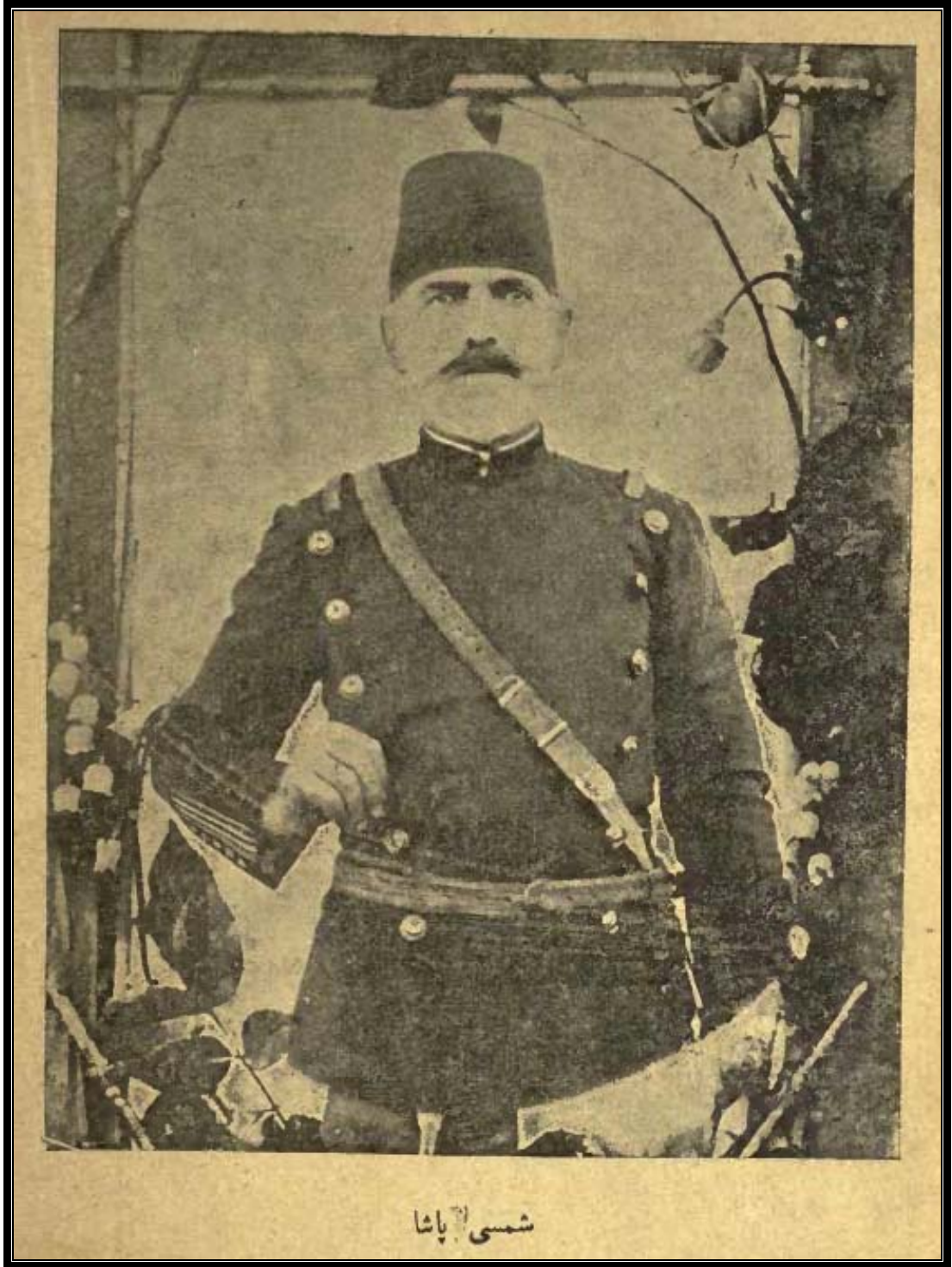
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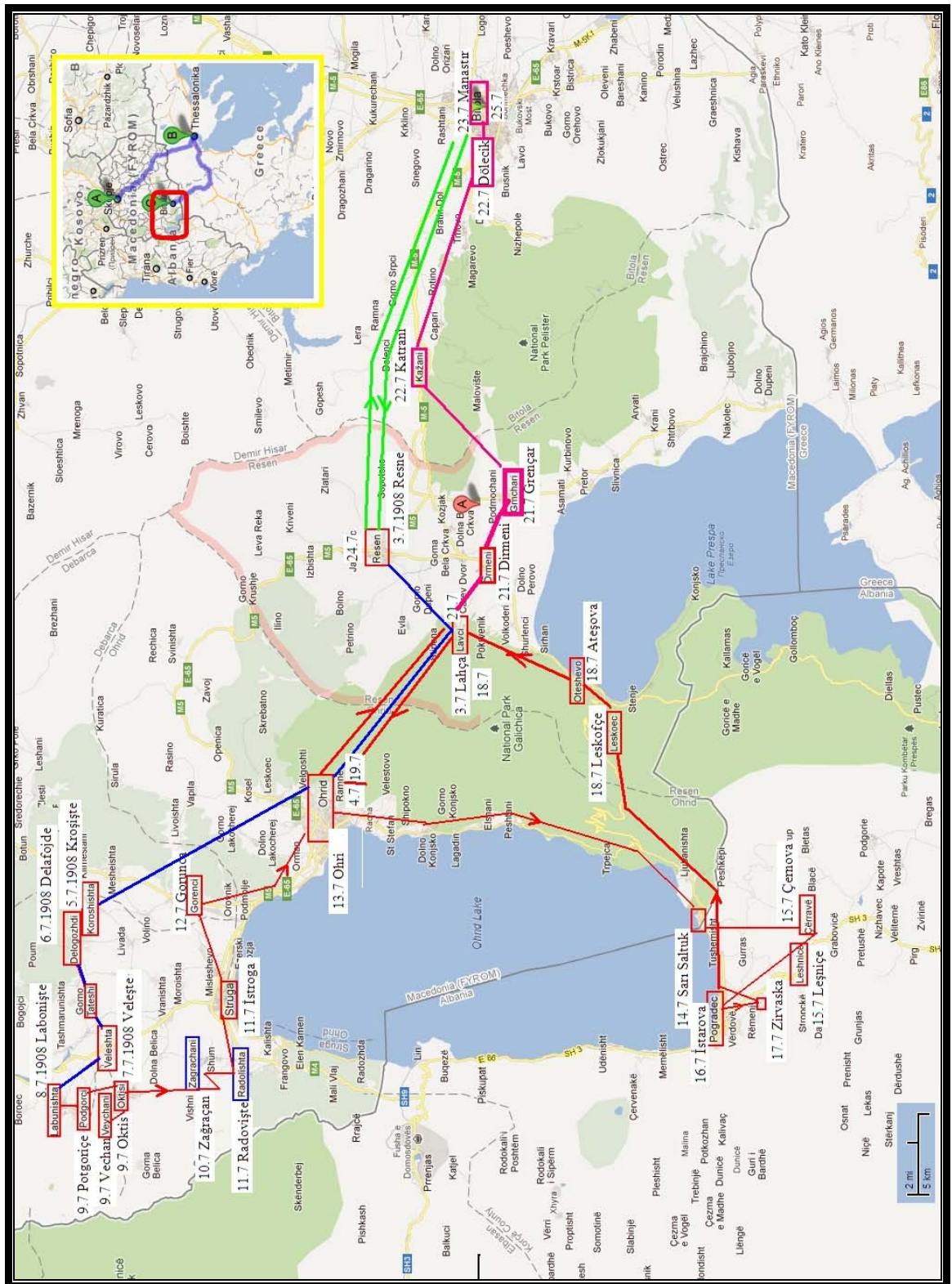
## APPENDICES



Şemsi Paşa

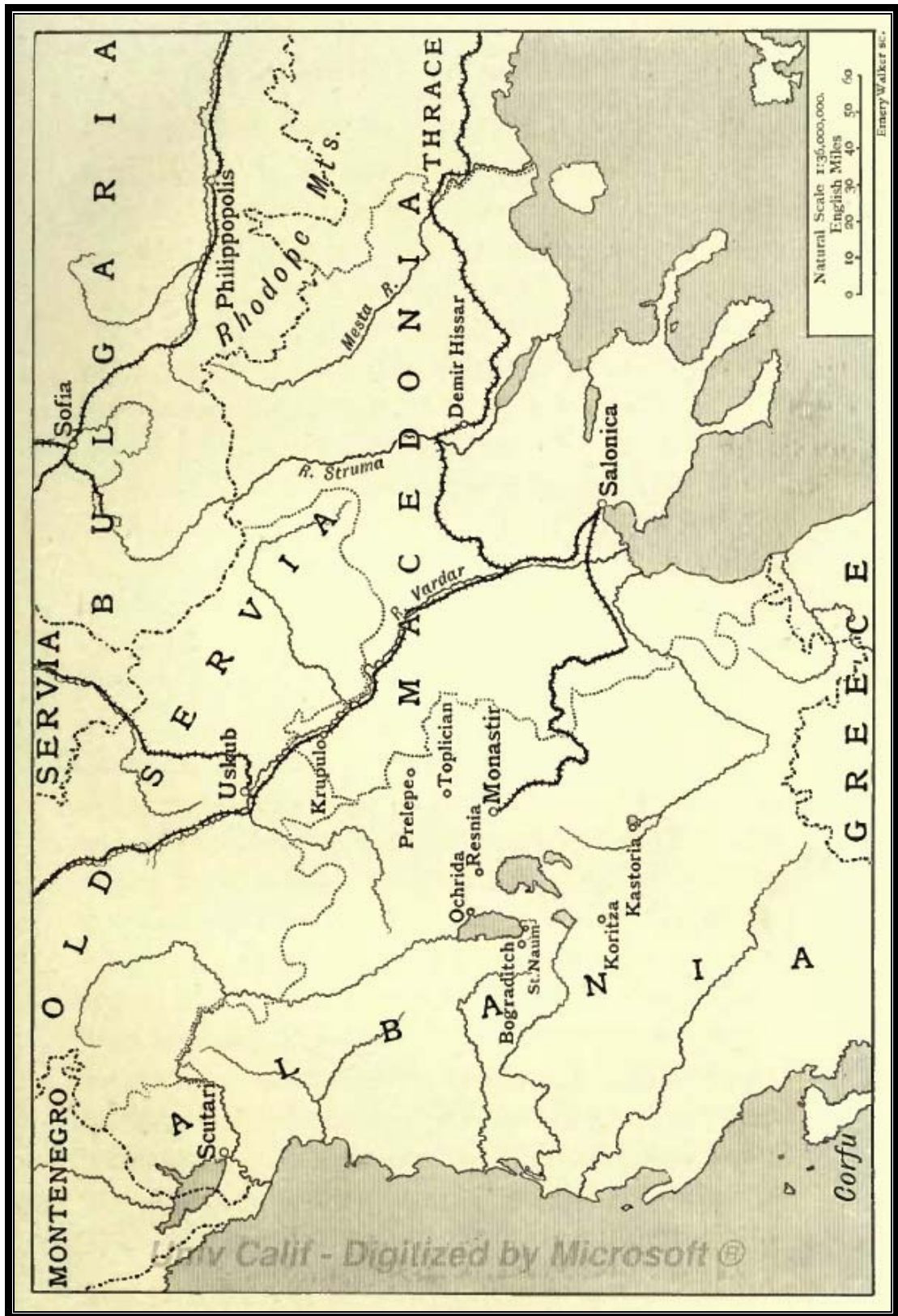
General, Commander of 18<sup>th</sup> Regular Corps of Mitroviça

(Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 114)

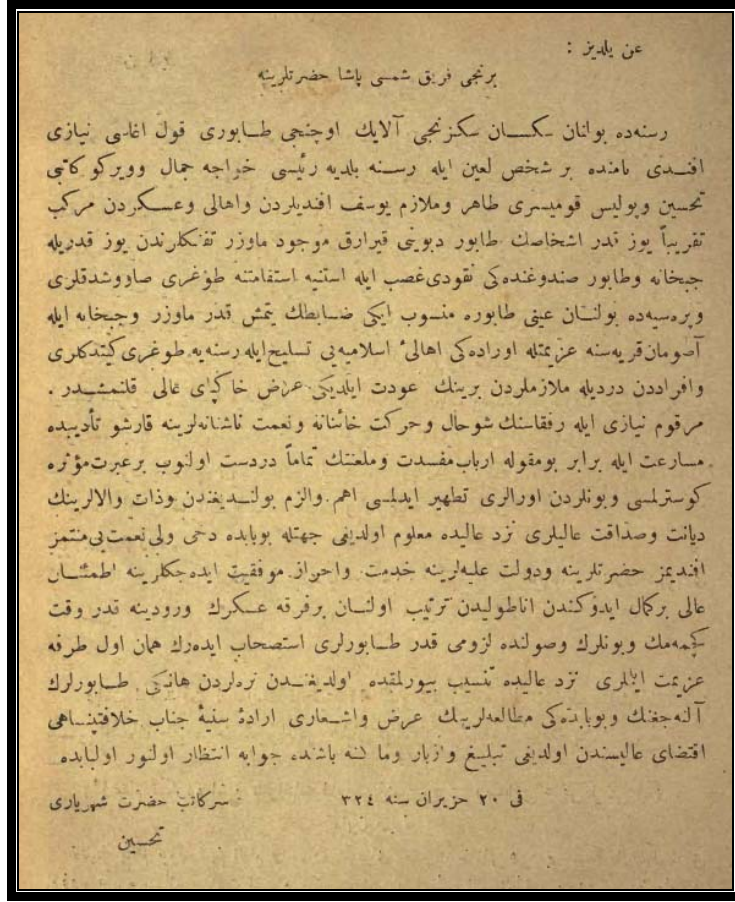


**Resneli Niyazi Bey's route during the revolt between July 3 and 25, 1908.**  
 (Prepared by Hakan Özdemir, 2012)





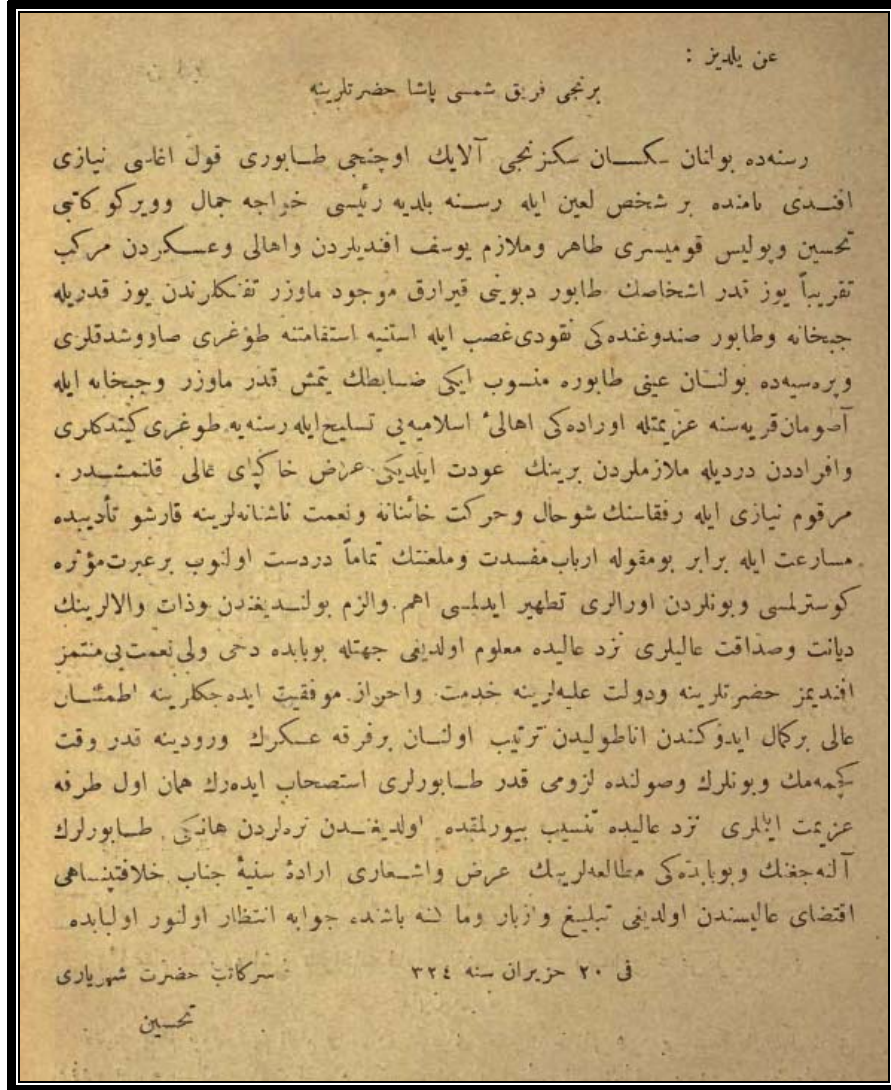
**Macedonia**  
 (Comyn-Platt, *The Turks in the Balkans*, p. 82)



Birinci Ferik Şemsi Paşa Hazretleri'ne, (Yıldız'dan)  
 Resne'de bulunan Seksensenzinci Alay'ın Üçüncü Taburu Kolağası Niyâzi Efendi namında bir şahs-ı laîn ile Resne Belediye Reisi Hoca Cemal ve Vergi Katibi Tahsin ve Polis Komiseri Tahir ve Mülâzım Yusuf Efendilerden ve ahâli ve askerden mürekkeb takrîben yüz kadar eşhâsın tabur debboyunu kırarak mevcut mavzer tüfenklerinden yüz kadarıyla cephaneye ve tabur sandığındaki nükûtu gasp ile İstinye istikâmetine savuştukları malûm olmuştur. Prespe'de bulunan bu tabura bağlı iki zabitan de yetmiş kadar mavzer ve cephaneye ile Asuman karyesine azimle oradaki ahâli-yi İslâmiyyeyi teslîh ile, Resne'ye doğru gittikleri ve efrâddan dördü ile mülâzımlardan birinin avdet eylediği arz-ı hâk-i pâyi âli kılınmıştır. Merhum Niyazi ile rüfekâsın şu hal ve hareket-i hâinâne ve ni'met nâşanelerine karşı te'dîbde müsârrat ile beraber bu makûle erbâbı mefseded ve mel'ânet tamamen derdest olunup bir ibret müessire gösterilmesi ve bunlardan oraları tathîr edilmesi ehem ve elzem bulunduğundan ve zât-ı vâlâlarının diyânet ve sadâkat alîleri nezd-i âlfide ma'lûm olduğu cihetle bu bâbda dahî velinimet-i bî-minnetimiz Efendimiz hazretlerine ve Devlet-i Aliyyelerine hizmet ve ihrâz-ı muvaffakiyet edeceklerine itmi'nân a'li ber-kemâl idüğünden Anadolu'dan tertîb olunan bir fırka askerinin vürûduna kadar vakit geçmemek ve bunların vüsûlünde lüzûmu kadar taburları istishâb ederek hemen ol tarafa azîmet etmeleri nezd-i âlfide tensîb buyurulmakta olduğundan nerelerden hangi taburların alınacağı ve bu bâbdaki mütâlaaların arz ve işârî irâde-i seniyye-i cenâb-ı hilâfetpenâhî iktizâ-i âlîsinden olduğu tebliğ ve izbâr ve mâkine başında cevâba intizâr olunur. Olbâbda. Fî 20 Hazîrân 324  
 Serkâtib-i Hazret-i Şehriyârî Tahsîn

**The first order from Yıldız Palace to Şemsi Paşa on his new duty to destroy Niyazi Bey's revolt against the government.**  
 (Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatirât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 131)





Birinci Ferik Şemsi Paşa Hazretleri'ne,

Evvelce diğer telgrafla arz olunduğu üzere, Anadolu'dan sevk ve nakledilecek taburlardan yerine badehu konulmak üzere zât-ı vâlâlarının Metroviçe fırkasından lüzumu miktar taburları istishab ederek ve treni mahsusa rakîb olarak hemen serîan Manastır'a azîmet ve Niyazi ile ona refakat eden zâbitân ve neferâtı ve onların rûfekâsını behemehal ahz-ü girift için zât-ı vâlâlarından muntazar olan faaliyet-i fevkalâdeyi ibrâz ve irâeye gayret eylemeleri ve kıyafet-i askeriyye altında bulunmak üzere işimize yarar olanlardan emin olduğumuz erbâb-ı şecaattan gönüllü olarak taburlarla münâsib efrâd almaları, velhasıl işin sirâyet ve tevessüüne meydan ve imkân bırakmıyarak erbâb-ı mefsedete bir ibret-i müessire olacak surette ibrâz-ı şiddetle muktezâ-yı sadâkat ve ubûdiyyetin şerefsudûr buyurulan irâde-i seniyye-i hazret-i hilâfetpenâhi iktiza-yi âlîsinden olarak Üçüncü Ordu-yu Hümâyûn Müşîriyet-i celîlesine ifâ-i tebligât kılınmakla ve zât-ı vâlâları selâm-ı saadet ittisâm-ı şâhâne ile taltîf buyurulmakla ol-bâbda. Fî 20 Hazîrân 324

Serkâtib-i Hazret-i Şehriyârî, Tahsîn

**The second telegram to Şemsi Paşa instructing a change to the original plan and immediate move to Manastır by taking battalions from Mitroviça corps.**

(Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 132)









**The Assassination Plan**  
(Prepared by Hakan Özdemir, 2012)





*Büyük Fedâi Kardeşimize,  
Senin ismini yazmaktan şimdilik ihtirâz ediyoruz. Bizzarûr biraz zaman seni ihfâyâ mecburuz. İnşallah yakın zamanda millet hürriyetini istihsâl edince senin makâmın milletin sadrı olacaktır.*

*Sana sine-i ümmette bir taht-ı âli hazırlayacağız. Hayatında umum millet tarafından yapılacak kendi heykelini görecek, bütün efrâd-ı milletin senin huzurunda takdim edeceği ihtirâmâtı ve teşekkürâtı kabul edeceksin.*

*Sen vazifeni ifâ ettin. Bundan sonra ümmet senden artık hizmet istemez. Yalnız senin vücud-ı nazîkinin istirahatı ve selâmeti hakkında vereceğin emre intizâr ve âni ifa ile telezzüz eyler. [..]*

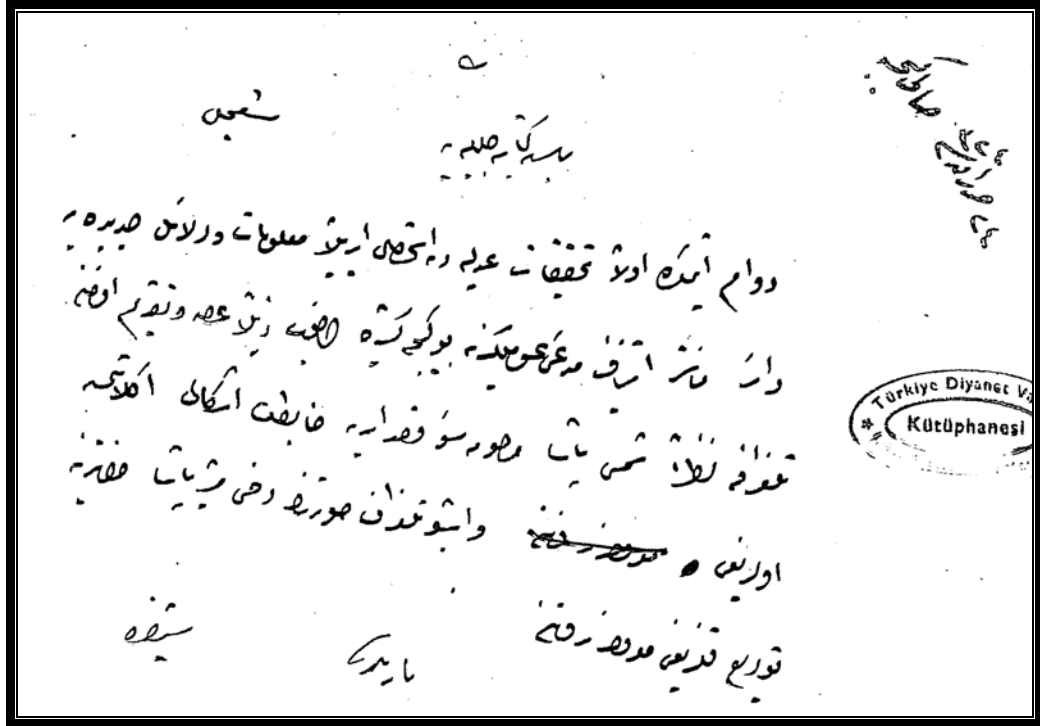
*26 Haziran 324 Perşembe  
Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti*

(Şehsuvaroğlu, 'İkinci Meşrutiyet', p. 320)

**Lieutenant Atif, who shot Şemsi Paşa**  
(Sacit Kutlu, *Didâr-ı Hürriyet*, p. 111)



**Atif Bey's grave in the area of the Abide-i Hürriyet Monument in Istanbul.**  
(Photo: Ali Çalışır, 2011)



Başkitâbet-i Celîleye, Müsta'cel 24 Haziran 324 Salı gece  
Devâm edilmekte olan tahkikât-ı adliyeden istihsâl edilen ma'lûmât ve delâil-i  
cedîdeye dâir Manastır istinaf müdde-i umûmîliğine bu gece keşide olunup  
zeylen arz ve takdîm olunan telgrafa nazaran Şemsi Paşa merhuma sû-i kâsd  
eden fâilin eşkâli anlaşılmış olduğu ve işbu telgraf suretinin dahî müşîr paşa  
hazretlerine tevdi' kılındığı ma'rûzdur fermân.

(Rumeli Müfettiş-i Umûmîsi Hüseyin Hilmi)

Manastır'dan Saat 1:45 (~21:00) Mahallî numarası : 19229

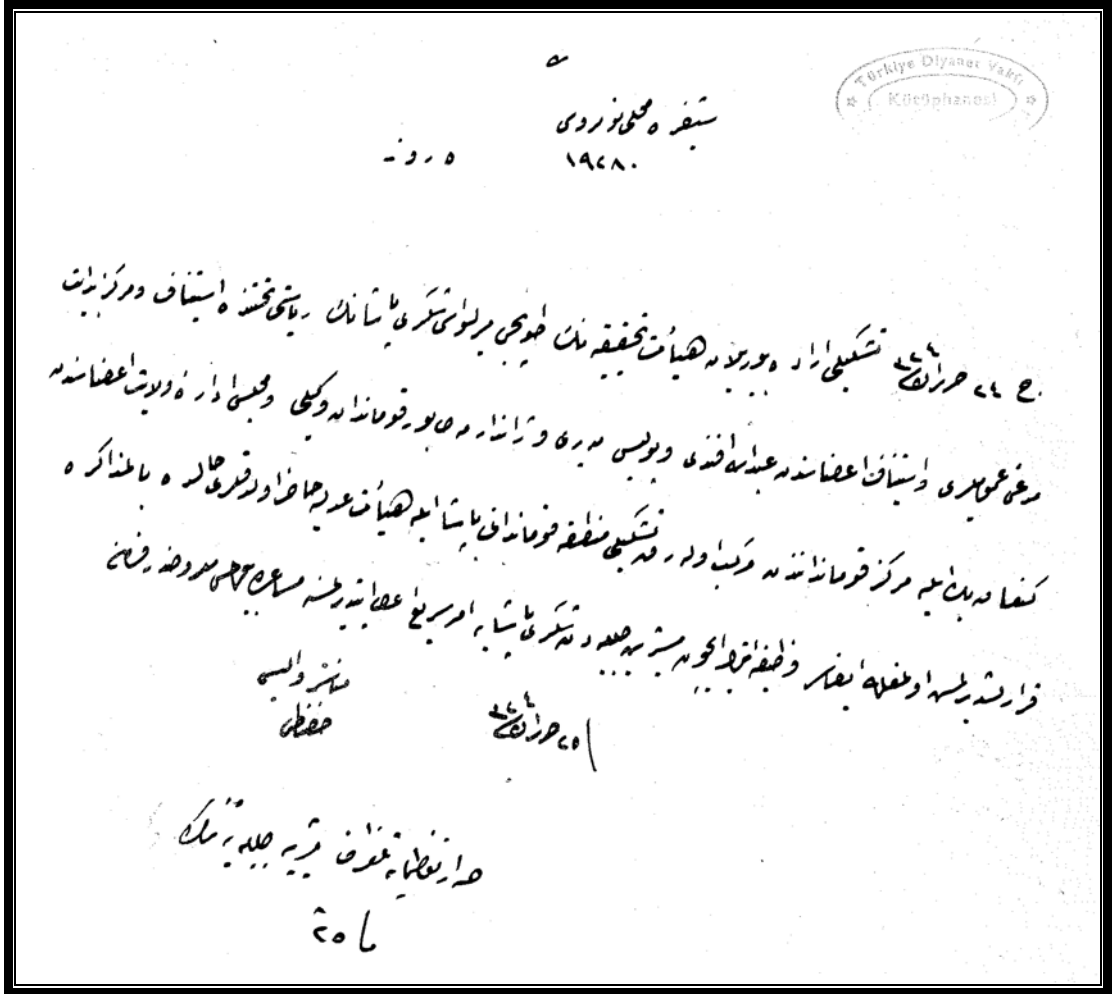
Huzûr-u Celîl-i Müfettiş-i Umûmîye,

İcra edilmekte olan tahkikâta nazaran Belediye dâiresi istikâmetinde ve  
postahânenin yüz kırk sekiz hatve ilerisinde keşf edilen kan izi bi'tta' kib  
kunduracı Anastas'ın dükkanı önündeki merdiven taşı başında ve dükkan  
içerisinde dahi görülen bir iki kan damlası üzerine isticvâb olunan kalfa ve diğer  
bazılarının zabt kılınan ifâdelerinde, silahlar patlamakda iken orta boylu  
tıknazca, az siyah bıyıklı apoletinde bir yıldız mevcûd fesli ve laciverd elbiseli  
esmer çehreli yirmi beş yaşlarında bir zâbit mezkûr dükkan içerisine girerek  
"Eliboş mahallinde muvazzaf olduğum halde oh vuruldum" dedikten ve az bir  
müddet gizlendikten ve birkaç silah patladıktan sonra tahminen bir dakika sonra  
silahların arkası kesildiğini işitince çıkıp gittiğini, ve ayağından kan akmakta  
olduğunun görüldüğü anlaşılmış ve mecruh zâbitin cihet-i askeriyece tahkik-i  
hüviyeti için makâm-ı âlî-yi vilâyete arz kılınmış ve tahkikât ta'mik edilmekte  
bulunmuş olduğu ma'rûzdur, fermân. Fî 24 Haziran sene 324.

İstinaf Müdde-i Umûmîsi Mazhar

**Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa's memorandum to Yıldız Palace based on appeal  
prosecutor Mazhar Bey's report.**  
(İSAM, HHP, 19/1267-1, 7.7.1908)





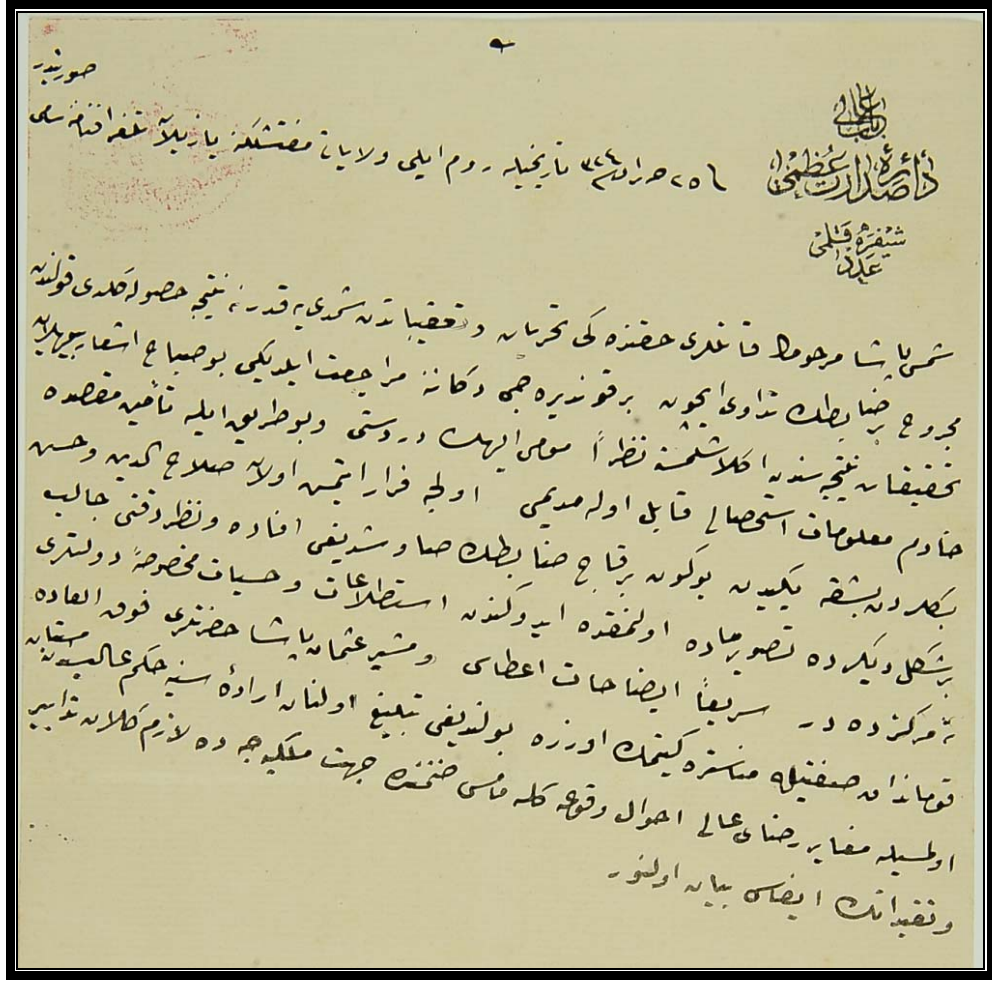
(Müfettiş-i Umûmîliğe,) Şifre, No: 19280 rûz 5 (~12:15)  
C. 24 Haziran 324. Teşkilî irâde buyurulan hey'et-i tahkîkiyenin topçu mirlivâsı Şükrü Paşa'nın riyâseti tahtında, istinâf ve merkez bidâyet müdde-î umûmîleri ve istinâf a'zâsından Abdullâh Efendî ve Polis Müdürü ve Jandarma Tabur Kumandan Vekili ve Meclis-i İdâre-i Vilâyet a'zâsından Kenan Bey ile Merkez Kumandanından mürekkeb olarak teşkilî mıntuka kumandanı paşa ile heyet-i adliye hâzır oldukları hâlde bi'l müzâkere kararlaştırılmış olmakla, îfâ-yı vâzife etmek için Müşîriyyet-i celîleden Şükrü Paşa'ya emri seri' i'tâ ettirilmesine müsaade buyurulması ma'ruzdur ferman. 25 Haziran 324

Manastır Valisi Hıfzı

**Memorandum from the governor Hıfzı Paşa regarding the creation of a Commission under the leadership of Brigadier General Şükrü Paşa. The purpose of the Commission was to investigate the crime, ensuring the murderer was found.**

(İSAM, HHP, 8/477-1, 8.7.1908)

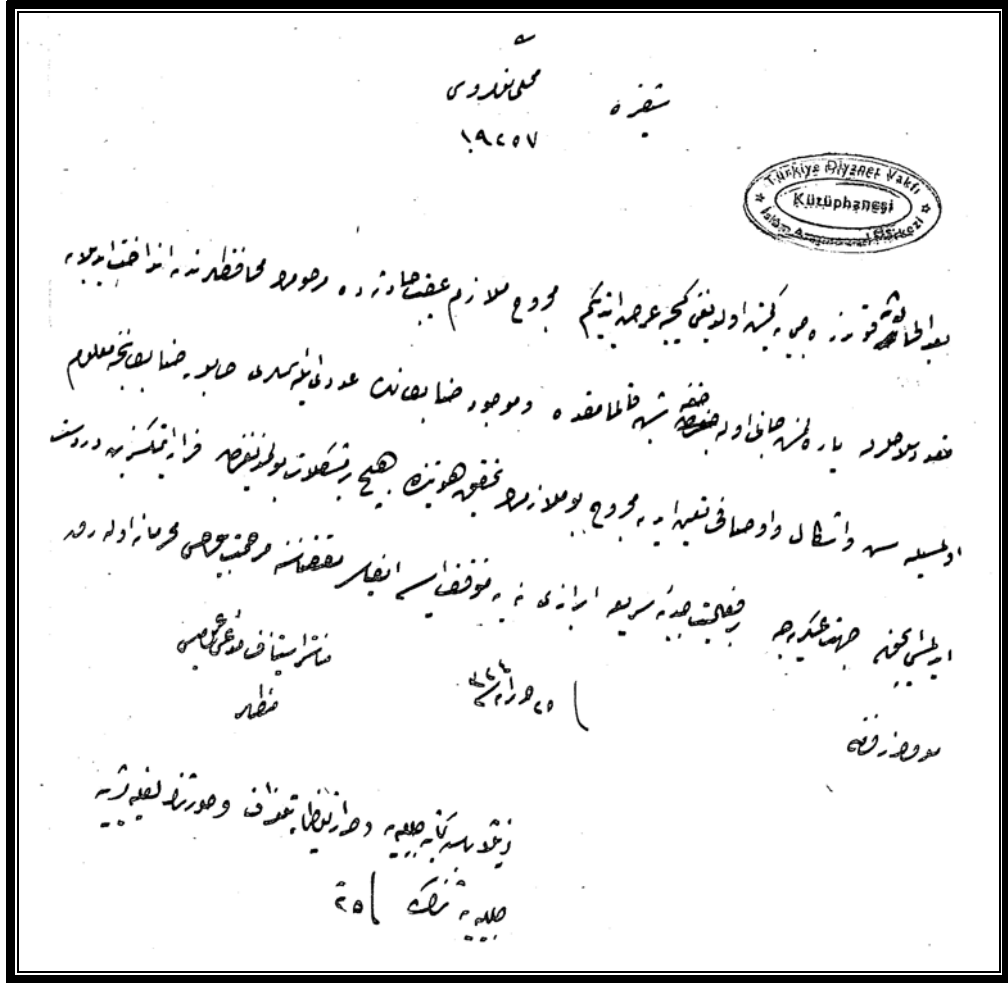




Rumeli Vilâyâtı Müfettişliğine, şifre, 25 Haziran 324  
Şemsi Paşa merhumun katilleri hakkındaki taharriyât ve takibattan  
şimdiye kadar ne netice husule geldi, kolundan mecruh bir zâbitin tedavi  
için bir kunduracı dükkanına müracaat eylediği bu sabah iş'âr buyurulan  
tahkikat neticesinden anlaşılmasına nazaran mûmâileyhin derdesti ve bu  
tarîk ile temin-i maksada hâdim-i ma'lûmât istihsâli kâbil olamadığını,  
evvelce firâr etmiş olan Selahaddin ve Hasan Beylerden başka yeniden  
bugün bir kaç zâbitin savuştuğu ifâde ve nazar-ı dikkati câlib bir şekli-  
diğer de tasvir-i madde olunmakda idüğünden istitlâât ve hissiyât-ı  
mahsûsa-yı devletleri ne merkezdedir serian izâhât i'tâsı ve müşîr Osmân  
Paşa hazretlerinin fevkalâde kumandan sıfatıyla Manastır'a gitmek üzere  
bulduğu tebliğ olunan irâde-i seniyye hükm-ü âlisinden müsteban  
olmasıyla muğâyir-i rızâ-yı âlî ahvâlin vuku'a gelmemesi zımmında  
cihet-i mülkiyece de lâzım gelen tedâbir ve takayyüdâtтан ittihaz ve ifâsı  
beyân olunur.

**Memorandum from Porte to the Inspectorship of Rumelia regarding arresting  
the officers who were identified as suspects in the assassination.**

(BOA, Y.A.HUS., 523/55-8, 8.7.1908)



(Müfettiş-i Umûmîliğe,)

Şifre, No: 19257

Ba'de'l hâdisе kunduracıya gitmiş olduğunu gece arz ettiğim mecruh mülâzım, akab-i hâdisede merhûmun muhafızlarından endahet edilen müteaddid silahlarla yaralanmış câni olacağına şüphe kalmamakta ve mevcûd-u zâbitânın adedi ile isimleri tabur zâbitânınca malum olmasıyla sinn ve eşkâl ve evsâfi taayyün eden mecrûh bu mülâzımın tahkik-i hüviyetinde hiçbir müşkîlât bulunmadığından firâr etmeksizin derdest edilmesi için cihet-i askeriyece bir faâliyet-i ciddiye-i seri'â ibrazı neye mütevakıf ise ifâsı muktezâsına merhamet buyurulması mahremâne olarak maruzdur, ferman. Fî 25 Haziran sene 324.

Manastır İstinâf Müdde-i Umûmîsi

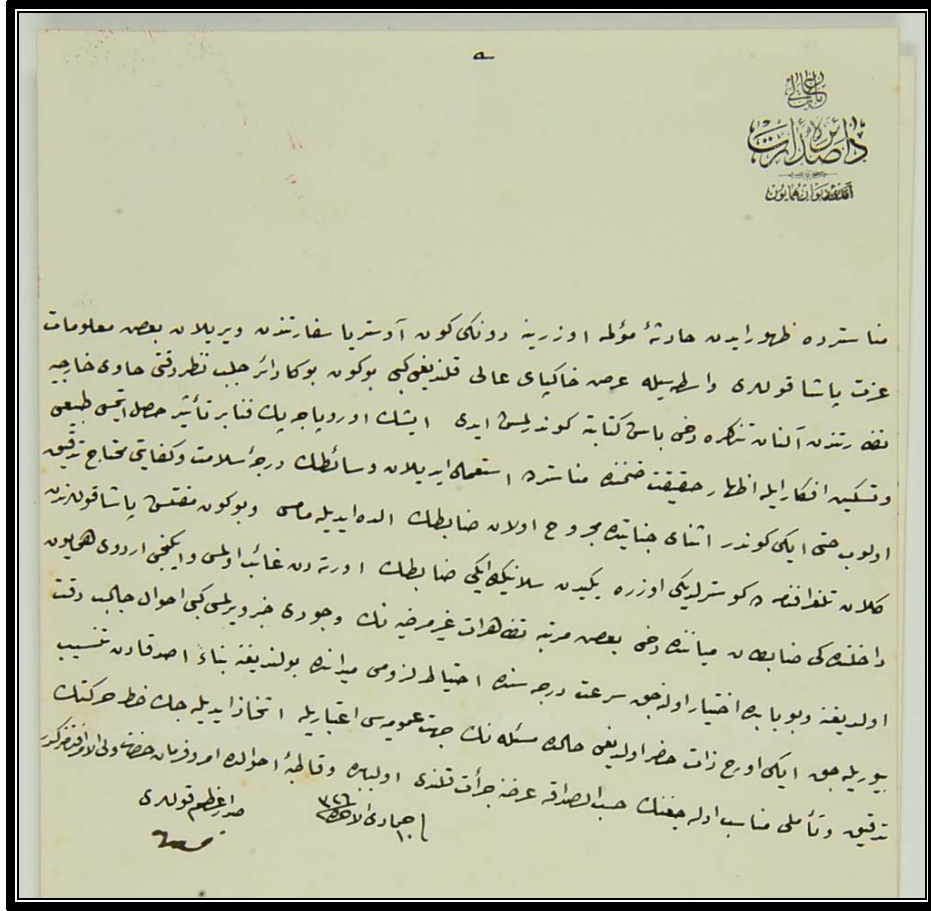
Mazhar

Zeylen Başkitâbet-i Celîleye ve Sadâret-i Uzmâ'ya telgraf ve suretinin leffiyile Müşîriye-yi Celîleye telgraf. Fî 25

**'Top Secret' memorandum from the appeal prosecutor, informing that the murder was committed by a lieutenant, and the military commandership should do what it takes to arrest him.**

(İSAM, HHP, 19/1278, 8.7.1908)



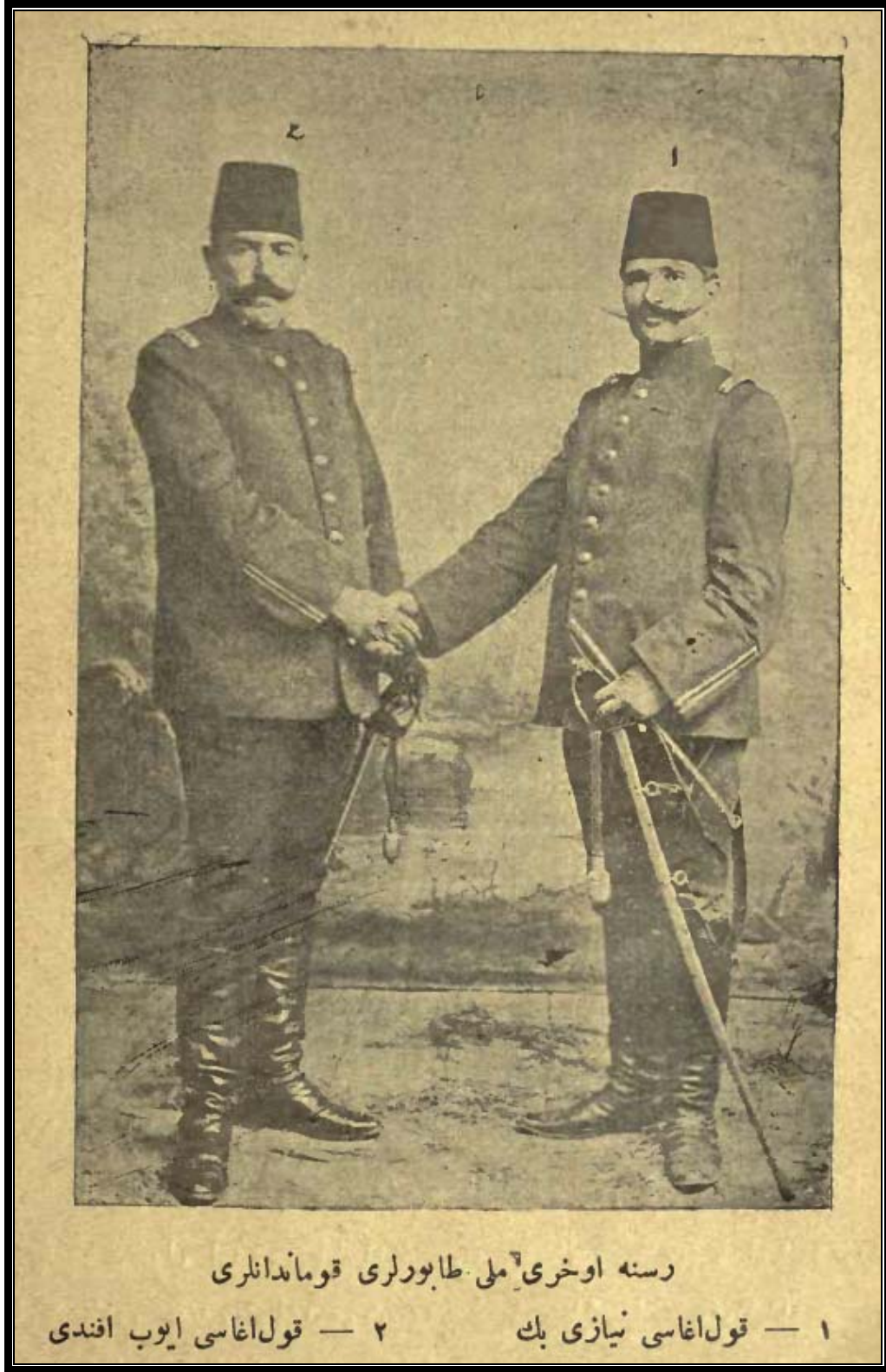


Daire-i Sadâret Amedî Divân-ı Hümâyûn

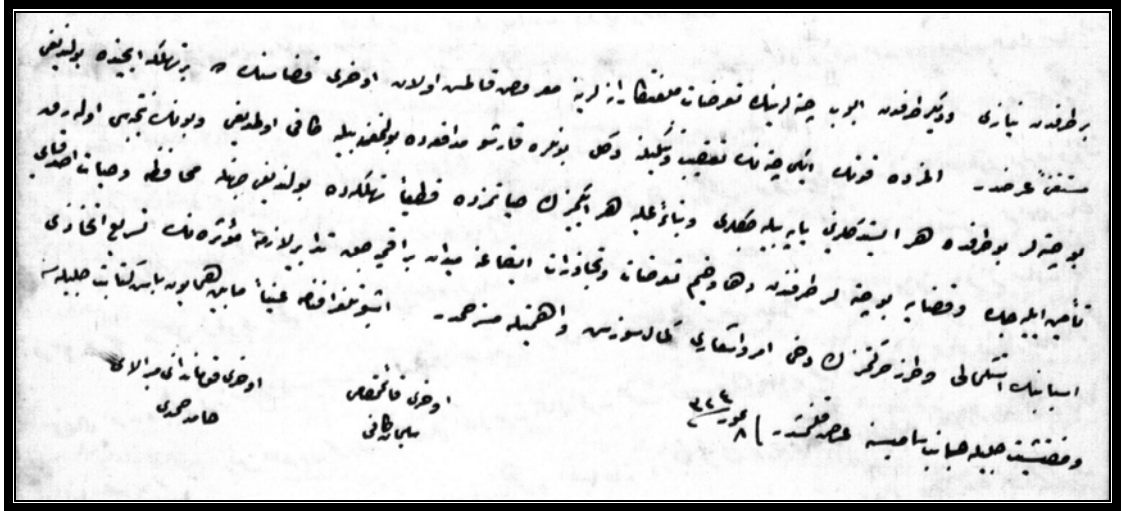
Manastır'da zuhûr eden eden hadise-i müellime üzerine dünkü gün Avusturya Sefâreti'nden verilen bazı malûmat İzzet Paşa kulları vasıtasıyla arz-ı hâkipâ-yi âlî kılındığı gibi, bugün buna dair celb-i nazar-ı dikkati hâvi Hariciye Nezareti'nden alınan tezkere dahî Başkâtâbet'e gönderilmiş idi. İşin Avrupaca pek fena bir te'sîr hâsıl etmesi tabîi ve teskîn efkâr ile izhâr-ı hakîkât zımmında Manastır'da isti'mâl edilen vesâyitin derece-i selâmet ve kifâyeti muhtac-ı tedkîk olub hatta iki gündür esnâ-yı cinâyette mecrûh olan zâbitin elde edilememesi ve bugün müfettiş paşa kullarından gelen telgrafnâmede gösterildiği üzere yeniden Selânik'te iki zâbitin ortadan kayıplı olması ve İkinci Ordu-yu Hümâyûn dahilindeki zâbitân meyânında dahî bazı mertebeli tezâhürât-ı gayr-i marziyenin vücûdu haber verilmesi gibi ahvâl, câlib-i dikkat olduğuna ve bu bâbda ihtiyâr olunacak sür'at derecesinde ihtiyat lüzûmu meydanda bulunduğuna binâen esdikâdan tensîb buyurulacak iki üç zat hazır olduğu halde meselenin cihet-i umûmiyesi itibarıyla ittihaz edilecek hatt-ı hareketin tetkîk ve teemmülü münâsib olacağına hasb'üs-sadâka arzına cür'et kılındı. Olbâbda ve kâtibe-i ahvâlde emr-u fermân hazret-i veliyy'ül-emr efendimizindir. Fî 10/Ca/1326 Sadrazam Ferid

**Ferid Paşa, the Grand Vizier's memorandum to Abdülhamid II, informing that although the murderer was injured, he managed to escape while other officers also fled.**

(BOA, Y.A.HUS., 523/55-5, 9.7.1908)



**Eyüb Sabri Bey and Resneli Niyazi Bey**  
**Commanders of Resne and Ohri National Regiments.**  
(Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırat-ı Niyâzi*, p. 42)



Bir taraftan Niyazi ve diğer taraftan Eyüb çetelerinin taarruzât-ı melânetskârânelerine maruz kalmış olan Ohri kazâsının da bir tehlike içinde bulunduğu müstağnî-i arzıdır. Elimizde kuvvetin iki çetenin takip ve tenkiline değil, bunlara karşı müdâfâada bulunulmaya bile kâfi olmadığı ve bunun neticesi olarak bu çeteler bu tarafda her istediklerini yapabilecekleri ve binâenaleyh her ikimizin hayatımız da kat'iyen tehlikede bulunduğu cihetle, muhafaza ve hayat-ı esdikâyı temin eyleyecek ve kazâya bu çeteler tarafından dahâ vahîm taarruzât ve tecâvüzât ikâma meydan bırakmayacak tedâbir-i lâzime-i müessîrenin tesrî'-i ittihâzı esbâbının istikmâli ve tarz-ı hareketimizin dahi emr-ü iş'ârı kemâl-i sûziş ve ehemmiyetle müsterhamdır.

İşbu telgrafname aynen Mabeyn-i Hümâyûn Başkitâbet-i Celîlesine ve Müfettişiyet-i celîle cânib-i sâmişine arz kılınmıştır. Fî 8 Temmuz sene 324.

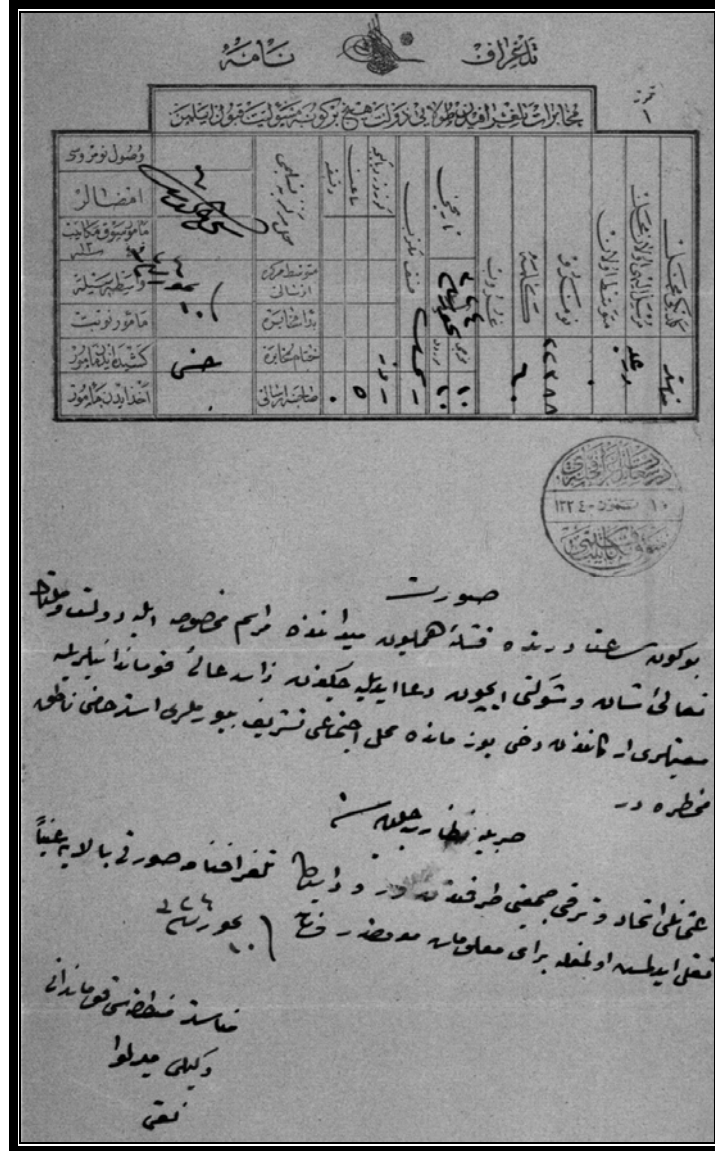
Ohri Kumandanı  
Miralay Hâmid Hamdî

Ohri Kaymakamı  
Süleymân Kâni

**The report from the governor and commander of the security department of Ohri expresses the lack of security staff to interfere with Resneli Niyazi Bey and Eyüb Sabri Bey's bands.**

(BOA, YEE, 71/61-1, 22.7.1908)





Bugün saat dörtte Kışla-yı Hümayûn meydanında merâsim-i mahsûsa ile devlet ve milletin teâlî-yi şân u şevketi için dua edileceğinden zâbit-i âlî-i kumandânîleriyle maiyetleri erkânından dahî bu zamanda mahal-i ictimâî teşrif buyurulmaları istihâmını mantûk muhtıradır.

Harbiye Nezâret-i Celîlesine,  
Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti tarafından vürûd eyleyen telgrafnâme sûreti bâlâya aynen nakl edilmiş olmağla berâ-yı ma'lûmât ma'rûzdur. Fermân. Fî 10 Temmuz sene 324.

Manastır Mintıkası Kumandanı Vekili  
Mirlivâ Takî

**Memorandum issued by the Committee of Union and Progress, requiring the attendance of all the soldiers and officers at the meeting at Kışla-yı Hümayûn square.**

(BOA, YEE, 71/56, 23.7.1908)



تلفون ١٠١

في ١٠ تموز ١٩٠٨

Le 10 - 1908

وصول نومروسى

N° d'arrivée

دقيقه ساعت

h. m. du

ارسال

Recexpédié

مأمورك امضائى

Signature de l'Employé

TELEGRAMME

في ١٠ تموز ١٩٠٨

Le 10 - 1908

واستلمه

Transmis par

دقيقه ساعت

h. m. du

بدأ بخاره

Commencé à

ختم بخاره

Fin à

مأمورك امضائى

Signature de l'Employé

L'état n'accepte aucune responsabilité à raison du service de la télégraphie

De \_\_\_\_\_ pour \_\_\_\_\_ الى \_\_\_\_\_ عن \_\_\_\_\_

محل نومروسى	عدد كلمات	غروب	محل تاريخى	ساعت	دقيقه	روز وياشب	طريق	اشارات مخصوصه
N° du dépôt	Nombre de mots	Group	Date du dépôt	Heures	Minutes	Matin ou soir	Votes	Indications non taxés
٢٢٢١٠	١٠٠			١٢		مساء		

تمة تلغرافة جماعتنا

ارادات نية مستقره لربنا نيم دريو دستا طرية بحسب ايماننا بربنا وادونه  
لطيفاتنا تعديل ساعده و اجاب اعلان اداره بوليس هوريط صحت و جود  
صلته و قايست اسرهام ديانا كونت قدر مجلس مهورنا مك كسادينه دائر فزانه  
اصدار بوليس ماله رضاي شهر بار طرية مخالف اعلان و نوحى كذا راولور ماستر  
ولاست اهل ذر اليوم بولانه مازيد ملكه ايطه وامر و صايطه كسركه و قرار ساها ايلم  
علم و ساخ و الخا اهل كيار و صفا اوطانه مختلفه خصوصيك بلا استقا و صليت هديه خاترو  
عبر و صفا و صفا بوليس عرصا ايدر فزانه

Atebe-i Felek-meretebe-i Cenâb-ı Padişahî'ye,  
İrâdât-ı seniyye-i müstekırralarıyla tebaa ve zîr-i destânlarına bahş u ihsan buyurulan Kanun-ı Esasî'nin tatbikât-ı fi'liyesine müsaade ve icab-ı hâlin irâde buyurulması suretiyle sadakat ve ubûdiyetimizin halelden vikâyesini istirhâm ve Pazar gününe kadar Meclis-i Mebusân'ın küşâdına dair fermân-ı hümayûnları isdâr buyurulmadığı hâlde rıza-yı Şehriyârîlerine muhalif ahvâlin vuku'u derkâr olup Manastır Vilâyeti dahilinde el-yevm bulunan memurîn-i mülkiye erkân ve ümerâ ve zâbitân-ı askeriye ve efrâd-ı Şahaneleriyle ulemâ ve mesâiyih ve'l-hâsıl kibâr u sığâr edyân-ı muhtelifê mensubîninin bilâ-istisnâ vahdâniyet-i Hüdâ'ya karşı ahd ü mîsâk-ı umumî altında bulunduğunu dahî arz eyleriz. Fermân. 10 Temmuz 324

Osmanlı Terakki ve İttihad Cemiyeti Manastır Merkezi

**The telegram addressed directly to the Sultan by the Committee of Ottoman Progress and Union, requesting the proclamation of the constitution on Sunday, July 26, 1908.**

(BOA, YEE, 71/69-6, 23.7.1908)

**Telegrams from Rumelia provinces, including Firzovik and Siroz, to Istanbul  
requesting proclamation of the constitution.**

#	From	To	Date	Subject	Source
1	Firzovik'teki Kosova Halkı (194 imza)	Sadâret ve Meşihât	20.07.1908	Vatanı korumak için Firzovik'te toplananların Anayasa'nın iadesi, Meclisin açılması talepleri	Ahmed Refik (AR), <i>İnkılâb-ı Azîm</i> (İA), p. 88-89
2	Firzovik'ten Priştine Kaymakamı Südü	Sadâret ve Meşihât	23.07.1908	Firzovik'te toplananların sabırsızlandığı ve biran önce olumlu cevap verilmesi; aksi halde silahlı olarak "aşağıya akın edileceği"...	AR, İA, p. 90
3	Preşova memurları, askeri ve mülkî erkanı ve eşrafi	Atabe-i Padişâhiye	23.07.1908	Önümüzdeki Pazar (26.7.1908)'a kadar Kânûn-ı Esâsi'nin tekrar tatbiki ve Meclis-i Mebusan'ın açılışına dair ferman çıkmazsa "rıza-yı şehriyâriye muhalif" şeyler olacağı ihtarı	AR, İA, p. 90-92
4	Köprülü Kaymakamı Ali Münif	Kosova Vilayeti	23.07.1908	Erkan-ı Harb Binbaşısı Enver Bey ve müslüman ve gayrimüslim ruhani reisleriyle birlikte 1876 Anayasasının yürürlüğe konması talebi	AR, İA, p. 92-93
5	İştib Kaymakamı Rıza	Kosova Vilayeti	23.07.1908	Saat 9:30'da asker, İslam ve Hıristiyan vs. Ahalinin hükümet dairesine toplanarak Hürriyet ilan ettikleri...	AR, İA, p. 93
6	Çaruvo? Nahiyesi Müdürü Tevfik		23.07.1908	Hürriyet ilanı ve 3 top atıldığı	AR, İA, p. 94
7	Kratovo Kaymakamı Ali Galib	Kosova Vilayeti	23.07.1908	Akşam 11:30'da asker ve subaylardan oluşan bir grubun hürriyet ilan ettikleri ve nümayiş yaptıkları	AR, İA, p. 95
8	Palanga Kaymakamı Hasan Hüseyin	Kosova Vilayeti	23.07.1908	Gece saat 3'te memur, subay ve ahalinin hürriyet ilanı	AR, İA, p. 95
9	Koçana Kaymakamı Hüsnü	Kosova Vilayeti	23.07.1908	Bugün saat 8:30da İslam ve Hıristiyan tüm halkın ittifak ederek "Yaşasın Vatan, Yaşasın Adalet!" diye bağırdıkları	AR, İA, p. 96

#	From	To	Date	Subject	Source
10	Siroz Sancağı umum ahalisi ve sadıka kulları	Atabe-i Padişâhiye	23.07.1908	"işlerde onlara danış" ilâhî emrine ve sünnet-i seniyye-i nebeviyye tavsiyesine tabiiyyet maksadıyla 7 Zilhicce 1293'te tasdik olunan Kânûn-ı Esâsi'ye göre "meşveret" usulünün yeniden müjdelenmesi, ve Millet Meclisi'nin yeniden toplanması [...] <b>aksi halde.</b>	AR, İA, p. 99; Uzunçarşılı, '1908 Yılında', p. 133; BOA, YEE, 71/78-9, 23.7.1908.
11	Siroz'da Nizâmiye ve Redif Firka-i Hümâyunları Umum mensûbîn-i askeriyyesi	Atabe-i Padişâhiye	23.07.1908	7 Zilhicce 1293'te tasdik olunan Kânûn-ı Esâsi'nin yeniden müjdelenmesi, ve Millet Meclisi'nin yeniden toplanması..aksi halde tüm ordu sınıflarıyla birlikte İstanbul'a hareket edileceği	AR, İA, p. 100; BOA, YEE, 71/78, 23.7.1908.
12	Siroz'da Nizâmiye ve Redif Firka-i Hümâyunları Umum mensûbîn-i askeriyyesi	Harbiye Nezaretine	23.07.1908	7 Zilhicce 1293'te tasdik olunan Kânûn-ı Esâsi'nin yeniden müjdelenmesi, ve Millet Meclisi'nin yeniden toplanmasına...	BOA, YEE, 71/50, 22.7.1908; BOA, YEE, 71/78-3, 23.7.1908.
13	Siroz Mutasarrıfı Reşid	Mabeyn'e, Selanik Vilayetine, Müfetiş-i Umumiye ve III.Ordu'ya	23.07.1908 4:30 (11:45)	Saat 4:30'da toplanan ahali ve askerinin, önceden gönderilen telgrafa cevap gelmeden dağılmayacağı...	AR, İA, p. 101; BOA, YEE, 71/78-1, 23.7.1908.
14	Siroz Sancağı umum ahali-i mutîa ve sadıka kulları	Mabeyn'e,	23.07.1908 5:10 (12:25)	Zât-ı Hilâfetpenâhiye karşı beslenen ihsâsât, sadâkate karşılık, 7 Zilhicce 1293'te tasdik olunan Kânûn-ı Esâsi'nin yeniden müjdelenmesi, ve Millet Meclisi'nin yeniden toplanması..aksi halde tüm ordu sınıflarıyla birlikte İstanbul'a hareket edileceği	BOA, YEE, 71/78-10, 23.7.1908.
15	Siroz Mutasarrıfı Reşid 9. Fırka Kumandanı Hasan	Mabeyn'e,	23.07.1908 5:30 (12:45)	Askerlerin ve tüm subayların, sancakları açmış bir şekilde, saat 4:30'da çekilen telgrafa cevap beklendiği...	BOA, YEE, 71/78-8, 23.7.1908.
16	Siroz Mutasarrıfı Reşid	Mabeyn'e,	23.07.1908 6:30 (13:45)	Silahlı bir şekilde önceki telgrafın cevabını beklemeye devam edenlerin "Yaşasın Hürriyet! , Yaşasın Millet!" diye bağırarak Padişah'ın müsadelerini bekledikleri	AR, İA, p. 102



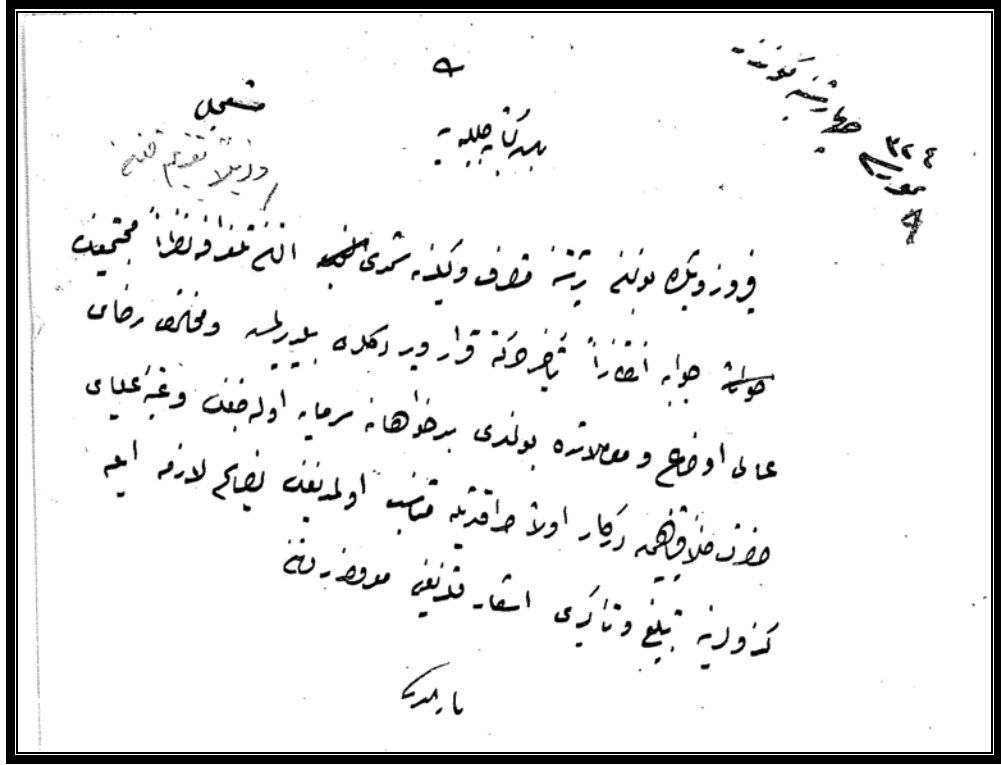
#	From	To	Date	Subject	Source
17	Siroz Mutasarrıfı Reşid	Mabeyn'e,	23.07.1908 8:30 (15:45)	Bundan önceki telgraflara cevap bekleyen asker ve ahali "Yaşasın Millet idâresi" seslerini ayyuka çıkarmakta oldukları...	BOA, YEE, 71/78-7, 23.7.1908.
18	Siroz Mutasarrıfı Reşid	Mabeyn'e,	23.07.1908 9:15 (16:30)	Silahlı bir şekilde bundan önceki iki telgrafın cevabını bekleyenlerin "yarım saat daha süre tanıdığını" bildirir.	BOA, YEE, 71/78-6, 23.7.1908.
19	Siroz Sancağı asker ve umum ahali-yi İslamiyye ve Hıristiyanîyesi	Mabeyn'e, Selanik Vilayetine, Müfettiş-i Umumiye ve III.Ordu'ya	23.07.1908 10:00 (17:15)	Bugünkü iki kıta' telgrafnameye zeyildir: Bir saate kadar cevâb-ı muvâfakat alınmadığı takdirde Kânûn-ı Esâsi mucibince ersed ve ekber olan veliahd-ı saltanata tahvil-i bey'ât olacağı Siroz'ca ilân edildiğinden ona göre tesri'-i cevâba inâyet buyurulması	AR, İA, p. 102
20	Sadrizam Said		23.07.1908	Siroz'dan keşide olunan 10 Temmuz sene 1324 tarihli telgraf Meclis-i Vükela'da mütalaâ olundu. Meclis-i Mebusân'ın ictimaa da'veti hakkındaki istid'âya dait ittihâz olunacak... Rumeli Vilâyâtı müfettişliğine ve taraflarımıza bildirilecektir.	AR, İA, p. 103-4
21	Siroz Mutasarrıfı Reşid	Mabeyn'e,	23.07.1908	.. Heyet-i Vükela'yı muhatap almadıkları, Kânûn-ı Esâsi'yi zaten ilan etmiş olsalar da, bağlı buldukları Padişah tarafından resmen ilanını istedikleri, 24 saat süre verdiklerini....	AR, İA, p. 104
22	Nevrekop Ahalisi	Makâm-ı Ulyâ-yı Hilâfetpenâhiye	23.07.1908	7 Zilhicce 1293 tarihinde tasdik olunan Kânûn-ı Esâsi'nin yeniden ilanına..	BOA, YEE, 71/71, 23.7.1908
23	Gevgili Umum Kıt'a-yı Askeriye, Ümera ve Zâbitân ve efrâdı namına Kumandan Vekili Binbaşı Yakub	Seraskerlik Makamına	23.07.1908	7 Zilhicce 1293 tarihinde ferman-ı hilafetpenahi ile tasdik ve ilan olan Kânûn-ı Esâsi'nin yeniden neşr ve ilanının temini ve Mebusan Meclisi'nin İstanbul'da toplanması	BOA, YEE, 71/76, 23.7.1908; Uzunçarşılı, '1908 Yılında', p. 172.
24	Siroz Mutasarrıfı Reşid	Müfettiş-i Umumiyye	24.07.1908	(Meşrutiyet'in ilanı üzerine) Kânûn-ı Esâsi'nin yeniden icrası ve Meclis-i Mebusan'ın açılması kararı üzerine Siroz halkının sonsuz mutluluğu ve Padişaha olan şükranları sunulur. Müslüman veya Hıristiyan ne kadar siyasi mahkum varsa serbest bırakılması istirham ediliyor.	AR, İA, p. 108



**The existing buildings on May 1st Avenue (Булевар 1-ви) next to the Telegram House of Manastir where Şemsi Paşa was killed.**  
(Photo: Hakan Özdemir, 2012)



**The shoemakers' shops of Fistani (Фустани) street, where Atif was hidden after the assassination.**  
(Photo: Hakan Özdemir, 2012)



Başkitâbet-i celîleye Müsta'cel, 9 Temmuz 324 Çarşamba Gündüz  
Firzovik'de bulunan Priştine mutasarrıf vekilinden şimdi alınan ve zeylen takdim  
kılınan telgrafa nazaran müctemi'inin cevâba intizaran tevkif-i harekete karar verdikleri  
bildirilmiş ve muhalif-i rızâyı âli evzâ' ve muâmelâtda bulunmaları bedhâhâna sermâye  
olacağı ve Atebe-i Ulyâyı Hazret-i Hilâfet-penâhîce derkâr olan sadâkat ile  
mütenâsib olmadığı nasâyih-i lâzime ile kendilerine tebliğ ve te'kidi iş'âr kıldığını  
ma'rûzdur fermân.

(Müfettiş-i Umûmi Hüseyin Hilmi)

Müfettiş-i Umûmilik cânib-i sâmiine,  
Rüesânın akşama doğru vukû' bulan ictimâ'larında karâr-ı âhire kadar burada kalarak  
istirhâm ve istid'âlarının buradan te'kidini tensib etdiklerinin Prizren, Yakova, Priştine,  
Gilan, Preşova ve sâir mahaller ahâlisinden ileri gidenlere te'hîr-i azîmetlerine dâir  
telgraflar keşide etdikleri ve makâm-ı sadâret-i uzmadan makine başındaistirhâmalarının  
sür'ât-i tervîcini talep eyledikleri anlaşılış ve Preşova kaymakamlığından alınan  
telgrafnâmeden ahâli-i kazâdan üç yüz kişinin bugün Gilan'ın Zağra karyesine azîmetle  
orada sâir mahallerden gelecek kesân ile birleşdikden sonra hatt-ı hareketlerini tesbît  
edecekleri ve Preşova kazasında efkâr ve emel-i ma'lûmiyeye yalnız me'mûrîn-i  
mülkiye henüz teşrik etmeyib anların dahi idhâli muhakkak idüğü bildirilmiş ve burada  
bulunan ulemâ ve eşrâf ve ruesa nâil-i emel olmadıkça geri dönmeleri ve dağılmaları  
imkân hâricinde olduğunu ve cevâb-ı şâfi almadıkları takdirde Üsküb'e ve daha ilerilere  
gitmeğe mecbûr kalacaklarını beyân etmekde bulunmuşlardır. Malûm-i fehîmâneleri  
olan bu tafsîlâtdan başka ma'lûmât ve hissiyât olursa arz edilecektir. 8 Temmuz 324

Firzovik'te Priştine Mutasarrıfı Vekili Cemal

**The armed Albanians who met in Firzovik (Ferizaj), postpone their march  
toward Üsküb (Skopje); and reaffirm their request against proclaiming the  
constitution.**

(İSAM, HHP, 9/508, 22.7.1908)

Tesis-i Celil-i Cenâb-ı Hilafet-penâhî olan Kânûn-ı Esâsî'de suret-i teşkili beyan olunan Meclis-i Meb'usan'ın içtimaa davet olunması hakkında bil'istizan şeref-sudur buyurulan İrade-i seniye-i hazret-i padişahî hükm-ü celili bi'l-cümle vilâyat-ı şahane ve elviye-i gayr-i mülhakaya batelgraf tebliğ kılınmış ve keyfiyetin Dersaadet evrak-ı havadisinde dahi resmen ilânı iktiza-yı maslahattan görünmüş olmakla muvafık-ı emr ü ferman-ı Humayun-u hazret-i padişahi buyurulduğu halde ifa-yı muktezasının Dahiliye Nezaret-i celilesine havale kılınacağı ve Rumeli ahvaline müteferri olup tevdi buyurulan evrakın takımile takdim ve iade kılındığı muhatı ilm-i âli buyuruldukta ol babta.

İmzalar

24 Cemaziye'l-ahır 1326, 10 Temmuz 324

Meclis-i Vükelâ'nın manzur-u âli buyurulan işbu mazbatası üzerine mucibince irade-i seniye-i cenab-i hilâfet-penahi şeref-sudur buyurulmakla ol babta.

Serkâtib-i Hazret-i

şehriyari

Tahsin

**The decision of the Council of Ministers, approved by Abdülhamid II, to proclaim the constitution and open *Meclis-i Mebusan*.**

(Tahsin Paşa, *Yıldız Hatıraları*, p. 489)

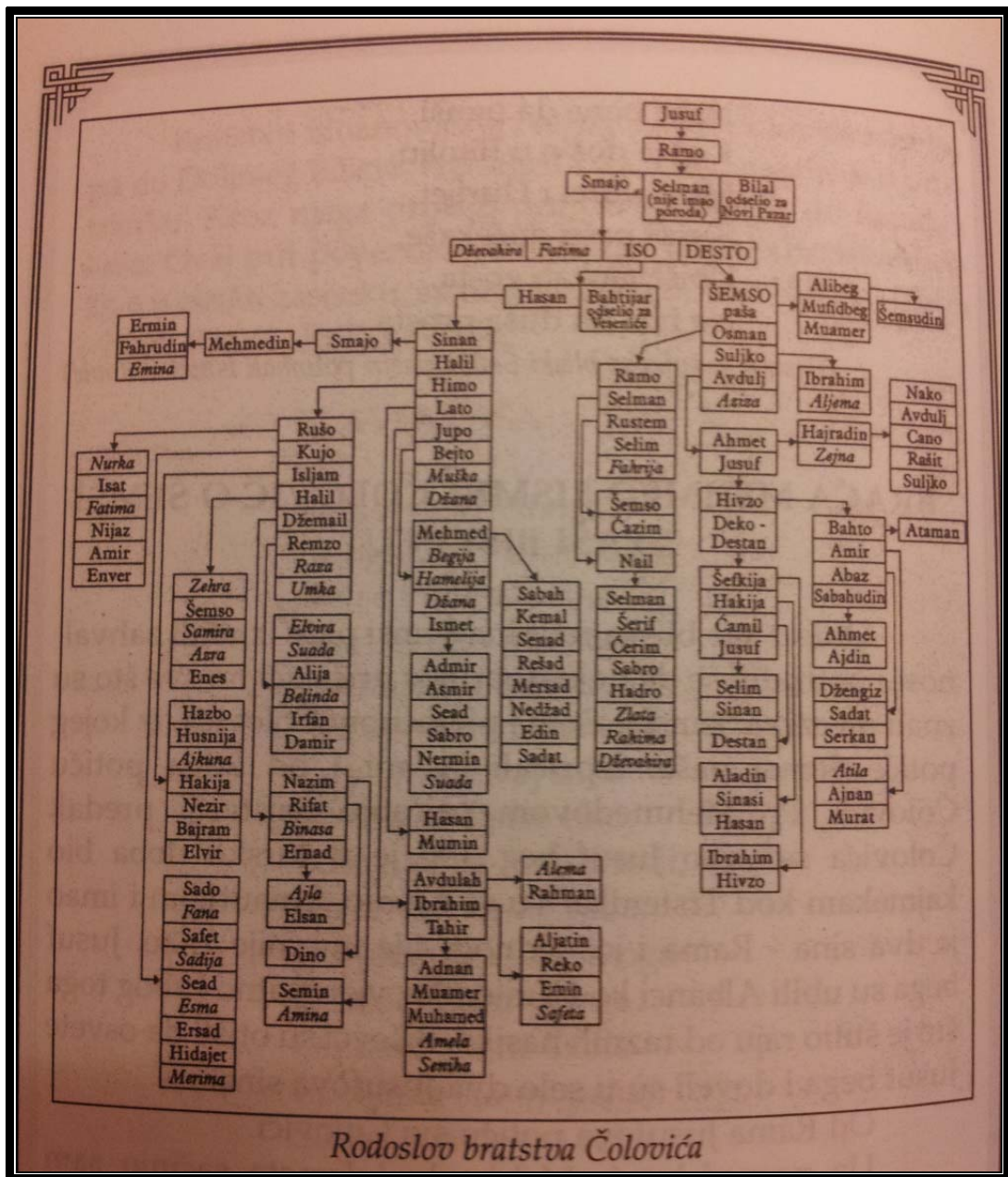
Telgrafname

Vilayât-ı selâse-i şâhâne ile mülhak elviye ve kaymakamlıklarına, Sadâreti uzmâdan bu gece saat beşte keşide buyurulup şimdi ahz ile suret-i bâlâyâ naklolunan telgrafnamede tebliğ buyurulduğu veçhile Meclis-i Mebusan'ın küşâdı hususuna irade-i seniyye-i hazret-i Padişâhî şeref-müteallik buyurulmuş ve velinimet-i bî-minnetimiz Padişâhımız efendimiz hazretlerinin tebaa-i şâhâneleri hakkında ibzal buyurdıkları işbu atıfet-i seniyye-i tebaaperverâne teşekkürât-ı gayrikâbil-i îfâ bir nimet olduğundan, hükmün vakit geçirmeden cümleye ilân ve tebşiriyle, Hakk-ı hümâyûn-ı Hilâfetpenâhîde bir kat daha hayır dualar edilmesine müsaraat buyurulması tebliğ ve temenni olunur. Olbâbda. 10 Temmuz 324.

Müfettiş-i Umûmî Hüseyin Hilmi

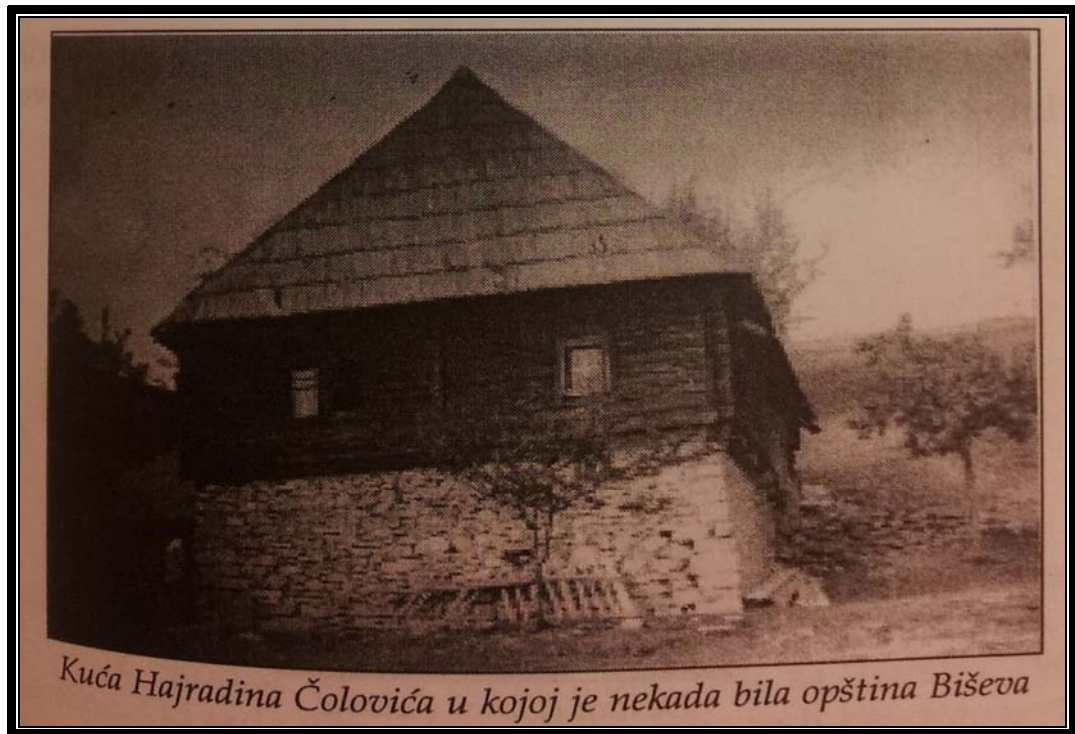
**Notification to the Rumeli provinces of the Sultan's approval regarding the constitution.**

(Galip Paşa, *Galip Paşa'nın Hâtıraları*, p. 11)



**Šemsi Paša's family tree.**  
 (Esad N. Šutković, *Šemsi Paša Biševac*, p. 192)

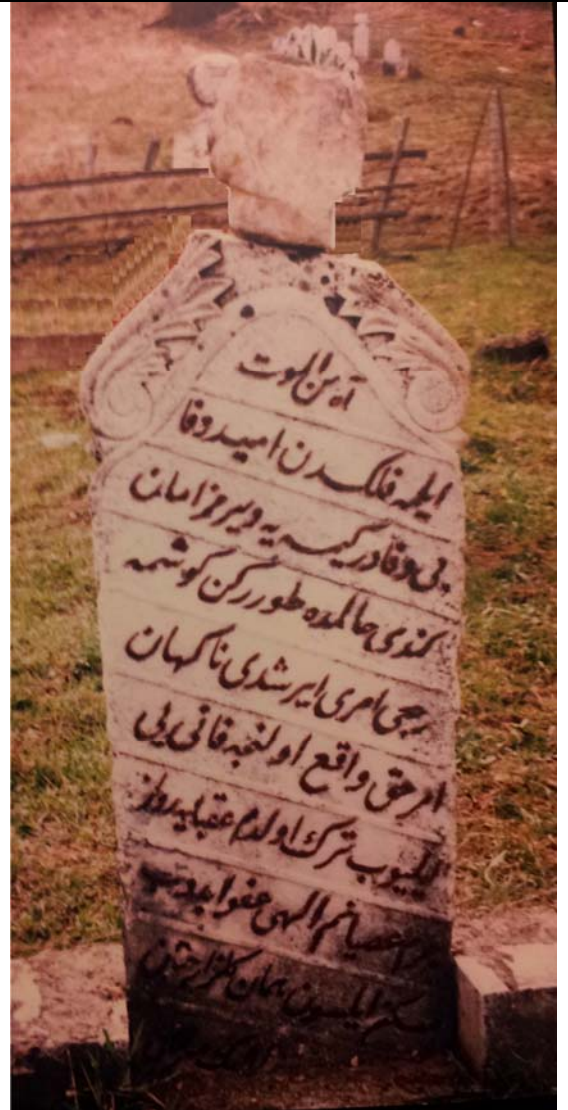
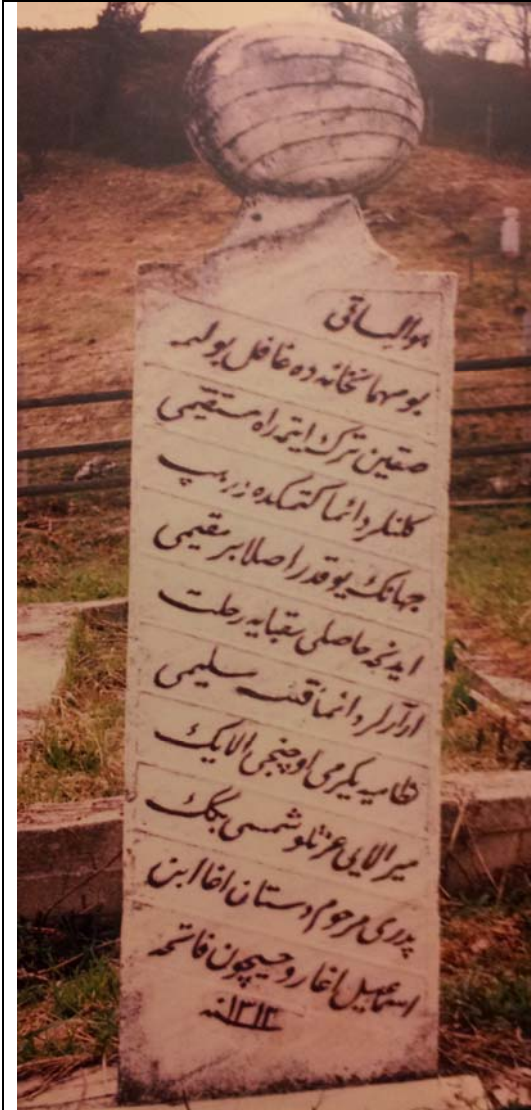




**Şemsi Paşa's family house at Biševo.**  
(Esad N. Šutković, *Şemsi Paša Biševac*, p. 192)



**Şemsi Paşa was buried in the garden of Rifai Tekke of Manastir.**  
(The grave was located next to İshak Çelebi Mosque, and removed by Yugoslavian government in 1972)  
(Photo: Hakan Özdemir, 2012)



Destan Ağa  
(Şemsi Paşa's father)

Şehriye Hanım  
(Şemsi Paşa's mother)

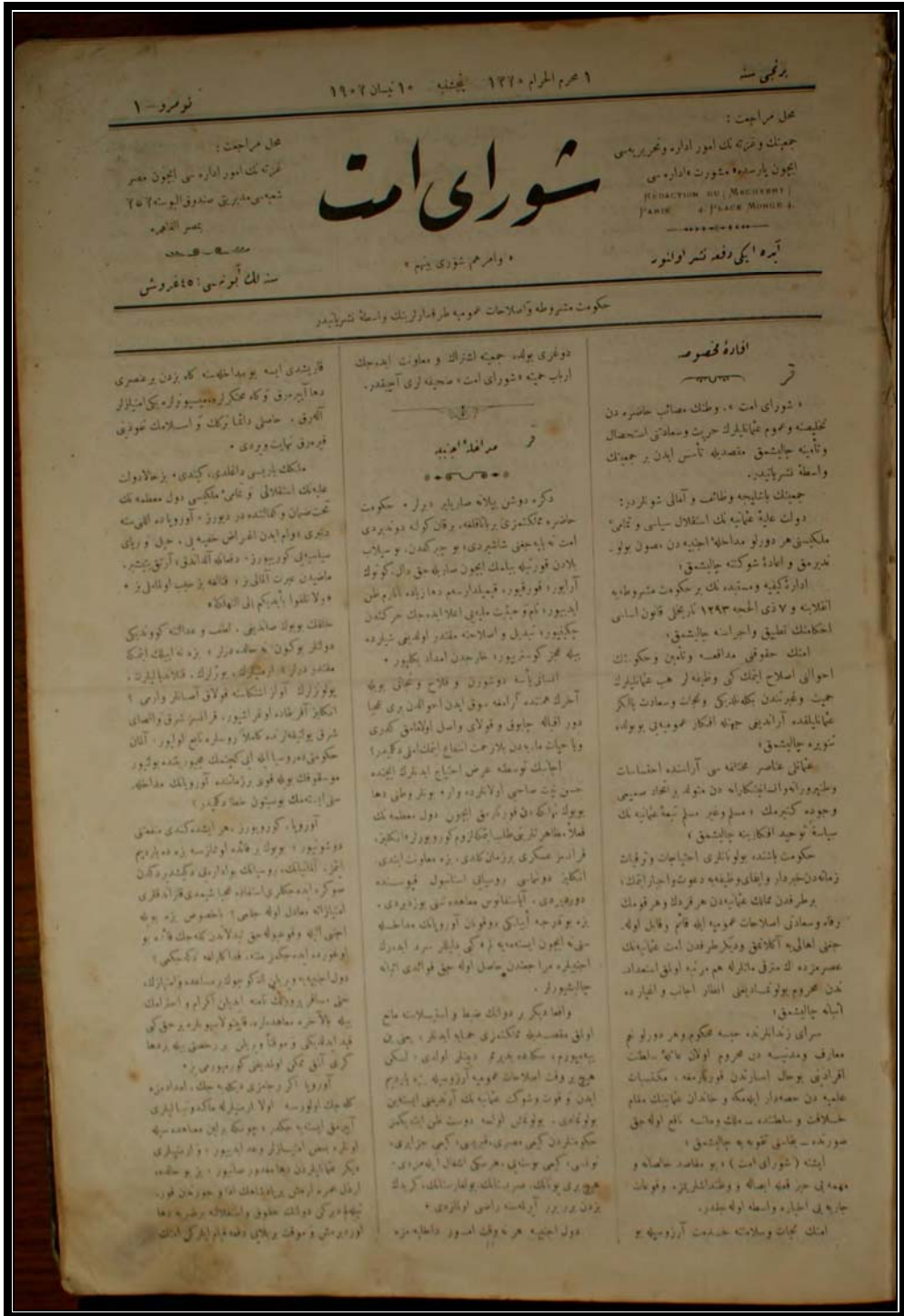
Hüve'l-Bâki  
Bu mihmânhânedede gafil bulunma  
Sakın terk itme râh-ı müstakîmi  
Gelenler dâima gitmektedir hep  
Cihânın yoktur asla bir mûkimi  
Edince hâsılı bekâyâ rihlet  
Ararlar dâima kalb-i selîmi  
Nizâmîye Yirmiüçüncü Alay'ın  
Miralayı İzzetlû Şemsi Bey'in  
pederi, merhum Destan Ağa ibn-ü  
İsmail Ağa Ruhiçün Fâtiha  
sene 1313 (1897)

Âh mine'l-mevt!  
Eyleme felekden ümid-i vefa,  
Bî-vefadır kimseye vermez aman,  
Kendi halimde dururken köşemde,  
İrcî emri erişdi nagehan,  
Emr-i Hak vaki olunca faniye,  
Eyleyüb terk oldum ukbaya revan,  
Cürm ü isyanım İlahi afv idüb,  
Meskenüm eylesün heman gülzar-ı cinan.  
.....  
.....  
.....

**Şemsi Paşa's father's (Destan Ağa) and mother's (Şehriye Hanım) gravestones in Biševo, Montenegro.**

(Photo: Hakkı Erik, Şemsi Paşa's brother's grandson)



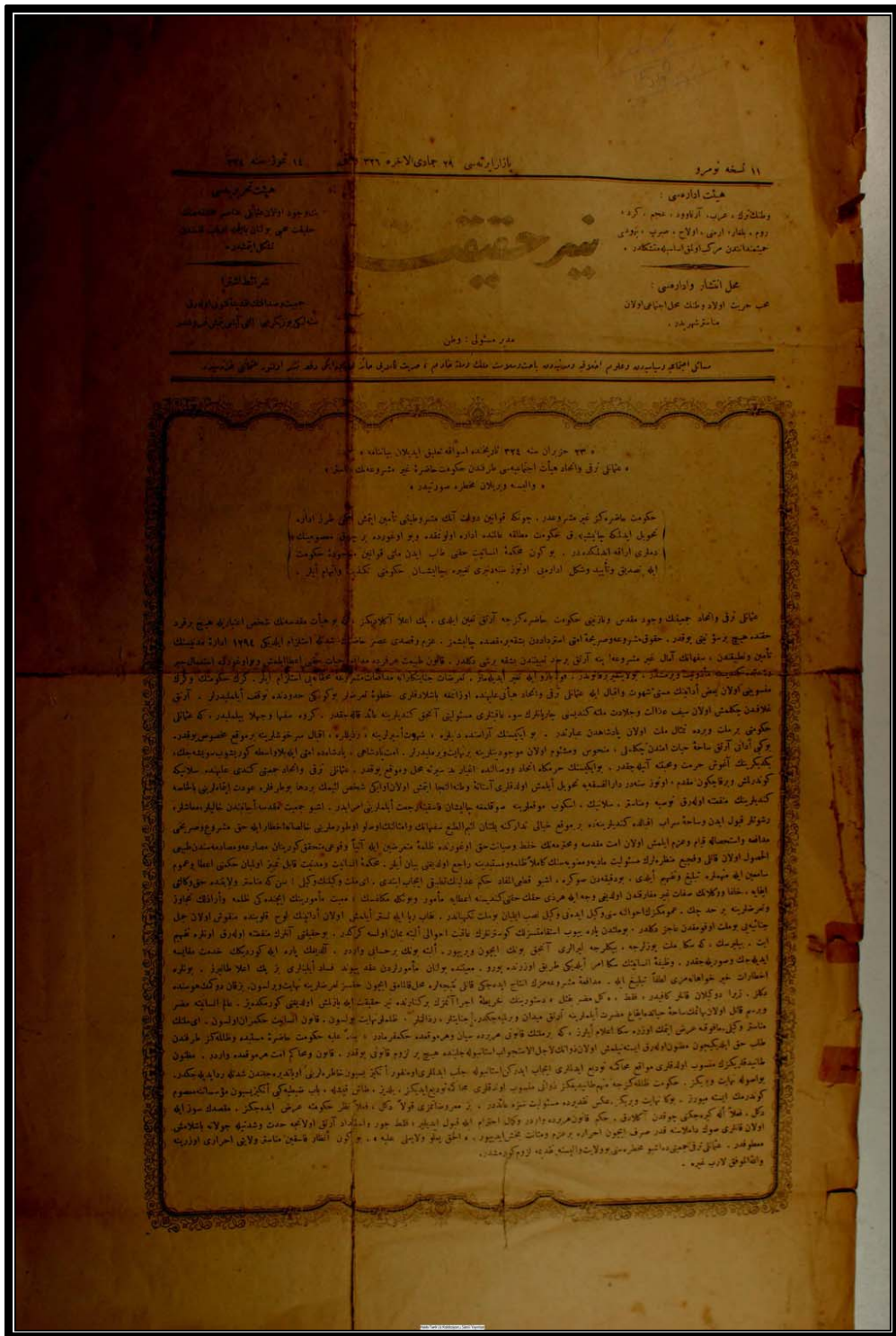


“Şura-yı Ümmet, vatanın mesâib-i hâzireden tahlisine ve umûm Osmanlıların hürriyet ve saadetini istihsâl ve te'mine çalışmak maksadıyla te'sis eden bir Cemiyet'in vasıta-i neşriyatıdır.”

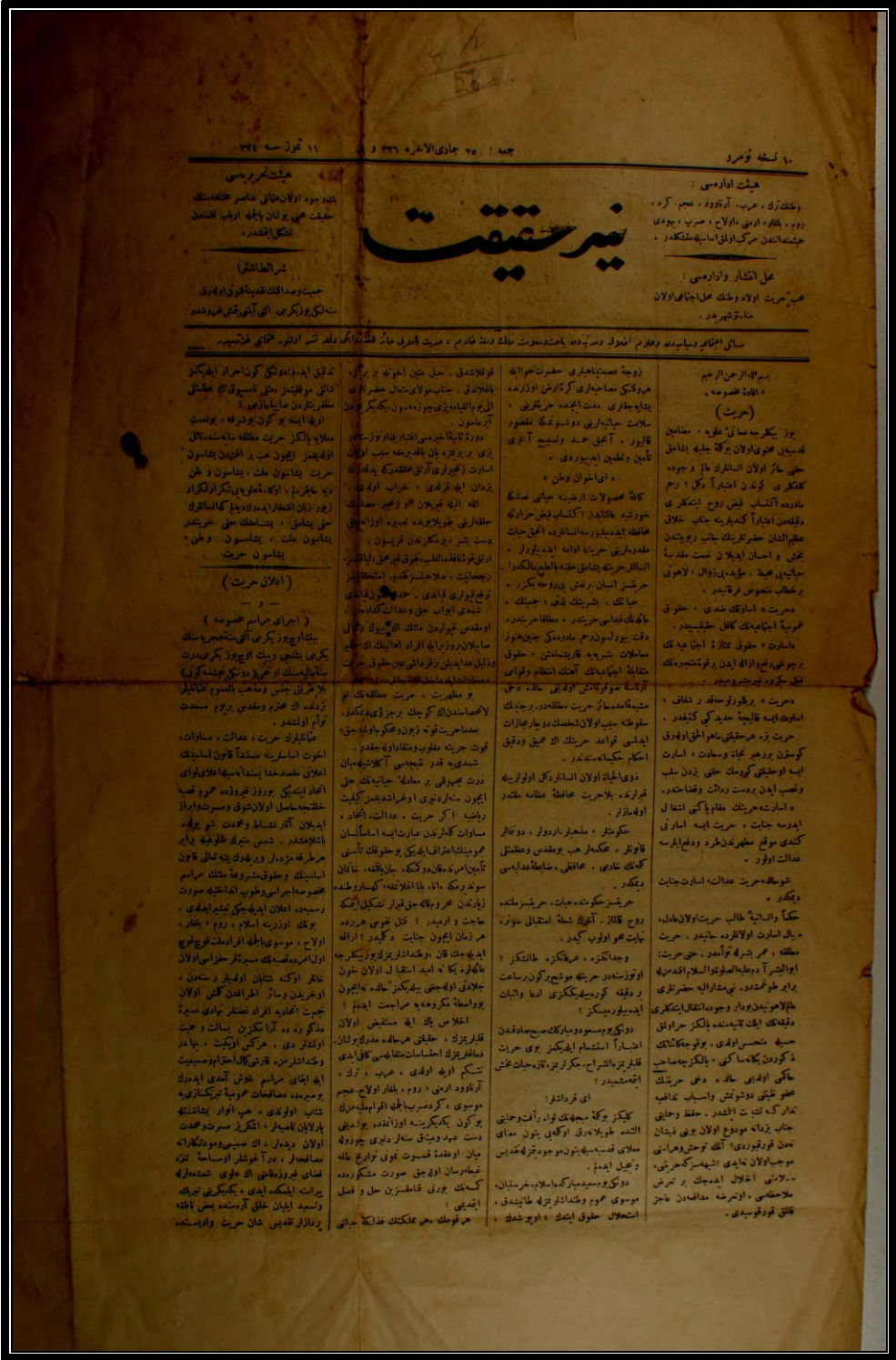
An opposition newspaper declaring its goals as salvation of the country and ensuring liberty for all Ottomans.

(Şura-yı Ümmet Gazetesi, No.1, 10.4.1902)





**Declaration of The Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress proclaims illegitimacy of the current government. (Announced in Manastır streets on July 6, 1908.) (Neyyir-i Hakikat Gazetesi, 27.7.1908)**



# نیستی

هیئت ادارتی :  
رئیس : آقا میرزا محمد علی  
نایب رئیس : آقا میرزا محمد علی  
کتابخانه : آقا میرزا محمد علی  
مجلس : آقا میرزا محمد علی  
مجلس : آقا میرزا محمد علی

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مجلس : آقا میرزا محمد علی

روزه صفت باغی حضرت سوره اله  
هر وقت که صاحبی که گزاشد او زنده  
بشاید خدای ممت ایمنه خیرش  
سلامت جانی دوشو که مقصود  
قانون آتی حد و تیسیر آتی  
تأین و نظیر ایستوری  
ایسوان و من  
کافه محمولات از حبس جانی نماند  
خودش نشانند آنگاه بیخ حراته  
عاطفه ایستوری سالتاره الحق حیات  
مقدور بی خیریه امام ایدینور  
النار حراته بیخ حیات الطبع بالکذا  
خریج انسان برین روجه بکوز  
حیاتک خیرتک فی جینک  
ما کفک تقاضی خیرتک مطلقا خیرتک  
وقت بولسولارم مادریه جین حیات  
ماملات شرحه قارتشاش حلق  
شاید ایستوری آتک انشام و قرانی  
آرتیه سو قوتش اولی سله دخی  
متیقا ممتد حرات مطلقه در جینک  
سقوطه سبب اولان خشک دوچار حرات  
ایسلی قواعد خیرتک آتک حق و حق  
انکام کجیا سندر  
ذوی الحیا اولان انکار اولورنی  
قورده بلا حرات عافیه عافیه مقدر  
اوله بازر  
سکونتر منجول اردور دوتار  
قانون حکم له بوقدم و عطف  
کفک نایب عافیه حافیه عافیه  
دیگر  
خریج سکونتر حیات خیرتک  
روح قلاز آتک شمه استقال سوره  
نیات هو اولوب کیدر  
و جدا کوز عریکوز خانکوز  
اوتور سندر حراته مویشی کوز رسام  
و دقیقه کوز عریکوز انا و انا  
ایستوری سندر  
دوکی بوسه سو دیمارک مسیح ساندن  
استیلا استعمال ایستوری حرات  
قلازیر با تراج کجری تاز حیات عشق  
ایستور  
ای قراشرا  
کلیک یوکه مجله ک اوله آت و حیات  
اشمه طوبیله آتک ایستور نیای  
ملائی نسیبیه نیون سو جو عجزه تقاض  
و تحیل ایستور  
دوکی بوسه سندر کجیا سندر  
موسی عجم و فتاندلیزه غایتند  
استعمال حلق ایستور اویشک

An opposition newspaper on the first day of the constitutional era. (Neyyir-i Hakikat Gazetesi, 24.7.1908)





**“Manastir. A street near which General Shemshi Pasha [Şemsi Paşa] was shot on entering his carriage to drive to Resna to suppress the incipient Revolution”.**  
 (Charles Roden Buxton, *Turkey in Revolution*, p. 61)



**Manastir; welcoming ceremony for the bands on July 25, 1908.**  
 (Ahmed Niyazi, *Hatırât-ı Niyâzi*, p. 198)



Bâb-ı Âli, Dâire-i Sadaret-i Uzma

Rumeli Müfettişliği'nden mevrûd şifre telgrafnâme, Müsta'celdir  
C. 4 Temmuz sene 324 Üsküp'ten münasip zevatın i'zamıyla rıza-yı âliye mugayir ahval hudûsüne meydan bırakmaması Kosova Vilayetine tebliğ edilmiş idi. İctima'mın esbâb ve ledünniyet-i hakikiyesine müteallik hissiyat ve istitlâ'âta dair jandarma kumandanı tarafından vilâyet-i müşârileyhaya keşide olunup, taraf-ı çâkerime tebliğ edilen şifrenin sûreti harfiyen ve zeylen takdim olunur. Priştine Mutasarrıflığı'ndan infisâl edip bugün Dersaadet'e muvâsalât etmiş olan İsmail Paşa'nın Selanik'te çâkerlerine verdiği malûmâtın dahî işbu iş'âra bir dereceye kadar tevâfuk etmekte bulunduğu maruzdur fermân. Fî 5 Temmuz sene 324

Müfettiş Hüseyin Hilmi

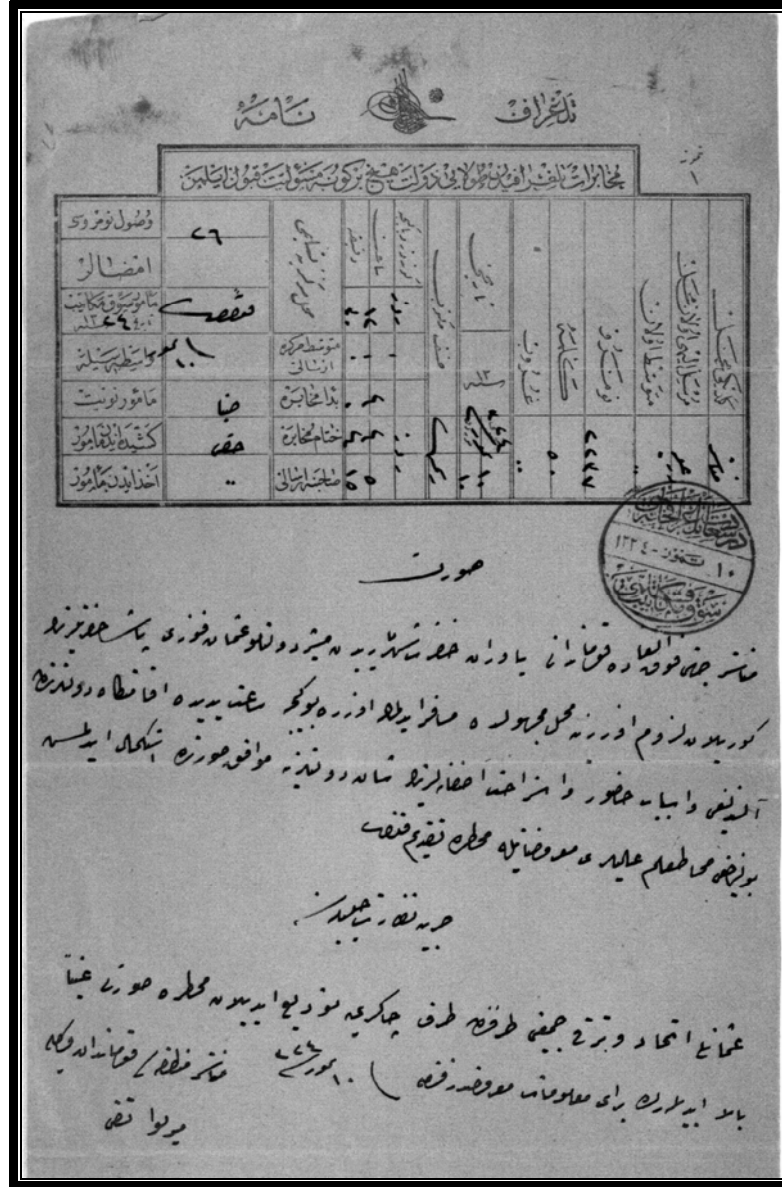
Şifre Mahalli Numarası: 780 Şeb 6.50

Firzovik'e hîn-i azîmetimde ihtiyâten Galip Bey'e bir şifre miftâhı verilmiş idi. Şimdi muma ileyhden alınan şifreyi telgraf manzur-ı sâmi-i fehîmâneleri buyurulmak üzere zîre naklen arz olunur fermân. Fî 4 Temmuz sene 324

Kosova Valisi Mahmud Şevket

Suret

Dünden beri biraz serbesti-i lisan başlamış olması sayesinde ber veche âti bir hakikata destresi olunmuştur. Şöyle ki Şemsi Paşa merhum Prizren'den Manastır'a hareket ederken kendisince muayyen olan eşhâsa ve Firzovik'e kadar yolun tarafeynindeki kur'â ve bir taraftan Yakova ve Mitroviça'ya serîan haberler göndererek “dinini, devletini , vatanını seven arkandan gelsin, Firzovik'te ictimâ' etsin, vatan elden gidiyor, Manastır ve sâir kasabât ve kurâ-yı İslâmiyyeyi basmış katliâm ediyorlar. Firzovik'e mikdâr-ı kâfi mavzer eslihâ ve cephânesi derdest-i celb ve iddihardır. Orada techiz olunacaksınız. Sûret-i hareketinizi telgrafla bildiririm. İmdâd-ı İslâm için yetişiniz, emirlerime intizar ediniz. İrâde-i seniyye-i hazret-i padişâhî bu merkezdedir” tarzında heyecan-âmiz sözlerle ictimâ'a sebebiyet verilmiş ve Tenze katarı meselesi teşâdüfen vesile-i mâddiye teşkil eylemiştir. Mürteza Paşazâde Ahmet Bey ile avenesine Yakova'da mavzer tüfenkleri tevzi'i ve yirmi beş Arnavudu aceleten ol suretle techiz ederek beraber götürmesi keyfiyetleri de enzâr-ı ahâlîde te'yid-i müdde'âya birer misal olmuştur. Filhakika buraya muvâsalat-ı âcizide görülen fevkalade bir takım esbâb-ı âdiye ile husûle gelecek derecenin pek çok fevkinde ve buna merhum müşârün ileyhın keyfiyet-i katli haberi dahî inzimâm ederek büyük bir tehlike görünmekte idi. Efkâr-ı ahâlinin bir dereceye kadar teskîn ve tatmînine muvaffakiyet hâsıl olmuş ve mehâlik-i maddiye ber taraf olarak yalnız kasabada görülen beş altı bin nüfusdan ancak yedi sekiz yüz kişi kalmış ise de şimdi efkâr-ı ahalide birden bire görülen tebeddülât, çâkerlerini hayrete ilkâ eylemekte ve bir takım teşvikât ve tesvîlâtın mâhirâne bir sûrette icrâ-yı te'sir eylemekte olduğuna kanaat getirmektedir. Yalnız bu cihet ahalisinde mücerreb olan ciddiyyet ve sadâkat hisleri, mugâyir-i rızâ-yı âlî ahvâlin hudûsüne meydan bırakmaz zannını te'yid ve takviyeye medâr olabilirse de, bugün yarın zaten meselenin tezâhür edeceği melhûz bulunmakla neticesinin başkaca arz edileceği maruzdur.



Manastır ciheti fevkalâde Kumandanı, Yaverân-ı hazret-i şehriyârîden Müşîr Osman Fevzi Paşa hazretleri görülen lüzûm üzerine mahal-i mechûlde misâfir edilmek üzere bu gece saat yedide ikâmetgâh-ı devletlerinden alındığı ve esbâb-ı huzur ve istirahat-ı asafânelerinin şân-ı devletlerine muvafık sûrette istikmâl edilmiş bulunduğu mumâ taallüm-ü âlîleri mârûzâtıyla muhtıra takdîm kılındı.

Harbiye Nezâret-i Celîlesi'ne,  
 Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti tarafından taraf-ı çâkerîye tevdi' edilen muhtıra sureti aynen bâlâ edilerek berâ-yı ma'lûmâta ma'rûzdur. Fermân. Fî 10 Temmuz sene 324

Manastır Mıntıkası Kumandan Vekili Mirlivâ Taki

**The memorandum issued by the Committee of Union and Progress upon kidnapping Fetih Osman Paşa from his mansion in Manastır.**  
 (BOA, YEE, 71/53, 23.7.1908)





Harbiye Nezâret-i Celîlesine,  
Manastır'dan şimdi vürûd telgrafname sûreti ber-vech-i zîr arz ve tezyîl-i  
hâzûr kılındı. 10 Temmuz 324

Yaverân-ı Hazret-i Şehriyâriden  
Üçüncü Ordu-yu Hümâyûn Müşîri  
İbrahim

İradat-ı seniyye-i müstakrallarıyla teb'a ve zîr-i destânlarına bahş ve  
ihsan buyurulan Kânûn-u Esâsî'nin tatbikât-ı fiiliyesine müsaade ve icâb-  
ı halde irade buyurulmuş hürriyetle sadakat ve ubûdiyetimizin halelden  
vikâyesini istirhâm ve Pazar gününe kadar Meclîs-i Mebûsân'ın küşâdına  
dâir fermân-ı hümâyûnları ısdâr buyurulmadığı halde rızâ-yı  
şehriyârîlerine muhalif ahvâlin vuku'u der-kâr olup Manastır Vilayeti  
dâhilinde el-yevm bulunan Me'mûrîn-i mülkiye, erkân ve ümerâ ve  
zâbitân-ı askeriye ve efrâd-ı şâhâneleriyle, ulemâ ve meşâyih ve velhasıl  
kibâr ve sıgâr, edyân-ı muhtelif mensûbîninin bil-istisna vahdâniyyet-i  
Hüdâ'ya karşı ahd ü mîsâk-ı umûmî altında bulunduğu arz eyleriz  
fermân.

Selanik'de Huzûr-u Müşîr-i efhâmiye,  
Atebe-i felek mertebe-i cenâb-ı Padişâhiye keşide kılınan telgrafnâme  
aynen bâlâdır. Hassa-i kumandânilerine isâbet eden vazîfe-i hamiyet ve  
vatanperverînin îfâsı müsterhimdir. 10 Temmuz 324

Cemiyeti  
Osmanlı Terakki ve İttihad  
Manastır Merkezi

(Continued) **The letter of the Committee of Union and Progress to İbrahim Paşa,  
requesting the opening of the Chamber of Deputies on Sunday.**  
(BOA, YEE, 71/57, 23.7.1908)



سجده

صدور نظایه

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ع. ۹ کورده جوشه عکبره نه تدبیر مانده تئبه اولن مائرف  
بولدینه مناه مروضات بئر شکرک یاش هفرنبره قوهوه  
ولایتینه بیاه داعه اولوبه دیکر تفرقاته جوابی جا کازینه  
عمره ایبدله احوال و معلوماته مند و جهته عکبره نه  
مقصده جا کاز ~~بئر شکرک~~ اسکوچک قوه عکبره نه  
بیایدله جوابه صلاوه نه کتایه صلیله بوجاه لایحه ایکیه  
مخبره زیند و صرفیه تقدیم اولوبه بوجا بزه ک مناسبتیه  
مصرف و لایحه کلامه و کذلک بیره نقل و بد تقدیم فلانیه  
تلفزده تجرینیه بصریه و نظریات واقعه اورزیه حاکم عالی  
صلاحتنده حرکت ائمه جفریه تائیه ابلدکلر بیاه اولکنه بیاز  
ولایت صیایه ایبدله مخبره نه نتایج عهده باطلع حرف لار  
مصرف و کینت انتقاله حاکمیه موافقه اولان جوابی عینا تقدیم  
فائده ایبدی ایکی و ملا طه کدر اتم سحر ک کیده ایبدلده  
بولدانه دیکر جواب جا کازانه مده رف عهده بیاه اولدین

ع

The letter from Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa to the Porte, regarding ten thousand armed people gathering at Firzovik, and declaring that going to Üsküb is not allowed. (İSAM, HHP, 18/1178-3, 22.7.1908) (Continues on the next page)

اداره اسکوبه خانہ موجود اور خود حکیم نیک کلمہ  
اور اودر خانہ وظیفہ حکیم لرین ایضا ویدہ حکیم  
اجتاد اولیہ صفت مرکزہ بولیدین کی الم حکیم امری  
انفار اجتری مامول اولدین تقدیرہ رض اسانہ  
کلیہ وہ عدوی اولیہ بیت ویدہ سندہ کوشرطکہ اولیہ  
برجمیت ماکم نیک مقادمتہ رد وریخ ایده جان کتده  
اولدین وضا بطاریت ایلیہ کما لفظ میں وایا کلام  
صفتہ حکیم بلہ حائر بربر ایلم برکنہ فریقیت بیانات  
و اسانہ منانہ و صبح ~~چشم~~ برجمیت ماکم نیک  
تجاویزیه قایم مقادمتہ عدل رض عدم کفایتی خیانه  
اولیہ برقوتہ ایلم طوتہ کتده یک چون کما ذیر ایلم  
نتایج مؤلفان ظور ایتمه ماکم بولین معروفه فرمایه  
ستف

The letter from Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa to the Porte, regarding ten thousand armed people gathering at Firzovik, and declaring that going to Üsküb is not allowed. (İSAM, HHP, 18/1178-3, 22.7.1908) (continues on the next page)

C. 9 Temmuz 324. Cihet-i askeriyeden tedâbir-i mâni'aya teşebbüs edilmesinin melhûz bulunmadığına müteallik ma'rûzât Müşîr Şükrü Paşa hazretleriyle Kosova vilâyetinden beyân ve arz olunub diğer telgrafnâme-i cevâbî-i çâkerâneyle arz edilen ahvâl ve ma'lûmâta müstenid ve cihet-i askeriyeden maksad-ı çâkerî Üsküb'deki kuvve-i askeriyedir mâbeyn-i hümâyûn-ı cenâb-ı mülûkâne baş kitâbet-i celîlesine bu sabah saat ikide yazılan cevâbdan sonra Kosova valisi paşa hazretleriyle cereyan eden muhâbere zeylen ve harfîyen takdîm olunan bu muhâbereyi müteâkib Priştine mutasarrıf vekilinden gelen ve kezalik zîre nakl ile takdîm kılınan telgrafda müctemi'inin nesâyih ve tefhimât-ı vâkıa üzerine rızâ-yı âli hilâfında hareket etmeyeceklerini te'kîd eyledikleri beyân olunmasına;

Manastır vilâyetiyle cereyan eden muhaberenin netâyicinin arzına bi't tab' sarf-ı nazarla mutasarrıf vekilinin intizâr-ı âliye muvâfık olan cevâbı aynen takdîm kılınmış idi re'y ve mülâhaza-i âcizânem şimdi keşide edilmekte bulunan diğer cevâb-ı çâkerânemde dahi arz ve beyân olduğu üzere Üsküb'de halen mevcut olan kuvve-i askeriyenin gelecek Arnavudlar aleyhine vazife-i askeriyelerini ifa edeceklerine i'timâd olunamayacağı merkezinde bulunulduğu gibi alacakları emri infâz etmeleri me'mûl olduğu takdirde dahi iş'ârât-ı mahalliyede **adedi on bin derecesinde gösterilmekde olan bir cemiyet-i müsellahanın mukavemetini red ve def edecek nisbetde olmadığı** ve zabitlerinin erbâb-ı muhalefete meyl ve irtibatları sıfat-ı askeriyeye haiz bir müşîr bir birinci ferikin beyânât ve iş'ârâtından müstebân ve hiçbir cemiyet-i müsellahanın tecâvüzüne karşı mukavemete adeden dahi adem-i kifâyeti ayân olan bir kuvvetle irâde-i satvete teşebbüsten pek büyük mehâzir ile netâyic-i müessifenin zuhûr etmesi melhûz bulunduğu ma'rûzdur fermân.

(Müfettiş-i Umûmi, Hüseyin Hilmi)

**The letter from Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa to the Porte, regarding ten thousand armed people gathering at Firzovik, and declaring that going to Üsküb is not allowed.**

(İSAM, HHP, 18/1178-3, 22.7.1908)

س

سبع

شعب

محرر

١٩٠٥

٢٤٦٥

سب

سری زرد عقیقه کلاه اوغری بخار زره بولدی متودی افقا سولورده بعضه اغارن بخار زره  
اداره حفره نك سیری و بعضی عمومی کتاری عقده تشا زره بلوچه مقصد اسولر اتعانه و اتخا زدن  
اداره تکلیفاته و بولدی و کز بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی  
اداره معامه در دکوری بخار اهالی به بر تاج کول زره کزین اجا ایرلیکی بیه بخار اهالی  
بویس بولدی و در نسو لازم کولدی بولدی و بخار اهالی به قانولیا بخار ایرلسه اسانل تکلیف طلب ایرلیکی  
دو تکلیفاته اجا ایرلسه سمدی بولدی به قطعا اساع ایرلیکی بولدی بخار بولدی بر ماده سفه  
تولدت و سا کراه کزیندی قطعا بخار ایرلسه بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی  
دو بخار نیشه ایرلسه بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی بولدی  
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١٩٠٥

سب

(Müfettiş-i Umûmîliğe,) Müsta'cel, Şifre, No: 2465, Şeb 2:30 (21:45)  
Şimdi nezd-i âcizîme gelen Ohri Bulgar Metropolitdi Metodi Efendi İslâmlardan bazı ağaların Bulgarlar'a idâre-i hâziranın tebdîli ve Meclis-i Umûmî küşâdı hakkında teşebbüsâtında bulunmak maksadıyla İslâmlarla ittifak ve ittihâd etmek üzere teklifâtında buldukları ve kendilerine bu husûsa muvâfakatı muktazî imzâ taleb ettikleri ve birkaç gün düşünmek üzere müsâade verdikleri Bulgar ahâlıden birkaç kişi tarafından kendisine ihbâr edildiğini beyan ve Bulgar ahâlinin bu bâbda ne yolda davranması lâzım geleceğinin ta'yîni ve Bulgar ahâliye fenâlık edilmemesi esbâbının istikmâlini talep ettiği ve bu teklifâtı icrâ edenlerin isimlerini bildirmekten kat'iyen imtinâ' eylediği cihetle Bulgarlar'ın böyle bir madde-i muzırta hakkında taahhüdât ve müzâkerâta girişmeleri kat'iyen gayr-i câiz olduğu yolunda mumâileyh cevâb verilmez ise Bulgarlar'ın bu bâbda dūçâr-ı tazyîk olmaları pek muhtemel görüldüğünden ve aynı tekâlifin Resne Demirhisar nahiyelerindeki Bulgarlara da olmakda bulunduğu mumâileyh metropolitdin ifâdât-ı mahremâne-i şifâhiyyesinden müstefâd olmuş bulunmasıyla bu bâbdaki hatt-ı hareketin irâde buyurulması müsterhamdır efendim. Fî 23 Haziran, sene 324.

Ohri Kaymakamı Kâni

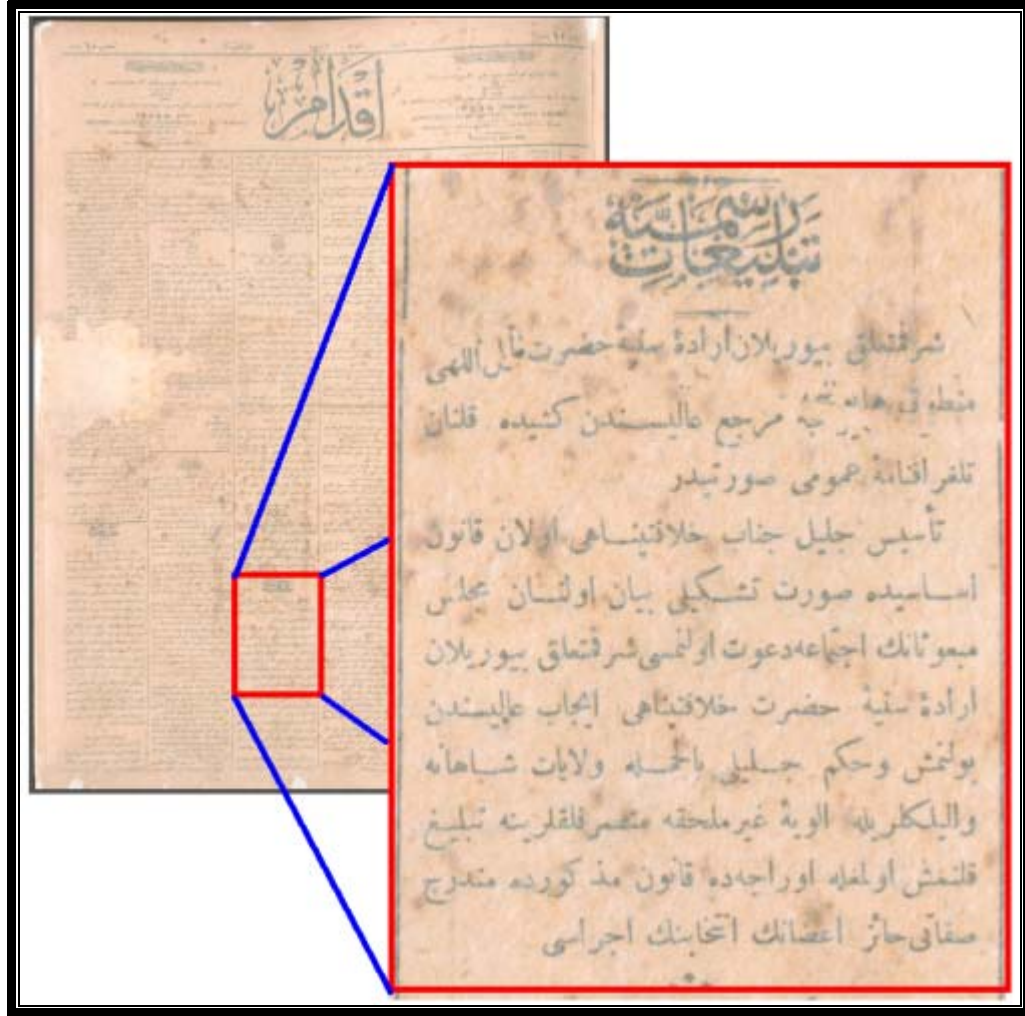
**Memorandum from Governor of Ohri to Inspector-General regarding the Niyazi Bey band's pressure on the local Bulgarians to collaborate with them.**  
(İSAM, HHP, 25/1686-6, 7.7.1908)



**Firzovik (Ferizaj) Train Station in Kosovo.**  
(Photo: Hakan Özdemir, 2012)



**Mitroviça Train Station in Kosovo.**  
(Photo: Hakan Özdemir, 2012)



### Tebliğât-ı Resmîye

Şeref-müteallik buyurulan İrâde-i seniyye-i hazret-i zillullâhî mantûk-u hayrınca merci-i âlîsinden keşîde kılınan telgrafnâme-i umûmî suretidir. Te'sîs-i Celîl-i Cenâb-ı Hilâfet-penâhî olan Kânûn-u Esâsî'de sûret-i teşkîli beyân olunan Meclis-i Mebûsân'ın içtimâa davet olunması şeref-müteallik buyurulan irâde-i seniyye-i hazret-i hilâfetpenâhî i'câb-ı âlîsinden bulunmuş ve hükm-ü celîli bi'l-cümle vilâyat-ı şâhâne vâililikleriyle elviye-i gayr-i mülhaka mutasarrıflıklarına tebliğ kılınmış olmağla oraca da kânûn-u mezkûrda münderic sıfatı hâiz âzânın intihâbının icrâsı.

**“Official Notification” prepared in accordance with the Government report and published on the morning of July 24, 1908.**

(“Tebliğât-ı Resmîye”, *İkdam Gazetesi*, No. 5087, 24.7.1908)



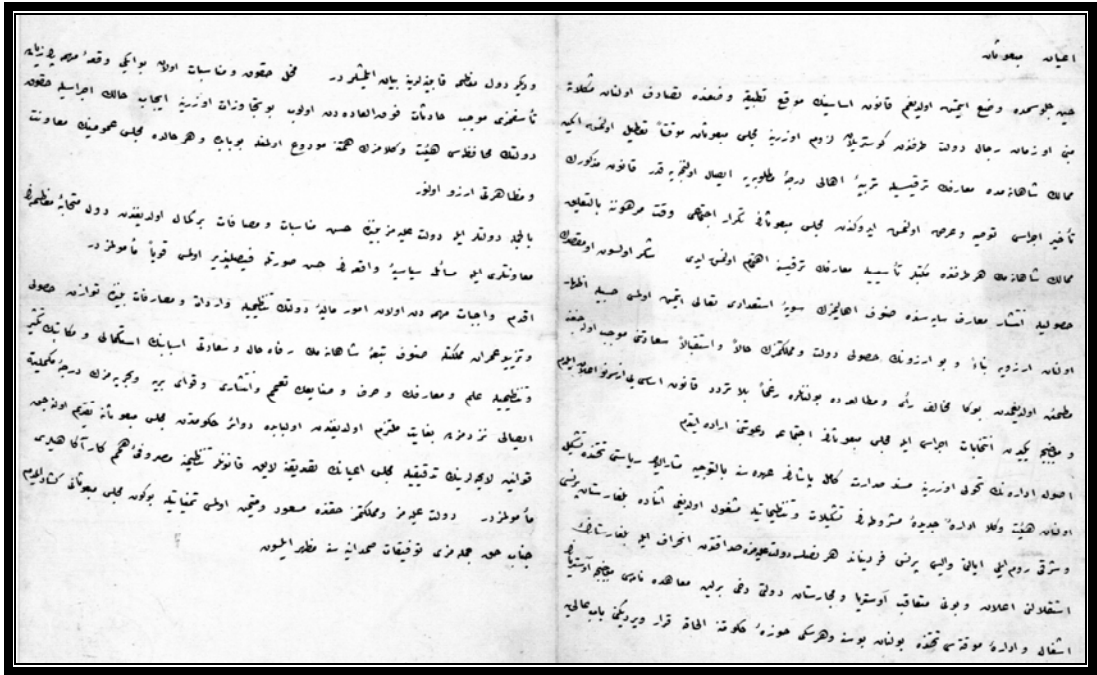
**Sultan Abdülhamid II**  
**On the occasion of the weekly *Selamlık* ceremony on the first Friday after the**  
**Revolution, on July 31, 1908.**  
(Buxton, *Turkey in Revolution*, to face p. 152)





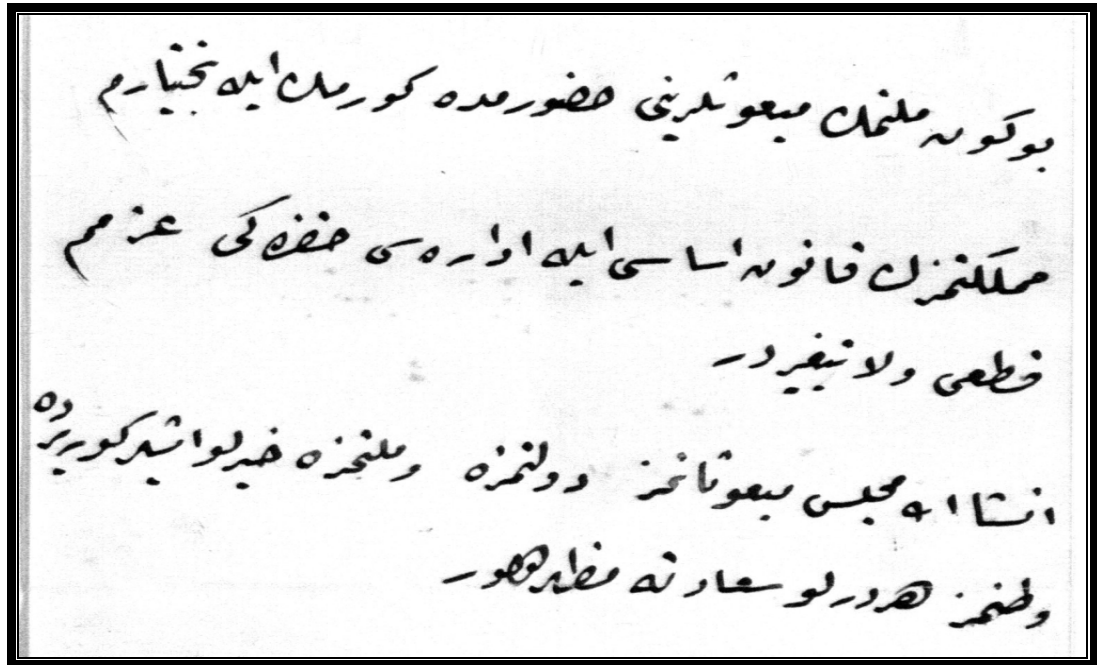






Abdulhamid II's opening speech (clear copy) at the Chamber of Deputies on 17.12.1908.

(BOA, Y.EE, 71/85-1)



“Bugün milletimin meb’ûslarını huzûrumda görmek ile bahtiyârım. Memleketimizin Kânûn-u Esâsî ile idâresi hakkındaki azmim kat’i ve lâyetegayyerdur. İnşallah Meclis-i Meb’ûsânımız devletimize ve milletimize hayırlı işler görür de, vatanımız her türlü saâdete mazhâr olur”

Abdulhamid's own handwriting confirms his adherence to the Constitution.

(BOA, Y.EE, 71/83-2)

“A'yân Mebusân,  
Hîn-i cülûsumda vaz'etmiş olduğum Kânûn-u Esâsi'nin mevki-i tatbîka vaz'ında tesâdüf olunan müşkilata mebni, o zaman rical-i devlet tarafından gösterilen lüzum üzerine Meclis-i Mebûsân muvakkaten ta'til olunmuş iken, Memâlik-i Şâhânemde maârifin terakkîsiyle terbiye-i ahâli derece-i matlûbeye î'sâl olununcaya kadar kânûn-u mezkûrun te'hîr-i icrâsı tavsiye ve arz olunmuş idiğinden, Meclis-i Mebûsânın tekrar içtimaı vakt-i merhûnuna bit-ta'lik Memâlik-i Şâhânemin her tarafında mektepler te'sisi ile maârifin terakkisine ihtimam olunmuş idi.

Şükr olsun, o maksadın husûliyle intişârı maârif sayesinde sunûf-u ahâlimizin seviye-i isti'dâdı te'ali etmiş olması hasebiyle izhâr olunan arzuya binâen ve bu arzunun husûlü, devlet ve memleketimizin hâlen ve istikbâlen saadetini mûcip olacağına mutmain olduğumdan, buna muhâlif re'y ve mütâlaada bulunanlara rağmen, bilâ-tereddüt Kânûn-ı Esâsi'yi ez ser-i nev ilân eyledim. Ve mûcibince yeniden intihâbât icrâsiyle Meclis-i Mebûsân'ın ictimaı' davetini irade ettim.

Usûl-ü idârenin tahavvülü üzerine mesned-i sadâret Kamil Paşa'nın uhdesine bit-tevcîh müşarûnileyhin riyâseti tahtında teşkîl olunan Heyet-i vükelâ idâre-i cedîde-i meşrûtanın teşkîlât ve tanzîmâtıyla meşgul olduğu esnada Bulgaristan Prensi ve Şarkî Rumili Eyâleti vâlisi Prens Ferdinand her nasılsa Devlet-i Âliyyemize sadâkatden inhîraf ile Bulgaristan'ın istiklâlini i'lân ve bunu müteâkib Avusturya ve Macaristan Devleti dahî Berlin Muâhedenâmesi mûcibince Avusturya'nın işgal ve idâre-i muvakkatesi tahtında bulunan Bosna ve Herseği havze-i hükûmetine almağa karar verdiğini Bâb-ı Âlî'ye ve diğer düvel-i muazzama kabînelerine beyan eylemişlerdir. Mahal-i hukûk ve münâsebât olan bu iki vak'a-ı mühimme pek ziyâde teessüfümüzü mûcib hâdisât-ı fevkalâdeden olub, bu tecavüzât üzerine îcâb-ı hâlin icrâsiyle hukûk-u devletin muhâfazası hey'et-i vükelâmızın himmetine mevdu' olmağla bu bâbda ve her halde Meclîs-i Umûmî'nin muâvenet ve müzâhereti arzû olunur.

Bilcümle devletler ile, Devlet-i Âliyyemiz beyninde hüsn-ü münâsebât ve mesâfât berkemâl olduğundan düvel i mütehâbe-i muazzamanın muâvenetleri ile mesâil-i siyâsiye-i vak'anın hüsn-ü sûretle feysülpezîr olması kaviyyen me'mûlumuzdur.

Akdem-i vâcibât-ı mühimmeden olan umûr-u mâliye-i devletin tanzîmiyle vâridât ve masârıfat beyninde tevâzun husûlü ve tezyîd-i umrân-ı memleketle sunûf-u teb'a-i şâhânemin refâh-ı hal ve saadeti esbâbının istikmâli ve mekâtibin teksîr ve tanzîmiyle ilim ve maârifin ve hiref ve sanâyi'in taammüm ve intişârı ve kuvva-yı berriyye ve bahriyemizin derece-i mükemmeliyete îsâlî nezdimizde begâyet mültezem olduğundan, ol bâbda devâir-i hükûmetden Meclis-i Mebûsân'a takdîm olunacak kavânin lâyhalarının tedkikiyle Meclis-i A'yân'ın tasdikine lâyık kânunlar tanzîmine masrûf-u himem-i kâr-âgâhileri Devlet-i Âliyyemiz ve memleketimiz hakkında mes'ûd ve müteyemmen olması temenniyâtıyla bugün Meclis-i Mebûsânî küşâd eyledim.  
Cenâb-ı Hak cümlemizi tevfişkât-ı samedâniyesine mazhar eylesün.”

(Continued) **Abdulhamid II's opening speech at the Chamber of Deputies on 17.12.1908.**

(BOA, Y.EE, 71/85)

Military Ranks			Military Units		
Republic of Turkey	Ottomans (as 1908)	US	Turkey	US	Number of Soldiers
Mareşal	Müşir	Field Marshal	Ordu	Region	
Orgeneral	1. Ferik	General	Ordu	Army Group	80.000~200.000
Korgeneral	2. Ferik	Lieutenant General	Kolordu	Corps	20.000~45.000
Tümgeneral	Ferik	Major General	Tümen	Division	10.000~15.000
Tuğgeneral	Mirliva	Brigadier General	Tugay	Brigade	3.000~5.000
Albay	Miralay	Colonel	Alay	Regiment	1.300~3.000
Yarbay	Kaymakam	Lieutenant Colonel	Tabur	Battalion	300~1.300
Binbaşı	Binbaşı	Major	Tabur/Bölük	Battalion&Co.	
Ön Yüzbaşı	Sağ Kol Ağası	Adjutant-Major	Bölük	Company	80~225
Kıdemli Yüzbaşı	Sol Kol Ağası	Senior Captain	Bölük	Company	80~225
Yüzbaşı	Yüzbaşı	Captain	Bölük	Company	80~225
Üsteğmen	Mülâzım-ı ewel	First Lieutenant	Takım&Bölük	Platoon&Co.	
Teğmen	Mülâzım-ı sâni	Second Lieutenant	Takım	Platoon	26~55
Çavuş	Çavuş	Sergeant	Manga	Squad	8~13
Onbaşı	Onbaşı	Corporal	Tim	Fireteam	4
Er	Nefer	Private Soldier	-	-	

**Military ranks of the Ottoman army and modern equivalents**



*“Osmanlılığı mükâseme etmek üzere hazırlanmış olan Avrupa hükûmât-ı kebîre ve sağıresine inkılâb-ı kebîre bütün Osmanlılar nasıl cevap verdiler”*

**“How Ottomans responded to the European states, which were positioned to divide the Ottoman Empire”**

(Servet-i Fünûn Gazetesi, 1.11.1908.)



درسمادته نسخہ سی  
۱۰۰ پارہ در  
شرائط اشترا:  
ولایاتہ سنہ لکی ۱۰۰  
آئی آئی ۸۰ غروش اولوب  
اوج آئی یوقدو .  
قبرلہ دن مقوا بورو ایله  
کوندرک ایچون سنوی  
بکری غروش فضلہ آلتیر .

# سِرْوَتِفُون

بجشبه کوناری چقار  
منافع ملک و دولته خادم مصور عثمانی غزته سی

صاحب امتیاز و مدیری  
احمد احسان  
شرائط اشترا:  
درسمادته سنہ لکی ۱۳۰  
آئی آئی ۶۰  
اوج آئی ۴۰ غروشدر .  
پوسته ایله کوندریلرسه  
ولایات بدل اخذ اولنور .

№ 908  
Directeur - Propriétaire  
AHMED IHSAN

**SERVETIFUNOUN**  
JOURNAL ILLUSTRÉ TURC PARAISSANT LE JEUDI  
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18<sup>me</sup> année  
BUREAUX :  
Vis-à-vis la Sublime Porte

اون سکرنجی سنه — اونوز بئشجی جلد

بازار اورتی ۱۳ تهرین اول سنه ۳۳۴

عدد : ۹۰۸



عثمانلرک عسکرجه اعلان حریتی  
La liberté Ottomane.

“Osmanlıların askerce i’lân-ı hürriyeti”

**Declaration of the freedom of the Ottomans by soldier.**  
(Servet-i Fünûn Gazetesi, 26.10.1908)



“Yaşasın Kânûn-u Esâsi!, Hürriyet, Müsâvat, Uhuvvet, Adâlet” ,

“Long live the Constitution, Freedom, Equality, Brotherhood and Justice”  
(Servet-i Fünûn Gazetesi, 5.11.1908)

## **BIOGRAPHY**

Hakan Özdemir was born in Cevizli, a village of Antalya-Akseki, in 1970, and migrated to İstanbul with his family in 1982. He has been working part-time as a technician during his university education. He completed his first undergraduate program in the Electrical Engineering Department of Yıldız Technical University in 1991. He has also completed the business administration license program at Anadolu University, before joining IBM, an international IT company, in a System Services Representative role in 1994. As at 2013, after almost nineteen years in office, he still works as Manager of Technical Support Services at the same company.

He has had the opportunity to travel to about thirty-five countries, mainly in the field of the Ottoman domination regions. Although interested in the subject from his high school years, he could realize his great aim to start his education in history when he was forty years old. He has completed his Master of Arts program at the Department of History under the Institute of Social Sciences of Fatih University in 2013. He is married and has two children.

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